

## UX DESIGN FINAL PROJECT – DAKOTA KRONBERGER

### DESCRIPTION/PURPOSE OF APPLICATION

My application was designed as a mockup of a web application that would be used for finding video-game related news. The website features a news panel, along with a forums page so that users can start creative discussion about news articles, as well as news publisher profiles.

**Key users** for my project include gamers, news enthusiasts, writers, and game developers.

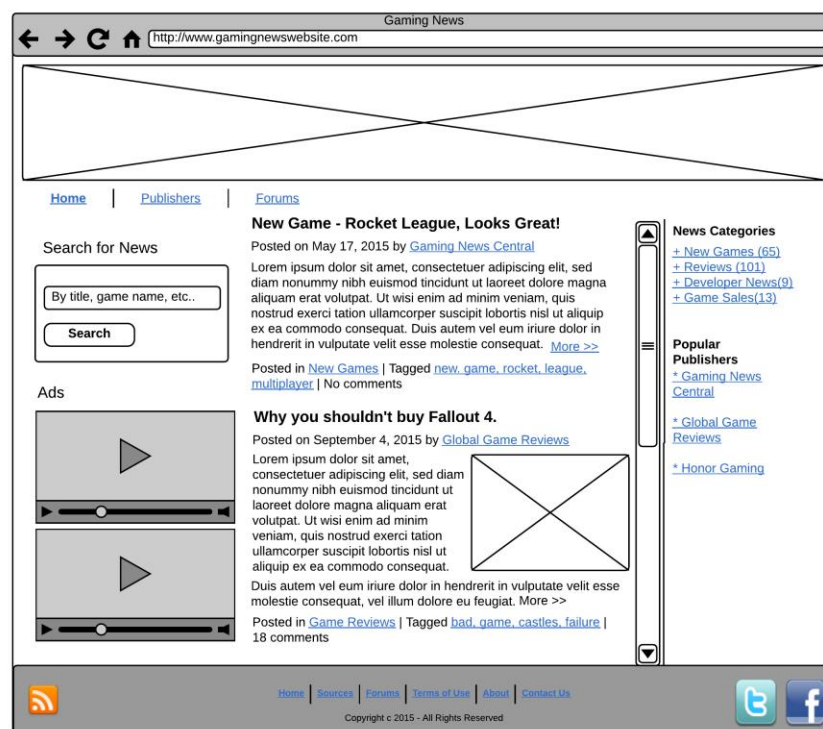
Mockup was designed in an online tool called Lucidchart. My mockup represents a wireframe diagram.

### PAGES OF WEB APPLICATION

#### HOME PAGE

#### GAMING NEWS WEBSITE MOCKUP

Dakota Kronberger | December 10, 2015



This page is the landing screen for the website when you enter. The main feature of the home page is the news section in the middle, which contains the most recent news articles posted to the website. As you can see, each article contains a title, the date it was posted, the publisher (with a hyperlink to the publisher's profile), the category it was posted in (also a hyperlink, filters by category), tags, and comments. Along the right hand side is

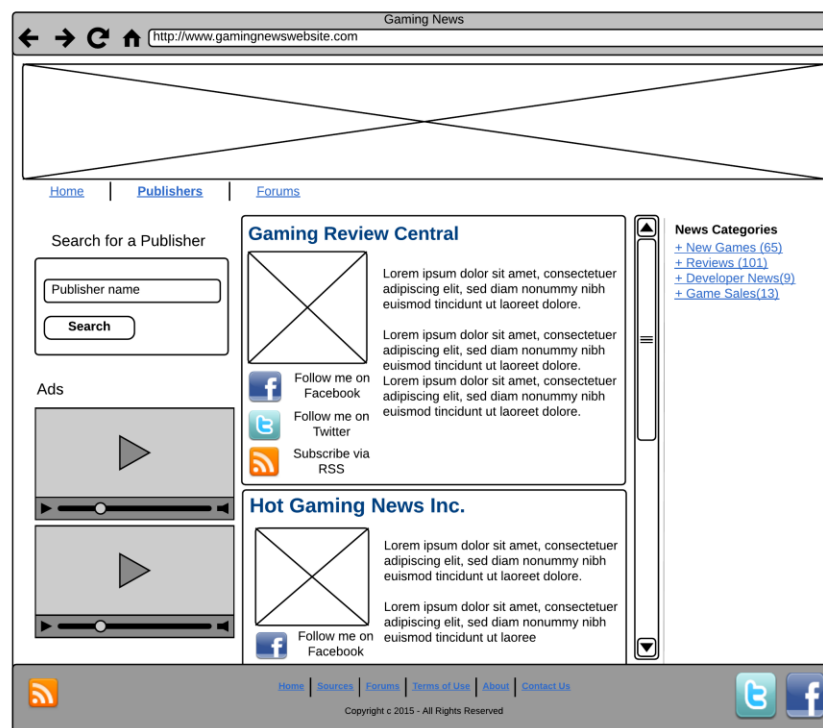
the sidebar, which is common among all pages. This sidebar contains links to filter news by a specific category, as well as hyperlinks to the most popular publishers on the site. By clicking the News Category links, you can filter news articles on the home page by a specific category. By clicking the links below Popular Publishers, you will be redirected to that specific publisher's profile. Also, as common on all pages, is the navigation bar on the top left, as well as a footer containing links to other pages, and advertising on the left hand side.

