Final Website Project Report

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1. Introduction

Not until I took this course did I realize that designing a website is not a merely technical exercise, but also take customer experience into consideration. I have imagined the difficulties of creating a personal digital portfolio, but when I saw The Design Thinking process by the Stanford School and Elements of User Experience is a framework developed by Jess James Garrett, I realized this might be tougher than my imagination.

The Design Thinking Approach consists of 5 steps, which are empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test. "Empathy" means that we should think from the perspective of the users, "define" implies that we can define the problem base on our observation of the users' behavior. Then we are encouraged to generate creative ideas and visualize them. And in the end, after the product is launched, we can use usability tests and quantitative tests such as A/B test to know more exactly what the users need and try to satisfy them through redesign.

Unlike design thinking approach which is more conceptual, 5 UX planes pays more attention to answer the question how to build a product practically. UX consists of five different planes from the bottom to top at both the levels of software interface, Strategy Plane (figure out what User Needs and Site Objectives are), Scope Plane (consider about the Functional Specifications and Content Requirements), Structure Plane (Interaction Design and Information Architecture), Skeleton Plane(Information Design, Interface Design, Navigation Design), and Surface Plane(Visual Design).

During the design process of my personal website, I tried to integrate design thinking with different UX planes to provide the users a better user experience. The following report

will start from the fundamental Strategy Plane from five UX planes and show how the idea of empathy is used to construct site objectives and user needs.

2. Strategy Plane

Considering that the primary objective of my personal website is to attract recruiters' attention and get myself a chance of interview, I did some research on what kind of job I'm most qualified for based on my knowledge and past experiences.

As a BA who studied German language and literature, I am always proud that I am able to write informative articles beautifully. My Will of sharing ideas and thoughts with others makes the content I create vigorous and full of personality. Thus I chose to become a content operator during the past two internship. I was trusted to take the responsibility for content marketing by running seven main stream social media platform, which expected to boost the key dashboard metrics of page viewers, likes and posting engagement of the subscribers. But then I found that content of high quality cannot guarantee its popularity, more data analytics techniques, which would contribute to exposing the characteristics of the target readers, need to be learned, which is the reason why I took the New Media program.

With what I have learnt from the master's program and my previous experiences, I can now figure out how to strive to offer better contents and manage content marketing in this traffic-dominated era. All these consideration lead to my final decision to aim at finding a job related to content operation. In that case, it is considerable to become a content operator of a culture media company.

I interviewed several people who have recruiting experiences or who are working in a media company to understand the user needs and customer journey of my personal website. One of my interviewees Mr. Tang, who used to work as an editor of the People's Daily told me that in most cases, personal website serves as an additional resource for HR after they

had seen the CVs. A good personal website may leave a deeper impression on the recruiters, which means that I could have more interview chances. Besides, he told me that many recruiters can gain a basic understanding of my skills from the design and content of my personal website.

My friend Jean who started her own business by operating a WeChat official account said, "A personal website can offer you great help when you are applying for some creative positions. On your website you are allowed to display more detail information about yourself, such as visualizing your experience by Storymap, showing some original products such as video or pictures. But you should highlight your strength rather than showing wordy content, since the recruiters may not spend much time in browsing your website."

I have also interviewed an editor of Trends Group (Lily Low) who suggested me to show more individuality on the website. Another friend Ivy who works as a HR in KPMG advised that I should emphasize on my projects to convince recruiters that I really have some hands-on skills to be qualified for the job.

Based on my career plan and interviews of some target users, I managed to profile the key persona who will visit my website:

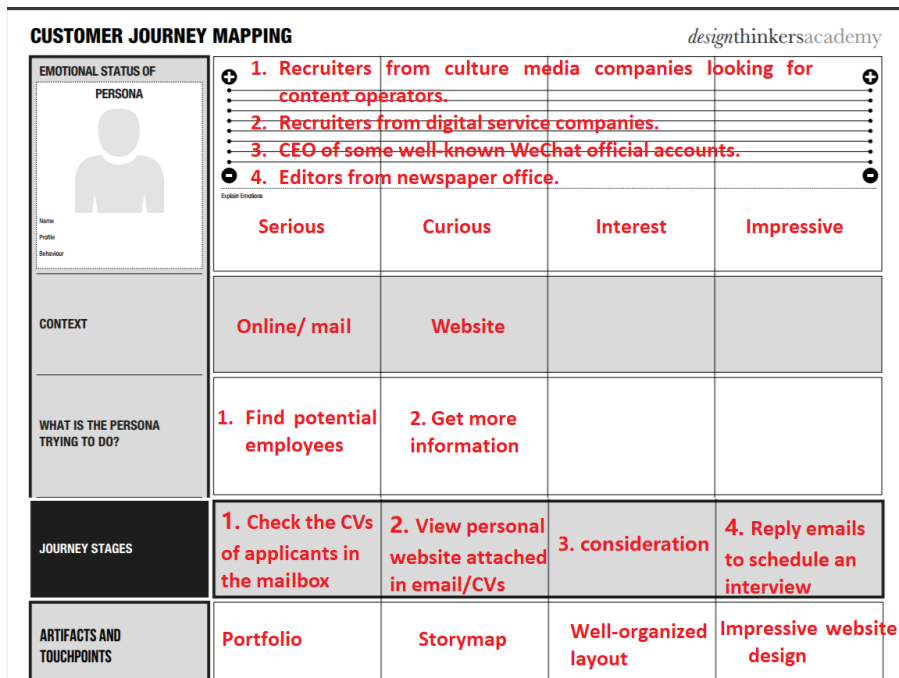| Site objectives		Target users		User needs
Primary goal	Impress the recruiters and gain an opportunity to a face-to-face interview, and finally get a job.	**Primary user**	HR or the recruiters hunting for content operators.	Looking for potential employees for a content operating position.
Additional goal	Show more detail information about myself that cannot be presented on the CVs due to the form limit	**secondary user**	Recruiters from culture media companies or digital service companies.	Looking for students to make and operate new media content.
Additional goal	Make the website creative and user-friendly.	**secondary user**	People who are working or hunting for a job in the field of content operation and product management.	Exchange ideas and experiences with peers.

