

WEB DESIGN PRACTICES *for* **SMALL BUSINESSES**

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ABSTRACT

Web Design Practices for Small Businesses

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The purpose of this study was to discover the most effective and successful strategies of web design and development for small businesses. A small business' web site is an increasingly critical marketing tool that can even drive profits if used correctly. This study makes an example of a web site redesign for Linnaea's Café, a coffee house, art gallery, and music venue in San Luis Obispo, California. The web site redesign was developed using a dynamic content management system to allow easy, frequent updates to the site by the café's manager.

To determine what consumers want and expect to see on a small business' web site, a survey was created and delivered to Cal Poly students, a big percentage of customers at Linnaea's Café. The survey showed that most people go to a small business' web site for basic information such as location and store hours, and almost everyone agree that it is important for the web site to be attractive. However, a vast majority of respondents also concluded that a dynamic web site that is regularly updated with fresh content would be valuable for a small business.

When the web site redesign for Linnaea's Café was completed, a short survey was sent to customers that frequent the café. The survey asked the customers to view the old version of the web site and the new version of the web site, and then answer multiple choice questions about whether or not there was an improvement in overall look and navigation. The customers also provided open-ended feedback. Overall, all survey respondents felt that the new web site was a significant improvement with better navigation. Dynamic web development was very successful in this case, and should be considered for any small business' web site due to its ease of updating and added incentive for repeat visits.

Acknowledgements

Many individuals contributed to the completion of this study, and I would like to express how grateful I am for their time and knowledge. First, I want to thank Harvey Levenson and Nancy Cullins for their guidance and thorough editing in the early stages of this study. I want to thank all of the survey respondents for sharing their thoughts on web design for small businesses. I would also like to thank Marianne Orme, the manager of Linnaea's Café, for trusting me to redesign her web site, for being a cooperative client, and for having the best espresso in town. Most of all, I want to thank Lorraine Donegan, my senior project advisor, for helping to make this study the best it can be and for inspiring me to learn more about web design in the first place.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Purpose of Study

In this digital age, businesses are increasingly realizing the importance of maintaining a presence on the Internet. A society that constantly has a wealth of information at its fingertips expects most businesses to have a web site and will often make judgments based upon the appearance, relevance, and quality of the material presented. A web site is frequently the first thing a new customer will want to view before deciding whether or not to make a purchase. Therefore, it is necessary for a business' web site to reflect its product or service in a positive light and stand out among its competitors. There is no reason for a business of any size not to take advantage of the speed, ease of updating, and low cost of a web site for sharing information and promoting marketing campaigns.

This study asks and answers the question: What is the most beneficial method of designing and developing web sites for small businesses? Web sites may generally be constructed in a static or dynamic fashion. Static web sites are more basic and exist to deliver fundamental information. They change very little over time and are usually updated by someone with experience in web development. Static web sites are less expensive and quicker to create, but content tends to become stagnant. In contrast, dynamic web sites are easily and consistently updated and boast some degree of interactivity. Anyone can upload new content to a dynamic web site with no experience in web development through the use of a simple user interface. Viewers have a reason to repeatedly visit the web site because new content is introduced regularly. Dynamic web sites may be more expensive to create and maintain overall, but the benefits far outweigh the costs. This study will determine if dynamic web sites designed to reflect a business' brand identity will result in an improved reputation and more web site visitors.

The purpose of this study is to help small businesses remain competitive in today's economy by learning how to maximize the potential of their web sites. A web site has the capability of increasing revenue by bringing brand awareness to Internet users, and the more times a user views a business' web site, the more likely it is that he or she will make a purchase from that

business. This study determines what methods bring the most users to a web site and keep them coming back to broaden the consumer base and boost revenue. Helping small businesses maintain a competitive edge prevents monopolies, and on a grander scale, supports a healthy economy. Throughout the duration of this study, references will be made to a web site being built for Linnaea's Café, a small coffee shop, music venue, and art gallery in San Luis Obispo, California. The current web site Linnaea's Café displays is ten to fifteen years old, difficult to navigate, uses clashing colors, and has outdated content. A beautiful web site will be developed that has dynamic properties, is easily updated by the manager, and brings awareness to customers about events. The development of this dynamic web site will serve as a primary case study to demonstrate how interactive properties affect the number of visitors, time spent on the web site, and search engine rankings.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

This portion of the study delves into the research and expert opinions on web design for small businesses. As research suggests, small businesses deal with web site challenges that are significantly different from those of large corporations, and incorporating a frequently-updated blog may be a way to make a business more personable and attract returning visitors with fresh content.

In recent times, “a company’s web site is its primary public face for customers, partners and clients. All business, especially those that rely on Web visitors for profit, should do everything they can to make sure they [create] user-friendly and well-designed sites.” (Rapoza) Small businesses have to be especially creative with their web site because “the very large and growing number of web sites...is making it increasingly difficult for organizations to attract visitors to their site and, more importantly, convert these visitors into customers. The challenge of attracting visitors can be even more daunting for small businesses than for their larger counterparts because of such considerations as a lack of name recognition, limited web site development and maintenance budgets, and a lack of advertising resources.” (Auger) However, there is a way to overcome this challenge; “recent research suggests that one of the key elements in a successful commercial web site is its interface and design. A report by Chain Store Age even proposed that poor interface and design has been a key element of several high profile site failures and...the design of a site is a crucial determinant of whether visitors are likely to return to the site.” (Auger)

Web designers and developers recognize that one of the most important design elements in commercial web sites may be their level of interactivity. This view on the importance of interactivity is shared by a number of researchers who consider the capacity to support interactivity as one of the key advantages of the Internet over other mass media. This may be because high levels of involvement can stimulate consumers to be more alert to the information presented to them.

Interactivity can also increase the level of individuality between participants and can give the firm the ability to have “quasi-personal contact” with its customers. It is expected that interactivity should be positively related to the overall performance of the site, as more interactive sites should allow customers to more easily gather information and communicate with the organization. In effect, more interactive sites should enable the organization to convert visitors into buyers more effectively. On the other hand, there is no reason to believe and no theoretical justification to suggest that more interactive sites will attract more visitors. That is, interactive sites do not necessarily attract more visitors as they are often not more appealing or unique than less interactive sites. However, interactive sites are potentially more effective at satisfying customers and converting visitors into buyers. (Auger)

A recent study showed that the level of interactivity of a site is positively associated with overall performance, but that the level of sophistication of the design is not related to that performance construct. These results have important implications for both theory and practice. From a theoretical perspective, these results lend additional support for the interactivity construct and its importance in electronic environments. Interactivity appears to make web sites more useful and valuable to both customers and organizations by improving the level of communication between the two parties. That is, an interactive web site gives customers an additional channel by which to communicate directly with the organization and also gives them more control over the nature and frequency of interactions with the organization. For organizations, interactivity allows them to better understand their customers and, in the process, serve them more effectively. (Auger)

When it comes time to develop a web site, it must be understood that “the sophistication of a web site’s design is a controversial issue...Research on the graphical user interface clearly demonstrates that graphics do impact the behavior of computer users. However, there is also recent evidence to suggest that overly sophisticated and graphic intensive web sites may have a negative impact on users [because they take longer to load on the Internet].” (Auger) Because it is so easy for web site designers to “add multimedia, Flash, [which is a popular method for adding animation and interactivity to web pages], and crawling ads, [which may pop up or cover the content of a web site], the temptation to go overboard is always there. But [a person would not fill their] company lobby with neon signs or televisions blaring commercials, and [they would not] make it so cluttered that visitors could not find their way through it.” (Rapoza)

Therefore, the designer should strike a balance by creating an aesthetically pleasing web site with a moderate amount of graphics.

As for the aesthetics of a site, research revealed that a “sophisticated design may be a good way to attract visitors when launching a site, but may lose its effectiveness once individuals become aware of, and familiar with, the site. That is, the novelty associated with a sophisticated design appears to ‘wear off,’ which may lead to a lack of association between design sophistication and the number of visitors for older sites.” (Auger) A web site can not rely on stagnant graphics alone to keep visitors coming back more than once. This is why dynamic content reigns supreme.

