
Content Strategy Case Study

Beth Marie's Old Fashioned Ice Cream

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Section I: Applying a Core Content Strategy

Is Your Content in Its Best Form?

Here are some of the many questions for you to consider when aiming for successful web for a product:

- Have you considered the overall information architecture of the product from the time that it was created until now?
 - What do you think of the overall visual appeal of your product?
 - Does the content address your target audience?
 - Do the pages, headings, and buttons still provide functionality?
 - Have you factored in current thoughts on social media for your product?
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Understanding Core Content Strategy

A product needs to have an overall strategy that guides long-term decisions on content, style, and usability. Content or pages and subpages may become outdated over time. There are ways to reach a local audience, but these ways change, such as the advancement of social media or keeping up with virtual orders.

The guiding principles should be interesting, inspiring, and motivating. To create a strategy, we looked at the business, its target audience, and the tone and voice of the current website. We then did an advanced analysis to determine what changes needed to be made.

What Is the Core Content Strategy for Beth Marie's Website?

The core content strategy for your product is to create a fun and informative website for ice cream lovers that provides Beth Marie's visitors with up-to-date and actionable information on shopping, catering, and employment opportunities.

By analyzing the current product, we can anticipate problems before they arise, keep content, style and overall structure easy to manage, and support key business goals.

Why Did We Select This Core Content Strategy?

Our goal is not only have visitors say they enjoyed Beth Marie's site, but they were able to find the information they needed.

Run a fun and informative website for ice cream lovers that provides Beth Marie's visitors up-to-date and actionable information on shopping, catering, and employment opportunities.

Beth Marie's wants to provide visitors (including potential employees and Denton residents) with the information they need to make a purchase or fill a job application.

Beth Marie's information is the most useful when there is a clear call to action following any piece of content and is not outdated.

Understanding the Business

What Is Beth Marie's?

Beth Marie's is a locally-owned ice cream shop with three locations in North Texas:

- Beth Marie's on The Square
- Beth Marie's at Unicorn Lake
- Beth Marie's at Downtown

Beth Marie's on The Square is the main focus of this presentation. This business is well known for its participation in community fundraisers.

Identifying the Users

Who Would Visit Beth Marie's Website?

To determine who might visit Beth Marie's website, we created personas. With these personas, we considered how each would process the content on each page.

By interviewing a former employee and asking for perspective from past customers, we created the following personas to help us understand the potential user experience of the website.

Personas for User Experience Consideration

Roberta Smith



Role: UNT Student

Age: 21

Favorite Product: Pint

Group Size: Single

Audience: Primary

#1 Need: Hours Open

Top 3 relevant pages:

Contacts & Locations, Buy Online, and Fundraisers

Robin Cannon



Role: Denton Parent

Age: 42

Favorite Product: Waffle Cone

Group Size: Family

Audience: Primary

#1 Need: Allergen Information

Top 3 relevant pages:

Buy Online, About Us, and Party Room

Joan Chase



Role: Potential Employee

Age: 17

Favorite Product: Pint

Group Size: Single

Audience: Secondary

#1 Need: Pay

Top 3 relevant pages: Employment,

Specials and Promos, and Gift Cards

Identifying Voice and Tone

The voice of a website is captured in the values and feelings it expresses, and the tone is determined with consideration to the audience, the point to be conveyed, and how the speaker hopes to be perceived.

Choose Voice and Tone Principles

Voice

1. On the About Us page, three main points help define the company's values: involvement in growing local businesses, growing strong communities in the Denton area, and making and selling authentic, old-fashioned ice cream.
2. Beth Marie's voice should be trustworthy, inclusive, and authentic.

Tone

1. Beth Marie's website's primary audience is local community members that enjoy desserts and social time, whether they are families, students, or future employees.
 2. Beth Marie's site should be reassuring and helpful towards its customers and welcoming and professional towards its potential employees.
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Section II: Finding Actionable Change Through Analysis

Updating the Information Architecture of a Website

Before changing a website, it is good to step back and analyze the actual structure that holds the content together. We examined each page of the website closely.