Figure 1: Strategy plane

CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING

*design*thinkersacademy

EMOTIONAL STATUS OF PERSONA	Serious	Curious	Interest	Impressive
	1. Recruiters from culture media companies looking for content operators. 2. Recruiters from digital service companies. 3. CEO of some well-known WeChat official accounts. 4. Editors from newspaper office.			
CONTEXT	Online/ mail	Website		
WHAT IS THE PERSONA TRYING TO DO?	1. Find potential employees	2. Get more information		
JOURNEY STAGES	1. Check the CVs of applicants in the mailbox	2. View personal website attached in email/CVs	3. consideration	4. Reply emails to schedule an interview
ARTIFACTS AND TOUCHPOINTS	Portfolio	Storymap	Well-organized layout	Impressive website design

Figure 2. User journey mapping

3. Scoping Plane

In order to build an image efficiently and reach my site objectives in an effective way, I should select appropriate contents and organize them in the personal website. In the Scoping Plane, I need to define functional specifications and content requirement.

3.1 Functional Specifications

3.1.1 One pager mode

All the sections of the website will be shown in the same page that is because users will not get lost so easily in such a mode, which could improve its user experience.

3.1.2 Clear Navigation

All the pages users need will be displayed prominently in the navigation bar, so that the users could easily find the information they need without taking too many unnecessary steps. The main navigation bar will be place on the header. The bar is fixed at the top of the page, so after the users scroll down the website, they do not have to bother themselves to go back to top.

3.1.3 Back-end Support

A 'live document' is necessary for a professional website, since as the project proceeds, new information could be added in. During this process, the back-end support from Drupal or any other CMS will be very helpful when I want to store and manage my contents and data. However, due to time limit, my personal website did not make use of CMS. This part need to be improved later.

3.1.4 Download Files

Visitors can download my CV by click.

3.2 Content Requirements

3.2.1 Impressive Identity information

A stunning background image will be displayed on the landing page. At the center of the page, a slogan which describe myself will also be presented. These settings ensure that recruiters can be impressed at the first sight.

3.2.2 Contact Information

Rather than using a contact from which will take the viewer quite a lot of time typing in words, my Wechat account, Github account, Linkedin account will be assessable on the "Contact " page, the recruiters can jump to my account by just clicking the icons.   Besides, they can choose to send my e-mails by clicking the "mail" icon, which is a shortcut to their mailbox.

3.2.3 Latest Project

Since my desired position is content operator, both writing ability and the ability of visual design is required. Thus it is necessary to show my works to the recruiters to convince them that I have excellent photography skills and good writing and communicating skills and I am able to provide content of high quality. My works such as photographs I took and articles will be displayed on the "portfolio" page.

3.2.4   Multi-media Content

Visitors can see not only texts on my website, but also information in different forms like images and pdf. files.

3.2.5   Story Map

Both my education background and internship experiences will by visualized though a story map. Story map can not only provide information to the views but also make the website more interactive.

4.   Structure Plane

During the process of writing down the information I want to convey to visitors of my website, I have a rough initial planning of the structure and skeleton of the website.

In this plane, information structure should be established. The following text will define how users will interact with site functionality.

