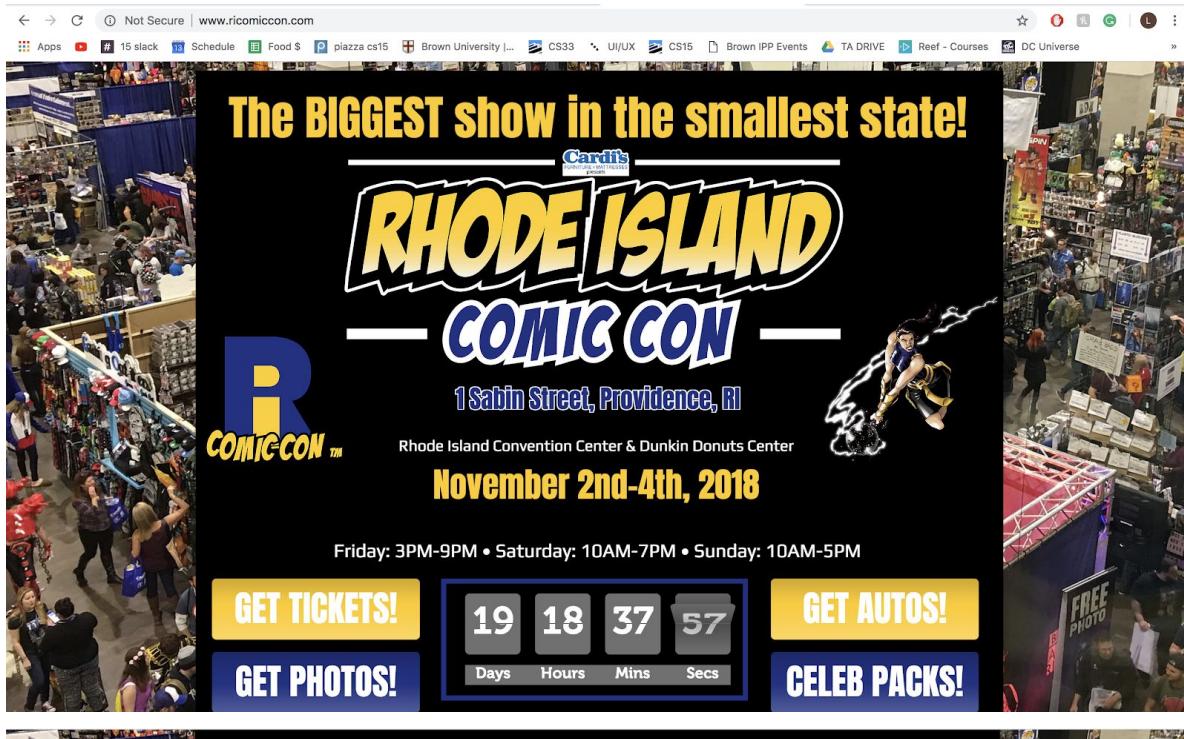


Website Redesign: [RIComicCon.com](http://www.RIComicCon.com)

Introduction:

The purpose of this project is to redesign a public website to improve its quality, especially in regards to usability, visual design, and responsiveness. The website I chose was www.RIComicCon.com.

Below is a screenshot of the website as it appears when it opens. The second image is the same opening page that is scrolled down to reveal more content, such as the toolbar.



