user-centered design
creating user-centered design for a non-profit organizations

Domeapalooza Inc.

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Domeapalooza + Problem

Introduction:

Domeapalooza Inc. is an up and coming organization that our team is collecting information about as part of our project 4 write-up. The main goal of our team is to identify a problem with their user-centered design, but first we must find a person of contact with the organization, compile their issues, collect info on those who will benefit from our help, and provide general background on the non-profit.

Organization | Background:

DOMEAPALOOZA INC. was founded in early 2015 in effort to raise money through concert-based fundraisers to be donated to the Melanoma Research Foundation, the largest and leading research foundation of that purpose. Domeapalooza sells tickets, t-shirts, and collects donations prior to and during a multi-act concert where many audience members are allowed the opportunity to show off their musical skills (backed by talented musicians) in front of the entire audience. After the event, 100% of proceeds are donated to the MRF.

Contact:

We will be working with Henry Schwartz, Founder and President of Domeapalooza Inc. In addition we will be working with treasurer Luke Streppa and vice-president Robert Mooney. Mr. Schwartz had the idea to start The Domeapalooza Foundation in 2013, a couple years after his mother was diagnosed Melanoma. She has since made a full recovery. This has not stopped Mr. Schwartz from continuing to find ways to support those with Melanoma by donating to melanoma research. Mr. Schwartz helped us collect all our information about Domeapalooza and he is excited for us to share it.

The issue:
The Domeapalooza Foundation would benefit from user-responsive design in most part because the current website transfers users to a separate shopping page to purchase tickets and t-shirts, which has a more sleek and clear design. However, the shopping segment of the site is different from the informative segment of the site, which could confuse customers and make them hesitant to proceed shopping. The outdated and relatively tacky homepage design could be made to look much more professional using responsive design with updated graphic design features in the shopping cart function of the website.

The Domeapalooza team whole-heartedly believes that improved flow through the website with a consistent layout and design would draw users in further to the site emotionally, let weary donators be assure that the site is indeed serving a good purpose, and improve new-user navigation so that the end goal can be reached with as little effort as possible.

**Beneficiaries of Improved Interaction Design:**

Those who wish to support Domeapalooza are simultaneously supporting the Melanoma Research Foundation, as Domeapalooza Inc. donates 100% of their proceeds to the MRF. With improved layout and design consistency throughout the site’s components, users will be more trustworthy of the site when making domenations (haha), and then the Domeapalooza team feels more accomplished, the MRF receives a larger donation, the artists feel welcomed by more numbers at the concert, the fans enjoy a bigger (more successful) concert, and those affected by Melanoma receive the peace of mind that there are people supporting research for a cure.

a. Mission: [www.domeapalooza.org](http://www.domeapalooza.org)
b. Social Media site: Instagram: [@Domeapalooza](https://www.instagram.com/domeapalooza)
**Project Research**

**Introduction**

The project research section of our project is where we used the seven mindsets and the five modes of thinking in the Design Thinking Guide by the Stanford D-School as they applied to our organization, Domeapalooza. We have cumulated our findings into a typical user profile and also include prototyping designs and their usability.

**Process**

The case study that our team has completed includes the seven mindsets that are present in the “Bootcamp Bootleg” by the Stanford D-School. They include:

- show don’t tell
- focus on human values
- craft clarity
- embrace experimentation
- be mindful of process
- bias toward action
- radical collaboration

We will also apply the five modes of thinking: empathizing, defining, ideating, prototyping, and testing from the journal. Our case study will present all of these mindsets and modes and how we have applied them in the Methods section of the project research.

**Modes**

This section explains how our team adopted each mode of thinking presented by the Stanford D-School while researching our organization.

**Empathy**
In order to empathize with the users in Domeapalooza, we followed the foundational process laid out in the Stanford Bootcamp of observe, engage, and immerse. We collected observations from how users had interacted at the event from our contact and other attendees. We also interviewed and asked questions of those who had attended to identify motives and emotions of users in order to get information for our ideal user. To immerse, we used the personal experience of one of our team members who was present at the event.

**Define | Ideate**

After a long and dense collaboration with our contacts at Domopalooza, we defined the final issue our report would detail is the inconsistency between webpages and their design. Their current website does not provide the flow and design needed to be a successful website. After we met with users of Domeapalooza.org, we began to generate the optimal solution from our brainstorming collaboration.

**Prototype**

Merging the best of our qualities from the ideation process above, we will create optimal page design that improve the flow of the site and cut out the unnecessary information that lies outside what is the current shopping cart. These designs will help users dive deeper into the site, in an easier manner.

