

FINAL WEB DESIGN REPORT

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1 Introduction

Briefly speaking, web design means planning, creation and updating of websites. Simple as it may seem, it also involves information architecture, web structure, user interface, navigation ergonomics, web layout, colours, contrasts, fonts as well as imagery. Apart from these visual elements, more abstract elements like usability, ergonomics, layout traditions, user habits, navigation logic and some other things that help simplify the using of websites and find information faster. In order to maximize the function of a website both in aesthetic and communicational degree, design thinking is of vital importance in the whole process. Design

thinking utilizes elements from the designer's toolkit like empathy and experimentation to arrive at innovative solutions. In the designing process of my own portfolio, I also have tried my best to adopt data-driven design thinking to construct the user experience planes and later to better serve the users. In this report, I will explain how and why design thinking is adopted in this project.

2. Five Planes of UX Elements

The user experience development process is about taking every possibility of action the user is likely to take into consideration and understanding the user's expectations at every step of the way through the process. By breaking the job of crafting user experience down into its component elements, we can better understand the problem as a whole and come up with innovative solutions. A whole set of decisions — no matter the decision is small or large — about how the site looks, how it behaves and how it allows users to do build upon each other and influence all aspects of user experience. To create a responsible personal portfolio website, I'd better peel away the layers of such experience. Five planes — strategy, scope, structure, skeleton and surface — are used as the tools in this report to conduct a conceptual framework for talking about user experience problems and better solve them.

2.1 The Strategy Plane

The strategy plane is about the objectives of the website, which incorporates both what the designer wants to get out of it and what the users want to get out of the site. The objection of my website is clear, which is to get my ideal job. Based on my knowledge and past experiences, I am clear that I want to become an editor in a fashion corporation. I used to work as an intern in ELLE China (a top fashion magazine) website for almost one year and have some basic

knowledge about how a website works. Editors' work is no more just about interviewing and writing. With the revolution of media and communication, as well as the tendency that the traditional media companies have transformed to better meet the demand of the audiences, editors are increasingly catching up with the modern new media technology in carrying out new media content operations. Since traditional media is now all seeking new media transformation, I think this market is full of potential and I'm glad to make my contributions in this field. I think it is essential to have a clear purpose when designing a website so that it could better serve the function. Meanwhile, since I am seeking a fashion-related job, besides the mainly objective, the whole website should also meet the aesthetic requirement.

Another important factor of the strategy plane is user needs. In this project, my user is those recruiters related to fashion industry. Since I would like to return to Shanghai after graduation, the companies based in Shanghai would become my special target. In order to better understand the user needs and user journey of my personal portfolio, I interviewed several of my previous colleagues: senior editors involved in fashion, beauty, celebrity and lifestyle fields and HR Claire Zhang in Hearst with rich recruitment experience. Claire told me that candidates did not necessarily required to have their own websites, but it could be a plus since a website could reflect a person's beauty sense and highlight past works directly and vividly which helped one stand out from other candidates. However, even a personal website was dedicatedly designed, an HR usually did not have enough time to browse each page and each section carefully, instead, they just grasped the whole style of the webpage and see some of the past projects one had done which could not be acquired from the printing resume. So, the website must be designed in a way that users could grasp the key information easily and efficiently. What's more, Emin Luo, a senior lifestyle editor in ELLE China website said that many bloggers all have their own websites and it is good for me to have my own. Since my target was a fashion-related company,

apart from paying attention to the website function, a beautiful design was also significant so that the personal website could impress the recruiter in a positive way or they may just close the tag at first sight. According to her experience, users are first attracted by the visuals on the website rather than the texts, and they tend to care more about the pictures and not spend much time reading the texts carefully, so the visuals should be high quality and show your good beauty taste.

Based on my career plan and the interviews of my potential target users, I figured out the following table to better illustrate my site objectives, target users and user needs (see figure 1).

SITE OBJECTIVES		TARGET USERS		USER NEEDS
Primary Goal	Show my strengths and qualifications for a job of fashion-related editing and help me get hired.	Primary User	Recruiters from top fashion company based in Shanghai.	Examine qualifications of certain candidates.
Additional Goal	Give my contact to those who are interested in me and have similar interests and goals.	Secondary User	Recruiters from top fashion company around the world.	Find suitable candidates for certain job vacancy.
Additional Goal	Record my periodical achievements.	Secondary User	Editors involved in fashion, beauty, celebrity and lifestyle field.	Find something interesting in their dull work of checking plenty of plain resumes.

Figure1: Strategy Plane

I also figure out a user journey map stage after the interviews (see figure 2). In order to explain it well I used icons to make it more visualized and approachable.

