

Unit 1 – Site Design

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Table of Contents

Themes	page 3
Personas & Scenarios	page 4
Suburban Bob	page 4
Urbanite Karen	.....	page 5
Student Stephen	.....	page 6
Suzie Spectacles	.....	page 7
Other Considerations	.....	page 8
Site Mockup	.....	page 9
Mapped Learning Outcomes	.....	page 12
References	.....	page 13

Theme

When I contemplated a theme for a website, I wanted to selfishly achieve a dual purpose with my selection. Primarily, I wanted to pick a theme that would allow me to meet the requirements of this course, but secondly I wanted to select a topic that I could use to grow a website over time as a hobby as I used to operate a website years ago and found it to be therapeutic with regards to mental health. I landed on a theme centered around the hobby of hiking, primarily around the Alberta area. With hiking as the central theme, there will be a few areas I hope to explore, some will be ambitious, and some less so. I plan to explore hiking through providing reviews of trails, providing articles on hiking, and discussing my own personal physical fitness journey and how the hobby of hiking can help other achieve physical fitness goals.

A primary area of the site will be trail reviews. Trail reviews will provide information on trails for other users to take in, and help the audience decide if they wish to pursue a trail themselves or look at another option. Although there are trail reviews available on a social media page called AllTrails, located at www.alltrails.com, my site will be a bit different as the reviews I intend to post will be more detailed in nature and be from a viewpoint of someone who is not extremely physically fit. My reviews will be sure to acknowledge difficult and easier portions of a trail and focus on not being arrogant in a review and describing trail being easy which often comes up on short AllTrails reviews or on the Facebook group, Hike Alberta, when people describe a trail when people ask about the difficulty. I feel this will provide a more accurate difficulty rating for readers. This will be by far the most ambitious part of the site, but will evolve over time and more reviews will be added. To start, a few reviews will be added from this most recent summer.

Articles will also be a component of the site, serving an informational purpose. Some of these articles may simply be links to outside sources, but will provide visitors with necessary information so that they can start enjoying hiking themselves. I plan to include articles that cover off the importance of what to pack in a day bag for a hike, so people have an enjoyable experience, or links to articles about bear safety and other useful pieces of information. This will likely require less upkeep and have less updates than the trail review section of the site, but still provide valuable information for people. I wish I was more prepared and had a resource I could rely on to go over some basics before I went out for the first time in a single location.

Lastly, a small section going over my own personal wellness journey will be appropriate to complement the other content on the site. This will encourage others to consider taking up hiking as I discuss the benefits, and let them know the challenges I faced, including not being able to finish a trail. This will be related to many people who are prone to biting off more than they can chew and help bring a human element to the hobby that is sometimes missed in resources provided by experienced enthusiasts. This section might be the difference between someone trying hiking or not, and I hope it helps people become healthier through physical fitness.

Personas and Scenarios

Suburban Bob

43 Year Old Male

Married

Real Estate Agent

Will skim the site for information, too busy



(Luci in Bici, 2017)

Suburban Bob lives outside of the city and spends much of his time in the city helping clients see houses. Bob is often curious about picking up a hobby that could help with fitness levels. Deep down Bob feels he works too hard and has no time for himself. Married with no kids, his wife is also a real estate agent and works long hours, too. Bob is curious about picking up a hobby that would help him increase physical fitness levels, while also being an activity he can do with his wife. He thinks hiking would be an easy activity where they could go on nice nature walks. Bob would come to the site to learn about what hiking entails so he can feel more prepared. As a real estate agent, time is a hot commodity for Bob, and he wants to be prepared enough for hiking so time isn't wasted. However, Bob is also well connected given his long time in the real estate industry and could refer other people to the site, generating increased traffic.

Scenario 1

Bob and his wife want to go out on their first hiking trip. He wants to be able to review the website quickly for information for people who are new to the activity. In order to achieve meeting Bob's needs, the site will need to be well organized so he can find starter tips quickly and efficiently. A site which requires Bob to click through multiple different pages to get to what he needs will not serve his needs.

Scenario 2

Motivated by fitness, Bob sees a section on a wellness journey and does some skimming as he is curious about improving his fitness levels. He gains a better understanding and appreciation for the difficulties presenting from hiking and has his feelings of hiking being easy corrected by reading the diary I have on the site documenting my wellness journey. As a result, Bob then goes to the trail reviews area to see if it's easy to find a beginner trail, again hoping the information is easy to find.