Also, you can see that there is a search bar on the left hand side, which users can use to find a specific article that they are looking for.

## PUBLISHERS PAGE

### GAMING NEWS WEBSITE MOCKUP

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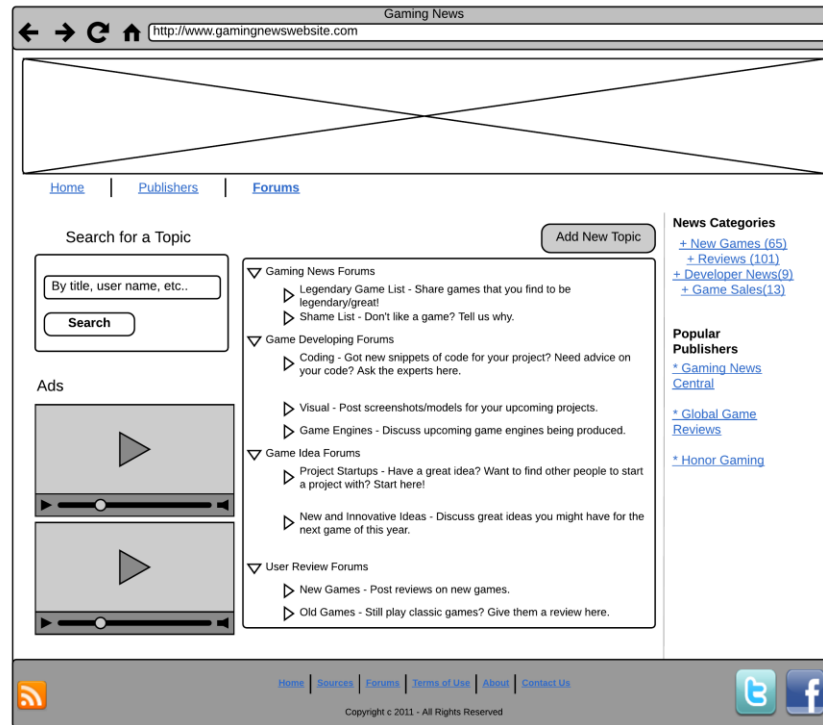


The publisher's page showcases popular news article writers. These publishers are usually gaming companies/writers who have a big background in gaming and writing. Many elements in this page are similar to the home page, except for the middle section, which contains all publisher's profiles. On each profile, you can see a description of the writer, their photo, and their social media links. Also, there is a search bar on the left hand side much like on the home page.

## FORUMS PAGE

### GAMING NEWS WEBSITE MOCKUP

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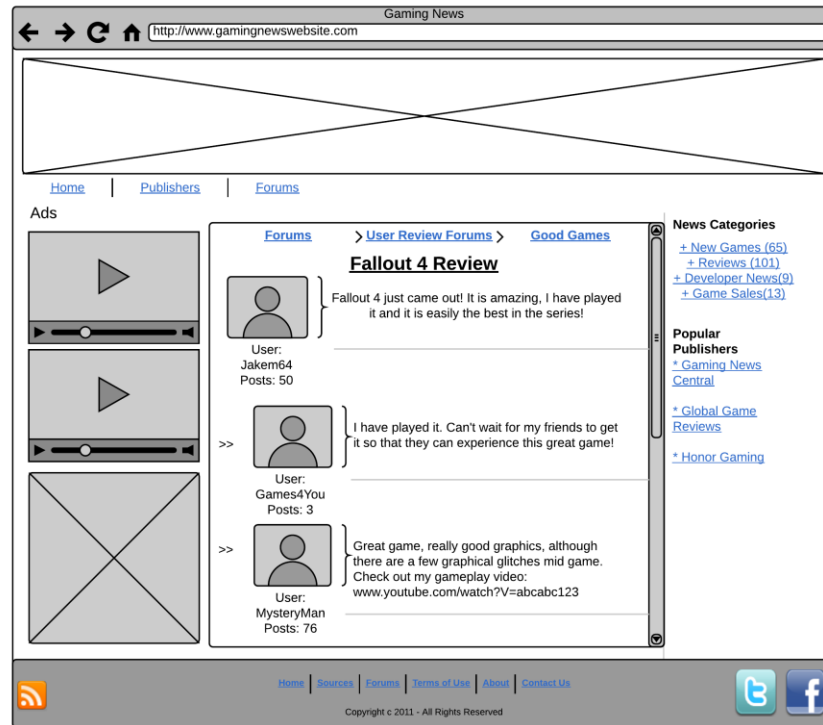


The forums page is a page where users can go to start discussion on new gaming topics. As you can see, there are main topics, which filter down into smaller sub-topics. This helps to filter discussion into appropriate categories so if someone is planning on talking about a specific topic, they can easily find that topic. There are more screens that go along with the forums page, which will be shown below.

