Responsive Redesign 2014

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Project Goals

- Establish a "one web" content strategy
- Share templates and interaction design patterns across brands
- Provide enough flexibility to enable custom branding and layouts as necessary
- Promote a single domain (no more "m-dot")
- Simplify and improve analytics

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Content Strategy: "One Web"

There is no such thing as the "mobile web"

- Different devices, same content and use cases
- Mobile users resent watered down versions of desktop sites
- Most users work across different devices, beginning tasks on one device and finishing them on another
- Many users are mobile-only and perform all of their online tasks on their mobile device
  - If content isn't on mobile, it doesn't exist

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Content vs. Presentation

Use case:

"I would like the user to be able to browse through a series of photos/images."
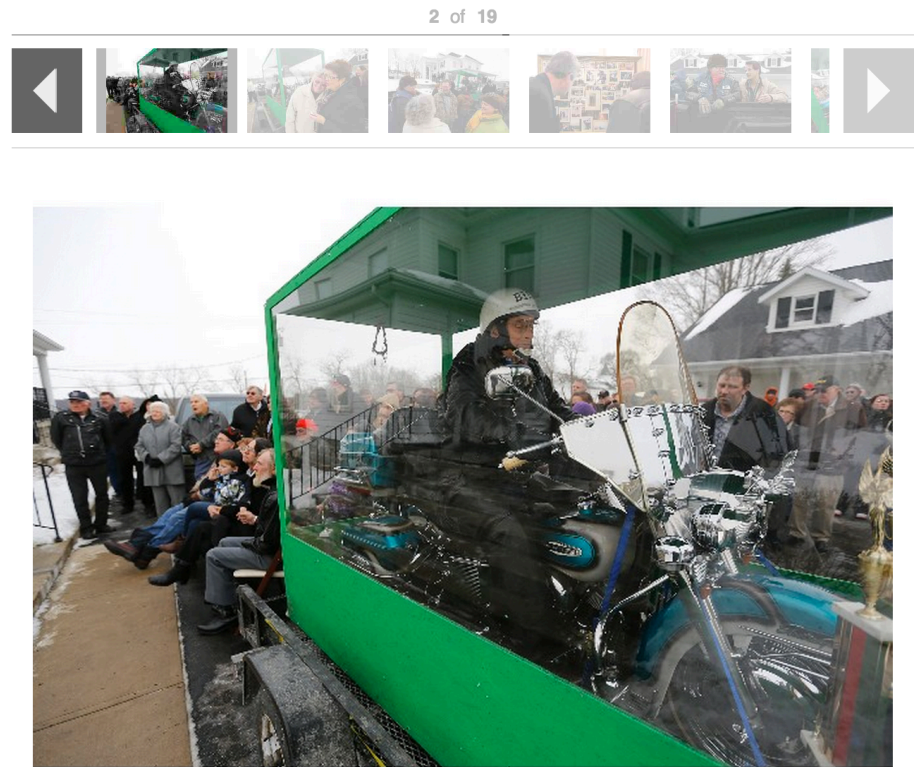
Content:

Content vs. Presentation

Small device presentation:

Large device presentation:

Content Strategy: "One Web"

If it's unnecessary on mobile, chances are it's unnecessary on the desktop.

Content with questionable value should be reexamined with analytics to back it up:

- Hot Links
- Most Popular, Most Shared
- What do you think?

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Content Strategy: "One Web"

Advertising should be treated as content.

- Ads are grouped tightly in the right rail
  - Easy to ignore due to banner blindness
- Hover ads are disruptive and annoying

Recommendation:
Remove the rail and integrate ads with content
- Higher visibility and better clickthrough rates
- Works well across all devices

Design and Development Process

- Mobile first
- Broad device targets: small, medium, and large
- Clean, minimal design
  - Minimizes design and development time
  - Maximizes front end performance
- Waterfall to Agile
  - Detailed discovery and requirements gathering phase followed by iterative UX design and development
- Collaborative
  - Designers and developers solicit frequent feedback from stakeholders