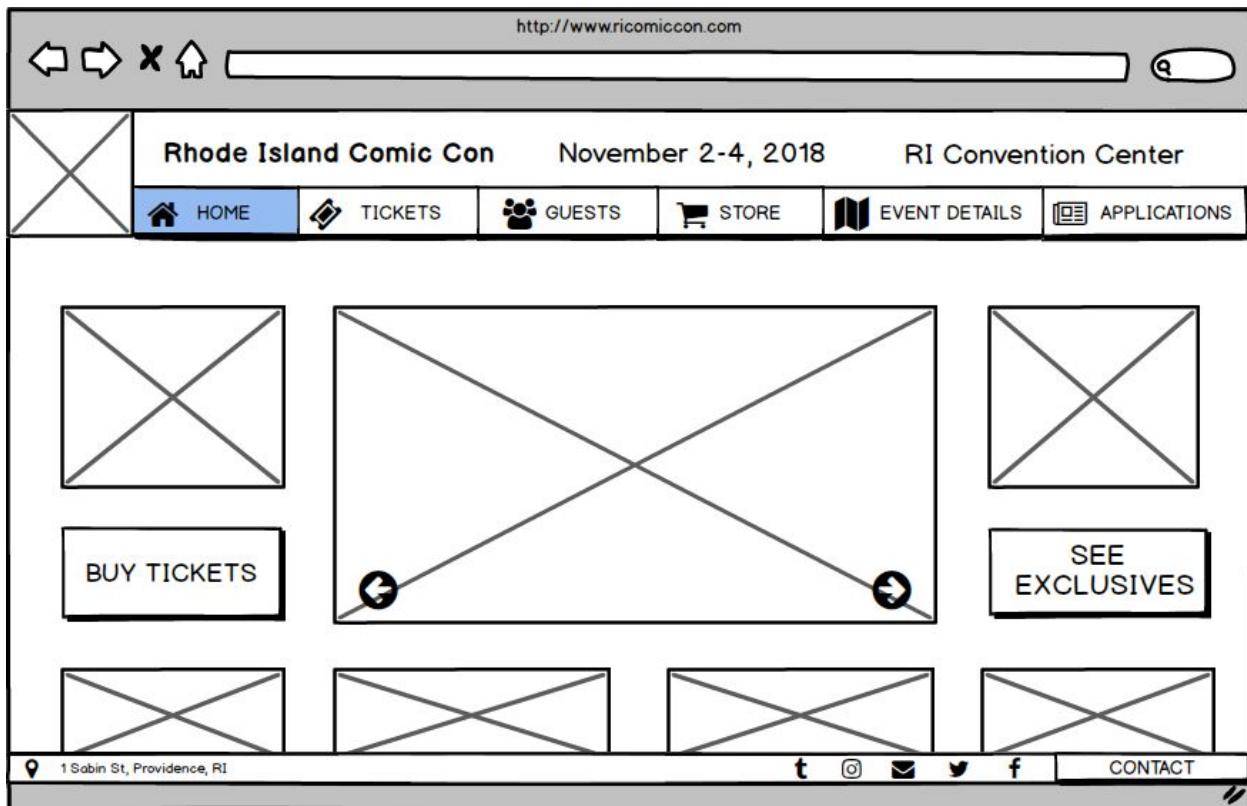
Website Purpose:

This is the website for Rhode Island Comic Con (RICC), an annual convention for fans of comics, gaming, and entertainment. The site has a plethora of functions, including advertising the attending celebrities, providing applications for vendors and volunteers, selling tickets and merchandise, and offering information on nearby hotels. The main focus of the website is providing critical details about the event, including the date and location.

Usability Redesign:

Below are low-fidelity mockups of five pages of the website, redesigned to maximize learnability, efficiency, memorability, and intuitive design. Directly following is an explanation of the improvements made.

HOME PAGE:



TICKET-INFO:

The wireframe shows a web browser window for <http://www.ricomicon.com>. The header includes the event name "Rhode Island Comic Con", date "November 2-4, 2018", and location "RI Convention Center". A navigation bar below has links for HOME, TICKETS (highlighted), GUESTS, STORE, EVENT DETAILS, and APPLICATIONS. Below the navigation are buttons for PURCHASE SHOW TICKETS, TICKET PRICES, and SPECIAL EVENTS TICKETS. Three main sections provide ticket details: 3-DAY PASS, SINGLE-DAY, and VIP PACKAGES. The 3-DAY PASS section lists prices for Adults (\$85) and Kids (\$30). The SINGLE-DAY section lists prices for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The VIP PACKAGES section lists GOLD and SILVER 3-DAY PASS prices (\$299 and \$199 respectively), each with a placeholder text block.