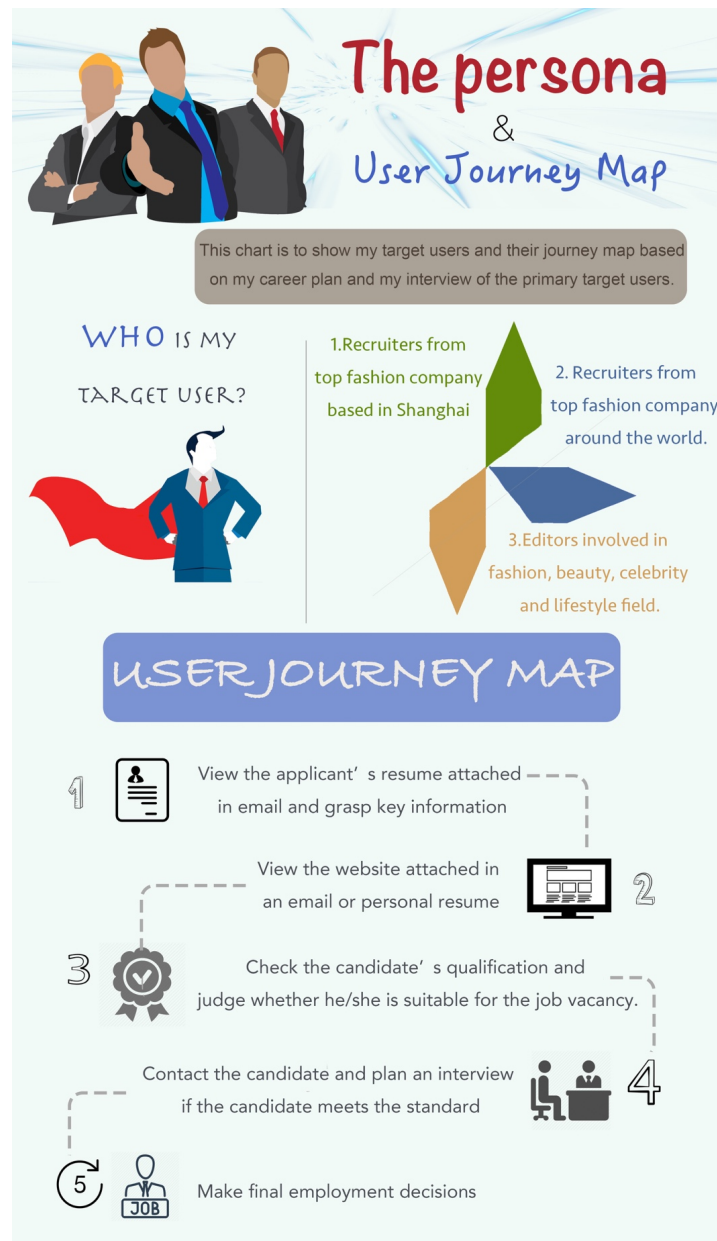


Figure 2: The persona and user journey map

2.2 The Scope Plane

The structure defines the way in which the various features and functions of the site fit together. It is about the question of whether that some features should be included on a site. I have conducted a research by studying other people's personal websites and the tips given by experienced people on how to build a personal website that will impress the hiring managers. By comparing my expectations on the website and other people's works, I gradually come up with my own ideas on what should be placed on my website. And I will list them down in two aspects: function and content.

From the functional perspective, I would like to add the following functions to my website: a clear, concise and efficient navigation bar, which helps the users find his or her way around the website very easily; direct contact approach, which is to help the users directly contact me even there is only little chance that recruiters would contact me through the website, however, better little than not; data processing, a resume is plain while a website should be dynamic and data-driven since we are now living a big data era, even now I do not have so much data to put on my website, I will pay attention to the maintenance and update of my website in the following period and use CMS to manage my contents and data if necessary; file fetch, actually I do not think users bother to download my files, rather, they tend to be more willing to open the file in a new page, but I will consider adding the function once they have opened the link. I also consider adding the function of data filtering or a searching box, and I will try to realize the function in the future due to time limitation.

Regarding the content, I think it should include the following sections: all the basic information users want to know about me and my work in a clean and easy-to-read way; link to my resume in a form hiring managers are familiar with; my past works in a multimedia form; a multimedia timeline of my experience; contacts serving my website objectives.

2.3 The Structure Plane

The structure is an abstract expression of the site which defines how users got to that page and where they could go when they were finished there. Claire told me that the hierarchy of my website should be simple and brief so that users could directly find the information they would like to know efficiently since they did not want to spend too much additional time on your website. Based on this, I figure out a simple site map for my website (see figure 3).

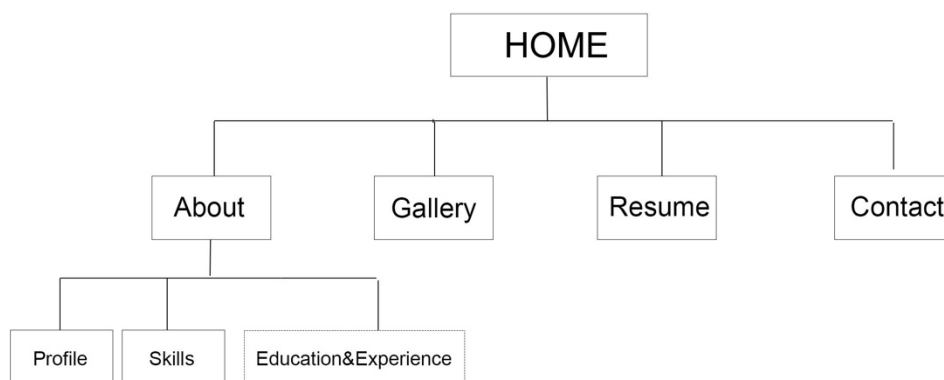


Figure 3: a simple site map

The first part is about my personal information. Since my personal website is a complement of resume, so I decided to put what could not be presented on my resume at the first order. The first sub-navigation of my personal information is my profile, some of my preferences and stories. This part is to give my users the first impression of what kind of person I am. I believe

that first impression wins, thus I'm striving to leave a positive and unforgettable impression on my targets. The second sub-navigation is skills, in which I try to visualize my skills to better show my strengths and competitiveness instead of just listing my skills which can be boring. Since my experience and education background can be acquired on my resume, the priority of them is lower than my profile and skills. When it comes to my experience and education background, I try to use timeline to make my page more dynamic and straightforward compared with my paper resume. The gallery is about my article collection during my previous internships, which directly shows my rich experience in writing, editing and ideas in this industry. I also add the resume section in the navigation bar to help people directly find my resume if they first come to my website and want to know my basic information in the quickest way. Since I assume that most of my target audience find my website from my email or resume, and I interviewed several people that they all prefer to view the resume online, I do not provide the download button. Finally, my contact information is included to make sure people can reach out to me. And it should be placed somewhere on the page easy to be found.

