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Creating a Web Presence for a Small Business Using a Holistic Content Strategy Approach

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Creating a Web Presence for a Small Business Using a Holistic Content Strategy Approach

By

Tabitha Akins

A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the

Requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Professional Writing in the Department of
English

In the College of Humanities and Social Sciences of Kennesaw State University

Kennesaw, Georgia

2017

*College of Humanities & Social Sciences
Kennesaw State University
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Certificate of Approval*

This is to certify that the Capstone Project of

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*the Master of Arts in Professional Writing
in the Department of English*

May 2017

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The Capstone Essay

Introduction

Not all pathways are clear from the beginning. In fact, many pathways through life are obscured by the overgrowth around them—childhood expectations of yourself, old dreams that never came to life, and others' perceptions of where your pathway should lead. In the summer of 2013, having just received my bachelor's degree in Sociology, my pathway through life was as unclear to me as it had ever been. Up to this point my life had always been about school—going to class, writing papers, earning an A. However, my passion for school didn't translate into a career choice. Childhood fantasies of becoming a teacher had proven themselves to be just fantasies of the past. So it seemed that my dream of becoming a writer—a dream that fueled almost all of my interests as a kid—had also been sacrificed in the name of getting a “good” job that would provide “good” money to support myself with. Under this overgrown canopy of expectations and dead dreams, I found myself searching for a light to help me find the path hidden underneath.

Fortunately, not long after beginning my search, I found my light in the form of the Master of Arts in Professional Writing (MAPW) website. A few visits to this website and the overgrowth on my pathway felt like it was beginning to clear away. Even more exciting, my childhood dream of becoming a writer showed signs of life again. Thankfully, after deciding on the MAPW program as the next step on my journey, I was accepted and began classes in the fall of 2014. Over the course of the next three years I entered a world I had once dreamed of as a kid. I began to learn about prominent theorists and theories of writing and arming myself with new tools of literacy that would help me clear the ever oppressive overgrowth on my path; overgrowth which began to significantly clear away in my second semester in the program.

During that semester I took two courses, *Writing for the Web* and *Professional and Academic Editing*, which both gave me tools that helped light my way and changed the course of my life. *Writing for the Web* introduced me to a world I was already familiar with—the web—but in a way that shifted how I thought of it and how it could be used in my life. Complementing this new perspective on an old friend, a project in *Professional and Academic Editing* introduced me to two books—*The Web Content Strategist’s Bible* by Richard Sheffield and *Content Strategy for the Web* by Kristina Halvorson and Melissa Rach—that I have used ever since to guide me along my journey.

With this new understanding and group of tools, I quickly began to tailor the rest of my courses in the program to include content strategy and web writing, so that I could continue to become literate in that area. The very next semester, I used the option of a directed study to take what I had learned the previous semester and try my hand at it. In that course, I revised a small website for a client and gained firsthand experience in strategizing for and creating web content. Through that experience, I realized reading a few books on content strategy was much different than the actual practice and, if I wanted to become truly literate in the field, I needed to continue practicing until I was fully immersed. In order to facilitate that immersion, I chose to use the capstone project as an expanded version of my directed study course. Through this project I hoped to advance my understanding of web content strategy and hone my skills to the point where I could present those skills to the world. In the end, the project achieved that goal and opened up a wider understanding for me of what it means to be a content strategist. The results of that project are presented in the remainder of this essay. After reviewing who the client was and what the goals of the project were, I will discuss each part of the project in detail, before finally discussing what lessons I learned over the course of the project.

The Client

Since I decided to complete the practicum option for the capstone project, I had to find a client who was willing to not only let me revise (or create) their website, but who was also willing to let me write about the experience and the final results. Perhaps due to fate, a few months before it was time for me to start my capstone, Brittany Hagemann approached me about possibly helping her with her website. Ms. Hagemann is the owner of Unique Boutique by Nicole (UBBN), a boutique store that sells women's and children's fashions, jewelry, and other boutique style items. Coincidentally, at the same time that I was facing the overgrowth on my life path, Ms. Hagemann was facing the same problem on hers. In 2013, Ms. Hagemann was pregnant with her first child and unable to work; however, she still needed a way to help support the family she was building with her husband. Since holding a fulltime job was not an option for her, she decided that she would try selling clothes as a side business. She started with a single rack of women's clothing that she stored in her house and sold to friends and family. From this single rack, she grew her business to the point where she felt an online presence would greatly increase her daily sales, and in 2014 she began to explore her online options through Facebook and a website. Shortly after this first expansion, she continued to expand her business to include a physical store front (which currently doubles as her storage unit for her merchandise) and a presence at local market events and trunk shows.

Due to her business's rapid growth, in the spring of 2016, Ms. Hagemann began looking for someone to help her with her website. Although she does do business through her physical store front, the UBBN website is still the main source of revenue for her business. Unfortunately for Ms. Hagemann, at the time, her website was fraught with many of the problems that plague other small business websites: content was missing, spread across platforms, and ill-organized.

Further, while Ms. Hagemann recognized that she had content problems with her website and online presence, she didn't know what to do to fix the problems. In fact, her solution for many of her website issues was to simply change the template and hope that the new template would make her website look better. With this background in mind, I agreed to help Ms. Hagemann with her website and she agreed to be the subject of my capstone practicum.

Project Goals

Before I could begin working on Ms. Hagemann's website it was imperative that I understand her goals for her website and her business. Since this website would be doubling as both a professional project and my capstone practicum project, there were goals that I had for the website and the project outside of Ms. Hagemann's business concerns. In the same vein, Ms. Hagemann's goals for her website were solely related to her business and where she wanted to take that business, and had no relation to my goals for the capstone. So, it would not have been surprising for myself and Ms. Hagemann to have completely different goals for and expectations about this project. For example, one of my goals for the capstone project was to become more of an expert in content strategy than I was when I first learned about the field several months prior; however, Ms. Hagemann had no such desire. Therefore, she did not care about the research portion of the project or the small details about how a content strategy project works. While this is just one example, it illustrates the point, as Kristina Halvorson and Melissa Rach point out in their book *Content Strategy for the Web*, that it was important to "creat[e] a common understanding"¹ between myself and Ms. Hagemann about what this project would entail and what it would not.

¹ Halvorson and Rach, *Content Strategy*, 39.

In order to create that understanding, I interviewed Ms. Hagemann twice in the beginning stages of the project.² Interviewing stakeholders³ in the beginning of a project is a highly recommended first step in almost every source on content strategy that I consulted.⁴ During the interviews I asked the following questions to determine Ms. Hagemann's goals for the project: What are your business goals for the next year, five years, ten years? and What are your website goals? Although the main portion of Ms. Hagemann's business is her website, it was important to me to differentiate between her business and her website in these first interviews, since her goals for each could have been different. However, through my interviews I discovered that Ms. Hagemann did not differentiate between the two and her goals for each were the same. For the most part, Ms. Hagemann's goals centered around monetary checkpoints she wished to hit: "to get to \$[specific amount] a month;"⁵ "to be able to put up a product and sell it out in 30 minutes."⁶ Ms. Hagemann also had one goal separate from her monetary concerns of starting to build a brand for herself.⁷

Given the results from these interviews, the following goals for the overall capstone project were established:

- Create a solid base for Ms. Hagemann to continue to build her brand off of in the future;
- Create a website that would help Ms. Hagemann increase her sales revenue year over year;
- Gain a better understanding of what strategizing for content entails (personal goal);

² See Appendix A on page 45 for the full set of questions asked during each interview.

³ Stakeholders, as defined by Kristina Halvorson and Melissa Rach, are those "people who matter to your project," or, in other words, people who "can make or break your strategy project" [*Content Strategy*, 40]. On an enterprise level, a content strategy project will have several stakeholders from various departments; however, since Ms. Hagemann is the sole owner of her business, she was the only stakeholder for this project.

⁴ See Bibliography on pages 43-44 for consulted sources.

⁵ Personal interview, Brittany Hagemann, August 27, 2016.

⁶ Personal interview, Brittany Hagemann, October 1, 2016.

⁷ Ibid. During this interview she made statements such as "So when people are walking down the road, people will be like, 'Oh, you got that at UBBN,'" which showcased her desire to build a brand for herself.

- Gain firsthand experience in strategizing for content and working with a client (personal goal);⁸
- Create a website that could be used as a representation of the content strategy and website creation/revision skills I learned over the course of my time in the MAPW program (personal goal).

With the goals for the project established and in mind, I could begin working on the capstone project, using a holistic content strategy approach, which I will detail below.

The Capstone Project

Before discussing each stage of the project, it is important to review what I mean when I refer to content strategy and using a holistic approach to revising Ms. Hagemann’s website. In their book *The Language of Content Strategy*, Scott Abel and Rahel Anne Bailie define content strategy as “the practice of helping organizations improve their content performance, primarily through the analysis of existing content problems and development of plans for improvement.”⁹ In short, then, content strategy is about (1) using various assessment tools to find out where a project’s content problems are; (2) using the results of those assessments to understand how to fix those problems; and (3) creating and implementing plans to fix them. Although this process seems simple enough, there are a wide range of approaches to the content strategy process. For some, content strategy is website specific, as Richard Sheffield explains in *The Web Content Strategist’s Bible*: “Content strategy is a repeatable system that defines the entire editorial content development process for a website development project, from very early tasks such as analyzing and classifying readers to the very last tasks, such as planning for the ongoing content maintenance after the project launches.”¹⁰ Under this theory of content strategy, the main focus is

⁸ Although this was also a goal during my directed study, the client in that project only needed a fairly static website that consisted of eight webpages. For this project, the website needed was much larger (almost 300 webpages when product pages are taken into account) and one that would need consistent updating over time. Therefore, I felt this goal was still relevant for this project.

⁹ Abel and Bailie, *Language of Content Strategy*, 15.

¹⁰ Sheffield, *Web Content Strategist’s Bible*, 35.

on an organization's website content and figuring out how to best present that content, so that website visitors will be inclined to receive it.

However, there are others who advocate for a much more expanded role for content strategy. For example, in his handbook, *Enterprise Content Strategy: A Project Guide*, Kevin P. Nichols defines content strategy in much broader terms: "Enterprise content strategy envelopes all proprietary and intellectual property across an organization's operational infrastructure. It includes every method used to deliver content to the consumer and all the interaction and integration points."¹¹ Under this definition, strategizing for useful content is not simply about an organization's website, but includes every place an organization presents content to their consumers, including business cards, brochures, social media accounts, TV, and radio, just to name a few. It also includes all types of content, such as print, video, audio, visual, and digital. Here, strategizing for content is on a much larger scale and, as Ann Rockley and Charles Cooper emphasize in their book *Managing Enterprise Content: A Unified Content Strategy*, meant to bring "together the planning and design for all customer-facing content to ensure a seamless customer experience from first contact through purchase, usage, and support."¹²

Beyond definitions of content strategy, there are also several different understandings of how that process should play out. Returning to Nichols,¹³ under his theory of content strategy, the strategy must always have governance¹⁴ at the center of any plan verses having governance as a separate stage of a project; follow a more closed-loop lifecycle (i.e. the strategizing process

¹¹ Nichols, *Enterprise Content Strategy*, 5.

¹² Rockley and Cooper, *Managing Enterprise Content*, 4.

¹³ See chapter one of *Enterprise Content Strategy: A Project Guide*.

¹⁴ As defined by Nichols, "governance supports a consistent, relevant, timely, and effective content experience. Additionally, governance oversees the entire content ecosystem, establishing tools, processes, roles, responsibilities, and ongoing operations" [*Enterprise Content Strategy*, 123].

never actually ends); and be organized under an omnichannel¹⁵ approach. Further, he includes the following stages for any content strategy project: Plan; Assess; Define; Design; Build; Publish; Measure; and Optimize. In a similar vein, Rockley and Cooper advocate for a more omnichannel approach under their theory of content strategy. For these theorists, content strategy projects should focus on making content intelligent, or in other words, making content “structurally rich and semantically categorized” so that it is “automatically discoverable, reusable, reconfigurable, and adaptable” across an organization’s various channels.¹⁶ However, unlike Nichols, Rockley and Cooper do not include governance at the center of their model, but at the end of the model as a separate stage.

In contrast to both Nichols and Rockley and Cooper, Kristina Halvorson and Melissa Rach, discuss content strategy in relation to websites and the strategy stages needed for a website’s specific content needs. For Halvorson and Rach, their process segments content strategy stages into “content components” and “people components” that will affect the “core strategy” of the website project.¹⁷ Finally, as with Rockley and Cooper, Halvorson and Rach also include governance as a separate stage in their process, which is as follows: Discovery; Audit; Analysis; Core Strategy; Content Strategy (segmented into substance and structure); and People Strategy (segmented into workflow and governance). However, even with these differences among theorists about what a content strategy project should look like and how it should proceed, when all theories and process setups are considered together, the process can be said to typically have seven stages: (1) Plan, (2) Discovery, (3) Assess, (4) Design, (5) Build, (6) Publish, (7) Maintain/Govern.

¹⁵ Omnichannel is another way of referring to focusing on content on all customer touchpoints and how customers will interact and receive that content across those touchpoints.

¹⁶ Rockley and Cooper, *Managing Enterprise Content*, 16.

¹⁷ Halvorson and Rach, *Content Strategy*, 29-30.

With regard to this project, I chose to sample from all theories of content strategy, instead of following one in particular. In the end, the capstone project had five stages: (1) Plan, (2) Discovery/Assess, (3) Design, (4) Build/Publish, and (5) Governance/Maintenance. Further, when I originally envisioned how the capstone would be completed, I planned to use the more expanded understanding of content strategy that takes a more enterprise approach. Therefore, during the planning and discovery/assess stages, I included all of the UBBN business's customer touchpoints and customer-facing content in my activities and tasks. However, as I will discuss in the Important Lessons section, after the discovery/assess stage, it became apparent that trying to create and implement a strategy across all UBBN channels would not be possible. The creation and implementation window for the capstone project was two months, which caused the implementation focus to narrow to the point of only including the website. Given that some strategy plans and processes take several months to sometimes years to fully implement, it is not surprising that this project's focus needed to be fully narrowed down. Even still, I feel that taking the more expanded approach in the beginning stages was beneficial to the project as a whole, as it allowed me to gain a big picture understanding of Ms. Hagemann's content ecosystem and exposed areas where Ms. Hagemann could continue to improve that ecosystem in the future beyond the capstone project. With this understanding of what content strategy is and how I approached it for this project, I will now detail each of the project stages and the tasks I completed for each.

Planning Stage

As the name suggests, the planning stage is where the overall project plan is worked out. During this stage, as Erin Krissane discusses in her book, *The Elements of Content Strategy*, the most important task is to “take the time to clarify what the project is meant to accomplish—and

to make sure that everyone who needs to agree on that point, does.”¹⁸ In essence then, the planning stage is meant to answer “the five Ws and H” questions: Why, What, Who, Where, When, and How.¹⁹ However, as with almost all aspects of content strategy, what tasks deemed appropriate for this stage can vary depending on the strategist or theory of the process. For that reason, there are a wide range of deliverables that can be created for this stage, including stakeholder interviews; stakeholder workshops; a project brief or summary worksheet; creating a content team and detailing what each member’s responsibilities will be throughout the project; and a project charter. Interestingly, while some of these deliverables were suggested by only one or two strategists, stakeholder interviews came up in every book I consulted related to content strategy, which showcases the importance of that activity. Regardless of the activities completed in this stage, the most important end result is that everyone involved with the project is on the same page and that a feasible project plan is in place.

Due to the requirements of the capstone project, with regards to project stages, much of this planning had previously taken place since it was required that I write a proposal for the capstone before starting it. Therefore, I already knew that the capstone would have six major parts even before starting the planning stage. Those parts were (1) research and client meetings, (2) qualitative and quantitative content assessments, (3) internal and external impact factors analysis, (4) a recommendation report, (5) the website creation and revision, and (6) a maintenance and governance report. Aside from that previous planning, the actual capstone project planning stage involved four main activities: research, stakeholder interviews and observation, a client email detailing the goals/objectives of the project, and several blog posts about the research and interviews/observation that was completed.

¹⁸ Krissane, *Elements of Content Strategy*, 48.

¹⁹ Jones, *Clout*, 112.

For the research portion, I spent roughly the first two months of the capstone project extending my knowledge on the content strategy process and what the best practices are for that process.²⁰ During this portion of the planning stage, I also created a blog that served as a research hub and as a way to update my capstone committee on my progress.²¹ After completing this research, I conducted two stakeholder interviews with my client, Ms. Hagemann, as previously discussed above.²² To create the interview template for these meetings, I pulled questions from four of the sources I had previously research: *Nicely Said: Writing for the Web with Style and Purpose* by Nicole Fenton and Kate Kiefer Lee; *Content Audits and Inventories: A Handbook* by Paula Ladenburg Land; *Enterprise Content Strategy: A Project Guide* by Kevin P. Nichols; and *Managing Enterprise Content: A Unified Content Strategy* by Ann Rockley and Charles Cooper. The final interview questions can be reviewed in Appendix A on page 45. In addition to interviews, I also observed my client at one of her market events that she regularly attends. Since Ms. Hagemann does quite a lot of business at these events, I thought it was important to observe her at one of these events, as it would give me the opportunity to see how Ms. Hagemann interacted with her potential customers and what types of customers stopped by her booth. Taken together, the observation and interviews resulted in the project goals discussed on pages 5 and 6. Although some of my research sources suggested a project brief or charter, since my client indicated that she wanted to receive simple updates about the project process and did not want to read reports, I sent an email briefly detailing the project goals and reiterating the parts of the

²⁰ Although I do not cite or quote from every source in this essay that I researched during this stage, I have included all of them in the bibliography on pages 43-44.

²¹ This blog can be found at <http://tabithaakinscapstone.tumblr.com/>. For the most part, this blog was meant to be informal and updated as needed; therefore, posts ranged in setup and style.

²² See The Project Goals section on pages 4-6.

project that were to be completed. All-in-all this stage took about two months to complete, after which I moved into the Discovery and/or Assess stage of the project.

Discovery/Assess Stage

Although most of the sources I consulted separate the discovery and assess stages, for this project these stages were essentially one stage. Combining these two stages into one is not uncommon, as Nichols suggests in *Enterprise Content Strategy: A Project Guide*, since their activities are so dependent on one another.²³ Regardless of what this stage is called, the outcome should be “a snapshot of an organization’s content ecosystem.”²⁴ In order to achieve that result, depending on the size of the project and/or organization, there are several deliverables that can be produced. Those deliverables include, but are not limited to, a content inventory; a quantitative content audit; a qualitative content audit; a competitor audit; and stakeholder interviews to determine key messages and target audiences. Finally, after completing these activities, it is necessary to analyze the results and then communicate those results, usually in the form of an analysis report. Interestingly, with regard to the analysis report, there seems to be a split amongst content strategists on what should actually be included in and how to present such a report. For example, while most of the consulted sources detailed a specific type of analysis report, in *Content Audits and Inventories: A Handbook*, Paula Ladenberg Land recommends that a strategist “choose a delivery mechanism that works for [their] audience.”²⁵ Here, a report could include a PowerPoint presentation verses a long word document. Further, while Richard Sheffield states that the end results of an analysis report “is to make recommendations to the clients/sponsors about how the content track of [the] project should proceed based on what [was]

²³ Nichols, *Enterprise Content Strategy*, 27.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Land, *Content Audits and Inventories*, 89.

learned” from the analysis activities,²⁶ Kristina Halvorson and Melissa Rach call for recommendations to be excluded from the end report: “This document shouldn’t include any recommendations for the future content. Its sole purpose is to ensure that everyone on the content team starts the content strategy process with the same information about the complex ecosystem [the] content lives in.”²⁷

Keeping all of these points in mind, for this project, the discovery/assess phase involved five main activities and deliverables: (1) a content inventory of the client’s website, (2) a content audit of the client’s website, (3) an audit of the client’s content channels, (4) a content audit of two competitors’ websites, and (5) the creation of an analysis report. To create the inventory and audits categories,²⁸ I consulted a number of sources, in some cases directly incorporating specific categories they suggested.²⁹ For the content inventory, once I had the categories, I went through my client’s entire website page by page and recorded the appropriate information in an Excel spreadsheet. Figure 1 below shows an example of what the spreadsheet looked like. Originally, I thought this process would take about a week to complete; however, it actually took three weeks to inventory the entire website due to the amount of website pages and time constraints. Although this process took longer than I first thought, as I stated in my blog post “Content Inventory Complete!”³⁰ I felt that going through the website on such an intensive level helped me to gain “an intimate understanding of [the] website,” an understanding that I still feel would not have resulted had I not done the inventory.

²⁶ Sheffield, *Web Content Strategist’s Bible*, 67.

²⁷ Halvorson and Rach, *Content Strategy*, 89.

²⁸ See the full list of categories for each deliverable in the What Was Assessed and Assessment Criteria section in Appendix B on pages 52-54.

²⁹ See the Bibliography on 43-44 for sources.

³⁰ See <http://tabithaakinscapstone.tumblr.com/post/152544356018/content-inventory-complete> for the full blog entry.

ID	Title	URL	Content Type	Content Description	Content Owner or Author	Storage Location	Last Updated
0.0	Home Page	https://www.uniqueboutiquebynicole.	Web Page	Home page of site	Brittany	CMS	Unknown
0.1	Top Navigation		Text	Top navigation bar with search, login, create account, and cart	Unknown	CMS	Unknown
0.2	Logo		Image	UBBN logo: grey, pink, and black color scale	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
0.3	Secondary Navigation		Text	Secondary navigation bar with links to all products	Brittany	CMS	Unknown
0.4	Hero Image Carousel		Image	Hero image carousel	Brittany	CMS	Unknown
0.4.1	Hero Image #1		Image	Brunette in white, orange, & pink dress	Brittany	Unknown	N/A
0.4.2	Hero Image #2		Image	Blonde in blue dress	Brittany	Unknown	N/A
0.4.3	Hero Image #3		Image	Trifold image of brittany in dress	Brittany	Unknown	N/A
0.4.4	Hero Image #4		Image	Trifold image of brittany in striped shirt	Brittany	Unknown	N/A
0.4.5	Hero Image #5		Image	Brunette in blue shirt	Brittany	Unknown	N/A
0.4.6	Hero Image #6		Image	Blonde in pink shirt	Brittany	Unknown	N/A
0.5	Earn Rewards		Text; Image	Pop up box explaining how to get rewards	Brittany	CMS	Unknown
0.6	Sign Up		Text	Pop up box explaining how to sign up for text offers and the newsletter	Brittany	CMS	Unknown
0.7	Send us a message		Text; Image	Pop up message box for people to send UBBN a message on Facebook	Brittany	Unknown	Unknown
0.8	Bottom Navigation/Footer			Links to Search page, Location page, and Return Policy page	Unknown	CMS	Unknown
0.8.1	Quick Links		Text; Link	Links to Instagram and Facebook	Brittany	CMS	Unknown
0.8.2	Follow Us		Text	Address, Phone Number, Email	Brittany	CMS	Unknown
0.8.3	Contact Us			Submit box to sign up for newsletter	Unknown	CMS	Unknown
0.8.4	Newsletter Sign Up		Text; Submit Form	Logos for different cards the business accepts	Unknown	CMS	Unknown
0.8.5	Copyright		Text	Page that contains the form to log into your account; can also click over to create an account from this page	Unknown	CMS	Unknown
0.8.6	Payment Bar		Image	Page that contains the form to create an account	Unknown	CMS	Unknown
1.0	Login	https://www.uniqueboutiquebynicole.	Web Page; Text	Page that contains the form to create an account	Unknown	CMS	Unknown
2.0	Create Account	https://www.uniqueboutiquebynicole.	Web Page; Text	Page that contains the form to create an account	Unknown	CMS	Unknown
3.0	Cart	https://www.uniqueboutiquebynicole.	Web Page	Page tells you that your cart is empty and prompts you with a link to continue browsing	Unknown	CMS	Unknown
3.1	Cart - Empty		Web Page; Text	Page tells you what is in your cart: shows a picture	Unknown	CMS	Unknown

Figure 1: Content Inventory Spreadsheet

With regard to the three audits, the process also took about three weeks to complete. For the client content audit, I selected a representative sample of her website pages to conduct the audit on. Since her website has similar content on most of her pages, I felt that sampling a portion of the pages was appropriate versus auditing every page. For the client content channels audit, I selected the main content channels she used at the time, which were her website, main Facebook account, VIP Facebook account, Instagram account, and Twitter account. Finally, for the competitor audit, I chose a sampling of content categories that I could compare the client's website against two competitors. To choose the competitors, I asked Ms. Hagemann who she saw as her main competitors. From that list I chose one competitor and then selected a national boutique chain as the second competitor. Each of these audits also required an Excel spreadsheet to be created. Examples of what those spreadsheets looked like can be seen in Figures 2-4 below.

Page	Usability	Messaging	Knowledge	Findability					
Home Page	Does your content have short or long paragraphs? -short, long, n/a -excellent, very good, good, acceptable, poor	Does your content have subheadings? -yes, no, n/a -excellent, very good, good, acceptable, poor	Do you think there are too many text links? Too few? -yes, no, somewhat, unsure -very satisfactory, satisfactory, somewhat satisfactory, unsatisfactory	What are the quality of the graphics? -excellent, very good, good, acceptable, poor	Are the graphics well organized? -yes, no, somewhat, n/a -very satisfactory, satisfactory, somewhat satisfactory, unsatisfactory	Is the content still current? -yes, needs updating	Does the content effectively communicate UBBN's messaging? -yes, somewhat, no -very effectively, effectively, somewhat effectively, not effectively	How much prior knowledge does your user need to understand your content? -none, almost none, some, expert	Does the content appear in the navigation or easily on site search? -yes, no -needs significant improvement, could benefit from improvement, somewhat effective, effective, very effective
Login	n/a; excellent (home pages should be mostly links, but could use some text somewhere)	yes; very good (two nav bars; navigation could be cleaned up a bit)	somehow - too many; satisfactory (navigation categories could be cleaned up a bit; also bottom nav bar has links to things that the business doesn't have - like a news letter; also missing links to things the business does have - i.e. twitter account; there are also several pop up boxes that link to other places)	poor (the hero carousel has a number of different size and quality of images that need to be more streamlined as it messes with the look at feel of the page)	somehow; satisfactory (hero carousel is an excellent way to organize the images, but it needs to be cleaned up)	yes	no; not effectively (you do get a sense that the website is a clothing store, but you don't get much else)	none	yes; could benefit from improvement (if home page link does appear in the navigation, but navigation categories and placement could be improved)
Create Account	n/a; excellent (just a form letting people login in or pointing them where to go instead)	n/a	somehow - too many (could be a pop up box instead, so that the main navigation doesn't distract; could also use a link pointing people to the login page)	good (just the logo)	yes; satisfactory (logo at the top of page)	yes	no; not effectively	almost none - need to know how a login page works	yes; effective (in the top right hand corner of website)
Cart	short; excellent	yes; excellent	no; satisfactory	good	yes; very satisfactory	yes	no; not effectively	almost none - need to know how a shopping cart page works	yes; effective (in the top right hand corner of website)
New Arrivals	short; excellent (landing page for new arrivals)	yes; excellent	no; very satisfactory	acceptable - quality of images ranges from poor to excellent	yes; very satisfactory	yes - to my knowledge	no; not effectively	none	yes; effective
Gals	n/a; good	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	yes; effective

Figure 2: Content Audit Spreadsheet

Channel	Product Information	Crosslinks	Crossposts	Broken or Outdated Links	Style & Tone of Posts	Branding	Notes
Website	Unique Boutique by Nicole	Base Line	Facebook & Twitter	No	No; Newsletter doesn't actually exist	informal; last minute; colloquial; enthusiastic; playful; light-hearted	Unclear
Facebook	Unique Boutique by Nicole (@UniqueBoutiqueByNicole)	Consistent	Website, Instagram; Posts about Twitter & Snapchat (Snapchat post has no comments or likes)	Yes - Instagram	No	informal; last minute; colloquial; enthusiastic; playful; light-hearted	Unclear
Facebook 2	Unique Boutique by Nicole VIP	Inconsistent - different prices	No	Yes - Instagram, UBBN Facebook	No	informal; last minute; colloquial; enthusiastic; playful; light-hearted	Unclear
Instagram	UBBN (@Ubbn_Ubbn)	Consistent	Website; Post about following on Twitter	Yes - UBBN Facebook, VIP Facebook	No	informal; last minute; colloquial; enthusiastic; playful; light-hearted	Unclear
Twitter	uniqueboutiquebynicole	Consistent	No	Yes - UBBN Facebook, VIP Facebook	No	informal; last minute; colloquial; enthusiastic; playful; light-hearted	Unclear

Figure 3: Multichannel Audit Spreadsheet

	A	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Business	Home Page						Rating	Notes
2		Features							
3		Logo	Navigation Description	Hero Image Carousel	Content Box Types	Pop Up Box Types	Footer Content Types (bold those that UBBN DOESN'T have)	Very satisfactory, Satisfactory, Somewhat Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory	
4	UBBN	Yes	Two main navigation bars separated by the logo	Yes	None	Rewards Text message sign up Facebook Message	Quick Links (Search, Location, Return Policy) Follow Us (Social Media Bar) Contact Us (Address, Phone Number, Email) Newsletter Sign Up Copyright Bar Payment Methods Bar	Somewhat satisfactory	Navigation and logo take up over page; hero carousel has different images that mess up page when
5	ShopHopes	Yes	One main navigation bar; also have a section for the cart, etc. that is connected to the logo part	Yes	What's New Instagram Feed	Rewards Chat (zendesk)	Services (Contact Us, FAQs, Search, Locations) Policies (Privacy, Term of Use, Shipping Policy, Contests, Promotions) My Account (My Account, Order Status, Returns, Gift Card) Let's Get Social (Social Media Bar) Copyright Payment Methods Bar	Very satisfactory	
6	Francesca's	Yes	Two main navigation bars that are connected to each other	No	Shop Holiday Gift Guide Shop New Arrivals BOGO Mixer View the Lookbook Shop Jewelry Shop Dresses	Live Chat	Various links about the company Contact Us Privacy & Security Terms of Use Help Number Track Your Order	Satisfactory	

Figure 4: Competitor Audit Spreadsheet

Once I had the results of the content inventory and three content audits, I analyzed the results and compiled them into an audit report. The report can be viewed in its entirety in Appendix B on pages 46-110. The report detailed what was assessed, how the assessment was done, the current state of the client’s website and content, the next steps for the project, and gave a brief summary of the content inventory results and the full results for all three audits. Briefly, the analysis results showed that while Ms. Hagemann’s website was useable, it could do with some improvements in several areas. Areas of concern were the organization and navigation structure of her website,³¹ the website internal metadata,³² the usability of the website’s home

³¹ See the Findability and Organization sections in Appendix B on pages 56-60.
³² See the discussion on metadata in Appendix B on page 57.

and product pages,³³ who the target audience of the website was,³⁴ and missing information. Further, the website's imagery³⁵ and branding³⁶ were found to be in need of significant improvement; however, given the time frame of the capstone project and Ms. Hagemann's resources, both of these areas were deemed to be outside the scope of the capstone project.³⁷ Finally, although the audit report was originally intended to be shared with both my client and the capstone committee, through conversation with her, Ms. Hagemann indicated that she had no desire to read and review the final report, so it was never shared in full with her. However, I did incorporate some of the report's results in the recommendation presentation,³⁸ which I went over with her in detail.

Design Stage

After completing all of the assessments and analyzing their results, I then moved on to the design stage. Although I have called this stage the design stage, it incorporated activities from two different content strategy stages: the define and design stages. According to Nichols, during these stages the main goal is to “define the future content experience based on what [was] learned in the assess phase,”³⁹ before moving on to “design several pieces of the [new] content ecosystem.”⁴⁰ Sheffield takes a similar approach in *The Web Content Strategist's Bible*, stating that the main purpose of this stage “is to figure out exactly what content needs to be modified or created, and figure out exactly how the work is going to be done.”⁴¹ In short then, the main goals

³³ See the Home Page and Product Pages sections in Appendix B on pages 72-78.

³⁴ See the Audience section in Appendix B on pages 82-83.

³⁵ See the Graphics section in Appendix B on pages 64-71.

³⁶ See the Messaging and Branding section in Appendix B on pages 79-81.

³⁷ Although I was unable to incorporate these areas into the capstone project, I still made recommendations on how Ms. Hagemann could improve them in the future. Those recommendations can be seen in Appendix D on page 125.

³⁸ See Appendix D on pages 120-126 for the full recommendation presentation.

³⁹ Nichols, *Enterprise Content Strategy*, 49.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 61.

⁴¹ Sheffield, *Content Strategist's Bible*, 85.

of this stage are (1) to define what content is needed and (2) to design that content. Finally, there are a number of deliverables and activities that can be created and conducted during this stage, including a content brief; a content workflow; a content strategy framework; a message architecture; a content matrix; content models; metadata; site maps; wireframes; and a host of others.