I used one pager mode for my website, so the structure of the website is quite simple. Here is a simple site map for my website. Except from the landing page (homepage), there are six different sections in my website: about, experience, skills, portfolio, contact, resume.
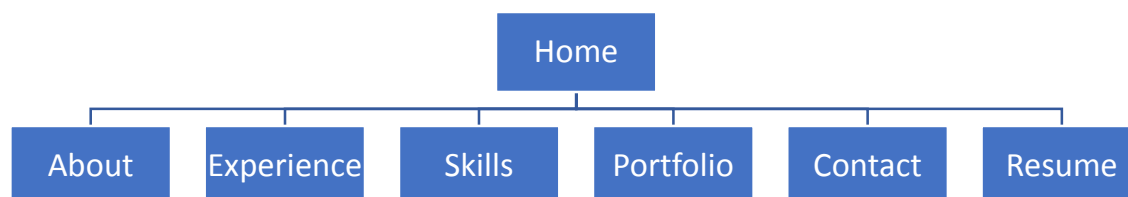
Figure 3. Simple site map

5. Skeleton

At this stage, I have develop the basic ideas of how every element are connected on the website after sketching out a site map. I tried to build small prototypes of the. Wireframing is a good tool to work in a minimal way to start organizing information and figure out the flow of a page before worrying about colors and fonts. A lot of ideas came out during the process of wireframing. After several attempts and advice from users, I made medium fidelity wireframes for my website. Interactive effects are added to make them more interactive and the website is responsive on mobile devices.
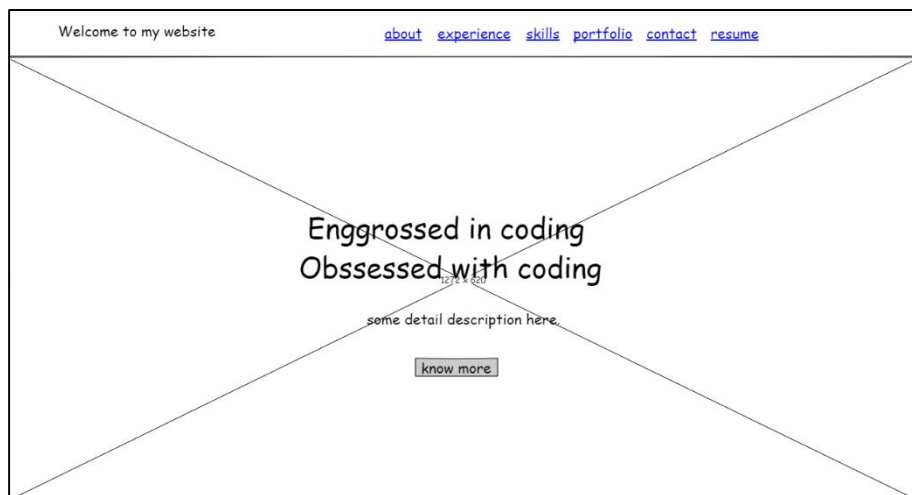
Figure 4. Homepage
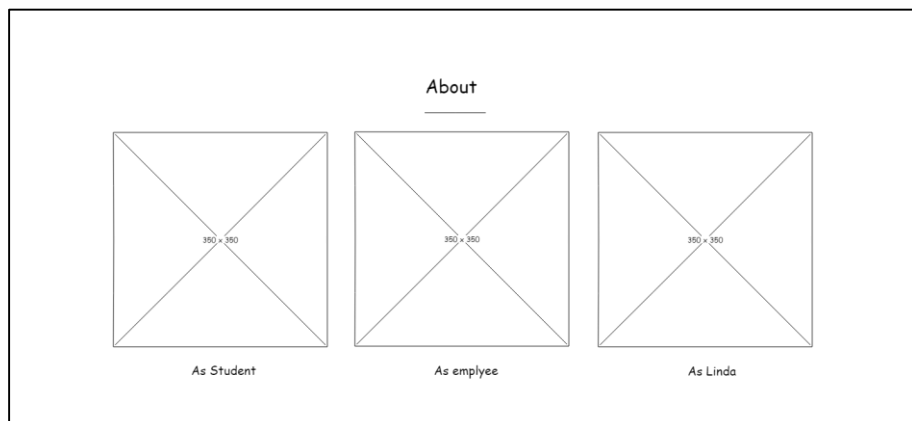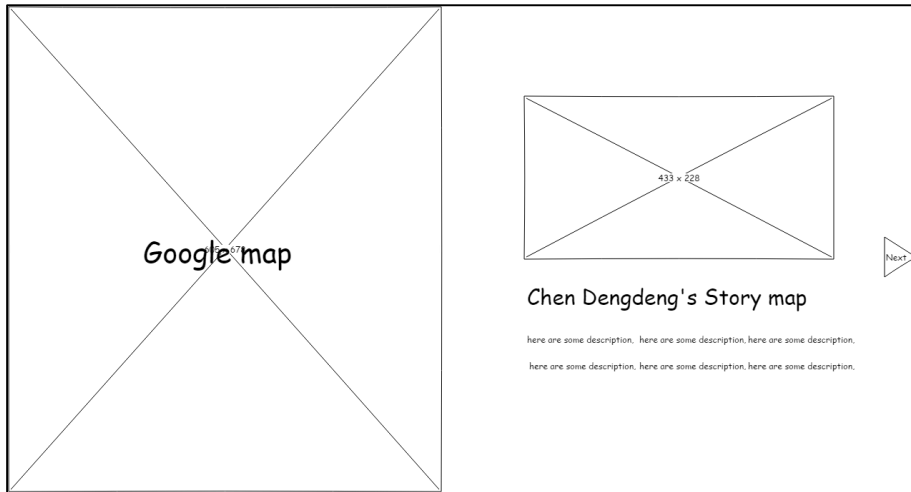