When the structure and aesthetics of a web site has been addressed, it is time to consider dynamic elements that will bring added value to the user’s experience...As multimedia materials have become more standard, many web authors are turning to interactive technologies including blogs and podcasts to create a more dynamic online presence for their visitors. A blog (short for web log) is a series of online journal entries to which others may be allowed to respond. Blogs are easy to create and use and typically are free of charge. Newest additions are positioned at the top of the web page, so visitors are always aware of the most recent content. In addition, some blogs are syndicated or send out automatic notifications when content is updated. (Miranda)

A blog bridges the wide gap between sexy advertising copy and dry mission statements, connecting web site visitors with a company via content that is easy for employees to update whenever the spirit moves them. For a small business, a blog might discuss company culture, industry trends, or even simply news items that are interesting. A blog is a window into a business’s people, culture, and values. It is desirable to encourage customers to connect to a brand in a way that encourages community, trust, and, of course, repeat sales. In today’s crowded marketplace, it is important to embrace any opportunity to attract consumer loyalty. Blogging software makes updating site content remarkable quick and easy. This means that a blog can also serve as a crisis communications tool, providing customers with opinion or defense—instantly. (Morgan)

In order to set up a blog on web site, there are a variety of content management systems (software installed on a web site that organizes content dynamically) that can be used. One of

the most popular is Wordpress, a “free, open-source blogging platform [that] was developed for blogging, [although] some [businesses] use it as a content management system for their entire web site. The software allows for the creation and management of blog posts and static pages, meaning that [businesses] can use it to post both timely and permanent content. But just because your site uses blog software doesn’t mean it has to look like a blog. Wordpress has hundreds of themes created by talented users of the application. Choosing a different theme allows the [business] to change its web site’s look. Themes can be modified by making changes to the Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), or a library can design its own theme.” (Farkas)

Setting up a blog for a company’s web site is not enough to deem it successful; it must also be maintained. This involves writing “at least three posts a week. Readers are more likely to return to a blog if they find fresh material. Plus, one of a blog’s main functions is adding pages to a company’s otherwise static web site. Sites with [a lot] of pages and many incoming and outgoing links are more likely to appear near the top of search-engine results.” (Hopkins) The subject of blog posts should cover “a little bit of everything. A restaurant chef could reveal how she created a new dish. A dog trainer might write about a customer’s frustrations living with a new puppy. Good blogs are varied in subject and length of entries.” (Hopkins)

Researching scholarly articles on the most successful web sites for small businesses has suggested that web sites with a simple design, conservative graphics, and dynamic content organized with a content management system, such as a Wordpress blog, are highly effective.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methods

In order to determine the success of a dynamic web site for small businesses, research will be required to learn how people react to interactive properties of a web site. The underlying goal of a business' web site is to improve sales and reach out to customers. If customers or potential customers react positively and are compelled to explore the pages and come back to the web site more than once, then the web site is considered conducive to increased sales of the business. However, if the majority of customers that view the web site feel that there is too much content and do not like the overall concept of a dynamic web site, sales may be affected negatively.

The primary method of research in this study will be descriptive research, followed by content analysis. Descriptive research studies are “designed to determine the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of study. The aim is to describe what exists with respect to variables or conditions in a situation.” (Levenson) Content analysis will take the subjective descriptive research and present it in a quantitative manner (Levenson). As it applies to this study, I will be describing how well the new web site is received by the target market of Linnaea's Café, and compare this to how the old web site is received by the target market. This will be achieved through receiving feedback and surveys.

A dynamic web site will be developed for Linnaea's Café, a small coffee shop in San Luis Obispo. This web site will serve as the primary case study research that will be carried out in this study. A case study is an “intensive investigation of once individual or of a single unit, such as a small group, a department within a company, or a company itself.” (Levenson) The emphasis of this case study will be on how the implementation of a dynamic web site affects Linnaea's Café. I will gather data about the business' present state and past experiences and compare them with future experiences after the new web site is displayed.

When the web site has been launched, it will be presented via email to the target market of Linnaea's Café and they will be asked a short sequence of multiple choice questions followed by an open-ended chance to add feedback or comments. The previous static version of the web

site will also be displayed for comparison. I will measure the response of 30 individuals with differing demographics and ask the participants multiple choice questions about how they feel about the new site and analyze the data. These people will be a representative sample of the customers from Linnaea's Café. Questions that I will ask these individuals are as follows:

1. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being best), what do you think of the overall appearance of the new web site?
 - A. 1 (strongly prefer old site)
 - B. 2 (prefer old site)
 - C. 3 (neutral, no preference)
 - D. 4 (better)
 - E. 5 (much better)
2. Would you visit this web site more than once to read the posts on the home page?
 - A. Yes
 - B. Yes, but I would need incentive such as special deals or discounts
 - C. No
3. Compared to the old web site, is the new web site easier to navigate?
 - A. Yes, much easier
 - B. Yes, slightly easier
 - C. Can't tell
 - D. No, slightly more difficult
 - E. No, much more difficult
4. (Optional) If you have any other feedback or comments, please feel free to write them here.

To gain a broader perspective of how people feel about dynamic web sites, a survey will be created on SurveyMonkey and made available to college students, an important demographic of Linnaea's Café. It will be sent to all of the students in the Graphic Communication department and made available online to students of any discipline at Cal Poly. Therefore, the respondents of my survey will mostly be college students of both sexes that are educated in the graphic arts. I hope to get at least one hundred responses to my survey. However, the goal with this survey

is to get as many responses as possible to get the most accurate overall reaction to dynamic web sites. The benefit of implementing a survey into the research is that numerical data can easily be generated and understood. The data will be suitable for future content analysis. Questions that I will ask in the survey are as follows:

1. What are your typical reasons for going to a small business' web site? Check all that apply.
 - A. Find out the location
 - B. Find out the hours it is open
 - C. Find out their phone number or contact information
 - D. Find out about discounts or special deals
 - E. Find out about store events
 - F. Learn more about what they sell
 - G. Find out the prices of what they sell
 - H. Find information about job openings

2. What factors would encourage you to visit a small business' web site more than once? Check all that apply.
 - A. Site updates with special deals or discounts
 - B. Site updates with new store events
 - C. Read interesting blog posts written by a business' representative
 - D. Find out what new products or services are offered
 - E. Forgetting store hours or location

3. Is it important for a small business to have an attractive web site?
 - A. Yes, a business' web site says something about the quality of the business and may affect how likely I am to use their product or service
 - B. No, a business' web site is irrelevant to how likely I am to use their product or service

4. Do you think it is valuable for small businesses to maintain a dynamic web site that is regularly updated with fresh content (such as events, specials or discounts, and news)?
 - A. Yes, it would increase traffic and make the web site more interesting to visit

more than once

B. No, it would not be relevant or important for a small business

5. Please rate how important it is for each element below to appear on a small business' web site. (Choose from very unimportant, unimportant, important, or very important)

A. Business name

B. Location

C. Phone number

D. Directions

E. Email address

F. Embedded email contact form on the web site

G. History of business

H. Information about staff

I. Information about discounts

J. List of products and/or services

K. Prices of products and/or services

L. Photo gallery

M. Testimonials

N. Posts with updates about the business

O. Calendar of events (if applicable)

P. Job openings

6. The case study for this senior project deals with a web site redesign for Linnaea's Café, a coffee house in downtown San Luis Obispo. Have you ever been to music or art event at Linnaea's Café?

A. Yes, and it was an event I planned on going to

B. Yes, but I went to the café not knowing about the event

C. No, but I have heard about an event at Linnaea's Café

D. No, and I didn't know there are events at Linnaea's Café

7. The new web site for Linnaea's Café will allow the manager to freely update the site at her convenience. What sort of site updates would compel you to visit the web site? Check all that may apply.

- A. Discounts or special deals
- B. Event previews, such as upcoming bands that will be performing in the café
- C. New menu items
- D. Staff profiles
- E. Job openings
- F. General news about the business
- G. Photos and/or stories about events in the café

When I have collected the responses from this survey, I will be able to extract the data and draw conclusions from the statistics I produce. This will be the content analysis portion of my research; I will take the data from the surveys and present it clearly with indisputable numbers. Content analysis is “a method for quantifying qualitative information gathered from Elite and Specialized interviewing, historical research, and descriptive research. In other words, content analysis is often used in combination with other research methods in developing results and drawing conclusions.” (Levenson) As for the email feedback survey, I will perform a content analysis on the responses as well in order to quantify the subjective material that I gain. I would do this by grouping common responses and calculating percentages of people that feel a certain way. For example, if fifteen out of thirty people liked the idea of a business blog, I would record that 50% of the people I conducted focus groups with were amenable to frequently updated business blogs. This is a quantitative output from qualitative research.

