



ENSE 271 Project report-out & lessons learned

Team name & members

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Project sponsor

Dr. Tim Maciag (ENSE 271 Lecturer)

Business needs/opportunity

- IABC Regina needs a website that clearly highlights membership benefits and events.
- Make the backend easy to use so it is more manageable and less time consuming.
- Easy navigation on the website so people can look for the information faster.
- Attracting new membership enrollment.
- A function for taking payments on the website(for job postings, events etc.)
- Have their own content which is different from their international site(share IABC regina specific things) like a local career page, local events.
- Redirect members to the international website for duplicate information(so the board has less content to renew or manage). Also, saves the board members time.
- Set up 2-way communication from the board to the members and vice versa. For example let members post blogs, events etc.
- A sign up/ sign in option where members can easily enroll for events etc.
- Create an option where employers can post jobs themselves.



Reflections on project planning

NorthStar Customer:

- IABC Regina members :
 - Student/ Entry level- These users join IABC to add accreditations to their resumes and build connections to find jobs.
 - Medium level- These users are looking for connections to give them exposure to leadership roles and also to maintain their accreditations.
 - Senior level- These users are willing to give back to the community by offering their experience and guidance to entry/medium level professionals.
- Organizations who are looking for professionals in communications.
- IABC administrators

Carryover Customer:

- Communicators who are not a part of IABC.
- People looking to gain information on pursuing communications as a profession.
- Public

Project Assumptions:

- The website will be built on Wordpress
- The website represent IABC Regina
- Low threshold and high ceiling for administration
- The web maintenance will be IABC staff without professional web development skills in the next few years.

Constraints:

- Financial Constraints – Trade-off between performance and the allotted budget.
- Limitation technique support by using Wordpress and Elementor plugin
- Knowledge gap between the designer vs the actual customer.
- Lack of targeted user feedback.
- Lack the communication background and the development in the future to consider.

Key findings from affinity diagramming, empathy mapping:

- The navigation of the website is very hard.
- The hierarchy menu is very confusing.
- Lots of duplicate content on different pages.
- It is very hard for customers to find the information they want.
- The website lacks a platform for 2 Way member communication.

Initial & evolution of USM/MVP:

Initially, our USM focused on how the administrators would manage the website. The feedback from IABC administrators shifted our ideas of what needs to be included in our MVP. We chose different



points that the users might primarily focus on and changed our MVP and USMs accordingly. For our final version for our USM, we included stories from the perspective of the administrators and the users. For the admin side, we focused on main parts they might work on like events and blogs. For the user side, we focused on areas that would be of most interest to them like Careers, Membership, Events and About us. We also adjusted our MVP according to our final solution in Wordpress as we moved the career login and payments to MVP2.

Prototyping activities and findings:

We created multiple Lo-fi prototypes that we got feedback on. After making some changes to our Lo-Fi prototypes, we created our Hi-Fi prototypes. Some of the design principles we incorporated into our prototypes and our final designs are listed below:

- Natural mapping
 - The layout of the content is left to right and top to bottom. Applied Z design principle on each page.
 - To avoid overcrowded content on each page, each section has its own space and is separated with overlay titles.
 - The Call to Action buttons are in close proximity to the sections they refer to.
- Affordance
 - The expansion button can expand the content of the section so the users can read more about the section. The buttons allow users to keep read or link to the related page.

How do I join IABC?



How do I transfer a membership?



- The Register/Apply button is clickable and leads users to the events' official pages.
- "Scroll to top" button can help customers get back to the top of the page.

- Signifiers
 - Clickable words are highlighted to hint the user that they are clickable.
 - All the clickable text or buttons have information that signals to what they lead to.

JOIN IABC RIGHT NOW



- Constraint
 - The job position posting has to be approved by IABC administrators.
 - The default hides the information on Certifications.



Reflections on project results

How we felt about the project

- This project gave us an opportunity to apply mostly all of the concepts that we learned in class like the fast feedback cycle, prototyping etc. which helped us to retain the concepts and helped us gain a deeper understanding of those concepts.
- One thing that we really liked about the project were the meetings with IABC Regina administrators and the scrum with Dr. Maciag. Those meetings gave us a real understanding of where we stood with our designs and also gave us some experience of communicating with the client before we even stepped out in the industry.
- This project gave us a lot of space for innovation and gave us an opportunity to create something that will be of use to the user but also will be easy to manage for administrators.
- We would have liked some user feedback to properly design the website from a user's perspective(user being the IABC Regina members who will use the interface.)

What went well during the project:

- Prototyping went very well for us. We created multiple lo-fi prototypes and got positive and negative feedback on them which helped us create "better" and more acceptable Hi-Fi prototypes which then we used to implement our Wordpress solution.
- Our chosen Wordpress theme was similar to what we had envisioned for our website and it was simple to manipulate.
- Collaboration on Wordpress went very well for us. Xia created an instance on Google Cloud which was free that made collaboration very easy! We could all just sign in with our admin credentials and work on our own pages.