GUESTS:

The wireframe shows a web browser window for <http://www.ricomicon.com>. The header includes the event name "Rhode Island Comic Con", date "November 2-4, 2018", and location "RI Convention Center". A navigation bar below has links for HOME, TICKETS, GUESTS (highlighted), STORE, EVENT DETAILS, and APPLICATIONS. A search bar at the top says "Search Guest Name". Below it are tabs for CELEBRITIES, ARTISTS (selected), and COSPLAY. Four guest profiles are shown in a grid, each with a placeholder "FIRST LAST" name and dropdown arrow, and options to "BUY PHOTO-OP" or "BUY AUTOGRAPH". The bottom of the page includes the event address "1 Sabin St, Providence, RI" and social media links for Twitter, Instagram, Email, Facebook, and a CONTACT link.

SHOW STORE:

The wireframe shows a web browser window for <http://www.ricomicon.com>. The header includes the event logo, "Rhode Island Comic Con November 2-4, 2018 RI Convention Center". Below the header is a navigation bar with links for HOME, TICKETS, GUESTS, STORE (highlighted in blue), EVENT DETAILS, and APPLICATIONS. A note at the top states: "NOTE: **Items must be picked up on site at the event **". On the left, there's a sidebar with a search bar and sections for "SORT BY" (Price, Popularity, Rariness) and "FILTER" (Price, Color, Genre, Celebrity, Artist). A "Toggle Price" checkbox is also present. The main content area displays a grid of items, each with a placeholder image (crossed-out box), a name field ("NAME OF ITEM"), a "DETAILS" button, and a quantity field ("1"). To the right is a "CART" section showing a summary table:

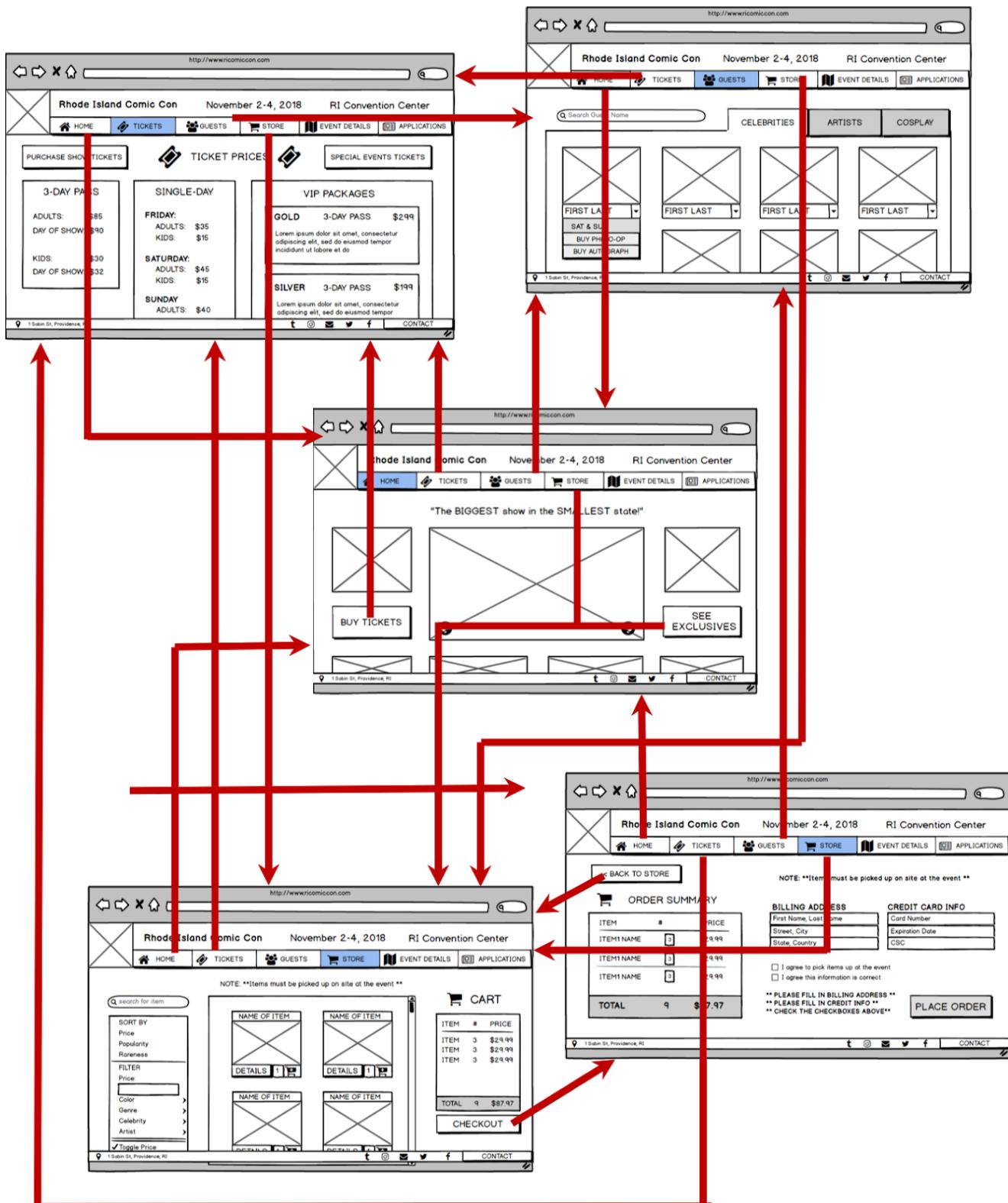
ITEM	#	PRICE
ITEM	3	\$29.99
ITEM	3	\$29.99
ITEM	3	\$29.99
TOTAL	9	\$87.97