2.4 The Skeleton Plane

Compared with the structure plane, the skeleton is a concrete expression of the website structure, which defines the placement of the interface elements such as buttons, tabs, photos, and blocks of text. The skeleton is designed to optimize the arrangement of these elements for maximum effect and efficiency. At this stage, I used wireframe to figure out the flow and layout of my website and come up with several plans. After several times of comparison and balance of the prototypes, I come up with the following format (due to some practical reasons it is kind of different from the final results).

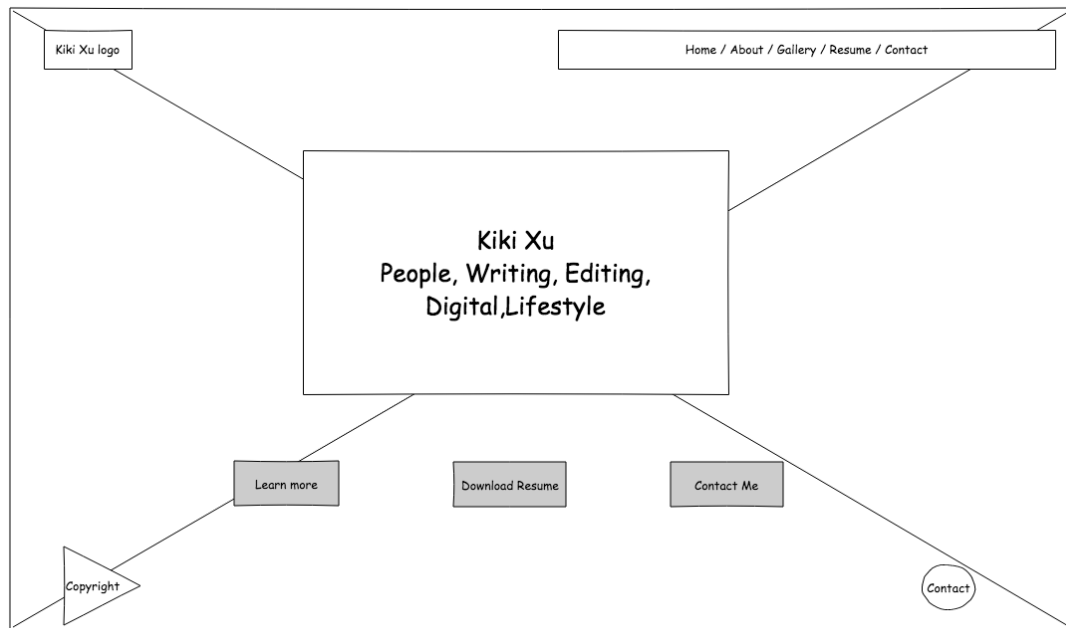


Figure 4: Home page layout wireframe

Generally, I prefer brief and clear structure and layout which can create a professional and advanced feeling. I studied the websites listed on *The 35 Best Personal Website* with diverse personal personalities and come up my own preferred style. Since I learned that recruiters tended not to spend too much time on the website, I finally decided to apply a brief structure and design to make everything digestible. I also pay attention to the colors and design to meet the big four principals of contrast, repetition, alignment and proximity.

I put the function button of getting my resume and contacting me directly on every page, so that I could grasp every potential opportunity. On my home page (see figure 4), I put some key words on it below my name to people a direct feeling of what kind of person I am and which field I'm involved in. Then I put three buttons of learning more, downloading my resume and

contacting me under the card (it is my original assumption and is little bit different from the final version due to trails and practical reasons).

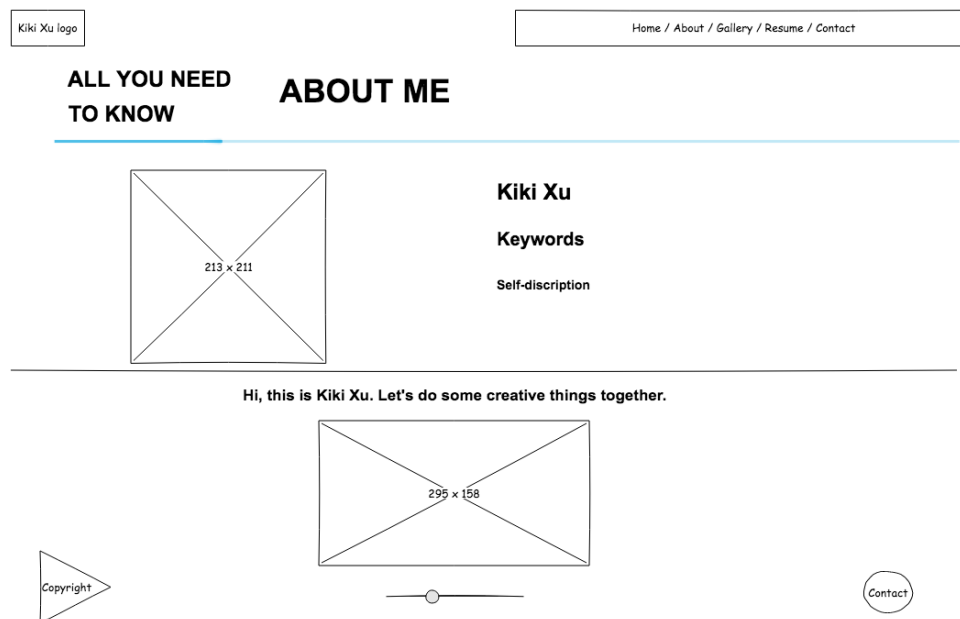


Figure 5: Profile page layout wireframe

The first child page of my about page is my profile (see figure 5). I put a picture of me and my self-description in the first part. I try to use words and phrases to present key information to save users' time since Emin told me that readers hate long paragraphs. Under the profile is some pictures of my interesting facts. I design this part to visualize my profile and show some of my personalities which cannot be acquired directly from my resume.