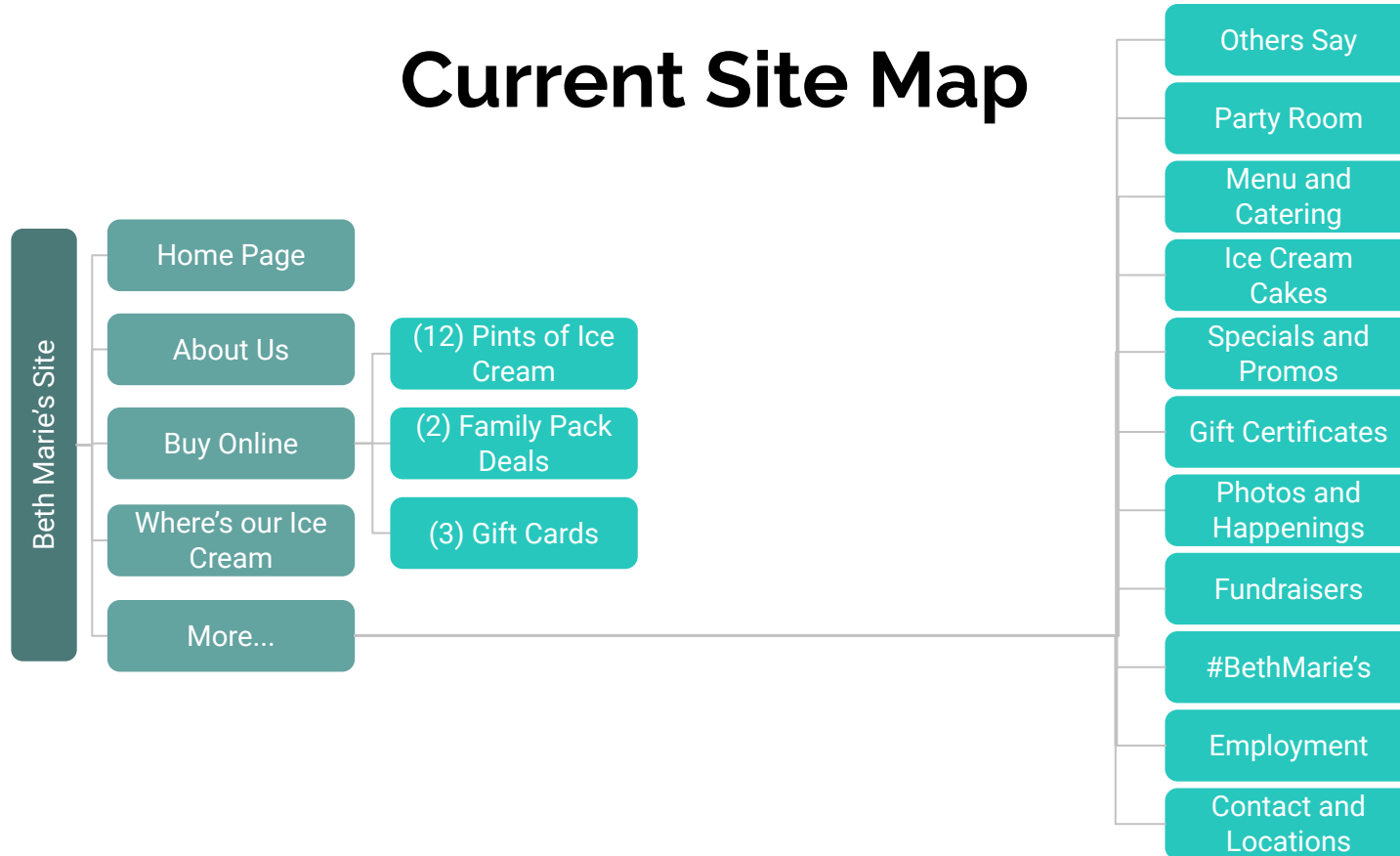
Changing Your Information Architecture

I considered the following factors: Make the Landing Page more complete. Many users may not navigate further than the first page and may miss some of your offerings. Consider the weight of each subpage. Does it stand independently? Can it easily be combined?

When it seems most effective, combine subpages and remove unnecessary pages.

Review the order and placement in terms of navigation through the site.

Current Site Map



Overall Problems Found in Your Information Architecture

- There are too many subpages under Buy Online and More..., which makes navigation tedious.
 - Some pages are currently not applicable due to COVID-19 restrictions such as catering, fundraising, and renting the party room and will need to be updated as restrictions lift and change.
 - Some content should be redistributed from heavier to lighter pages.
 - Potential employees could struggle to find the work applications.
 - Review the order and placement in terms of site navigation.
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Suggested Site Map Changes



Final Recommended Site Map



Taking a Content-First Approach

After creating wireframes for each page, we determined the purpose and primary audience of the page and suggested changes to improve each page.

How did I improve each section

Purpose

What is the general purpose for the user on that particular page?



Primary Audience

Who is the primary audience?



Suggestions

How we lay out the content, from header to CTA, that leads the primary audience to their desired behavior?

Content Suggestions for the Home Page

Purpose

The Home Page draws the user's attention and persuades them to find out more about Beth Marie's. Navigation is important because it is likely the first page the users will see.



Primary Audience

The Home Page is the only page that is meant for all users. It is the landing page and needs to appeal to all potential users.