A "CHECKOUT" button is located at the bottom of the cart summary.

CHECKOUT:

The wireframe shows a web browser window for <http://www.ricomicon.com>. The header and navigation bar are identical to the store page. Below the header is a "BACK TO STORE" link. A note at the top states: "NOTE: **Items must be picked up on site at the event **". The main content area is divided into several sections: "ORDER SUMMARY" (listing three items at \$29.99 each, totaling \$87.97), "BILLING ADDRESS" (fields for First Name, Last Name, Street, City, State, Country), and "CREDIT CARD INFO" (fields for Card Number, Expiration Date, CSC). There are two checkboxes for agreeing to pick up items and confirming information. At the bottom, there are three lines of instructions: "** PLEASE FILL IN BILLING ADDRESS **", "** PLEASE FILL IN CREDIT INFO **", and "** CHECK THE CHECKBOXES ABOVE **". A "PLACE ORDER" button is located at the bottom right.

Below is a graphic representing the **navigation flow** between pages, represented with arrows. The majority of navigation is delegated to the toolbar, which is always present on screen, resulting in the ability to navigate freely about the site.



Usability Comparison Between Old and New Design

	Original Design	New Design
Intuitive Design	<p>The main navigation bar is not initially visible (you must scroll down to see it), and because there is no affordance to scroll, it is not intuitive that you must scroll to find the toolbar. However, <i>it is intuitive</i> that the majority of page navigation is delegated to the toolbar.</p> <p>There is very little consistency in terms of UI responsiveness; for example, only some buttons turn yellow when hovered over (leading users to think those that don't are disabled).</p> <p>Many labels (such as "Celebrity Guests" and "Comic Book Creators", on the homepage) are titled and formatted such that they appear as buttons but are in fact <i>not</i>.</p> <p>There is no clear purpose to the home page, with much of the space occupied by ad-like content.</p>	<p>The navigation bar is always visible at the top of any page so the user does not have to scroll down in order to find it.</p> <p>The new design adds an affordance to scroll by cutting off content at the bottom of the window. In addition, contact information is always visible on screen (in the footer).</p> <p>The toolbar offers a concise set of 6 buttons, each with clear labels and symbols that lead to a page with the same title and purpose as indicated on the button label.</p> <p>There is a distinction between clickable buttons (on the toolbar for example) and static text (the date on top).</p> <p>You can buy an autograph/photo op for a guest from finding them on the guest page, rather than having to navigate to another page and find them again.</p>
Ease of Learning	<p>The website provides an immense collection of information on the home page, which, paired with the crowded visual design, can overwhelm a user new to the site.</p> <p>There are 17 buttons on the home screen, and they all appear very similar, with no symbols to aid a new user trying to skim them. They also do not have shading to appear clickable.</p>	<p>There is a navigation toolbar at the top of the screen that clearly offers a variety of destinations for the user.</p> <p>There is less content to distract users, as well as less buttons, which makes the toolbar more skimmable. The toolbar also has symbols for easier identification.</p> <p>All buttons are shaded to appear clickable, creating a definite distinction between interactable content and static content.</p>
