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Evaluation Report

Project Summary

This project focused on finding a learning gap and creating a product for an independent high-end interior design firm located in Denver, CO called Recherché Interior Design. Through analysis, myself and the business owner found a need to educate new clients on Recherché's interior design process, services offered, and the general types of billing found throughout the interior design process. Our first rendition of the product was a responsive WordPress website that can be found by visiting http://design.rechercheid.com/. The website requirements were that it should be easily accessed and reviewed by new clients and a provide a secondary content format such as a pdf brochure (https://design.rechercheid.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Recherche-Interior-Design-Lets-Get-Started-3.pdf).

Background

During the information gathering and analysis phase a Recherché client survey illustrated the need to understand the design process, services offered, and billing types more clearly. The business owner interview answers also described a strong need to focus on these topics to help set client expectations throughout the entire design process. Through multiple meetings with the owner we also wanted to incorporate content that conveyed the company's value, experience, custom offerings, and craftsmanship.

Typical projects include kitchen and bathroom designs, furnishing a room, entire house designs, and remodels. A typical project follows a design process from start to finish and usually has a general project estimate. A typical project usually has an hourly rate that is established and agreed upon by the owner and client before work commences. Invoicing is typically provided to the client in stages based on finalizing each section of the design process. Recherché ID also offers a la carte services outside of typical projects such as, paint consultations, general consultations, art procurement, and accessorizing. A la carte services are generally less extensive and fall within an average time and dollar amount.

Evaluation Objectives

Near the end of the first iteration I conducted a formative evaluation to determine how helpful and user-friendly the new website was in portraying the Recherché Interior Design process, services offered, and billing types to a new client. Through this evaluation I wanted to identify areas of improvement so we could most effectively

educate the client. I also wanted to obtain feedback on ways to make the interface and content more user-friendly and appealing.

Evaluation Key Questions

This evaluation had two key questions.

- How well does the website convey the Recherché interior design process, services offered, and billing types to new clients?
  and
- How can the website design and functionality be improved to help new clients understand the Recherché interior design process, services offered, and billing types?

Overall Evaluation Design

The overall evaluation design conducted was simple, formative, and qualitative. The evaluation focuses on the website's design, aesthetics, usability, functionality, and helpfulness of content regarding educating a new client.

Data Collection Methods

The website I created is a first iteration of content and navigation structure. This is the primary reason why the evaluation focuses on quality instead of measurable or quantitative statistics. The client and I used this simple formative evaluation to gage how effectively the website helped to fill knowledge gaps for new clients as well as how easy it was to comprehend and navigate. In the future, if marketing efforts are used to drive traffic to the website and all functionality, usability, and content updates have been applied, we would like to include a quantitative aspect to the evaluation.

Sampling Strategy

This evaluation used convenience and purposive sampling due to time constraints and the ease of having willing participants who could help pilot test the website and provide timely feedback. I found participants who are homeowners, extremely interested in high-end interior design services, and have never utilized Recherché services before.

Analytical Method(s)

Since this was a simple evaluation, we chose three pilot testers who were all very interested in interior design services for their home. The pilot testers were female, ages ranged from 40-70, they had a middle to upper income bracket, and their familiarity with technology differed. I also obtained feedback from the client via a phone conversion on updates she wanted made. In obtaining the evaluation data from the pilot testers, I recorded, reviewed, and organized the interview answers. Then I

presented them in a clear manner to the client so we could determine what modifications to make.

Evaluation Instruments

The evaluation instruments used where a personal written email sent to the pilot testers requesting their help and feedback in the evaluation (see Appendix A for an example of the email). I then followed up with a phone call to explain the evaluation and answer any questions. In the next 1-3 days after the pilot tester reviewed the website, I interviewed them over the phone using the interface rating form (see Appendix B for an example of the rating form). Then I asked a set of open-ended questions (see Appendix C for the open-ended questions). The pilot-testers expounded on some of the interface rating form questions with additional comments.