Given the vast amount of deliverables that could be applicable to this section, for the capstone project, I decided to only create those deliverables that were appropriate to the project verses simply creating deliverables for the sake of creating them. Further, as I previously mentioned, it was during this stage of the project where it became apparent that there would be some areas of the client's ecosystem that were simply beyond the scope of what could be completed within the capstone project timeframe. With that being said, the deliverables for this stage of the project were as follows: (1) finalizing the target audiences and messaging for the website; (2) a recommendation report; (3) creation of a new organization and navigation system for the website; (4) creation of several new pages and pieces of content for the website; (5) selection of a new theme for the website; (6) creation of a new product tagging system; (7) revising product names to incorporated more descriptive titles; and (8) detailing a new design for the home and product pages. I will briefly discuss how I created these deliverables in the following sections.

Target Audiences, Messaging, and Voice & Tone. In order to determine the target audiences and messages for the website, I consulted several sources that included extremely helpful sections on figuring out these key areas. Particularly helpful were *Content Strategy at Work: Real-World Stories to Strengthen Every Interactive Project* by Margot Bloomstein; *Communicating Design: Developing Web Site Documentation for Design and Planning* by Dan

M. Brown; *Nicely Said: Writing for the Web with Style and Purpose* by Nicole Fenton and Kate Kiefer Lee; *Content Strategy for the Web* by Kristina Halvorson and Melissa Rach; *Content Audits and Inventories: A Handbook* by Paula Landenburg Land; *Letting Go of the Words: Writing Web Content That Works* by Janice Redish; and *Managing Enterprise Content: A Unified Content Strategy* by Ann Rockley and Charles Cooper. Each of these books either had sections on how best to go about figuring out the appropriate audience for a project or sections on how to best define what messages fit with a project.

Beginning with audience, figuring out the target audience(s) for Ms. Hagemann’s website was both easy and a bit difficult. With regard to the process being easy, since Ms. Hagemann is based in Alabama, she typically caters to a southern demographic. This point is evident in products she offers for various sports teams around the southern region and the fact that she attends trunk shows around different southern states. Further, as I observed at the event I shadowed, a majority of the people who frequented her booth were women. For these reasons, one of the target audiences for the business would clearly be southern women and was easy to figure out. However, when it comes to target audiences, the process needs to be more robust than simple inferences, which is where the difficulty of this activity came into play. Every source that I consulted emphasizes the importance of basing target audiences off of real data about a business’s customers. However, as I stated in my blog post about working through this process, while each of those sources listed a number of ways to find that data, most of those ways “I d[idn’t] have access to (i.e. analytics software) or the time to implement (i.e. extensive customer interviews).”⁴² Further, while I also interviewed Ms. Hagemann about her idea of a target customer—which she did have a clear idea of—that idea did not seem to fit with half of her

⁴² See <http://tabithaakinscapstone.tumblr.com/post/155651818013/target-audiences-and-personas> for the full blog entry.

business. For example, in one of my interviews with Ms. Hagemann, she stated that her target customer was “college girls who are looking for something they and their moms can wear together.”⁴³ While this may be her target audience in her mind, half of her products are for young kids, which would suggest the target audience to be mothers buying for their children. In the end, with these constraints in mind, I used my interviews with Ms. Hagemann, my observations of who frequented her booth at the event I shadowed, and the three analytics reports on actual customers⁴⁴ available to me through her content management system (CMS) to settle on the main target audiences for the website.⁴⁵ Further, once I had the target audiences settled, I created two audience personas to help bring the audiences to life and give a more personal view of who the audiences were.⁴⁶

Moving to messaging, to create the target messages that the UBBN brand would communicate to customers, I drew heavily from a card sorting activity suggested by Margot Bloomstein in her book *Content Strategy at Work: Real-World Stories to Strengthen Every Interactive Project*.⁴⁷ In the second chapter of this book, Bloomstein details a card sorting activity that companies can use to create a message architecture⁴⁸ for their brand. For this activity, a content team is meant to come together and sort through a number of cards that have different descriptive words—such as “proactive,” “in touch,” or “lavish”—on them. These cards are sorted into three different piles: “Who we are,” “Who we’d like to be,” and “Who we’re not.”

⁴³ Personal interview, Brittany Hagemann, October 1, 2016.

⁴⁴ These reports are not included with this essay as they contain sensitive monetary information about the UBBN business.

⁴⁵ See the Audience section in Appendix C on pages 112-115.

⁴⁶ See Appendix C pages 115 and 116 for the personas. Although it is not necessary to create personas for every project, I felt that creating them for the capstone would be beneficial over all. Not only would these personas give a personal touch to a target audience, but creating them would give me practice is using them.

⁴⁷ See pages 28-34 of *Content Strategy at Work* for the card sorting activity.

⁴⁸ A message architecture can be defined as “a hierarchy of communication goals that reflect a shared vocabulary.” [Abel and Bailie, *Language of Content Strategy*, 88.]

Finally, the cards are narrowed down to a handful of messages that the content team wants to prioritize. In order to move through this process, since the content team consisted of only myself and Ms. Hagemann, I modified the activity to fit the project's situation. Due to scheduling, time constraints, and the fact that Ms. Hagemann and I live in different states, instead of working through activity with her, I went through the activity by myself. Once I narrowed down what I thought the target messages should be, I also morphed those message traits into guidelines on what voice and tone the UBBN business should use when communicating with customers. While it was important to create these guidelines for myself, it was also important since these guidelines could be used by Ms. Hagemann in the future and as a way to start branding her business.⁴⁹ Finally, I created a presentation⁵⁰ that I reviewed with Ms. Hagemann so she could approve the target messages and voice and tone guidelines.

Recommendation Report. Originally, as many of the sources suggested, I had planned to create a very detailed recommendation report in the form of a word document, similar to the inventory, audits, and analysis report. However, this plan quickly changed when my client stated that she neither wanted a full recommendation report nor would she read one if I sent one to her. For that reason, I finally settled on creating a recommendation presentation in Powerpoint.⁵¹ In addition, at the request of my capstone committee, I also created a detailed presentation outline they could review since they would not be present for the presentation itself.⁵² The final recommendation presentation included the following recommendations:

⁴⁹ Although creating voice and tone guidelines may seem trivial, such guidelines can actually be an important part of a business's success. Larsen points out this fact in their post "Creating the Right Brand Voice": "The personality of your brand is determined, in large measure, by the words you use and the sentences you write" [2014]. For this reason, while these guidelines may not have been part of the website overhaul itself, I still felt they were important to create.

⁵⁰ See pages 116-117 in Appendix C for the Messaging portion of the presentation.

⁵¹ See Appendix D on pages 120-126 for the full presentation.

⁵² See Appendix E on pages 127-132 for the full outline.

- General site-wide recommendations—including picking one logo for her brand, changing the website’s theme, and creating canned content that could be used throughout the website;
- Update the website’s organization and navigation to better organize the website;
- Create a new product tagging and naming system;
- Add product descriptions and information to product pages;
- Revise and revamp the home and product pages to make them more usable; and, finally,
- Recommendations that were beyond the scope of the capstone project—including updating all imagery throughout the website, integrating the business’s social media accounts into the website, coordinating cross-channel posting and information, and to review and update all of the business’s touchpoints to fit the brand voice and tone.

Each of these recommendations directly corresponded to results and analysis from the content inventory and audits. Once the presentation was created, I emailed it to Ms. Hagemann and we went over it in detail using the video chat option in the Facebook Messenger app. During the presentation Ms. Hagemann only asked a couple of questions. At the end, she accepted all of the recommendations and approved moving forward with the project. I will review the most important recommendations, the reasons for making them, and what work was done to fulfill them in the remainder of this section.

Organization and Navigation. The first major recommendation given was to update how the website was organized and the navigation categories that were used. Before this project, Ms. Hagemann’s website was organized around three different categories: (1) who the product was for, (2) the size of the product, and (3) the type of product. This organization system resulted in the main navigation shown in Figure 5 below. There were several reasons why this organization and navigation setup was problematic. Firstly, the categories used could alienate customers because they might not identify with the groups each category represents.⁵³ Secondly, as Janice Redish discusses in her book *Letting Go of the Words: Writing Web Content that Works*, most e-

⁵³ See my discussion of this problem in the Organization section in Appendix B on page 60. In this discussion, I use the example of a mother shopping for her daughter and having to identify her daughter either as a “Gal” or “Curvy Gal” and how that might cause frustration for her.

commerce websites are typically organized around a single category—product type—and this category was prioritized third on the UBBN website.⁵⁴ Thirdly, although not a front-facing customer issue, Ms. Hagemann had multiple pages for a single product that affected how products showed up in which navigation category. Finally, as shown in Figure 6, the footer navigation was also missing several pieces of important content—such as an About Us or FAQ.

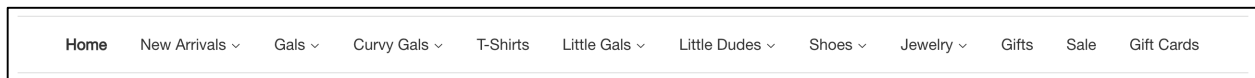


Figure 5: The Website’s Old Main Navigation

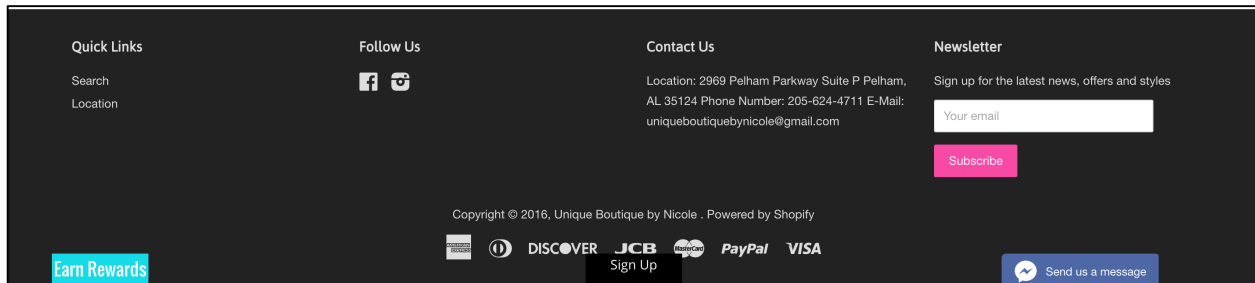


Figure 6: The Website’s Old Footer Navigation

In order to fix these issues, I recommended that the main navigation categories be collapsed into a simpler system. Therefore, as an example, instead of having two categories of women’s clothing, Gals and Curvy Gals, there would only be one category, Women, for this product type. Further, I also recommended that the footer navigation be expanded to include content that is normally included in the footer of a website, such as various business policies. This new organization system and navigation setup for both the main navigation and footer can be seen in Figures 7 and 8 below. Finally, to make sure that this new organization and navigation setup actually worked, I had to go through all of the website’s product pages and manually

⁵⁴ Redish, *Letting Go of the Words*, 106.

combine several duplicate pages into one product page. As with the content inventory, this process was a bit slow and tedious, but worth the effort so that the new website would function better for Ms. Hagemann’s customers.

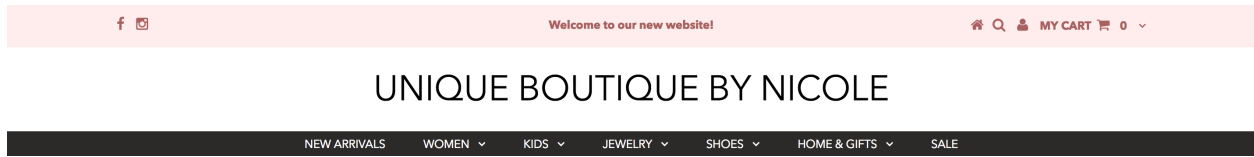


Figure 7: The Website’s New Main Navigation

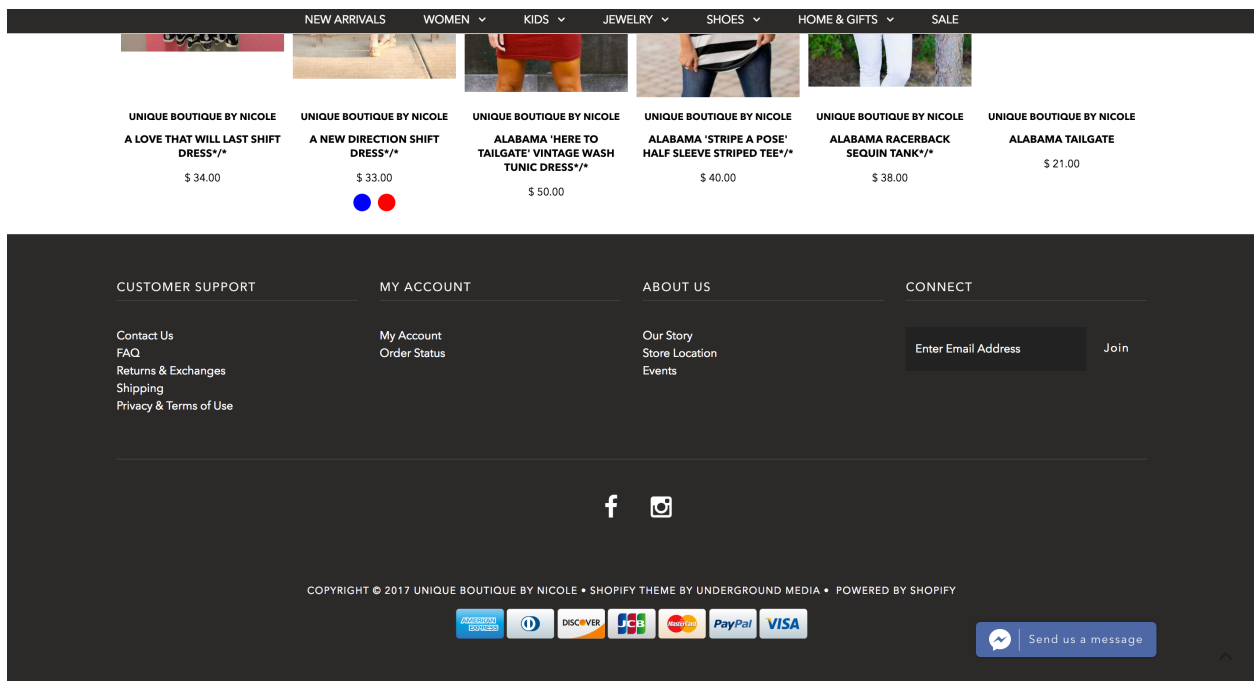


Figure 8: The Website’s New Footer

New Website Pages and Content. While revamping the website’s organization and navigation were important, the effort would have been for nothing if I had not also recommended that several pieces of new content be created. Specifically, those pieces of content were a Contact Us page, an FAQ page, a Shipping and Returns page, a Privacy and Terms of Use page,

an About Us page, a Store Location page, and an Events page.⁵⁵ Creating these pages was important as they would answer many customer questions that were previously going unanswered on the old website. To create this content, in some cases I reviewed how other websites presented a certain piece of content. As an example, for the FAQ page, this activity meant finding out what common questions were included on competitors' FAQ pages. After reviewing those websites and consulting several of the sources I had previously researched, I narrowed down what needed to be included on each new webpage. Once that process had taken place, I needed to collect the appropriate information from Ms. Hagemann, which turned out to be the most difficult part of this section of the project. Unfortunately, there were several instances where it took a week or more for Ms. Hagemann to return my emails with the requested information, which caused a delay in the creation process.⁵⁶ However, in the end, I was able to create all of the recommended new content.⁵⁷

Website Theme. In order to accommodate the new content and to fulfill some of the other recommendations that will be discussed below, it was necessary to pick a different theme for Ms. Hagemann's website. Currently Ms. Hagemann uses the Shopify CMS to create and store her website. As its name suggests, this CMS is specifically geared towards e-commerce websites, and while it has many excellent features, most of those features depend on what theme a website is using. While almost all of the sources I researched for this project discussed the need to create and think of content separately from formatting or design choices, in this case, it was literally

⁵⁵ Originally, I also recommended creating a Rewards Program page for the website; however, Ms. Hagemann informed me that she was getting rid of her rewards program so this page was scrapped.

⁵⁶ I will discuss what lessons this delay taught me in the Important Lessons section below on pages 40-42.

⁵⁷ Due to the number of pages created and length of text on some of those pages, instead of including the full text or screenshots of these pages in the body of the essay they can be found in Appendix F on pages 133-143.

impossible to implement some of the suggestions made without changing the theme. Therefore, picking a new theme for the website was a crucial step in revising the website.⁵⁸

Previously, the website was using the Minimal theme that used a very simple design and had few features which could help better organize and present the new website. In order to recommend a more useful theme, I went through all of the Shopify themes under the “Fashion” category, as well as a few of the other industry categories. There were three themes that not only would have improved the website, but also fit into the brand style Ms. Hagemann wanted for her business.⁵⁹ Once these themes were singled out, I went over each of them with her and we decided on which theme would fit best. In the end, we chose the Testament theme, which offered a range of features, including collection pages that showed customers all the options available for a single product,⁶⁰ the ability to filter products according to specific criteria, and the most important feature, the ability to use internal product tags to organize the website. After choosing the theme, since the website was already previously published, I had to take it offline so that all changes could be made and kinks worked out.

⁵⁸ The fact that website and page features in Shopify so heavily depend on what theme is used was also the reason why I did not create any wireframes or page design models for this project. Originally I had planned to create wireframes for each of the main pages; however, no matter what theme is used, there is literally no way to change a page’s design in Shopify without completing some extensive coding work on the backend. Although I do have a basic working knowledge of coding, to change the pages would have been beyond my skills. However, given that all the page designs were similar to what I would have designed myself, removing the creation of wireframes from the project was not a major issue.

⁵⁹ One of the key goals for this project was to create a basis for Ms. Hagemann to build her brand off of in the future. [See the Project Goals section on pages 4-6.] Since one of the most important ways to differentiate a brand is through design [see Barton, Kalmbach, and Lowe, *Writing Spaces Web Writing Style Guide*; Chapman, “Why Your Brand Needs a Style Guide;” Gaines, “20 Inspiring Branding Guides;” and Grant, “Online Brand-Building 101”], I had originally planned to create a style guide complete with brand colors, fonts, etc. for the UBBN business. However, once Ms. Hagemann saw the colors and fonts of the Testament theme, she liked them so much, she did not want to change any of them. While I did explain to Ms. Hagemann that using the default colors and fonts does not differentiate her from other e-commerce websites that use the same theme, she did not want to change them. Therefore, I scraped the idea of a style guide and creating a specific color/font/etc. scheme for her brand. With that being said, there is always room for Ms. Hagemann to have these elements created in the future.

⁶⁰ See the “Anything for You Cold Shoulder” product in Figure 9 on page 29 for an example. Underneath the product there are three different colored circles which indicate that the product comes in three different colors. Under the old theme, this feature was not possible.

Product Tagging System. As I previously mentioned, one of the features of the new theme was its use of internal product tags to organize the website. In order to utilize this feature of the theme, I first had to create a tagging system that would appropriately filter product pages. After testing different types of tags, I eventually settled on tags for the categories of size, color, and price. I also created tags specific to each type of product, since each of the collection pages⁶¹ also used the tag system to filter in appropriate products. These tags can be seen in Table 1 below. Getting the tagging system right was important, because it can (1) cause a page on the website to show up or not show up and (2) it directly affects how other features of the website work. For example, from a customer standpoint, one of the most useful features of the new theme is a sidebar on the collection pages that lets them filter the products within a collection, as shown in Figure 9 on page 29. However, if a page is not tagged with the proper tag, it will not show up when the collection is filtered. As another example, since each collection page also uses the tagging system, if a product is not tagged correctly, a collection page will not filter it in to its page to begin with. If that were to happen, the incorrectly tagged product would be completely invisible to a customer unless they know its exact URL. In order to make sure that every page was tagged correctly, I manually tagged every product and collection page with their appropriate tags. Although this process was tedious and time consuming, it was well worth the results.

⁶¹ Collection pages are the main way in which Shopify organizes different categories of products. Therefore, if a business wants to have a “Women’s” section of a website, they must first create a “Women’s” collection page.

Size	Color	Price	Collection
XS	Black	\$0-9	Bags
S	Blue	\$10-19	Bottoms
M	Brown	\$20-29	Boys
L	Clear	\$30-39	Bracelets
XL	Denim	\$40-49	Dresses
1X	Gold	\$50-59	Earrings
2X	Green	\$60-69	Frames
3X	Grey	\$70-79	Girls
0-3 M	Magenta	\$80-89	Home & Gifts
3-6 M	Multicolor	\$90-99	Kid's Shoes
6-9 M	Neutral		Mugs
12 M	Orange		Necklaces
18 M	Pink		New Arrivals
24 M	Purple		Pins
2T	Red		Signs
3T	Yellow		Stickers
4T	White		Tops
Size 5			Toys
Size 6			T-Shirts
Size 6X			Women's Shoes
Size 7			0-9 Months LD
Size 8			0-9 Months LG
Size 9			12-24 Months LD
Size 10			12-24 Months LG
Size 11			2T-4T LD
Size 12			2T-4T LG
Size 13			5-6X
Size 14			7-16
Size 15			
Size 16			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
5 Toddler			
6 Toddler			
7 Toddler			
8 Toddler			
2 Kids			
11			
12			
13			
1			

Table 1: Product Tags by Category

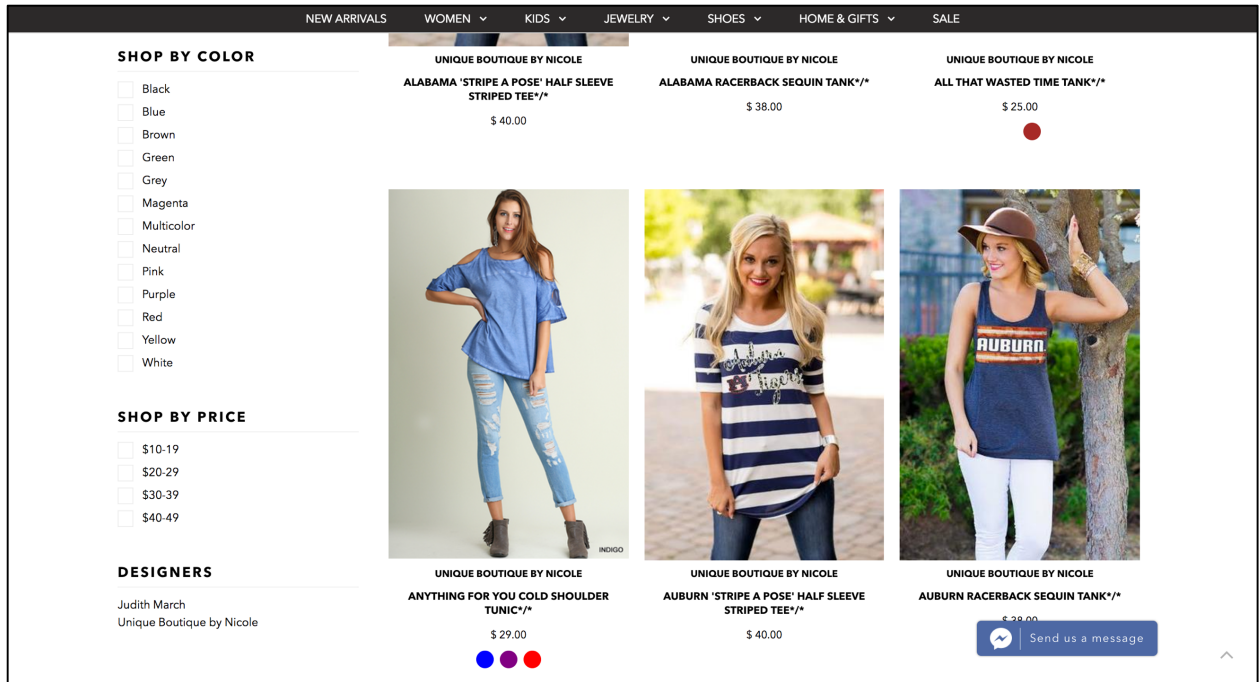


Figure 9: Example of a Collection Page on the New Website

Home Page and Product Pages. Aside from revising the internal organization system, the most dramatic changes and differences made to the UBBN website were on the home page and product pages. For any e-commerce website, the home page and product pages are the essence of the website, and can make or break an e-commerce business.⁶² Beginning with the home page, according to Janice Redish, home pages are meant to fulfill six basic functions: (1) “be findable through a search engine;” (2) “identify the site;” (3) “set the site’s tone and personality;” (4) “help people get a sense of what the site is all about;” (5) “continue the conversation quickly;” and (6) “send each person on the right way.”⁶³ In essence, a website’s home page is meant to give any visitor a clear picture of who runs the website, what the website is about, and how best to get where the visitor wants to go.

⁶² Lauren, “Building eCommerce Content,” 2008.

⁶³ Redish, *Letting Go of the Words*, 74.

Unfortunately, at the beginning of this project, the UBBN home page had several problems that needed to be addressed. In short, there were four main issues with the page:⁶⁴ (1) the logo and navigation took up over half of the page, (2) there were poor images in the hero image carousel, (3) information was missing or outdated, and (4) there was no clear call to action. Each of these problems reduced the usability of the home page and could contribute to customers being frustrated. For example, as Figure 10 below demonstrates, while the old home page clearly identified the name of the website and presented links to let customers know where to go, the amount of space dedicated to these two sections pushed almost all other content below the scroll fold, leaving only a person's forehead visible. Further, while the images in the hero image carousel did "set the site's tone and personality," that tone and personality was marred by the poor quality of the images. Finally, instead of giving customers a call to action and pointing out where the business wanted them to go—such as product sections or a sale banner in the carousel—there was literally no other content on the home page besides the logo, navigation bar, and the images in the carousel.

In order to fix these issues, the entire page needed to be revised. Revisions to the page included: changing the theme to reduce the size of the navigation; removing the logo from the center section of the home page; updating the images in the hero image carousel to improve their quality; removing the "Earn Rewards" and "Sign Up" pop up boxes that led to outdated information; adding links in the footer to useful information customers would want and need; and adding a call to action through banners in the hero image carousel and product sections under the carousel. Each of these changes to the home page were done to directly fix the issues with the original home page, and helped to improve the overall usability of the page. Figures 11-

⁶⁴ See the Home Page section in Appendix B on pages 72-74 for the full discussion on these issues and why they were considered problems for the home page.

15 below show what each of these changes look like on the new home page. Figure 8 on page 24 shows the new footer.

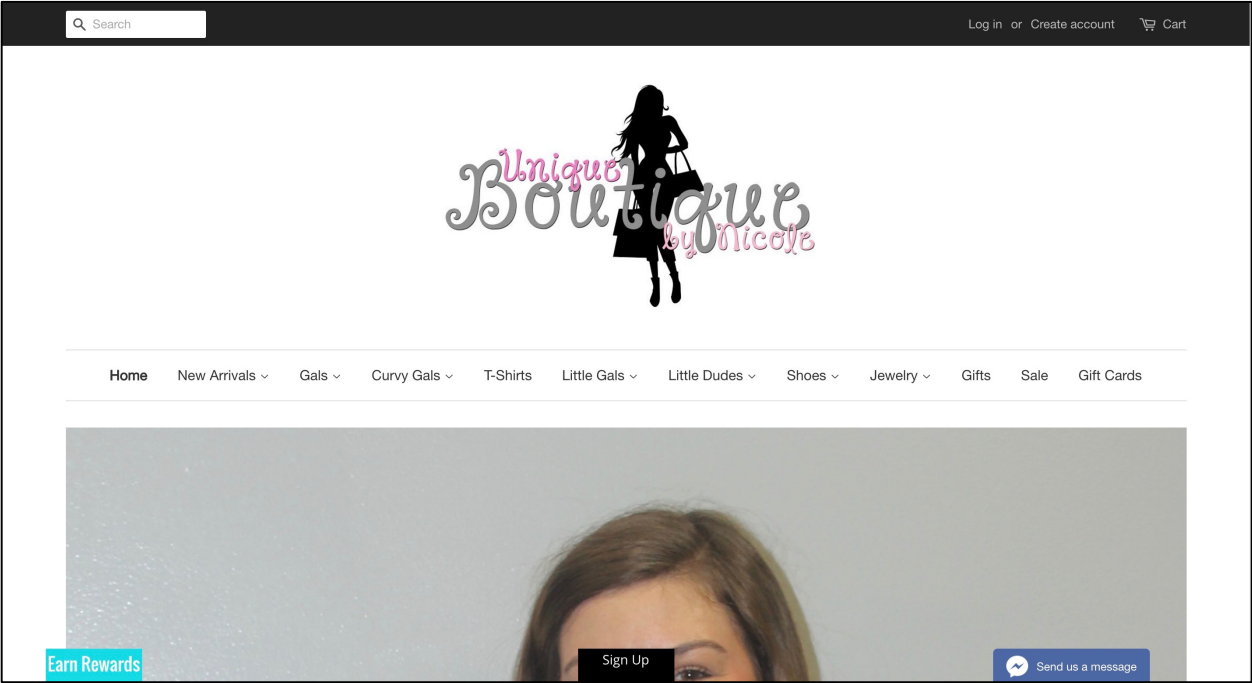


Figure 10: The Website’s Old Home Page

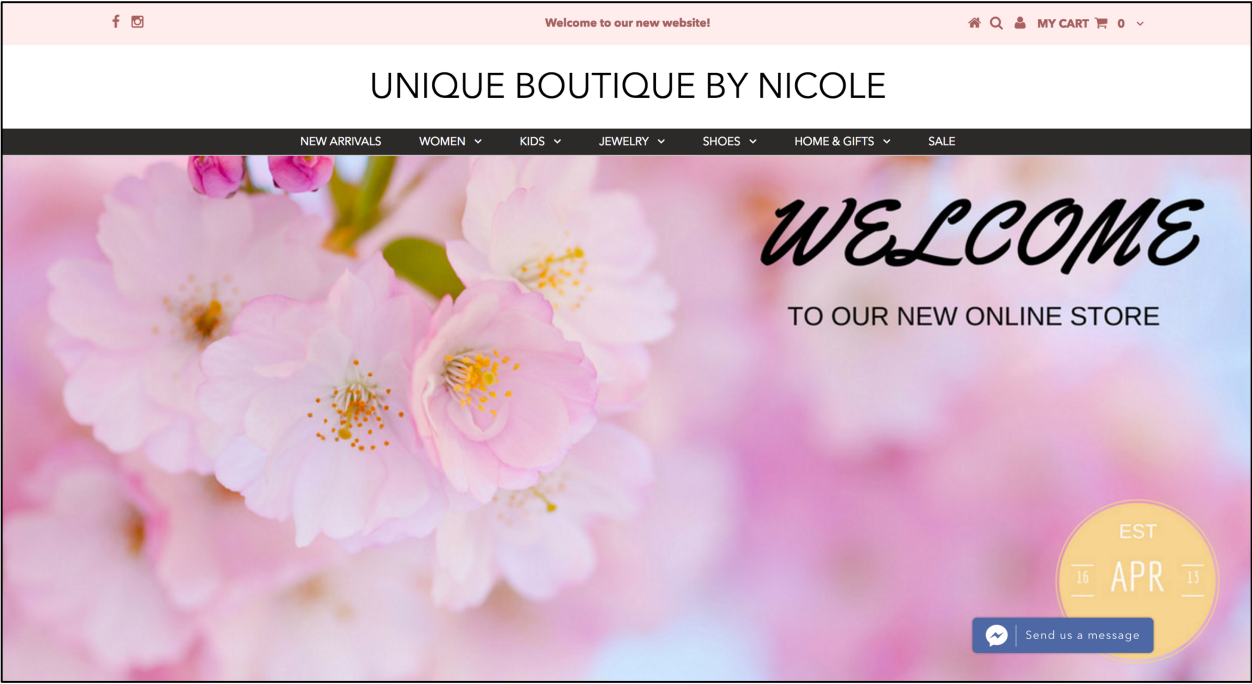


Figure 11: The Website’s New Home Page

Shop Spring Dresses



Figure 12: The Second Image in the Hero Image Carousel on the New Website



Figure 13: The Third Image in the Hero Image Carousel on the New Website



Figure 14: The Fourth Image in the Hero Image Carousel on the New Website

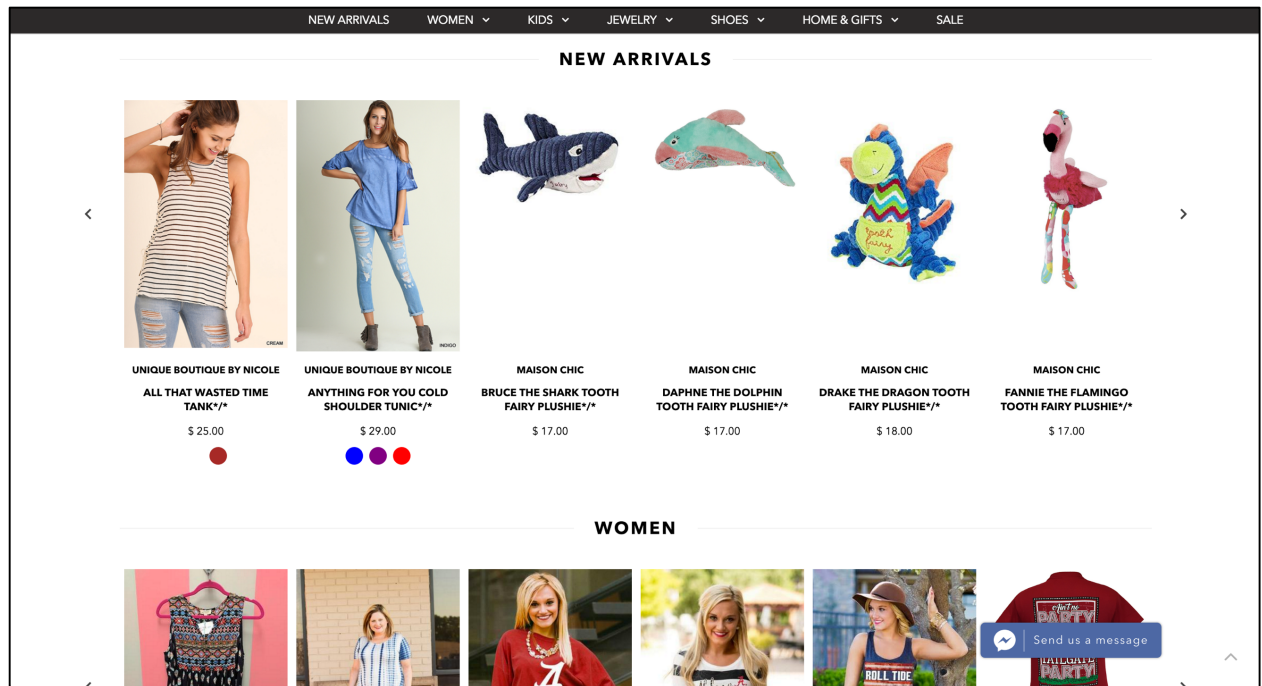


Figure 15: Product Sections on the New Home Page

Moving to product pages, there were also a number of issues that needed to be fixed on these pages as well.⁶⁵ First, similar to the home page, because the logo and navigation bar took up over half the page, most of the information on the product page was pushed below the scroll fold. On some product pages that information included all product selection menus and the “Add to Cart” button, completely eliminating the call to action on many of the product pages. Figure 16 below shows an example of this issue. Secondly, as I previously discussed, there were several instances where there were multiple pages for the same product. By duplicating the same product on different pages, customers could not choose between product options on the same page, but would have to view each page individually instead. This process could create frustration and lead customers to abandon a purchase. Finally, almost all of the product pages lacked any descriptive content about the product or helpful information, such as links to shipping and returns policies, as Figure 17 below demonstrates.