Efficiency of Use	<p>The website clearly and immediately provides the essential information about the event on the top of the home page for those users who are visiting specifically to find that information.</p> <p>Experienced users may know what button to click on the navigation bar, but clicking it will cause the page to scroll to the top, so you have to scroll down again to get the desired content.</p>	<p>Important details about the event are still available and clearly displayed on the home screen, but take up less space to allow other content to become visible.</p> <p>Less useless information and ads are displayed, and a smaller font size is used, so that less scrolling is required, aiding efficiency.</p> <p>The toolbar is always visible on the top of</p>

	Each page contains lots of information in large font, requiring the user to scroll for a long time to reach content located near the bottom of a page.	the screen (even with scrolling), so the user never needs to scroll to the top to navigate to another page.
Memorability	<p>There are too many pages to remember exactly where to click to find the desired one, but once the user knows there is a toolbar on the site, they will likely think to scroll on the homepage to find it, then skim for the title of the desired page.</p> <p>No symbols are used to pair with text labels.</p>	<p>The user does not have to remember to scroll to find the toolbar, as it always appears on the top of the page.</p> <p>Pages are organized logically, with clearly labeled buttons with corresponding symbols that aid memorability.</p>
Error Frequency and Severity	<p>Purchasing tickets, autographs, and photo ops are delegated to an external website (ticketmaster), evading a major source of errors.</p> <p>However, purchasing exclusives is completed through the “Show Store” page. The total and item names are clear and visible, but the user can not update the quantity from the summary section (where you confirm the purchase). They must scroll to the top of the page to do so.</p> <p>Additionally, an important note that purchased items are not shipped is located far beneath the submit button where a user would never scroll, leading to possible miscommunication.</p>	<p>Quantity can be updated from the summary check-out page, with the total amount immediately reflecting the change.</p> <p>The note that items can not be shipped and must be picked up onsite at the event is located clearly at the top of the store page AND the checkout page, and the user must check a box to confirm they understand that.</p> <p>The submit button is disabled if the user has not inputted proper input, and there are clear error messages reflecting that.</p>
Subjective Satisfaction	<p>The website appears garish and cheap, with extremely large font and bright, contrasting colors, as well a large amount of information per page, which can overwhelm and off put the user.</p> <p>Trying to find or observe a specific guest is a frustrating experience, as hovering your mouse over a guest creates a white mask over the picture and information, so the user must always keep their mouse on the edge of the screen.</p>	<p>Less information is displayed on each page, with smaller font to leave more white space, resulting in a less overwhelming interface.</p> <p>Adding search capability to the guest page allows users to find specific guests much faster, with less frustration than in the old website.</p>

Visual Redesign: Home Page (*high fidelity mockup*)