Another important tool I will use in my research will be statistics generated from Google Analytics. I will be able to implement a string of code into my web pages that will tell Google the behavior of every person that visits the web site: what links they click on, how long they visit the web site, and how they found the web site. This will provide some numerical data that will show how effective the new site is.

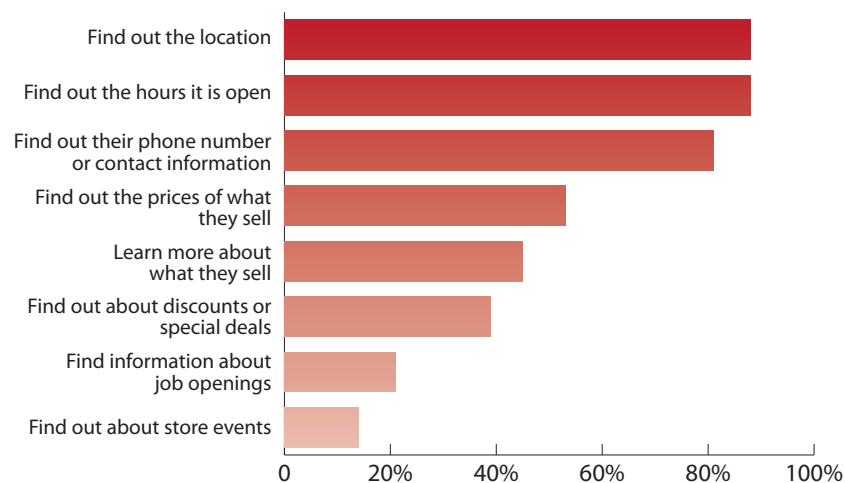
The results of this research will help gain a better understanding of general preferences for small business' web sites and attitudes toward dynamic web sites. This knowledge will help maximize the effectiveness of the web site I am developing for Linnaea's Café and for any web site in general.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Results

The success of a small business' web site is largely determined by how their customers interact with it and whether or not they had a pleasant browsing experience. In order to gain a general understanding of what the public prefers to see on a small business' web site, an online survey was delivered to a mixed demographic. It asked general questions about why the survey respondents go to a small business' web site in the first place and what they expect to see, as well as questions specific to Linnaea's Café, the case study for this report. The survey, powered by SurveyMonkey, got a total of one hundred and thirty-three responses. The results of this survey only include the first one hundred responses because that is the maximum allotment for a basic account. Below are the results of my survey with a brief analysis.

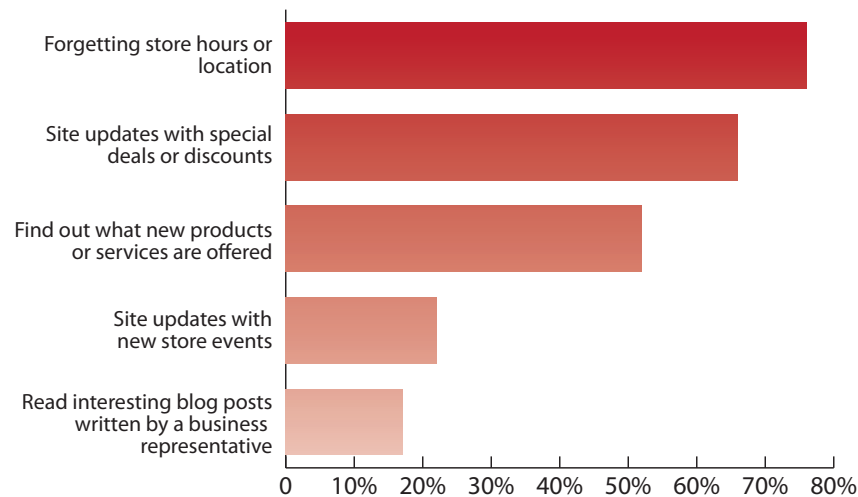
1. What are your typical reasons for going to a small business' web site? Check all that apply.



The results of this question indicate that the location and hours of the business is very important for viewers to see on the web site, as this is one of the major reasons they go to the

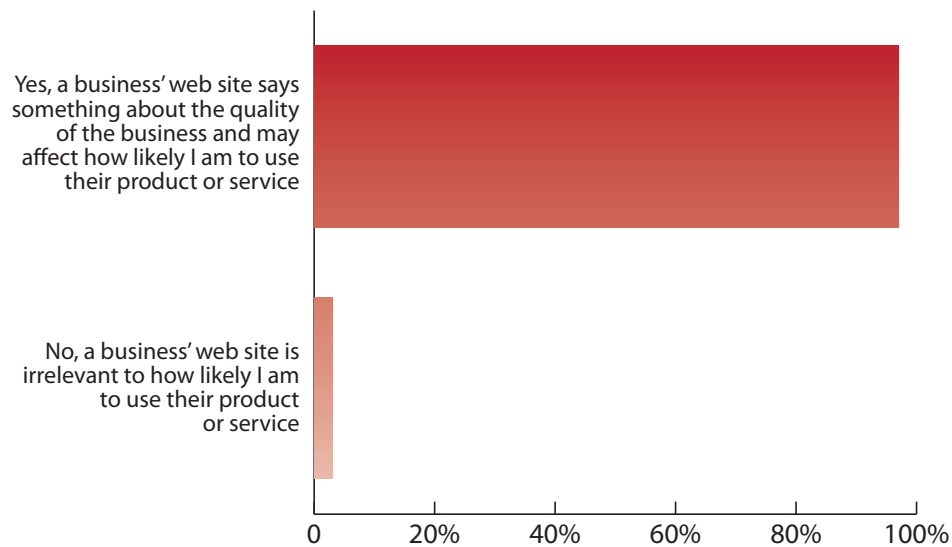
web site in the first place. It could cause a great deal of frustration if customers do not easily find the information they seek. Other important reasons the survey respondents go to a small business' web site are contact information and product prices.

2. What factors would encourage you to visit a small business' web site more than one time? Check all that apply.



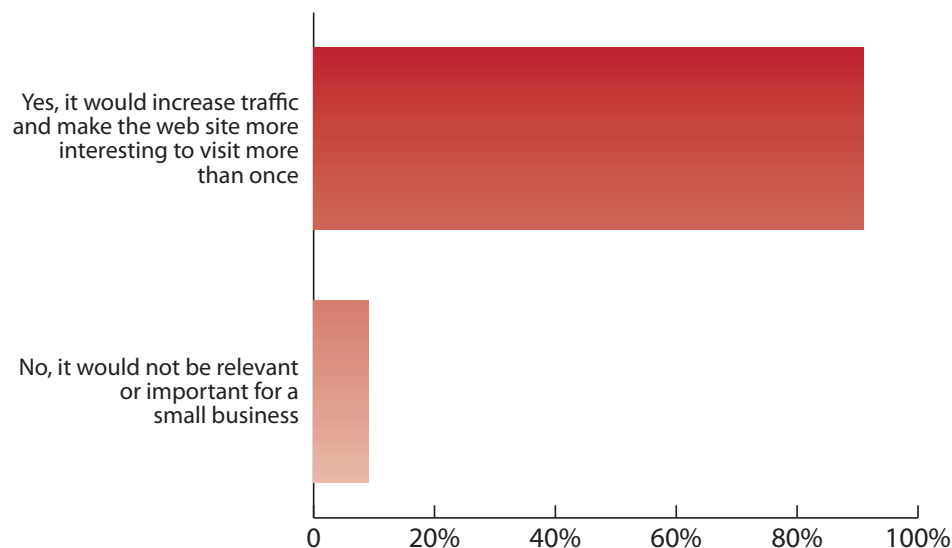
This question was intended to reveal what would be necessary in order to encourage customers to visit a small business' web site on a regular basis, which would help with marketing, brand equity, and customer loyalty. The primary reason that the respondents decided they would visit a web site more than once was in the event they forgot the store's hours or location. This result seems to be expected, but the next most important factor is site updates with special deals and discounts. Customers would go to a small business' web site repeatedly if something was in it for them, such as a coupon. This is very relevant because dynamic web site development easily allows for such site updates, even by the store managers.

3. Is it important for a small business to have an attractive web site?



This survey question was asked to determine if it was worth the time, effort, and money for an “attractive” web site for a small business in particular. The overwhelming response was that it is, indeed, important, and some customers may judge a business based on their web site.