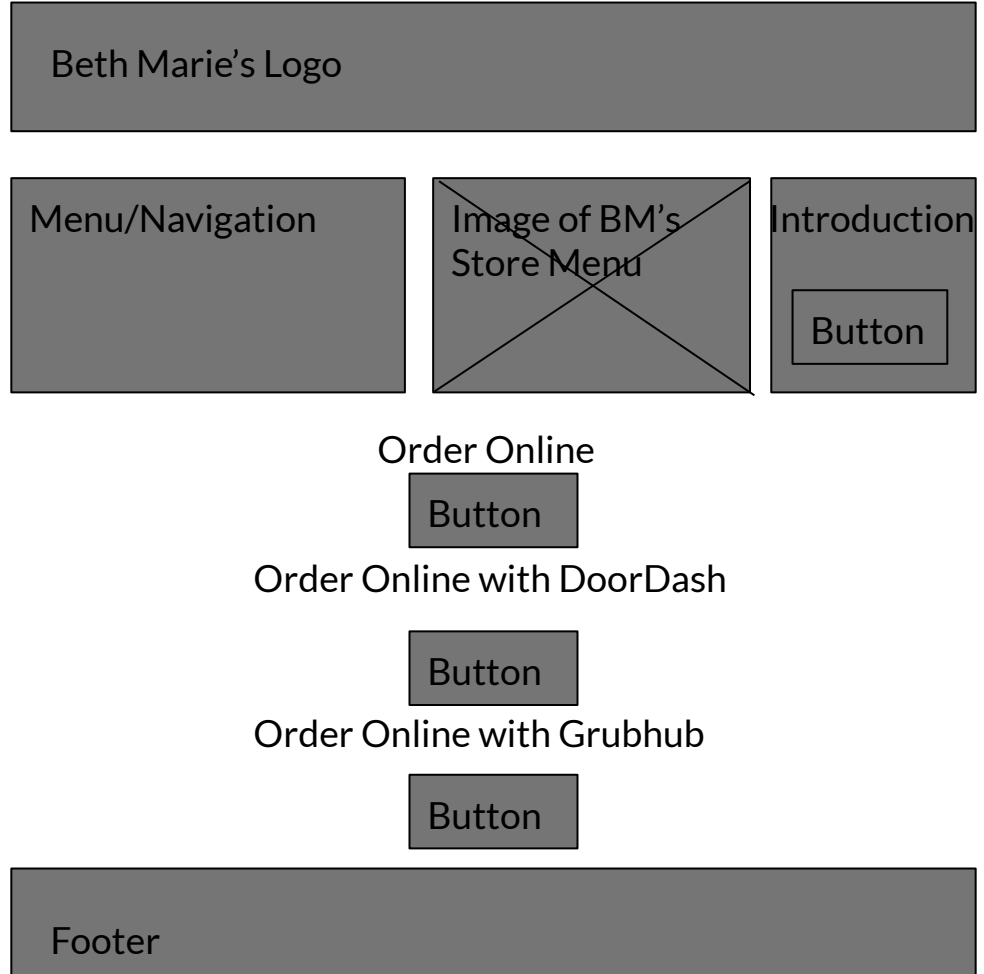


Suggestions

Remove the videos, deals, and feeds that distract some users and complicate navigational choices throughout the site.

Left align all headings and make buttons the same size to create desired symmetry rather than conflict.

Content-first Model for the Home Page



Layout Suggestions for the About Us Page

Purpose

The About Us page aims to inform visitors about the history, products, and initiatives.



Primary Audience

The About Us page displays the company's background for customers who take a more keen interest in Beth Marie's brand.



Suggestions

The About Us page has body text with no headings at the top of the page. Add this missing heading to give context and help the user to decide if it is important.

Combine other historical content from the Home Page, Others Say, and Photos and Happenings on the About Us page to help customers learn about Beth Marie's from many perspectives in one place.

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Content-first Model for the About Us Page

Beth Marie's Logo

Menu/Navigation

Online Shop

Orders for Next Day

~~Beth
Marie's
Logo~~

About Us

A Few Things You May Not Know About Us

Footer

Layout Suggestions for the Order Online Page

Purpose

The Order Online encourages and assists the customer in buying a pint of ice cream, a family pack, a gift card or certificate, or an ice cream cake.



Primary Audience

The Order Online page assists customers who want to order Beth Marie's products online.



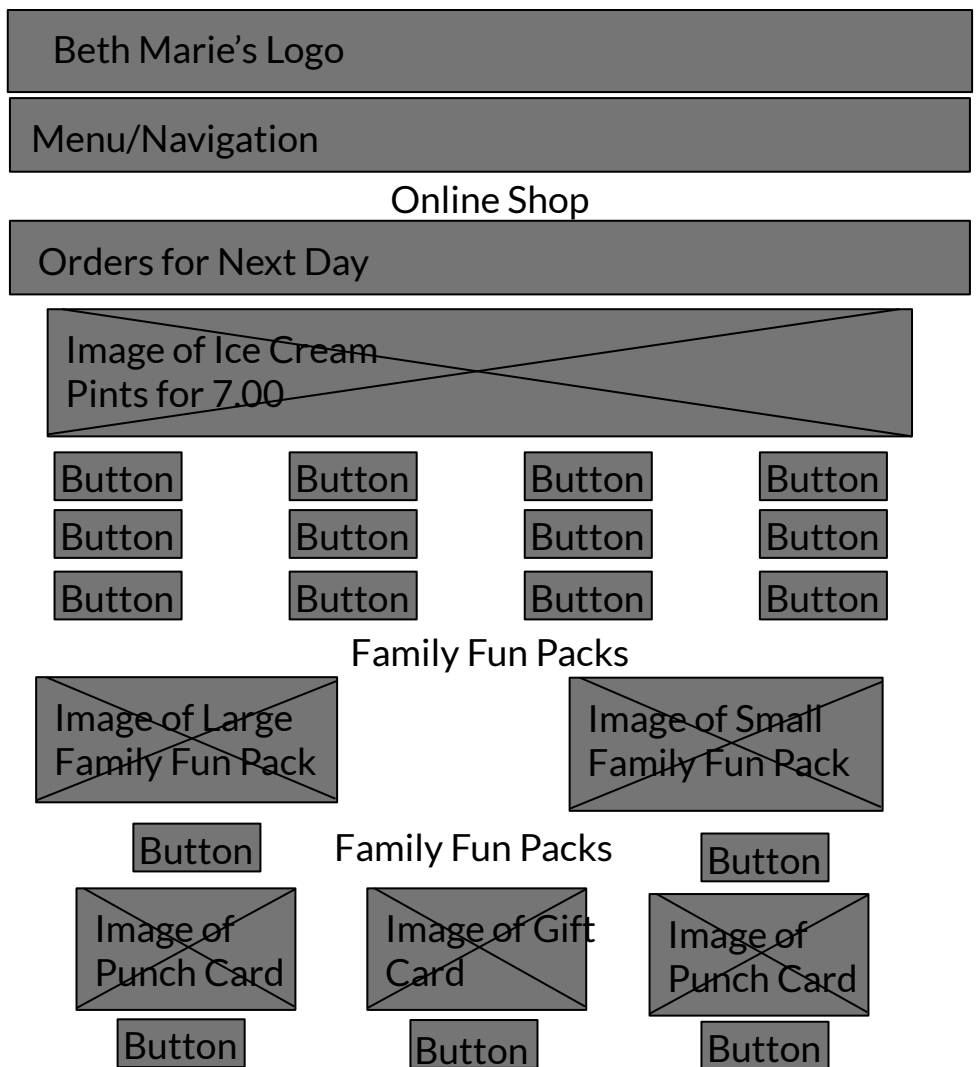
Suggestions

The Order Online page should have an appealing introduction to help customers enjoy ordering and purchasing often.

