Client Survey

Client: Renton History Museum

Team: CHKZ

1 General Information

1.1 What is the name of your company and current (or intended) URL?

Renton History Museum
www.rentonhistory.org

1.2 Who are the primary contacts from your organization and who has final approval on the project? Please list names, titles, email addresses and phone numbers?

Liz Stewart, Museum Director
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425.577.3383, cell

Sarah Samson, Museum Collection Manager
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Theresa Clymer, President, Renton Historical Society
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Alexis Madison, Board of Trustees
alexismadison@bbirmingham.com

1.3 What is your intended launch date for the new site? Are there any outside considerations that may affect the schedule (e.g., PR launch, tradeshow, annual report, etc.)?

Anytime that works. It would be great to start a new year with a new web site, but we can be totally flexible.

1.4 Do you have a specific budget range in mind for this project? Can this project be divided into phases in order to accommodate budget and timing constraints?

We don't have a specific budget in mind, because we have no idea what costs are involved, but we can talk that through. Yes, it can be phased.

2 Current Site

2.1 Do you feel your current site promotes a favorable user experience? Why? Why not?

Our current site consists of pages on the City of Renton web site, and we are pretty difficult to find there. The URL is http://www.rentonwa.gov/rentonhistorymuseum/. We are bound by their restrictions, so we cannot take donations or membership payments, we cannot run an online shop, and there are restrictions on the levels of interactivity and linking to other web sites. Our pages also have to reflect their design standards.

2.2 What specific areas of your current site do you feel are successful? Why are they successful?

We keep the content changing fairly frequently so our News, Exhibits, and Programs pages are the most popular (although we haven't checked the numbers anytime recently). We also have a walking tour posted to the web site, which is pretty popular. Our Coast Salish curriculum page is accessed by teachers interested in using the curriculum. And we have our Museum Master Plan housed on a page in a low res format, which is real convenient for people interested in what our future plans are.

2.3 What shortcomings exist with the current site and what three things would you change on the site today, if you could?

I listed some of the shortcomings above. Three things to change:
- ability to take payments for memberships and donations
- greater interactivity, maybe a Twitter feed and Facebook feed, maybe a blogging function
- improve the design and navigation

2.4 Have you conducted usability tests on your current site? If so, how long ago? Please include any reports or findings.

No.

2.5 How important is it to maintain your current look and feel, logo, and branding?

We definitely want a new look and feel. We do not now have a logo that we like (long story) and we are interested in new branding. If the team were able to come up with new ideas for branding, we would be delighted.

3 Reasons for Redesign

3.1 What are the main reasons you are redesigning your site? (New business model, outdated site, expanded services, different audience, etc.

All of the above! The Museum has a new master plan that is our blueprint for reaching out to new audiences and developing new programs, and now we're looking for a web site that reflects that.

You can see our master plan here: http://www.rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=25536. (Click on the cover with the yellow bar.)

Our hope is to cultivate the next generation of museum supporters - younger, more diverse, and more creative and imaginative - that will sustain us into the future.

3.2 What are your primary online business objectives with the site redesign? What are your secondary objectives? (Increased sales, marketing/branding awareness, reduce customer service calls, etc.) Please discuss both long- and short-term goals.

- Building our audience and membership
- Strengthening brand awareness, particularly that we're changing our operations
- Creating efficiencies in donations and membership renewals

3.3 What is the main business problem you hope to solve with the site redesign? How will you measure the success of the solution?

Providing members and donors the opportunity the give online. We're hoping to see an overall measurable increase in donations and membership renewals.

3.4 What existing strategy (both on and offline) is in place in order to meet the new business objectives?

We hope to drive more donors and members to our online presence using social media and print publicity. Our quarterly newsletter is snail mailed to members and it's our most popular member benefit; it will be a great tool to publicize the new web site.

4 Audience/Desired Action

4.1 Describe a typical user coming to your site. How often is s/he online and what does s/he generally use the web for? How old is the user and what does s/he do for a living? (Use as much detail as possible in profiling your target user. Profile more than one type if appropriate.)

We probably have several target users.

The traditional museumgoer / museum member is middle-aged, white, and middle-class; those folks will want to use the online donation system, and may want to find out what's going on at the Museum (new exhibits, programs, other projects).

There will probably also be web visitors interested in doing research on Renton history; these may be students, genealogists, and others interested in history.

Studies also show that first-time museum visitors engage the museum online before making a physical visit, so these may be out-of-towners who are heritage tourists and families or retired people looking for something local to do.

4.2 What is the primary action the user should take when coming to your site? (Purchase, become a member, search for information, etc.)

Probably their first action would be to look for information about the Museum or history more generally; we hope they might be motivated to become a member or leave a donation before they go.

