

Chen-wei (Kevin) Chiu

Feb 28th, 2017

INFO433 Winter 2017

Content Strategy Final Report on Seattle Meowtropolitan

Introduction/Overview

This project analyzes the website of our client, Seattle Meowtropolitan, from the perspective of content strategy. The purpose of the project is to identify problems on the current website and propose solutions to help the client in achieving their business goals and customer needs. It is set to address three main business goals of our client: (1) support online booking and sales, (2) engage new and returning customers, and (3) educate customers about cats.

Throughout the course of the project, we have created a content inventory and conducted a technical audit, competitive analysis, and content audit. From the audits, we find that the current site has issues in complex navigation, inconsistency in the quality of content, and lack of clear calls-to-action or attention. It is recommended for Seattle Meowtropolitan to restructure the website for a flat navigation and consolidate similar content for easier updates. It is also suggested for our client to set options that are more actionable and informative through clear wording.

The goals of this final report are to cover the major findings from the quantitative and qualitative audits and discuss recommendations on areas of improvement. It is our hope to guide Seattle Meowtropolitan in advancing the quality of their website in the context of content and content strategy.

Content Inventory and Technical Audit

A content inventory is a quantitative record of all the critical navigation pages on a website. Its purpose is to identify patterns in content structure and act as the basis for migration tracking. A technical audit is an assessment on the pages' technical areas related to search engine optimization and/or accessibility. It is crucial for understanding whether the website meets certain basic best practices for search engine optimization and is benefiting or hurting from its current practices.

Findings

From the content inventory and technical audit, problems on the site's search engine practices are found. The page titles, meta descriptions, and use of keywords are almost, if not all, the same across different pages. This repetition in the page elements does not describe the content of the page properly and may lead to lower ranking in the search engine, especially due to keywords spamming. The technical audit reveals that the meta description is outdated, as it still says the café is coming soon. It also shows that there are multiple duplicate URLs for some pages and broken links to the online store.

Recommendations

It is recommended for Seattle Meowtropolitan's design and development team to update the page titles, meta description, H1 tags and other important HTML elements to best describe the page content. For a more proper the search engine optimization practice, you need to ensure that keywords are distinctive for each page. In addition, the site developer needs to remove duplicate page files on the main site (or ensure that page URLs are consistent throughout) and fix broken links to the online store.

The summarized recommendations for the technical areas of the website include:

- Updating page titles, meta descriptions, and H1 tags for each page
- Rewriting the keyword lists to ensure that they aren't overly repetitive across different pages
- Removing duplicate page files, especially html vs. php duplicates, or ensuring the consistency in the link URLs
- Fixing broken links to the online store on some pages

Competitive Audit and Analysis

A competitive audit is an assessment of the corporation's strengths and weaknesses in comparison to its competitors. The method generally starts by producing usability metrics and performance indicators (called heuristics) and grading the client and competitors on a Yes-No-Meh scale. This analysis creates benchmarks for the clients. In addition, it helps identify concrete opportunities, such as gaps and places to update or eliminate excess, and provide clear next steps.

Findings

From the results of heuristics rubrics in the competitive audit (Figure 1), we find that Seattle Meowtropolitan underperforms in effectively delivering content on its website, especially on its home page. The heuristics show that, in comparison to the competitors, our client excels in font legibility and its use of images, but primarily due to the flaws in its content. In particular, it (1) has unclear calls-to-action, (2) has too much unnecessary duplicate of content, (3) uses same title tags, keywords, and meta description for many pages, (4) does not have enough content to inform or persuade audience, and (5) has outdate content on its site.