Include a short but catchy description of each category to help users scan through the content more easily.

Put anything that could be ordered from Beth Marie's on this one page.

Content-first Model for The Order Online Page



Layout Suggestions for the Find Us Page

Purpose

The purpose of the Find Us page would be to combine the existing pages that describe the locations of the stores and the social media streams that exist on various pages.



Primary Audience

The Find Us page assists users looking for any one of the Beth Marie's onsite locations, vendors of Beth Marie's ice cream, or the social media sites.



Suggestions

Add headings to lead the eye through the embedded images.

Expand the layout to include more links and interactive content to find Beth Marie's online and offline.

Add links to all social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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Content-first Model for the Find Us Page

Beth Marie's Logo

Menu/Navigation

Where to find Beth Marie's in DFW

~~Beth Marie's
Store 1
Location~~

~~Beth Marie's
Store 2
Location~~

~~Beth Marie's
Store 3
Location~~

Other Locations That Sell Beth Marie's

List of Beth Marie's Vendors

Where to Find Beth Marie's Online

Beth Marie's
Instagram
Feed

Beth Marie's
Twitter Feed

Beth Marie's
Facebook
Feed

Layout Suggestions for the Employment Page

Purpose

The purpose of the Employment page is to attract potential employees, usually college or high school-aged students, to serve ice cream or do delivery for Beth Marie's.



Primary Audience

The Employment page engages and collects potential employees.



Suggestions

Reorder the existing images and descriptions. Photos should not break up the persuasive content.

Ensure the images follow the text, and add a button to the embedded employment application to apply directly from the website.

Content-first Model for the Employment Page

Beth Marie's Logo

Menu/Navigation

Now Hiring

Roles Hiring for

Why Work for Beth Marie's

Image 1 of
Beth Marie's
Opportunities

Image 2 of
Beth Marie's
Opportunities

Image 3 of
Beth Marie's
Opportunities

Embedded Employment
Application

Button

Footer

Layout Suggestions for the Special Opportunities Page

Purpose

The purpose of the Special Opportunities is to inform customers about unique opportunities that Beth Marie's offers and are generally geared toward larger groups.



Primary Audience

The Special Opportunities page is targeted at families seeking birthday parties or students interested in doing fundraisers for their student organization.

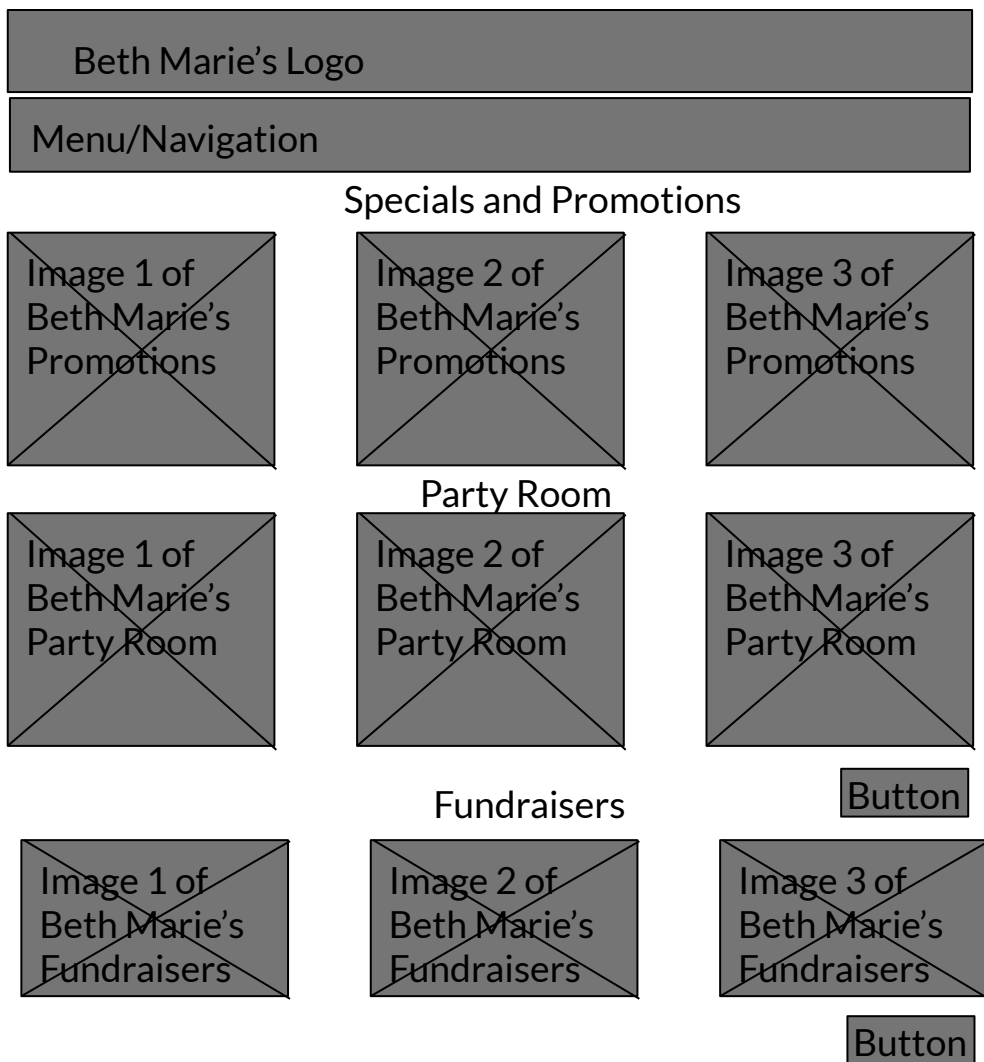


Suggestions

The Special Opportunities page combines the current Specials and Promos, Party Room, Fundraisers, and Catering pages into a single page offering all unique opportunities.