In order to fix these issues, I completed several different activities. First, by changing the website theme, the logo and navigation no longer took up half of every page; therefore, all product selection menus and the “Add to Cart” button were now above the scroll fold. Second, as I previously discussed, I manually combined several duplicate product pages so that all different options for a product could be displayed on one page. As Figure 18 below shows, by eliminating duplicate pages, a customer could now see all sizes and colors available for a product on one page. Third, although I was unable to add descriptive content to most of the product pages,⁶⁶ there were some that I was able to add a short description to, as well as the links to the shipping

⁶⁵ See the Actionability and Product Pages sections in Appendix B on pages 61-63 and 75-78 for the full discussion on the problems with the product pages.

⁶⁶ I will discuss why I was unable to add descriptions and product information to most of the product pages in the Important Lessons section on pages 40-42.

and returns policies. Finally, a “More In This Collection” section was added to the bottom of every product page to give a stronger call to action for each page, as shown in Figure 19 below.

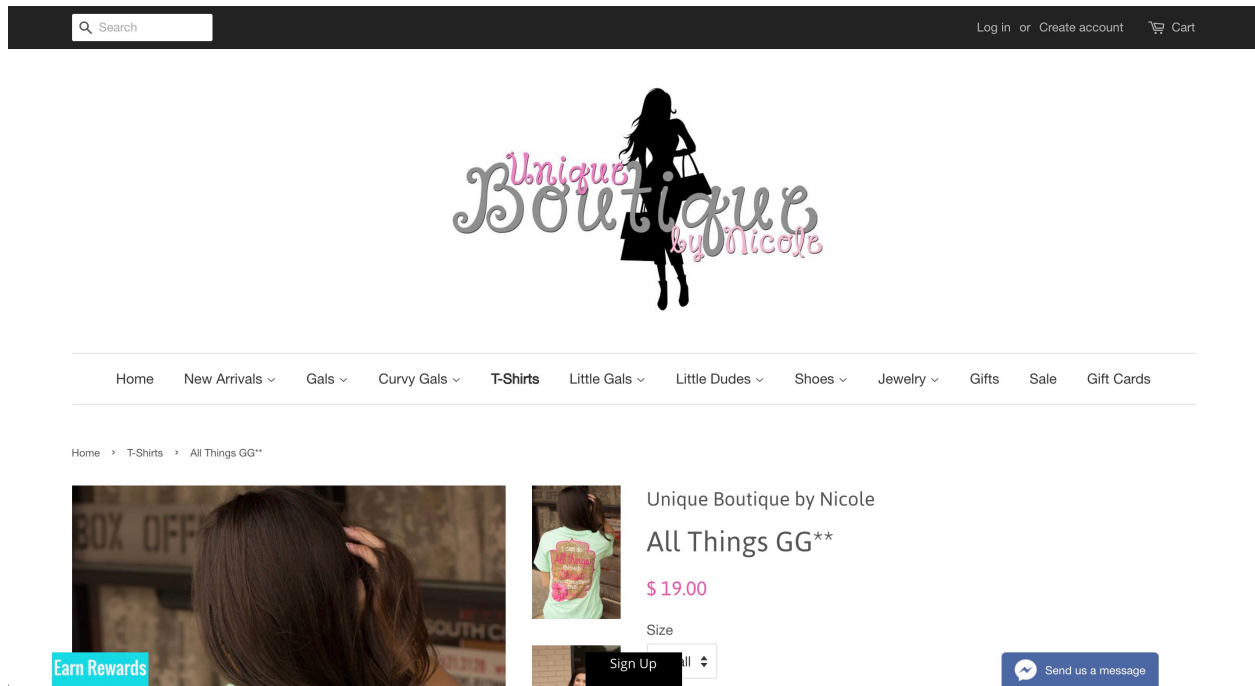


Figure 16: First Example of a Product Page on the Old Website

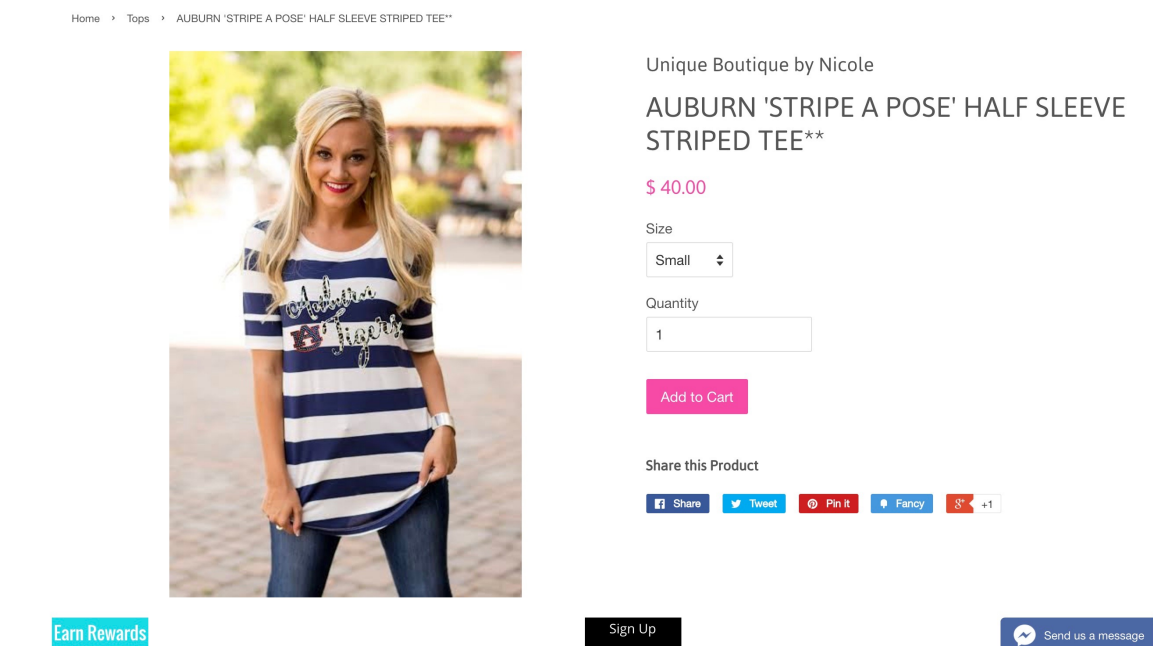


Figure 17: Second Example of a Product Page on the Old Website

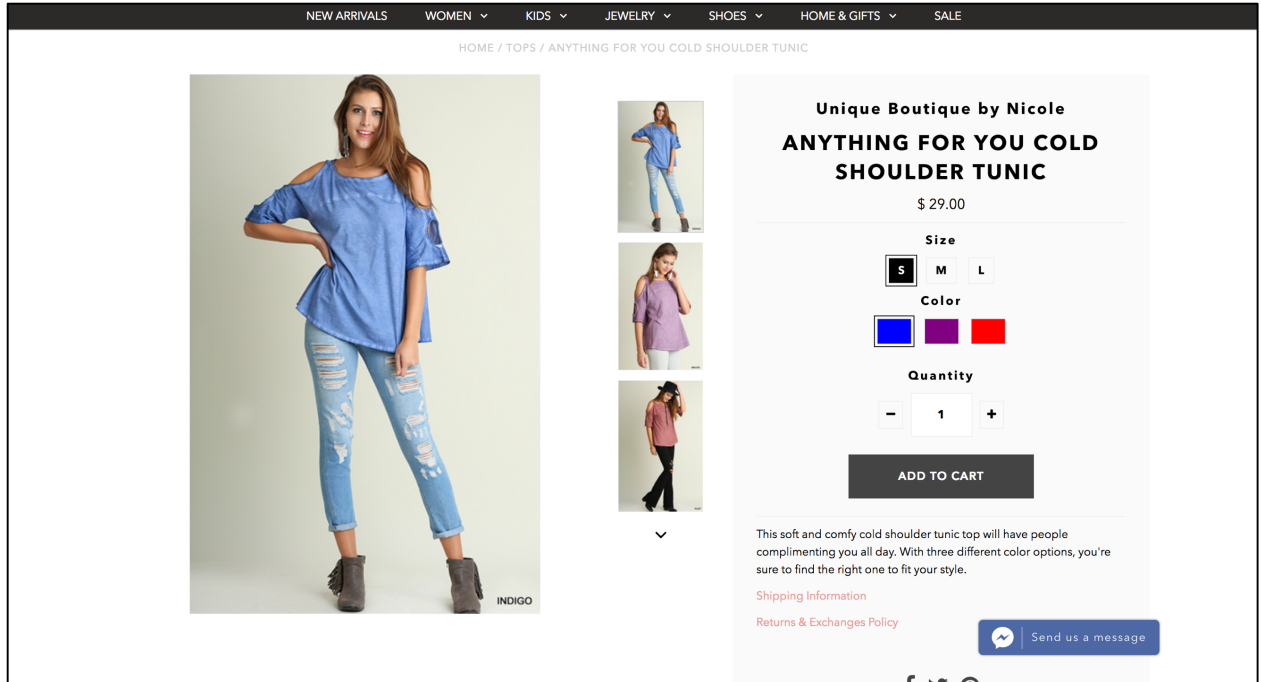


Figure 18: Example of the Top Half of a Product Page on the New Website

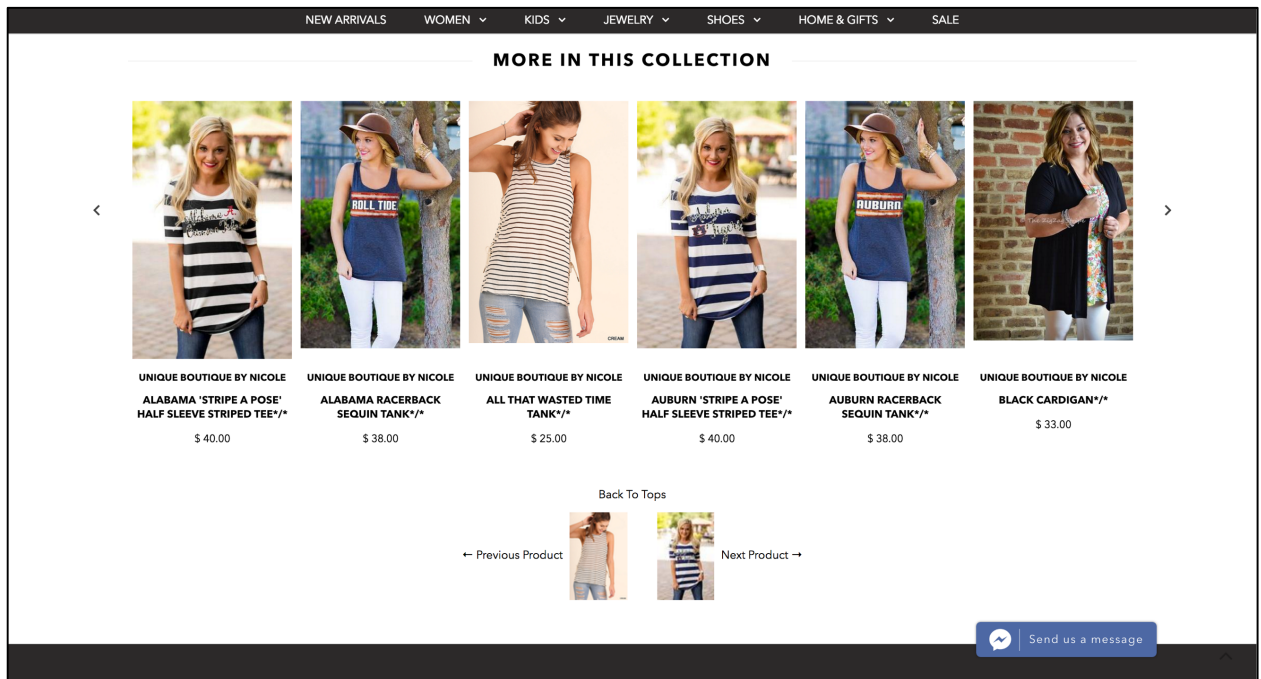


Figure 19: Example of the Bottom Half of a Product Page on the New Website

Build/Publish Stage.

It should not come as a surprise that during the build phase of a content strategy project the main objective is to build various portions of the project. In fact, this is the one stage where the majority of sources actually seemed to agree on the definition of what this stage entails. For example, in *The Web Content Strategist's Bible*, Sheffield states that “the build phase is where the actual content development work is done....the content strategist's main jobs are tracking the actual development of content, writing content, and editing/approving content.”⁶⁷ In a similar vein, in *Enterprise Content Strategy: A Project Guide*, Nichols explains the build stage as follows: “During the build phase, you work with a technology team to ensure that your design work...is properly implemented.”⁶⁸ Although he discusses this phase on an enterprise level and involves a technology team in his definition, his point is still the same as Sheffield's: this is the stage where the actual content implementation happens. Since the main goal of this stage is to digitally build the previously designed content in whatever CMS the project is utilizing for its website, there are not any true deliverables for this stage. The built content is the deliverable. Finally, with regard to the publish stage, as Nichols points out, this stage “functions are a mere step within a content lifecycle where content becomes exposed to an audience.”⁶⁹ In other words, this stage means hitting the post or save button that will cause the content to become public on the website or channel.

For the capstone project, the build stage mainly consisted of copying the appropriate content into the right sections of the CMS. Since most of the content was actually created during the design phase, other than going through each page on the website and pressing the “Save”

⁶⁷ Sheffield, *Content Strategist's Bible*, 115.

⁶⁸ Nichols, *Enterprise Content Strategy*, 97.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 107.

button, there was very little content creation in this stage. With that being said, there were a few general activities I completed during the actual build stage. For example, it was during this stage that I actually went through and combined duplicate product pages, reorganized images on product pages, and tagged all product and collection pages with the new tags. Finally, as I previously mentioned, since Ms. Hagemann’s website was already live before this project started, in order to fully publish the new website, I had to take her entire website offline after selecting a new theme. Originally, the website was meant to go offline for about a week; however, due to the fact that Ms. Hagemann requested that the final publish date be delayed several times, the website was not actually put back online until mid-April, almost a month and a half after it was taken down.

Governance/Maintenance Stage

While there are some who advocate for starting the content strategy process with governance, for most strategists governance and maintenance come at the end of the strategy process. In short, “governance is the process of managing change.”⁷⁰ This stage of a content strategy project is extremely important, since “small changes can add up and become significant over time...unless those small changes are tracked and managed,”⁷¹ as Rockley and Cooper explain in *Managing Enterprise Content: A Unified Content Strategy*. During this stage, deliverables can include documents such as a governance charter, a communication plan for the content team, an editorial calendar, the codifying of a content removal process, and an archival policy. In the end, this stage is all about making sure that the content that was painstakingly created in the previous stages remains “consistent, relevant, timely, and effective.”⁷²

⁷⁰ Rockley and Cooper, *Managing Enterprise Content*, 230.

⁷¹ Ibid, 229.

⁷² Nichols, *Enterprise Content Strategy*, 123.

Originally, for this project, I had intended to create a governance and maintenance report detailing the important measures that would need to be enacted to make sure that the new website remained accurate and up-to-date. However, as with the inventory, audits, and analysis reports and the recommendation report, Ms. Hagemann did not want a detailed report. For this reason, I sent Ms. Hagemann an email with all of the important governance and maintenance measures that she would need to undertake moving forward. Those measures included:

1. Reviewing the list of product tags used on a weekly basis to insure they are still accurate and up-to-date. This includes updating the list as new product tags are added to the system and removing tags that are no longer needed.
2. Reviewing the home page every two weeks to make sure that all information presented on the page is accurate and up-to-date. This includes updating the hero image carousel with new images and changing the product sections on the home page as needed.
3. Periodically reviewing all collection pages to make sure they are still needed and functioning properly. Pages should be removed if they are no longer needed.
4. Periodically reviewing all policies presented throughout the website to make sure they are still accurate and up-to-date. Policies should be updated if they are deemed to be inaccurate.
5. Periodically test random website pages to make sure they are functioning properly.

Each of these measures was reviewed with Ms. Hagemann in detail. Although they may seem too few for a website that had such an extensive renovation done, they actually cover most of the monthly and yearly maintenance needed for the website. Fortunately for this project, once most of the content was created and the work completed, it did not need updating or reviewing.

Important Lessons

As with any project, there are inevitably lessons learned along the way, and the case was no different with this capstone project. First, although I had previously learned this in my directed study, this project reminded me that the content strategy process on paper is much different than the actual execution of that process. When reading about content strategy, all of the books make the process seem very simple, linear, and fairly easy to implement. Each stage seems to smoothly progress into the next with clear demarcations on when a stage begins and ends. The execution of that process, however, is far from this rosy picture. It is messy and fluid. Yes, there are stages, and yes, there are different activities conducted during those stages. But those stages are not so rigidly separated from each other, and in some cases they tend to overlap, as was the case in this project during the design and builds stages. As a person who enjoys order and can sometimes be a bit rigid in how I handle things, this project was a reminder that there will be times when I need to be open-minded and flexible about how a project progresses.

In a similar vein, this project also taught me that even though I may recognize certain issues with a project, there is a limit to what I can do by myself. At the beginning of this project, after my initial interviews and observations, it became clear that Ms. Hagemann needed a branding strategy. Her need was so great that it became one of the goals of the project: “Create a solid base for Ms. Hagemann to continue to build her brand off of in the future.” While I do feel that this goal was achieved, it is far from what I wanted to achieve at the beginning of the project. Originally, I wanted to create a branding strategy along the lines of the omnichannel strategies discussed by Nichols and Rockley and Cooper.⁷³ Such an approach would mean that all of Ms. Hagemann’s channels would have been incorporated into one content strategy. In that

⁷³ See my discussion of such an approach on page 7.

way, Ms. Hagemann would have a strategy where all content was coordinated across channels and published simultaneously. However, after the discovery/assess stage, it became clear that to undertake such an overhaul of Ms. Hagemann's content creation/publication process and all of her content channels would not be possible, especially given that the website alone needed extensive revision. While this fact frustrated me, it taught me that there will be times where I will only be able to do so much in a given time frame. Further, it also taught me that not all projects need to be all-or-nothing. It is ok to complete things in increments, and a project does not have to mean failure just because some pieces had to be pushed to a future date. Given the fact that I will be entering this career field in the near future, I am glad that I learned this lesson now instead of after I am in a job position.

Finally, and possibly most importantly, this project gave me firsthand experience in working and dealing with a client. As I previously mentioned, there were several times during this project where working with my client was tricky, specifically when it came to communication and receiving necessary information to move the project forward. There were multiple incidences where it took a significant amount of time to get my client to respond to emails and send information that I needed. In fact, as an example of how this issue affected the project overall, the reason why I was unable to add descriptions to products was that I never received information regarding what materials products were made of, what the products' brands were, or how products' sizes were measured. Looking back on my communication with my client in this area, I am not unsure that the fact she never sent this information to me was not because she did not understand its true value. If this was the case, it is a clear area where I can improve in the future. A major part of my job as a strategist is not simply pointing out what issues exist with a project, but *why* those issues are problems. My job is about imparting as much

of my knowledge as necessary to my client so that they can make the best possible decisions. In future, I will need to be more vigilant about explaining to clients about why something is needed, not just that it is needed. With that being said, this project is a clear example to me that there will also be time where even if a recommendation is made and explained, the client may simply just not want to implement it. Either way, I am thankful that this project gave me the opportunity to learn these lessons now as opposed to later in my career.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Stakeholder Interview Questions

August 27, 2016

- What are your business goals?
- What are your website goals?
- Can you give me a brief history of your business? Why did you start it?
- Who all has a hand in producing and publishing your digital content?
- Login & Email info
- How would you like to communicate in the future?

October 1, 2016

Goals

- What are your goals for your business in the next year? Five years? Ten years?

Content

- What is your typical workflow for identifying a content need, getting it created, and published?
- What are your painpoints and successes in publishing content?
- How do you organize your content?
- How do you name your content?
- Do you use metadata?
- How do you archive your content?
- Do you rely on third parties for content?
- How do you measure the success or failure of content?
- What types of content do you have?

Website

- What are your current issues/problems with your site?
- What do you like about your site?
- What would you like to change about your site?

Competitors

- What do you like about your competitors' websites?

Social Media

- What channels do you use?
- How do you decide what to publish to each channel?
- Do you crosslink between channels?

Legal

- Are there any legal or regulatory requirements that dictate the need for particular types of content?
- Are you required to archive content or keep it for a certain amount of time?

User/Audience

- Who is your target audience?
- What data do you gather about your users?
- How do you handle user generated content?

Appendix B – Inventory, Audits, and Analysis Report

Below is the inventory, audits, and analysis report that was presented to the capstone committee.

To make the original document fit with the style of this essay, several changes have been made.

1. The font styles and sizes have been updated to fit with the style of this essay.
2. The footnote numbers have also been updated to fit into the sequence of this essay; however, the footnotes within the report only refer to information within the report itself and not to information within the introductory essay.
3. Originally there were headers on every page of the document except the title page. These have been removed to fit the style of this essay.
4. The page numbers have been changed to correspond with this essay; therefore, the Table of Contents page will have page numbers that do not fit the page numbers within this essay.
5. The original figure numbers from the report are still in use and have not been updated to fit into the figure sequence of the overall essay. Therefore, when a figure is referenced within the report it is referring only to figures within the report itself and not the larger essay.

Unique Boutique by Nicole Content
Inventory, Content Audit, Multichannel
Audit, and Competitor Audit Report



Tabitha Akins
December 2016

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Executive Summary

Brittany Hagemann is the owner of Unique Boutique by Nicole (UBBN), a boutique business that consists of an e-commerce website (uniqueboutiquebynicole.com) and physical storefront. In recent months, Mrs. Hagemann has tried to revise and update her website to her frustration. She has requested the services of Tabitha Akins to (1) assess the current state of her website's content, (2) recommend revisions and changes to that content, and (3) implement those revisions and changes.

In order to assess the current state of the website's content, a content inventory of the client's website, an audit of her website content, an audit of her content channels, and an audit of her competitors' content were conducted.

These assessments found that while the current website and content is usable and acceptable, there is clear room for improvement. In particular, the areas of audience, imagery, and product pages were shown to need significant improvement moving forward with the project.

In addition, while the areas of branding and multichannel content strategies were shown to also need significant revision or outright creation, these areas were deemed to possibly be outside the scope of the project moving forward.

Next steps for moving the project forward include:

- Reviewing the inventory and audits results with the client. Due to scheduling issues, this review will happen sometime in late December 2016 or early January 2017.
- Creating a content strategy plan for the UBBN business. This process will take place in January 2017.
- Creating a recommendation report, with specific content revision and creation recommendations, based on the inventory/audits results and the subsequent analysis. This process will take place in January 2017.
- Reviewing the recommendation report with the client and gaining approval for recommended content changes and revisions. This review and approval will happen in late January 2017.
- Implementing the approved content changes and revisions. Implementation will happen in February of 2017.

Client Profile

Brittany Hagemann is the owner of Unique Boutique by Nicole (UBBN), a boutique store that sells women's and children's fashions, jewelry, shoes, and other boutique store style items. Mrs. Hagemann started her business in 2013, which consisted of a single rack of clothing she stored in her house. Friends and family were Mrs. Hagemann's main customers during this time.

In 2014, Mrs. Hagemann began to explore the online options available to her by creating a Facebook page and a website for the business (uniqueboutiquebynicole.com). Mrs. Hagemann also began to attend local market events and trunk shows during this time. With this expansion, customers for her business began to include those outside Mrs. Hagemann's circle of friends and family.

In 2016, Mrs. Hagemann continued to expand her business by opening a physical store front that also doubles as a storage unit for any excess product.

Mrs. Hagemann hopes to one day own and operate multiple store fronts, while continuing to grow her online and event business.

Objectives and Goals

The six main objectives and goals when completing the inventory and audits were:

1. To understand what content the client currently has and where that content lives.
2. To better understand the client's website, its content, and organization.
3. To evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the client's content.
4. To evaluate how the client's content compares to competitors' content.
5. To understand what content channels the client currently uses.
6. To create a baseline for what content areas need to be priorities in future stages of the project.

What Was Assessed and Assessment Criteria

In order to fulfil the objectives and goals listed on page three, a content inventory of the client’s website, an audit of her website content, an audit of her content channels, and an audit of her competitors’ content were conducted.

UBBN Content Inventory

To gain a better understanding of the client’s current content makeup, an inventory of the UBBN website was conducted.⁷⁴ The client does have other sources of content besides the UBBN website;⁷⁵ however, since the main purpose of this project is to revise the client’s website and its content, other channels and content areas were not included in the inventory.

The following categories were used to create the inventory spreadsheet:⁷⁶

- ID
- Title
- URL
- Content Type
- Content Description
- Content Owner or Author
- Storage Location
- Last Updated
- Update Frequency
- Metadata
- Metadata Type
- Metadata Keywords
- Date Inventoried
- Notes

⁷⁴ The client has since removed some of the pages within the inventory and added new pages not contained in the inventory since it was conducted. However, the overall results of the inventory and the conclusions drawn from those results are not affected by these changes to the website.

⁷⁵ See the “Unique Boutique by Nicole Multichannel Audit Results” appendix on page 51.

⁷⁶ See the “Consulted Resources” appendix on page 62 for resources that informed the creation of the inventory spreadsheet and its categories.; See the “Unique Boutique by Nicole Key Inventory Results” appendix on page 38 for a breakdown of key inventory results.; For the full inventory spreadsheet, consult the “UBBN Inventory” spreadsheet in the “UBBN Inventory and Audits” excel document.

UBBN Content Audit

To gain a better understanding of the quality and effectiveness of the client’s content, an audit of the UBBN website’s content was conducted. Instead of auditing every page of the website, around 20% of the pages were audited as a representative sample.⁷⁷ The following categories were used to create the audit spreadsheet and evaluate the website’s content:⁷⁸

- Usability
- Messaging
- Knowledge
- Findability
- Actionability
- Audience

UBBN Content Channels Audit

To gain a better understanding of the client’s various content channels, an audit of those channels was conducted.⁷⁹ The following categories were used to create the audit spreadsheet:⁸⁰

- Channel
- Channel Name
- URL
- Content Types
- Metrics
- Content Owner/Author
- Audience
- Information Consistency
- Crosslinks
- Crossposts
- Broken or Outdated Links
- Style and Tone of Posts
- Branding
- Notes

⁷⁷ See the “Unique Boutique by Nicole Content Audit Results” appendix on page 41 for a breakdown of key audit results.; For the full audit spreadsheet, consult the “UBBN Website Audit” spreadsheet in the “UBBN Inventory and Audits” excel document.

⁷⁸ See the “Consulted Resources” appendix on page 62 for resources that informed the creation of the audit spreadsheet and its categories.

⁷⁹ See the “Unique Boutique by Nicole Multichannel Audit Results” appendix on page 51 for a breakdown of key audit results.; For the full audit spreadsheet, consult the “UBBN Multichannel Audit” spreadsheet in the “UBBN Inventory and Audits” excel document.

⁸⁰ See the “Consulted Resources” appendix on page 62 for resources that informed the creation of the audit spreadsheet and its categories.

Competitor Audit

To gain a better understanding of how the client’s content compares to that of competitors, an audit of the client’s website content and two competitors’ website content was conducted.⁸¹ Instead of auditing every page of each website, the audit was centered around specific content categories and evaluation criteria that were deemed important to the overall project.⁸²

The following categories were used to create the audit spreadsheet and assess the websites’ content.⁸³

- Home Page
- Navigation
- Organization
- Product Page
- Pop Up Boxes
- Social Media
- Images
- Messaging and Branding
- Audience
- Tone and Style
- Call to Action
- Notes

⁸¹ Competitor websites audited were shophopes.com and francescas.com. Both businesses are boutiques.

⁸² See the “Unique Boutique by Nicole Competitor Audit Results” appendix on page 55 for a breakdown of key audit results.; For the full audit spreadsheet, consult the “UBBN Competitor Audit” spreadsheet in the “UBBN Inventory and Audits” excel document.

⁸³ See the “Consulted Resources” appendix on page 62 for resources that informed the creation of the audit spreadsheet and its categories.

Current State Assessment

The current state assessment presented below will look at key content areas and themes that will be important in the creation of a content strategy for the UBBN business moving forward. As such, this assessment will not present and analyze every inventory and audit category and result. For full inventory and audit results, see the “UBBN Inventory and Audits” excel document.

The following key content areas and themes will be discussed:

- Findability
- Organization
- Actionability
- Graphics
- Home Page
- Product Pages
- Messaging and Branding
- Audience
- Content Channels
- Current State Assessment Summary

Each category will be organized as follows:

- How the Category Was Assessed
- Assessment Results
- What The Results Mean

Findability

How Findability Was Assessed

The following criteria were used to assess the findability of the UBBN website's content:

Content Inventory

- Content Storage Location
- Metadata

UBBN Content Audit

- Does the content appear in the navigation or easily on site search?
- Rating of each page's findability
- Is there appropriate metadata?

Competitor Audit

- Describe Navigation
- Give Navigation Categories
- Rating

Assessment Results

Content Inventory

- Content Storage Location
 - All text and non-image content was determined to be stored on the Shopify CMS.
 - All image content (728 images) was determined to have an unknown storage location.
- Metadata
 - Metadata, in the form of tags, could only be found for product pages.
 - No metadata could be found for images, product descriptions, or for SEO purposes.
 - Possible metadata categories available: tags, descriptions, and alt-text for images.
- Pages for Home, Login, Create Account, Cart, and Search could not be found.

UBBN Content Audit

- Does the content appear in the navigation or easily on site search?
 - 136 of the 138 pages selected for audit could be either found in the navigation bar or in site search.
 - The following ratings were applied to the 138 pages selected for audit:
 - Very Effective – 98 pages
 - Effective – 14 pages
 - Somewhat Effective – 23 pages

Competitor Audit

- Describe Navigation/Give Navigation Categories
 - The navigation setup for all three websites included some combination of a navigation bar and dropdown menus.
 - The navigation bars for all three websites included some combination of search, cart, customer account, and products.
 - UBBN organizes its main navigation bar around (1) who the product is for, (2) the size of the product, and then (3) the type of product. The two competitors organize their main navigation bars around the type of product only.
- Satisfactory rating of the website's navigation
 - UBBN – Satisfactory
 - ShopHopes – Very Satisfactory
 - Francesca's – Very Satisfactory

What The Results Mean

These results show that the findability of UBBN's website content could benefit from some revision. Two areas in particular show a need for revision: content metadata and site navigation.

Metadata

Metadata is one of the most important aspects of findability. Metadata gives “additional context and information that tells software how to handle content,” with titles and descriptions of products and webpages being some of the most important and useful metadata that allows a customer to find the product or page they are searching for.⁸⁴

With this in mind, the fact that there is no description metadata for any page or product on the UBBN website is troubling. This lack of description metadata means that customers will more than likely find searching for a product difficult as they would need to either know the category a product is filed under or the product's exact title to find it on the website.

Customers' difficulty in finding a product on the UBBN website is further compounded when internal impact factors are taken into consideration. Currently, the client does not employ any true product naming system. Instead she simply “names [products] after popular song titles” or lifts product names from other websites.⁸⁵ This naming system does little to help customers.