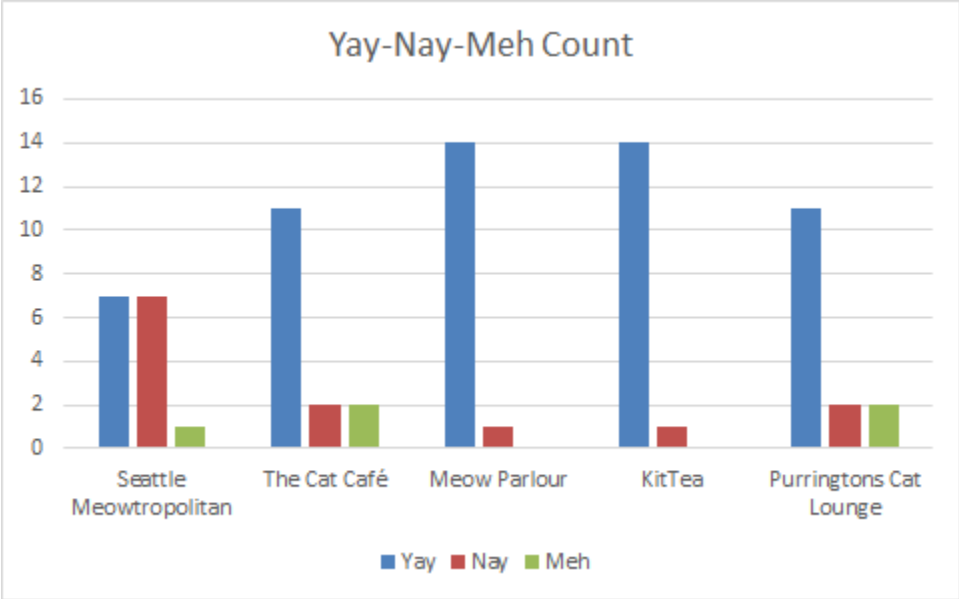


Figure 1. Competitive audit yay-nay-meh count results

Recommendations

The recommendations from the competitive audit are more focused on improving Seattle Meowtropolitan’s home page. Besides improving the technical areas of the web pages, it is recommended to our client’s design and develop team to consolidate and rearrange the

content on the home page to ensure that it offers enough information about the café's operation in an effective manner. You should remove repetitive calls-to-action, especially the social media icons. The wordings to reserving a visit need to be fixed and be more actionable.

The summarized recommendations for the competitive areas include:

- Updating page titles, meta descriptions, and H1 tags for each page
- Providing information to inform the customers of what to expect at the café
- Ensuring that the calls-to-actions are clear, relevant, and grammatically correct
- Removing unnecessary duplicate of content, such as calls-to-action to Seattle Meowtropolitan's social media channels

Qualitative Audit

A qualitative audit is an assessment on the qualitative aspects of an organization's web content, specifically relating to its business goals, customer goals and needs, and taxonomy and organization. It is important for determining what business and customer goals each page is trying to and should fulfill. The audit is also crucial for identifying issues of quality with the current content on the web pages and determining the next steps, including keeping, consolidating, removing and updating the content.

Findings

From the qualitative audit, of the 43 pages analyzed, we can see that most of the content are redundant, trivial or incomplete (see Figure 2). Key pages, including the home page,

café and reservation pages, all have very thin content that aren't effective in informing and persuading the customers to take the next action. The online stores are set up on different platforms with different design layout and do not clearly articulate the message of purchasing a product to help cats and for a meaningful cause. Blog and social media channels other than Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have been inactive for a period of time, while the active channels do not generate attractive or sharable content.

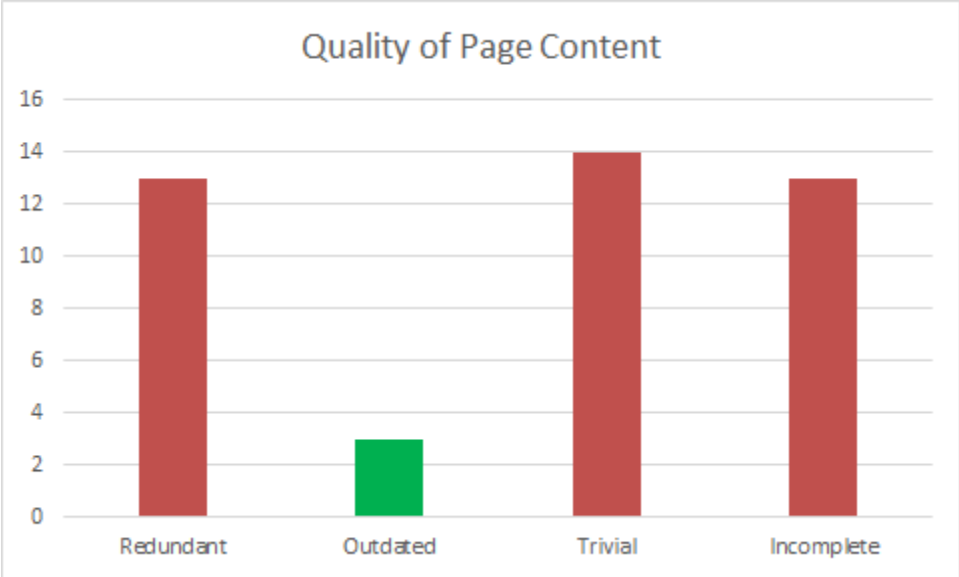


Figure 2. Quality of page content on the site

Recommendations

To address the issue of incomplete and trivial content and engage with new and returning customers better, it is recommended to consolidate the similar content into one page and update the content to include information that meets the business and customer goals. For pages that are in the first order navigation (Home, Cats, Visit, etc.), content needs to be updated with more convincing, clear calls-to-action to, for example, adoption and online store. Seattle Meowtropolitan should remove links to inactive social media channels, such

as Google+, Pinterest and the blog, if you do not have a regular publishing calendar for these channels.