The layout will have a similar design, leading with a heading and following with three images, a description, and a button to take advantage of the specific opportunity available.

Content-first Model for the Special Opportunities Page



Understanding the Heuristic Assessment

The Web Content Audit ensures that the content makes sense for the target audience, is relevant for business goals, and anticipates any communication problems between the business and its customers.

The Web Content Audit includes a thorough Heuristic Assessment that:

- Includes a quantitative list of all items on the website.
 - The items on the list are then considered using the factors on the Qualitative Audit Factors chart.
 - Scales the criteria from Great, Average, Poor, or Doesn't Apply.
 - Records suggested changes in a spreadsheet, which are then used to make understandable graphics for the client.
 - Accesses formatting using the custom Style Guide created for the website.
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Heuristic Analysis Criteria

Heuristic Analysis Factors				
	Great	Average	Poor	Doesn't Apply
Usability	The content has short paragraphs, the right number of headings, links, and high-quality graphics.	The content has paragraphs that are either too short or too long, reasonably usable headings and links, and graphics that need improvement.	The content has long paragraphs, limited or missing headings, too many or missing links, and/or poor quality graphics.	Usability improvements cannot be applied due to the format.
Findability	The content is the most useful and accessible in its current location.	The content is not the most useful or usable in its current location.	The content is not practical or usable in its present location.	Findability improvements cannot be applied due to the format.
Actionability	After the users finish the content, it is clear that they know what to do next. The call to action is easily identifiable as a button or directive.	After the users finish the content, it is unclear whether they will know what to do next. A call to action is present but not clear.	After the users finish the content, there is no clear next step. The call to action is not clear or present.	Actionability improvements cannot be applied due to the format.

Heuristic Analysis Criteria (Cont.)

Heuristic Analysis Factors				
	Great	Average	Poor	Doesn't Apply
Accuracy	The content is accurate and up-to-date and is easy to read and understand for the users.	The content is inaccurate or out of date and could potentially mislead the audience or be embarrassing.	There is out-of-date content or typos that may mislead the audience leading to a potential complaint or lawsuit.	The content accuracy cannot be determined due to the format.
Formatting	The headings and content match the established style sheet. Only live links are underlined. A maximum of two fonts and font colors are used for text formatting. Content is left aligned. Headings always lead images and body text to guide the eye through the content.	The headings and content may vary from the established style sheet. The alignment changes in a distracting manner.	The headings and content do not match the established style sheet, non-live links are underlined, over two fonts and font colors are used, and/or, content is centered. The text and images do not have leading headings.	The content format does not need to adhere to the style sheet.
Appropriate for Target Audience	The content is appropriate and clearly designed for the target audience.	The content may not be appropriate or clearly designed with the target audience in mind.	The content is not appropriate or designed for the target audience at all.	The content does not need to adhere to the target audience due to the format.

Beth Marie's Style Guide

The Style Guide includes color palettes and font styles to:

- Ensures that Beth Marie's content is consistent for anyone who creates, reviews, edits, or publishes content.
 - Answers issues with colors, headings, font, buttons, and links that might arise during website editing.
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Beth Marie's Style Guide

Primary Color Palette



#000000 #008080 #A0522D #D2B48C #F5F5DC

Secondary Color Palette



#E61E00 #008080 #A52A2A #800080 #0056B3

Font Styles

Heading A - *Lobster*, Grey (Large)

Heading B - *Playball*, Grey (Large)

Subheading A - *Lobster*, Light Brown or Red (Medium)

Subheading B - *Lobster*, Grey, (Medium)

Subheading C - *Playball*, Grey or Red, (Medium)

Body Text A - *Handlee*, Grey, (Small)

Body Text B - *Handlee*, Brown or Red, (Small)

Body Text Emphasis - *Handlee*, italicized, (Small)

Body Text Link - *Handlee*, underlined, (Small)

Large Button - *Lobster*, White, (Large)

Small Button, Times New Roman, White, (Small)

Small DoorDash Button - Arial, Small

*Content not following style guide was marked as alternative versions.