Taken together, these results show that improving the UBBN website and website's content's metadata should be a priority moving forward with the project.

⁸⁴ Abel and Bailie, *Language of Content Strategy*, 29.; Land, *Content Audits and Inventories*, 25.

⁸⁵ Hagemann, Brittany, personal interview, October 1, 2016.

Navigation

A website's navigation is absolutely crucial to the findability of a website's content. Without an effective website navigation system, customers will be left to search for products on their own with no help from the website itself.

Although the competitor audit found the UBBN website's navigation to be satisfactory, there is room for improvement. The website's main navigation is currently organized around three different categories: who the product is for, the product size, and type of product. Taking the customer category of women as an example, the current UBBN website navigation set up results in customers encountering the following main navigation bar categories:

- Gals
 - Tops
 - Bottoms
 - Rompers
 - Dresses
 - ZZZ

- Curvy Gals
 - Tops
 - Bottoms
 - Rompers

In contrast, both competitors' websites' main navigation bars are only organized around product type. In the case of the ShopHopes website, and taking women as the same example, this navigation setup results in customers encountering the following main navigation bar categories:

- Dresses
- Tops
- Bottoms
- Shoes
- Accessories

In this example, on the UBBN website customers must first decide which size of product they are looking for before they can get to the type of product they are searching for. Whereas in the competitor example, customers find the type of product they are searching for immediately in the main navigation bar, and can then decide to narrow the search down by product size. When compared at this level, although the current UBBN main navigation system will more than likely assist customers in finding the product they are looking for, there is room for improvement. As such, improving navigation should be a priority moving forward with the project.

Organization

How Organization Was Assessed

The following criteria were used to assess the organization of the UBBN website's content:

Competitor Audit

- How is the site organized?
- Is the site organized appropriately?
- Rating

Assessment Results

Question	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
How is the site organized?	-	-	-
Who the product is for	√	-	-
Product Size	√	-	-
Product Type	√	√	√
Is the site organized appropriately?	Somewhat	Yes	Yes
Rating	Somewhat Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory

What The Results Mean

To use Janice Redish's metaphor, website visitors are bloodhounds.⁸⁶ They want to find what they are looking for and find it quickly. For this reason, the backbone of every website is how its content is organized. If a website's organization does not assist the bloodhound visitor in finding what they want, they can easily become frustrated and search for their prize somewhere else.

Given this bloodhound nature of visitors, the results on UBBN website's organization are somewhat disconcerting. As discussed on page ten, the UBBN website is organized around the categories of (1) who the product is for, (2) the size of the product, and (3) the type of product. This organization system is slightly counterintuitive given that the UBBN business is, in part, an e-commerce business, which are typically organized around product type.⁸⁷ This point is demonstrated by the fact that both competitors' websites are organized around product type.

⁸⁶ Redish, *Letting Go of the Words*, 90.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 106.

Further, by organizing the site by people and then product type, the risk of alienating visitors is present. As Redish points out, organizing content by people requires a visitor to “instantly identify the right group for what they want” and “want to be associated with the name” given to that group.⁸⁸

As an example, staying with the customer category of women used previously, say a mother wants to buy her daughter a dress for her birthday. Under the current organization, when visiting the UBBN website the mother would be presented with the categories in Figure 1.

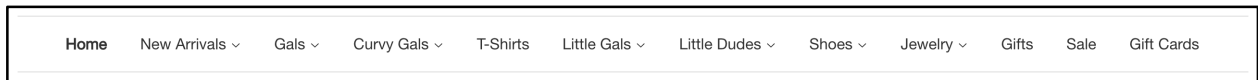


Figure 1: UBBN Main Navigation Bar

Does the mother click on “Gals” or “Curvy Gals?” Perhaps the mother does not consider her daughter “curvy,” and thus begins to pursue the “Gals” category, only to find that her daughter’s size of dress is not available in the one she picks, because the UBBN business considers the size to be a “curvy” size. She must now go back and begin the search again in the “Curvy Gals” category, which does not have the same selection of dresses as the “Gals” category.

By contrast, if the same mother were to visit the ShopHopes website, she would find the organization categories in Figure 2.



Figure 2: ShopHopes Main Navigation Bare

Here, the mother can quickly find the type of product she is looking for, without having to do any identity work at the outset.

Although this example is a simple one, it demonstrates why the current UBBN website organization is only rated as somewhat satisfactory and might frustrate customers. A website visitor might still find what they are looking for, but their experience could be improved. For this reason, revising the current UBBN organization structure should be a priority moving forward with the project.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 109.

Actionability

How Actionability Was Assessed

The following criteria were used to assess the actionability of the UBBN website's content:

UBBN Content Audit

- How clear is the call to action after a user comes into contact with your content?

Competitor Audit

- How clear is the call to action?
 - Home Page
 - Product Page

Assessment Results

UBBN Content Audit

- The following clarity ratings for the call to action of each page were applied to the 138 pages selected for audit:
 - Extremely Clear – 4 pages
 - Clear – 33 pages
 - Clear, but needs improvement – 99 pages
 - Somewhat Clear – 1 page
 - Not Clear – 1 page

Competitor Audit

How clear is the call to action?	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
Home Page	Clear, but needs improvement	Extremely Clear	Clear
Product Page	Clear, but needs improvement	Extremely Clear	Clear

What The Results Mean

The essential question that determines what call to action a website's page should make is "What do I want my visitor to do?" In the case of an e-commerce website, the answer is usually "I want them to buy something."

For the UBBN website, there is a clear call to action on both the home page (pick a category to view) and product pages (look at this product); however that call to action could be improved.

For example, Figure 3 shows what a typical UBBN product page looks like.

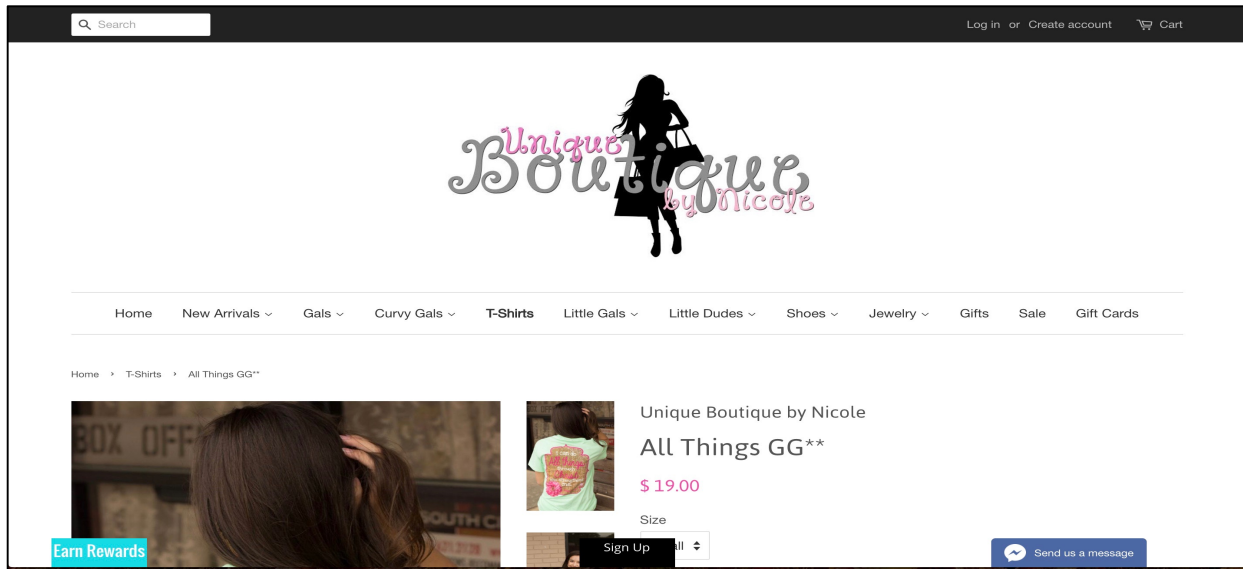


Figure 3: Example of a UBBN Product Page

On this page the logo and navigation bars take up half the screen, leaving little room for the product itself to be shown without the customer having to scroll. Further, the three pop up boxes at the bottom of the screen extend into the product area, leaving even less room on the page for the product. Finally, and most importantly, there is not a “Buy” or “Add to Cart” button anywhere on the screen. Taken together, while customers may understand that they are supposed to view the product and then buy it, there is still room for improvement.

By contrast, Figure 4 shows a typical ShopHopes product page.

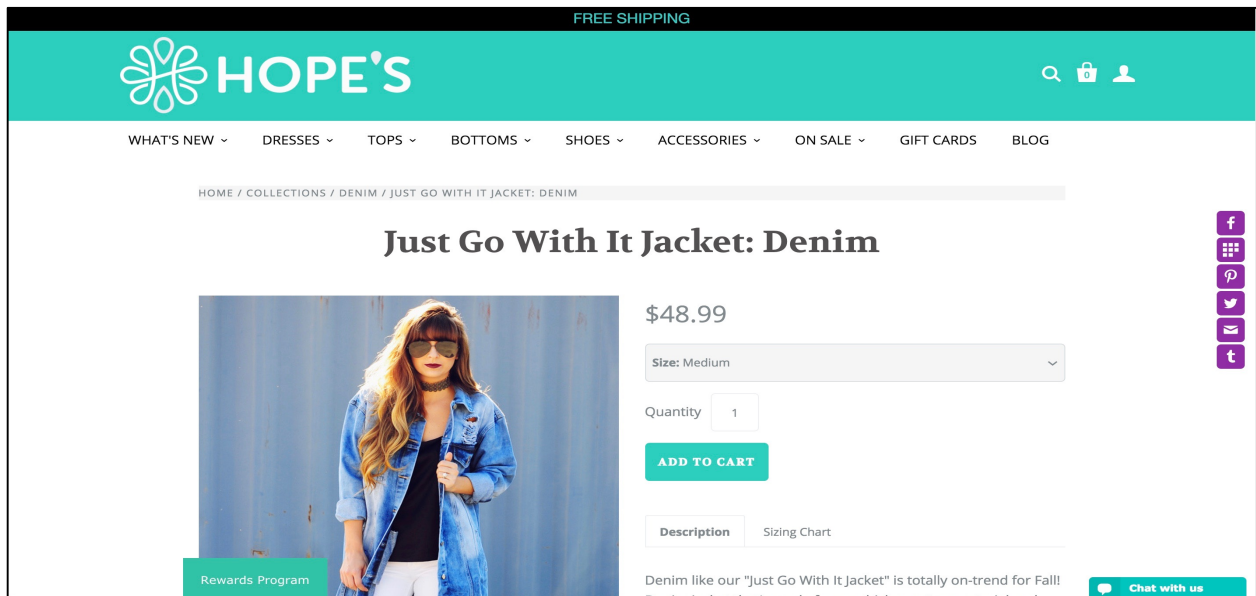


Figure 4: Example of a ShopHopes Product Page

None of the issues that exist on the UBBN product page exist on the ShopHopes page. The customer can clearly see the product and any selection menus. Further, there is an “Add to Cart” button clearly visible on the screen when it first loads. Finally, while there are pop up boxes and a social media share bar on this page, they are off to the sides, and do not cover up any of the essential elements on the screen. On this page it is clear that the website wants customers to see the product, select their size, and then add the product to their cart.

Given these results, making sure that the call to action on pages is extremely clear should be a priority moving forward.

Graphics

How Graphics Were Assessed

The following criteria were used to assess the UBBN website's graphics:

Content Inventory

- All graphics were individually recorded in the content inventory.

UBBN Content Audit

- What is the quality of the graphics?
- Are the graphics well organized?
- Satisfactory rating of graphics organization.

Competitor Audit

- Describe image backgrounds.
- Is image sizing consistent across the website?
- Overall Quality Rating of Images.

Assessment Results

Content Inventory

- Images were found to be the primary content type of the UBBN website.
- 278 out of 728 images do not have a known owner.
- All 728 images do not have a known storage location.

UBBN Content Audit

The following graphic quality ratings were applied to the 138 pages selected for audit:

- What is the quality of the graphics?
 - Very Good – 2 pages
 - Good – 59 pages⁸⁹
 - Acceptable – 57 pages
 - Poor – 14 pages
 - No Rating – 6 pages
- Are the graphics well organized?
 - Yes – 131 pages
 - No – 1 pages
 - N/A – 6 pages

⁸⁹ It should be noted that although these images were given a “good” rating, there were caveats listed about every page.

Competitor Audit

Question	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
Describe image backgrounds	Varied; Distracting	Varied; Some Distracting	Varied, but usually a solid color
Is image sizing consistent across the website?	No	Yes	Yes
Overall Quality Rating of Images	Acceptable	Excellent	Excellent

What The Results Mean

The results from the content inventory, UBBN content audit, and the competitor audit can be broken down into two main categories: organization and quality.

Organization

Overall, the graphics on the UBBN website are organized very well. Figure 5 below is an example of the typical graphic organization found on the website.

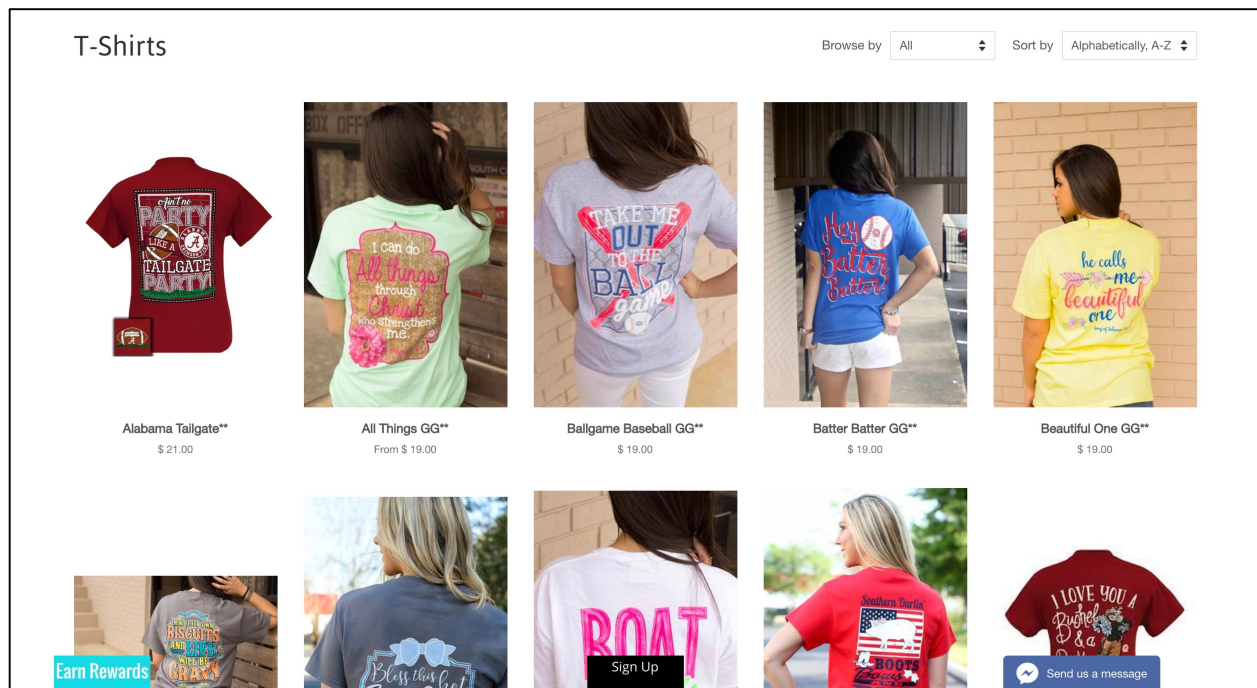


Figure 5: Example of UBBN Graphics Organization – T-Shirts Landing Page

As Figure 5 shows, customers visiting the website can quickly and easily see the products available within a certain category. Each product is also clearly labeled with a name and price. Further, customers are given the option to sort products as they see fit with a dropdown menu in the right-hand corner of the screen.

In comparing the UBBN website’s organization to that of competitors, the setup is extremely similar to that of the ShopHopes website (Figure 6), but differs somewhat from the setup of the Francesca’s website (Figure 7). Francesca’s gives more information about each product with each thumbnail image, and gives customers a wider range of options in how they can organize the page and display products. However, even given these differences, the graphics organization of the UBBN website is very satisfactory.

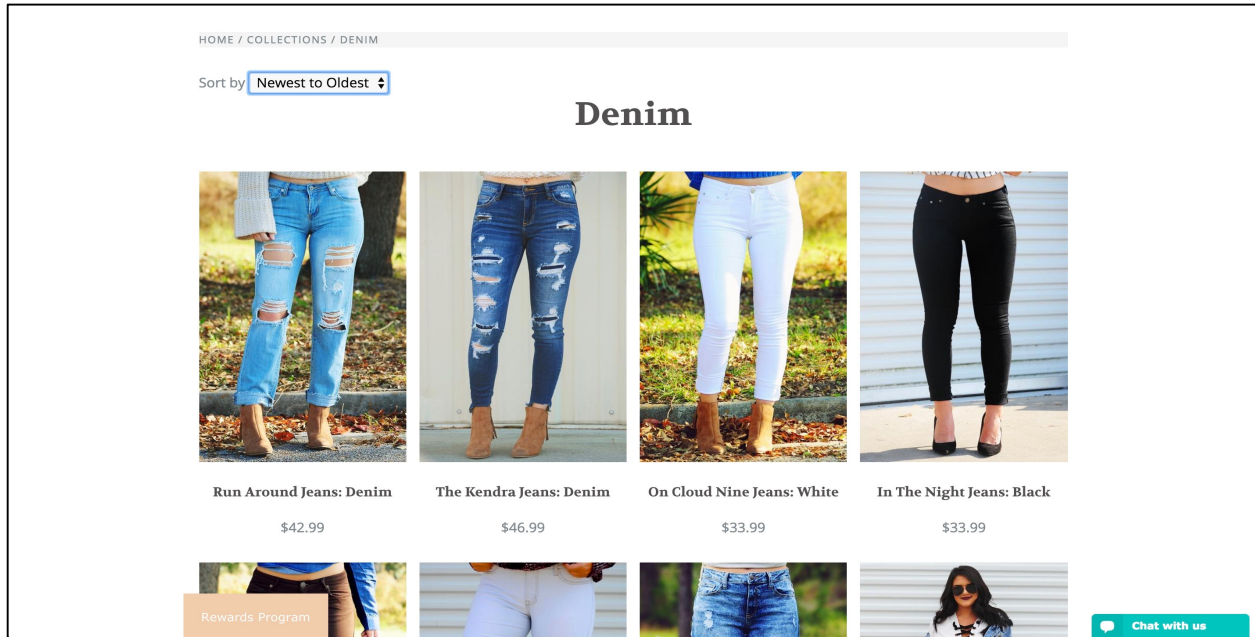


Figure 6: Example of ShopHopes Graphics Organization

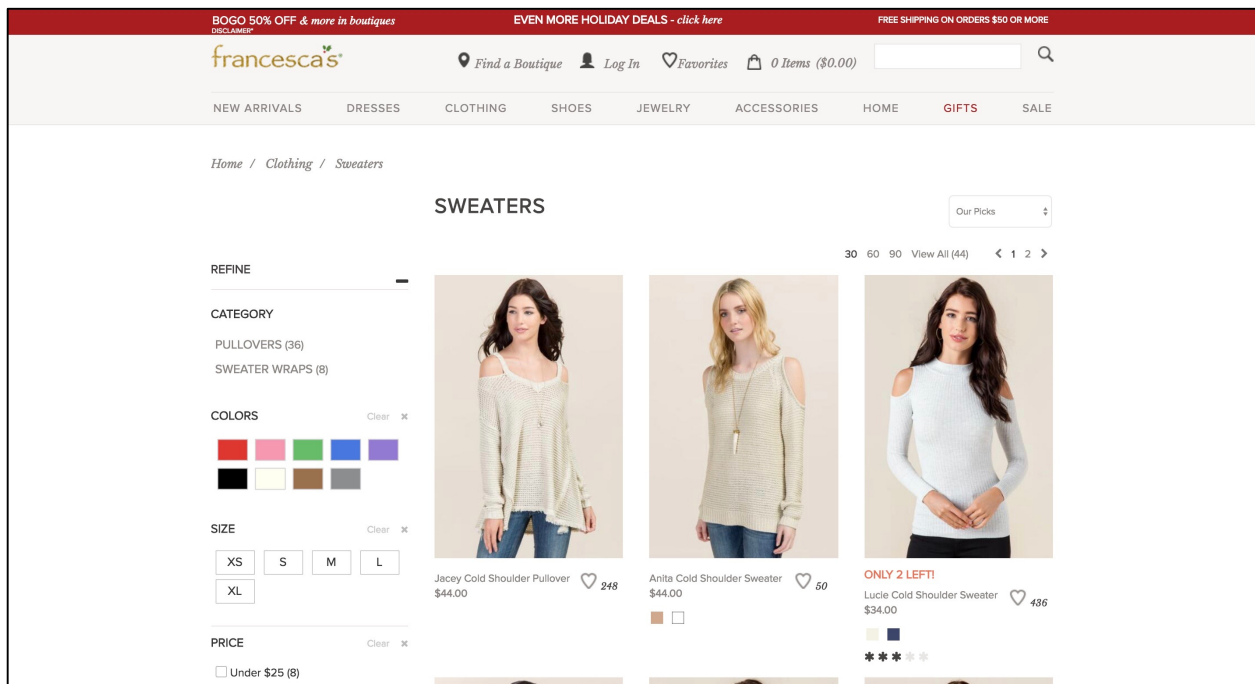


Figure 7: Example of Francesca’s Graphics Organization

Quality

Unlike the graphic organization on the UBBN website, the quality of the images on the website are cause for concern. Of the 138 pages chosen for audit, over half of them were rated as having either “Acceptable” or “Poor” quality images. Further, the 59 pages rated as having “Good” quality images all came with a caveat, and only 2 out of the 138 pages were rated as having “Very Good” quality images. These ratings are troubling given that product images are essential to any e-commerce business.⁹⁰

Ratings Reasons

There were four main reasons for the ratings given during the audit.

1. The size of images was inconsistent across the website. As an example, in Figure 8 below, there are three different image sizes presented to the customer. Given that website visitors typically scan a page instead of taking a detailed look at each section,⁹¹ a landing page with different image sizes makes scanning difficult.

By contrast, both competitors had consistent sizing throughout their websites, as shown in Figures 6 and 7 on page 18.



Figure 8: Example of Inconsistent Sizing of UBBN Product Images

⁹⁰ Faulker, “Importance of Including Great Product Images.”; Williams, “Importance of Product Photography,” 2015.

⁹¹ Redish, *Letting Go of the Words*, 4.

2. Several images showed products in inappropriate settings, such as hanging from a closet door or reception desk. Further, in such cases, these images were usually the only images of the product available to the customer, as shown in Figures 9 and 10 below.

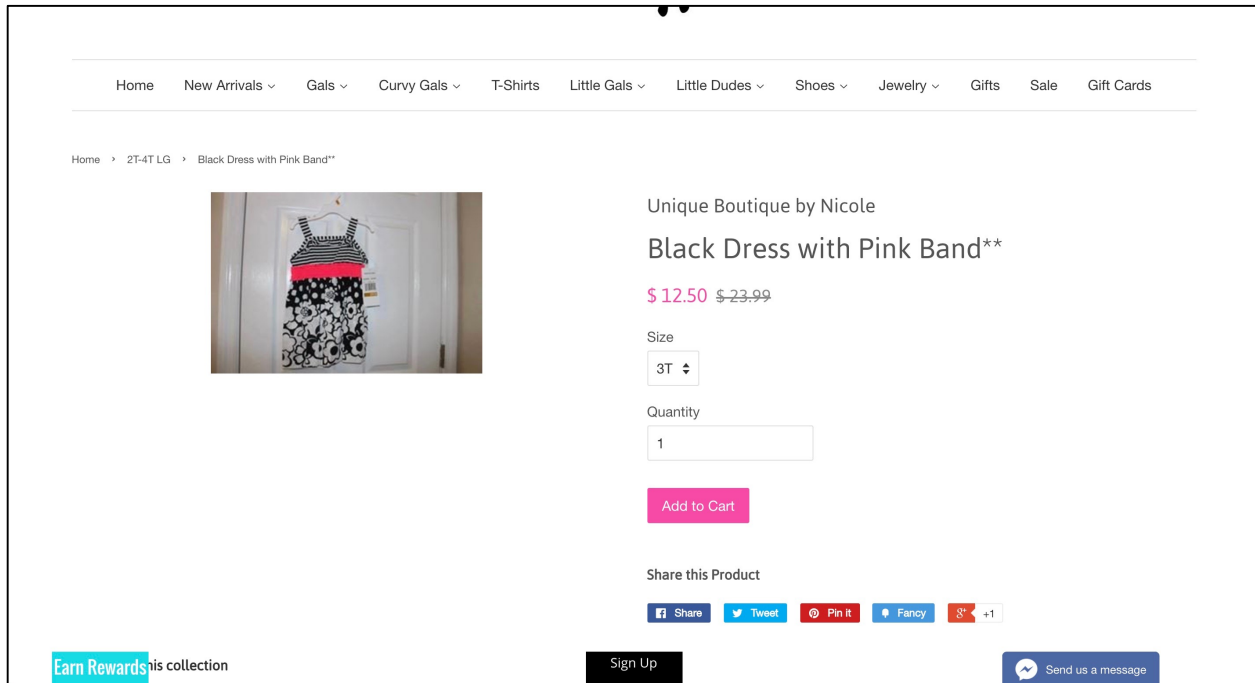


Figure 9: Example of Inappropriate Setting of Images

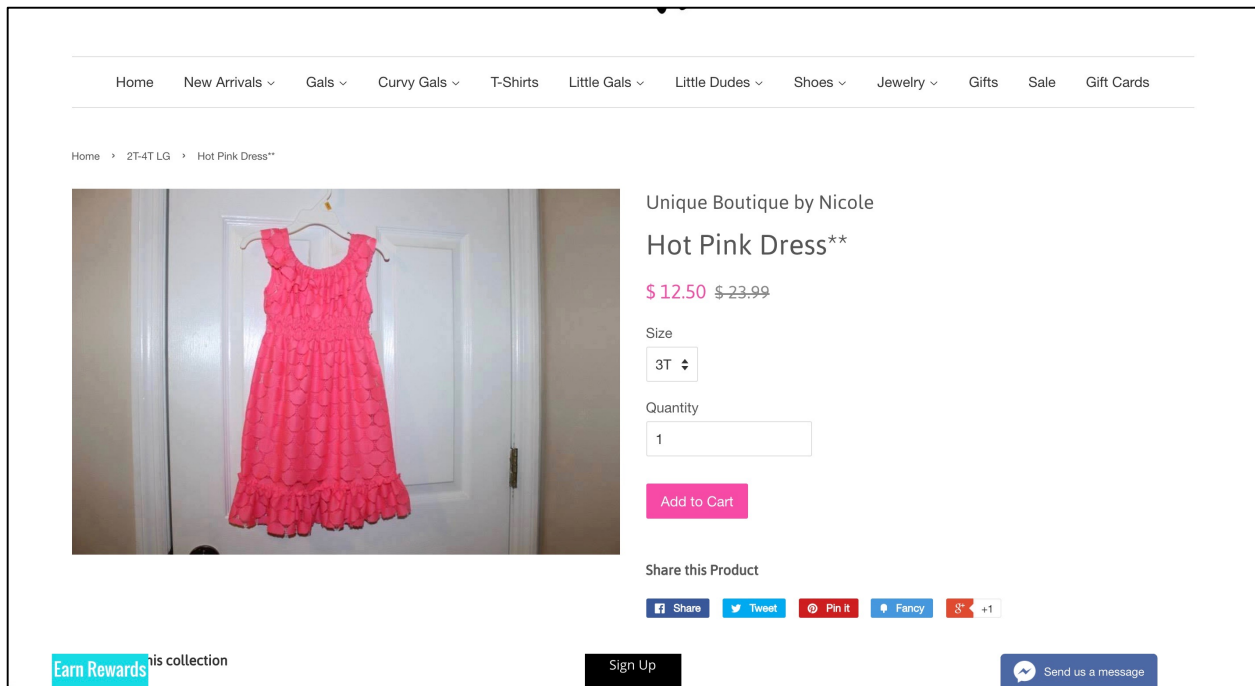


Figure 10: Example of Inappropriate Setting of Images

3. Several of the backgrounds were either distracting or dark, removing the product as the main focus of the image. In many cases where the image backgrounds were distracting, it was the result of the picture being taken in an inappropriate setting, as showcased in Figures 11 and 12 below.

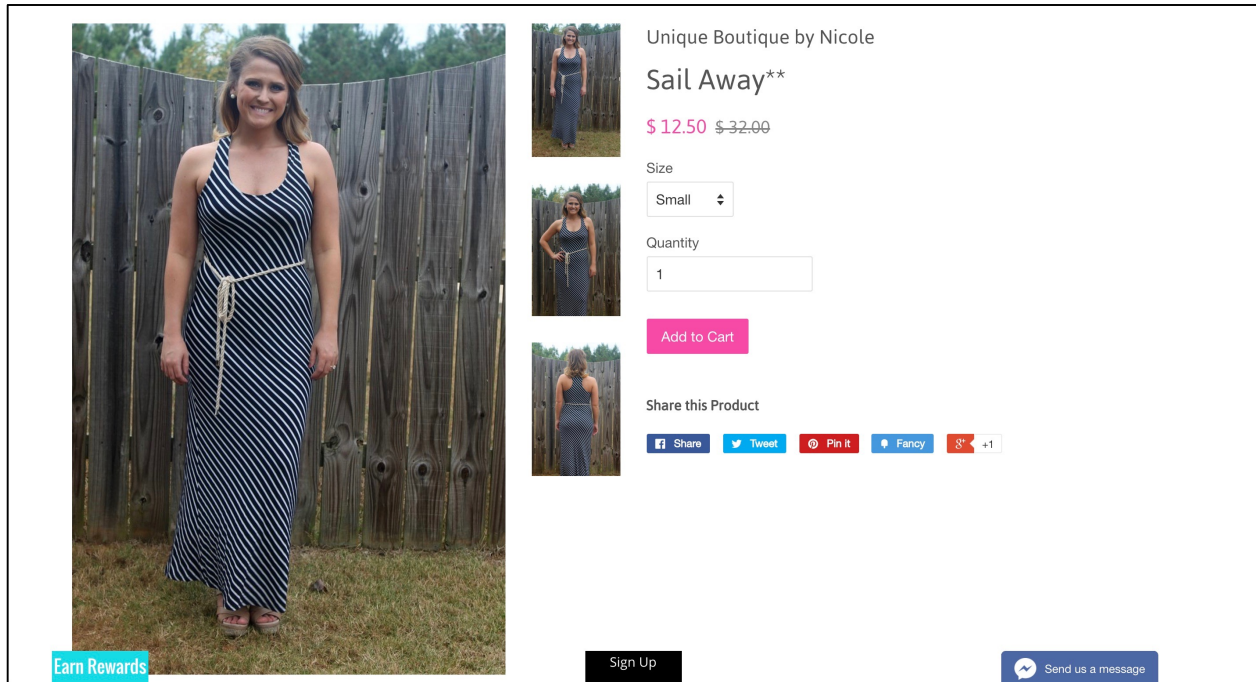


Figure 11: Example of Distracting Image Background

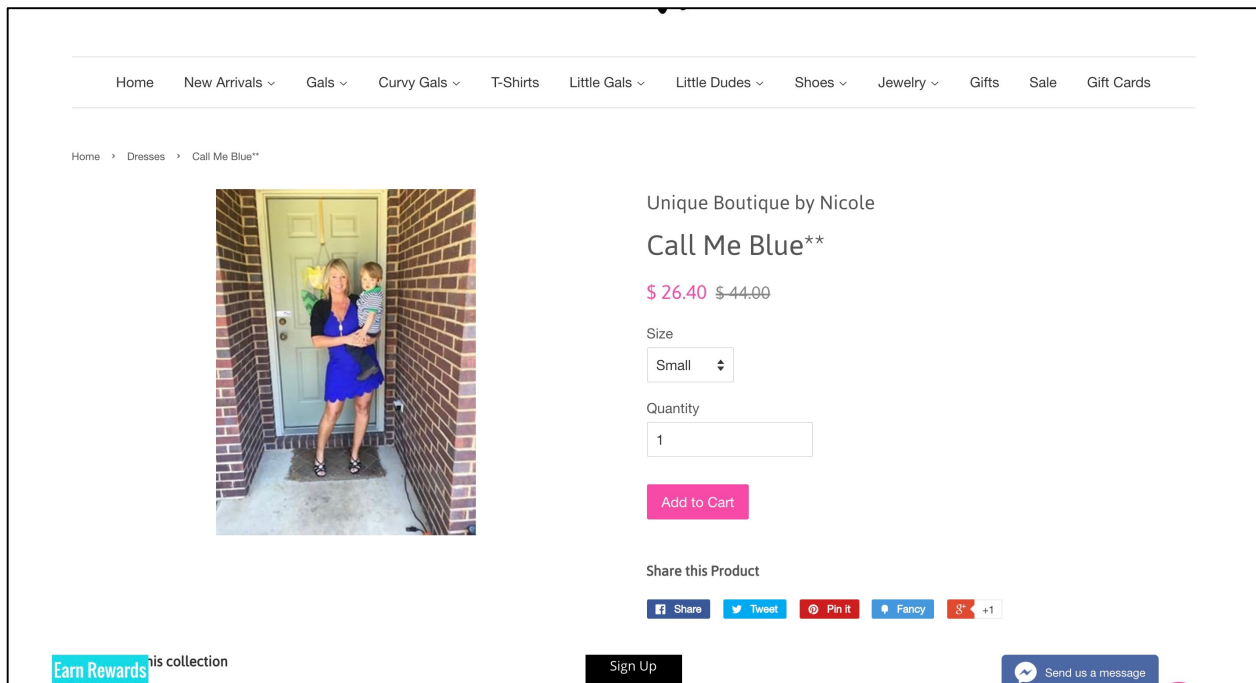


Figure 12: Example of Distracting Image Background

4. Image backgrounds varied in style instead of being similar to one another. In Figure 13 below, there are four different image background types. Similar to image sizing, varied backgrounds can make it difficult for customers to quickly scan a page for the product they want, since the backgrounds can stick out more instead of the product itself. By contrast, Figure 14 shows a typical product landing page on the Francesca's website, where all backgrounds are similar and each product is the clear highlight of the image.



