Mt. Hood Territory Website Evaluation

Final Report

Prepared for:

Clackamas County Tourism and Cultural Affairs

Prepared by:

Community Planning Workshop

A Program of the
Community Service Center
1209 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1209
http://cpw.uoregon.edu

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CPW | Community Planning Workshop

CPW Staff

Project Manager:

Amanda West

Research Team:

Neil Tosuntikool   Tracy Kribs   Daniel Berumen

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INTRODUCTION

Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory is defined by the borders of Clackamas County which is over 1,800 square miles and home to 16 incorporated cities, hamlets, and villages and is one of Oregon's most widely known natural features, Mt. Hood. The county is diverse; it encompasses urban and rural areas, farm lands, wineries, historic sites, and a host of opportunities for outdoor recreation.

The Mt. Hood Territory website, administrated by Clackamas County Tourism and Cultural Affairs (CCTCA), is one of the primary portals that potential and current visitors to the area can get information about the Territory and its amenities. As for any tourism website, it is important that the Mt. Hood Territory site is meeting the needs of these visitors and other stakeholders who access the site regularly.

It is in this spirit that CCTCA decided to conduct an evaluation of their current website through the eyes of potential visitors, partners and staff of the organization. CCTCA contracted with Community Planning Workshop (CPW) at the University of Oregon for this purpose.

CPW is a service learning program housed in the Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management at the University of Oregon. Its mission is to link the energy, expertise and innovation of the UO with the planning and public policy needs of Oregon communities. CPW carries out this mission by engaging graduate students in doing real projects for communities across the state.

CPW assisted CCTCA with community outreach for its website evaluation project. The role of CPW was to assess the key issues of the site and gain insight about how stakeholders feel those issues could best be addressed. CCTCA and CPW worked together to craft questions for the various outreach processes and to make sure the right people were engaged the process.

This report is a compilation of all the data that CPW gathered from January – June of 2010. It is organized by the functional areas of the website (appearance, content, navigation and features) and provides an assessment of each as well as information about improvements and preferences from competitors' websites. The appendices of this report are summaries of the engagement functions conducted by CPW and provide supporting information for the report.

The outcome of this evaluation will be a redesign of the current site. Information from this report will be used to inform the RFP process that solicits a firm to redesign the site.

From January to June of 2010 CPW used a variety of methods to collect information from staff, stakeholders and potential visitors to Clackamas County. This process was designed to start with a general assessment of the site from people who use it regularly then to end with specific ideas for implementing improvements in identified areas. As such each method informed the next and the three audiences involved were engaged at different times for different purposes.

To start off the project CPW conducted 20 stakeholder interviews. Individual stakeholders were identified by CCTCA as users who were familiar enough with the site through regular use that they could identify prominent themes or issues. The stakeholder interviews were the first glimpse at how key users view the website — what they like, issues they might have, and suggestions for enhancements to the site. The feedback from these stakeholder interviews formed the framework for the focus group meetings which occurred in February and March.

CPW conducted four focus groups, each lasting approximately 1.5 hours. The focus groups provided an opportunity for staff and other stakeholders to discuss their opinions about what the website can do to improve its effectiveness in attracting visitors to Clackamas County. The topics under discussion included site design, content, navigation, role of social media, and features both already on the site and proposed additions.

The next data collection method, the usability tests, asked participants to interact with the site on a computer terminal, view competitors' websites and discuss elements of each they like and ones that can be improved. The topics under discussion included homepages, visual preferences of competitor sites and features and the ease of navigation of the Mt. Hood Territory site. CPW conducted four of these usability group processes, each lasting approximately two hours.

Lastly, to test potential redesign ideas for the site, CPW conducted three beta test group processes, each lasting approximately two hours. The beta test groups provided an opportunity for staff and potential visitors to indicate website features (e.g., navigation bars) that they preferred over others. The features under discussion included various types of navigation bars, calendar of events, and maps.