Beth Marie's Content Audit

Comments for the Overall Content of the Product

- The website is appropriate for the target audience of local students and parents.
 - Restrict some pages due to COVID-19.
 - Give your users an action item to keep them engaged.
 - Revise the existing content architecture and layout.
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Some Reasons for the Results

- Beth Marie's is a growing business that still has a small business feel.
 - COVID-19 restricts specific opportunities that drive multiple pages.
 - There has been no firm style guide for the webmaster to follow, so some pages have inconsistent formatting.
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Changes for Your Consideration

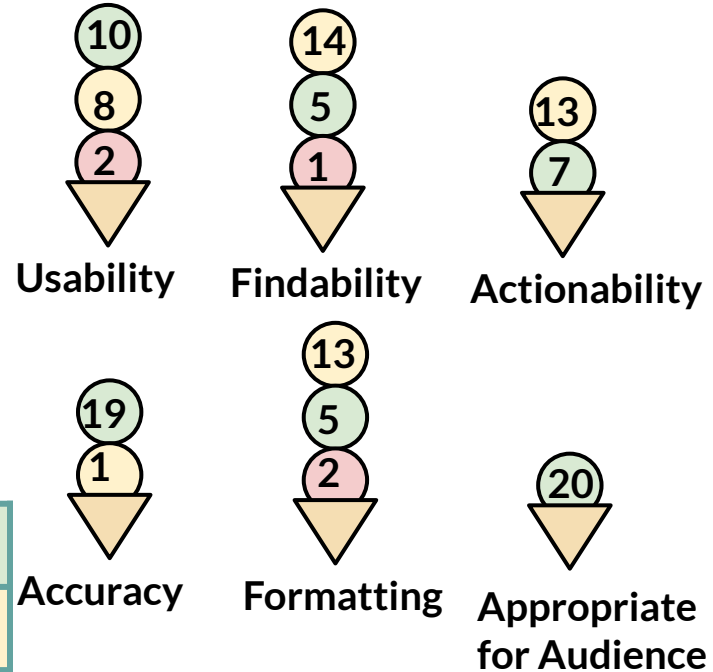
- Combine or move some pages across the website.
 - Ensure all content has a proper heading.
 - Replace static images and PDFs with interactive content that is self-contained.
 - All content should follow the Style Guide consistently.
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Beth Marie's Heuristic Analysis by Page

Home Page

- Remove the competing order of the online buttons.
- Match the smaller headings to those in the Style Guide.
- Move mini location flyers to Where's Our Ice Cream.
- Remove Twitter Feed widget.
- Move videos to About Us.