Figure 13: Example of UBBN's Images' Varied Backgrounds

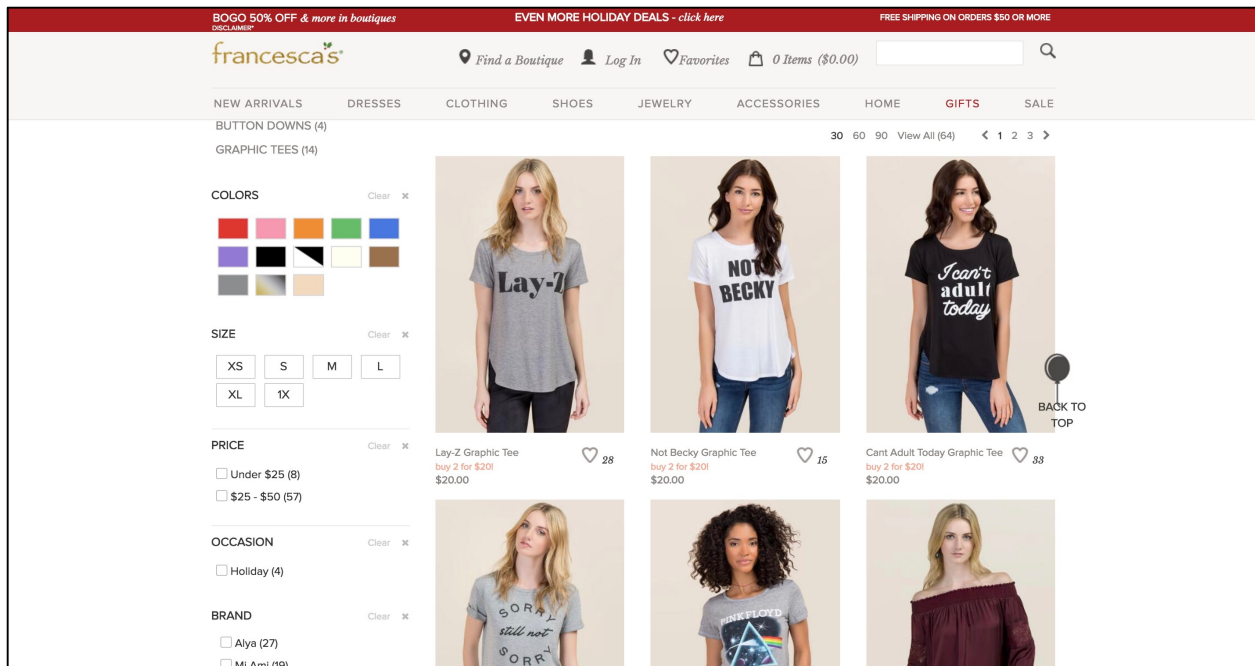


Figure 14: Example of Francesca's Images' Consistent Backgrounds

Given these ratings and the reasons for them, updating the imagery throughout the website should be a high priority of the project moving forward. However, updating the website imagery will be dependent on the client's willingness and ability to do so, and therefore it may be beyond the scope of this project.

Home Page

How The Home Page Was Assessed

The following criteria were used to assess the UBBN website's home page:

UBBN Content Audit

- Usability questions regarding length of paragraphs, whether or not there are subheadings, number of links, and quality of graphics.
- How clear is the call to action after a user comes into contact with your content?
- Does your content answer site visitors' questions?

Competitor Audit

- What content types does each home page have?
- Rating of home page content.

Assessment Results

UBBN Content Audit

- The overall usability of the home page was found to be acceptable; however,
 - the graphics on the home page were rated as being of poor quality, and
 - the number of links on the home page was rated as being too many.
- The home page was rated as having a clear call to action, but one that needed improvement.
- While the home page did answer site visitors' questions to a degree, there is room for improvement.

Competitor Audit

- The home page of each website had some combination of the following content types: name of business, logo, navigation bar, hero image carousel, pop up boxes, footer content.
- The competitors' home pages had the following content types which UBBN's home page did not:
 - FAQ
 - Gift Cards
 - Policies: Ordering & Payment; Privacy; Shipping; Terms of Use
 - Site Map
 - User Accounts: My Account; Order Status/Track Your Order
- Home Page Content Ratings by Website
 - UBBN – Somewhat Satisfactory
 - ShopHopes – Very Satisfactory
 - Francesca's – Satisfactory

What The Results Mean

These results show that while the UBBN home page is usable, its usability could be improved.

Figures 15-17 show the home pages of the UBBN, ShopHopes, and Francesca's websites.

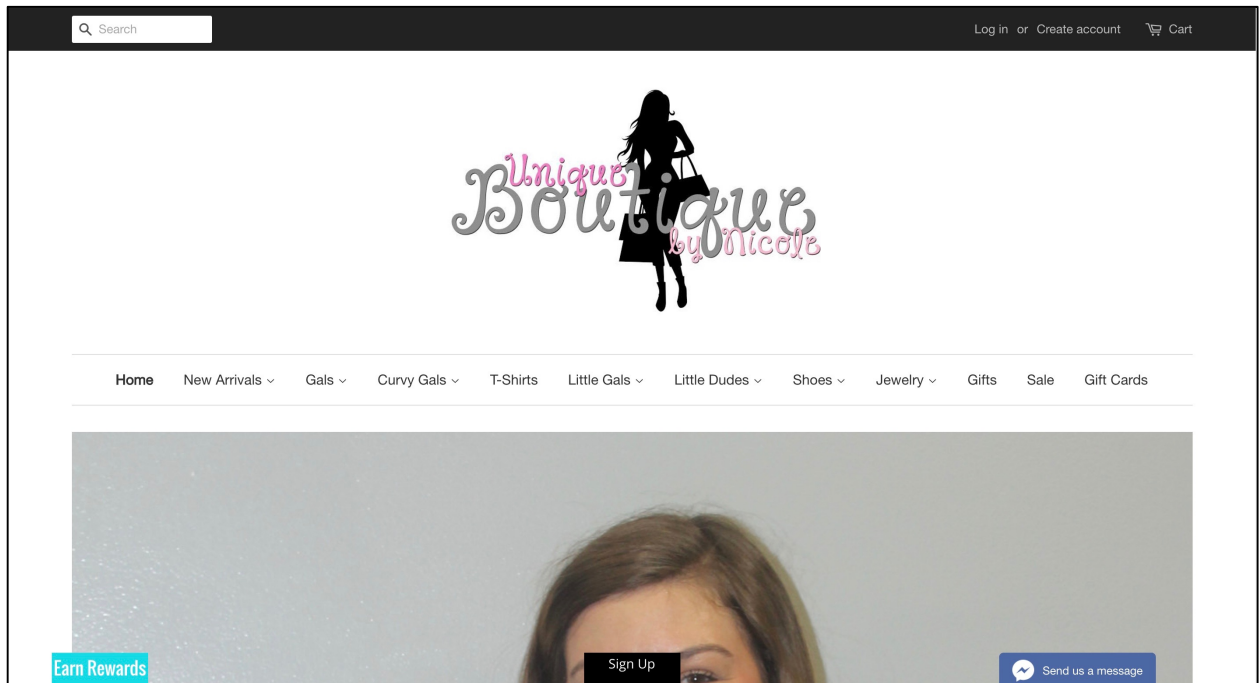


Figure 15: UBBN Home Page

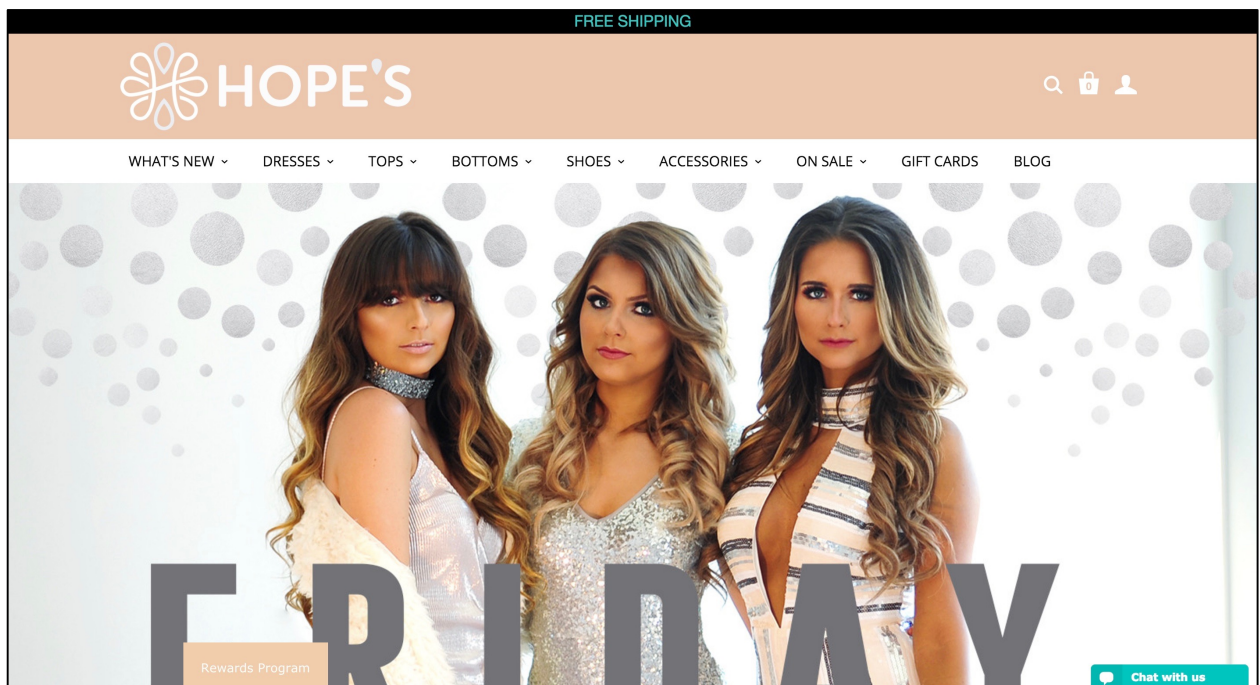


Figure 16: ShopHopes Home Page

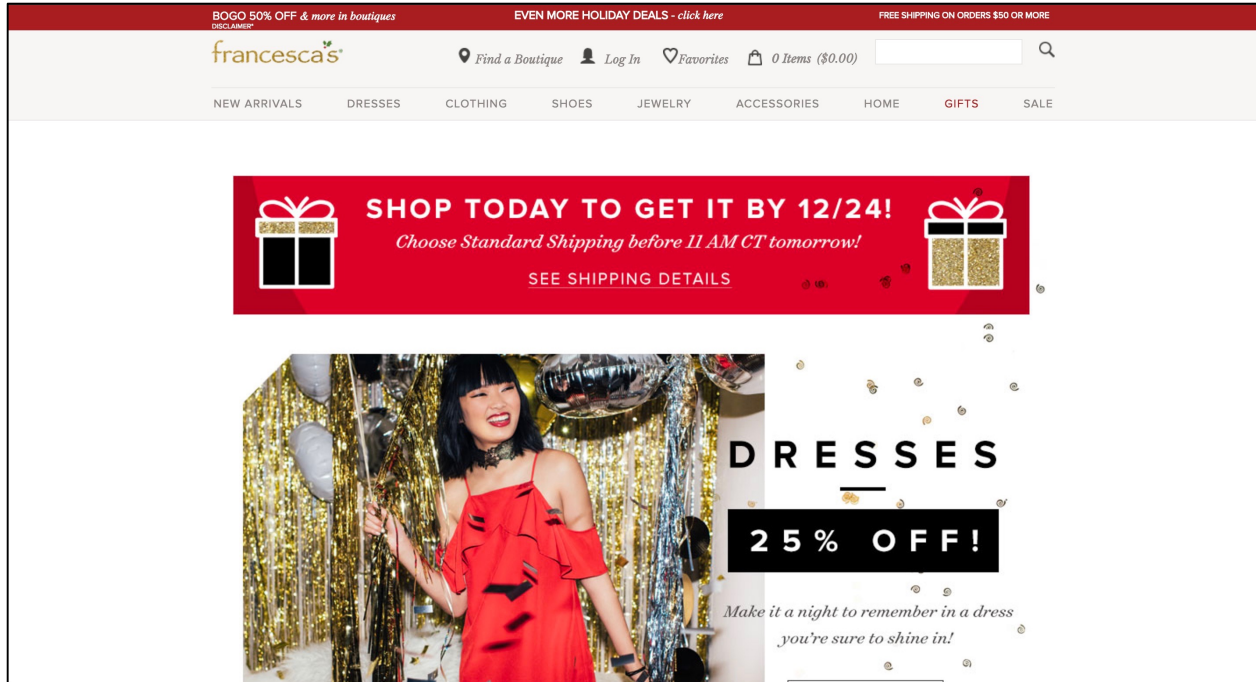


Figure 17: Francesca’s Home Page

On the UBBN home page, the logo and navigation take up over half of the screen, leaving little room for any other content. Figure 15 demonstrates this fact, with the hero image carousel being cut off, leaving only a person’s forehead showing instead of possible products customers might like to buy. By contrast, the logo and navigation on the ShopHopes and Francesca’s websites take up no more than ten percent of the screen, leaving ample room for other content.

Other concerns regarding the UBBN home page are the quality of images and missing pieces of content. For example, while a hero image carousel is an excellent way to display products on the home page, the images used on the UBBN website vary in size, which causes the page to resize itself every time a different image is scrolled to. Further, 4 of the 6 hero images are so large that even if customers were to scroll down the page, they would never be able to see the entire image at once.

Finally, unlike the Francesca’s home page, the UBBN home page does not take advantage of the page’s call to action. The Francesca’s page clearly calls its visitors to visit the “Dresses” section, whereas the UBBN page simply presents the main navigation and nothing else.

Although these are just three examples, they demonstrate that there is clear room for improvement on the UBBN home page.

Product Pages

How Product Pages Were Assessed

The following criteria were used to assess the UBBN website product pages:

UBBN Content Audit

- Usability questions regarding length of paragraphs, whether or not there are subheadings, number of links, page organization, and quality of graphics.
- How clear is the call to action after a user comes into contact with your content?
- Does your content answer site visitors' questions?

Competitor Audit

- What content types does each home page have?
- Rating of product page organization and content.

Assessment Results

UBBN Content Audit

- The overall usability of the product pages was found to be acceptable.
- The following graphics ratings were applied to the 99 product pages selected for audit:
 - Very Good – 1 page
 - Good – 51 pages⁹²
 - Acceptable – 34 pages
 - Poor – 13 pages
- 98 of the 99 product pages selected for audit were rated as having a clear call to action, but one that needed improvement.
- All 99 product pages selected for audit were rated as only somewhat answering site visitors' questions.

⁹² It should be noted that although these images were given a “good” rating, there were caveats listed about every page.

Competitor Audit

- The product pages of each website had some combination of the following content types:
 - Product name
 - Image of the product
 - Product price
 - Product size/type selection field
 - Quantity input or selection field
 - Add to cart button
 - A social media or share with other section
 - Related products

- The competitors’ product pages had the following content types which UBBN’s product pages did not:
 - Multiple images of each product
 - Image zoom
 - Product description
 - Sizing chart
 - Shipping information and policy
 - Returns/Exchanges information and policy
 - Add to Wish List (Francesca’s only)
 - Product reviews (Francesca’s only)

- Rating

Rating Type	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca’s
Page Organization	Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Overall	Somewhat Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory

What The Results Mean

As with the UBBN website’s home page, these results show that while the UBBN website’s product pages are usable, there is much room for improvement.

For example, Figures 18-20 show a typical product page for the UBBN, ShopHopes, and Francesca’s websites.

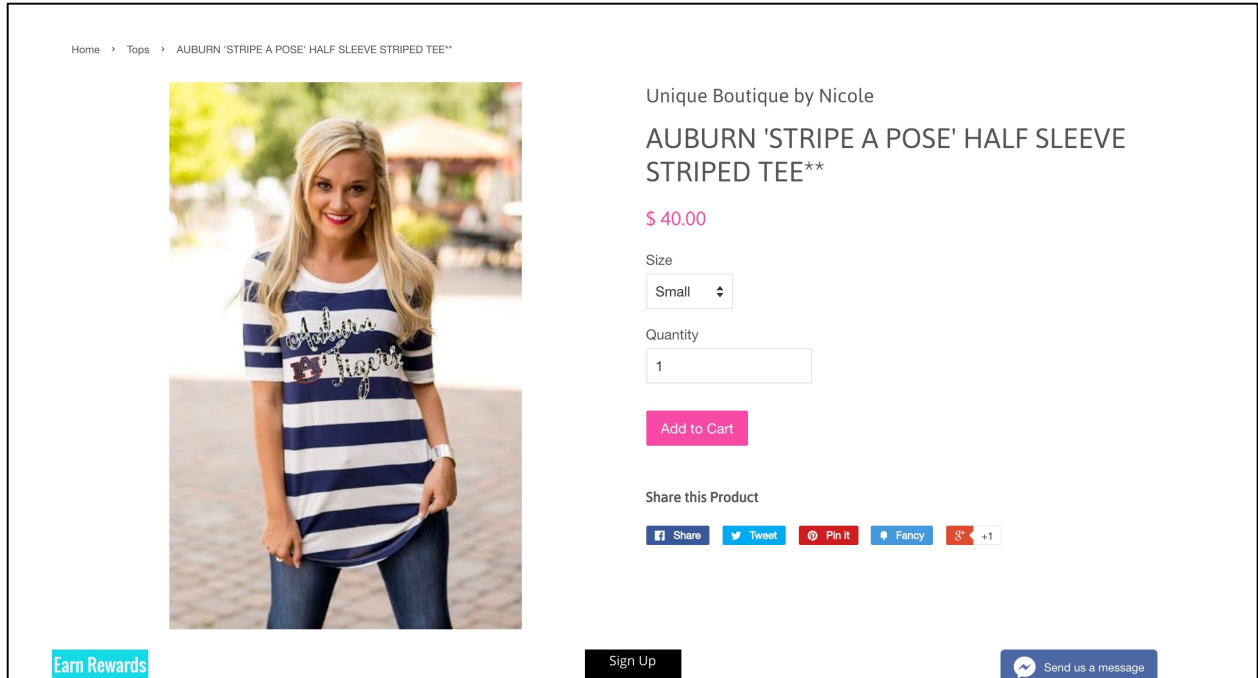


Figure 18: Example of a UBBN Product Page – Auburn ‘Stripe a Pose’ Half Sleeve Striped Tee

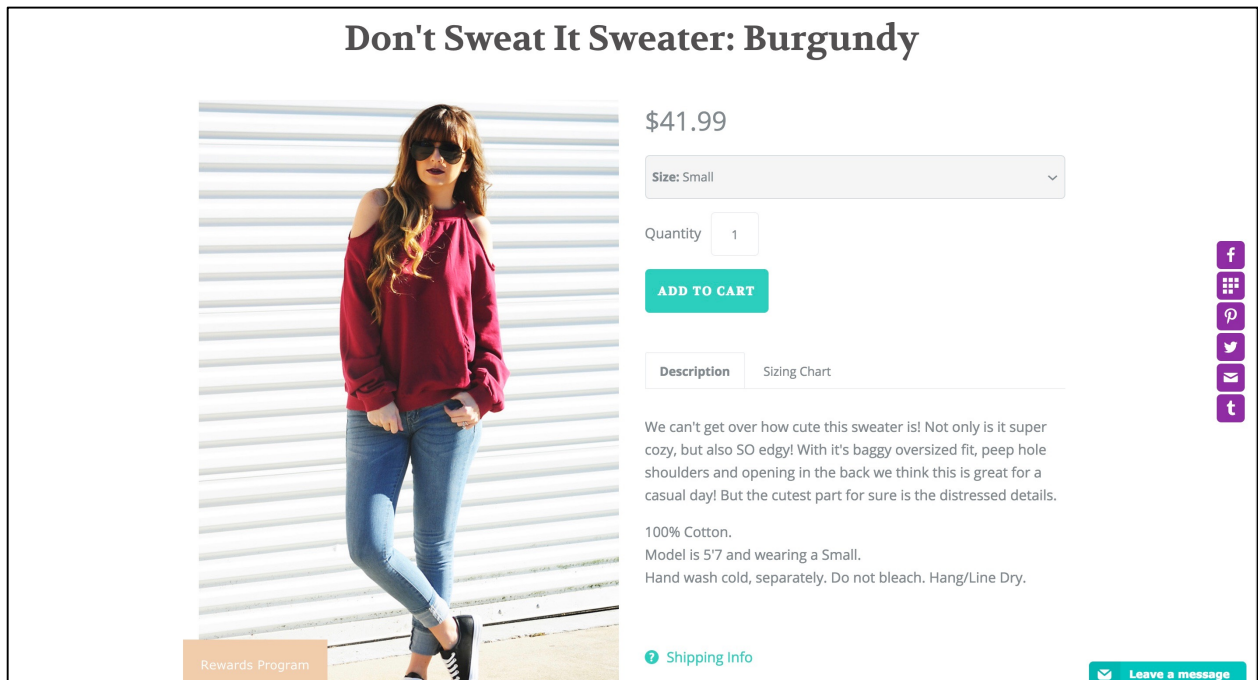


Figure 19: Example of a ShopHopes Product Page

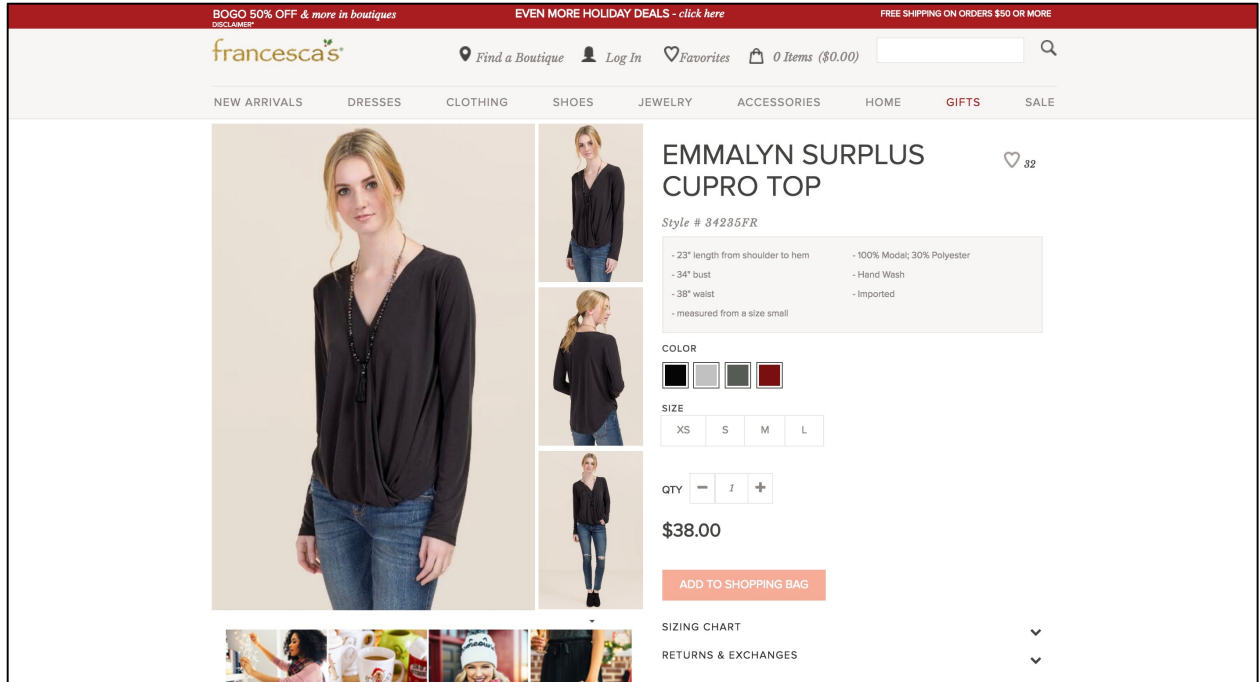


Figure 20: Example of a Francesca's Product Page

As demonstrated by Figures 18-20 above, the main area of improvement for the UBBN website's product page is the amount of information given on the page itself. While the product pages of the competitors' websites give customers information regarding product sizing, color, materials, descriptions, and important policies, the UBBN product page has none of this information. This lack of information means that customers' questions go unanswered and their needs unmet, making them more likely to exit the page and shop somewhere else.

There are also concerns regarding the quality of images on product pages (see Figures 9 and 10 on page 20 for examples), and the actionability of each page (see Figure 3 and subsequent discussion on page 14 for examples).

Given these concerns, and the fact that the UBBN business is an e-commerce business, revising product pages to meet customers' needs and answer their questions will be a main priority of the project moving forward.

Messaging and Branding

How Messaging and Branding Were Assessed

The following criteria were used to assess the UBBN website's messaging and branding:

UBBN Content Audit

- Does the content effectively communicate UBBN's messaging?
- Rating of messaging communication.

Competitor Audit

- Rating of how clear the messaging and branding is on each page.

Assessment Results

UBBN Content Audit

- Does the content effectively communicate UBBN's messaging?
 - 131 of the 138 pages selected for audit were determined to ineffectively communicate UBBN's messaging.
- Rating
 - The following ratings were applied to the 138 pages selected for audit:
 - Somewhat Effective – 1 page
 - Not Effective – 131 pages
 - N/A – 6 pages

Competitor Audit

- Clarity of Messaging and Branding Ratings
 - UBBN – Unclear
 - ShopHopes – Clear
 - Francesca's – Clear

What The Results Mean

Having a clear message and brand is one of the key ways to attract customers to a business. When a customer is able to differentiate a business from others, they are more likely to connect with that business and become loyalists to it. For this reason, the results on UBBN's messaging and branding above are concerning.

In essence, the results of the UBBN content audit and competitor audit show that the UBBN business does not really have any clear brand or message to speak of. The lack of messaging and branding is apparent in the details of the website. For example, Figure 21 shows the internet browser tab thumbnail pictures for the UBBN, ShopHopes, and Francesca's websites.

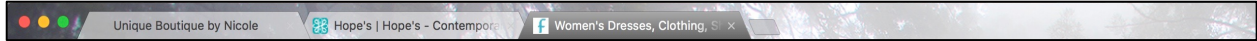


Figure 21: UBBN, ShopHopes, and Francesca’s Browser Tab Thumbnail Pictures

As Figure 21 shows, while both the ShopHopes and Francesca’s tabs have a thumbnail picture of their business logo, the UBBN tab does not have a thumbnail at all. Although a browser tab thumbnail picture is a small detail, it is a branding opportunity that UBBN is missing out on.

Even more troubling, however, is that even if a thumbnail of the UBBN logo were to be used, there are multiple logos to choose from. Figures 22-24 show the business logos for the UBBN website, Instagram, and Twitter accounts.



Figure 22: UBBN’s Website Logo

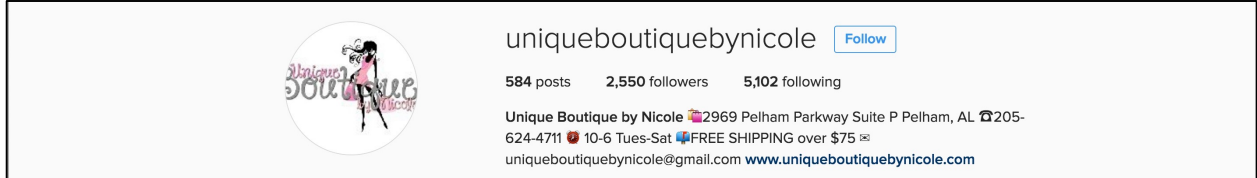


Figure 23: UBBN’s Instagram Logo



Figure 24: UBBN’s Twitter Logo

Each of these logos are completely different from one another, which is antithetical to building a brand for a business, since a tenant of branding is consistency.⁹³

Finally, with regards to messaging, there are several pieces of missing information on the UBBN website. For example, while both competitors' websites have information on various business policies (i.e. shipping, returns, payments, etc.), there is almost none of this information on the UBBN website. Further, the business has no "canned" content, such as order confirmation emails. Although policies and confirmation emails may not seem like pieces of content related to messaging and branding, they are actually great opportunities to showcase a business's tone and voice.⁹⁴ By not having this type of content prepared, the UBBN business is again missing out on a branding opportunity.

These examples demonstrate the current issue the UBBN business has with lack of messaging and branding. Trying to resolve this issue and begin building a brand for the UBBN business should be a priority moving forward with the project. Particularly given that the business owner is eager to build one for herself.⁹⁵ However, even given the client's willingness to make the necessary steps to build a brand, a full brand building strategy may be beyond the scope of this project.

⁹³ Grant, "Online Brand-building 101," 2016.

⁹⁴ Bredenkamp, "Don't Sound Like Everyone Else," 2015.

⁹⁵ Hagemann, Brittany, personal interview, October 1, 2016.

Audience

How Audience Was Assessed

The following criteria were used to assess the UBBN website's audience:

UBBN Content Audit

- What is the primary and secondary audience for this content?

Competitor Audit

- Rating of how clear the audience is for each page.

Assessment Results

UBBN Content Audit

- Possible audience categories derived from the audit were:
 - Potential customers
 - Returning customers
 - Middle-class women aged 18-50
 - Moms
 - Grandmothers
 - Aunts

Competitor Audit

- Clarity of Audience Rating
 - UBBN – Somewhat Clear
 - ShopHopes – Clear
 - Francesca's – Clear

What The Results Mean

The main takeaway from the results on audience is that beyond “female shopper,” there is not a clearly defined audience that the UBBN business is targeting. The lack of clarity regarding target audience on the website is a direct reflection of the client. In an interview with Mrs. Hagemann, when asked about her target audience, the answer given was essentially middle-class females between the ages of 18-50.⁹⁶ Although that is an audience description, it comprises a very large and varied group of individuals, and is not a specific category of people. Clearly defining and narrowing down the target audience for the UBBN business should be a priority before a content strategy is formulated and recommendations made.

⁹⁶ Hagemann, Brittany, personal interview, October 1, 2016.

Content Channels

How Content Channels Were Assessed

The following criteria were used to assess UBBN's content channels:

Multichannel Audit

- Information Consistency Across Channels
 - Information Given by Channel
 - Information Consistent with that on Website
- Crosslinks and Posts

Competitor Audit

- What social media platforms does the business use?
- Are there links to social media accounts on the main website? Which ones?
- Are social media accounts featured on the main website? (i.e. an Instagram feed)
- Is information consistent across channels?

Assessment Results

Multichannel Audit

- Information across these channels is inconsistent and varied.
- Crosslinks between channels are almost non-existent.
- Crossposts between channels do exist, but to a varying degree. The most crossposts are between the main Facebook page and the Instagram account.

Competitor Audit

- All businesses have social media accounts on the Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest platforms that they each use to a varying degree.
- ShopHopes is the only business to feature a social media account on their main website.

What The Results Mean

These results show that the UBBN business is attempting to harness the marketing and audience outreach opportunities that social media platforms can offer. However, these results also show that the UBBN business is doing so in a somewhat haphazard way. There is no consistency of information across channels, with some channels boasting more information than others. Further, as shown in the section on messaging and branding, there is not a consistent message and brand across channels. While the UBBN social media channels should be considered in a content strategy at some point, fully fleshing out a content strategy for them may be beyond the scope of this project. However, there are pieces of information on the social media channels that would be useful to migrate to the website.

Current State Assessment Summary

The previous sections have reviewed key content areas for the UBBN business.

Overall, these sections have shown that while the current UBBN website and content is usable and acceptable, there is clear room for improvement. In particular, the areas of audience, imagery, and product pages were shown to need significant improvement moving forward.

The areas of branding and multichannel content strategies were also deemed to possibly be outside the scope of the project moving forward.

