

Project Brief:

Upper Sandusky Community Library

This document presents the project brief for the upcoming website redesign of the Upper Sandusky Community Library.

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Background

The Upper Sandusky Community Library is interested in redesigning their website with a focus on making information more easily accessed by their users. It is the opinion of the stakeholder that the overall organization of the site content could be better designed to achieve this goal. In addition to redesigning for ease of the patrons, the redesign needs to be simplistic enough to allow for easy maintenance by the library staff.

Introduction

Considering the libraries goals and the current site structure, the Upper Sandusky Community Library site would benefit most from a re-evaluation of its information architecture (IA). Information architecture focuses on the grouping, organization, and labeling of information in a way that makes sense to the users of the site, and enables them to easily find the information they are looking for. Due to the vast amount of information found on a library website, it is particularly important for the site to have good information architecture, as it can be very difficult for the user to navigate if it doesn't. By improving the sites current IA, we will address the libraries concerns of information findability and ease of use for both the user and staff.

Current Website Observations

After evaluating the current site structure, it is apparent that there is considerable room for improvement within the current IA. The site appears to contain three main areas of navigation. These areas and important notes about the various sections within the site in need of review or improvement are outlined below.

Top Navigation

1. **Home:** Redirects back to the home page.
2. **Directions:** Redirects to an internal map page, with an external link to Mapquest for directions to the library. The Mapquest link is outdated, and does not link appropriately to directions.
3. **Hours:** Links to a page with the library hours. Hours are also available in the persistent header area of the site.
4. **Library Staff & Board:** Links to an internal site page listing the staff and board with names, titles, and terms, but does not note any contact information for anyone listed.
5. **Community Links:** Redirects externally to the Wyandot Chamber of Commerce site.
6. **News & Info:** Links to a wide variety of information including Upcoming Closures, Employment Information, 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten, a book search engine, and information for identitytheft.gov, Edutrek, Tuition Funding, ProQuest Ancestry, Ohio Here to Help, Support Your Library, Tax Forms, and Ohio Means Jobs.

Note: All but the Home navigation redirects to another page within the site, with the Community Links label externally navigating to the Wyandot Chamber of Commerce site. The top navigation does not include any drop down menus to aid the user in discovering what information they may find under each heading area, or to help them to navigate to their desired topic on the page faster. In addition, this navigation is located in the most prominent location on the page where users expect to find the main global navigation; however, these links do not contain the most important topic headings on the library website.

Left Side Navigation

Main Upper Navigation

1. **Our Library:** Links to a page with basic information about the library like how to obtain a library card, and various library policies.
2. **Our Collection:** Includes information about what types of items the library has, and how to locate them.
3. **Programs & Events:** Contains a link to the library newsletter, the libraries best seller list, and a link to the Common Reader's Book Group. This heading does not fit all of the information listed within this area.
4. **Library Newsletter:** Links to a PDF of the current library newsletter.
5. **Heritage Room:** Contains both a search of the Hayes Obituary Index, and an alphabetical listing of topics and people which can be found in this room. Although it is unclear what exactly the Heritage Room is based on the page information alone.
6. **Ellison Room:** Appears to include information about using a die cut machine. Includes information on using the room, as well as a link to a page with an alphabetical listing of the available dies.
7. **Teen Advisory Board (T.A.B.):** Contains a single graphic with clickable links to what appears to be information for different areas around the world. It is unclear what the links are or what you are to do with the information contained within them.
8. **Story Time:** Lists story time information and times.
9. **After School Action Hour:** Mostly utilizes pictures, but does not include a description of what the action hour is, when it is held, or how to join.
10. **Common Readers Discussion:** Includes broad information about the group with outdated group information from 2015. Links to the Current Programs & Events page for more information which happens to then link straight back to this page.

Note: This menu appears to contain the most important site information, but is not located in the pages top navigation, as users might typically expect. Many of the page headings do not allow for the clear understanding of what information may be found on the page when clicked. In addition, many of the pages lack clear descriptions of the information found within them.

Middle Picture/Icon Navigation

1. **Chilton Library:** Navigates to the Gale Cengage Learning login page, although it is unclear as to what this page is, or what information it will lead you to.
2. **News & Information:** This icon navigates to the same News & Info page listed in the top navigation.