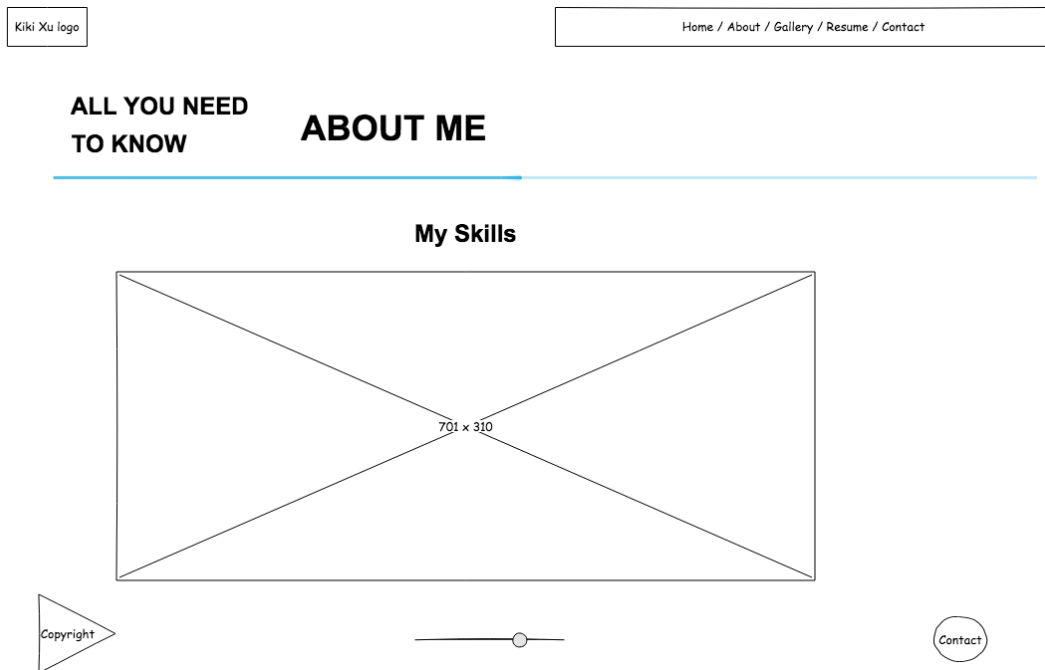


Figure 6: Skills page layout wireframe

The second child page of about page is about my skills (see figure 6), I adopted dynamic JavaScript to visualize it and also gave my proficiency level.

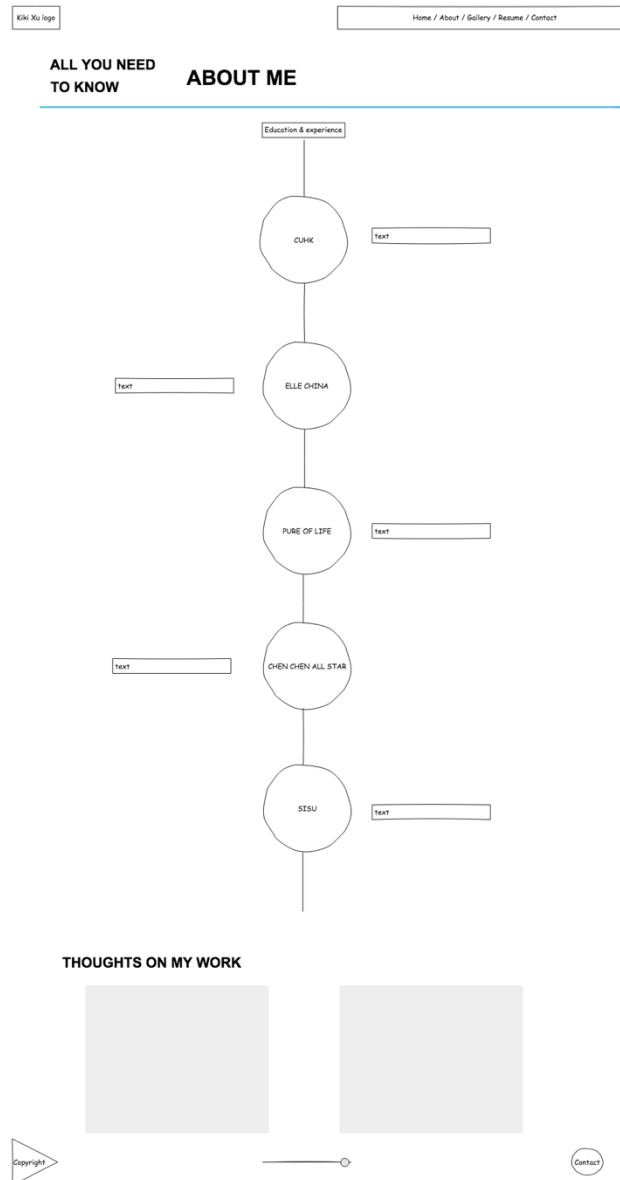


Figure 7: Experience page layout wireframe

I used a multimedia timeline to explain my education and internship history with multimedia tools. I also added some thoughts from my previous colleagues on my work to make it more objective (see figure 7).

