

UX Design Strategy

Company, History, Website URL

Company Name: ElkRanch

Company history:

As stated on the company website's about page,

"Thom van Eeghen has farmed with elk since he was 15, beginning in New Zealand and then for the past 20 years at ElkRanch, west of Ottawa. Thom and his wife Fay Armitage farm together here and Fay traces her family's farming in this area to more than 150 years ago."¹

The ranch has sold Elk meat for the past 20 years at their meat shop that is also located at the ranch.

Website URL: <https://elkranch.ca/>

Company description

The ranch sells quality Elk meat to the public and is located at 1271 Old Carp Road, Kanata, Ontario. It also is a supplier to restaurants that use the meat in their dishes in the Ottawa area. The company advertises that their product is used at many Ottawa restaurants and names one restaurant called The Works, which has an elk meat burger. They pride themselves on the quality of the meat, which is ethically farmed, grass fed, free-range, natural, and healthy.

The company has a limited online presence. They have a small website that gives basic information about the company. They sell elk steaks, burgers, sausage, roasts, ground meat, stew meat, bones, and organs. Currently, the company has a physical store where people can purchase meat in person. The company website offers some pickup and delivery options, but they will only discuss this by phone or email. No online transactions are available. The website has a basic list of the cuts of meat they offer on the "shop" page. The ranch currently does not have an e-commerce website. The company sells a product, Elk meats. The company has only one shopping location.

Stakeholder goals for the Site

The stakeholders are the owners: Thom and Fey.

The stakeholders wish to add e-commerce to their business. What they want is an online shop added to their website which will allow regular customers to purchase their product online for pickup and delivery. They want to keep this service local and limit it to the Ottawa region, as this is still a small business. The stakeholder goals are as follows:

¹ElkRanch, <https://elkranch.ca/about-elk-ranch>

1. Create an online store where customers can place orders and make purchases for home delivery in the Ottawa area
2. Maintain branding to preserve current customer and potential customer view of the product
3. Make the online shop familiar or similar to the real store
4. Make the shop for people in the Ottawa region that are inconvenienced by travel to the store
5. Allows customers to browse products and make an informed purchase choice
6. Increase sales

Target Audience

The target audience will be **health conscious red meat lovers**. This will comprise 2 groups: people who like organic food, and people who like a healthy alternative to red meat. The ranch markets their meat as naturally raised and healthy. This is most attractive to customers that are interested in this type of meat but will not go out of their way to get it.

Why I chose this company

I have been aware of this company for a long time. Grocery shopping is moving toward online shopping in general. There are already many international butcheries and local butcheries that offer online shopping and delivery. I believe that e-commerce would be a logical progression for the business to expand. This business has a small online presence but would benefit greatly by adding e-commerce.

Report

This report will describe the user experience strategy for the e-commerce expansion for ElkRanch.

Foreseen challenges

The challenges that I foresee are related to the company brand and the customer's shopping preferences. The ranch has an old-fashioned feel to it. It appeals to people who like the quality of a small shop in the country for the experience and for the quality.

As the ranch is marketed as a place of high quality and naturally produced cuts of meat, the addition of an online store may give the appearance that the company is mass producing the product. This may alienate customers that want quality over quantity. Secondly, the ranch is in a rural location. The local population would be their customer base and would be accustomed to in-person shopping. It may be difficult to reproduce a similar shopping experience online. Lastly, the company may lose its niche market appeal.

In summary, the challenges are, keeping the online shop experience from diminishing their good reputation, making the online shop familiar to the customer base, making it attractive to new customers, and aligning the shopping experience with their niche branding.

Activities to Achieve goals

1. Research users and similar websites

This will involve reviewing comments and reviews for similar online stores and conducting interviews with potential users: current customers of the ranch and users of similar online stores. Since the stakeholders want service limited to the Ottawa region, interviews should also be limited to people in that region. Reviewing the UX design of similar websites will also be a priority.

