

Design document

The Coast Middle School's website is in desperate need of a redesign (**Figure 1**). Use this sample design document to understand the structure phase of the web design process. You can use this design document both for new website projects, or redesign of an existing site. As part of this process you will perform the following steps: needs analysis, requirements analysis, and creative design. The *needs analysis* focuses on a user's experience of a website by defining challenges, goals, audience, and proposes a suitable solution. The *requirements analysis* identifies any technical considerations and scope of the website project. The *creative design* offers two or more design options for the client to review, select and approve.

The goal of this design document is to summarize the steps needed to improve function, usability and accessibility of the Coast Middle School website redesign project.



Figure 1 Coast Middle School website

Project overview

Site challenges

- *Content and navigation:* The single Coast Middle School page is too long, and requires visitors to scroll excessively. Too much information is contained within too few topics. For example, the About Us section could be broken into Athletics, Activities, and Volunteer Opportunities.
- *Usability and accessibility:* The page uses old-fashioned HTML tables and anchor links that cause the page content to display inconsistently across a range web browsers and devices. Images contain no alternative text for screen readers to translate visual content of an image into a suitable format for users with assistive devices.

- *Look and feel:* The website has an uninspired look and feel, the colors do not work well together and images are not visually interesting.

Proposed solution

- *Content and navigation:* Split the existing, single, Coast Middle School page into multiple pages organized by topics, with a clear and consistent navigation structure.
- *Usability and accessibility:* Develop with web browser, handheld devices, and assistive technologies in mind. This must include support for graphics, multimedia elements and dynamic graphics in modern web browsers and across various mobile and assistive devices.
- *Look and feel:* Redesign Coast Middle School logo and select two or three unifying colors to create a consistent visual identity across the site.

Site objectives

The audience will go to the site for information about the school, its faculty, and its events, as well as to find more ways to be involved with the school.

Site messages

The Coast Middle School cares about its students, parents, staff, teachers and the greater community.

Audience

The intended audience of the site is parents, community members, school administrators, teachers, and students.

Site goals

The redesign should include the following:

- Make the site easy to update, to provide information about new school activities as well as changes in the faculty and staff.
- Incorporate a new Coast Middle School logo.
- Give more detailed information about activities, athletics, organizations, and departments because these groups will be creating their own websites.
- Use a calendar to inform the community about events at the school.
- Give easy access to categories of information.
- Attract the audience to increase community and parental participation in the school.

Delivery requirements

Technical requirements

Audience members will typically access this site by using a dial-up modem, cable modem, or over a wireless network. They might use common browsers such as Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Safari, or others. Site visitors may also be accessing the website using a variety of mobile devices including cellular phones or tablets. Users with disabilities may be using assistive devices to help render the site accessible. Web technologies including template-based design, HTML5, and CSS3 will be used to address these technical and accessibility requirements.

Site content

Home page:

- Logo for the Coast Middle School

- Title for the Coast Middle School
- Links to the following areas:
 - Academics: departments, schedules, class pages, library
 - Student Activities: athletics, clubs and organizations
 - School Information: news, calendar, handbook, volunteering
 - Faculty and Staff: teachers, administrators, staff
 - About Us: mission, directory, civics, contact info, maps, links

Sample content page:

- New Coast Middle School logo
- Navigation bar
- Universal navigation to each of the following:
 - Academics
 - Student Activities
 - About Us
 - School Information
 - Faculty and Staff

Site Structure

A proposed site map is shown in **Figure 2**.

