



ENSE 271 - Nabooians - Project report-out & lessons learned

WPVivid WordPress Backup -

<http://download.uregina.ca/DownloadAttachment/8e8e49bc0fd1e73fdec9353570a76669/>

Team name & members

The Nabooians

- Karlee Fidek
- Kristoffersen Garces
- Kyle Jakob Labatete

Project sponsor

Dr. Tim Maciag (ENSE 271 Lecturer)

Business need/opportunity

The IABC Regina chapter is an organization that strives to provide opportunities for its members to learn, grow, and connect with other communication professionals. Therefore, it is crucial for the IABC Regina chapter to have an accessible and appealing website that IABC members can use with ease. The IABC Regina chapter board members addressed concerns about the current limitations and problems being experienced with their website.

These concerns included the multiple locations and layers of navigation; duplicated information on the Regina chapter and international websites; lack of two-way communication and membership engagement; inability to accept payments for job posting through the website; and amount of time and effort required to manage the website. The proposed improvements to address these concerns included introducing more simple and clean navigation; directing users to the international website to reduce duplication; introducing features such as a blog to increase engagement and communication; introducing payment functionality to the website; and introducing a more simple back-end.

A website redesign, both front-end and back-end, would improve IABC Regina members' experiences when using the website and increase the amount of connection and learning opportunities. A negative experience when using the IABC Regina chapter website may result in users no longer visiting or engaging with the website, deeming any amount (even minimal amounts) of effort put forth by the website administrators a waste of time. Therefore, it is important that IABC Regina members' experiences are a main consideration during the redesign process.



Reflections on project planning

Selected North Star & Carryover Customers

Our north star customers are the IABC Regina members which are the main users of IABC Regina's website. A main reason fueling the IABC Regina chapter's desire to redesign their website is the confusing navigation and duplicate information which impedes IABC Regina members ability to find things easily. Our carryover customers are the IABC Regina website administrators maintaining the backend of the website, users who are looking to submit and/or apply for career postings, users who are looking into joining the IABC membership, and users who are interested in learning more about IABC Regina.

Assumptions Made

- All aspects of the current IABC Regina website design can be modified and redesigned
- Initial assumption was that account registration and login is only required if the user is posting a blog post or commenting. However, this assumption later changed to account registration and login not being required for any part of the website based on feedback from the customers.

Constraints Uncovered

- Customers have a four-figure budget but the cost should be kept as low as possible. Plugins should be restricted to free plugins as much as possible.
- The website must be compatible and responsive for both desktop and mobile users
- All of the group work will be done remotely which increases the possibility of miscommunication between group members
- Time is a constraint due to limited availability for group meetings due to different schedules as well as the 2 month project deadline
- Security and privacy for payments on the website must be ensured

Key Findings From Affinity Diagramming, Empathy Mapping

- Customers felt there was a lack of two way engagement and communication and wanted to improve that
- Customers felt the current website's navigation was confusing and wanted to simplify it
- Customers would like the website to be simple, visually appealing, and compatible for all devices
- Customers want users to be able to search for information easily
- The current process of accepting and posting job ads is tedious and needs to be improved as it is the main source of income. Customers would like to implement on-site payment.

Initial & Evolution Of Your Usm/Mvp

Our initial USM included various features and functionalities such as filtering and account creation for submitting job postings, posting a blog/comments, and signing up for events. Throughout the course of the project, our group learned that these functionalities were not required for the website. So, our group updated our USM and moved those functionalities to a future MVP or removed them altogether. Our final product is an MVP because it is a working increment of the product that could be



implemented and used by the customers. The customers will be able to perform administration duties easily due to the simple back end. The website has working functionality for all pages which makes it usable as a first MVP.

Prototyping Activities And Findings

Throughout the project our group created various low-fidelity and high-fidelity prototypes. Our group created three low-fidelity prototypes which were presented to the customers in order to receive feedback. Our group then transitioned the low-fidelity prototype into a high-fidelity prototype with minor changes to accommodate the feedback received. One main finding our group discovered after presenting our high-fidelity prototype is that even though features of the low-fidelity prototype were liked, customers may not like them as much when implemented with full colour and typography. Both our prototypes and final WordPress design incorporated the following design principles and class topics.

Affordances and Signifiers

- Various pages include buttons which **afford** clicking. The buttons afford users the ability to interact and do something with the page such as post a job, sign-up, or apply. The affordance can be easily determined by the user through the common shape of the object often used to represent clickable buttons. The teal color which changes to green when hovering overtop of the buttons acts as a visual cue of a call to action. The text within the buttons act as a clear **signifier** of what can be achieved by interacting/clicking the button.