The summarized recommendation for improving the content quality include:

- Consolidating pages with similar content into one to fulfill the customer goals at once
- Making calls-to-actions more actionable and clear to the customers, through a better wording or context
- Removing links to inactive social media channels (if you do not have a publishing schedule for these platforms)

Core Model

A core model, or a content model, is an approach to map out the content of the pages. It is essential for identifying the business objectives and customer tasks for each page and answering the question, “What core content can help both the business and customers?” It helps the organization identify the most important pages on the site to focus on and informs the UX designers which are the most important elements to emphasize in their design.

Recommendations

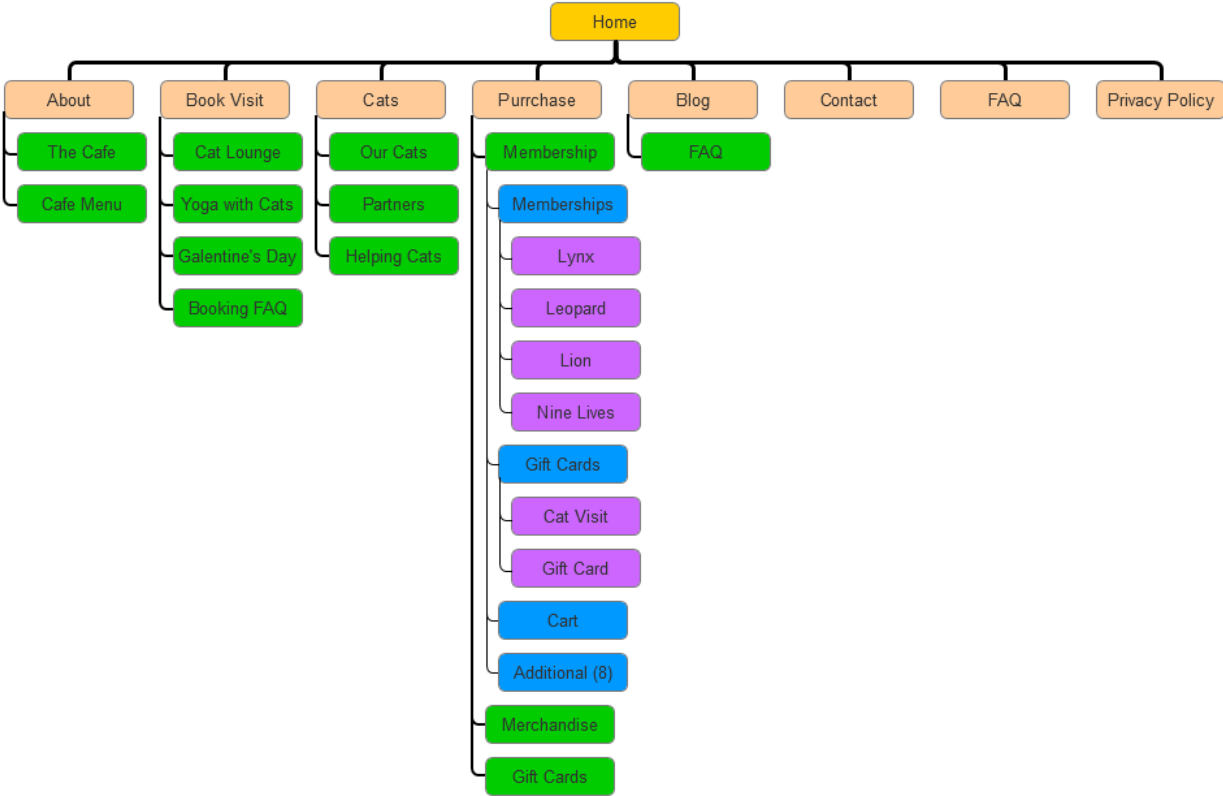


Figure 3. Original site map

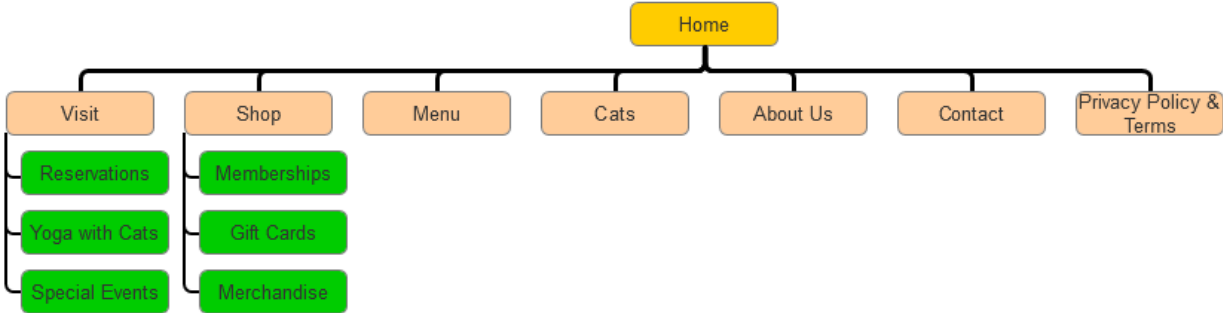


Figure 4. Proposed site map

The proposed site map (Figure 4) makes two major changes to the site structure of the original site map (Figure 3). First, it consolidates similar content into one page to create a flat navigation. Industry benchmarks, such as KitTea and Meow Parlour, have limited their

site structure down to two levels. This approach allows the customers to get to the information they want quickly. For Seattle Meowtropolitan, this solves the problem of duplicate or similar content and allows quicker content updates for the site developer. FAQs are also moved to be included in the corresponding page, which may exist in its own section or a modal.

Second, pages are reordered to match the order of Seattle Meowtropolitan's three business goals. For instance, "Visit" and "Shop", which match business goal #1, come before the "Menu" and "Cats" pages, which fulfill business goal #2 and #3. This helps better capture customers' attention when they navigate through the site, as the number one goal is to support online booking and sales. Industry's best practice, KitTea, also uses the same approach for their website structure.

*Note: A brief explanation on the "Blog" page can be found in the Further Recommendations section.

Further Recommendations (optional)

In addition to the findings and recommendations above, our user research, messaging, and best practices review has produced the following further recommendations for your site.

- Consider removing the Blog page

It is recommended for Seattle Meowtropolitan to consider closing down the blog, if it does not have a regular publishing schedule. This is because the blog page serves to fulfill