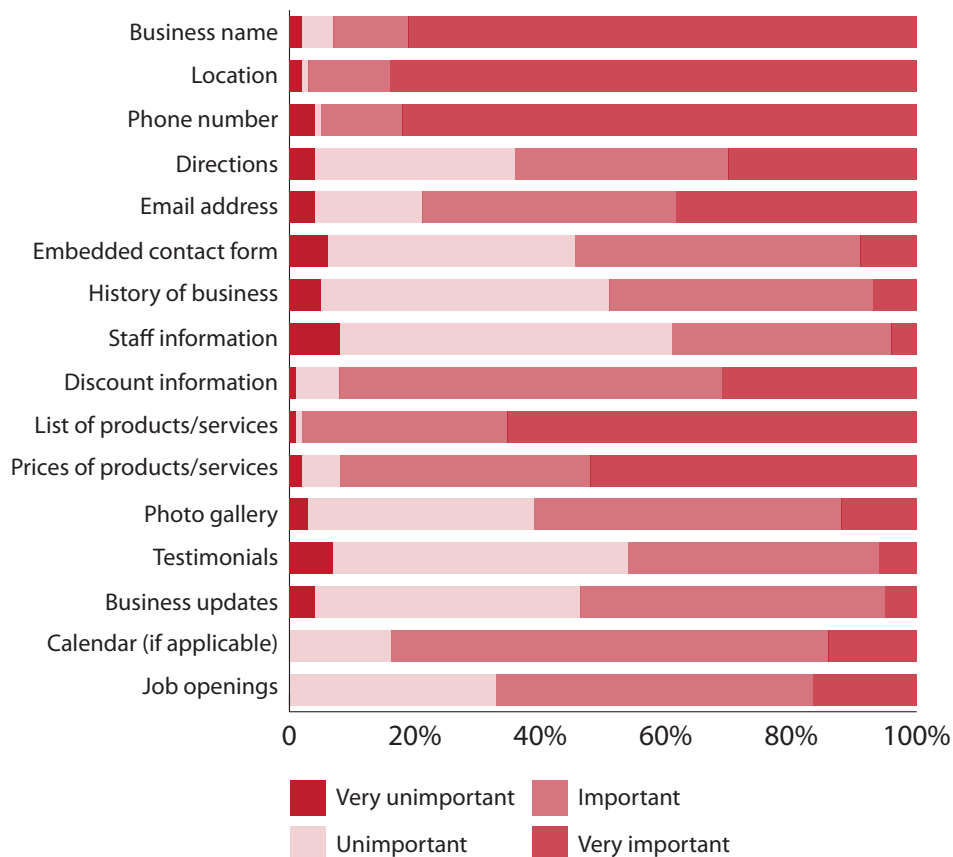
4. Do you think it is valuable for small businesses to maintain a dynamic web site that is regularly updated with fresh content (such as events, discounts, and news)?



While the majority of survey respondents felt that it was important for a small business to have an attractive web site, this question was asked to determine if it is also important for

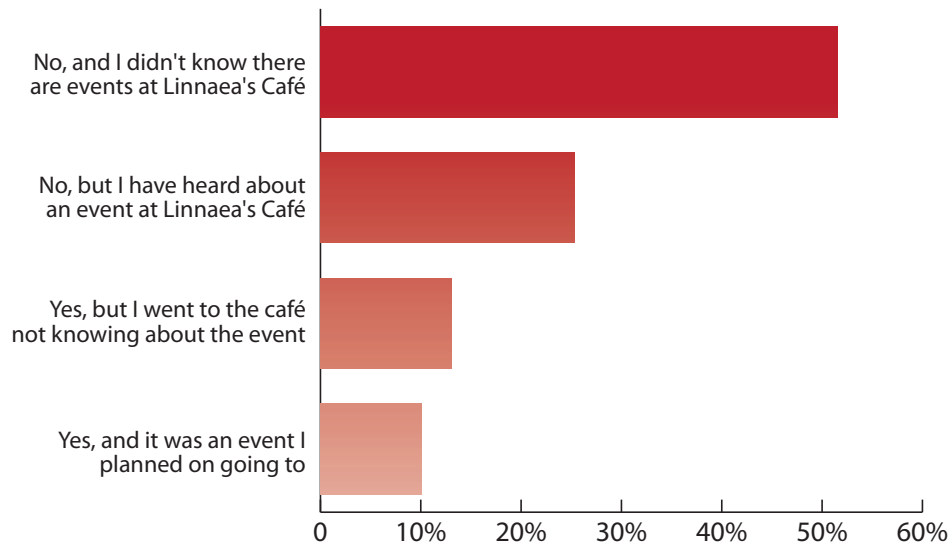
the web site to be dynamic and regularly updated. The answer clearly reveals that most people agree that it is beneficial, although slightly less than those who thought an attractive web site is important.

5. Please rate how important it is for each element below to appear on a small business' web site.



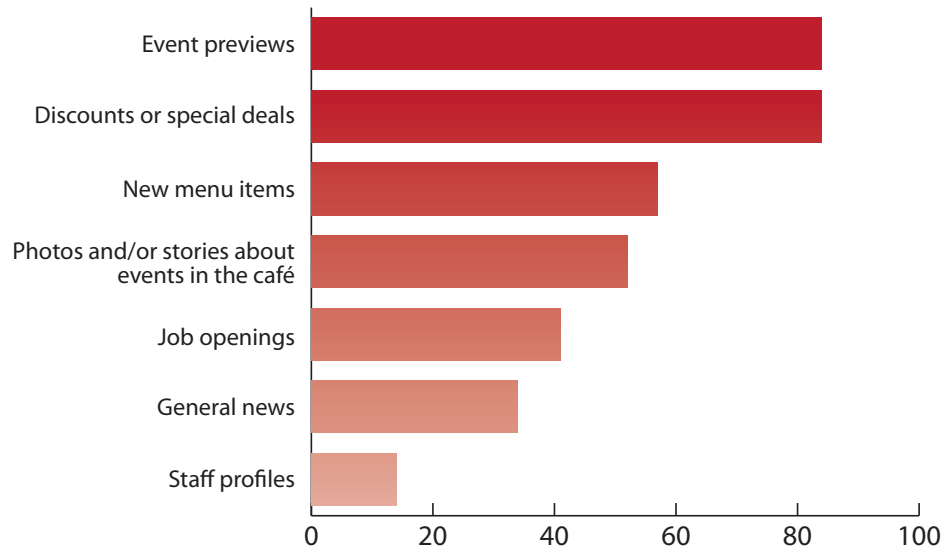
This general question was asked to determine what the respondents want to see on a small business' web site. The business' name, location, phone number, list of products or services, and prices of products or services were all ranked as being very important. It is strongly advised that web sites include these elements in obvious places. Also important was information about discounts and a calendar of events (if applicable).

6. The case study for this senior project deals with a web site re-design for Linnaea's Café, a coffee house in downtown San Luis Obispo. Have you ever been to a music or art event at Linnaea's Café.



This question directly pertains to the case study for this report, a re-design of the web site for Linnaea's Café. This small business is a coffee house that also puts on events such as musical guests and art shows. The response to this question indicated that about half of those surveyed have never heard or been to an art or music event at Linnaea's Café. This means that Linnaea's Café could do a better job getting the word out about their events. With the web site re-design, the goal is to increase awareness about special discounts and events, as well as improved communication with customers.

7. The new web site for Linnaea's Café will allow the manager to freely update the site at her convenience. What sort of site updates would compel you to visit the web site? Check all that may apply.



Because the re-design of the web site for Linnaea's Café is built with WordPress, a blogging platform, the manager will be able to publish posts to the home page at any time. This question was asked to help guide the manager as to what sort of posts her customers would like to see. The majority of respondents would appreciate posts about discounts or special deals as well as event previews. Posts about special deals create a great deal of incentive to visit a web site because customers can save money.