2. Concept development

This will involve brainstorming on design ideas. I will come up with a few ideas for the design and choose the best one. In this activity, we will decide on the overall style. I would like this to be in an argument and counter argument style. The overall purpose is to decide what is best for the customer base. This will answer the question of type of experience to provide that best suits the company and overcome challenges.

3. Set guidelines

Make a list of guidelines to adhere to for the design. This is where the details will be hammered out. The limitations, the layout, the options, number of pages, section layout, amount of choices, and content will be laid out.

4. Develop and test prototype

Create a low fidelity prototype for the layout to help convey the design. Once there is a prototype, the design can be tested. This is an important process to ensure the user group is able to use the website and find it attractive for reuse.

Reasoning for activity and order

The order of the activities should be in the same order given above: research, concept development, set guidelines, and then develop and test the prototype. The research should be the first activity because it will inform the concept development. Once we know the preferences of the users and how similar companies structure their user experience, we can then begin to form our own ideas. Therefore, brainstorming design concepts is the second step. Using the research data already acquired, we can envision the rough design idea that we will build on. We can then set guidelines to the design concept in the third step, where the branding, usability, functionality, and content will be outlined. We will then have a clear vision of what we are building and move on to the final step of making the prototype and testing it. This will ensure we will deliver a tailor-made design that suites the goals of the stakeholders and will work properly.

UX Strategy Blueprint

<h2>Challenges</h2> <p><i>What problems are you trying to solve?</i> <i>What obstacles must you overcome?</i></p> <p>EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of coherency Migration of customers Deteriorating image Internal constraints ... <p>Diminishing the company image Alienating customers Making online store familiar to customer base Interfering with niche branding</p>			
<h2>Aspirations</h2> <p><i>What are the ideal desired outcomes?</i> <i>What do you want to achieve?</i></p> <p>EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unification of experiences Accelerated adoption Market recognition Transformational impact on users ... <p>Create an online store where customers can place orders and make purchases for home delivery in the Ottawa area Maintain branding to preserve current customer and potential customer view of the product Make the online shop familiar or similar to the real store Make the shop for people in the Ottawa region that are inconvenienced by travel to the store Allows customers to browse products and make an informed purchase choice Increase sales</p>	<h2>Focus Areas</h2> <p><i>What is the scope of the strategy?</i> <i>What will you focus on for the most impact?</i></p> <p>TYPES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Users and persona Regions, languages, cultures Services and products User cases and scenarios Areas of UX (e.g., IA, content) <p>Users and personas Region Branding Product cataloguing</p>	<h2>Guiding Principles</h2> <p><i>How will you overcome the challenges?</i> <i>What specific mantras will guide teams?</i></p> <p>EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Particular sequence of activities Approach to persuasion Coordination of touchpoints Differentiation play ... <p>Be different from competitor Entice potential users Promote quality first Prioritize the customer's needs</p>	<h2>Activities</h2> <p><i>What types of activities solve the problems?</i> <i>What capabilities achieve your aspirations?</i></p> <p>TYPES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research methods Information architecture Design activities Prototyping and testing Best practice and patterns Skill development <p>Research users and similar websites Concept development Set guidelines Develop and test prototype</p>
		<h2>Measurements</h2> <p><i>What types of measurements will you employ?</i> <i>What metrics will be used to gauge success?</i></p> <p>EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in user satisfaction (e.g. SUS) Better task completion Higher frequency of use Increased self support ... <p>Increased sales Increased overall amount of shoppers Maintained or increased user satisfaction Limited browsing issues limited checkout issues</p>	

Resources

Jim Kalbach, 12 August 2014, *UX Strategy Blueprint*,

<https://experiencinginformation.com/2014/08/12/ux-strategy-blueprint/>

Andrew Maier, October 20th 2009, *Focusing Design with Design Strategy*,

<https://www.uxbooth.com/articles/focusing-interaction-design-with-design-strategy/>

ElkRanch website, <https://elkranch.ca/>