These methods yielded valuable feedback about what was working well on the current site, what could be improved and how staff, stakeholders or potential visitors thought those improvements should be made. Participants agreed on many aspects of the current site and redesign; however, if the same topic was discussed across the audiences and disagreement arose, it is noted in this report.

Essence of Clackamas County & Mt. Hood Territory Brand

A website should convey a sense of place or a feeling. This is especially important for tourism websites that act to inspire visitors to come to the area and are one of the gatekeepers of the area's reputation. Part of this website evaluation was to discover what comes to mind when people think about Clackamas County so those feelings can be captured in the redesign of the site.

Focus group participants were asked what characteristics first came to mind when they thought of Clackamas County. Participants mentioned many different natural resource amenities, outdoor activities and diversity.

Natural Resource Amenities
- Mt. Hood
- The national forest
- Rivers
- Lakes
- Beautiful, natural environment

Outdoor Activities
- Camping
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Rafting
- Active outdoor pursuits

Diversity
- Both urban and rural assets.
- Urban areas like Clackamas Town Center, Wilsonville and Lake Oswego
- Rural areas like Molalla and Sandy

Mt. Hood Territory Brand

At the beginning of the evaluation process it was decided that the branding of the Mt. Hood Territory was out of the scope of this project and CPW's efforts would focus specifically on the appearance and functionality of the website. However, the topic of the Mt. Hood brand was raised by stakeholders and potential visitors.

When asked for changes or improvements they would like to see on the site some stakeholders in the interviews suggested to "update the look [of the site], but keep the strong MtHoodTerritory.com brand."

During a discussion of the overall appearance of the site some potential visitors in the usability groups commented that the, "[Older feeling of the site] definitely seems like a method of branding, it just not 100% successful.

These comments are included this report to start a discussion on this topic when and if one is needed.

Tourism Website and Homepage Expectations

It is important to find out what characteristics people think tourism websites and homepages should embody. Once these characteristics are known Mt. Hood Territory can incorporate missing elements into its redesign.

Tourism Websites

Participants indicated that tourism websites should contain the following features:

Maps – Identifying a region's location and its context with surrounding areas is important to a tourism site. Having a map of the area to identify specific attractions, routes, lodging, and special events would be helpful for visitors and travelers. A traveler would expect to find where to go and what to do.

Trip Planner - The capability to plan a trip, either within the site (e.g., *trip planner*) or with enough information from the site to create itinerary, is another component desired from a tourism site. Participants also stated a desire for a one stop shop or "resource" that included many of these components and effectively delivered services to travelers.

User Reviews - Several participants indicated the use of feedback by means of user reviews and testimonials is a good way of generating interest of potential visitors. Feedback is useful for evaluating the overall experience of a particular area by visitors and highlighting the areas that were found to be either unique and/or worthwhile. Several participants suggested the use of newsletters and social media outlets to provide this information.

Culture and Heritage - A few participants expressed an interest in being able to learn about the cultural heritage and history of a region or place from its tourism website.

Contact Information - A few participants also suggested an effective contact mechanism that includes email and phone numbers, to be able to contact a staff person directly with further questions.

Tourism Homepages

According to participants, the experience and brand are most important. The homepage should convey the single-minded focus for the site and "get people hooked" so they will remain on the site. "Photos are also huge!" as they help people get engaged. Engage them right away to make sure folks know that it is a "one stop shop" for their travel needs.

Make activities the focus, not necessarily the lodging, but the lodging can be an activity too. Create sound/visual samples of the CD tour that are clickable on the website. Show people why they want to come there. "Text is less important because no one reads it." Make the experience first.

Participants in the usability and beta test groups looked at several tourism websites and commented and what they liked and did not like about them. Their comments for all the sites are reported below.