Urbanite Karen

47 Year Old Female

Single

Teacher

Likes to read, will read the website if the content is good.



(123RF, n.d.)

Urbanite Karen is a secondary school English teacher who spends a lot of time with her friends going to shows and going out to trendy restaurants in the City of Calgary. She wants to appear more impressive when she speaks with her friends, and she feels can do that by talking about her adventures in the mountains. She would go to the site as she has no idea what kind of animals there in the mountains and what ones to be afraid of. She has always thought the deer running through her yard are cute, but wonders if she should quickly do a bit of research before she heads out to the mountains for an adventure where she can show her friends what great photos she got by sharing on Instagram.

Scenario 1

Karen is planning to go on an epic hike as her friends are busy with their own lives this weekend. She goes to the site during a spare in between classes on Friday and wants to research about some of the wildlife she can get up close and personal with. This information should be easily located on the website. Hiking in the mountains is beautiful, but dangerous if not properly prepared when it comes to wildlife.

Scenario 2

Karen is motivated by being accepted by her friends, and one of the ways she feels she can accomplish this is by sharing great Instagram shots. Karen goes to the site and trail reviews hoping to find a trail that has a great site so she can show off herself with the site in the background, hoping her friends will like the post on social media and ask her about her adventure when they get together next.

Student Stephen

22 Year Old Male

Single

Student

Reads the site in full



(This Person Does Not Exist, n.d.)

Stephen is a student at a post-secondary school. He leads an active life and likes strength train in his free time. He grew up in Regina, however is going to class in Calgary. In one of his new classes this semester he has met a new group of friends and he knows they are avid hikers. Stephen likes to appear prepared and knowledgeable about anything he participates in, even if he has not done the activity before. Stephen would be best served by reviewing some articles on getting started with hiking, so he packs the right food and right amount of water for his hike.

Scenario 1

Stephen's new acquaintances are going out for a hike on the weekend and have asked Stephen to come. Although he strength trains, Stephen doesn't really know what he needs to bring to be prepared, so he goes to the side to look for beginning information.

Scenario 2

As a new hiker planning to hike in the Rockies, he has purchased bear spray as he heard it was something everyone should have on them when he told his new friends he had never gone hiking. He has no idea how to use it, so returns to the site to find external content on how to use bear spray so he can feel more prepared.

Suzie Spectacles

38 Year Old Female

Single Mom

Paralegal

Browses the website only for what she needs



(This Person Does Not Exist, n.d.)

Suzie is a single mom with an older daughter. The daughter is filled with teenage angst and Suzie has difficulties connecting with her. They do share a passion for the great outdoors and have tackled a few popular hikes in the Calgary area together, where Suzie feels they finally connect. Suzie would visit the site to gain insight on other trails so she can use that information to impress her daughter with new trails.

Scenario 1

Suzie and her daughter want to go on a trail less traveled for the weekend and check out the trail reviews section, hoping to get some guidance. Ultimately trail reviews could be narrowed down by a few specifications to make the trail type Suzie is interested in accessible without too much trouble.

Scenario 2

Suzie and her daughter want to push their limits and attempt a longer trail than what they normally do, one they will remember for some time. They return to the trail reviews section, looking to find a trail of longer length that has good reviews as she doesn't want her and her daughter to hike a great distance for disappointment. She wants her daughter to be impressed if they are going to spend a long time out in the mountains together.

Other Considerations

There are some legal considerations for a site of this nature. Linking or integrating external information, it is important to properly credit the sources.

Using external photos will depend on permissions granted by originators of work. In some cases, the information will be sourced from my own camera work.