Figure 5. About page
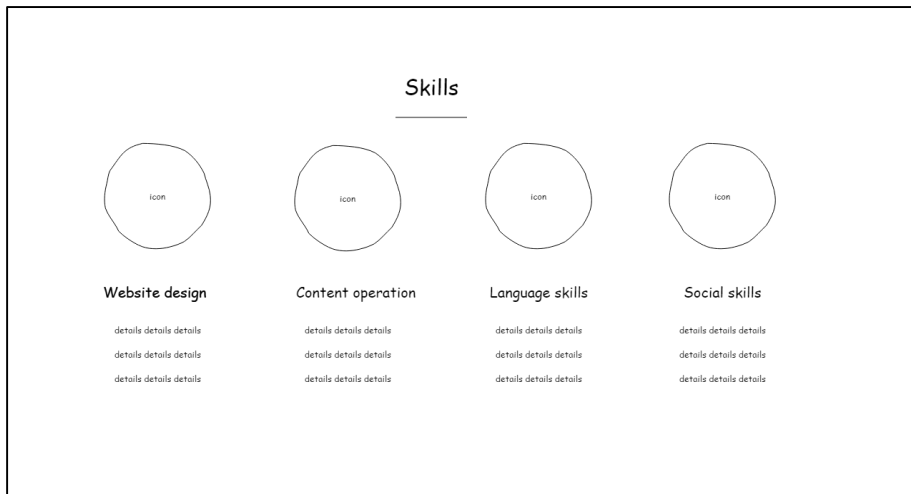
Figure 6. Experience page
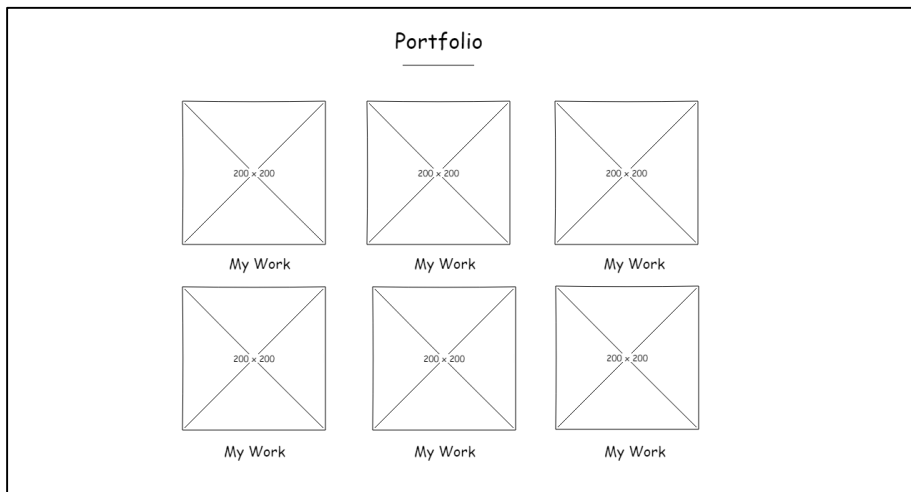

Figure 7. Skills page
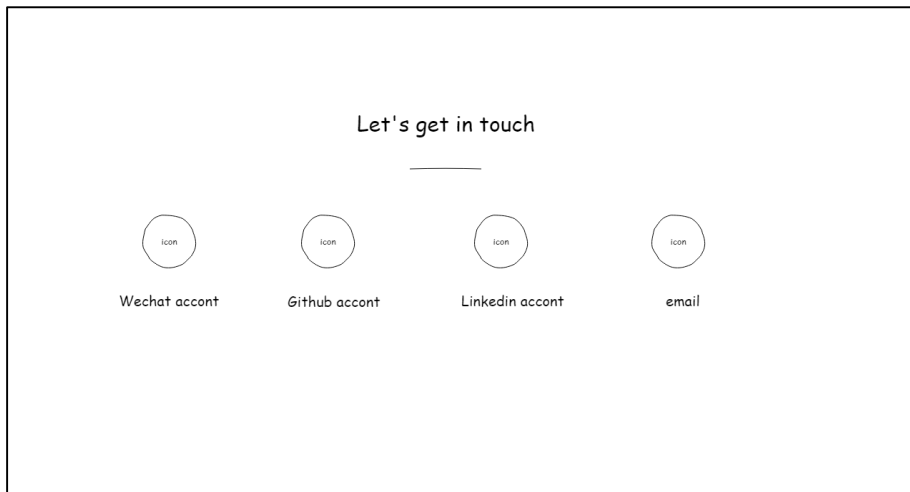

Figure 8. Portfolio page

Figure 9. Contact page

6. Surface Plane

For a personal website, some identity design is important to impress visitors. Visual components should do the talking here.