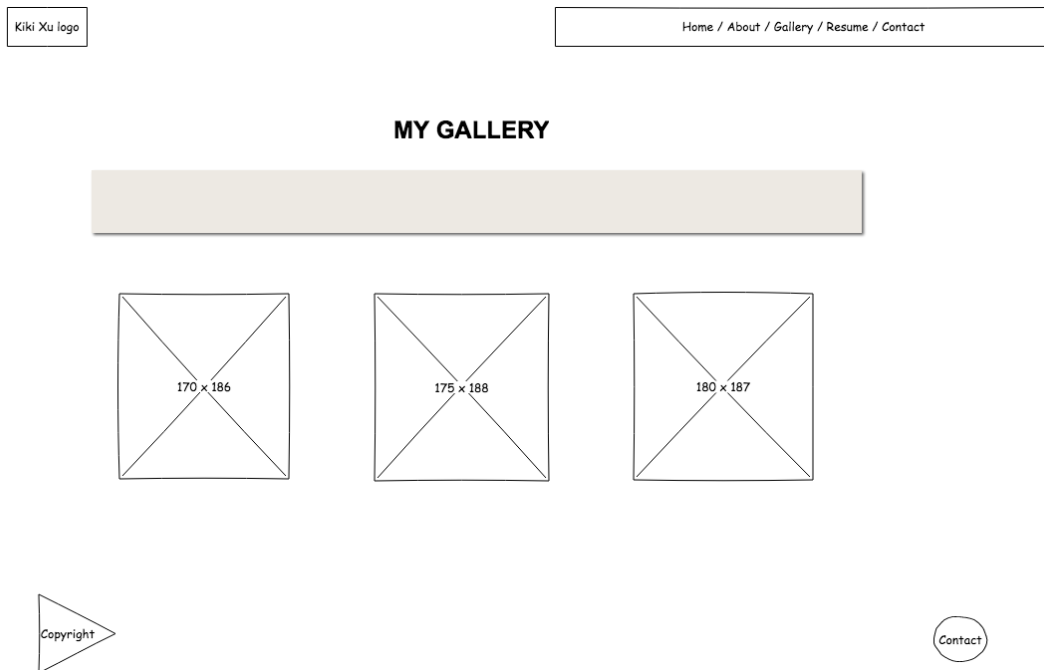


Figure 8: Gallery page layout wireframe

My gallery is about my previous works (see figure 8). I used to work in a fashion website and have completed many pieces of articles and projects. This part will show my articles. I gave a supporting visual and a brief introduction about my works, and then put a hyperlink on each piece to help users see my original complete article.

When you click on the Resume button in the navigation, it will directly turn to a resume page which could give hiring managers my resume in a form they are very familiar with which they can download, print, share with other team members more pretty easily.

The last part is about my contact information, which gives the potential recruiters or hiring managers approaches to find me easily.

2.5 The Surface Plane

On the surface level, we can see a series of web pages made up of images and text. Since the basic structure and layout of my website has been figured out, I try to use some unique design to strengthen my website identity, as well as to serve the usability and functionality.

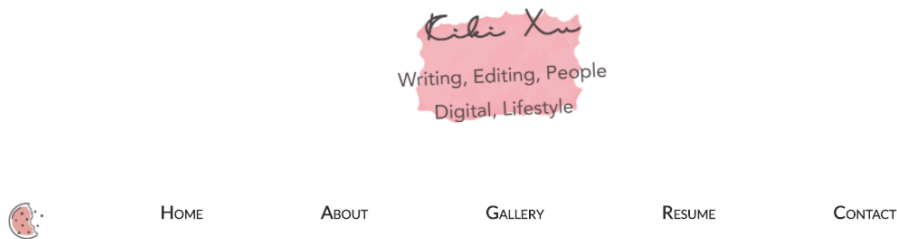


Figure 9: Colors and banner of my pages

I used pink (#f5b5bb), grey (#f5f5f) and white as the main colors of my website (see figure 9), since pink represents sweet, softness and elegance, grey represents modesty and calmness, and white represents purity. These three colors go well with each other. Editors need to deal with plenty of people and the application of the three colors could give users a feeling that I am an easy-going and soft person. I used Photoshop to design the banner of my website banner, consisting of my signature and some keywords, which is to let the users have a direct knowledge of what kind of person I am and what I am looking for.

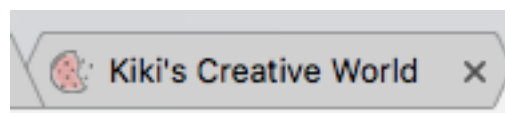


Figure 10: Title of my website

I also put an icon of cookie at the left of the navigation bar as well as the website title (see figure 9 and 10), since my Chinese name sounds like “cookie” and I also used this as my WeChat name.