business goal #2, which is to engage new and returning customers. It is the place for an organization to build relationships with the customers through constant updates with relevant content to the business. However, the content inventory and technical audit shows that the blog has not published any new articles since October 2016, while the latest post appears to be more like a commercial rather than an entertaining or informative article for the customers.

	Seattle Meowtropolitan		The Cat Café		Meow Parlour		KitTea		Purringtons Cat Lounge	
Social Media Channels	Have?	Note	Have?	Note	Have?	Note	Have?	Note	Have?	Note
Blog	Yay	No frequent update	Yay	Titled as "Updates"	Nay		Nay		Nay	

Figure 5. Competitor’s use of blog

The competitive analysis also shows that, out of the four competitors analyzed, only The Cat Café chooses to have a blog in the form of updates and news about the café’s operation. And The Cat Café publishes new, informative posts on a weekly or biweekly schedule. Keeping a blog is costly since it requires constant management of content, and the current blog does not appear to facilitate customer engagement or traffic to the online store. Thus, the recommendation on the Blog page is to either come up with a regular publishing schedule or removing it.

- Set the number of calls-to-action (to 2~3) per page

Aside from rewriting the wordings for your calls-to-action, it is suggested to set the number of calls-to-action to about two to three per page. Some key pages, including the home page, have either too many or too few calls-to-action. When there are too many, customers can fall into choice overload, where they will find it too difficult to make a decision and leave

the page instead of going to online store, making a reservation, or checking out your Cats page. When there are too few, the page is not effective in leading customers to the next step.



Conclusion

This report has presented the major findings from the audits and analyses conducted on your website. It also provides recommendations on the technical elements and content. It is highly recommended for Seattle Meowtropolitan to consolidate the pages for a flat navigation. You should consider keeping the Blog page or not, since it has a great impact on your business goal #1 and #2 but requires a regular publishing schedule and a lot of effort to maintain.

Technical areas, such as page title and meta description tags, should be rewritten to match the page content. Missing content needs to be filled in to help engage new and returning customers, and content should be revised for clear and persuasive wording in order to make your calls-to-action more actionable. In addition, you should set the target number of calls-to-action per page to around two to three to effectively direct customers to the next step while they are navigating on your site.