GOOD ELEMENTS OF HOMEPAGES

- Imagery and colors that convey a sense of the place
- Friendly toolbars and drop down menus. Make it easy to get places on the site.
- Maps; scalable map; map bars that show the whole region
- "Top Ten" or "Features Links" sections
- Drop down menus with photos
- Backgrounds are very important and judged harshly
- Language translations
- Above the fold
- Being nice and clean in appearance and layout
- Universal search
- Cohesiveness and consistency
- RSS feed for reviews
- Comes out and tells the person why they should visit (explains their niches)
- Images that scroll through, but not too fast
- Being comprehensive without being overwhelming
- Intuitive navigation
- Live chat for quick questions

BAD ELEMENTS OF HOMEPAGES

- Having to scroll down to see important information
- Confusing menu bars; too many of them; having them in different places
- Not being able to get rid of videos
- Busy or cluttered
- Commercial or advertorial feel
- Copy heavy
- Not having enough information
- Elements that seem like they are links but are not
- Confusing search categories
- Unattractive colors
- Not being as dynamic as the place itself
- Text that is too small or hard to read
- Being boring, rigid or "looking cheap"
- Unimportant features are given prominence and feel overwhelming
- Narrow links that are hard to click on
- Content that is "crammed" into tiny boxes
- Not being able to navigate back home easily if you click off of it

Overall Functionality

The majority of respondents interviewed by CPW reported the MtHoodTerritory.com site worked "okay" for them overall. When asked to elaborate on the subject a little further many of the participants indicated that the homepage on the MtHoodTerritory.com site seemed "busy" or "cluttered" making the website seem overall harder to use. Focus group and usability group participants had similar feelings and said they were somewhat overwhelmed by the homepage.

ELEMENTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE "CLUTTERED" FEELING

- The text taking a large amount of space especially in the middle portion of the page.
- An excessive use of different fonts and/or graphical styles.
- Elements are not framed in a very hierarchical order (e.g., Territory Overview is below the Wedding Guide, etc.)
- Appears to be wasted space along the right side of the display screen.

Some participants noted that they liked the color scheme and said they were easy colors to look at while others did not care for the color scheme and thought it looked dated.

Participants generally felt that the site conveyed that it held a lot of information and content, they were just unsure as to how best to access that content or find what they were looking for. Several of the participants mentioned that finding a specific item or piece of information on the website could be a little difficult or frustrating.

The graphics and photos were highlighted as an effective part of the homepage as they captured the season (winter) well. Although, a number of participants noted that the graphics on the homepage changed quickly and that it was difficult to focus.

Appearance and Layout of the Homepage

Overall, participants thought the MtHoodTerritory.com homepage was busy, overwhelming or geared toward an older audience. The site requires a lot of scrolling down and the layout does not present a clear hierarchy. To some, the colors and images seem dated and a little washed out. Participants mentioned wanting bigger pictures that would entice them to come and colors that conveyed the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. Text on the site is abundant, small in size and generally tough to read. While some said the categories on the search bar were good, most said it is located in a "weird place" and kind of hidden. The site also lacks consistency in formatting.

Color Quality/ Interest

Some participants said they liked the overall color scheme used, and felt that it was appropriate for Clackamas County because it reminded them of natural forest and had a vintage look. They noted that the colors were effective in portraying the feel of the winter season. In contrast, other participants said they didn't really care for the overall color scheme of the website, citing that it looked "outdated" and that the contrast between the background colors and the text used was somewhat difficult to read. Some participants questioned the colors used because they thought they did not convey the beauty of the blue skies, clean water and green forests in the area. Others stated that there was no real consistency in the color scheme and that having only a two color scheme would be cleaner. The potential visitors groups were more united about the colors being the wrong choice than staff and stakeholder groups who were often divided on this matter.

Photos

Participants cited liking the graphics used on the website but felt there were almost too many of them, making finding what they were looking for and navigating the website somewhat difficult. It was also noted that the image on the homepage moves too fast and needs to be slowed down a lot.

Some thought that the images seemed a little dated and washed out and that they could be brighter to be more inviting. In general, participants wanted the site to do more with high-end photography to entice them to visit and draw them into the site. They indicated that photography can be more important than text to draw people into the site.