6.1 Images

For the main visuals on the landing page of my website, I chose one of my photography works, whose tone is serious and mysterious, which fit the expected emotions.

Figure 10. Background image of the homepage

I also use my own photos as the identity images in the "About" and "experience" sections. All these images can convey the message that I am an energetic and cheerful

person. There is a contrast between the image these portraits build and the feeling convey by the background image, which could arouse the interest of the visitors.
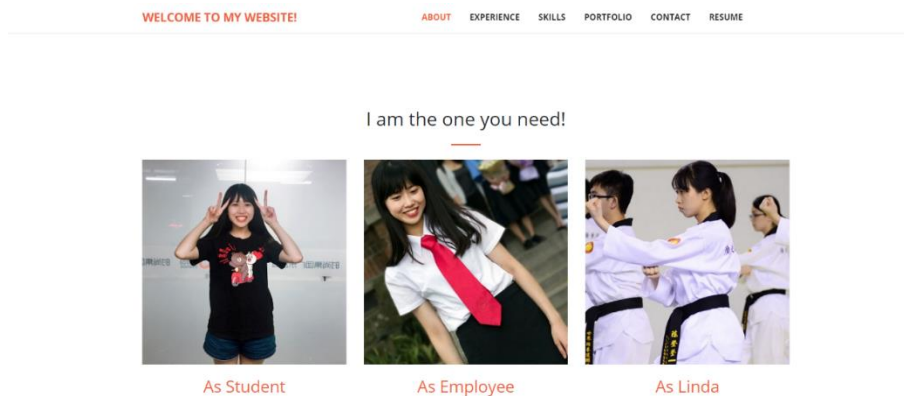

Figure 11. Images on About page

6.2 Slogan

I consider slogan as an important elements of a personal website. I have different slogans in English, Chinese and German. These slogan will be placed at the center of the front page to deliver my belief.
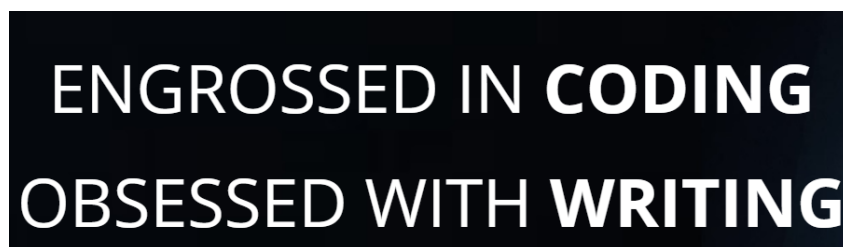

Figure 12. Slogan

6.3 Choice of Color

I use white as background color and #f05f40 (similar to orange) as the main color of my website. These two colors can create good contrast and represent two elements of my personality: calm and dynamic, and color #f05f40 makes the website more vivid.

7. Test

For the improvement of the website, both qualitative and quantitative methods could be used to find out problems. Usability test is one of the most widely adopted qualitative

method for testing websites. Apart from that I also use Google Analytics to perform an A/B test to track the user behaviors and conversion rates.

7.1 Qualitative Method: Usability Test

Since usability can largely help maintain or increase the conversion rate of websites, doing usability tests is a good way to be close to users and get to know what they want and what they think.

For the usability test of my personal website, I invited 5 of my friends who work as editors in the new agencies or recruiters working in IT companies. The whole process lasted 5-10 minutes for every user. Many of them live in mainland China, so they took the test online and we communicate with each other through face time, a limitation of this test is that I am not able to observe them in detail during the whole process.

They were asked to browse through my website for them and they had to say out loud what kind of functions they assume on every page and what information they get from browsing on the website. And then every one of them were asked about the biggest limitation of the website. Here are the main limitations and possible method for improvement：

- Primary usability problem 1: Loading speed is not very fast.
- ✓ Possible Solution: Compress media contents/ (since the story map take the user a long time to load, I could) use another form rather than Story map to visualize experience.
- Primary usability problem 2: Resume is not prominent enough.
- ✓ Possible Solution: Add a new section between "portfolio" and "contact" page to contain my resume.
- Primary usability problem 3: "About" page is not attractive enough.
- ✓ Possible Solution: Do some more interactive effects on this page. But many

effects like "mouse over" cannot present in mobile endpoint devices, this part should be improved in another way.

· Primary usability problem 4: No Chinese version website.

✓ Possible Solution: Create a Chinese version.

