The ★
UX Fest SLO Website Redesigned For Better Comprehension.

Creating simpler, digestible experiences to build trust and encourage participation.

✈ Izzy Pascua
Dedication

For my UX Fest Team <3

PREPARED BY

Izzy Pascua

Graphic Communication
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA
Table of Contents

04  Preface
A brief biography about who I am and brief description of my project.

08  Initial Problem Discovery
What did users have to say about the current solution? How might we make it better?

14  Background Research
What was the current solution like? What were competitors doing? Who is my audience?

30  Project Scope
What is the timeline, and what are my project objectives?
Design Thinking
What was my iterative process like?
How did I execute this project?

Final Design
What were my final screens?

Results
What were my success metrics? Did I succeed creating the product I wanted?

Project Reflection
What did I learn? What were my challenges? What would I do differently?
About Me

I’m Izzy Pascua (she/her), and I am currently in my 4th year at Cal Poly SLO, pursuing a Graphic Communication degree with a concentration in UX/UI design and a minor in Media Arts, Society, and Technology. I am also a Junior Product Design at CNN!

At Cal Poly, I’m learning to design for people first. I am pursuing a career in product design and user research, and while I am constantly evolving my design style and improving aesthetics, I am also, more importantly, collaborating with others and discovering new things about the world and the struggles that people face. I have a strong emphasis on community building in both my design work and in my personal life to not only establish meaningful connections with others but also to have a better understanding of issues and problems and how we can work together to solve them.
UX Fest SLO
Cal Poly's First UX Designathon
UX Fest SLO is a weekend festival where Cal Poly students across all education backgrounds can learn and foster their UX skills by creating and collaborating on purposeful projects and technology.
Abstract

UX Fest SLO is a student organization that strives to help Cal Poly students learn and foster their UX skills by providing accessible UX learning opportunities. UX Fest SLO is known to be a successful organization that allows students to learn and grow in their craft; however, the number of students that benefit from this organization is not as high as the club would like.

One of the reasons why UX Fest SLO may not see this growth in numbers is due to a poorly designed website. Users are unable understand what the club is all about when they look at the website. For a UX–centric club, they fail to offer high quality user experiences.

The purpose of this club is to redesign the UX Fest SLO website to create a simpler, digestible solution that allows users to better comprehend the club’s mission, activities, and events.

This was a solo project prompted by my Senior Project class. I had 10 weeks to work on it, and everything is made with Figma and Adobe InDesign.
Like, what even is UX Fest SLO??

Survey shows that target users are finding it difficult to understand the content on the UX Fest SLO website and are struggling to appreciate the website’s layout and structure.

Among the 31 respondents surveyed, approximately 73.33% rated their comprehension of the UX Fest SLO website at 6/10 or lower.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how clear and comprehensible did you find the content on the website?

31 respondents
Approximately 33.33% of participants rated their preference for the visual language at 7/10 or lower.

**On a scale of 1 to 10, how visually appealing would you rate the colors, fonts, imagery, & other graphic elements?**

31 respondents

Approximately 40% of participants rated their preference for the layout and structure at 7/10 or lower.

**On a scale of 1 to 10, how visually appealing would you rate the website's layout and structure?**

31 respondents
The Pain Points.

I got more specific feedback about the pain points of the website from the same 31 survey respondents as well as 5 contextual inquiries from 3 past UX Fest SLO Lead Directors and 2 general participants. I utilized Figma’s AI tools to categorize all of my notes into 3 notes: content, visual language, and layout.
Wordy & unclear text. More than 60 characters per line of text.

Broken links.

Unnecessary user interactions.

Slow loading time.

Inaccessible UI designs (issues with font & color).
Problem Statement

UX Fest SLO aims to empower students from various disciplines by offering career development workshops, networking events with industry professionals, and design competitions. Despite these opportunities, students are facing challenges comprehending the information on our website.

The 2022 UX Fest SLO website has wordy and unclear text (text blocks with more than 60 characters per line), interface designs that are inaccessible (fonts, colors, etc.), broken links, unnecessary user interactions, website builder advertisements, and slow loading time.