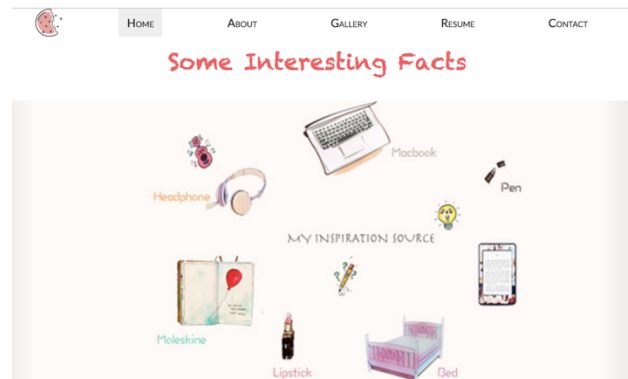
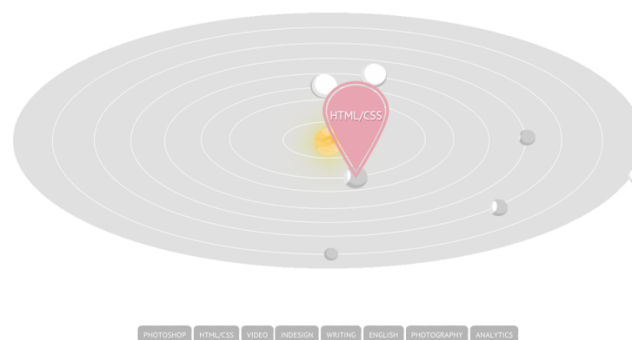


Figure 11: Personalities shown in pictures

Since my website aims to show some of my personalities (see figure 11) which cannot be directly acquired from my resume, I used Photoshop to create four pictures about my inspiration source, preferences, keywords and area. Each picture is made up of elements and icon since Professor Bernard has always attached great importance on web visualization. I only list one of the pictures here and users can view my website if they want to see the full pictures.



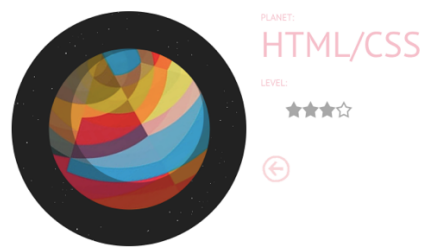


Figure 12: Interesting JavaScript

I have tried not to make my website dull and boring. I learned some interesting JavaScript and make some adjustments on my website to make the whole design more harmonious and dynamic (see figure 12). I think that if a website is all about text people can be easy to get tired of it, so I'm trying to include more forms in my website.

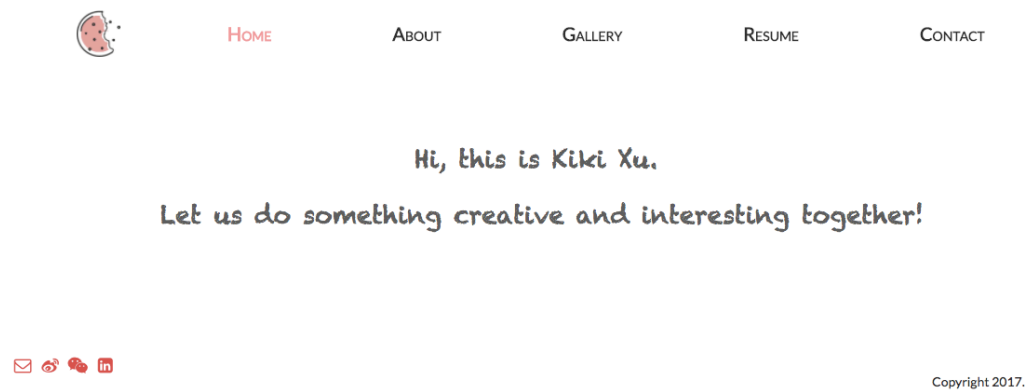


Figure 13: Typography of my website

In terms of typography, which is also an important factor that should be taken into consideration when designing a website. For my websites, type should be both aesthetic and readable. I mainly adopted two types of fonts - Avenir and Chalkduster – in my website. I mainly use

Chalkduster in headlines, and Avenir in body part. Both fonts are dynamic fonts which go well with the whole style of my website.

3. Test

Since website design is an interactive process, apart from my ideas, users' reflection should also be highly regarded in this period. So, I adopted several tests in this process.

3.1 Qualitative Test: Usability Test

Usability testing is a technique used in user-centered interaction design to evaluate a product by testing it on users, which gives direct input on how real users use the system.

3.1.1 Remote Usability testing

Since my previous colleagues are based in Shanghai, conducting a traditional lab usability evaluation creates challenges. I invited three of them, two editors and one HR to engage in the test and suggested them to use screen record tool so that I could have a collection of users' click streams, user logs of critical incidents that occur. Since my website has simple logics and structure, I do not set any tasks to my interviewees. Before I sent them my website url, I first asked them what they expected from my website, and they answered that they would like to see my pictures, past works, or even some elements directly showing my tastes or life attitudes. Claire also stressed that she has seen so many websites, it was significant to catch her at first sight. Some details, one's personal icon, or even the colors on the website all made sense. According to the recording videos, firstly they opened the home page, then two of them turned to the about page, one turned to the gallery page; they three clicked the about page, but they do

not see through the whole “skill” and “experience” page; they click on the “resume” but turned it off in a few seconds; they clicked on the contact page while did not try to send a message. Then I asked them if they had some trouble on my pages or misunderstand some functions on my pages. They said that since my website had simple logic, they could understand each section easily. As to some improvements on my website, Emin said that I could add a side navigation bar on the gallery page to better instruct the users. I also asked if a Chinese version is needed, they three both said I could have a try, however, since they would not spend too much time on the website, they mostly would only choose one version. The gallery part has my Chinese articles, while the rest part is all in English, so it is efficient to only view the English version. So, I finally decide to not add a Chinese version even I target at a company based in Shanghai. I also asked two questions that confuse me, one is whether the links should be opened in a new tag, the other is about the download of my resume. Claire told me that people in mainland China may have different using habits compared with foreign people, who prefer to open in a new tag since they are accustomed to using the “close” button rather than the “back” button. As a result, I had better put all the hyperlinks to a new blank page. As to the resume, since my website mainly target at the staffs in my target company, they probably first had my resume, then my website. On the other hand, it can be annoying to download something to your computer unconsciously when you view something. As a result, I could just let users view the resume in a new tag, rather than download it.

