

**Special Olympics Ontario:
Healthy at Home (Website-Experience
Improvement)**

Design & Evaluation Report

RA

DC

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The Hills

Our primary and secondary user-research led us to developing the following Hill Statements.

1. Ashley can read and understand all text in the global navigation menu, without any help from her caregivers.
2. Ashley can get to the website content that she is looking for, with no more than three clicks.
3. Ashley can understand any piece of content on the website, without selecting the content itself.
4. Ashley can find any particular content using multiple pathways, according to her preference.

Design Artifacts

The following design artifacts have been submitted with this report. All of the following files are attached with this submission.

1. **Wireframes:** low-fidelity blueprints for developers
2. **Prototypes:** medium-fidelity
3. **Prototype Storyboard:** sequential
4. **Recommendations:** best practices for publishing content
5. **Sitemap:** virtual whiteboard, revised information architecture

Design Explanation

Summarizing our design, based on our Hill Statements, we have made changes to the existing site. That is, we have proposed new methods for our partners to publish their content in a more efficient and user-friendly way. Overall, our design can be split into layout design, publishing recommendations, and information architecture. In this section, we outline the design categories and conclude with justification for our design.

Layout Design

We propose the following layout changes for the existing site, as evident from our wireframes and prototypes.

- Adding a breadcrumb trail throughout the site
- Simplifying labels for global navigation, both textually and contextually
- Adding present-location indication in the global navigation
- Adding a Featured carousel to the homepage to let users know about anything important, new, or upcoming
- Excluding the sidebar from the homepage and adding it to all the other pages
- Incorporating tags, for content posts, into the layout
- Changing the irregular 3x3-grid layout of existing listing-pages to singular lists
- Adding Next/Previous navigation for posts
- Suggesting inclusion of embedded video players in posts
- Suggesting inclusion of useful text in posts (ingredients, instructions for cooking-related posts)

Publishing recommendations

We propose the following recommendations for authoring and publishing content, as evident from our recommendations document.

- Using more representative and vivid featured-images
- Using more simplified and less redundant post titles

Information Architecture (IA)

We propose the IA changes, as evident from the proposed sitemap document.

- New categories and subcategories for existing content
- Renaming some categories and sub-categories

Justification

All the mentioned proposals and recommendations were determined by using the following deduction and justifications.

- Designs were based on best practices for IA (breadcrumbs, indicators in navigation)
- Design decisions were determined by the results of heuristic evaluation and user evaluation (such as images, wordiness of text, grid layout on the existing site)
- Conventions for WordPress sites and blogs (tags, sidebars) were implemented if appropriate
- Partner's wishes were considered and given maximum priority (Featured section was kept as-is for this reason)
- Tree-testing and user comments contributed to the majority of our design decisions because users had more limitations compared the general population
- Design conventions of WordPress sites, based on our understanding and experience, were followed; recommendations were given based on this knowledge

User-Interface (UI) Functionality and Outlook

Our proposed UI looks similar to the current website in terms of themes. It is our best judgement to keep some familiarity for users who regularly use the website. In terms of functionality and layout, however, we have re-designed the global navigation. As mentioned, the re-design is based on the results of our primary and secondary research. In the background, functionality and layout goes hand-in-hand with our UI. A major element of our proposed design is the inclusion of content tags. Their functionality has manifested itself throughout our UI, as visible from our prototypes.

It is worth noting that, upon our partner's request, we maintain the four categories that represent the site's mission. These pillars are *Stay Connected*, *Stay Active*, *Stay Positive*, and *Stay Informed*. In our proposed design, they are in the *Stay Healthy* category that we have created in the global navigation. Going further into our prototype, we have added tags to guide users to their desired content. They don't have to inspect the entirety of a content piece to decide if it's worthwhile. Within our UI, displaying these tags in dynamically generated, different sizes not only adds visual interest to the site, but it also adds functionality by capturing the attention of users who sometimes have a difficult time being attentive. This tag cloud also relays ample information about content.

Moreover, breadcrumb trails and a sidebar on all pages, except the homepage, allow users to see where they are within the site and where they can go from their current location. Also, to

improve the ease of use, 'Next post' and 'Previous post' links allow users to quickly switch between content of similar nature (podcasts, shows, recipes). They don't need to navigate to prior pages and potentially get lost on the site. Our UI also implements whitespace, which goes hand-in-hand with simplification of textual content and use of imagery. These practices reduce the cognitive burden of the users, many of whom have limited cognitive capabilities. Thus, functionally, our UI improves the existing one to its entirety while incorporating the familiar elements to make users feel at home.

Iterative Design

The following table outlines our iterative design after our primary and secondary research:

	Filename	Activity
1	HAH Content v1.pdf	-----
2	HAH Content v2.pdf	Items grouped according to format of content
3	HAH Content v3.pdf	Items grouped according to type of content
4	HAH Content v4.pdf	Group names / potential categories for global navigation refined
5	HAH Content v5.pdf	Category names and content refined and re-organized
6	HAH wireframe 1.png HAH wireframe 2.png HAH wireframe 3.png	Lo-fi prototype (non-clickable) created as conceptual sketches to aid in design

Formative Evaluation

We had conducted usability tests with four representative users via Zoom; users were given a link to the prototypes. They opened the link and clicked/used our prototypes to complete designated tasks. We later met with our partner via Zoom and showed the clickable mid-fi prototype. The following summary outlines the feedback from the usability tests and from our partner who had who been presented with the usability test findings:

1. We received overwhelmingly positive feedback from all representative users. They particularly liked the layout, the choice of colors, the organization of IA, and the existence and display of tags within the pages. None of the users were able to give us

any negatives, should-haves, nice-to-haves, or could-changes as feedback. We did not receive any feedback to change or redo any aspect of our design.

2. We received overwhelmingly positive feedback from our partner as well. However, their only concern was its implementation. They noted their technical incapacity and the lack of staff resources on their team. They requested that we provide them with wireframes or blueprints that they could offer to student workers for their technical help. They also suggested a collection of best practices to serve as a guideline for their technical team.

From this feedback, we mark our next steps as follows:

1. Construct blueprints or wireframes to serve as instructions for our partner and their team. These documents will be easy to understand for a team with limited technical capacity.
2. Construct a design and recommendations document that demarcate the best practices in the UX industry. This document will be high-level and meant to serve the client's technical team in the short-term and long-term future.
3. Work towards building a high-fidelity prototype that could provide details for the technical team to implement.