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IA/UX Design: Goals

- Establish consistent UX design patterns across brands
  - Ease maintenance
  - Maintain focus on new project work
  - Promote consistency for users across brands
- Pare content down to the essentials
- Focus on simple design and interactions for the first iteration
  - MVP = Minimum Viable Product
    - iPhone launched without "essential" features like MMS and copy/paste functionality
  - Iterate and improve over time based on analytics and usability testing
- Improve front end performance
  - Reduce/minimize design elements that don't contribute materially to the content (logos, stock photography)
  - Eliminate rotating/changing content in favor of stacked content
    - Less JavaScript means faster rendering
    - Stacked content is easier for users to scan

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IA/UX Design

Owners: UX Designer
Participants: PM, BA, Stakeholders, Front End Manager, IT Manager
Deliverables: Personas, sitemaps, wireframes/prototypes, style tiles

1.   Review the content strategy and formulate recommendations and amendments based on UX best practices
2.   Compile user personas based on the final content strategy
3.   Map out user journeys and use cases to determine pages/templates/ functionality that UX artifacts must represent
4.   Break templates and functionality down into modules so each piece can be designed to be independently responsive
5.   Start with basic paper prototypes and whiteboard sessions to brainstorm, then move to semi-functional prototypes
6.   Conduct "hallway" usability tests using the prototypes and incorporate feedback into the design
7.   Conduct accessibility testing for users of assistive technologies (screen readers)
8.   Create style tiles demonstrating different UI elements' visual design

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Visual Design

Traditional design comps take too much time to do for every page on a responsive site
- – Separate comps for mobile, tablet, desktop

Recommendation:

Create a style guide based on style tiles
- – General guide with fonts, colors, etc.
- – "Mini" design comps for each module that can be referenced for any page

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Technical Research and Assessment

Owners: Front End Manager, IT Manager
Participants: Front End Developers, Back End Developers, BA
Deliverables: Task list with hours estimates

1. Define unresolved architectural issues
   - Analytics, DFP, legacy templates, responsive images
2. Identify native app functionality that will need to be ported to the web if native apps go away
   - Push notifications
3. Identify third party content and determine effort to support responsive
4. Identify content that should be editable via OpenCMS, but currently requires a release
5. Identify baseline browsers and popular devices for testing and incorporate this testing into the project plan as its own line item
6. Provide a high-level task list with hours estimates based on these assessments and all new work specified by the IA/UX assessment and content strategy
   - Provide a more detailed task list for the project plan once UX design nears completion
7. Include time for regular code reviews throughout the life of the project

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Project Plan and Management

Owners: Project Manager
Participants: Digital Director, Front End Manager, IT Manager, BA
Deliverables: Project Plan, Gantt chart

- Follow a traditional waterfall workflow for the initial groundwork (requirements gathering, early UX) followed by an iterative approach that involves stakeholders frequently
- Maintain the project long view via a detailed project plan based on the task list and estimates produced by the tech leads, design leads, and BA
- Conduct brief daily stand-ups with everyone
- Conduct weekly project status reviews with stakeholders, team leads, and BAs
- Schedule as-needed sit-downs with stakeholders to review wireframes, prototypes, and development
    - Should be frequent and short
    - Conducted by the UX designer and developer, chaperoned by the BA
    - Stakeholders working on-site part time so they're available for quick review and feedback
- Identify areas of concern and set expectations as needed
    - Change should be anticipated and embraced, but this requires flexibility from everyone

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Project Plan Recommendations

- Stagger the release schedule
  - Start with one site (TWN), then do the next two
  - UX design work streams can overlap, but keep developers working on one site at a time
- Place enhancements to any sites undergoing a redesign on hold
  - Enhancements made to the old site will have to be built separately for the responsive site
- Perform only essential enhancements and bug fixes for other sites to maximize available resources
- Dedicate a rotating front end resource to production defect resolution
  - After each site's launch, move its developers into a support role and rotate production support to project work

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Additional Recommendations

- Establish a single point of contact empowered to make decisions for stakeholders

- Front end developers are responsible for browser testing before QA

  - Provide them with virtual machines for different browsers for a smoother workflow

- QA testers should rely on use cases documented during discovery and UX design

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