Icons

The topic of icons was briefly discussed at one of the potential visitors beta test groups. The question asked was a general one about how icons on a website should look to be distinguishable from advertisements or other elements of the site. Participants in this group said that uniformity among the icons is preferred. This uniformity could be a standard size, background or border thickness or color. Stacking or grouping the icons draws attention and adding a roller effect helps indicate it is not an advertisement.

Layout

Most of the participants felt that the layout of the website was "busy" or "cluttered". They thought the page did not have a clear hierarchy and that the navigation bar should be bolder to give the site more structure.

Several participants stated that the use of space, particularly the seemingly underutilized space along the right-hand side of the screen was an issue on the homepage. Some participants suggested the features list on the right side of the page may not be framed in the appropriate order. Other said that the page requires a great deal of scrolling down and they would like to see more above the fold.

Text

Participants noted that the text was too prominent on the homepage and became overbearing. Several of the focus group participants commented on the "length" of the homepage. Some said their eyes were not drawn to scroll down and see what was below the fold, while others did not indicate that was an issue.

Participants said that the fonts on the site are small and a little tough to see and read. Additionally, the text paragraph is not ideal and having underlines for every link is overwhelming. One participant suggested using buttons instead of just text as a way to de-clutter the homepage. Several participants suggested eliminating much of the content (copy) found on the homepage and providing a universal search component to navigate. These changes would ease the text heavy look of the page and allow users to find specifically what they need without having to read excessive text.

Preferences from Competitors' Websites

Participants had positive feedback about the appearances and layouts of some of the tourism sites they were shown in the usability group processes. These positive comments about other sites can useful to the redesign process of the MtHoodTerritory.com site. Please note that there were many aspects of these

sites that participants did not like and this section only reports positive comments specifically related to appearance and layout.

Figure 1. Mississippi Gulf Coast Site
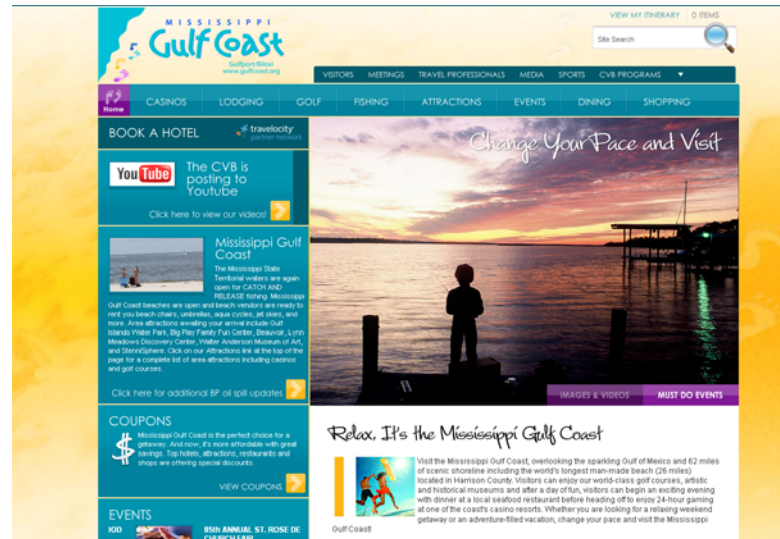
Participants said they liked the imagery and colors of this site and that the site" felt like the gulf coast." They also liked that important information was in large boxes that drew attention to it.

Figure 2. Pennsylvania Dutch Country Site

Participants said they liked the colors of this site because they are energetic and lively. They also said the background is appealing and the site conveys a sense of place.

Figure 3. See Monterey Site

Participants liked the look of the text on this site and the control panel format.

Figure 4. Gibson County, ID Site

Participants liked this site because everything was above the fold, it looked "nice and clean" and the top graphic was not in a straight line.

Figure 5. Loudon County Site

Participants liked the colors in this site and said it looked clean and straightforward. It was also noted that the site tells you exactly why you should visit Loudon County and that it could serve as an example of how to let people know about Clackamas County's niches.