4.3 What are the key reasons why the target user chooses your company's products and/or services? (Cost, service, value, etc.)

Key reasons are:
- Interest in history
- Desire to engage in a local activity

- Value-for-money from a leisure experience. (Admission is $3 for adults and $1 for children.)

4.4 How many people (as far as you can tell) access your site on a daily, weekly or monthly basis? How do you measure usage? Do you forecast usage to increase over the next year and by how

We have no stats on web visits. Depending on how we move content from the city's web site and how well we publicize the new site, we certainly expect that visitors would shift from the old site to the new, and we would hope to increase web site use over time (although some museums are finding that the Facebook page is now the go-to site for visitors).

5 Perception

5.1 Use a few adjectives to describe how the user should perceive the new site. (Ex: prestigious, friendly, corporate, fun, forward-thinking, innovative, cutting edge, etc.) Is this different than current image perception?

Imaginative, creative, stimulating, innovative, community-oriented.

5.2 How is your company currently perceived offline? Do you wish to carry through the same kind of message through your web site?

Friendly, maybe a little dull, but also think we're invisible to many. We definitely hope to change that.

5.3 How does your company differentiate itself from competitors? Do you think your current audience differentiates you from your competition? Please list competitor URLs.

I think our current audience is very locally based so, yes, they do differeniate us from "competitors," but mainly geographically. Among heritage professionals we are known for doing innovative programs; it would be great if others knew that.

http://www.wrvmuseum.org/
http://www.maplevalleyhistorical.com/
http://www.highlinehistory.org/
http://www.eastsideheritagecenter.org/

5.4 List any URLs of sites you find compelling. What specifically do you like about these sites?

http://musevery.com/exhibition1/
http://www.avam.org/
http://www.exploratorium.edu/ (compelling, but don't like the navigation)
http://www.empmuseum.org/ (again, like the design, don't like the navigation)

https://sciencegallery.com/illusion (The exhibits page is awesome.)

6 Content

6.1 Will this site use existing content from the current site? If so, what is the source and who is responsible for approval? If not, will you be creating content in-house or using an outside provider?

We'll be creating content. We will probably move some content over from the City of Renton pages.

6.2 What is the basic structure of the content, and how is it organized? Is it a complete overhaul of the current site, or an expansion?

Complete overhaul. The navigation is fairly easy, so we may want to use some of that - one main page with easy side menu.

6.3 Describe visual elements or content which should be utilized from your current site or marketing materials (logo, color scheme, navigation, naming conventions, etc.).

We're up for a total overhaul. We have a tentative logo that we're considering to replace our current one.

6.4 How will the content of this site (along with functionality and navigation) expand or differ from your current site? Do you have an existing sitemap for the outgoing site structure? Do you already have a sitemap or outline for the proposed redesign?

Not sure how it will differ. We do not have a sitemap or outline, but probably the current one would be a good jumping-off point.

7 Technology

7.1 What is your target platform and browser (if you know)?

Do not know

7.2 Are there specific technologies (Flash, DHTML, JavaScript, Real Audio, etc.) you would like to use in the site? If so, how will they enhance the user experience? Please describe in detail.

No ideas

7.3 Will you have database functionality (dynamic content generation, search capabilities, personalization/log-in, etc.)? Do you already have a database in place? Please describe in detail, including specific information regarding existing programs and software.

No database in place, although our collections cataloguing software, PastPerfect, can accommodate incorporation into a web site. (See http://www.museumsoftware.com/ppoguide.html.)

7.4 Will you have a need for secured transactions (e-commerce)? Do you already offer transactions online? Please describe in detail.

We do not now offer transactions online. We really hope to enable donations and membership renewals, although probably not sell merchandise at this time.

7.5 Will you require other specific programming needs (personalization, search capability)? Please describe in detail.

Unsure.

8 Marketing/Updating

8.1 How do most people find out about your current web site? What methods of distributing the URL already exist within the company?

The URL is on all print materials--newsletter, program flyers, email and snail mail correspondence--and we link to it often from Twitter and Facebook.

8.2 Briefly, what are your short-term marketing plans (Specifically for the site redesign and the 12 months following launch)?

Unsure.

8.3 Do you have an existing or planned marketing strategy in mind to promote this site redesign? If so, please describe.

No.

8.5 Do you intend to keep the site updated? If so, how often? Who is responsible for updating and providing content?

Yes, we hope to update it in small ways at least weekly or more frequently (if we blog). We'd love to link the Twitter and Facebook feeds to it. Right now, our most internet and graphic design-savvy staffer, Sarah Samson, would be designated to update it. Sarah currently maintains our web pages.