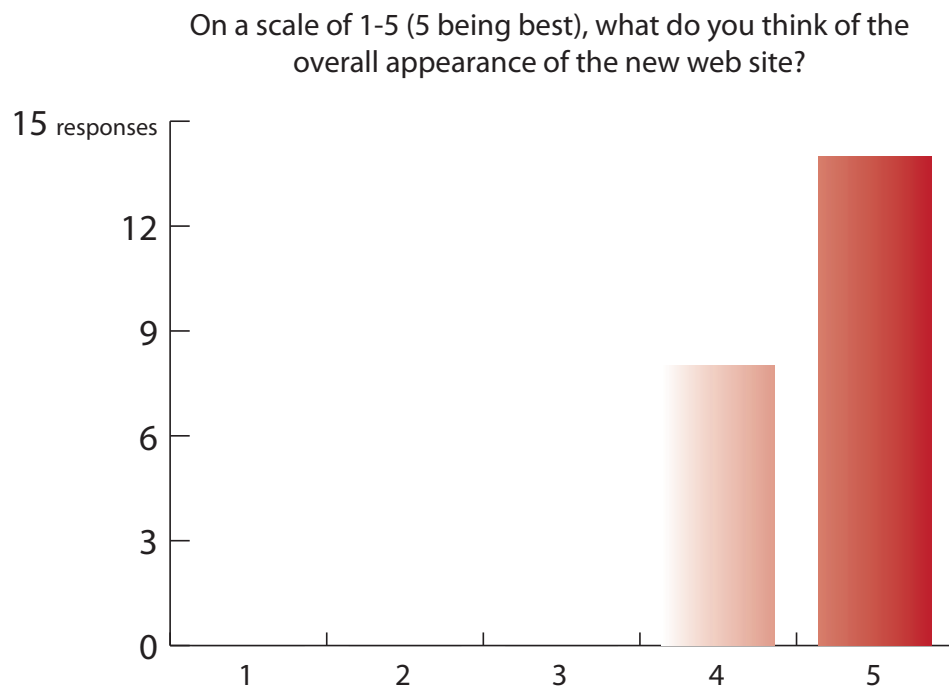
The results from this survey were very helpful in revealing what matters most to customers that visit small business' web sites. Customers' opinions are of the utmost importance because they decide whether or not a small business survives based on whether or not they buy their product or service. The results of this survey have been given to the manager of Linnaea's Café to help guide her future web site additions.

To further discuss the case study of Linnaea's Café, the re-design of their web site has been successfully completed. Their previous static web site, shown below, had clashing colors, and was very difficult to navigate. To update the site, the client had to download files from the server using File Transfer Protocol (FTP), edit the files with a basic text editor, and the re-upload the files with FTP.

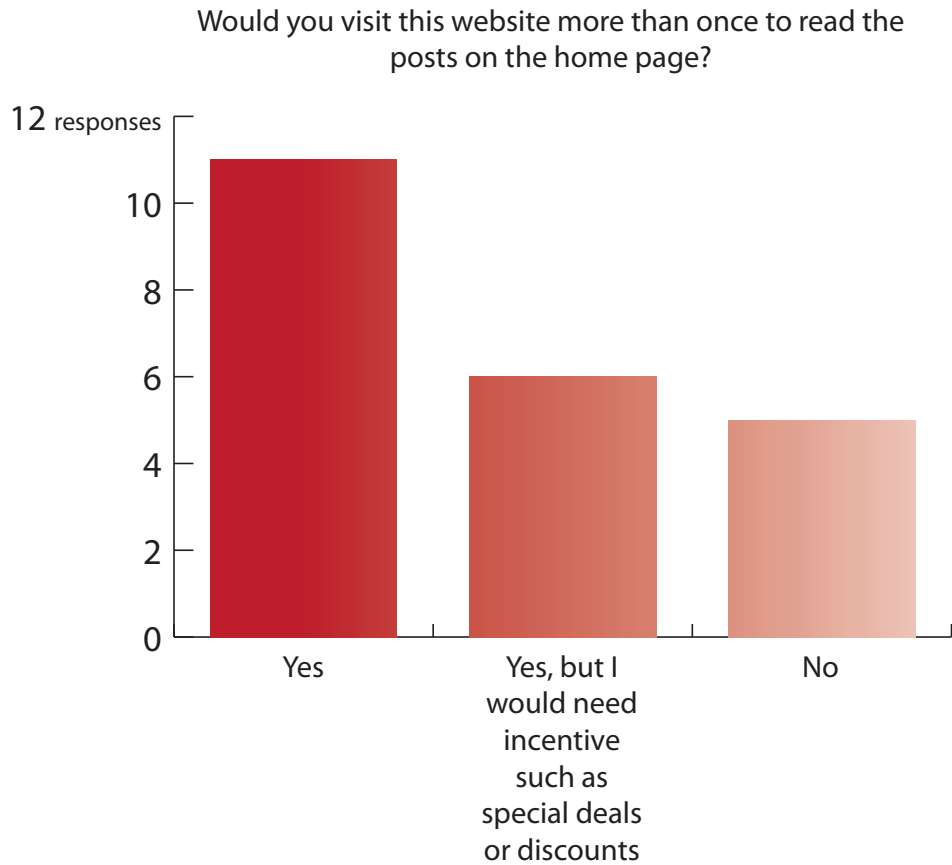
This web site has undergone complete renovation. It is now powered by WordPress, which is a content management system that simplifies the process of updating the site. It now has a

much more limited color palette, easy-to-use navigation, and dynamic elements such as the blog posts, Google Calendar, Google Map, photo gallery, and rotating testimonials. The web site, shown below, has been received very positively by the manager and individuals that have seen it. Individuals that have seen the site noted the increased interactivity and improved appearance. The manager has been taught how to update almost any aspect of the site, and she felt that it was very easy. She has been making posts to the web site on her own, without any help. Important information, such as the address and hours of the café, are prominently placed in the sidebar on most pages of the web site.

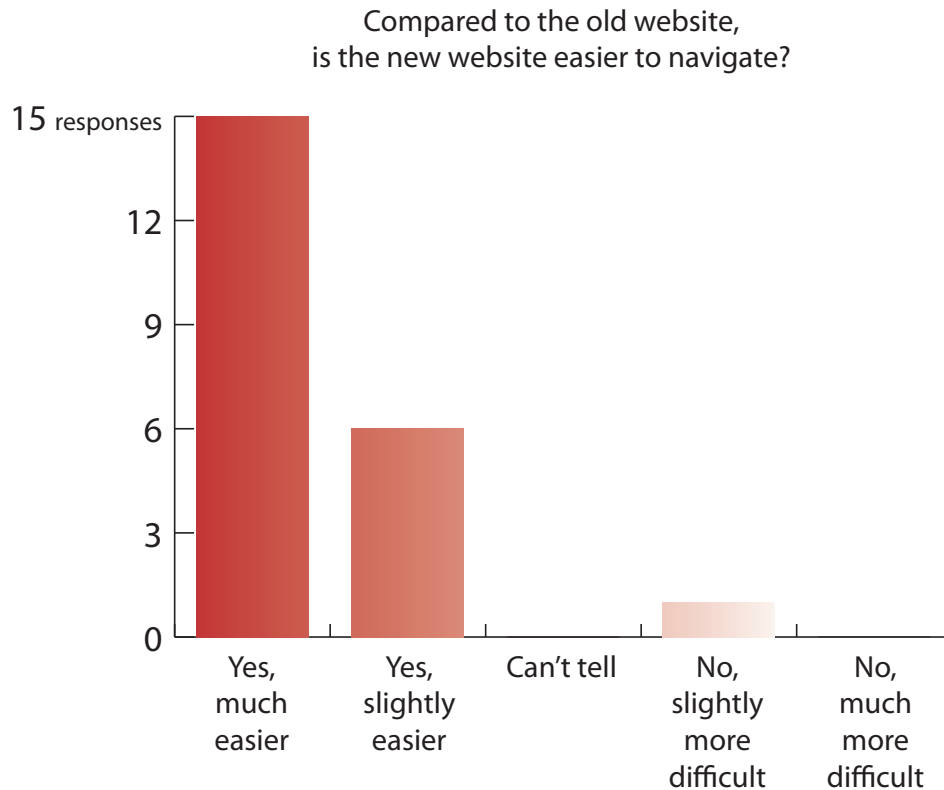
After completing the re-design for this web site, a short survey was emailed to individuals in San Luis Obispo that buy coffee from Linnaea's Café. The goal of this survey was to gain feedback on the new web site and discover how it compares to the old web site. The respondents also had the opportunity to include as much commentary as they wanted. The respondents to this survey were very diverse in age, profession, sex, and knowledge of web development. The results of this survey are as follows.