Figure 6. Visit Bend Site
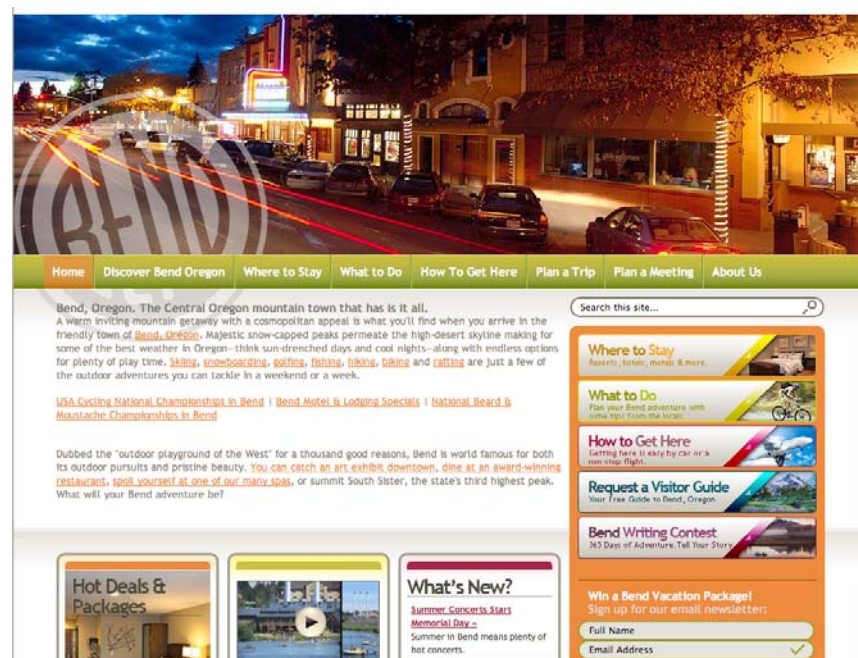
Participants had many positive comments about the appearance of the Bend site including: the images and how they scroll through, the photos are high quality and convey Bend well, and the title bars stay consistent. Participants also said the website looks comprehensive and like it gives you a generous amount of information without being overwhelming.

Figure 7. Visit the San Juans
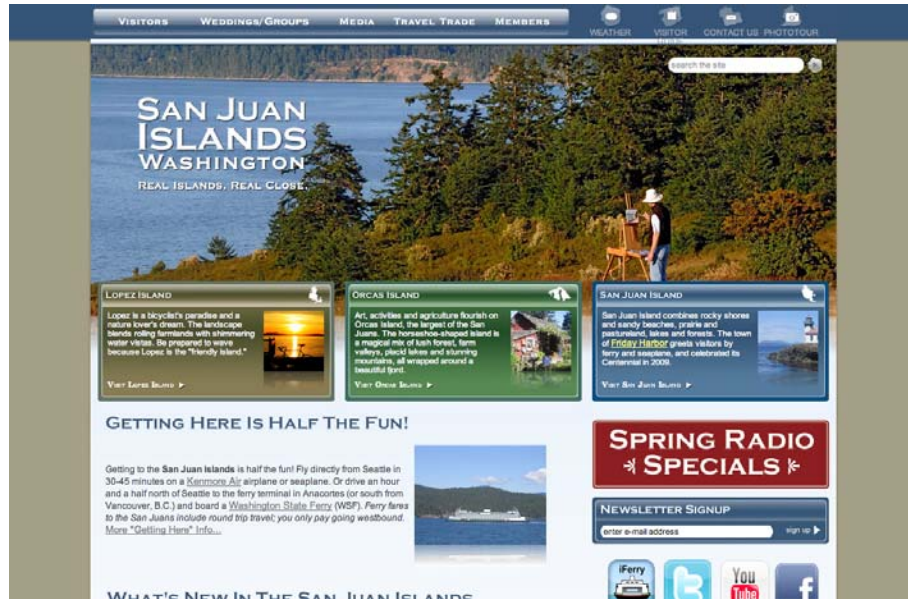
Participants thought the fonts on this site were very appealing and easy to read.