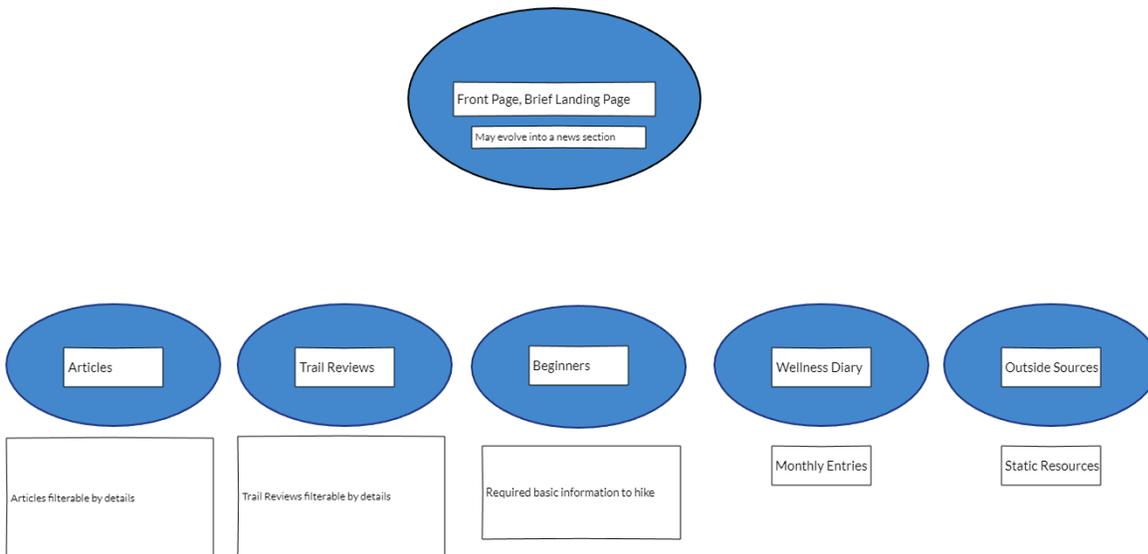
Site design requirements will be important to address a few common themes that came up in the scenarios.

- Information will need to be readily available
- Information will need to be well organized

With the first persona especially, a mobile version of the site will be important to offer. Suburban Bob, for example, likes to skim for information, and wants the information “yesterday”, so it is unlikely he will boot up a desktop PC to review the site.

Ultimately, it appears the personal wellness diary section is more self-serving, as the personas do not really care about it. Provided the wellness section is not highlighted and treated more importantly than the other sections, it can stay (for now).

Site Mockup



The most ambitious part of the website will be content creation, by far. I realized that if people aren't interested in trail reviews or articles, they are likely new to hiking and need a beginner's section. I may shuffle the categories around as far as order depending on what content shapes up to look like. The main page will also evolve into more of a news section alerting the visitor to updates and pulling in data from external sources, allowing me to incorporate learning objectives of later units.

A main page will allow readers to go to:

- Articles
 - Organized by most recent by default in table format or filterable by categories
 - Categories include:
 - Animal articles
 - Gear articles
 - Requires a second click to the article
- Trail Reviews
 - Organized by most recent by default in table format or filterable by categories
 - Categories include:
 - Difficulty
 - Popularity
 - Distance
 - Time to Complete
 - Hiking type (Hike, Scramble, Mountaineering)