Results of Heuristic Analysis



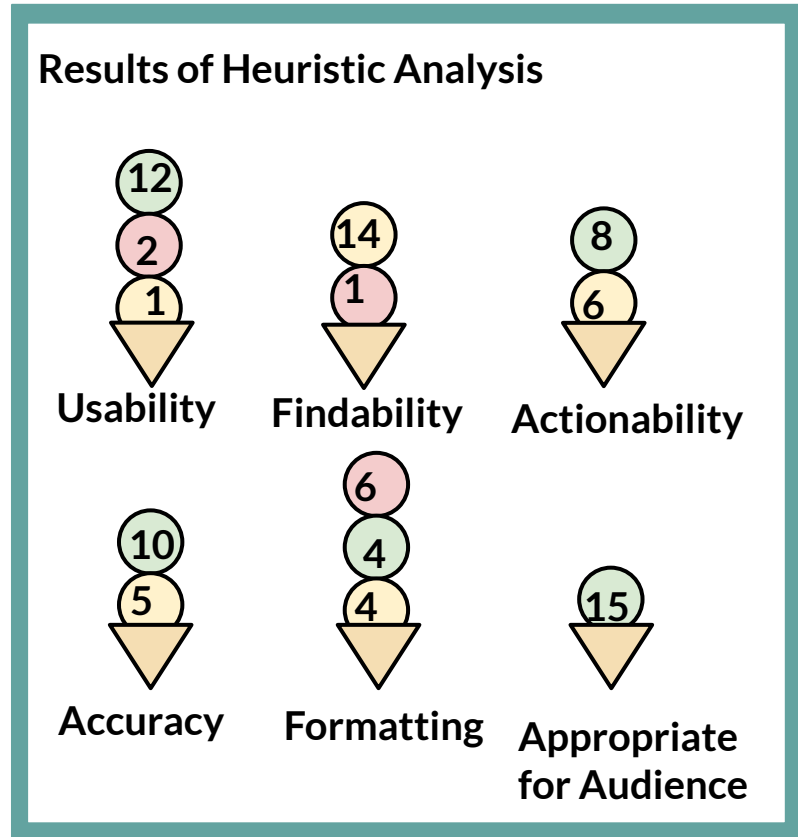
of Great Findings

of Average Findings

of Poor Findings

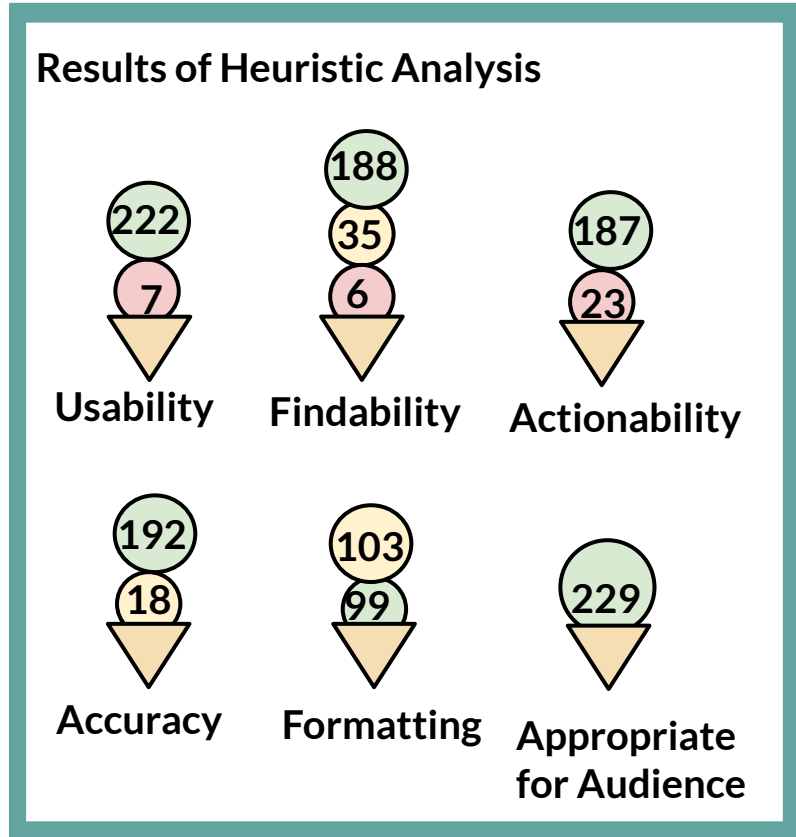
About Us

- Add a heading to introduce the content.
- Remove the logo.
- Remove underline from non-linked headings.
- Change body text from cursive script to a scannable Handlee font.
- Add links to the bottom of paragraphs to increase actions taken.
- Add scattered content from Home Page and Others Say pages.



Buy Online

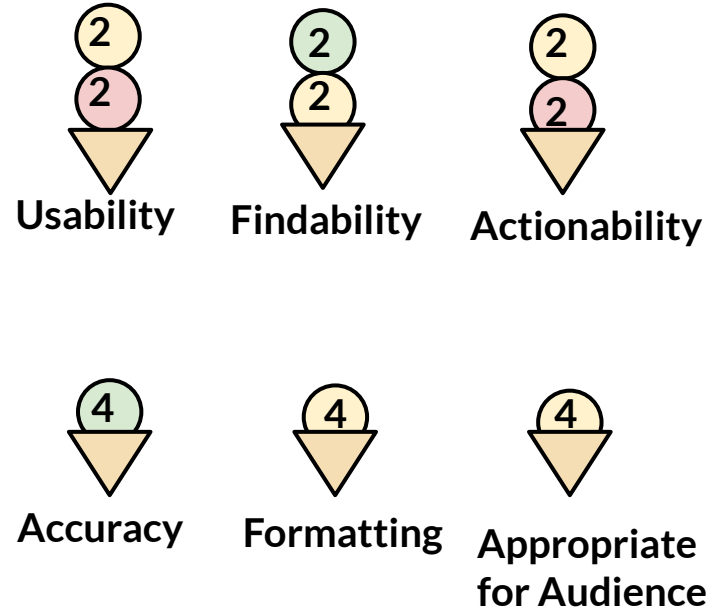
- Align and color headings according to the Style Guide.
- Remove the Google Plus social media buttons that don't work.
- Remove image carousels competing with other content.
- Change body text to match the Style Guide.
- Include missing Gift Certificate.
- Match customization options for the large family fun pack and the small family fun pack.



Where's Our Ice Cream?

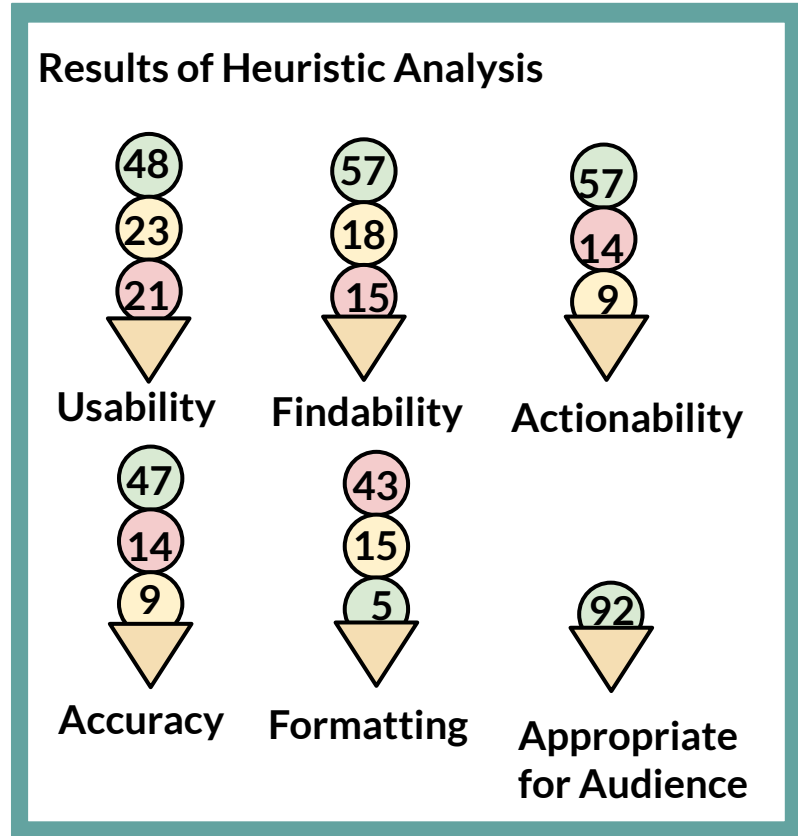
- Add headings to lead the eye through the content.
- Add embedded google map(s) for locations that sell Beth Marie's ice cream.
- Convert images into site content as headings and footers.
- Rename to Locations and combine with Contacts and Locations.
- Add a question mark after Cream in the heading.

Results of Heuristic Analysis



More...

- Complete and add headings to lead the eye through the content.
- Place existing content under headings.
- Match headings and body text to the Style Guide.
- Turn PDF downloads into online forms that can be completed and submitted directly to Beth Marie's in one step.
- Specific opportunities did not exist during the COVID-19 period, such as in-store fundraising training.
- Combine pages with other sections, such as Promotions.



Section III: Improving Omni-Channel Content Strategy

Overview of Your Engagement Channels

Beth Marie's has a Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram account. Create a LinkedIn account to connect with future employees.