Next Steps

The next steps of this project are as follows:

1. Review the inventory and audits results with the client. Due to scheduling issues, this review will happen sometime in late December 2016 or early January 2017.
2. Create a content strategy plan for the UBBN business. This process will take place in January 2017.
3. Create a recommendation report, with specific content revision and creation recommendations, based on the inventory/audits results and the subsequent analysis. This process will take place in January 2017.
4. Review the recommendation report with the client and gain approval for recommended content changes and revisions. This review and approval will happen in late January 2017.
5. Implement the approved content changes and revisions. Implementation will happen in February of 2017.

Unique Boutique by Nicole Key Content Inventory Results

Presented below are key results from the content inventory conducted on Unique Boutique by Nicole's website (www.uniqueboutiquebynicole.com). The inventory was conducted between October 16 – October 29, 2016, and should be considered a snapshot of UBBN's website content at that time.⁹⁷ For the full inventory spreadsheet consult the "UBBN Inventory" spreadsheet in the "UBBN Inventory and Audits" Excel document.

The inventory results will be presented as follows:

- Content Types
- Content Accuracy and Update Frequency
- Content Owner
- Content Storage Location
- Metadata
- Product Pages

⁹⁷ The client has removed some of the pages within this inventory and added new pages not contained in this inventory since it was conducted. However, the overall results of the inventory and the conclusions drawn from those results are not affected by these changes to the website.

Content Types

Primary: Image
Secondary: Text
Other: Link, Webpage

Content Accuracy and Update Frequency

No individual page or piece of content has a known date for when it was last updated.
No individual page or piece of content has a known update frequency.

Image Owner

Of the 728 images, 278 do not have a known owner.
The other 450 were determined to be owned by Brittany.

Content Storage Location

All non-image content was determined to be stored on the UBBN Shopify CMS.
All 728 images were determined to have an unknown storage location.

Metadata

Metadata Types

- Description (either for the page or for a product)
- Alt text
- Tags (product pages only)

Metadata Usage

- Product Pages
 - All product pages have at least one tag associated with them.
 - Other than a tagging system, there is no true metadata for any of these pages.
- Other Pages
 - No metadata to speak of.

Tags Used

- Not Sale; Tops; Bottoms; Dresses; Romper; ZZS; Tops CG; Bottoms CG; T-Shirts; 0-9 Months LG; 12-24 Months LG; 2T-4T LG; Size 5-6X LG; Size 7-16 LG; 0-9 Months LD; 12-24 Months LD; 2T-4T LD; Gals Shoes; Little Gals/Little Dudes Shoes; Earrings; Bracelets; Necklace; Gifts; Gift Cards

Product Pages

How many product pages have at least one image of the product?

- 592 out of 592

How many product pages have a description of the product?

- None

How many product pages have size, material, etc. information about the product?

- 37 out of 592

What is the range for the number of images each page has?

- 1 image: 431
- 2 images: 87
- 3 images: 47
- 4 images: 19
- 5 images: 4
- 6 images: 1
- 7 images: 2

Missing Information

Could not find pages for Home, Login, Create Account, Cart, or Search.

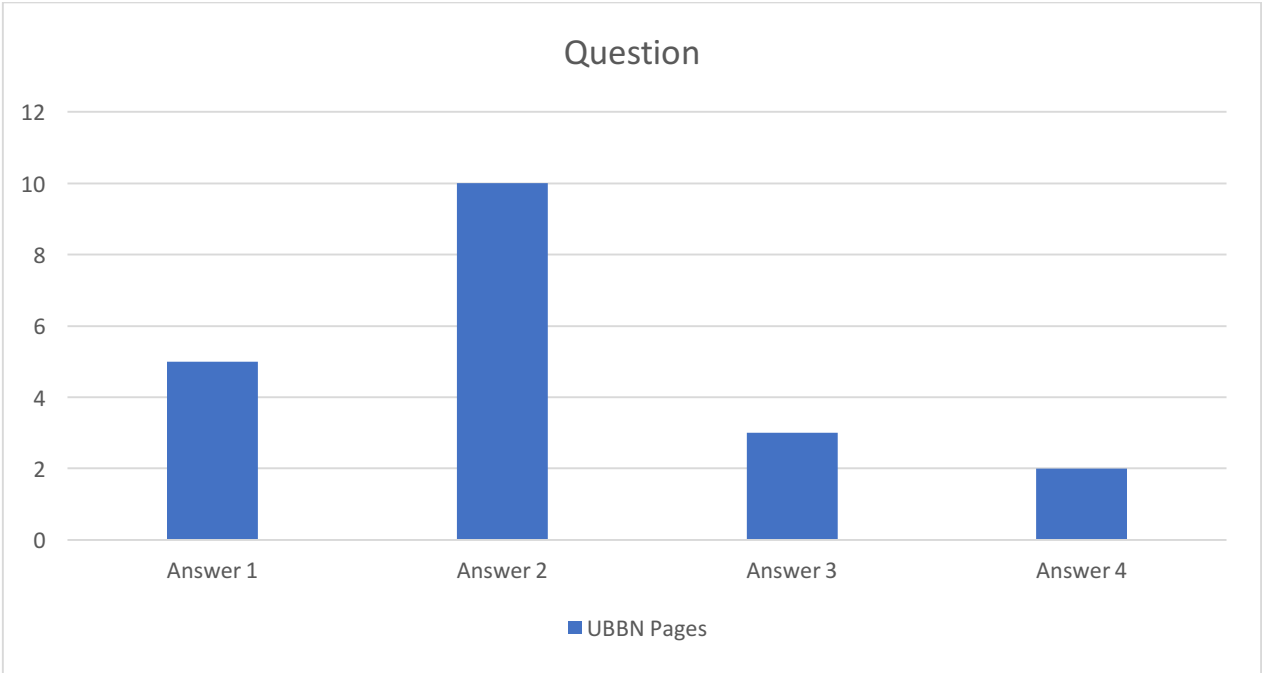
Unique Boutique by Nicole Content Audit Results

Presented below are key results from the content audit conducted on Unique Boutique by Nicole’s website (www.uniqueboutiquebynicole.com). The audit was conducted between November 7 – November 13, 2016. Instead of auditing every page of the website, around 20% of the pages were audited as a representative sample. For the full audit spreadsheet consult the “UBBN Website Audit” spreadsheet in the “UBBN Inventory and Audits” Excel document.

The audit results will be presented as follows:

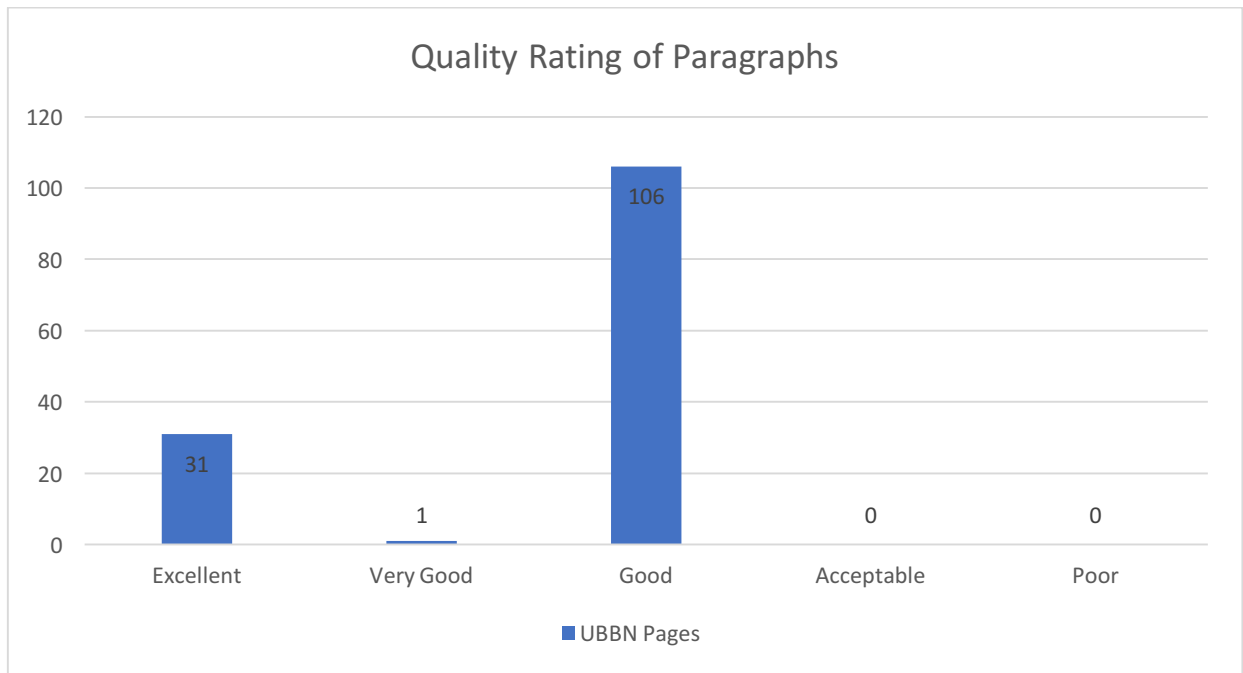
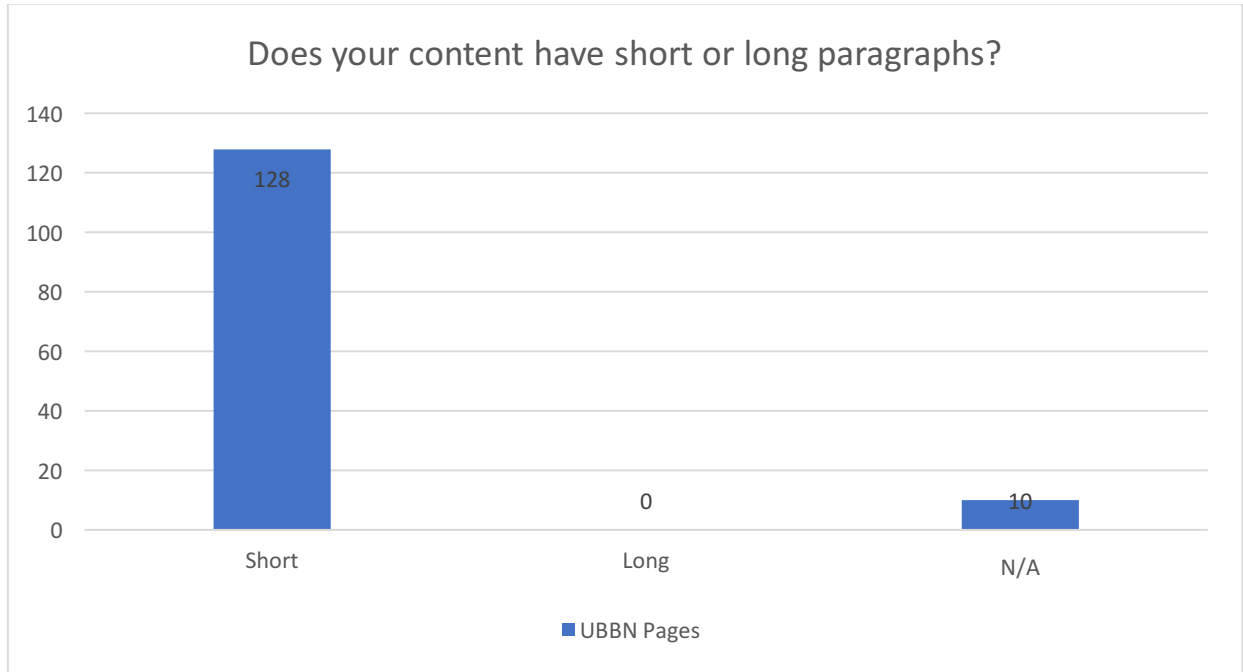
- Usability
- Messaging
- Knowledge
- Actionability
- Findability
- Audience

All results will be presented in a chart like the one below.

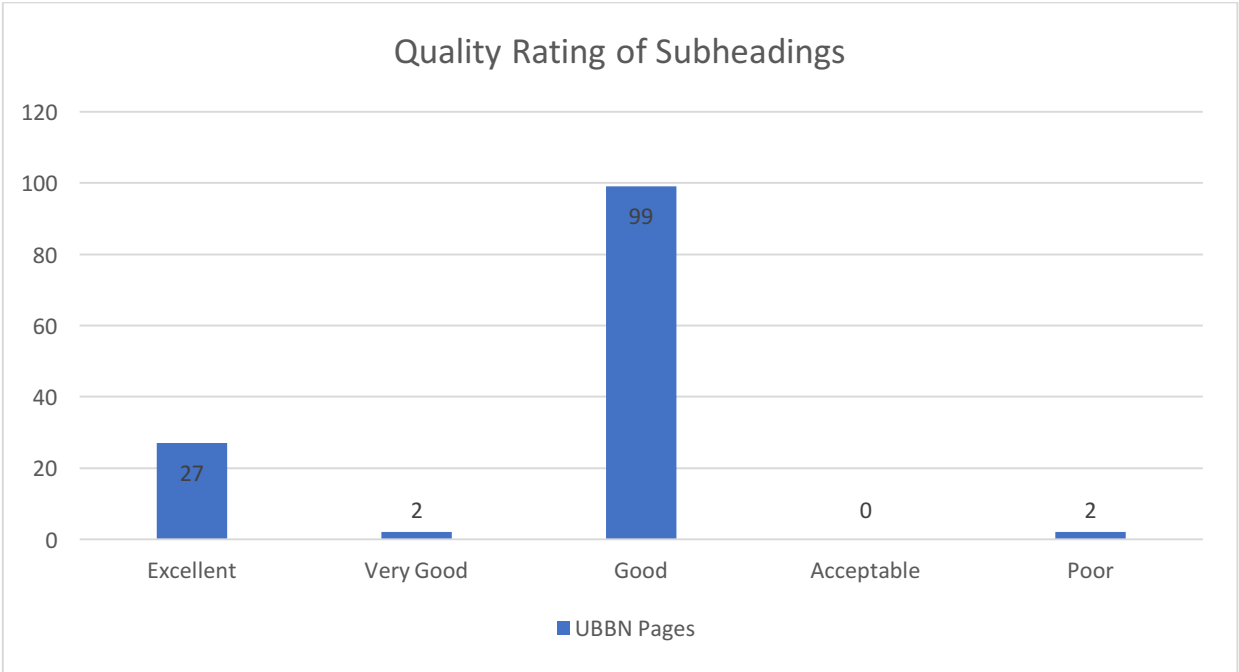
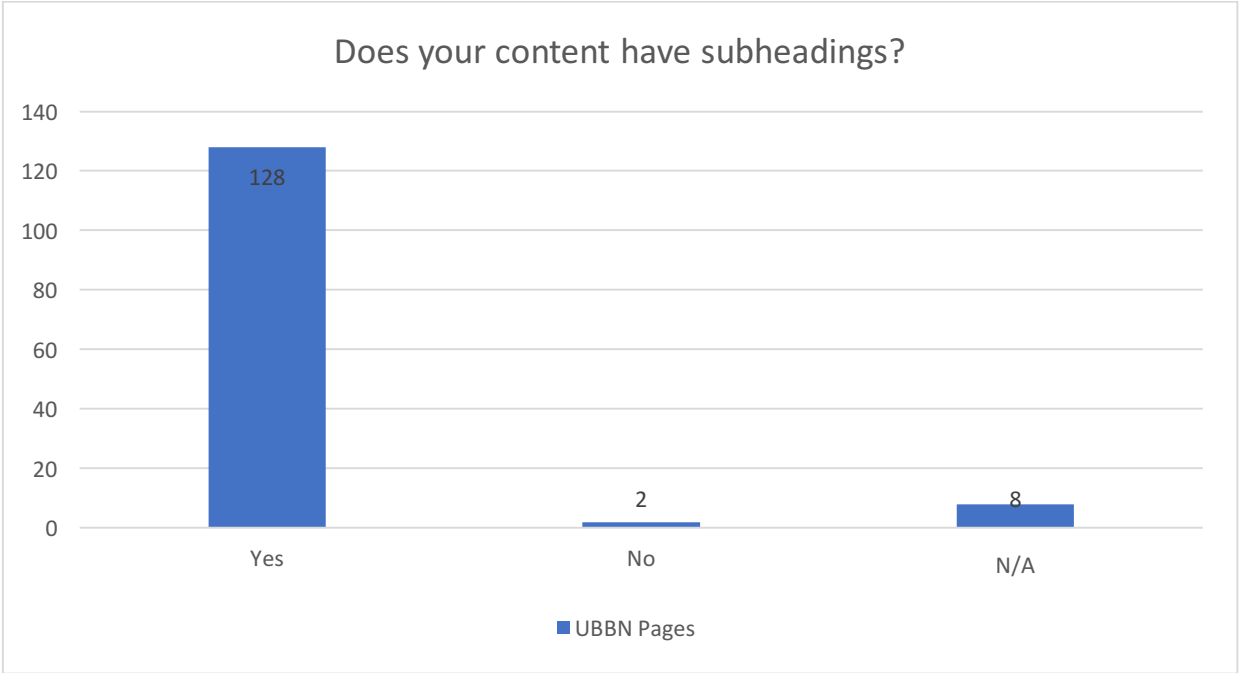


Usability

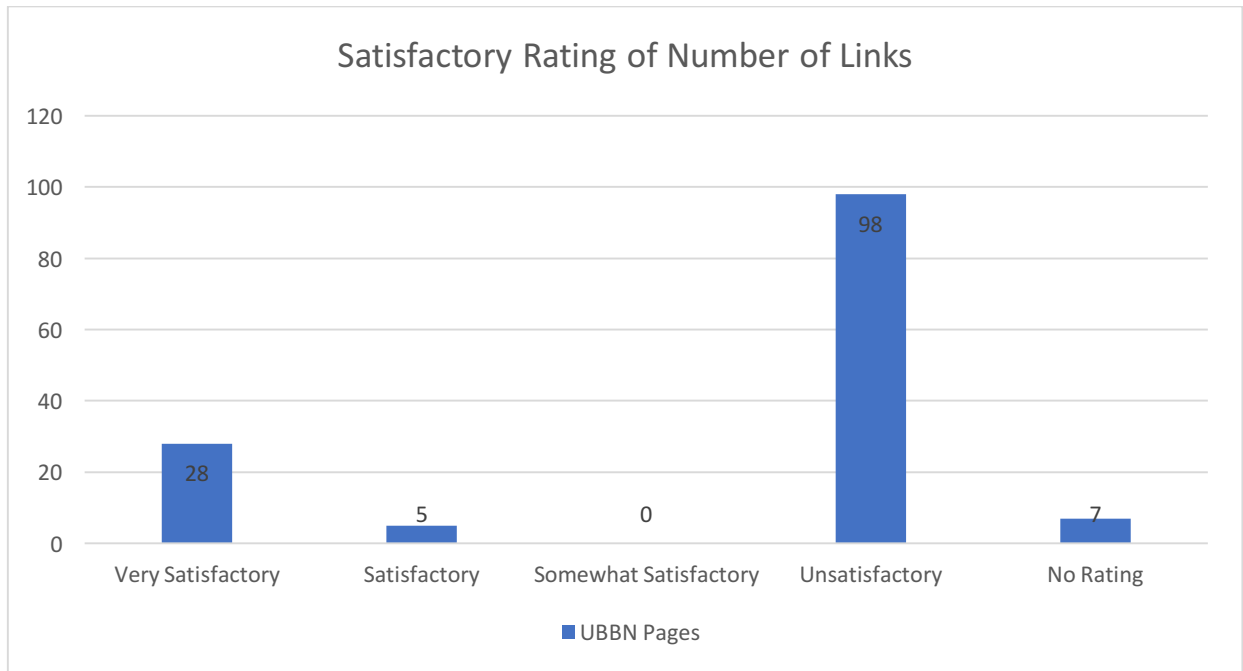
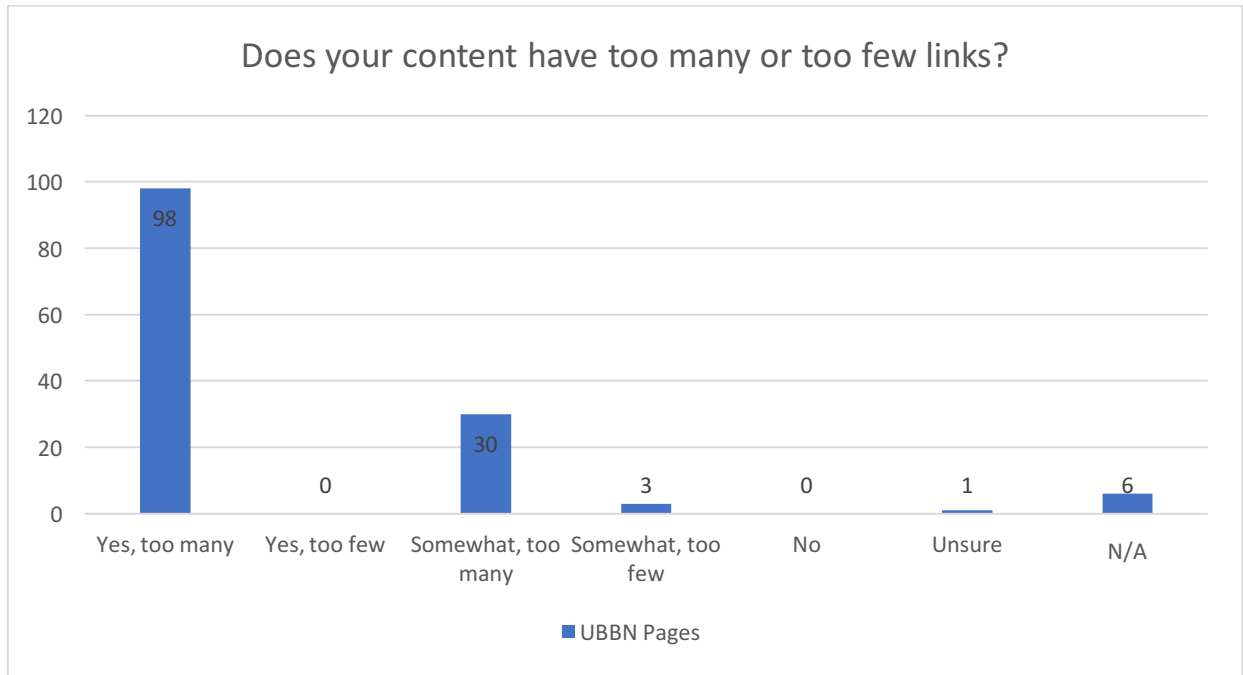
Paragraphs



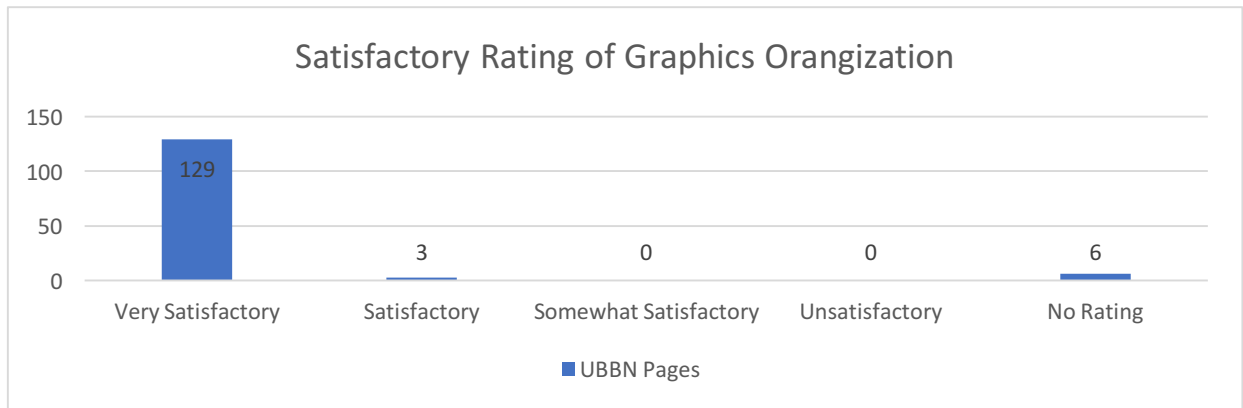
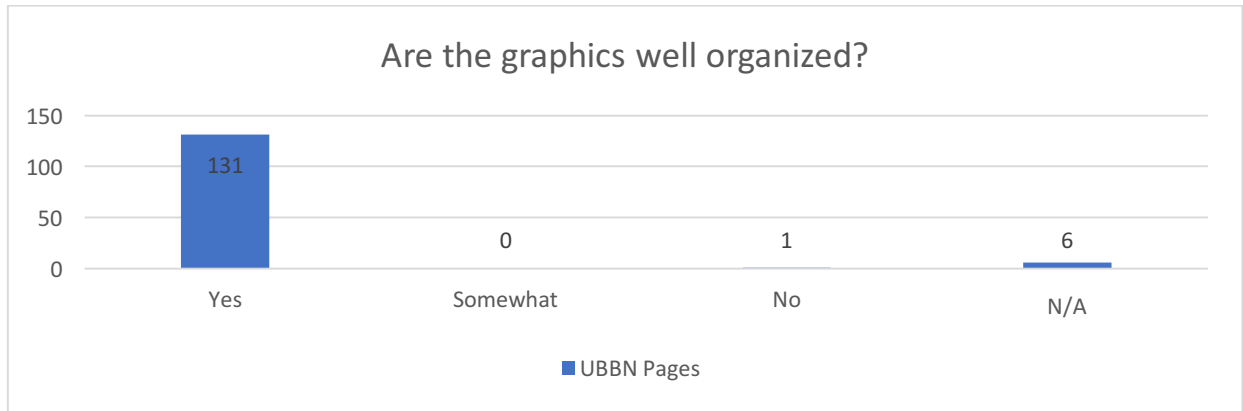
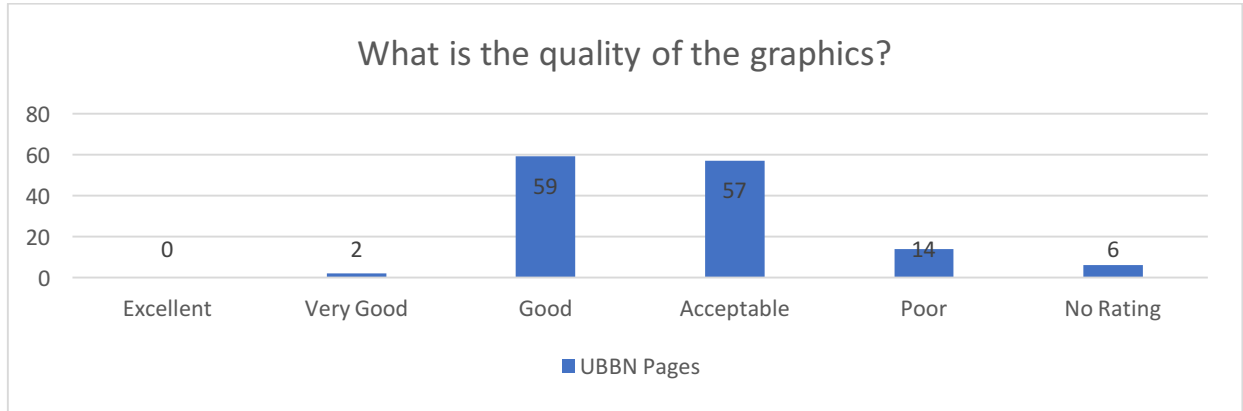
Subheadings



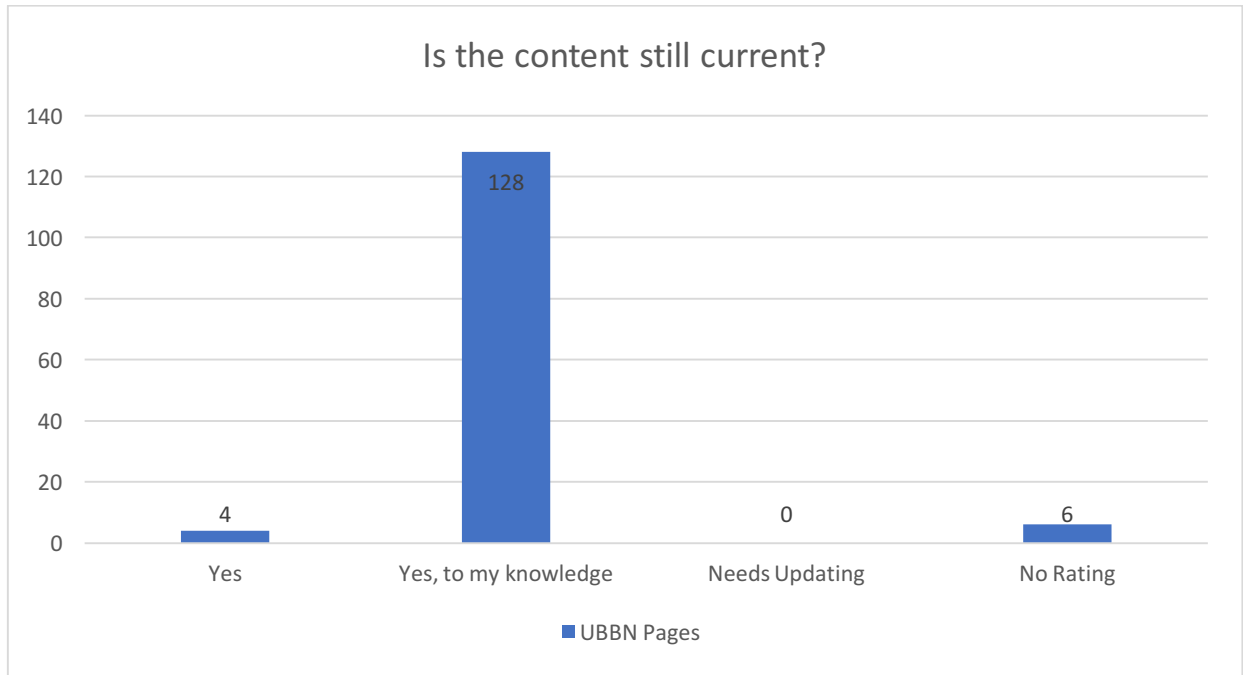
Links



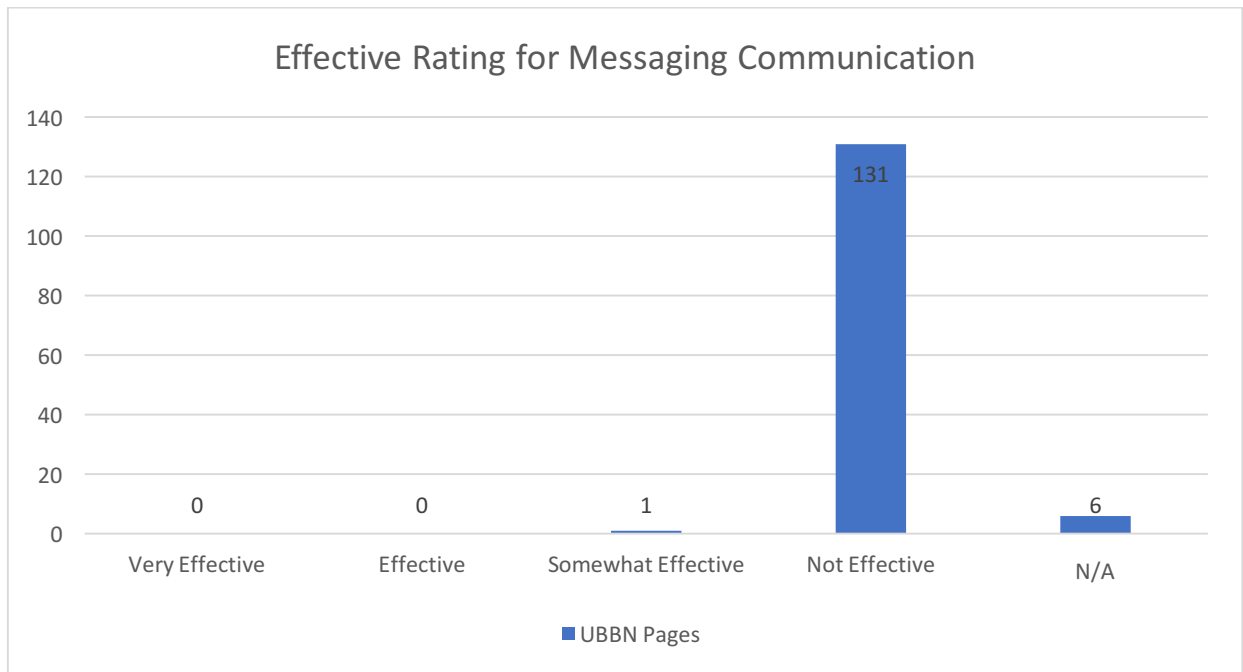
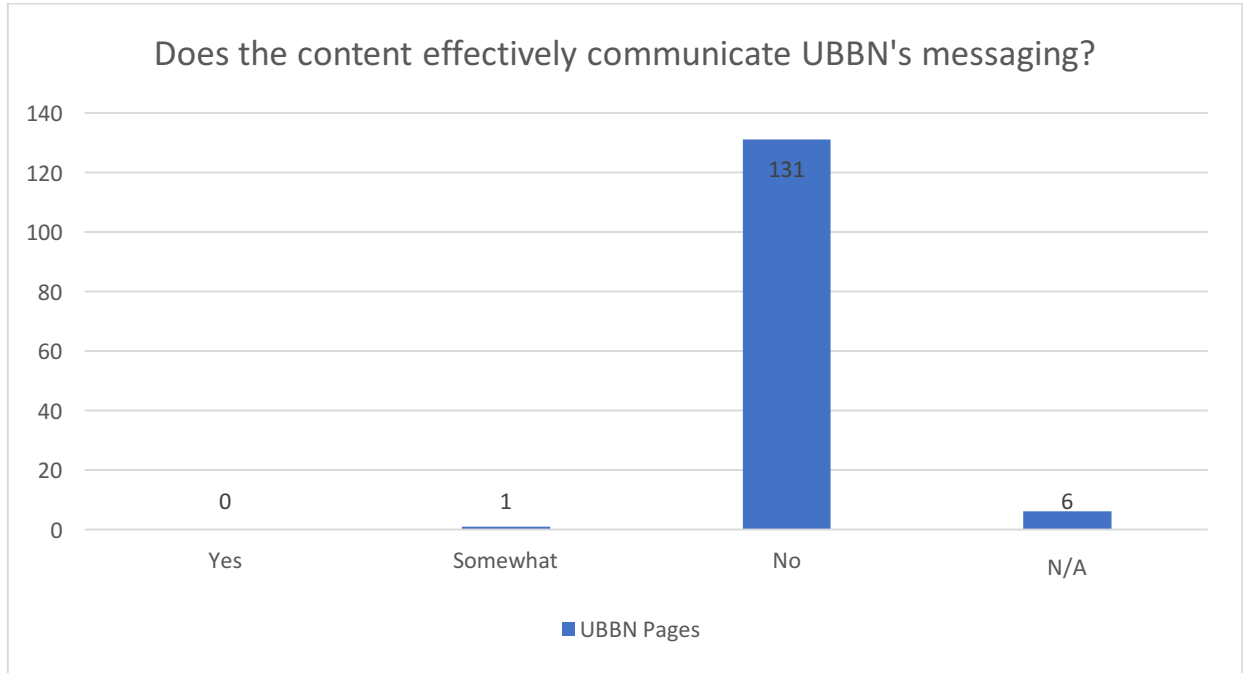
Graphics