Content

Participants were asked about the type and level of content available on the Mt. Hood Territory site. They're comments are divided into positive comments, negative comments, and recommendations.

Positive Comments

- The majority of participants interviewed felt there was **a sufficient and significant amount of content** on the site. Participants were particularly impressed by the level and depth of the information that was provided. They expressed it in terms such as "you can tell there's a lot there" and "it's almost overwhelming".

- Participants had very positive comment about the content of the **photo/media libraries, visual tour and agritourism** categories.

Negative Comments

- While many participants stated that the content is sufficiently present they felt that the **access is not very streamlined**. With the lack of streamlined

content it takes much longer to search for specific information (e.g., a hotel or restaurant).

- Interview participants expressed a **desire for a cleaner/simpler way to browse** or "gaze through" the content on the site. Participants said it is nice to be able to find what you're looking for in a very quick and efficient manner; but, it's also nice to just be able to look around and perhaps find something that you were not necessarily looking for.

- Some participants commented on the **use of flashing ads** on the site by saying it feels "sales-ish" and makes them feel like the information on the site is less reliable.

Recommendations

Throughout the data collection participants mentioned some content areas on the site that could be improved or added. They are:

- A travel and tourism site should appeal or focus on more than one season (like winter), for those visitors who might be doing more long range planning or research for a trip during a different season.

- Display a list of all vendors and do not make people choose a city first.

- The calendar of events on the homepage "does not look right". Participants suggested the calendar of events does not need to be as a list of events, but rather an actual monthly calendar format that users could access (more on this topic in the Features section of this report).

- Activity guide is a little unclear and may be placed wrong.

- More information about Clackamas County as a whole (including a reference map), and the heritage and culture of the area.

Details Pages from Competitors' Websites

Participants in the beta test groups looked at three examples of details pages to see if they conveyed information in an appealing way. The staff group preferred the Travel Lane County Site to the others while potential visitors preferred the Anaheim, CA site.

Figure 8. Travel Lane County Site
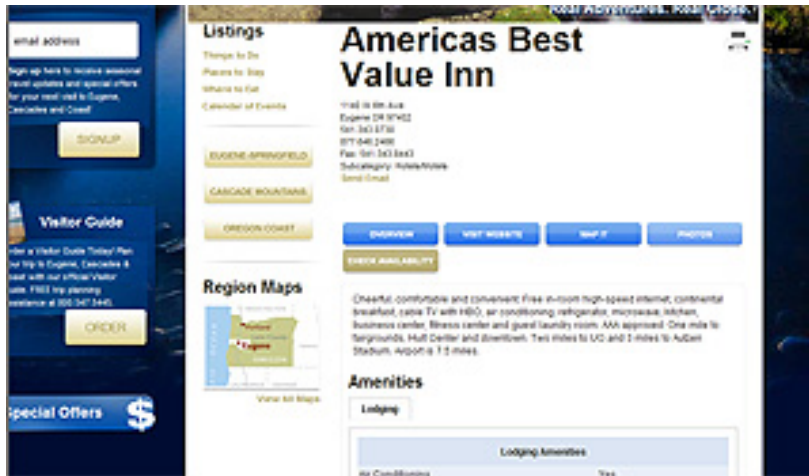
Participants in the staff group said, "this works for me" and it's "a little over kill, but I like it." Participants in the potential visitors group noted that the top third of the page (not pictured here) is not relevant to the calendar and that the page would be better without this front page branding. They also said that the tabs were a useful feature.