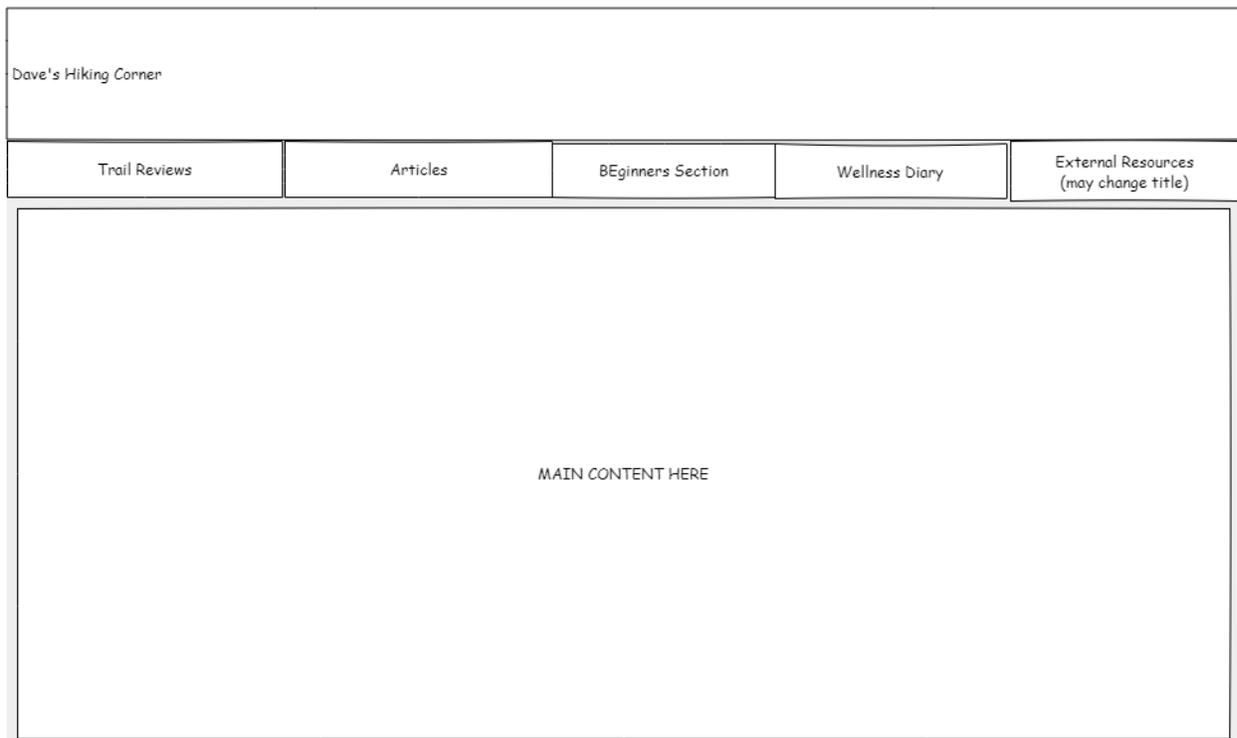
Unit 1 – Site Design

- Requires a second click to the review
- Beginners Section
 - An introductory article going over some of the basics so a person can enjoy their first hike
- Wellness Diary
 - A chronicle of my personal journey to improve my own wellness and the challenges overcome or milestones achieved
- Outside Sources
 - Different than articles, a collection of a few resources that may be useful to also follow for a visitor such as AllTrails, Gaia, the Kananaskis.org site, etc

Basic view of the site will look as follows:

Desktop Version

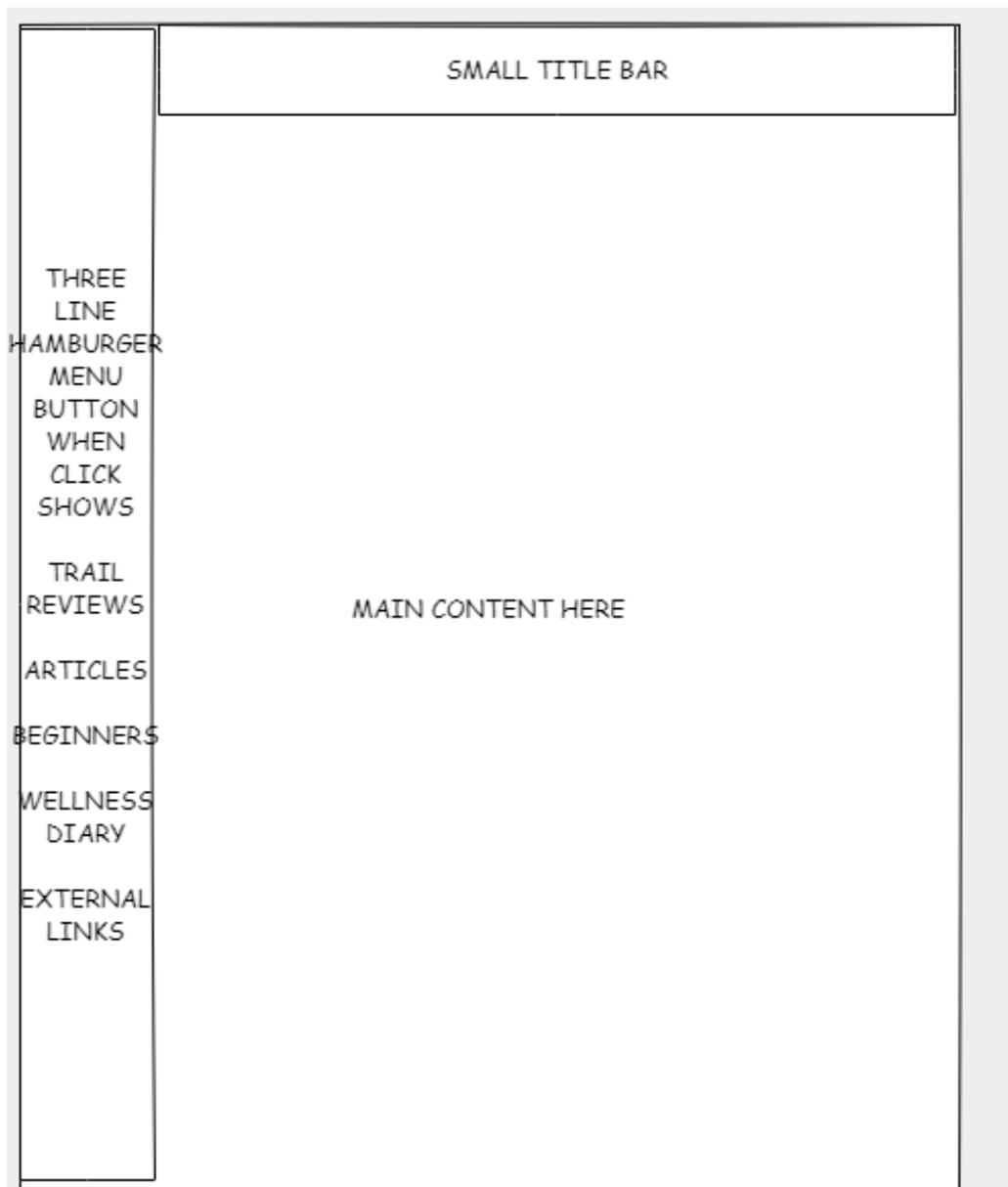
*It will be important to allow visitors to jump to the top of the site again when in an article should they want to return to the menu bar. A small contact me will be present on pages, at the bottom of the content.