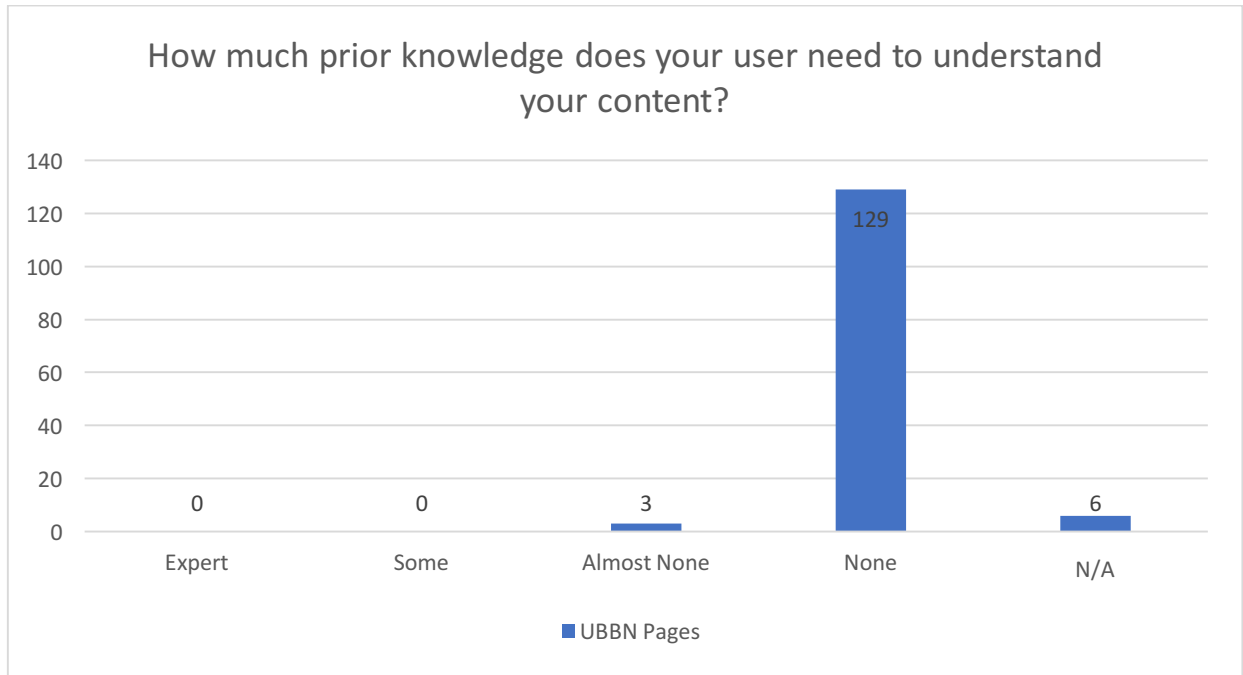
Accuracy



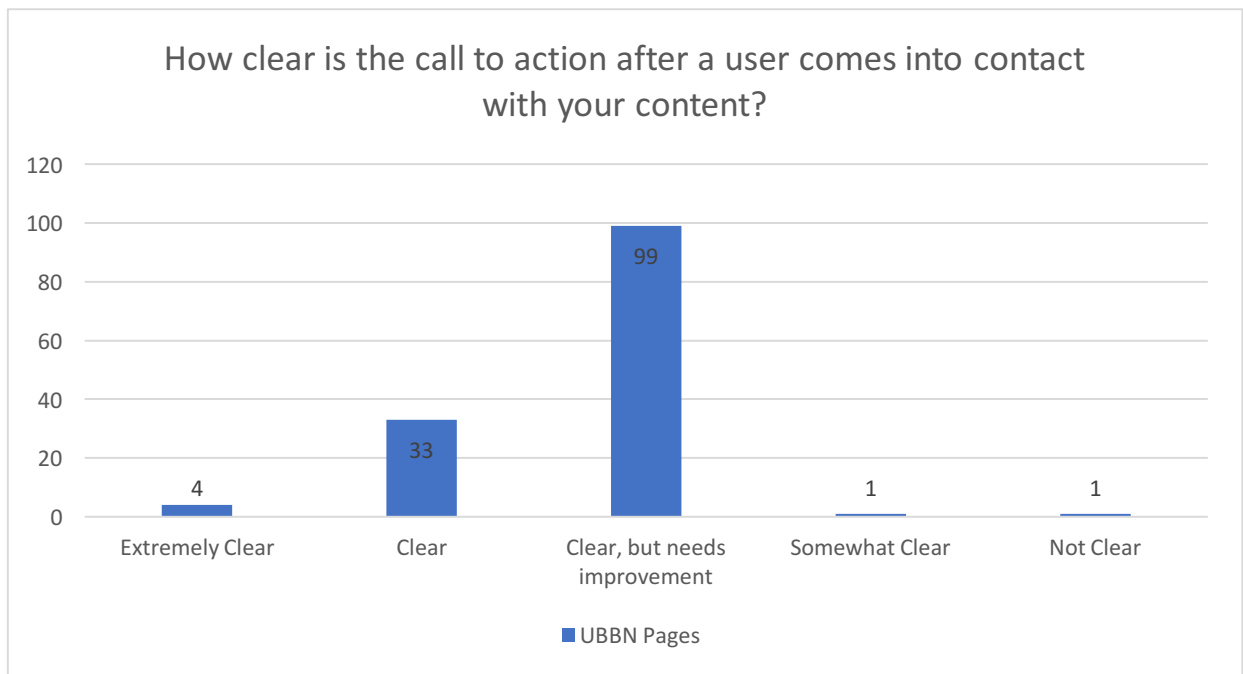
Messaging



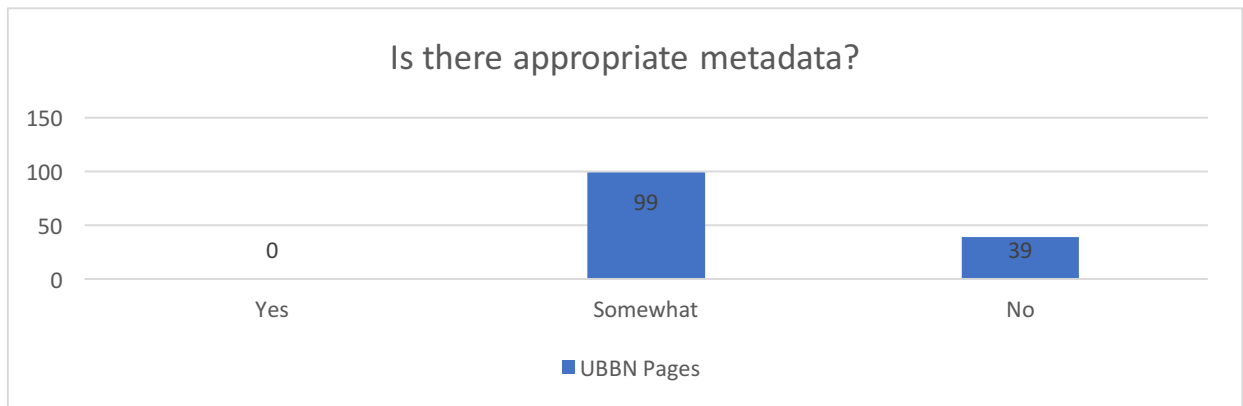
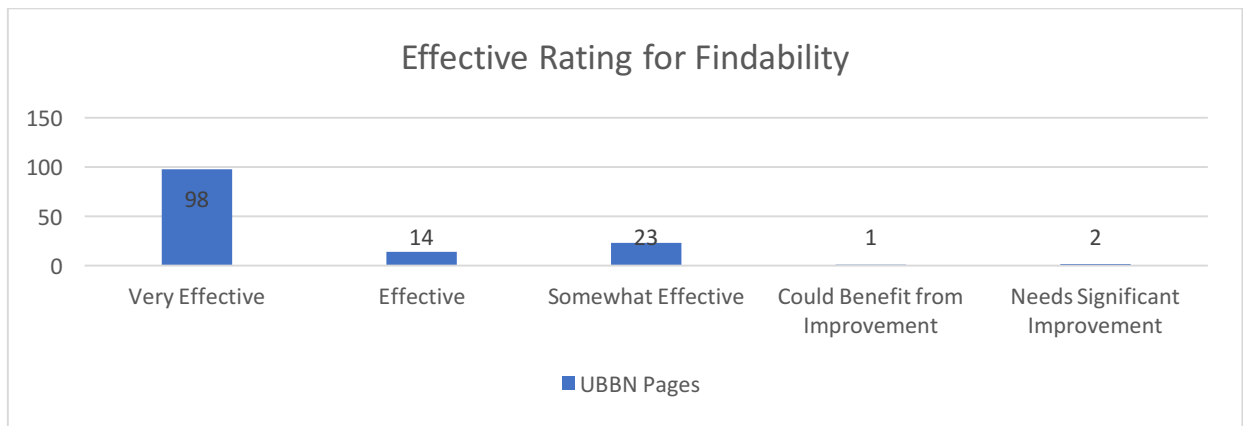
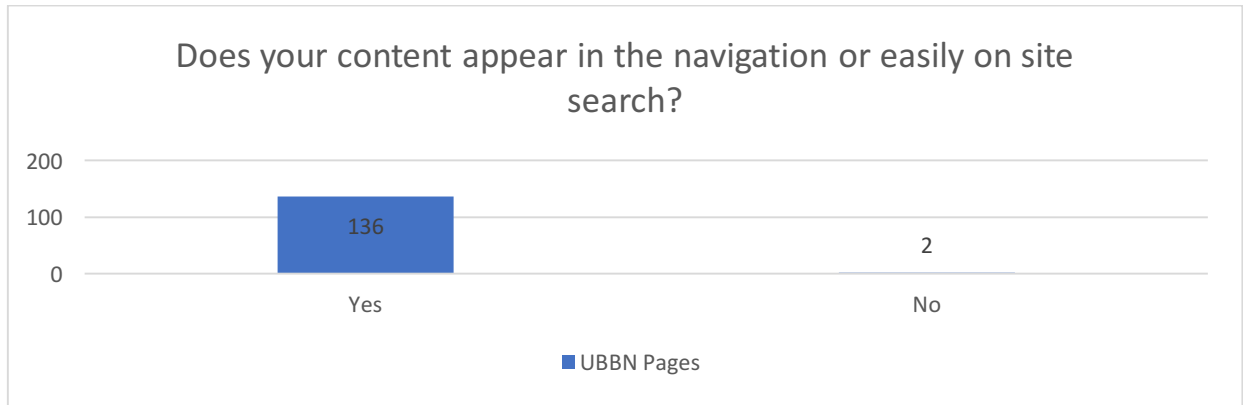
Knowledge



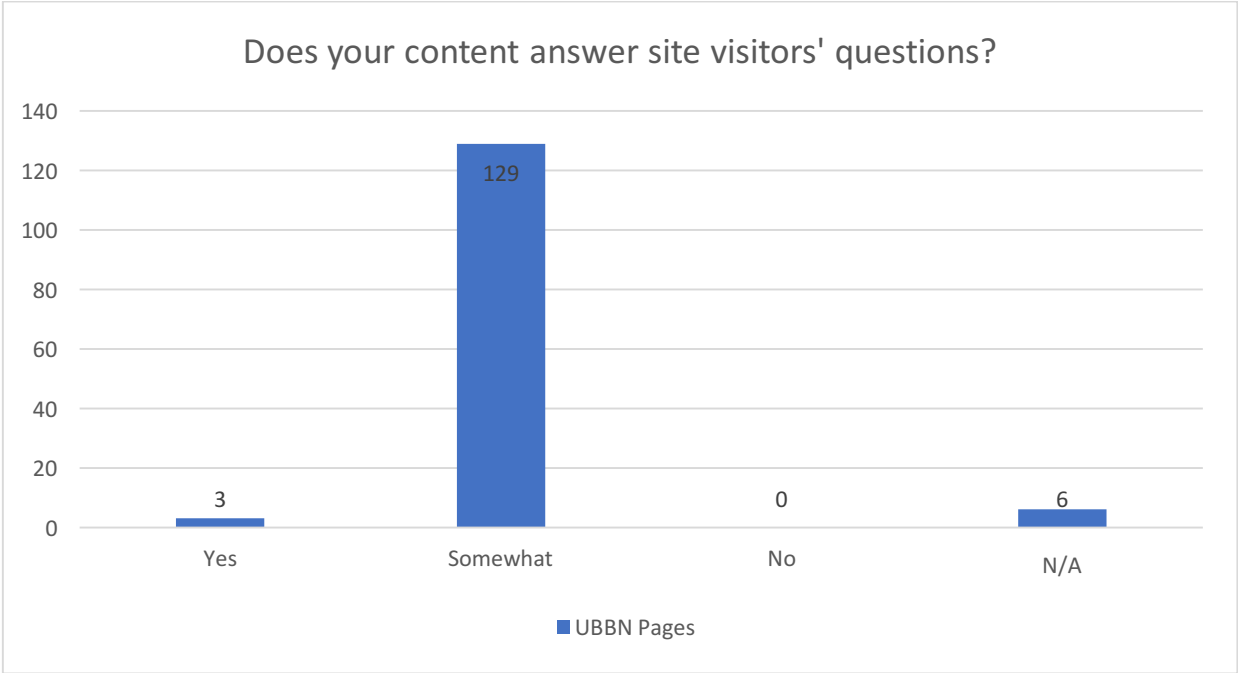
Actionability



Findability



Audience



Unique Boutique by Nicole Multichannel Audit Results

Presented below are key results from the multichannel audit conducted on the main Unique Boutique by Nicole channels: Website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. The audit was conducted on November 21, 2016. Although UBBN has other channels outside of those audited here, the channels chosen for audit are those UBBN uses most frequently. For the full audit spreadsheet consult the “UBBN Multichannel Audit” spreadsheet in the “UBBN Inventory and Audits” Excel document.

The audit results will be presented as follows:

- Content Types
- Possible Metrics
- Information Consistency
- Crosslinks and Posts

Content Types

Channel	Content Type			
	Image	Text	Link	Video
Website	√	√	√	-
Facebook (main)	√	√	√	√
Facebook (VIP)	√	√	√	√
Instagram	√	√	√	√
Twitter	√	√	√	√

Possible Metrics

Channel	Metric Type					
	Views	Followers	Likes	Shares	Comments	Other
Website	√	-	-	√	-	√
Facebook (main)	-	√	√	√	√	√
Facebook (VIP)	-	√	√	-	√	-
Instagram	-	√	√	-	√	-
Twitter	-	√	√	√	-	√

Information Consistency Across Channels

Information Given by Channel

Information Type	Channel				
	Website	Facebook (main)	Facebook (VIP)	Instagram	Twitter
Name of Business	√	√	√	√	√
Logo	√	√	√	√	√
Website URL	√	√	-	√	-
Address	√	√	√	√	√
Phone Number	√	√	-	√	√
Email	√	√	-	√	-
About Information	-	√	√	-	-
Store Information	√	-	-	√	√

Information Consistent with that on Website

Information Type	Channel			
	Facebook (main)	Facebook (VIP)	Instagram	Twitter
Name of Business	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Logo	No	No	No	No
Website URL	Yes	No	Yes	No
Address	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Phone Number	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Email	Yes	No	Yes	No
About Information	No	No	No	No
Store Information	No	No	No	No

Crosslinks and Posts

Crosslinks by Channel

Channel Links To	Channel				
	Website	Facebook (main)	Facebook (VIP)	Instagram	Twitter
Website	-	√	-	√	-
Facebook (main)	√	-	-	-	-
Facebook (VIP)	-	-	-	-	-
Instagram	-	√	-	-	-
Twitter	√	-	-	-	-

Crossposts by Channel

Channel	Channel				
	Website	Facebook (main)	Facebook (VIP)	Instagram	Twitter
Website	-	-	-	-	-
Facebook (main)	-	-	√	√	√
Facebook (VIP)	-	√	-	√	√
Instagram	-	√	√	-	√
Twitter	-	-	-	√	-

Unique Boutique by Nicole Competitor Audit Results

Presented below are key results from the competitor audit conducted on the Unique Boutique by Nicole (uniqueboutiquebynicole.com), Shophopes (shophopes.com), and Francesca's (francescas.com) websites. The audit was conducted on November 21, 2016. For the full audit spreadsheet consult the "UBBN Competitor Audit" spreadsheet in the "UBBN Inventory and Audits" Excel document.

The audit results will be presented as follows:

- Home Page
- Navigation
- Organization
- Product Pages
- Social Media
- Images
- Pop Up Boxes
- Messaging & Branding
- Audience
- Tone & Style
- Call To Action

Home Page

Home Page Content by Website

Content Type	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
Name of Business	√	√	√
Logo	√	√	√
Navigation	√	√	√
Hero Image Carousel	√	√	-
Other Content Boxes	-	√	√
Pop Up Boxes	√	√	√
Footer Content	√	√	√
Home Page Content Rating	Somewhat Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Home Page Content ShopHopes and/or Francesca's Have That UBBN Does Not

- FAQ
- Gift Cards
- Policies
 - Ordering & Payment
 - Privacy
 - Shipping
 - Terms of Use
- Site Map
- User Accounts
 - My Account
 - Order Status/Track Your Order

Navigation

Content Type	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
One Main Navigation Bar	-	√	-
Two Main Navigation Bars	√	-	√
Drop Down Menus	√	√	√
Search	√	√	√
Cart	√	√	√
Customer Account	√	√	√
Products	√	√	√
Product Navigation Organized by Type of Product	-	√	√
Rating	Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory

Organization

Question	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
How is the site organized?	-	-	-
Who the product is for	√	-	-
Product Size	√	-	-
Product Type	√	√	√
Is the site organized appropriately?	Somewhat	Yes	Yes
Rating	Somewhat Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory

Product Pages

Product Page Features and Content UBBN, ShopHopes, and Francesca’s All Have

- Product Name
- Image of Product
- Price
- Size/Type Selection Field
- Quantity Input or Selection Field
- Add to Cart Button
- Share With Others
 - Social Media Bar (UBBN & ShopHopes)
 - Share With Friends Email (Francesca’s)
- Related Products

Product Page Features and Content ShopHopes and/or Francesca’s Have That UBBN Does Not

- Multiple Images of Product
- Image Zoom
- Product Description
- Sizing Chart
- Shipping Information & Policy
- Returns/Exchanges Information & Policy
- Add to Wish List (Francesca’s only)
- Reviews (Francesca’s only)

Ratings

Rating Type	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca’s
Page Organization	Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Overall	Somewhat Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory

Social Media

What social media platforms does the business use?

Social Media Platform	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
Facebook	√	√	√
Instagram	√	√	√
Twitter	√	√	√
Pinterest	√	√	√
SnapChat	√	-	√
Tumblr	-	-	√
YouTube	-	-	√
LinkedIn	-	-	√
Wanelo	-	-	√
Polyvore	-	-	√

Other Information

Question	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
Are there links to social media accounts on the main website?	Yes, Facebook & Instagram	Yes, Instagram	Yes, all
Are social media accounts featured on the main website?	No	Yes, Instagram	No
Is information consistent across channels?	No	Yes	Yes

Images

Question	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
Describe image backgrounds	Varied; Distracting	Varied; Some Distracting	Varied, but usually a solid color
Is image sizing consistent across the website?	No	Yes	Yes
Overall Quality Rating of Images	Acceptable	Excellent	Excellent

Pop Up Boxes

Question	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
Are there too many or too few pop up boxes?	Yes, too many	No	No

Messaging and Branding

	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
Clarity Rating	Unclear	Clear	Clear

Audience

	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
Clarity Rating	Somewhat Clear	Clear	Clear

Call to Action

How clear is the call to action?	Website		
	UBBN	ShopHopes	Francesca's
Home Page	Clear, but needs improvement	Extremely Clear	Clear
Product Page	Clear, but needs improvement	Extremely Clear	Clear

Consulted Resources

The following resources were consulted in creating the content inventory and audits, and in analyzing the results.

Abel, Scott, and Rahel Anne Bailie. *The Language of Content Strategy*. Laguna Hills, CA: XML Press, 2014.

Bredenkamp, Andrew. "Don't Sound Like Everyone Else: 12 Essential Elements to Create a Consistent Brand Voice." Content Marketing Institute. March 26, 2015. contentmarketinginstitute.com/2015/03/consistent-brand-voice/.

Faulkner, Kate. "The Importance of Including Great Product Images in E-Commerce." *WME*. N.D. www.wmegroup.com.au/e-commerce/the-importance-of-including-great-product-images-in-e-commerce/.

Fenton, Nicole, and Kate Kiefer Lee. *Nicely Said: Writing for the Web with Style and Purpose*. San Francisco, CA: Peachpit Press, 2014.

Grant, Emma. "Online Brand-Building 101." *Web Design Blog*, WebdesignerDepot. April 26, 2016. www.webdesignerdepot.com/2016/04/online-brand-building-101/.

Halvorson, Kristina, and Melissa Rach. *Content Strategy for the Web*. 2nd ed. Berkley, CA: New Riders, 2012.

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Land, Paula Ladenburg. *Content Audits and Inventories: A Handbook*. Laguna Hills, CA: XML Press, 2014.

Nichols, Kevin P. *Enterprise Content Strategy: A Project Guide*. Laguna Hills, CA: XML Press, 2015.

Redish, Janice (Ginny). *Letting Go of the Words: Writing Web Content that Works*. 2nd ed. Waltham, MA: Morgan Kaufmann. 2012.

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Williams, John. "The Importance of Product Photography for Ecommerce Websites." *LinkedIn*. August 12, 2015. www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-product-photography-ecommerce-websites-john-williams.

Appendix C – Target Audiences, Messaging, and Voice & Tone

Target Audiences/Personas, Messaging, and Voice/Tone for UBBN

Purpose

- Explore possible audiences and present personas
- Detail messaging
- Describe the brand voice

Audiences and Personas

Who are our audiences? What do they need and want? What are their questions?

Possible Audiences for UBBN

1. Customer

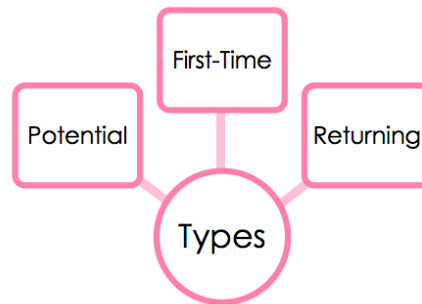
2. Women

- Mother
- Grandmother
- Daughter
- Southern

- Student
- Friend
- Football Fan
- Shopper
- Browser
- Alabamian

Target Audience: Customer

- Customer as an audience type encompasses all audiences for the UBBN website.
- Ranked as the priority audience.
- Shopify reports* show that first-time customers make up the overwhelming majority of the customers currently interacting with the UBBN website.
- Primary: Potential
- Secondary: Returning



*First-time vs Returning Customer Sales for 4/16-12/16

Customer – General Questions

Potential

- What do you sell?
- Do you have a rewards program?

First-Time

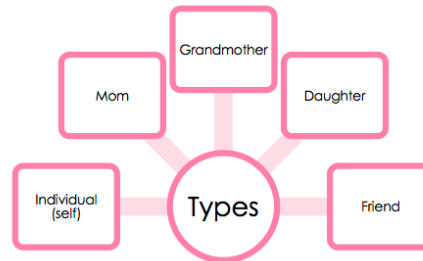
- Can I create an account?
- Do I have to create an account to buy something?
- What are your shipping policy?
- Do I get a discount for my first time buying something?
- What is your policy on returns?

Returning

- How do I return something?
- How do I change information on my account?
- How can I see what's new?

Target Audience: Woman

- Ranked as a priority audience, second only to customer.
- Woman was determined to be a priority audience for the UBBN website based on observations from October 2016 and the business owners desire to target that particular audience.*
- Primary: Individual (self)
- Secondary: Mom



*See Research Notes and Final Questions for Meeting from 10/1/16

Woman – Individual (self)

- Various ages
 - 20-25
 - 25-30
 - 30-35
 - 35-40
 - 40-50
- Buying for herself
- Interested in fashion
- Shops for recreation
- Wants to have a unique style, but one that people will appreciate
- Wants to look like her friend group
- Online shopper vs Sometimes Online shopper
- Mobile vs Desktop

**Target Audience: Woman,
Individual, Self**

Name: Megan
Age: 28
Location: Alabama
Marital Status: Non-married, but in a relationship
Education: High School graduate
Occupation: Waitress
Income: \$8/hour

○ **Interests**

- Hanging out with friends
- Going to the movies
- Shopping
- College Football – Alabama
- Spending time with her family

○ **Style**

- Casual and comfortable
- Likes unique pieces
- Enjoys that she and her friends have the same type of look

○ **Behaviors**

- Has a smart phone
- Spends most of her online time on Facebook
- Sometimes an online shopper

○ **Shopping Habits**

- Shops for individual pieces vs an entire outfit
- Tends to browse online
- Likes to save items to a wish list to buy later
- Buys clothing in small quantities
- Spends small amounts over time (i.e. \$20 at a time)

Woman - Mom

Young Mom

- Aged 22-35
- Children are still young (babies to middle school aged)
- Usually a stay-at-home mom
- Can be buying for herself or her children
- Uses both mobile and desktop, but prefers mobile

Older Mom

- Aged 38-50
- Children are older (teenager to young adults)
- Both stay-at-home and working
- Usually buying for herself
- Uses both mobile and desktop

**Target Audience: Woman,
Mom, Young**

Name: Jennifer
Age: 32
Location: Alabama
Marital Status: Married
Children: 2, girl (8) and boy (2)
Education: High School graduate
Occupation: Stay-at-home Mom
Income: \$40,000/Year

○ **Interests**

- Kids' school
- Spending time with family
- Watching TV
- What's happening in her community

○ **Style**

- Casual and comfortable
- Prefers jeans
- Loves shoes and accessories

○ **Behaviors**

- Has a smart phone
- Avid Facebook user
- Likes Pinterest
- Shops online

○ **Shopping Habits**

- Bargain hunter/shopper
- Tends to buy more for her kids than herself
- Buys individual pieces vs an entire outfit

Messaging

What are our key messages? What do you want to say to people? How do we want people to see us?

Messages

Primary

1. Unique
2. Trendy
3. Fun
4. Friendly
5. Southern (Regional and Local)

Secondary

- Customer-oriented
- Enthusiastic
- Casual

Communication Messages

- Professional
- Consistent
- Reliable

Our Mission

We want to provide women with a range of unique and trendy products for themselves and their kids.

Voice and Tone

How do we describe our brand voice? What should our tone be for certain content types?

Brand Voice Attributes

- Casual, but not sloppy
- Friendly, without being overbearing
- Enthusiastic, but not overzealous

Tone by Content Type

Content Type	Audience Emotion	Appropriate Tone
Error Message	Confusion, stress, anger	Gentle, calm, serious
Help Document	Confusion, annoyance	Straightforward, helpful
Success Document	Relief, pride, joy	Positive, friendly, enthusiastic
Legal Document	Stress, confusion, annoyance	Clear, serious, straightforward
Marketing Campaign	Surprise, delight, distraction	Enthusiastic, memorable
Social Media Post		

Some content/emotion/tone combinations were taken from
Nicely Said: Writing for the Web with Style and Purpose by Nicole
Fenton and Kate Kiefer Lee.

Appendix D – Recommendation Presentation



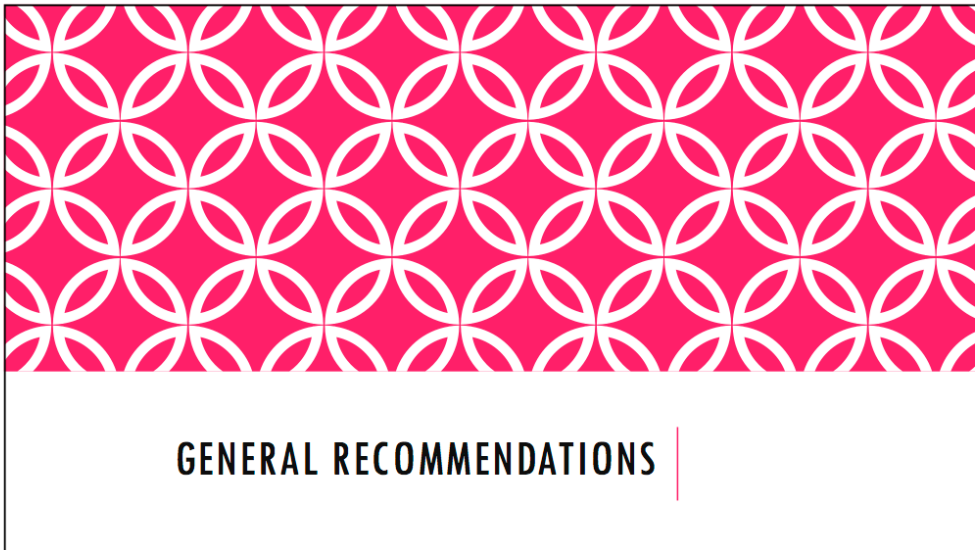
PURPOSE

To review the strengths and weaknesses of the UBBN content and website, and make recommendations for moving forward.

Recommendations will be presented as follows:

- *General
- *Website Specific
- *Beyond Project Scope

A proposed workflow will follow the recommendations.