POST A JOB

Metaphors

- The magnifying glass is used as a **metaphor** for searching as it is easily understandable for users since magnifying glasses are usually associated with looking for something. Another **metaphor** is the hamburger icon which represents the menu. By looking at the menu of the site, you are able to see the pages that make up the site just as if you were to look at a hamburger you can see the ingredients that make it up.



Interface Design Mappings

- Our group placed the “+” and “-” icons for the accordions on the left side of the accordion title. The left side placement adheres to the principle of natural and cultural mapping for North American users who read interfaces left to right.

+ Infographics

Gestalt

- Across all the pages, all related information is **enclosed** within colored sections or accordions. This allows users to identify which information is related and which information is separate.



Careers

and Regina help communications and public relations professionals learn about employment opportunities that can bring career advancement and personal growth. Check out the opportunities available right now.

Learn More

Events

Want to get involved and learn? Check out our events page for upcoming events and professional development opportunities.

Learn More





Reflections on project results

Likes

- Being able to work with real customers and get to experience what it is like to work in industry
- Collaborating on ideas with group members
- Learning how to work with and fulfill the customer's desire(s)
- Learning about and seeing the transition from prototypes (low fidelity & high fidelity) to the final deliverable (WordPress website)
- Being satisfied with and proud of the overall result of the project
- Applying concepts learned in class which helped guide us in shaping/working towards our goal
- The meetings with IABC and their feedback were really useful and gave us insight regarding what our group was doing well and what could be improved

Dislikes

- Customizing the webpage can be very restrictive and tedious initially until templates have been created
- Limited options in designing the website without adding plugins
- Paid options to plugins were necessary to be able to access more functionality to improve the design
- Extremely hard to work collaboratively in wordpress

What Went Well During the Project

Considering the final result of our project, our group is pretty satisfied with the outcome of our product. The planning phase and creating prototypes went smoothly. Although we all had different ideas in our low fidelity prototypes, we were able to adjust and combine the ideas together according to the customer's desire(s). Our group also managed to get our WordPress design fairly close to our high-fidelity prototype (with the exception of changes we made based on feedback) using only free plugins. Therefore, the transition between the high-fidelity prototype and our final product went well. We collaborated well in terms of being open to ideas and finding a common ground in determining what our users would want. The meetings with IABC went well as they were open to hearing our ideas and providing us with feedback.

What Did Not Go Well During the Project

Working on the final product collaboratively in WordPress did not go as well as we would have liked because Local does not allow collaboration. Therefore, our group was only able to have one person working on the website at a time, requiring very clear communication between group members and constant exporting and emailing of the website. This solution worked, but could have been better. The limitation of trying to use free functionality and as few plugins as possible made it more difficult to transition our high-fidelity prototype to a WordPress website. We were able to transition it in the end, but it could have gone more smoothly without that limitation.

Prototype to WordPress Translation

Our group was able to successfully implement the high-level aspects of our high-fidelity prototype design in WordPress. The high level aspects being a static header, the full width content layout, color separated sections, consistent design throughout all pages, and the use of accordions for



condensing and hiding large amounts of information. However, the feedback our group received from the IABC customers did influence us to change our design from the original version of our high-fidelity prototype. They expressed concern regarding text size, the contrast in some of the colored sections, the need for static content outside of the accordions, and the text-heavy appearance. Therefore, we changed our design accordingly when implementing it with WordPress to use appropriate text size and typography; use color sections with more readable contrast; add static content outside of the accordions; and add images throughout the pages to reduce the text-heavy appearance.

Did Class People-centred Design Ideas Help or Hinder Our Design Exploration?

The content explored in the class helped us to focus on creating a product design that was useful, usable, and delightful for the customers. The empathy and affinity diagram ideas helped guide us in being able to hear what the customers were saying and determine what the underlying problem(s) were. Knowing the underlying problems, our group was able to use the other design ideas and principles shared in class to design solutions to IABC's problems that would provide a positive end-to-end experience rather than a purely feature based experience. The fast-feedback cycle the class project followed was also helpful to provide us with feedback from the customers quickly before venturing too far in the wrong direction.

What Would We Do The Same For Future Projects?

- Have each member make their own version of a prototype/document and combine the best ideas from everyone's into one final prototype/document
- Follow the fast feedback cycle or a similar process to continually get feedback from customers/users early on and at all stages of the project
- Use a communication tool to allow team members to ask questions or make suggestions even when the group is not actively meeting

What Would We Do Different For Future Projects?