As a result, users experience information overload, confusion, and ultimately lose interest in the organization. This is evident in the low engagement, poor event turnout, and frequent basic inquiries such as “What is UX Fest SLO?” and “What do you do?” throughout the year from participants.
How Might We...  

...create a simpler, comprehensive, digestible, and accessible solution that makes it easy for students and sponsors to learn about the club’s mission, activities, and events?
Background Research

Citation

Summary
The document outlines why hackathons can be great for companies and for individual growth. Being able to generate a great business or product idea and develop it in just a few days is key to competitive advantage —for the individuals and for the company. The core values of a hackathon are ideation and teamwork —the ability to create new meaningful technology while also
building strong community. This document is helpful in developing the copy that would be needed to market UC Fest’s Designathon and get people interested in joining the competition. It is also useful to figuring out the details of the designathon itself.

**Citation**


**Summary**

This document outlines everything that a newcomer needs to know about a hackathon before competing in one. Hackathons are usually 24–72 hour design sprints in which a solo participant or a group of participants design and develop their own product that solves or addresses the prompt or theme. Teams can work with mentors, or industry professionals, to guide their development. Organizers of the hackathon do make sure
that the participants are at least well-fed and do take breaks with fun activities and socials. At the end of the sprint, each team demos their product to a panel of judges of feedback and for prizes for the winning teams. The event is stressful but you basically get the crash course you never had. This document is great for outlining what a participant for UX Fest needs to know for our Designathon.

Citation

Summary
This document says that hackathons are reliable tools that drive innovation. Additionally, it also outlines the process of ideation through four pillars: discovery, ideation, creation, and execution. Because
Hackathons are so quick and fast-paced by nature, it helps bring out their most creative and problem-solving skills. Also, making participants learn so many tools like rapid user testing, which is not something that most students learn in a regular classroom but is used industry-wide in all companies. This is a great way for students to learn dynamically while also giving them the freedom to create something new, exciting, and different. This source is great in providing examples for what UX Fest can inform students about when they’re interested in joining.

**Citation**

**Summary**
This is the website for one of the more
popular university hackathons, which is HackMIT—a hackathon hosted by Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This is the second part of my background research—the competitive analysis portion—where I look at competing university hackathons’ and designations’ websites to see how they provide useful information to their participants. Some characteristics of this one-page website include, a navbar that scrolls to the section in the one page, dynamic and bold graphics, short blurbs and mission statements, track information presented via cards, FAQs, a sponsor list, and a countdown.

**Citation**


**Summary**

This is the website for another hackathon on Cal Poly’s campus. This is a 24-hour hackathon for developers to apply their
coding skills. Characteristics of this one-page hackathon website includes, a nav bar that scrolls to the section on the one page, a mission statement with statistics of the event, the 3 tracks involved in card format, an event schedule that causes the website to lag, a list of sponsors, FAQs, bold graphics that take up the whole page, and meet the team section with headshots, names, and titles.

**Citation**


**Summary**

This is the website for the largest student run hackathon in the U.S. —HackNYU. It is a 48 hour event with 5 different tracks that students can build their products in. Some characteristics of the one-page website include, images of the winners of the event, the 5 tracks presented via card format (unclickable), bold and dynamic graphics that make the page load slower, a list of sponsors,
FAQs, a map embed for event location, and a navbar that scrolls to the section of the page.

Summary
This is a website for the hackathon hosted by UC Santa Barbara’s student organization: SB Hacks. UC Santa Barbara students competed in the first ever UX Fest Designathon, so it was interesting to check out what the hackathon was like on their side and how UX Fest differs. Some characteristics of the one-page website include, a nav bar that scrolls to the section on the one page, cohesive graphics, a little About Us blurb, FAQs, a meet the team section with headshots, and a sponsorship list.
Citation
https://www.igi-global.com/article/approaches-and-principles-for-ux-web-experiences/176908.