Tailor and distinguish Beth Marie's content for each of its channels. Determine a mission statement for each social media outlet.

Facebook/Meta

Social Media Strategy	Best Practices
1 Engage local communities with a shared interest on Facebook and tailor your content to appeal to their interest.	Write short posts of under 480 words. Most users will not make an effort to click for the longer version.
2 Prepare your content for users with desktops, laptops, and mobile devices.	Organize Beth Marie's photo albums. Make sure to add descriptions that will highlight different areas, flavors of ice cream, services, and employees.
3 Media experts suggest 9 a.m., 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., and 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Thursdays to Sunday for Facebook posts. (Kolowich)	Create posts worth reading that engage the reader and celebrate milestones or call customers to action.

Twitter

Social Media Strategy	Best Practices
1 Use Twitter to quickly respond to complaints, questions, and suggestions that your customers may have.	Tweets should always be complete. Secondary connected tweets may not reach the same audience.
2 Prepare your content for users with desktops, laptops, and mobile devices.	Tweet multiple times a day. Twitter feeds move quickly, and your audience can easily miss lone tweets.
3 Media experts suggest tweeting at 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. to catch weekend shoppers. (Kolowich)	Tweets are a great way to answer questions and get them out to a large audience.

Instagram

Social Media Strategy		Best Practices
1	Display tasteful photographs that feature your current line of products.	Request or create photoshoots explicitly designed for your Instagram market. Make sure they are new and exciting.
2	Prepare your content for users with desktops, laptops, and mobile devices.	Remember, Instagram has a younger audience. Include themes that may be of interest.
3	Media experts suggest posting at 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., during lunch, and at the end of the workday on Friday. (Kolowich)	Use pictures from the party room and community outreach activities.

LinkedIn

Social Media Strategy	Best Practices
1 Acquire new employees quickly, retain your network of past/present employees, and establish a corporate presence.	Post exciting news and updates about Beth Marie's on LinkedIn.
2 Prepare your content for users with desktops, laptops, and mobile devices.	Promote company events on LinkedIn to connect employees and professional allies to Beth Marie's.
3 Media experts suggest posting at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Wednesday. (Kolowich)	Try to attract professional attention by connecting with potential board members and fundraiser volunteers.

One Month Strategy

Week 1

Facebook: Highlight new events on Thursday.
Twitter: Answer customer questions during the weekend evenings.
Instagram: Post images of products during lunch periods on Wednesday and Friday.
LinkedIn: Post stories about successful customer service.

Week 2

Facebook: Reinforce event posts on Thursday.
Twitter: Run customer surveys during the evening on weekends.
Instagram: Run an employee story on Wednesday afternoon.
LinkedIn: Ask questions about favorite employee experiences.

Week 3

Facebook: Add a new album and trickle photos in slowly to expand news feed presence.
Twitter: Answer customer questions during the weekend.
Instagram: Post a survey about products on Wednesday and Friday.
LinkedIn: Post a positive message reflecting values.

Week 4

Facebook: Add a short, positive post to the page.
Twitter: Run customer surveys during the weekend evenings.
Instagram: Post images of products during lunch periods on Wednesday and Friday.
LinkedIn: Promote job openings at Beth Marie's.

Six Month Strategy

Month 1

Month 2

Month 3

Month 4

Month 5

Month 6

Purpose:

Determine a clear purpose that includes your company's core values.

Audit:

Complete a social media audit that would include measurable goals for each account.

Competition:

Look at competitors' social media sites both locally and nationally and be open to new opportunities based on those examples.

Interactivity:

Determine which media outlets and which audience are most interactive.

Core Values:

Using your core values, determine if starting new accounts from a different perspective would help
Remove old, unpopular, or seldom viewed posts or accounts.

Review:

Evaluate what worked and what didn't and set standards of effectiveness for each social media. Revisit goals periodically to ensure your metrics improve.

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Interview Transcript

Who Visited Beth Marie's?

Visitors usually arrived in groups with families or friends. Busiest periods involved parents and families. Some came by to pick up pints, while others came by to visit while on the square.



Who Visited Beth Marie's? (Continued)

Children with parents were usually under the age of 10. Whereas, teenagers or college students would come in groups, on their own, and with friends. Parents would always order. Solo visitors were usually in their upper 20s-30s.



What Product Did Visitors Order the Most?

Visitors mostly ordered one of the four cones.



How Often Did Visitors Buy Pints, Family Packs, or Cakes?

Visitors usually ordered over the phone, rarely in person.



Interview Transcript Part 2

What Questions Did Customers Ask Staff?

Visitors often asked what allergens were in the ice cream. They also wanted to know if sherbert was available, and what ingredients were in each ice cream flavor. They seemed most concerned about alcohol and nuts.



Did You Receive a Lot of Online or Phone Orders?

Pickup orders were rare before COVID-19.



What Do Customers Like Most About Beth Marie's brand?

Visitors like the old-fashioned aspect of the ice cream but also the special soda fountain drinks. The store fits square, charm, and stays the same in Denton, even when things change. Everyone is usually happy.



What Did Employees Like About Working at Beth Marie's?

Managers spoke up for servers and usually taught servers new skills. Servers learned cashier skills and how to make sodas and ice cream.

Interview Transcript Part 3

Why Did Employees Join Beth Marie's?

Beth Marie's offered a good part-time job to Denton High School and college students and allowed them to learn good customer experience skills.



Why Did Employees Leave Beth Marie's?

Because many servers were students, they would graduate and leave town. However, each year there are always new students.