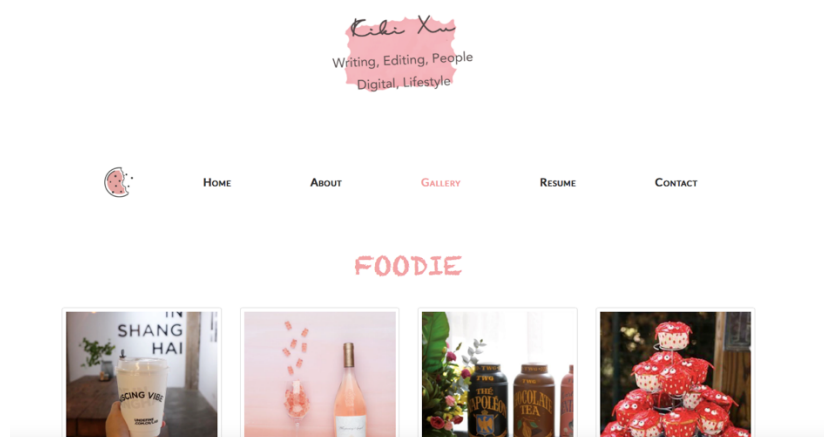
3.1.2 “Think Aloud” Usability Test

Apart from the remote usability testing, I also invite three pf my friends to do the usability test face to face. I opened my website for them and suggested them to say out loud any confusion, thoughts or ideas on my website directly. Since when I conduct this test, I have some data on

my google analytics which shows that my users care about the gallery most. I also asked them whether there is any improvement on my gallery page. One reminded me to pay attention to the present on mobile devices to be responsive, another said again that I had better add a side navigation bar. Since it had been pointed out by two interviewees, I conducted a A/B test using Google analytics to decide whether or not to take their advice. In the next part, I will introduce the A/B test.

3.2 Quantitative Test: A/B Test

A/B Test can be significant in web design, which helps to identify changes to web pages that increase or maximize an outcome of interest. And I did an A/B test on checking whether a side navigation bar on the gallery page can help users spend more time on my website and reduce the bounce rate. Below are the two versions (see figure 14).



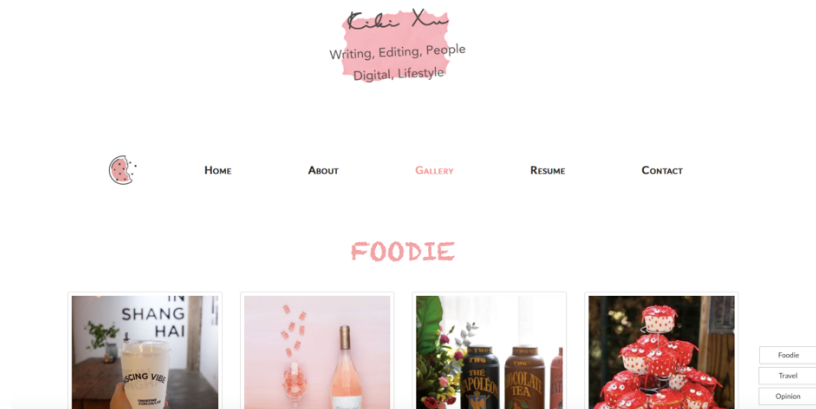


Figure 14: Two variants of the A/B test

Since it is recommended that an A/B test should run at least two weeks to have more accurate results and I have only run this for eight days (starts from 3 Dec. to 10 Dec.), in this stage the experiment is still running and I am still waiting for more statistics to see which one wins. But the current statistics could still provide some insights. From the current data (see figure 15), though the original version has more page view compared with the modified version, the average time on page of the modified one is longer than the original one, which is 11 seconds. Since my main objective is to keep my users staying longer on my website, I would take the average time on page more into consideration. As a result, I would add a side navigation bar on the gallery page. However, after the presentation on Monday presentation, I listened to one of my classmate's advice to add some instructions on the page. Out of usability consideration, I have deleted the A/B test code in my html and users now could only see one version.

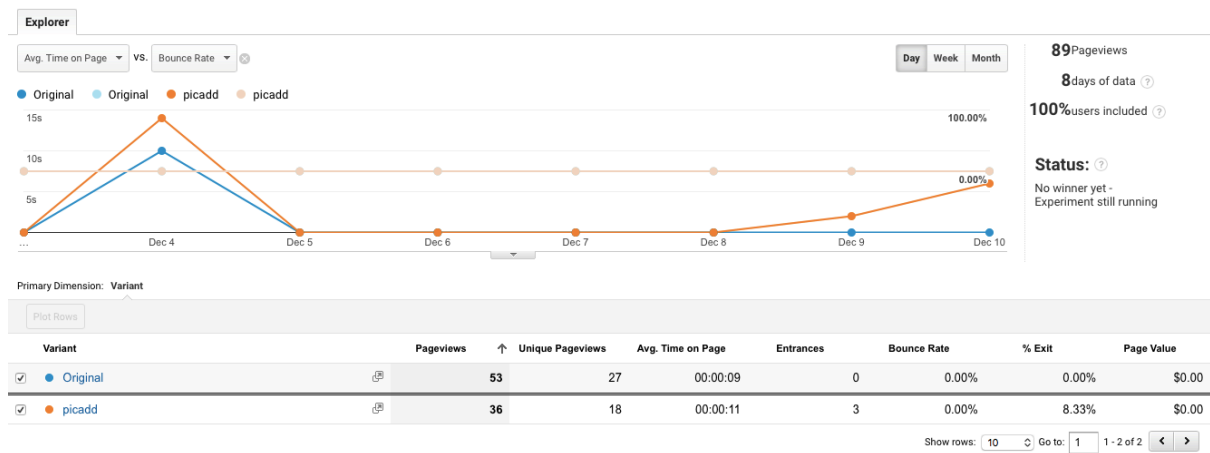


Figure 15: A/B test statistics

4. Dashboard Design and Analysis

A dashboard is significant in that it is a good way to learn how and how well the users are involved in the pages, thus helping to improve the pages.