Summary
This document outlines the competencies of UX designers. Designers should be familiar with practices for understanding how to design to communicate effectively. Some concepts include hierarchy, typography, aesthetics, and composition. UX designers should be able to identify problems, research and ideate solutions, prototype, and test with users in order to create a great solution. Additionally, the document outlines that more users are using their mobile devices over web and desktop, suggesting that designers have
to be able to adapt their designs to different screens. This source is great for thinking about what to keep in mind when iterating solutions for the UX Fest website redesign.

**Citation**


**Summary**

This article outlines how to identify poor UX and how to improve it. Common factors of poor UX include slow page loads, broken links and unclickable buttons, confusing words and call-to-actions, and high bounce rate (when users immediately click away from your site due to poor design. In order to improve the user experience, designers must be able to empathize with their users and see their point of view, constantly test your product to determine if its the best solution. This
document outlines how to identify issues in the current solution.

Citation

Summary
This document is a case study that investigates how UX principles and concepts affected a website design. The case study redesigned an existing website called Positive Communications. The investigation involved a heuristic evaluation of the current site, then researching UX principles and best practices, then redesigning the site, conducting testing, and the results. The document outlines best practices for color, typography, functionality, usability, alignment, interactivity and more. The document also discusses how human psychology shapes, colors, and design all influence the way people read, feel, and think.
Strengths to Adopt

The hackathon crash course was really helpful in figuring out what goes on in a hackathon. UX Fest SLO is a student organization dedicated to creating a hackathon/designathon every year, and the website exists to be a hub of information related to the event itself.

The competitive analysis was insightful, as it showed what kind of information is necessary/unnecessary for hackathon websites. The purpose of these websites is to exist as a warehouse of knowledge for a student participant to learn more about what that university hackathon is all about, when it is, what the rules are, and what they can get out of it. It was interesting to see that there was some seemingly standard design conventions in each website, but I do wonder if those conventions are best practices.

The best practices section was helpful in understanding the typical product development workflow and in familiarizing myself with common UX practices and principles. That way, it can give me an idea of what to keep in mind when I am redesigning the website and what kind of questions to ask during my interviews, surveys, and user tests.
Weaknesses to Adapt

I think my biggest takeaway from this research is that hackathons are very tailored towards folks who seem like they know how to research, ideate, create, and execute a product, but I think hackathons are actually a great way for beginners to learn too. I mean, I don’t think beginners should be thrown into this competition without given any resources, but also are we giving them the space to learn as much as they can? Even without knowing what is it they should be learning?

I think an untapped market for UX Fest is actually fostering and teaching the next generation of UX designers and giving them all the tools and advice they need in order to succeed in a hackathon. Hackathons are supposed to help your professional development, but there’s no market that helps participants learn about how they can utilize hackathons to do that. For example, what do you need to create in a hackathon, what does the typical design process look like, and what happens after the hackathon? When it is their first competition, students get thrown in with a learn by competing attitude. Which is great! But sometimes, students can get really overwhelmed by this fast-pace, stressful environment. How might we empower students to succeed in designathons and prepare them for the stressful environment and nature of the competition—especially as beginner designers and developers?
Wix Analytics

I took a look into the Wix Analytics to understand user behavior from the quantitative data. Users tend to spend about 1-2 minutes on the website per session. Most users tend to visit the homepage and maybe the Designathon details page, with a bounce rate of 43.8%. Users tend to view the website on their Desktop and coming from social media.
Persona

I created two personas to summarize the UX Fest audience. There are different users that come visit the UX Fest SLO website, but there are some characteristics that main the same, such as their expertise level and eagerness level.

**Eager Stresser**
18 years old

The Eager Stresser is a new first-year student who believes that they need to get ahead right now. They strategize what clubs to join to start building their resume or portfolio. They want to get an internship this summer so that they can be successful postgrad, and they think UX Fest SLO is the place to help them craft their skills.