GENERAL

Weaknesses

- *Multiple logos across channels
- *Logo and navigation take up over half of every page on the website
- *Sign-ups for services that don't exist
- *Missing policy information
- *Unclear brand voice and tone

Recommendations

- *Select one logo and upload it to all UBBN accounts
- *Change the website theme to reduce the prominence of the logo and navigation
- *Remove the newsletter signup section in the footer and the text message signup box
- *Create canned content to be used throughout the website
- *Update all website copy to fit the brand voice and tone



**WEBSITE SPECIFIC
RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Organization & Navigation
- Metadata & Product Naming
- Home Page
- Product Pages

ORGANIZATION AND NAVIGATION

Weaknesses

- *Navigation is organized around competing categories
- *Can cause customer confusion and frustration
- *Can bury content within the website
- *Missing content

ORGANIZATION AND NAVIGATION

Recommended Main Navigation

New Arrivals
Women (w/ dropdown menu)
Kids (w/ dropdown menu)
Shoes
Jewelry (w/ dropdown menu)
Home & Gifts
Monograms
Sale

Recommended Footer Navigation

My Account

- My Account
- Order Status
- Returns

Customer Support

- Contact Us
- FAQs
- Shipping & Returns
- Rewards Program
- Privacy & Terms of Use

UBBN

- About Us
- Store Location
- Events

Social Media

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter

METADATA AND PRODUCT NAMING

Weaknesses

- *Product naming system impedes customers' ability to find products
- *No metadata throughout the website
- *Leads to customers having no assistance when they are internally or externally searching
- *Decreases SEO

Recommendations

- *Create a new product naming system that focuses on descriptive names for products
- *Add a description and title for the website
- *Add a description and title for all website pages

HOME PAGE

Weaknesses

- *Logo and navigation take up over half the page
- *Somewhat poor navigation
- *Poor image quality
- *Missing information
- *No call to action

Recommendations

- *Change the website theme to reduce the prominence of the logo and navigation
- *Update the website navigation
- *Update images to fit the 1280x460 recommendation of Shopify
- *Add canned content to footer
- *Add featured collection, rewards program and upcoming events sections

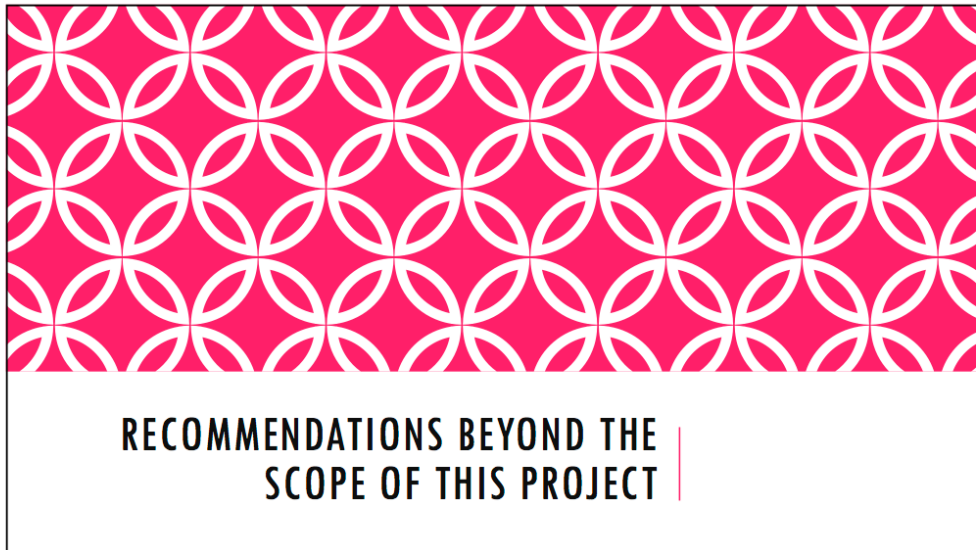
PRODUCT PAGES

Weaknesses

- *Missing product information
- *No metadata to assist in customer searching or increase SEO
- *Poor quality images
- *No call to action

Recommendations

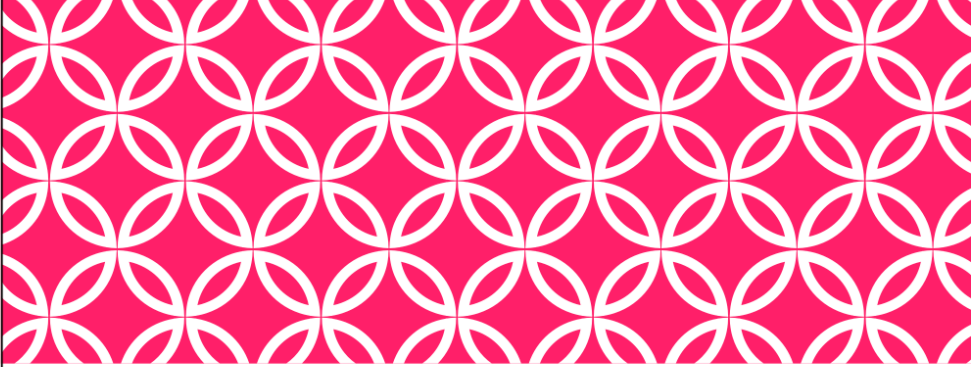
- *Add product descriptions
- *Add sizing information
- *Add shipping and returns policies
- *Change layout to:
 - *Accommodate the new information
 - *Place the "Buy" button above the scroll fold



RECOMMENDATIONS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT

Given time, resource, and budget constraints, the following recommendations are beyond the scope of this project, but should be implemented at some point in the future.

- *Update all imagery throughout the website
- *Integrate the UBBN social media accounts into the website
- *Coordinate cross-channel posting and information in order to present a more consistent brand and presence
- *Review and update all UBBN touchpoints so they meet the brand voice and tone



WORKFLOW AND IMPLEMENTATION

WORKFLOW

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	March	April/Beyond
Create metadata templates and new product naming system		Update all website pages with new metadata and naming system				
	Create templates for product descriptions	Update product pages with product descriptions and sizing information				
		Create About Us page, Contact page, Store Location page, FAQ page, Events page, Shipping & Returns policy, Rewards Program page, Privacy & Terms of Use policy				
		Create wireframes for home page and product pages		Update theme, website organization/navigation, home page, and product pages		

Appendix E – Recommendation Report Outline

Slide 1: Opening

- A. Review overall capstone project phases and what stage of the project we are currently in.
- B. Go over any questions she may have.

Slide 2: Purpose of Presentation Slide

- A. Review the process you went through for the inventory and audits.
 - a. Explain that these assessments show the strengths and weaknesses of the business/website content.
- B. Purpose of Presentation: To review the strengths and weaknesses of the UBBN content and website, and make recommendations for moving forward.
- C. Recommendations fall into three categories:
 - 1. General
 - 2. Website Specific
 - 3. Beyond Project Scope
- D. Presentation will end with a proposed workflow.
- E. Questions

Slide 3 &4 – General

- A. These recommendations affect multiple areas of the business, from print to digital content.
- B. Strengthens
- C. Excellent base of content to build from.
- D. Weaknesses
 - 1. Multiple logos across channels
 - a. Show the website, Facebook, and Twitter logos
 - b. Explain how different logos detract from branding
 - 2. Logo and navigation take up over half of every page on the website
 - a. Explain how this set up pushes important content to where a customer can't see it, making their experience with the site frustrating.
 - b. Defeats the purpose of a hero image carousel since it's below the fold.
 - 3. Sign-ups for services that don't exist
 - a. Specifically the newsletter sign-up in the footer and the text for information program.
 - b. Explain how offering services that are truly not available diminishes her credibility as a business and creates negative emotions in customers.
 - 4. Missing information that customers need
 - a. Specifically canned content: about the business, various business policies, FAQ.
 - 5. Unclear brand voice and tone
 - a. Discuss her social media voice vs website voice.
- E. Recommendations
 - 1. Select one logo and upload it to all UBBN accounts
 - a. Alternatively, could also create a new logo.

- b. Need to make sure that the logo selected can be altered to fit image requirements across platforms.
- 2. Change the website theme to reduce the prominence of the logo and navigation
 - a. Currently using the “Minimal” theme. Discuss how comfortable she is changing the theme, since Shopify has a limited number of themes.
 - b. New theme selection will depend on whether or not she wishes to spend money or choose a free theme.
- 3. Remove the newsletter signup in the footer and text message signup box
- 4. Create canned content to be used throughout the website
 - a. Specifically: About Us page; Contact page; Store Location page; FAQ page; Events page; Shipping & Returns Policy; Rewards Program page; Privacy & Terms of Use page
 - b. Having this content answer her customers’ questions and gives her somewhere to point her customers if they ask her about her policies, etc.
 - c. Will discuss the placement of this content later in the presentation.
- 5. Update all website copy to fit the brand voice and tone
 - a. This includes all policies, descriptions, titles, etc.
 - b. Review voice & tone attributes.
 - i. Casual, but not sloppy
 - ii. Friendly, without being overbearing
 - iii. Enthusiastic, but not overzealous

F. Questions

Slide 5 – Website Specific Recommendations

- A. These recommendations affect specific areas of the website.

Slide 6 – Organization and Navigation

- A. Review the importance of website organization and navigation
 - 1. It’s the backbone of a website.
 - 2. Gives customers a baseline of where to start.
 - 3. Can make the difference between customers finding what they need and giving up.
 - 4. Use the example of customers as bloodhounds from Redish.
- B. Weaknesses
 - 1. Navigation is organized around competing categories
 - a. Explain that e-commerce sites are usually only organized around ONE main category.
 - 2. Can cause customer confusion and frustration
 - a. Review the current UBBN navigation categories.
 - b. Review the ShopHopes navigation categories.
 - c. Explain the differences between the two setups.
 - d. Give a customer scenario that shows how the navigation can be frustrating.
 - 3. Can bury content within the website
 - 4. Missing content

- a. No navigation categories for: customer accounts; business policies; events; monograms.

C. Recommendations

1. Main Navigation

- a. Review which categories were consolidated and added
- b. Discuss how the new categories fit the best practices for e-commerce businesses. Pull up examples of ShopHopes and Francesca's if needed.
- c. Discuss how these categories help customers by making it easier for them to figure out where to go.
- d. Discuss how it pulls information that was buried within the website to the forefront (i.e. with monograms).

2. Footer Navigation

- a. Add a "My Account" section. Review proposed categories.
- b. Add a "Customer Support" section. Review proposed categories.
- c. Add a "UBBN" section about the business and with relevant business information
- d. Update the "Social Media" section. Review proposed categories.
- e. Explain how this setup fits best practices and provides customers with information they need. Pull up examples of ShopHopes and Francesca's if needed.

D. Questions

Slide 7 – Metadata and Product Naming

A. Review what metadata is and the importance of metadata and product naming.

- 1. Metadata gives "additional context and information that tells software how to handle content."
 - a. Give examples of descriptions, tags, etc.
- 2. Good metadata helps customers find what they are looking for easily and quickly.
- 3. Good metadata helps you organize your content and find it more easily and quickly.

B. Weaknesses

- 1. Product naming impedes customers' ability to find products
 - a. Give examples of product names: Donut & Back for a tank top; Don't Be a Fool for a blouse.
 - b. Combined with the fact that there are no descriptions for these products, customers will find it hard to find through search.
 - c. Explain how Shopify itself tells her this with the section on search terms that her customers are using that come up empty. Almost always descriptive when I have looked.
 - d. Give examples of competitor sites naming systems. Francesca's is more descriptive than ShopHopes, but both are more descriptive than UBBN. Both are also more consistent in their naming.
- 2. No metadata throughout the site
 - a. No product descriptions, alt-text for images, no page titles, etc.

- b. Explain how this makes it hard for both customers to find products internally and for search engines to categorize her pages, diminishing SEO.
- C. Recommendations
 - 1. Create a new product naming system that focuses on descriptive names for products
 - a. Examples: Floral Embroidered Dress; Floral Cardigan; Coral Shift Dress
 - 2. Add a description and title for the website
 - a. Will help search engines categories her website and increase her SEO.
 - 3. Add a description and title for all website pages
 - a. Will help search engines categories her pages and increase her SEO.
 - b. Will help customers find her products.
- D. Questions

Slide 8 – Home Page

- A. Review the importance and purpose of a home page.
 - 1. Direct customers where to go.
 - 2. Call customers to action.
- B. Weaknesses
 - 1. Logo and navigation take up over half the page
 - a. Review previous section on logo/navigation placement.
 - 2. Somewhat poor navigation
 - a. Review previous section on navigation.
 - 3. Poor image quality
 - 4. Explain the purpose of an hero carousel.
 - a. Explain that the images need to fit within the image standards of the theme.
 - b. Discuss how images create a business’s ethos and how they can evoke emotions in customers. Explain how, in this instance, having poor images can be worse than having no images.
 - 5. Missing information
 - a. Review previous section on missing information (i.e. canned content, navigation categories, etc.).
 - b. Go over the ShopHopes footer as an example of what to aim for.
 - 6. No call to action
 - a. Images are just presented at random, with no context for why they are there.
 - b. No “Try Our New Dresses” (as an example) section.
 - c. No other content sections besides logo, navigation, and hero carousel.
 - d. Go over the calls to action on the ShopHopes and Francesca’s sites.
- C. Recommendations
 - 1. Change the website theme to reduce the prominence of the logo and navigation. The current theme makes it difficult to do so.
 - 2. Update the website navigation.
 - 3. Update hero images to fit the 1280x460 recommendation of Shopify.
 - 4. Add canned content to footer.

- a. Add featured collection, rewards program, and upcoming events sections.
- b. Featured collection will draw customers' attention to these items.
- c. Having a clear rewards section will make this service more prominent.
- d. Adding an events section will highlight that she does events around the state, something that she has said is extremely important to her several times.

D. Questions

Slide 9 – Product Pages

A. Review the purpose of a product page

- 1. Give customers information about the product.
- 2. Direct them to buy the product or add the product to a wish list to buy later.

B. Weaknesses

- 1. Missing product information
 - a. Including product description, sizing chart/information, shipping and returns information, multiple views of the product (in some cases).
 - b. Give examples of information on competitors' product pages. Francesca's is more extensive than she needs, but a good example of where she could go.
- 2. No metadata to assist in customer search or increase SEO
- 3. Poor quality images
 - a. Distracting backgrounds, inappropriate settings, inconsistency between images.
 - b. Use any of the images of products hanging from a counter or closet as examples.
 - c. Gives examples of competitor images. Francesca's is the best of the two.
- 4. No call to action
 - a. Review that the logo/navigation take up half the page, putting almost all information below the fold.
 - b. Discuss the fact that the "buy" button is below the fold and defeats the main purpose of a the page.
 - c. Give examples of competitor pages. ShopHopes is the best of the two for what this project is aiming for.

C. Recommendations

- 1. Add product descriptions. Will need to create a template to make it easy to create descriptions.
- 2. Add sizing information, where it is available by the sellers she buys her products from.
- 3. Add shipping and returns policy.
- 4. Change layout to accommodate the new information (listed above) and to place the "buy" button above the scroll fold.
- 5. Explain that images will be discussed in the next section.

D. Questions

Slide 10 & 11 – Recommendations Beyond the Scope of This Project

- A. Explain that these recommendations are beyond the scope of the project due to time, resource, and budget constraints, but are highly recommended for the future.
- B. Recommendations
 - 1. Update all imagery throughout the website
 - a. Review the weaknesses of the website images previously discussed.
 - b. In some cases this may mean hiring a photographer to shoot new images.
 - 2. Integrate the UBBN social media accounts into the website
 - a. This could be an Instagram or Twitter content box on the home page or product pages.
 - 3. Coordinate cross-channel posting and information in order to present a more consistent brand and presence
 - a. Explain the importance of having a consistent brand experience and voice
 - b. Discuss what implementing this would entail in the future (i.e. everyone has to write in this voice, posts across channels are the same, etc.).
 - 4. Review and update all UBBN touchpoints so they meet brand voice and tone standards
 - a. Review the brand voice and tone standards presented previously.

Slide 12 & 13 – Workflow

- A. Review the proposed workflow and discuss any changes.

Appendix F – New Content and Website Pages

The new content and pages created for the website will be presented as follows: Contact Us, FAQ, Shipping & Returns, Privacy & Terms of Use, About Us, Store Location, Events, and Graphics. Each section will show a screenshot of the page as it appears on the website. With the exception of the Privacy & Terms of Use page, the full text of each page will follow the screenshot. Some of the original formatting is changed to fit the style of this essay.

Contact Us Page

UNIQUE BOUTIQUE BY NICOLE

HOME / CONTACT US

Contact Us

Need to get in touch with us? We'd love to hear from you!

Store Hours: 10-5 pm CST, Wednesday-Saturday

Phone: 205-624-4711

Email: uniqueboutiquebynicole@gmail.com

Phone calls will be answered during store hours. Emails received between Monday-Thursday will be answered no later than the next business day. Emails received after 6PM CST on Fridays through Sunday will be answered no later than the following Monday.

You can also use the form below.

Name

Email

Phone Number

Message

Send us a message

Want to contact us? We'd love to hear from you!

Store Hours: 9-6 pm CST

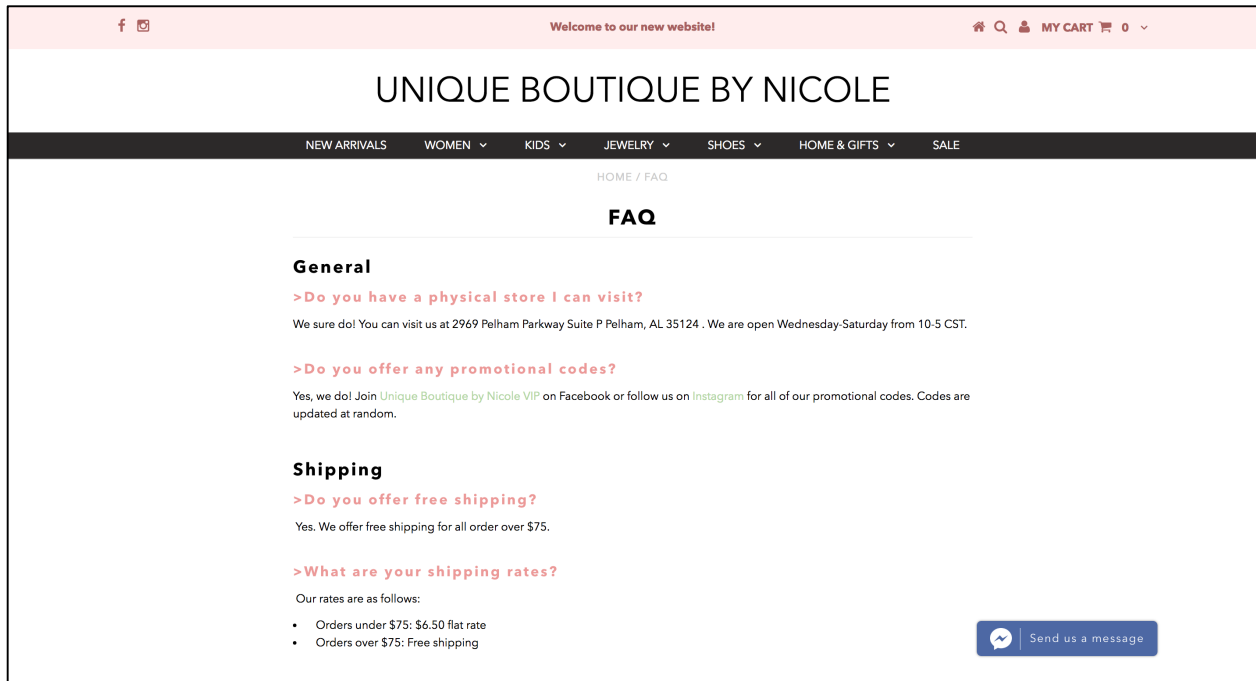
Phone: 205-624-4711

Email: uniqueboutiquebynicole@gmail.com

Phone calls will be answered during store hours. Emails received between Monday-Thursday will be answered no later than the next business day. Emails received after 6PM CST on Friday-Sunday will be answered no later than the following Monday.

You can also use the form below.

FAQ Page



General

>Do you have a physical store I can visit?

We sure do! You can visit us at 2969 Pelham Parkway Suite P Pelham, AL 35124 . We are open Wednesday-Saturday from 10-5 CST.

>Do you offer any promotional codes?

Yes, we do! Join [Unique Boutique by Nicole VIP](#) on Facebook or follow us on [Instagram](#) for all of our promotional codes. Codes are updated at random.

Shipping

>Do you offer free shipping?

Yes. We offer free shipping for all order over \$75.

>What are your shipping rates?

Our rates are as follows:

- Orders under \$75: \$6.50 flat rate
- Orders over \$75: Free shipping

>Do you ship internationally?

Unfortunately, we don't at this time.

>How long will it take my item(s) to ship once I've placed an order?

All items usually ship between 2-4 business days after the order is placed.

>Will I receive a notification when my order has shipped?

Yes. A notice of shipment will be sent to the email you associated with your order at checkout.

Orders, Returns, and Exchanges

>Can I change or cancel my order after I've placed it?

If you would like to change or cancel your order, you must contact Brittany Hagemann within 2 hours of your order placement. She can be contacted at uniqueboutiquebynicole@gmail.com.

>Can I exchange an item for a different size or color?

Yes. You can exchange all **regular priced** items for a different size or color. Items that were bought using a promotional code or that were on sale cannot be exchanged.

Please see our [Returns & Exchanges Policy](#) for more details.

>Can I return my item(s)?

Yes. You can return all **regular priced** items. All sale items are **final sale**. All returns are for *store credit only*.

Please see our [Return & Exchanges Policy](#) for more details.

>Can I return items from multiple orders at one time?

Yes. Please include both order invoices in your shipment so that we can know which item goes with which order.

Please see our [Return & Exchanges Policy](#) for more details.

>Who do I return my item(s) to?

Please ship your item(s) to Unique Boutique By Nicole Return Department at 2969 Pelham Parkway, Suite P, Pelham, AL 35124.

Please see our [Return & Exchanges Policy](#) for more details.

>How will I know when my refund or store credit has been applied?

Once we have processed your return, we will send you a email with a code to use for a future purchase.

Don't see your question or need clarification?

Feel free to [contact us](#) if you don't see your question above or would like further clarification.

Shipping & Returns Page

The screenshot shows the website header with social media icons, a welcome message, and a cart icon. The main navigation bar includes categories like NEW ARRIVALS, WOMEN, KIDS, JEWELRY, SHOES, HOME & GIFTS, and SALE. The breadcrumb trail reads HOME / SHIPPING, RETURNS & EXCHANGES. The page title is 'Shipping, Returns & Exchanges'. Under 'Shipping', it states that orders under \$75 have a \$6.50 flat rate fee, while orders over \$75 ship for free. Under 'Returns & Exchanges', it explains the store's policy: returns are for store credit only, must be used within 12 months, and made within 14 days. It also lists conditions for returns, such as items being in original unwashed, unworn, unstained, smoke-free condition with tags attached. Monogrammed items, jewelry, and sale items are marked as 'FINAL SALE' and are not accepted for return. Shipping fees are non-refundable. A 'Send us a message' button is visible on the right. A note at the bottom states: 'For size exchanges, before returning your item, please call 205-624-4711 so that we can hold your new size (if still available)'.

We understand that sometimes you may need a different size or style. We want you to completely love your UBBN purchase, so we have an easy, no-hassle return policy.

- All returns are for store credit ***only***. Store credit must be used within **12 months** of it being issued. (Example: Store credit issued on May 15, 2015 must be used by May 14, 2016.)
- All returns must be made within 14 days of you receiving the item.
- All items must be in their original unwashed, unworn, unstained, smoke-free condition with the tags attached.
- Monogrammed items, jewelry, and sale items are **FINAL SALE**. These items will **NOT** be accepted if returned. Sale items include any item sold during a flash sale, holiday sale, or with any type of discount.
- Shipping fees are **non-refundable**. Return shipping is the customer's responsibility.
- For size exchanges, before returning your item, please call 205-624-4711 so that we can hold your new size (if still available). Once you have returned your item, we will issue you store credit so that you may purchase the new size.
- UBBN reserves the right to refuse any returned item deemed to be unacceptable. These items will be refused and shipped back at the customer's expense. If the customer refuses to pay for return shipping, we will hold the item for 30 days, after which we will donate the item to Goodwill.

Please return all items to the following address:

Unique Boutique By Nicole Return Department
2969 Pelham Parkway, Suite P
Pelham, AL 35124

If you have any questions about our Returns & Exchanges Policy, please email us at uniqueboutiquebynicole@gmail.com or call us at 205-624-4711.

Privacy & Terms of Use Page

f 

Welcome to our new website!

   MY CART  0

UNIQUE BOUTIQUE BY NICOLE

NEW ARRIVALS WOMEN  KIDS  JEWELRY  SHOES  HOME & GIFTS  SALE

HOME / PRIVACY & TERMS OF USE

Privacy & Terms of Use

PRIVACY STATEMENT

SECTION 1 - WHAT DO WE DO WITH YOUR INFORMATION?

When you purchase something from our store, as part of the buying and selling process, we collect the personal information you give us such as your name, address and email address.

When you browse our store, we also automatically receive your computer's internet protocol (IP) address in order to provide us with information that helps us learn about your browser and operating system.

Email marketing (if applicable): With your permission, we may send you emails about our store, new products and other updates.

SECTION 2 - CONSENT

How do you get my consent?

When you provide us with personal information to complete a transaction, verify your credit card, place an order, arrange for a delivery or return a purchase, we imply that you consent to our collecting it and using it for that specific reason only.

If we ask for your personal information for a secondary reason, like marketing, we will either ask you directly for your expressed consent, or provide you with an opportunity to say no.

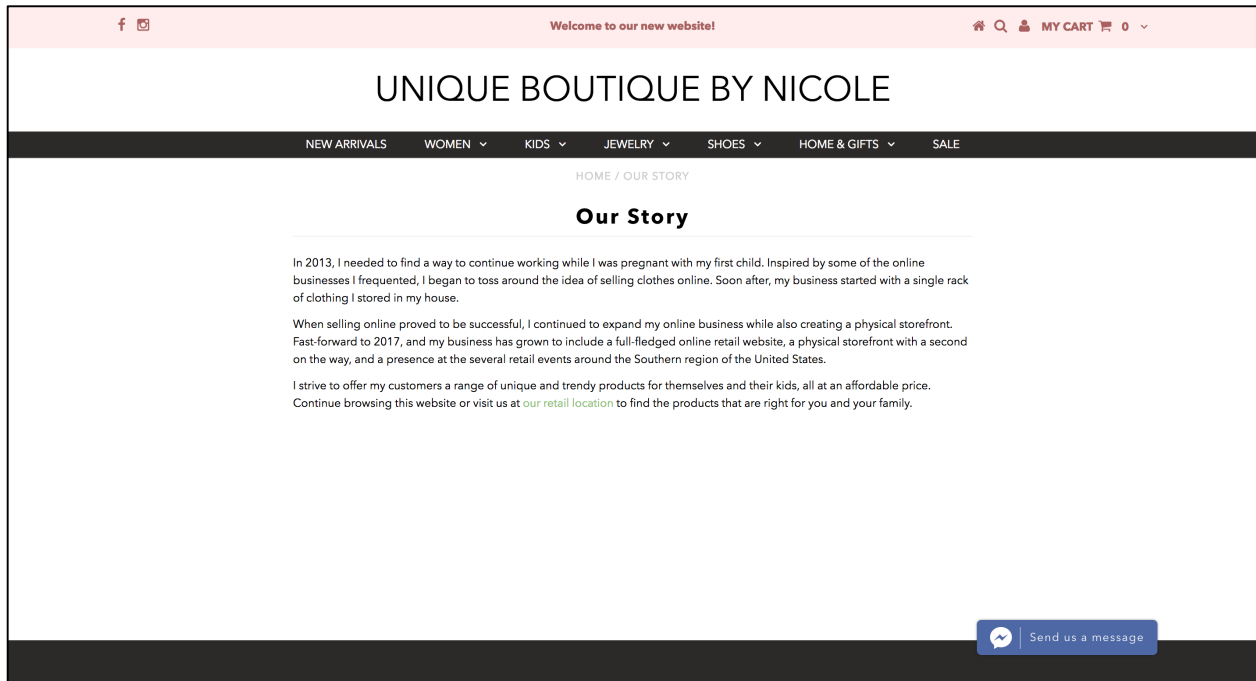
How do I withdraw my consent?

If after you opt-in, you change your mind, you may withdraw your consent for us to contact you, for the continued collection, use or disclosure of your information, at anytime, by contacting us at uniqueboutiquebynicole@gmail.com or mailing us at:

Unique Boutique by Nicole



About Us Page

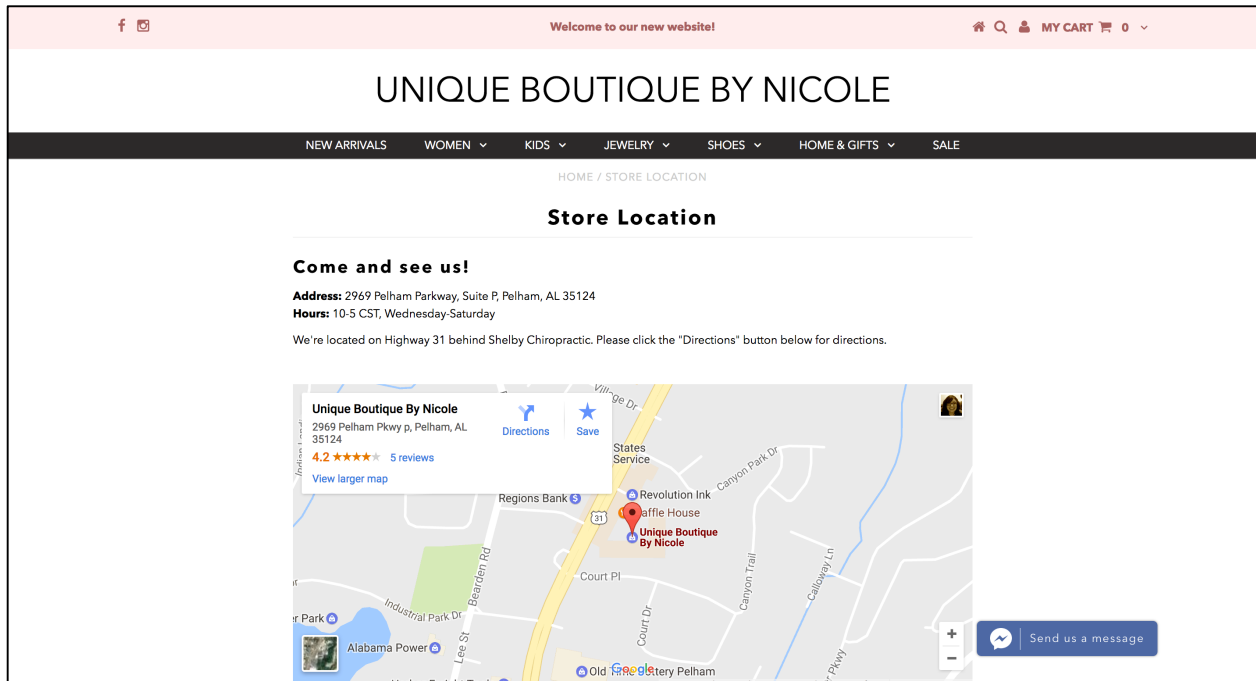


In 2013, I needed to find a way to continue working while I was pregnant with my first child. Inspired by some of the online businesses I frequented, I began to toss around the idea of selling clothes online. Soon after, my business started with a single rack of clothing I stored in my house.

When selling online proved to be successful, I continued to expand my online business while also creating a physical storefront. Fast-forward to 2017, and my business has grown to include a full-fledged online retail website, a physical storefront with a second on the way, and a presence at the several retail events around the Southern region of the United States.

I strive to offer my customers a range of unique and trendy products for themselves and their kids, all at an affordable price. Continue browsing this website or visit us at [our retail location](#) to find the products that are right for you and your family.

Store Location Page



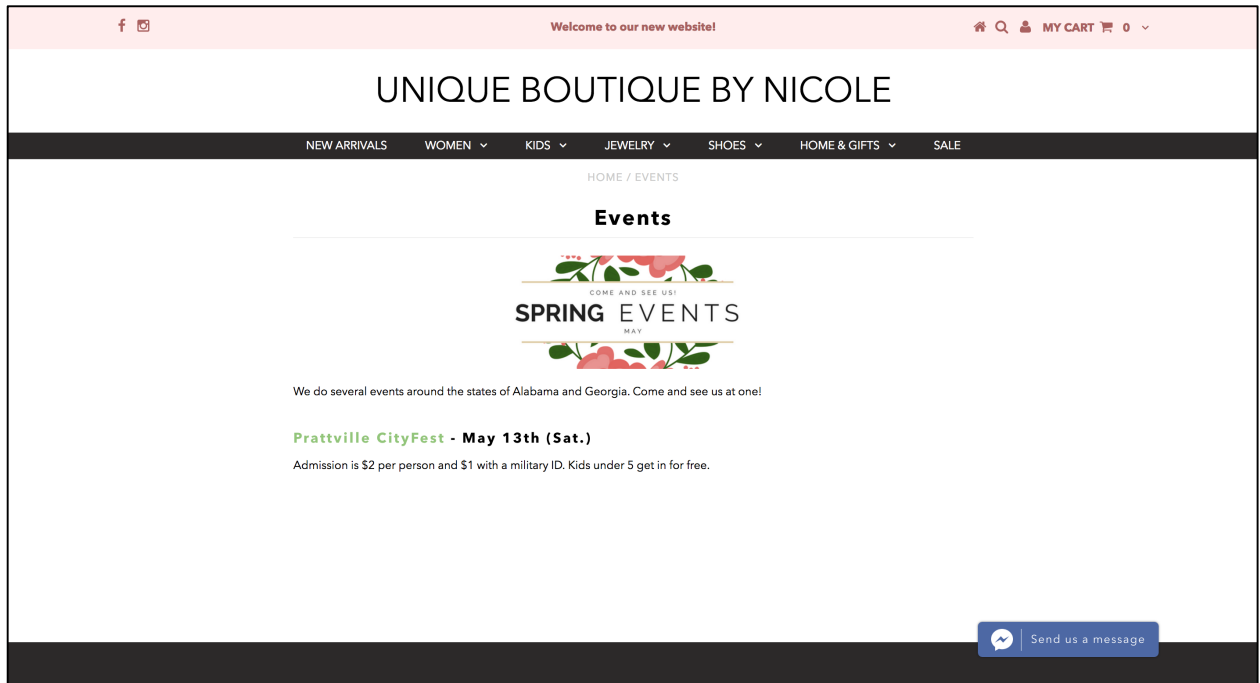
Come and see us!

Address: 2969 Pelham Parkway, Suite P, Pelham, AL 35124

Hours: 10-5 CST, Wednesday-Saturday

We're located on Highway 31 behind Shelby Chiropractic. Please click the "Directions" button below for directions.

Events Page



We do several events around the states of Alabama and Georgia. Come and see us at one!

Prattville CityFest - May 13th (Sat.)

Admission is \$2 per person and \$1 with a military ID. Kids under 5 get in for free.