The Results

The results provided feedback from different perspectives and focus areas. Some pilot testers concentrated more on grammar, some on useability and functionality, and some on aesthetics and content. There were more positive comments then negative and from speaking with the testers I felt like the website did a good job of conveying the company's value, experience, expected level of service, and craftsmanship. None of the users had trouble accessing the site and all pilot testers intuitively progressed through the site in a linear fashion, which was intended in the initial design layout.

Recommendations

The recommendations made by pilot testers that were applied to the first iteration were things such as,

- changing the color scheme of the website from teal to a white minimal look
- making the logo larger
- updating the mobile menu color so the hyperlinks were visible
- updating the H1 heading tags to make them a smaller font size
- updating the photo galleries to display 2 thumbnails per row instead of 3
- adding press articles to showcase experience and designer notoriety
- removing the steps under the design process and adding descriptive titles instead
- added a gallery under the remodel tab
- added a picture of the designer on the contact page
- removed external links that would take people away from the site
- created a downloadable pdf of the site as a secondary content format
- added more photos to project examples and the entire home tab
- made content and typo updates where suggestions were made by pilot testers

Limitations

The main limitation I ran into was due to a fast-paced schedule that provided a limited amount of time to acquire additional pilot testers. I would have liked to include a male client's perspective, interviewed a past and existing client, and gain feedback from other industry professionals such as partner vendors and crafts people.

Another limitation was that the client had very particular ideas on what recommendations she wanted to follow-through with and make active on the website. For example, it was suggested to add a vendors / partner's page, to add a more extensive biography of the designer, and include additional content that details how the designer strives to keep within the client's budget. These items were not added on the first iteration.

Appendix A: Email Introduction Sent to Pilot Testers for Website Evaluation

Dear (New Client Name Here),

I have designed a website to help educate you on how to Get Started with Recherché Interior Design (ID). I'm hoping the website helps convey to you, how Recherché ID performs from the design process, the types of services and products offered, and the type of billing to expect throughout a typical project.

In the next couple of days, I would like to interview you while you have the website open on your device of choice (Example: desktop computer, laptop, tablet, mobile/smart phone). I will ask you questions that will help to rate and evaluate the website and will provide insight into how it can be improved for new clients.

Please start by visiting: https://design.rechercheid.com/

Thank you again for your time and assistance in this website evaluation.

Sincerely,
Krista

Appendix B: Interface and Usability Rating Form Example

Tester Name:
Device Used:
Operating System:
Browser:
Date:

Time:	Low				High
First Impression:					
1. The website is visually appealing.	1	2	3	4	5
2. It provides interesting content.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Colors used are acceptable.	1	2	3	4	5
Focus:					
4. It is clear the audience the website is designed to serve.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The overall purpose of the website is clear.	1	2	3	4	5
Bandwidth:					
6. Page loading times are acceptable.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Photos are effectively used as an aesthetic to showcase services.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Alternative content delivery methods are available.	1	2	3	4	5
Site Framework and Organization					
9. The home page gives a clear outline of the content and what to expect.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Content is organized into a logical framework.	1	2	3	4	5
Text Elements:					
12. Text is free from grammatical and spelling errors.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Text is written at an appropriate level for the intended user.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Text is in readable font and size.	1	2	3	4	5

15. Text is broken by clear subheadings and easy to scan for needed content.	1	2	3	4	5
16. There is reasonable amount of information displayed on each page.	1	2	3	4	5
Navigation:					
17. The appearance of controls (buttons, etc.) gives a clear idea of their functions.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Controls (buttons, links, etc.) for moving around the site are in consistent locations on every page.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Any (or nearly any) page in the site can be reached within three clicks.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Important content is easy to locate and identify.	1	2	3	4	5
21. There are no broken links.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Links to external sites are clearly identified.	1	2	3	4	5
Communication and Feedback					
23. The website provides a clear means of communicating with the business owner.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C: Open-Ended Questions Asked to Pilot-Testers

1. How could the website be improved to provide a better understanding of the interior design process?
2. How could the website be improved to provide a better understanding of the services offered?
3. How could the website be improved to provide a better understanding of the billing types?
4. What did you like most about the website?
5. Please suggest any other ways to improve the website.