What did not go well:

- We had to implement our solution in Wordpress and that was something we were struggling with in the beginning. Wordpress has a lot of features but some of them are paid which restricted us to show our clients some functionalities we wanted to integrate- like payments.

Translating Hi-Fi prototypes into Wordpress Reality:

- We were very successful at implementing our Hi-Fi prototypes in Wordpress.
- For most pages, we were able to recreate our website into Wordpress like we had designed in Adobe XD - example: Events, Careers, Home and Membership.
- For the Get Involved page, we could not implement the accordion as per our Hi-Fi prototype as we did not want to use a lot of plugins for the website. Instead, we went with anchors and a "scroll to top" button for that page.

People-Centred Design Ideas - Helpful or a hindrance?

- People-Centred design ideas pushed us to create designs that were simple, useful and delightful.



- Using People-Centred design principles helped us focus on what's actually important- the Usability. Rather than focusing primarily on the "look" of the website, we focused on providing a delightful experience for the user by repeatedly incorporating signifiers while keeping a simple yet useful interface.



IABC Book Club for April: "Eat that Frog" by Brian Tracy



Online



March 9, 2021

REGISTER

We're all tired of being a part of "unprecedented times" and a side effect for a lot of us is a huge increase in procrastination.

- In the picture above, the user knows exactly which button to click to register and which event they will be registering for by clicking said button (Affordance and Natural mapping.)

LEARN MORE ABOUT IABC REGINA

- The "Learn More About IABC Regina" does exactly what it says - teaches you more about IABC Regina (Signifier.)

What would we do same on Future Projects:

- For future projects, we would like to stick with the Fast Feedback Cycle. It is very important to get feedback on your work as early as possible so necessary changes can be made in the process of producing useful technologies.
- We will keep considering user empathy when we design a project.

What would we do differently on Future projects:

- For future projects, we could incorporate the Agile Methodologies where big tasks are broken down into comparatively smaller tasks. This way we would be able to present more accurate time estimates which might be useful for bigger projects.
- With the agile methodology, we can involve user testing stages to make sure the core functionalities of the application remain intact.

Summary of Opportunities and design ideas for Future work:

- For future work, we could work more on the look of the website.
- We can bring more functionality to the website, and raise the ceiling of our design. For example, adding a live chat tool.
- We could incorporate dynamic blocks on the home page. (ex: Carousel)
- HR posting jobs on the Careers page would be able to sign up/ sign in.



WordPress themes and plugins

Theme:

- Astra :

The user rating: 5 stars based on 5678+ ratings

Last updated: a week ago

Number of active installations: 1+ million

Purpose: Astra is the most popular theme in WordPress. It applies to a lot of possibilities. Astra can be highly modified, and the templates they provide are diverse so we can choose the best one to fit in our HI-Fi design.

Plugin :

- Elementor :

The user rating: 5 stars based on 5750 ratings

Last updated: 1 month ago

Number of active installations: 5+ million

Purpose: Elementor is a powerful WordPress website builder tool, and it contains many useful blocks for users.

- Essential Addons for Elementor:

The user rating: 5 stars based on 2119 ratings

Last updated: 1 day ago

Number of active installations: 1+ million

Purpose: Essential Addons applies more free functional blocks for Elementor.

- Happy Elementor Addons

The user rating: 4.5 stars based on 87 ratings

Last updated: 2 days ago

Number of active installations: 100,000+

Purpose: Happy Elementor Addons applies more free functional blocks for Elementor, and the floating effect of it is very interesting.



- Premium Addons for Elementor
The user rating: 5 stars based on 904 ratings
Last updated: 1 day ago
Number of active installations: 400,000+
Purpose: Premium Addons applies more free functional blocks for Elementor
- Max upload filesize
The user rating: 5 stars based on 3 ratings
Last updated: 1 year ago
Number of active installations: 8000+
Purpose: Increasing the upload file size limit without editing php.ini.
- WPForms Lite
The user rating: 5 stars based on 8922 ratings
Last updated: 2 weeks ago
Number of active installations: 4+ million
Purpose: WpForms is an excellent plug-in for building contact forms. It is very simple and powerful, and it contains some other form templates. However, it needs to pay if we want to generate an actual contact form.
- WPFront Scroll Top
The user rating: 5 stars based on 114 ratings
Last updated: 2 weeks ago
Number of active installations: 100,000 +
Purpose: WPFront Scroll Top allows us to set up a backup button on specific pages. However, only a few icons to select. If it applied more icons, it would be better.
- WPvivid Backup Plugin
The user rating: 5 stars based on 391 ratings



University
of Regina



FACULTY OF ENGINEERING
& APPLIED SCIENCE

Last updated: 2 weeks ago

Number of active installations: 100,000 +

Purpose: It offers several fundamental backup functions. The best part is it can back up to a cloud. Using it to migrate a copy of a WP site is a great choice. If it provides a function to link the storage to Github, it would be better.

WordPress Backup File Upload:

<http://download.uregina.ca/DownloadAttachment/ea258b5fa428fda15f256be1fc4a7d61/>.