I also prepared two tasks and three questions for my users to complete: (1) Find my articles. (2) Find my LinkedIn account. (3) What do you think the purpose of this site is? (4) Is it easy to read? (5) Could you find what you were looking for? They all did a good job on these two tasks. Since there're not many functions on the website and the logic is easy to understand. They all agreed that my website objective is clear, which is for job hunting. They also think that the website is readable and friendly when they want to find some specific information.

One of the participants suggested me to create a Chinese version or even a German version for the website to show my language skills and attract more attention from recruiters. In order to test whether it's better or not to take his advice, I conducted an A/B test using Google Analytics during a 3-day period. In the next part, I'll present some of my findings about this A/B test.

7.2 Quantitative Method: A/B Test

7.2.1 Holistic Impact of the Test

Although it is better to run the test as long as 1 or 2 weeks to collect more data and traffic. Due to the time limitation, the A/B test of my personal website only lasts for 5 days (starts from 6th Dec. to 10th Dec.).
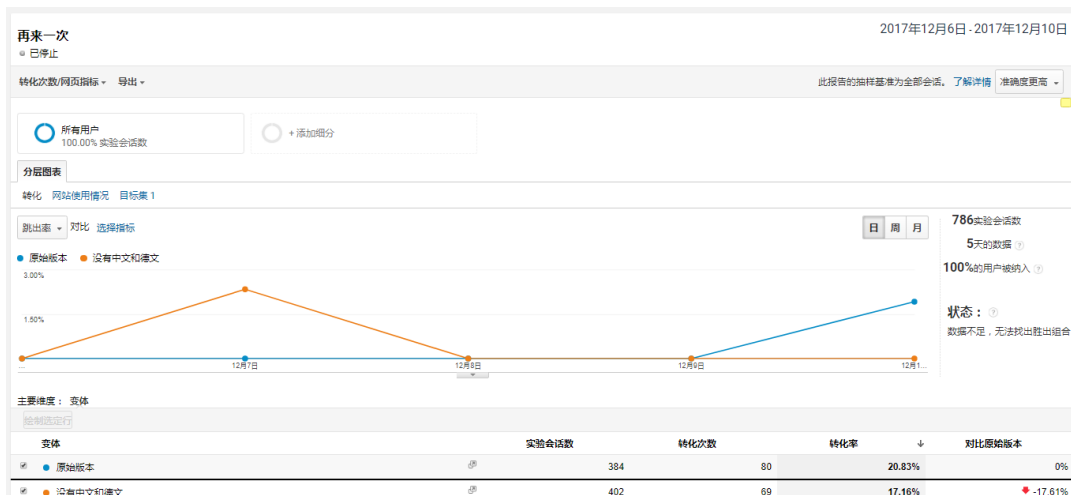
Figure 13: Time period and bounce rate trend of the test

The experiment has gone through 786 page views have been involved in the 5 day period.
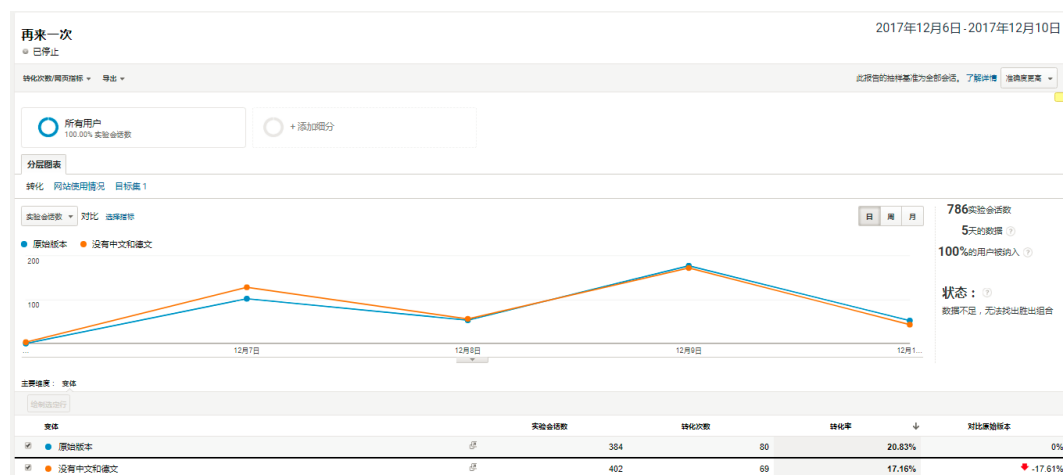