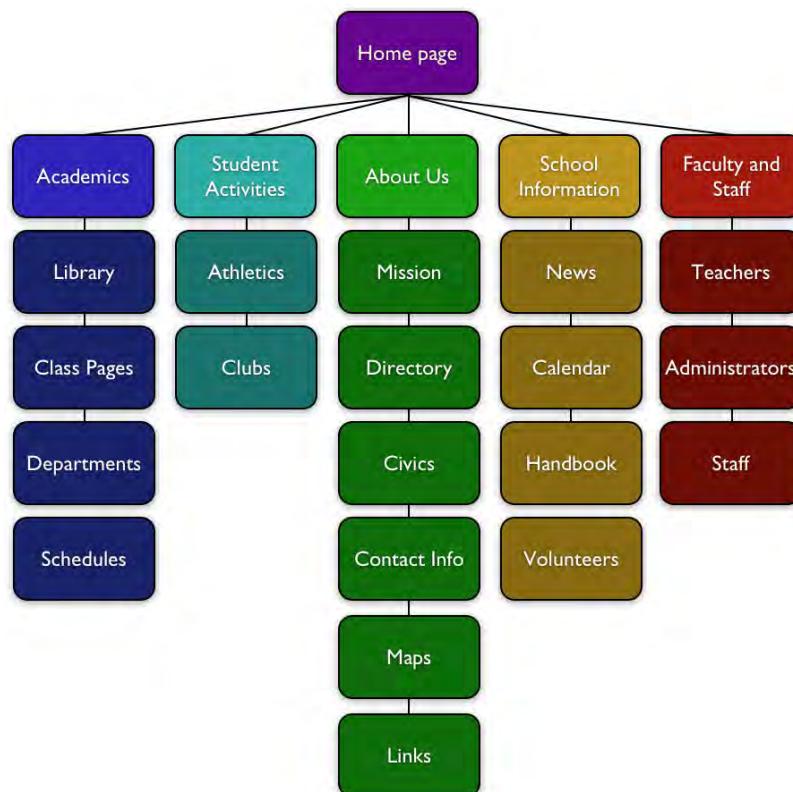


Figure 2 Proposed site structure

Creative design

In the creative design step, a clear design direction is established and may consist of wireframes, font and color options, and design comps. Designers present creative design plans to clients, and then make revisions based on client feedback.

Font and color options

You can open the related file p2_design_document_electonic_file.fw.png in Adobe Fireworks to create your own font and color option document.

Design A

The font and color palette in the first alternative design (**Figure 3**) has the following qualities:

- The main blue color will be used for the navigation structure and as part of the logo.
- The pink color will be used for regular text on the page.
- The black and white will be used in the logo.

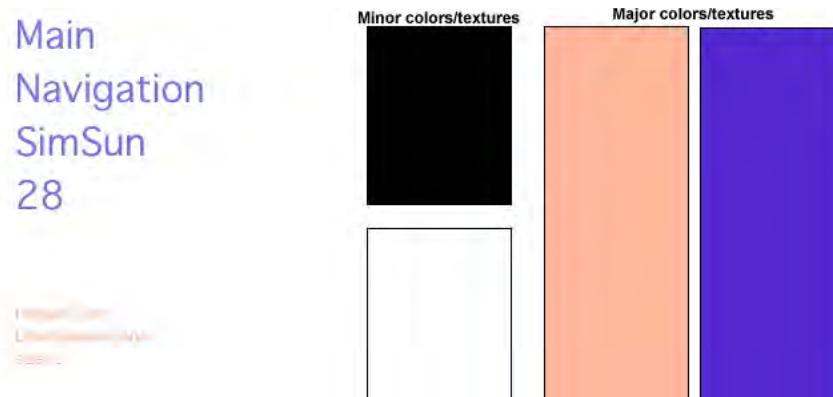


Figure 3 Design A font and color options

Design B

The font and color palette in the second alternative design (**Figure 4**) has the following qualities:

- The main yellow-orange color will be used for the logo and to highlight any text.
- The gradient blue-black will be used as a background for the navigation structure on all pages.
- The black and white will be any text on the page: white text on the blue-black background and black text on the white background.