**Test**

Lastly, our team will test the best of our prototypes with users of Domeapalooza.org in order to see which they felt most comfortable with, which they found to be most creative, and overall pick the most important qualities to decide on a prototype or even merge components of different prototypes to create the best user-responsive design.

**METHODS**

**Assuming a Beginner’s Mindset**
Our team assumed a beginner’s mindset in order to put our biases aside and create a successful design. The aspects of this included not judging so that we could observe users from a non-opinionated perspective. We also tried to question everything even if we already had knowledge of it. Our team also worked on trying to find what themes came across from the organization and its users as well as to listen to what users are saying in order to incorporate their ideas in the design.

**Interview Preparation**

The time that we had with our different users was important so we tried to maximize this by guiding the conversations and preparing our interviews. Before talking with the person we made sure to brainstorm questions and identify the issues that we wanted to learn from the person we were interviewing. We also made sure to refine our line of questioning so that we could get to how the user feels.

**Interview for Empathy**

During our interview process for the project our team used a few of the different strategies from the Stanford Boot Camp. For example, we asked a lot of why questions in order to try to understand why the person was doing certain things. We also tried to encourage them to tell us personal stories to discover more things about them. One last technique that was prominently used by our team was to not ask binary questions so that the person had to come up with more in depth answers that provoked either more questions or deep thought.

**Brainstorming and Selection**

In order to complete the brainstorming and selection method, our team got together and thought individually of questions and topic ideas, using the How-Might-We questioning method. Then we shared these things and developed further ideas so that we're able to produce several inventive and interesting questions. Then, based on this final list we selected the option that seemed to be the best for our purposes.
**User-Camera Study**

The user-camera study allowed us to look at pictures from our contact of the activities that occurred during the concert. This study allowed us to get a more personal point of view on the environment and allowed us to truly understand the experience from the user’s point of view.

**Exploration of Extreme Users**

For our extreme user, we looked at one of the founders of the organization that was our contact. Our team considered him to be an extreme user because of his very committed involvement to the organization and its cause. It was important to look at him because we were able to gain insight into the needs of the wider population and the needs that the population has.

**Findings**

Based on the research and information our team has gathered about Domeapalooza we have come up with a Composite Character Profile to use as an example of a typical user. This character sketch is based off of what our team has observed.

**Quick Stats**

Age: 21  
Occupation: Student  
Location: Lake Forest, IL  
Organization Size: 3

**Character Profile**

**About**
The Composite Character Profile includes a user who is a college student who most likely lives near Lake Forest, Illinois. They most likely are very good at using different technologies like social media to connect with friends and find things to do. They also most likely heard about Domeapalooza from a friend on a social media site or in person.

**Behaviors/Traits:**
- Technically knowledgeable
- Not married
- Enjoys spending time with friends

**Goals:**
- Enjoy being with friends and meeting new people
- Likes donating money to good causes
- Helps to spread word of events to other friends

**Design Brief**

**Purpose**
The purpose of the design our team came up with is to create a design for the webpage that displays a better user-responsive design. Since the current website transfers users to a separate shopping page, it can cause users to be skeptical about the organization’s validity, and this is what we want to stop. In order to do this, we had to come up with a design that would keep the web environment of the shopping section of the site and the informative section of the site consistent with each other. It is also important that our design makes the users more emotionally attached to the organization after visiting the site.

**Accuracy**
It is extremely important that in our design, we design the shopping section of the site to match with the informative section of the site very accurately. If we fail to do this, then potential donors could continue to be skeptical about wanting to support this cause, due to them thinking they could be redirected to a different page. This could then potentially lead to a loss of total money raised for Domeapalooza to donate to the MRF. It is also important for us to include things in the design that will make the users of the site more emotionally attached, instead of being passive towards learning about the organization.
Usability
Not only did our group want to create a design for the website that would remain consistent with the rest of the website, but we also wanted to make it easier to use. We had the idea of creating different categories for the merchandise available for sale to allow users to navigate to whatever products they desire much easier.

Prototype Design And Testing

Introduction
At this point in our project, we have created a design that we are confident will help solve the issue at hand. By showing the president of Domeapalooza a rough version of our design and also having him test it, we will be able to determine if our prototype will actually be able to fulfill the needs that we want it to.

Initial Prototype
Based on our groups interviews, we designed a prototype that would help Domeapalooza with their design issue. The process of designing this prototype involved a prototype for empathy, a prototype to test, and testing with users.