A dashboard has provided plenty of information on the users and their behaviors and show what the users care about most, their use journey, or even their preferences. It can be a good implication on the improvement on the website.

Listed below are 9 widgets in my google analytics (see figure 16). Since I have figured out that my main target users are the recruiters in my target company, what I care about most is how much time they would like to spend on my pages, so I put average time on page on my dashboard. Besides, in order to find out what kind of device are used by my audience and remind me to pay attention to the responsive design, I add session duration by device category. Also, I would like to have a basic understanding of my users and the bounce rate of the website, so I add users and bounce rate to the dashboard. Besides, what my users care about most and their exit page can also give me insights, so I put exits and pageviews by page on the dashboard. What's more, since I have set a goal for my websites, that is to have a duration of more than 1

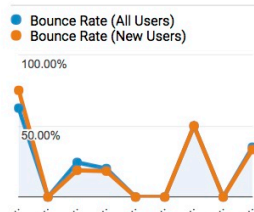
minute, in that HR Claire that she generally would only spent 40-50 seconds to scan a personal website, I add goal conversion rate and goal completions on my dashboard. Finally, I am interested in where my users come from, and I add pageviews by country/territory and pageviews by city on the dashboard. I also add a new segment of new users on my dashboard.

Content Analysis Dashboard

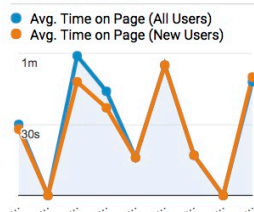
Dec 1, 2017 - Dec 9, 2017



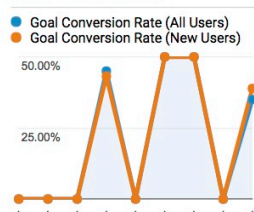
Bounce Rate



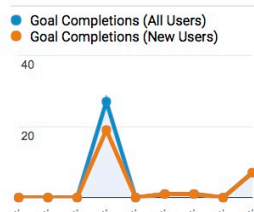
Avg. Time on Page



Goal Conversion Rate



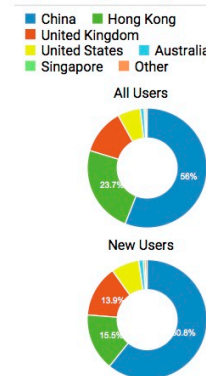
Goal Completions



Exits and Pageviews by Page

Page	Exits	Pageviews
/final/home1.html		
All Users	57	203
New Users	45	175
/final/gallery.html		
All Users	34	246
New Users	25	184
/final/about1.html		
All Users	10	105
New Users	8	91
/final/contact.html		
All Users	9	32
New Users	7	28
/final/skills.html		
All Users	7	63
New Users	6	51
/final/home1.html?luicode=20000061&lfid=4180872234238742&featurecode=newtitle&ext=sourceType:weixin		
All Users	4	6
New Users	4	6
/final/home1.html?luicode=20000061&lfid=4180872234238742&featurecode=newtitle&ext=sourceType:weixin		
All Users	3	5
New Users	3	5
/final/home1.html?luicode=20000061&lfid=4181230368671702&featurecode=newtitle&ext=sourceType:weixin		
All Users	3	8
New Users	3	8
/final/timeline/compiled/examples/groups_test_3.html		
All Users	3	22
New Users	3	18
/final/home1.html?luicode=20000061&lfid=4181230368671702&featurecode=newtitle&ext=sourceType:weixin		
All Users	1	2
New Users	1	2

Pageviews by Country / Territory



Pageviews by City

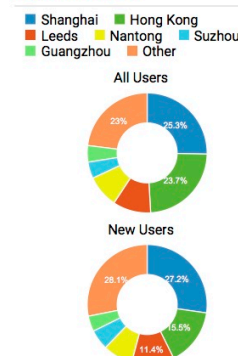


Figure 16: Dashboard of Google Analytics

4. Limitations

Due to time limitation and some other factors, my website still have some limitations. Firstly, the data on my website still is stored locally, and I will consider using drupal to store the data to better manage and update it. Secondly, I only release my website mainly to my friends, who may have a different attitude and mind when they view the pages compared with my target audience, and the data tracked by google analytics is not so accurate. However, I have learned such a testing method and hope it could provide some help in my future career. Thirdly, I have thought of self-branding and use a brand picture and some keywords to make me outstanding, however I would consider applying what I have learned in other class to make it more unique and impressive. Fourthly, I do not care about too much about the various sources of the beginning of the user journey and I will optimize and customized it in the future. Lastly, I used to think about making some changes on my skills page. But after I listened to the comments on Monday night, I feel like it would be better if I ask for my previous colleagues' recognition on my LinkedIn, so I just listed my skills on my page and a rough proficiency level. Overall, it could be a tough but worthwhile which pushes me to achieve great progress in design thinking which not only helps me with the final project but also the thinking mode which I highly appreciated.