- Have more group meetings where all three of us are online and actively available to discuss the project progress
- Use some version task calendar or KanBan to track who is working on what task and what progress has been made
- Follow an agile structure to break down the larger increment into smaller tasks
- Host the WordPress solution on a server so all members could work on it collaboratively

Opportunities and Design Ideas for Future Work

- Improve the appearance of the events page and show a better, more detailed summary of the events outside of the accordion (could be done with paid version of the easy accordion plugin)
- Make the home page carousel dynamically pull content from other pages such as the events page
- Add site analytics and security features
- Implement a better payment solution for job postings (and even for events to replace eventbrite)
- Automate job postings after form submission as well as for events if continuing to use eventbrite



WordPress themes and plugins

Theme: Neve

User rating & number of ratings: 4.8/5 stars determined from 709 user reviews

Last Update: April 13, 2021

Number of active installations: 200,000+

Description/Purpose/Functionality:

- It is a super fast, easily customizable, multi-purpose theme
- It requires little to no usage of HTML and CSS code
- Our group decided to use this as our theme because it had coloured page sections which was similar to our HiFidelity Prototype as well as the integrated search functionality
- The visual layout of the theme also helped us turn our text heavy high-fidelity prototype into a visually appealing website
- It also has a banner image on its homepage which was a perfect spot for our carousel

Plugin: WPForms Lite

User rating & number of ratings: 4.9/5 stars determined from 8,925 user reviews

Last Update: 2 weeks ago (approximately around April 1, 2021)

Number of active installations: 4+ million

Description/Purpose/Functionality:

- A beginner friendly plugin for creating simple forms
- The paid version has more specific options for the form content. Page break is one of the options that our group was interested in as it allows the creation of forms that have multiple steps. (To avoid using the paid version, our group used the Multi Step Form plugin as an alternative). The paid version also allows administrators to incorporate PayPal payment into their forms. The page break functionality is available by purchasing the basic version which is \$79.00 USD/year. The PayPal functionality is available by purchasing the pro version (which also includes the page break functionality) which is \$399.00 USD/year.
- Our group used it for the contact form on the About Us page

Plugin: Easy Accordion

User rating & number of ratings: 4.7/5 stars determined from 103 user reviews

Last Update: 3 weeks ago (approximately around March 25, 2021)



Number of active installations: 10,000+

Description/Purpose/Functionality:

- Allows users to easily create and manage accordions
- Our group used the accordions to conceal most of the pages' information to avoid displaying a lot of text statically on the page
- It was used on our Membership Page, Events Page, Careers Page, Programs Page and About Us Page
- The free version only allows users to have one continuous line of text visible in the accordion title bar. In order to get more functionality (including being able to display multiple lines), the pro version would need to be purchased. The lifetime plan (one time cost) costs \$99 USD for 1 site and the yearly plan costs \$29 USD/year for 1 site.

Plugin: Multi Step Form

User rating & number of ratings: 4.4/5 stars determined from 32 user reviews

Last Update: 3 months ago (approximately around January 15, 2021)

Number of active installations: 10,000+

Description/Purpose/Functionality:

- Creates a multi step form using simple drag & drop functionality
- Our group used it for the job post submission form in order to include the retrieval of payment information as well as the job details
- If paying for the pro or basic version of WPForms, this plugin could be removed and replaced with functionality from WPForms

Plugin: Smart Slider 3

User rating & number of ratings: 4.9/5 stars determined from 931 user reviews

Last Update: 1 month ago (approximately around March 15, 2021)

Number of active installations: 700,000+

Description/Purpose/Functionality:

- Allows users to easily create sliders (carousels) with a fast and intuitive interface
- Our group used this to create the carousel in our home page
- The carousel was used to give our website more visuals and to feature their important information such as events on the home page



University
of Regina



FACULTY OF ENGINEERING
& APPLIED SCIENCE

Plugin: myStickymenu

User rating & number of ratings: 4.8/5 stars determined from 659 user reviews

Last Update: 1 month ago (approximately around March 15, 2021)

Number of active installations: 100,000+

Description/Purpose/Functionality:

- Can be used to make a websites header sticky (static on the page) so that it moves down with the page as a user scrolls
- Easy to use as it makes the website menu/header sticky automatically after installation and activation, requiring no adjustment or interaction from administrators
- Our group used it to make the header/navigation remain at the top of the page as you scroll
- Our group implemented the static header for easier navigation at any point on a page