Prototype for Empathy
In order for our team to empathize with our users, we needed to engage them in the foundation and immerse them in Domeapalooza information. The best idea we had to do this was to put a video up on the site from a previous Domeapalooza. Not only does this show the users what the event was like the previous year, but it also could lead to the users further supporting the organization by sharing the video on social media.

- Add Dome Tour Video to bottom corner of shop screen
  - rationale: to promote empathy
- Remove all unnecessary text from shop pages
  - rationale: to prevent any confusion or wrong clicking
- Complete Navigation Bar
  - rationale: improved navigation
Prototype to Test

Prototype with the Dome Virtual Tour Video, in effort to stimulate empathy

Response From Testing

After our team completed all of our research and came up with a design, we brought the design to Domeapalooza’s president, Henry Schwartz. After showing him what we wanted the webpage to look like we laid out what we wanted each page to look like. The president of Domeapalooza got a first hand look at how our design would be able to help us accomplish our goal of keeping the consistency of the webpage and to further the user's emotional attachment to the organization.

Results

After bringing Henry Schwartz our design and having him test out the way we wanted it to work, he came to the conclusion that the prototype would definitely help us in reaching our goal. While keeping consistency across the web page sections would decrease susceptibility the organization being a false one, he noted that putting each merchandise option into categories would also keep users more interested in supporting Domeapalooza because it would make the site easier to use. He also noted that putting a link to a video on the home screen would definitely catch the user’s attention. If that specific user is interested in Domeapalooza, then they are able to get a first hand look at how the event went
last year, which could potentially lead to the user being emotionally attached to the organization.

Final Iteration

Homepage
Problem: The original site does not flow with the shop.
Solution: The former shop welcome page receives an improved navigation bar and is now the home page.

Shop
Problem: The shop lacks a complete navigation bar, and no media is included.
Solution: Add a dome tour video to the bottom corner and add a complete navigation bar.
PROJECT EVOLUTION

**Design Evaluation**
Picturing displaying our design’s evaluation: step labeled below picture

**HOME PAGE EVOLUTION**

![Original Home Page Image]

**Original Home Page**
The original Home page was very tacky and could be made a lot more simple and professional. We decided to abandon the current home page design and incorporate a useless page from the shop component.
Our team decided that it would be best to utilize the shop’s welcome page (another inconvenient page between the site and the shop) as the Home Page for the entire site, which would bring the layout of the site together and be extremely helpful.

The site could not fully function as a home page without the necessary navigation, which we added in this prototype here.
Shop Original
The original shop has only links to sub-shops, not to the other pages that used to stem from the home site

Shop Prototype 1
this shop prototype includes all the necessary navigation, but it is a bit hard to read and there is a lot of unnecessary text around the page
Shop Final Prototype
The final prototype features a fully visible and large navigation bar and all unnecessary text has been removed to get the user straight where they’re headed.

Understanding Evolution
During the prototype and testing phase of our project, our team sought how to better understand our users. Our team used some of the different interview methods and brainstorming and we developed a beginner’s mindset so that we could best understand the potential users.

However, upon beginning the prototype testing we noticed many new interactions among users. This led to more knowledge gained about how the users would see the new design of the homepage and shop. Thus, leading us to change certain aspects in our next iteration. Specifically, we were able to remove anything that seemed unnecessary knowledge for the user as well as provide a navigation bar so that users could easily locate different sections of the site.

In summary, the first part of the project allowed us to gain valuable information about potential users through interview methods and some initial observations or interactions. These experiences helped us to develop an initial prototype based on what we thought of as the user’s needs. Through the prototype process, we went through multiple iterations and then received feedback from the user in order to make one final iteration that best fit the user needs.
Conclusion

Throughout this project, our team has developed a better understanding of the process involved in prototyping and usability testing. While working with the Domeapalooza staff we had to use the different interview techniques from the Stanford Bootcamp in order to create prototypes of their website shop that we thought would best fit their needs and also the needs of the user. Some of the changes that we made throughout the iterations were a large navigation bar to make it easy for users to locate the section of the site that they want as well as the removal of all unnecessary text so that users are less likely to become confused or lose attention with unnecessary reading.

Another important takeaway from this project for our team is the value of feedback from potential users during the user testing. We found that sometimes the ideas that we believed would be most helpful to the user were things that the user’s really did not care too much about. Therefore, we were able to change our designs early on during the iterations and realign future designs to fit more of what the user wanted and less what we thought they wanted.

In the future, our team believes that when doing projects like this one we will make sure to record our user with audio and video so that we can look back at the testing and make sure each iteration is the best that it can be to fit user needs. For this project, we just observed the users with notes. With video we would be able to better understand the features the users wanted to see within the design.

References