The question above proves that the entire sample of Linnaea's Café customers think there is an overall improvement in the new web site over the old web site. All respondents think the new web site is at least slightly better, with the majority believing the new web site is much better.



This question was asked to determine if the respondents would be more likely to visit the new web site more than once after adding the dynamic features, including the manager's posts on the home page. The majority of respondents said they would, even without special deals or discounts. The next biggest group of respondents needed special deals or discounts, and the minority group wouldn't read the posts on the home page either way. This means that, after combining the two "yes" groups, about 70% of Linnaea's Café customers would read the home page posts, but the more special deals and discounts, the better.



One of the primary problems of the old web site was the difficult navigation. The sidebar was not always consistent. A goal of the new web site was to improve navigation and make it very easy for users to find what they need quickly and efficiently. The results of this question reveal that the goal was met successfully, with the vast majority believing the new navigation system is at least slightly easier, and most believing it is much easier. One individual thought it was slightly more difficult because they could not see the entire web site on their screen.

Overall, the second survey showed that Linnaea's Café customers generally appreciate the updated look to the web site and improved usability. As shown by the survey results, the re-design took a big step forward. While it is not perfect by any means, there is always room for improvement and no two people will like the same exact thing. With web design, it is important to try to appeal to the general masses rather than try to fix every criticism that an individual points out, unless many people say the same thing.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

This study was conducted to determine the most advantageous method of designing and developing web sites for small businesses. A successful web site can help a small business remain competitive in today's economy, increase revenue, and raise brand awareness. To determine how web sites should be built for small businesses, a general survey was sent to individuals to determine the reasons why they go to a small business' web site and what they expect to see on it. The success of a web site is largely dependent on the user experience. As discussed in Chapter Four, most people go to a small business' web site for basic information such as location and store hours, and almost everyone agree that it is important for the web site to be attractive. However, a vast majority of respondents also concluded that a dynamic web site that is regularly updated with fresh content would be valuable for a small business.

To put this information into practice, a fully dynamic web site was designed and built for Linnaea's Café, a coffee house in San Luis Obispo, California. The web site uses software called Wordpress, which allows the site to be updated using an intuitive user interface that is password-protected. The literary review in Chapter Two suggested that web sites with a simple design, conservative graphics, and dynamic content organized with a content management system, such as a Wordpress blog, are highly effective. The manager of Linnaea's Café was given lessons on how to update the site and has been writing posts to the home page since the launch of the new web site.

To determine the success of the new web site for Linnaea's Café, and thus the benefits of a dynamic web site for small businesses, there were plans to conduct one-on-one interviews as well as plans to gather data from Google Analytics. The one-on-one interviews have been replaced with a short email survey, in which the individuals compared the old web site with the new web site and provided feedback and criticism on the new web site. This produced valuable data that was discussed in Chapter Four. This data shows that all the respondents believed there was an overall improvement from the old web site to the new web site, most respondents

would read the posts on the home page written by the manager, and almost all respondents felt the navigation improved.

Google Analytics was not used in this study because Google Analytics is best used with static HTML web sites, while the web site developed for Linnaea's Café is dynamic. There may be ways to track visitor statistics at the new web site, but it is not feasible within the scope and time constraints of this study, especially because reliable results would take much more time than allowed. The new web site is not by any means a completed project, and there will be routine maintenance required long after the launch of the web site. It will continue to improve, and the feedback received from survey respondents will be helpful towards making the web site even better. However, the surveys conducted show that the new web site is overall very successful and a great starting point for future online endeavors for Linnaea's Café. In this case study, dynamic web site development has been a great fit for the manager and for the customers, and it is safe to say that any small business should seriously consider a dynamic, consistently updated web site for a strong online presence.

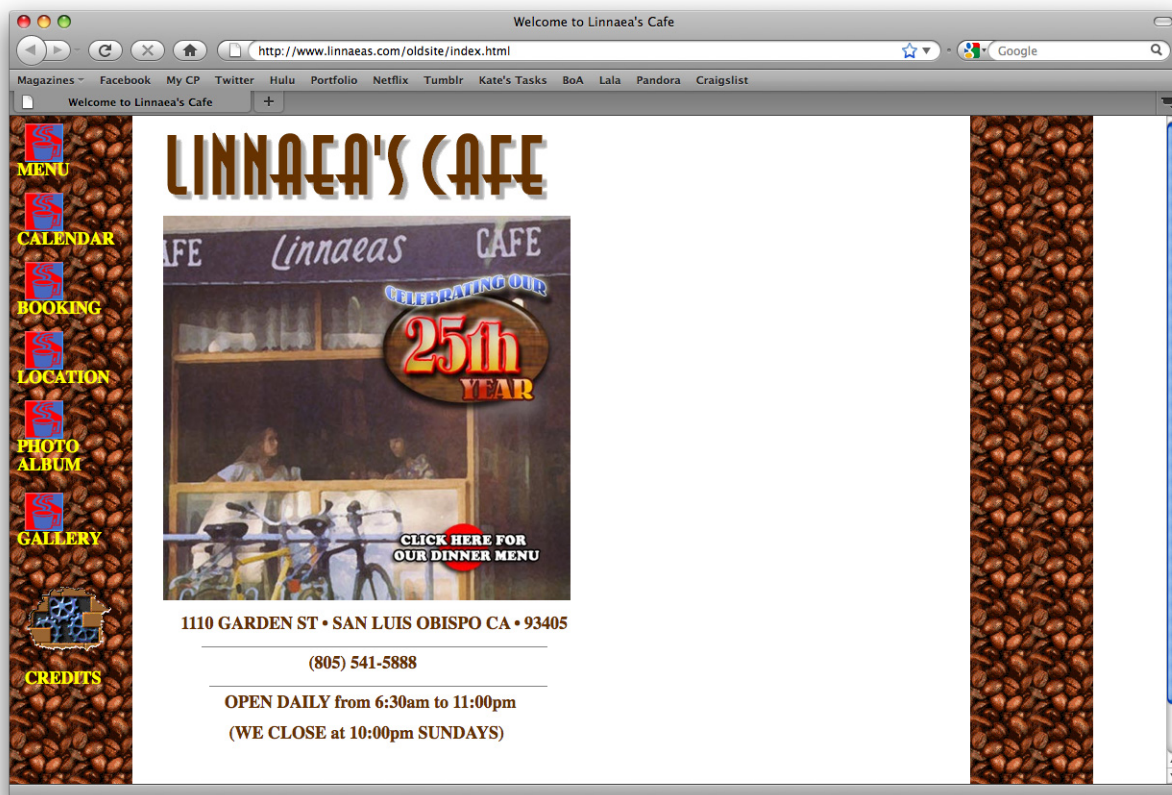
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APPENDIX

Before and After of Linnaeas.com

The following screenshots were taken of Linnaea's Café's web site prior to the redesign.