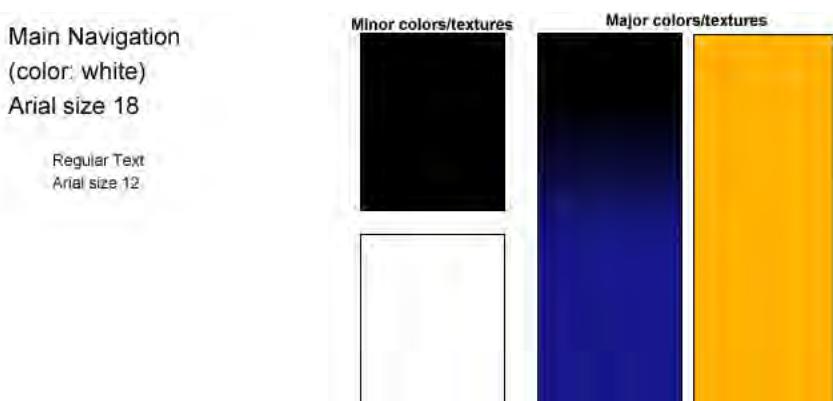


Figure 4 Design B font and color options

Sample design comps

Two sample design comps are based on the font and color palettes presented in the previous section.

Design A

The Coast Middle School home page design for option A (**Figure 5**) uses pop-up menus to manage all the content and links for the main navigation. It uses the blue color for the navigation and a mix of blue and pink for the logo. The main text on the page is similar to the pink in the logo to draw the attention of the visitor. A content page would look exactly like the home page, with the same navigation bar across the top. For this design, the team would need to create one template for use throughout the site. This design unifies the site; however, it does make it difficult for visitors to know when they are on the home page versus a content page.

Consider the following factors when reviewing this design:

- *Consistency:* The site is consistent because it uses only three colors and uses the logo and footer on every page.
- *Ease of use:* Pop-up menus make the site easy to use because visitors can jump to specific information easily and quickly.
- *Universal navigation:* A universal navigation scheme is repeated on every page.
- *Layout:* The layout uses white space between the logo and the footer to focus visitor attention on the content in the middle of the page.

This design uses the logo and color choice to create a simple site that might appeal to multiple audiences.

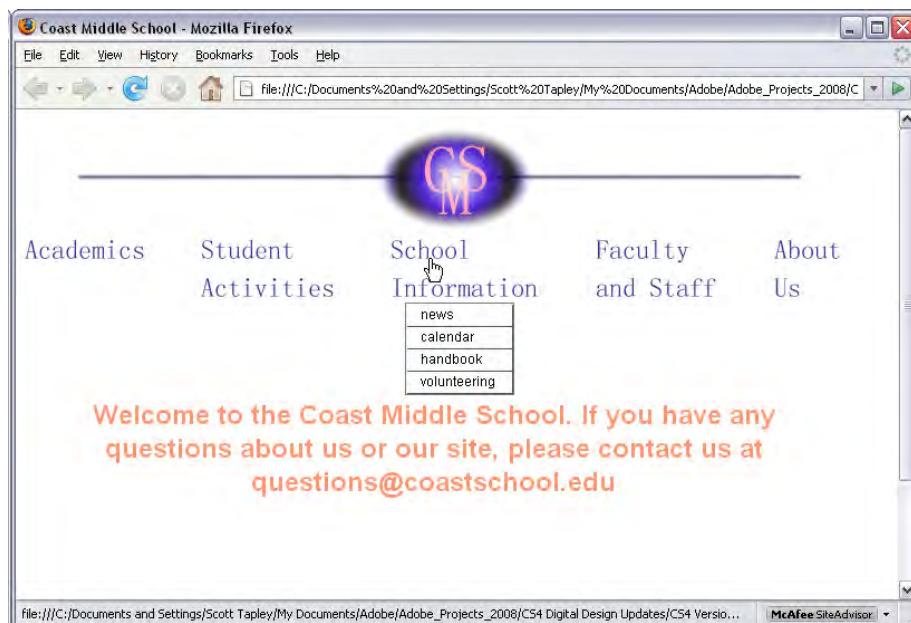


Figure 5 Design A design comp

Design B

The Coast Middle School home page design comp for option B (**Figure 6**) uses a large navigation menu for the home page instead of pop-up menus. Also, a school quiz is included to entice visitors to learn about the Coast Middle School. The main colors and logo are used as directed.