Figure 14: Page views during the test period

7.2.2   A/B Test Variations and Hypothesis

I created both Chinese and German version in the new website and named it "原始版本", and the without-multi- language version is called "没有中文和德文".
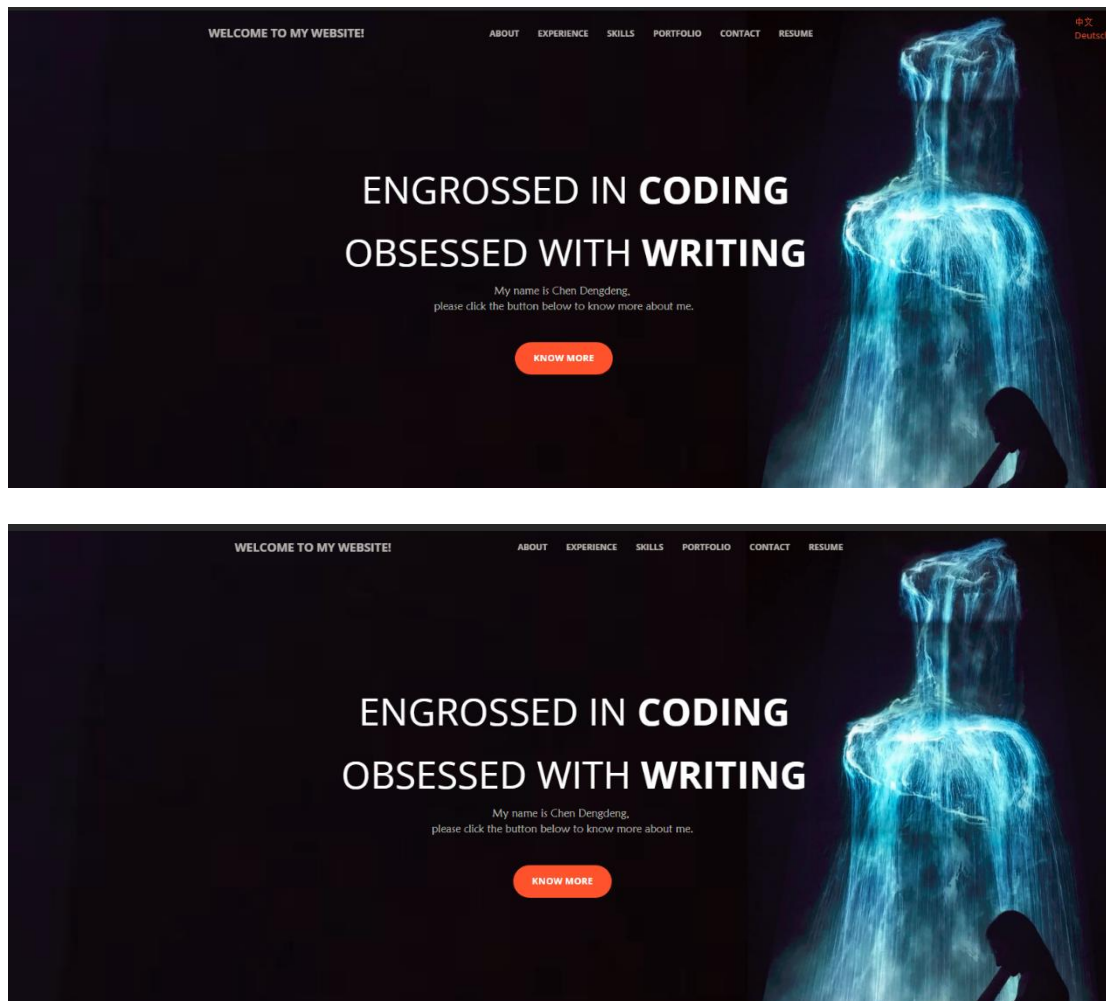
Figure 15: 原始版本 and 没有中文和德文 versions of Home Page

My hypothesis for the A/B test is proposed as: by adding multi-language version, users will be able to browse the website with less language obstacles, so they may be willing to spend more time on the page, which means they could get more information about me.

7.2.3 Most Important Results

A friend of mine who works as a HR reminded me that most of the recruiters would spend much time on an applicant's webpage, the longer time they stay on the page, the greater chance for me to get a chance of a face-to-face interview. So I set the goal of Google analytics as that people stay in my website for more than 30 seconds.

As for A/B test, the main goal of the experiment is to check out the conversion rate of the two versions (whether a multi-language version has a longer time on page or the

single-language version of the website has more).
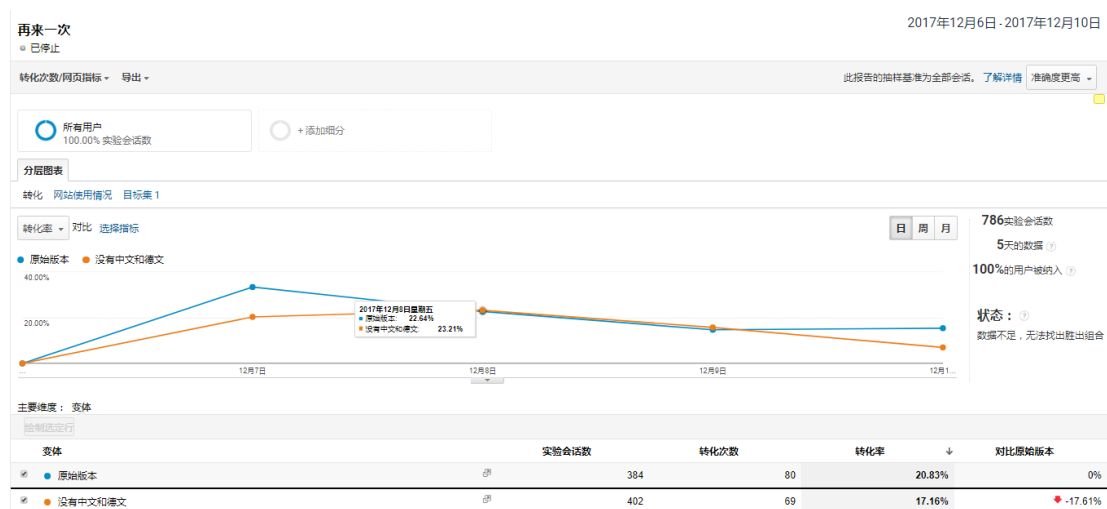
Figure 16: Conversion rate of the two versions