Rationale

The first major change is the use of colors: I wanted to preserve the original color scheme, which is tied to their brand, but also create a less garish, high-contrast visual experience. To do this, I delegated a slightly desaturated indigo as the primary color, and yellow as the accent color, with a neutral color (white) to both lighten up and balance out the vibrant colors. I also used colors to consistently indicate the state of certain features; for example, all buttons are purple (with a gradient and drop shadow to indicate clickability), and activated buttons (like the currently selected page) are colored yellow. I also used a legible font with various weights to indicate importance, and made the text and graphics a more reasonable size to improve readability. In addition, I employed a grid to improve alignment, used subtle gradients and cut off content for an affordance to scroll, rounded the edges of boxes to appear less pointy (which people naturally dislike), and desaturated pictures before placing text on top. The result is a less cluttered, more visually appealing interface.

Responsive Redesign:

I annotated the original mockup with layout changes that would occur to display the content on three other screen sizes, with the intention of preserving usability and visual design.

Tablet in Portrait: (450px - 1024px screen width)

TABLET: Rhode Island Comic Con November 3-5, 2018 RI Convention Center

The two rightmost buttons would be removed from the navigation bar and hidden under a hamburger menu that would appear to the left of "HOME". The rest of the buttons will shrink proportionally to screen size.

A THE BIGGEST SHOW IN THE SMALLEST STATE

B BUY TICKETS TODAY

C FEATURING COMICS GAMING AND TV/FILM STARS

D SEE FULL GUEST LIST

AN EVENING WITH THE CAST OF

The footer text will increase to account for the smaller screen size.

EVANGELINE LILLY ANT MAN AND THE WASP THE HOBBIT • LOST

1 Sabin St, Providence RI

Phone in Portrait: (<450px screen width)

PHONE: Rhode Island Comic Con November 3-5, 2018 RI Convention Center

The same hamburger menu setup would be employed, as described for the Tablet screen, except **all buttons** will be placed inside and it will be located to the left of the top banner, to the right of the logo, matching their height

THE BIGGEST SHOW IN THE SMALLEST STATE

BUY TICKETS TODAY

FEATURING COMICS GAMING AND TV/FILM STARS

SEE FULL GUEST LIST

AN EVENING WITH THE CAST OF

The footer text will increase again to ensure readability, but the alignment will remain the same.

EVANGELINE LILLY ANT MAN AND THE WASP THE HOBBIT • LOST

1 Sabin St, Providence RI

4K Desktop Widescreen: (> 1400px screen width)



Summary of Responsiveness:

Generally, the content will be resized in proportion to the width of the screen. If the screen becomes too small to display all the buttons on the navigation bar, it will place either two (for a tablet-sized display) or all of them (for a phone-sized display) in a hamburger menu to maintain a button size that is both readable and clickable. Once this happens, a hamburger menu button will appear to the left of the HOME button (for a tablet display) or between the logo and text banner at the top (for a phone display), ensuring that it is clearly visible, always within reach.

The large, central graphic will always remain at the top, as it is intended to catch the eye of the user. For a tablet and phone display, the content to the left and right will move below the central graphic, but will still be immediately in view when loaded.

The bottom two graphics are ads, so their lesser importance is represented by their location at the bottom of the page. If the display width is tablet-sized or smaller, they will be stacked vertically instead of horizontally to maintain readability of their text.

Using grids as the structure of this design allows flexibility in display, while also maintaining clean and organized alignment .

Code:

A set of HTML and CSS files are included in the folder to demonstrate the proposed responsiveness for the home page. Note that navigation functionality was omitted, as this was a single-page redesign.

Works Cited:

Icons used in the high-fi mockup were sourced from *FlatIcon.com*

- <https://www.flaticon.com/free-icons/symbol>

The two ad-like graphics were sourced from *FanExpoBoston.com*

- <https://www.fanexpoboston.com/en/home.html>