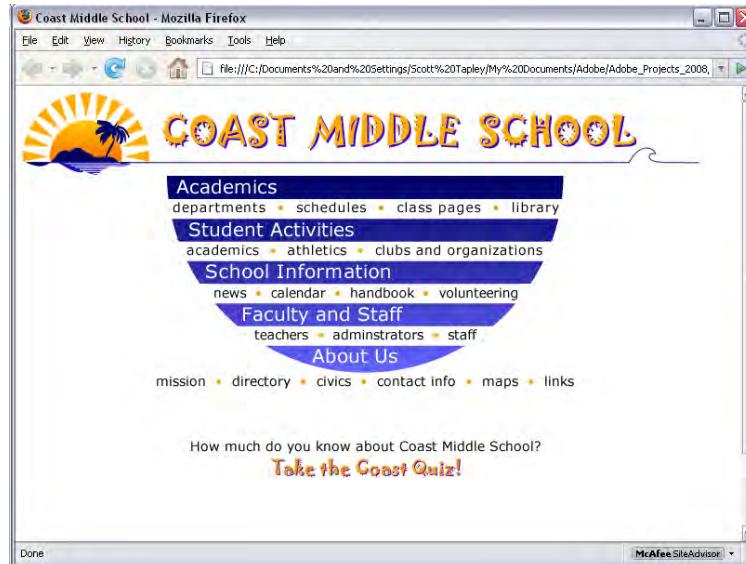


Figure 6 Design B home page design comp

This sample content page (**Figure 7**) is similar to the home page with the logo, but it contains a collapsed main navigation bar. Also, text links at the bottom of the page make the page more accessible. The site is unified by the logo and footer logo.

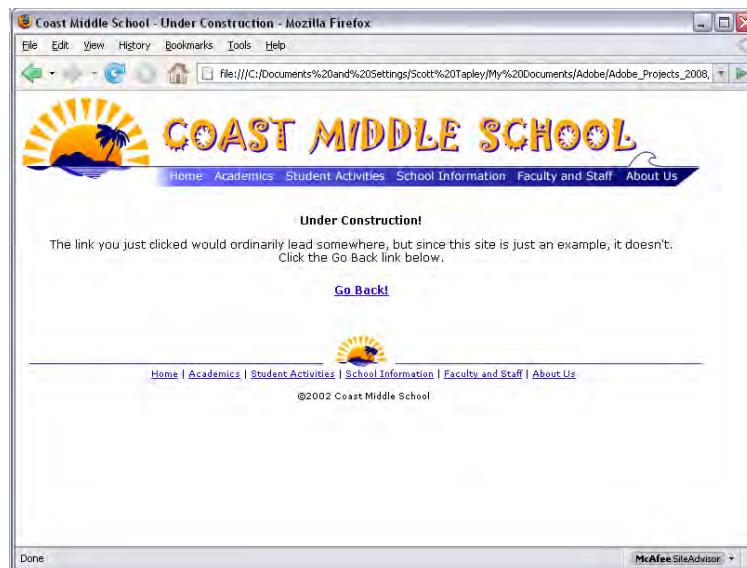


Figure 7 Design B content page design comp

Consider the following factors when reviewing this design:

- *Consistency*: This site uses color consistently, and the logo appears on every page.
- *Universal navigation*: The navigation scheme is a large menu on the home page and repeats in a simpler form on all content pages.

- *Ease of use:* The site has a main navigation scheme throughout the site and also contains text navigation at the bottom for visitors who have turned off viewing of graphics.
- *Layout:* Layout focuses visitors on the white space between logo and footer.

This design uses fonts and color to make the site more fun and more representative of students in a middle school.