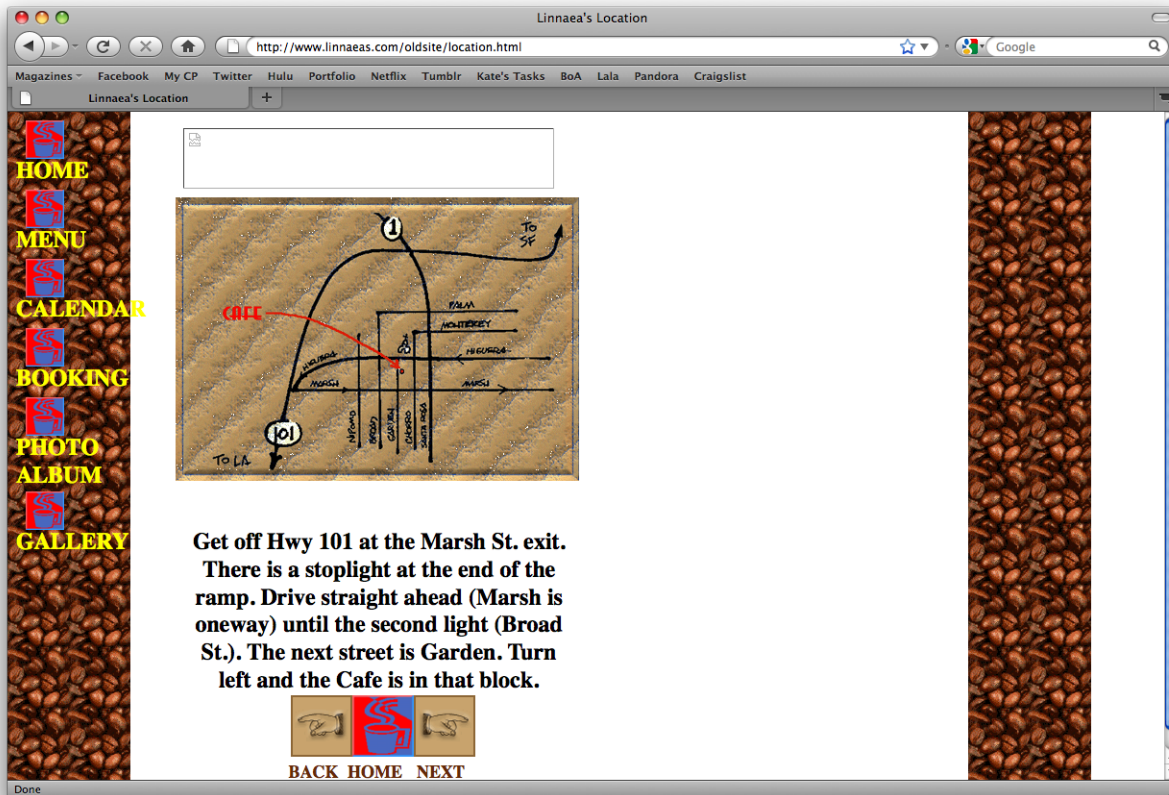
The home page



The menu page



The calendar page

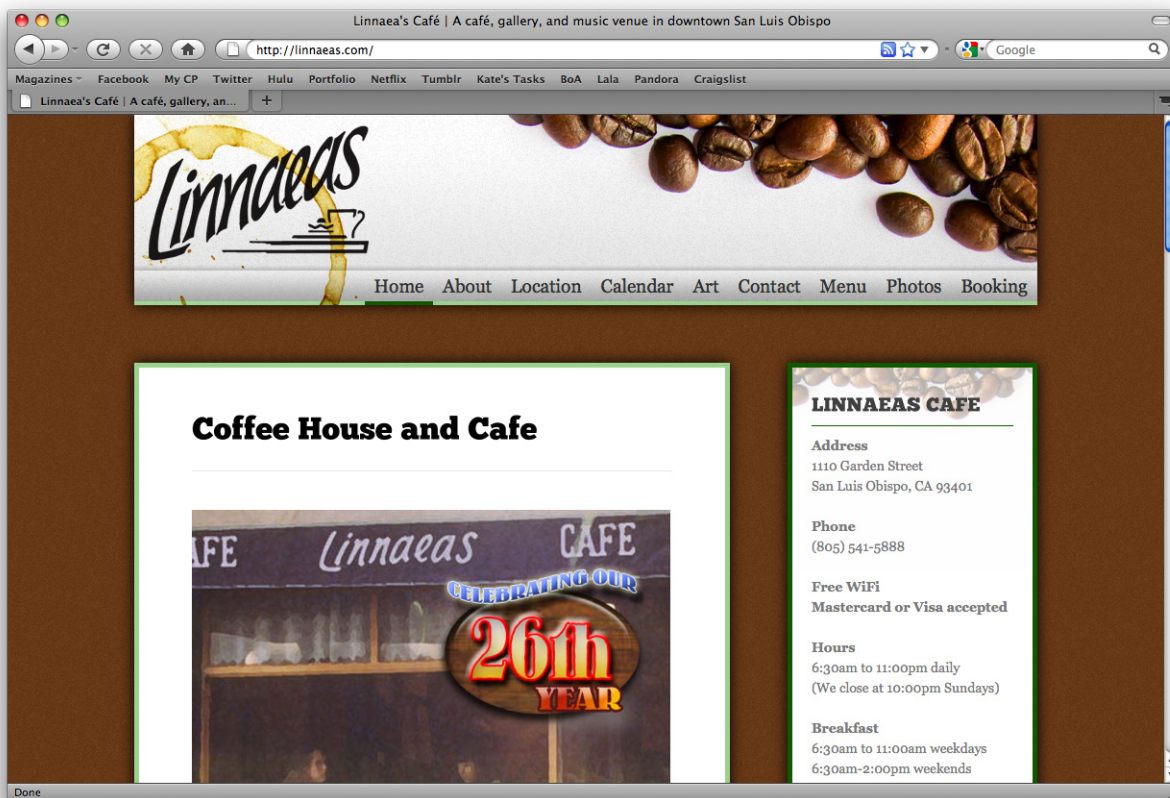


The location page

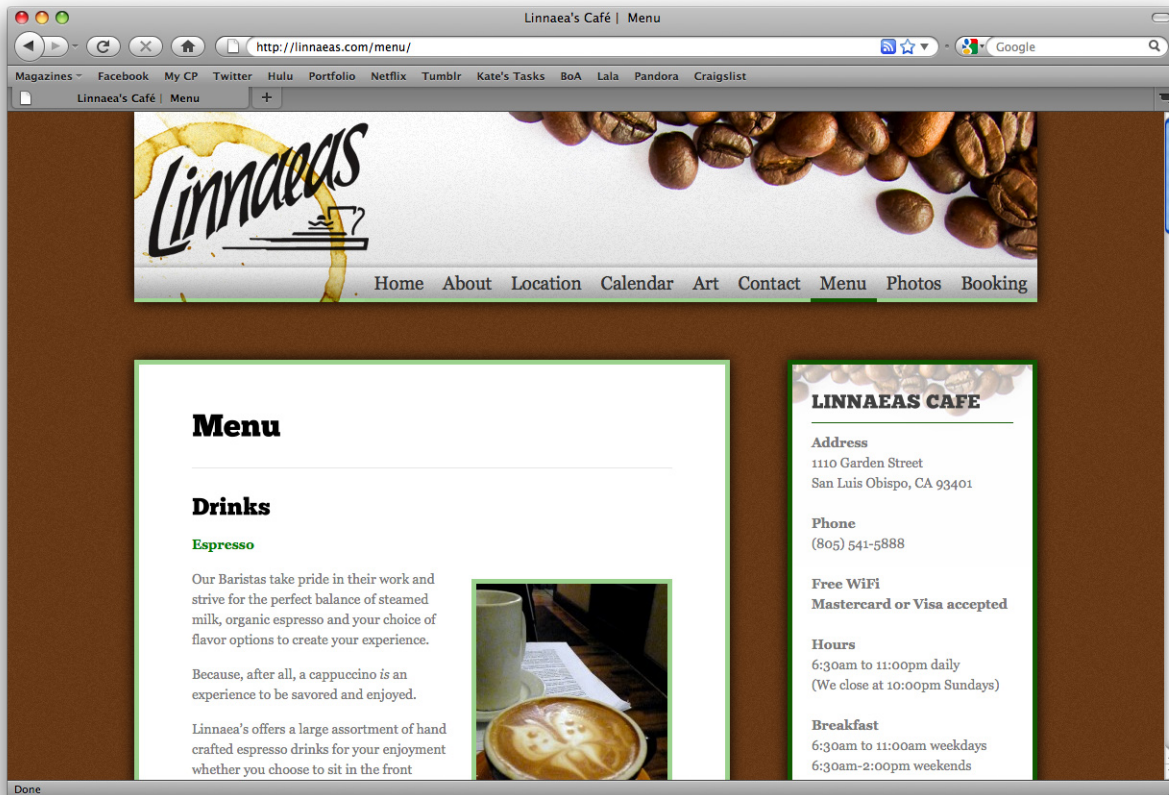


The gallery page

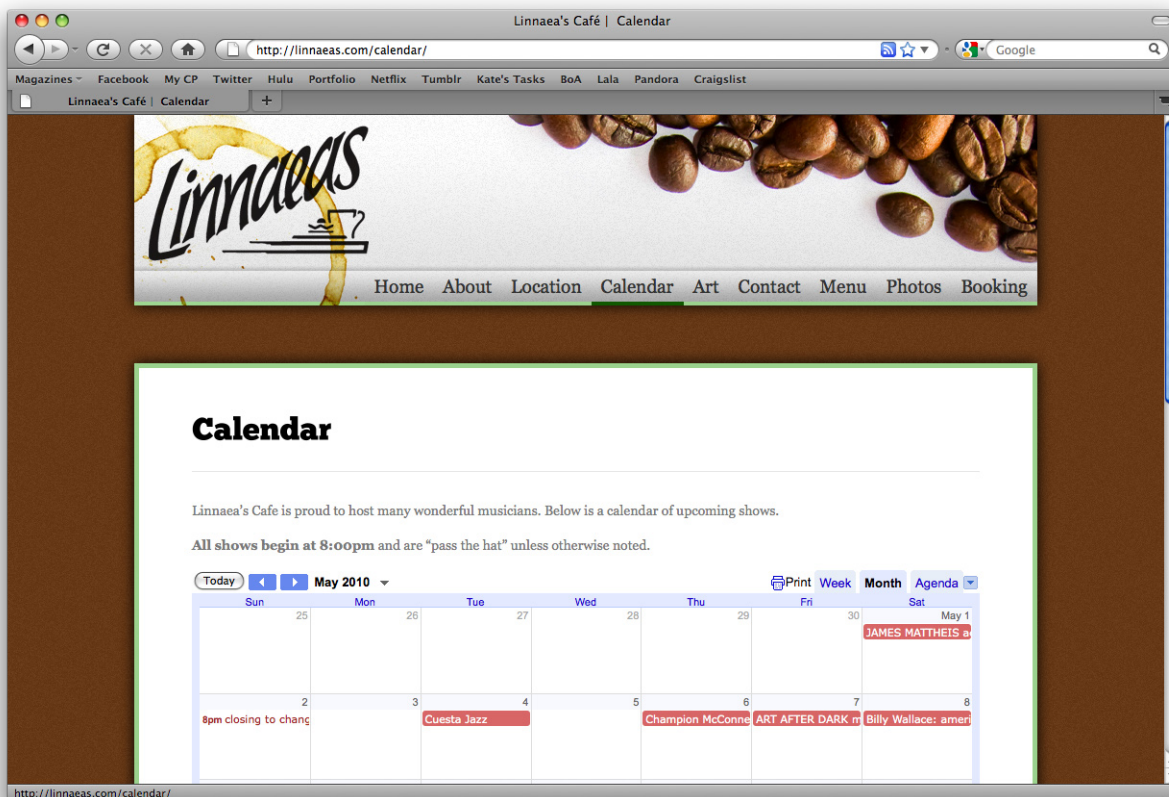