**User Traits**
- Ambitious
- Proactive
- Anxious
- Impatient

**Expertise**
- Novice
- Expert

**Details**
- Age: 18 years old
- Year: 1st year
- Major: Graphic Communication

**Skill Explorer**
22 years old

The Skill Explorer is not a UX designer or developer. They have spent the past four years studying a different discipline, but they came across UX Fest and got really curious about UX.

The Skill Explorer is not sure if they want to make a career change or anything, but they are interested in developing a new skill and joining this club to do so!

**User Traits**
- Curious
- Resourceful
- Open-minded

**Expertise**
- Novice
- Expert

**Details**
- Age: 22 years old
- Year: 4th year
- Major: Electrical Engineering
MoSCoW Matrix

From the competitive analysis, I was able to see what kinds of features other student-run designathon websites offered. With this prioritization framework, I was able to conclude that the features I absolutely need to focus on developing and designing include:
I took all of the features that I must prioritize and organized them within an information architecture to lay out the user journey. Throughout my process, you will be able to see how this changed over time.

1st IA Iteration
To figure out what I wanted to do with this project, I created a Work Breakdown Structure to determine what assets and deliverables I wanted to have at the end of these 10 weeks.
Gannt Chart
Roadmap

Because I had 10 weeks to complete this project, I had a very short timeline to accomplish everything that I wanted to do. I created a Gannt Chart in Coda that listed every single task that I needed to complete for this project. I categorized the tasks in 5 sections. The blue section is for research, the pink section is the redesign, the orange is for user testing, the green section is for case study (this process book), the yellow is for homework.
Project Deliverables

Success Metrics
1. Performing user tests and iterating on design solutions until over 85% of the test participants find the website to be highly comprehensible.
2. Performing user tests and iterating on design solutions until over 85% of the test participants enjoy the website design.
3. Performing user tests and iterating on design solutions until over 85% of the test participants find the website navigation and layout intuitive.

Tangible Deliverables
1. The new UX Fest SLO website on Squarespace.
2. The other 3 design iterations after its round of testing.
3. The 2 survey responses.
4. The interviews conducted with previous Lead Directors and UXF general members.
Survey Questions

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how clear and comprehensible did you find the content on the website?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how helpful and relevant did you find the content?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your knowledge of UX Fest?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how intuitive was the website’s navigation for you?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how visually appealing would you rate the colors, fonts, imagery, and other graphical elements?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how visually appealing would you rate the website’s layout and structure?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your overall experience using our website?
- Were there any technical issues when viewing the website? Check all that apply.
  - Responsiveness Issues
  - Slow loading time
  - Broken links
  - Accessibility issues
  - Form submission errors
  - None
Low-Fidelity Design

I started my redesign process in Figma, creating a low-fidelity prototype of the website. I brought the prototype to the UX Fest SLO Director Board, a key stakeholder, to ask for feedback. Here are the key changes that I made based on the comments.
To enhance readability and skimmability, reformatting blocks of text into a numbered list.
Show, don’t tell. Users care more about when & where events are hosted than why the event is being hosted.
A giant list of contacts may not be relevant for the website. Consider removing the list and utilize a form.
User Interview: Past Lead Directors

Because of the strict deadline, I moved the low-fidelity prototype into Squarespace. After iterating on the design based on the feedback, I conducted a user interview with 3 past lead directors of UX Fest.
TOO MUCH SCROLLING! Most of the feedback came from ways to restructure the information architecture to not only reduce scrolling but also make information more accessible to users, specifically the FAQ and the calendar component.
User Interview: General Members

After iterating on the design some more, I conducted my second user interview with two general members: one who has competed in the Designathon before, and one who is a novice user.
A giant list of contacts may not be relevant for the website. Consider removing the list and utilize a form.
TOO MUCH SCROLLING, particularly on the homepage! Despite reshaping the information architecture, there was still a lot of sections on one page. To combat this, consider reducing 5 sections to 3.
Improve the information architecture to improve the user journey.
Engage with the Homepage

Creating a homepage that immediately catches the user’s attention with a bold graphic, providing a brief blurb to hook the reader in on what UX Fest SLO is, then encouraging them stay on the page longer with an video.
UX Fest SLO
Cal Poly’s First UX Designathon

Learn More

What is UX Fest SLO?
UX Fest SLO is a two-weekend festival where Cal Poly students across all education backgrounds can learn and foster their UX skills by creating and collaborating on purposeful projects and technology.