The Google Analytics chart shows that "原始版本(the multi-language version)"

has a higher conversion rate(20.83%) compared to the "没有中文和德文(the single-

language version)"(17.16%). So our previous hypothesis is supported based on the

experiment results.

8. Dashboard Design and Analysis

After we launch our website, a customized dashboard is needed to display users'

behavior in the website in a systematic way to improve the design and content of the entire

website. This dashboard contains 9 metrics, which are helpful for analyzing the performance

of the website.

网站Dashboard   2017年12月5日 - 2017年12月10日

新用户
91.61% 会话数

所有用户
100.00% 会话数

会话数

新用户
1,845
占总数的百分比：**91.61% (2,014)**

所有用户
2,014
占总数的百分比：**100.00% (2,014)**

用户数

● 用户数 (新用户)
● 用户数 (所有用户)

800

400

会话数（按设备类别分组）

■ mobile ■ tablet ■ desktop

新用户

11.4%
25.2%
63.4%

所有用户

27%
62.1%

平均会话时长和每次会话浏览页数

新用户：
● 平均会话时长 ● 每次会话浏览页数
所有用户：
● 平均会话时长 ● 每次会话浏览页数

3 分钟   8

2 分钟

1 分钟   4

... 12月6日 12月7日 12月8日 12月9日 12月1...

目标转化率

新用户
19.46%
平均浏览次数：**20.80% (-6.47%)**

所有用户
20.80%
平均浏览次数：**20.80% (0.00%)**

目标达成次数

● 目标达成次数 (新用户)
● 目标达成次数 (所有用户)

200

100

... 12月6日 12月7日 12月8日 12月9日 12月1...

跳出率

新用户
2.87%
平均浏览次数：**2.88% (-0.25%)**

所有用户
2.88%
平均浏览次数：**2.88% (0.00%)**

平均网页加载时间（秒）（按国家/...

国家/地区	平均网页加载时间（秒）
China	
新用户	27.67
所有用户	27.67

会话数（按国家/地区分组）

国家/地区	会话数
China	
新用户	1,730
所有用户	1,875
Hong Kong	
新用户	34
所有用户	54
United States	
新用户	21
所有用户	22
Japan	
新用户	16
所有用户	16
Taiwan	
新用户	14
所有用户	14

The number of visitors (new and total) is monitored. Since the recruiters often visit the website as a "new users", the behavior of new visitors could serve as valuable reference. To see whether people stay on website to get more information about me or just close the window right away, bounce rate, page views and time on page are covered in the dashboard.

As can be seen in the dashboard, the bounce rate is less than 3% which means the website worked. But on the other hand, the time people stay on my website is no more than two minutes.

In order to better identify demographics of users and their behavior features, two widgets "Session by Country" and "Session by Devices" are added. The second metric in the third row imply that most of the users are from mainland China. To serve the major user group better, a Chinese version is definitely needed. And from the first metric in the third row we can see that the average page loading time in mainland China (27.67 seconds) is not users friendly enough, which should be improve to provide a better user experience.

The Session by Device Category widget shows that most sessions happen on mobile devices. Thus the personal website should be responsive and have good interactive functions on cell phones.

The goal conversion rate and goal completions are also monitored. The goal of the website is staying on my personal website for more than 30 seconds. Now the goal conversion rate is 20.86% which is not low but still I will take some actions to increase it.

9.   Conclusion

In spite of the limitation, this website is like a conclusion as well as a reward of learning outcomes in the past few months. I will try my best to make improvement in this website and make good use of it. Thanks to this project, I began to think critically about my future which I have never done before: what do I want to do in the future? What kind of position fit me the

most? What is my outstanding strength? The process of this project is not only a journey for others to know about me, but also a chance for me to see myself from a different and more comprehensive perspective. I really appreciate the techniques I gained from Professor Bernard and the process of creating this site. Also, thinking modes like the Design Thinking process and Elements of User Experience will be of great assistance to my future website design.