Note: This section uses pictures/icons rather than headings, however, the pictures lack uniformity and mimic the appearance of ads on many other sites. This could lead users to ignore this information rather than investigating it.

Bottom Navigation

1. **EduTrek, Tuition Funding Sources, ProQuest Ancestry**
2. **Ohio Here To Help**
3. **Support Your library**
4. **Tax Forms**
5. **Ohio Means Jobs**

Note: All of these links lead to the News & Info page. They do not take you to the area of the page you have specifically clicked, but instead navigate to the beginning of the page requiring the patron to still scroll down the page in search of the information they desire.

Right Side Picture/Icon Navigation

Resources

1. **Library Catalog:** Leads to the library catalog search. This is perhaps one of the most important links on the page, but it is located in a very out of the way area of the page, and has the appearance of an ad more than a library search link.
2. **Cypress Resume:** This navigated externally to the Cypress Resume login page. It is unclear exactly what this page is however.
3. **My Voter Registration:** Navigates the user externally to the State of Ohio voter look up page.
4. **Ohio Web Library Database:** Navigates externally to the Ohio Web Library online research resources.

Note: As noted above, the appearance of these pictures/icons gives the impression that these could be ads rather than areas to be navigated within the site.

Additional Site Observations

1. Many of the pages within the site do not scroll with the site, but rather have a center content area that scrolls separately from the site. This could cause frustration for the user as they aren't able to fully view the available information without further utilizing the separated center scrolling.

2. It is not clearly understood what information can be found under a number of the labels used within the navigation areas without being familiar with the library.
3. There are many links throughout the site that link to the same content area, creating a considerable amount of redundancy within the site.
4. The footer area of the page is not utilized in any way. This is valuable space which could be used for secondary navigation for less important or utilized information found on the site that isn't appropriate for the main navigation areas.
5. There are no tactics used to help the user to understand where they are within the site. There is no highlighting or shading of labels, or any apparent navigation path. This could cause confusion for the user if they forget how they arrived on a page or how to get back to a previous page.
6. The site lacks local navigation on the individual pages which contain multiple topic areas, preventing the user from easily navigating to their desired topic rather than scrolling through the entire page in search of their desired information.
7. The site does not contain a search system to allow users to search for information within the site.

Project Timeline

Week 1

Site analysis and initial reporting occurs this week. This gives us a good idea of where the site is starting from and any issues we recognize upon initial evaluation which allows us to properly plan future tasks.

Week 2

Once the initial site issues have been assessed, interviews will be conducted with library staff members to gain a better understanding of the online library user, their wants, needs, and how they use the site. In addition, a literature review will be performed to further discover information about library users. This will allow us to create personas for the types of users who utilize the library site which will help guide the design process and ensure the target user is kept in mind during the redesign. In addition, this will allow for the creation of task lists which should be included in the redesign.

Week 4

In week four we will perform a content analysis. This will help us to understand which content currently on the site can be reused within the new site, which content needs reworked, and which content is currently not available on the site and needs to be created for the redesign. In addition we will determine which classification scheme will be appropriate for the new site to allow users to easily find the information they desire. Finally we will create a site map indicating our suggestions for where the information should be located within the new site.

Week 5

At this point we will test our designs and suggestions from week four to be sure that our design accomplishes our goal of designing a site that allows for easier navigation by the site users. The online software Treejack will be utilized to accomplish this goal.

Week 6

Once we've established our basic site design we will test our labeling and taxonomy utilizing the Chalkmark online evaluation tool. This will help us to determine if our suggestions fit well with user expectations, and allow us to make any necessary changes before finalizing our design suggestions.

Activity	Week						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Analyze Current Site Structure	X						
Present Project Plan	X						
Recruit Interview Participants		X					
Conduct Library User Interviews		X					
Conduct Literature Research		X					
Analyze Interview & Research Findings			X				
Perform Content Analysis				X			
Identify New Site Classification Scheme				X			
Create Site Map				X			
Create Labeling and Taxonomy Testing in Treejack					X		
Recruit Participants					X		
Run Treejack Testing					X		
Analyze Labeling and Taxonomy Testing Data					X		
Create Paper Wireframes						X	
Test Navigation in Chalkmark						X	
Analyze Results						X	
Present Project Results							X