Unit 1 – Site Design

Mobile Version

* A small contact me will be present on pages, at the bottom of the content.



Mapped Learning Outcomes

Potential Grades

A - Your design fits very well with the site's purpose, and with the personas and scenarios you have created, with clear links between purpose, scenario, personas, and design. Excellent presentation. Everything is very well communicated with clear illustrations, clear and unambiguous text, and an easily navigable structure and design. Your design is extendible to accommodate all the requirements for the rest of the course outputs. An experienced web designer could take your design and create a site that would be an excellent fit with the purposes and needs that it is intended to address.

B - A clearly communicated set of design documents that show strong continuity and linking between purpose, scenarios, personas, and design. Well presented, in a form that an experienced web designer would find complete and sufficient to design a website that would fit the purposes and needs it is intended to address. Complete.

C - A good set of design documentation that provides sufficient information for an experienced web designer to create a professional website addressing the needs of its users, at least as identified in the personas. May be some minor weaknesses in presentation and may be slightly incomplete in some respects, or there may be aspects of the design that do not fully take into account the purpose, scenarios, or personas. Personas or scenarios may have insufficient detail or be slightly unrealistic.

D - Some weaknesses in presentation, limited continuity and linking between purposes, personas, scenarios, and/or the design. Insufficient detail to be able to judge the effectiveness or meaning of some elements. Unreflectively chosen personas or scenarios that do not relate well to the purposes of the site. Limited potential for development to meet the learning outcomes of the course.

Recommended Grading

The recommended grade for this unit would be an A. The links between the personas, scenarios, and the site purpose are clear. The presentation of the personas and scenarios shows the site purpose is justified, but also clearly shows a common theme of needing information to be easily accessible as well as well organized. Perhaps not achievable in the first couple of units, but there is also a clear need to display the site information differently depending on the device used, achievable with JavaScript. With the plan to incorporate external site information into the site and turn the home page of the site into a page pulling in external data, that will meet the obligation of the later units of the course as well. Both the planned future use of JavaScript and external site data clearly meet the needs and criteria of a dynamic website.

References

[Real Estate Agent Faking Excitement]. (2017, October 10). Luci in Bici. <http://www.luciinbici.org/why-hire-a-real-estate-agent/>

123RF. (n.d.). [Oblivious lady in white shirt]. Oblivious Stock Photos and Images. <https://www.123rf.com/stock-photo/oblivious.html?sti=mamvyb0qaddxhkd1b>

[Young male with hat]. (n.d.). This Person Does Not Exist. <https://thispersondoesnotexist.com/>

[Blonde lady with glasses]. (n.d.). This Person Does Not Exist. <https://thispersondoesnotexist.com/>