The following screenshots were taken of Linnaea's Café's web site after the redesign.



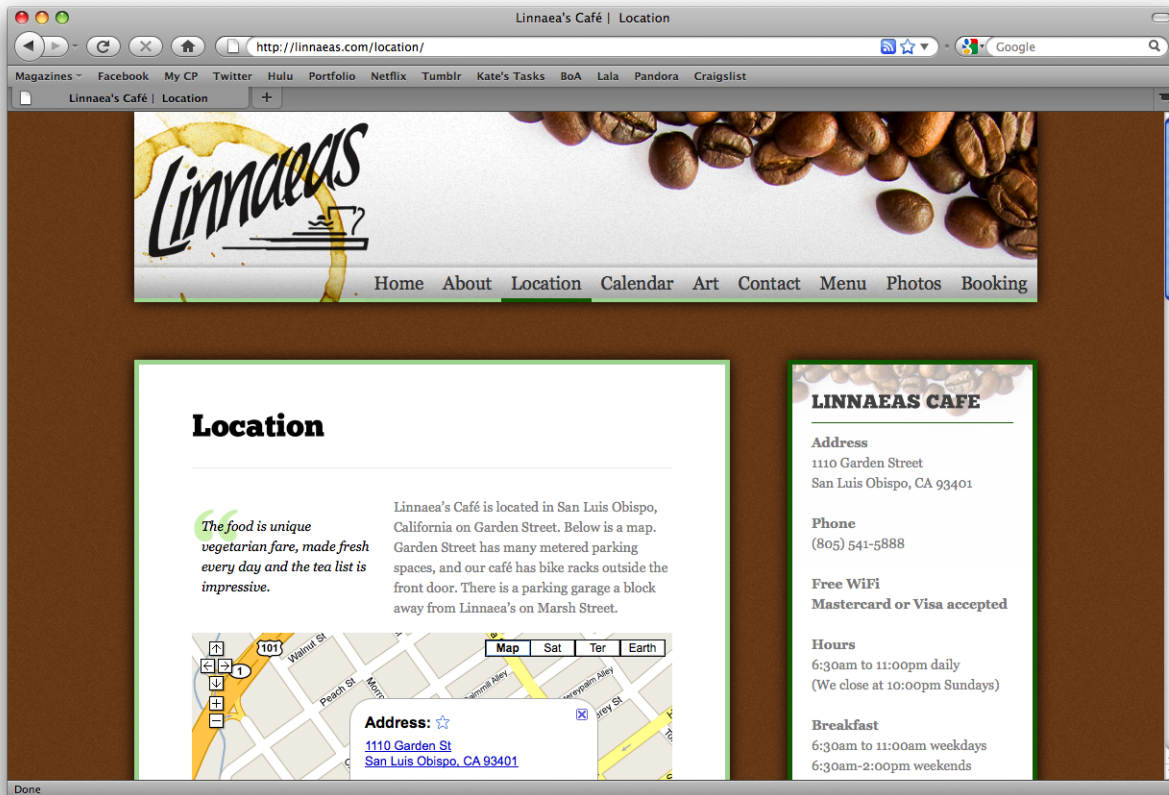
The home page



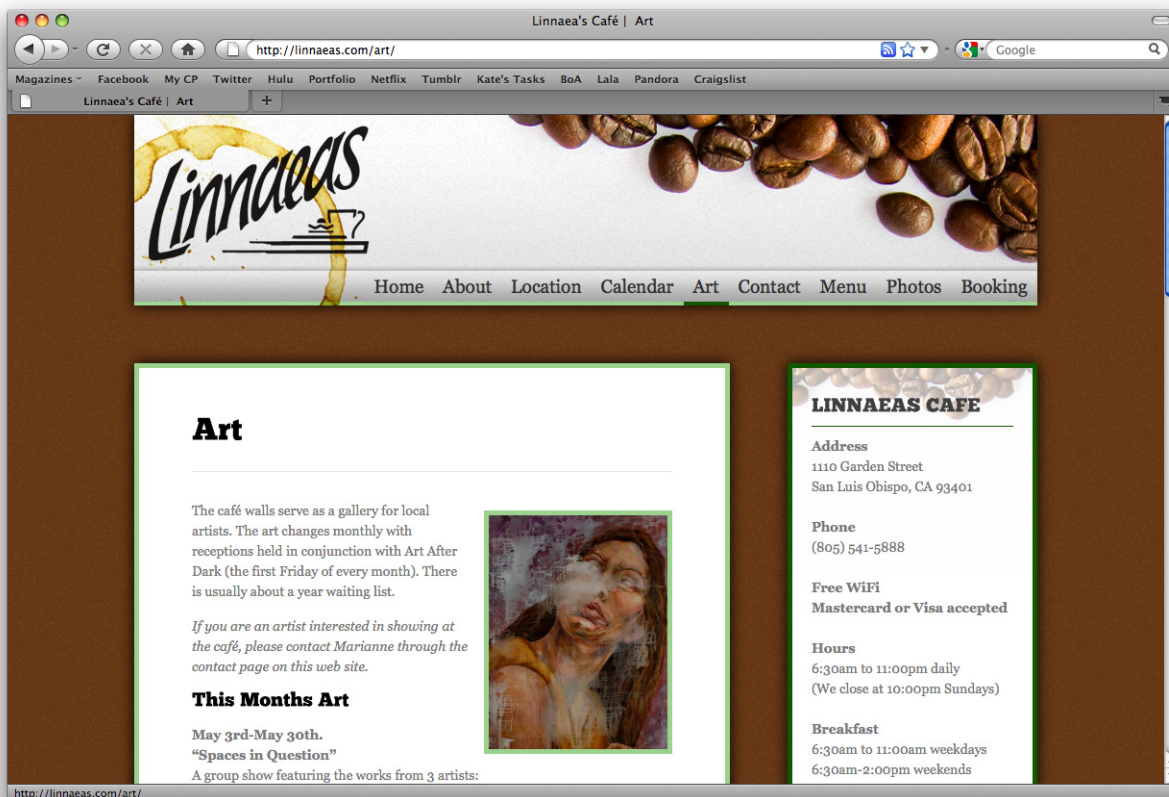
The menu page



The calendar page



The location page



The gallery page