Frequently Asked Questions →

Need more info? Watch our crash course!

2 Weekend Trip

13–14 JAN 2024
20–21 JAN 2024
Continue on the Homepage...

The Wix Analytics showed that most users stay on the homepage, maybe going to the Designathon detail page. So give users a crash course of everything they need to know!
Weekend One: Saturday, January 13–14th

We provide UX learning opportunities and activities to help students explore the industry and practice their skills!

Lead a workshop at UX Fest ➔

Weekend Two: January 20–21st

We host a Designathon competition where teams use what they learned in Weekend One to create an original product and present to a panel of judges!

Learn more about the Designathon ➔

How do we help you?

We make your UX learning journey fun and accessible. Our designathon is a great way to exercise and develop your UX skills in a hands-on, safe & inclusive environment.
TLDR: Past Projects & Prototypes

Users want to know what exactly do they do at UX Fest. Every little detail is outlined in the Designathon page!
Do you want to see what some winning prototypes looked like?

1st Place Winner, UXF 2023

The Center: Making healthcare discrete, anxiety-free, & accessible — Team UXPuritz

2nd Place Winner, UXF 2023

The Real Food Collaborative: Bringing local, sustainable, ethically-sourced food to users — Team Fig & Peach
Questions are Already Answered

Creating a homepage that immediately catches the user’s attention with a bold graphic, providing a brief blurb to hook the reader in on what UX Fest SLO is, then encouraging them stay on the page longer with an video.
The UX Fest SLO website was redesigned by Izzie Pascua.

uxfestslo.com
Success Metrics

I wanted to create a solution where 85% of users would find the website highly comprehensible, would enjoy the website design, and would find the navigation and layout intuitive. I can say that I have succeeded.

Among the 15 respondents surveyed, approximately 86.7% rated their comprehension of the UX Fest SLO website at 10/10.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how clear and comprehensible did you find the content on the website?

15 respondents
Approximately 86.7% of participants rated their preference for the visual language at 10/10.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how visually appealing would you rate the colors, fonts, imagery, & other graphic elements?

15 respondents

80% of participants rated their preference for the layout and structure at 10/10.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how visually appealing would you rate the website’s layout and structure?

15 respondents
Challenges & Learnings

1. **Feedback loop**: Without diverse perspectives, I found myself navigating decisions alone, which led to potential blind spots and limited creativity. Recognizing this, I proactively sought alternative avenues for feedback, reaching out to people who were in my design circle. I learned the value of external input, understanding that collaborative feedback fosters innovation and enhances the quality and depth of my work.

2. **Resource limitation**: Juggling multiple responsibilities—from design to content creation and coding—highlighted the importance of prioritization. To navigate this challenge, I honed my time management abilities, setting clear goals and breaking down tasks into manageable chunks. I also learned to explore innovative solutions and alternative approaches to accomplish tasks efficiently.
What would I do next time?

1. **More dedication to QA:** The lack of a dedicated Quality Assurance (QA) process posed a substantial challenge during my solo website redesign project. Without a structured QA phase, I encountered issues of overlooked bugs and functionality gaps, leading to a less polished end product. This challenge taught me to next time create a systematic QA procedure that can help me create a more robust and error-free website.

2. **Combating design fatigue:** Navigating decision and design fatigue was an unexpected yet valuable learning curve. The multitude of design choices and constant decision-making became overwhelming at times, leading to moments of uncertainty and slowed progress. I was forced to adopt strategies to alleviate the fatigue, such as breaking down the process into smaller, manageable steps. This challenge taught me to set principles very early on and to also allow for flexibility in deadline.
Hi again :)  

Thanks for reading! <3

PREPARED BY

Izzy Pascua

izzypascua.com
LinkedIn
Instagram