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This is the screen that users would use to post a new topic. It starts with a topic title (that will show up when people are searching/browsing), a body of text to edit that will end up being the content of the post (which features many formatting tools to make content creation easy to use), a CAPTCHA to avoid bots spamming posts, a dropdown to select a category to post into, and the submit button at the bottom. The layout is minimal to avoid distractions while the user is posting a topic.

## VIEWING A POST



This is an example of a topic posted to the forums. The parent comment is the first comment on the thread, and as you can see, any replies to the parent topic are indented to show that they are replies. The user's image, username, and number of posts are shown between each reply/post. As well, there is the topic title on top of the topic, and there is a breadcrumb section on top so that the user can easily navigate the forums from when they are viewing a specific topic. This way, the user does not have to go through the process of finding a specific category again, they can just click the link in the breadcrumbs.

## USABILITY/USER EXPERIENCE TESTING

I did not use any external software or tools to record my testing because I had just created a mockup. The two main methods that I used for testing were task-testing and area-click testing. I tested my peers in the classroom, my instructor, Clay Hess, and some friends that I know online that are key users for this application because they play videos games.

### **Usability Task-Testing:**

I gave my users a list of tasks that they had to complete on the website. I gave them no direction to complete these tasks, they just needed to complete the tasks on their own. Users had some issues navigating the forums, so I took their advice into consideration when designing the forums.

*Reflection:* I would use this tool again for sure. Next time, I would give more challenging tasks to complete, as most users were able to complete these tasks easily. I would recommend this technique/tool.

### **Usability Area-Click testing:**

When giving the users the tasks to test, I recorded where they clicked using observation. I measured the ratio of clicking in the right areas to complete the task to clicking in the wrong areas. By doing this, I could single out confusing elements in my webpage that needed to be redesigned or reworded.

*Reflection:* I may use this tool again, depending on if the website supports it. Nothing different that I would do in the future.

### **My tasks:**

1. Find all new game news on the home page.
2. Post a forum topic about a classic game.
3. Post a forum topic about game development and expand a forum parent/child topic
4. Find 3 ways to view a popular news source (author).
5. Search for news about a new game, Castle Crashers 2

### **UX Task-Testing:**

I used the same list of tasks that the users used for usability testing, and I studied their reactions/feelings when completing a certain task. I also asked users for feedback on if they thought that the way to complete each task was satisfying and felt right.

*Reflection:* I would use this tool again for sure. Again, I would give more challenging tasks to complete, as most users were able to complete these tasks easily. I would recommend this technique/tool.

### **UX Click Testing:**

Instead of measuring right/wrong clicks, I measured the amount of clicks it took users to complete a certain task. In order to make the experience better, I re-designed my pages in order to have less overall clicks. By having less clicks, the user can access what they need to faster, which leads to a better UX design.

*Reflection:* I may use this tool again, depending on if the website supports it. Nothing different that I would do in the future.

## FEEDBACK ON REVIEWS

### Peer Reviews:

My peers were able to give good design changes to the site that more reflected usability, such as adding elements to the forum to clear up the issue of posting a topic, or changing “Sources” to “Publishers”. Originally, I had named news authors “Sources” but users found that very ambiguous.

### Instructor Reviews:

My instructors gave me more detailed changes to make, and I found their advice more helpful. They gave me advice that would better satisfy the user, such as filling up whitespace or positioning of elements.

## ACTUAL CHANGES TO PROTOTYPE

- Added advertisement sections to sidebar to fill up white space.
  - Was recommended because there was too much white-space. Gave a bad user experience to most users I tested.
- Changed Sources to Publishers
  - Better terminology and prevents ambiguity, most users were confused by the word “Sources”
- Added "Add new topic" to forums page
- Changed layout of forum directories to better represent collapsible elements.
- Added CAPTCHA to forum post to prevent "spam".
- Changed layout of individual forum post page to better represent a "forum" look.
- Added scroll-bar to News page
  - ..so that it is clear that the user can scroll. Most users did not know of that functionality.
- Changed padding/styling of all pages to look more professional.
- Changed position of navigation bar from right-top to left-top.
- Duplicated navigation bar to the bottom links of the page
  - ..so the user does not need to scroll back up.
- Added breadcrumbs to forum post
  - ..so that the user knows what category they are in. Most users said that it was a pain to re-navigate through the forums for each post they read.
- Added forum post title to actual post.