Figure 9. Anaheim, CA Site

Potential visitors thought this site did a good job of giving details and the desired information. They liked the tabs for the rooms, rents, maps, etc. and thought that they made the information very accessible. One participant said he liked the V-Power idea but did not like the execution of it. Participants also said that the font is undesirable and the site looks like advertisement copy (which was seen as a negative). Other negative elements mentioned by staff are that the site takes too long to load and the pictures do not seem to show the actual beauty of the rooms. It was noted that a star or number could be useful in the maps to show location and give distances.

SUMMARY

Participants noted many elements that a successful details page should have. Those include: tabs, a map and a list, pictures, and not having to scroll down. The details page should provide you all the information you need and not feel like an advertisement. But, providing all the information must be balanced with being text heavy which is not desired. For a summary of what was said about the other sites please see Appendix D.

Navigation

The comments on the ease of navigation of the site were mixed between the various groups who participated in engagement functions and within the groups themselves.

Some of the stakeholder participants reported finding the content and information they were looking for on the website in an extremely timely and efficient manner (although they speculated that this might be because they were browsing and accessing the site in areas with which they were already familiar). In the navigation tests CPW conducted with potential visitors who were not familiar with the site, visitors were able to find the information they were asked to look for relatively easily and within a short timeframe. Participants in those exercises were generally satisfied with the ease of navigation on the site and the content they found once they arrived on the page. Some participants commented that the search function on the internal pages was sensitive or difficult to use.

Contrary to these results other participants expressed some level of dissatisfaction with the navigational ability of the website. Nearly all participants mentioned that they were accustomed to having a universal site search box located at or near the top of the screen and greatly missed this feature on the Mt. Hood Territory site.

Others commented on the somewhat confusing number of choices and content categories presented to them on the homepage. Some respondents expressed frustration at knowing what they want is there but not being able to find it quickly (or again).

Menu Bar

Participants said that the current menu bar is hidden on left (or "in a weird place") and could be better delineated. A few participants suggested that navigation could be better accomplished by using menu options along the top of the screen instead of using the left hand navigational menus along the side.

Figure 7. Mt. Hood Territory Site
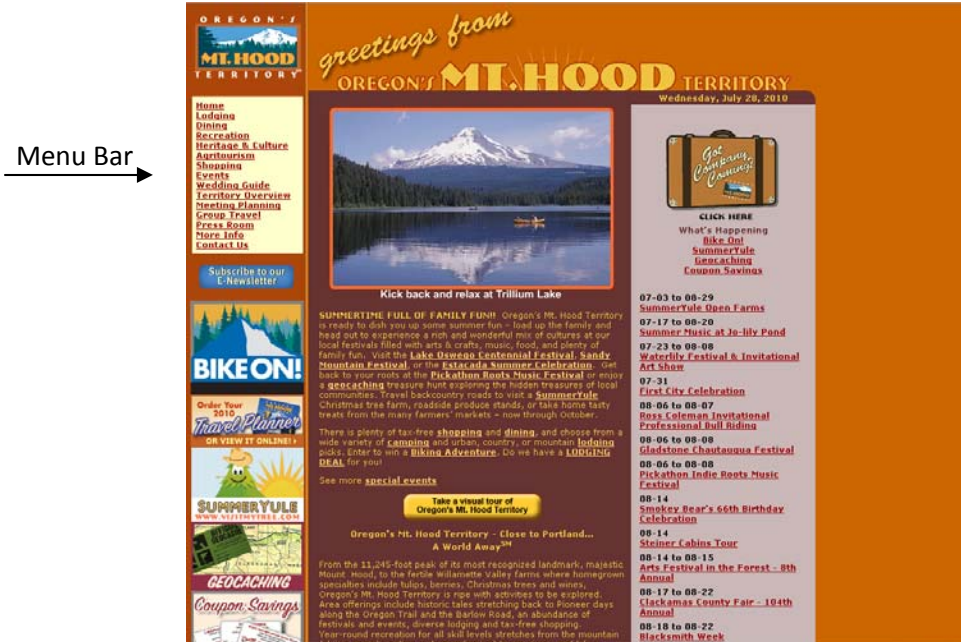
Menu Bar →

Some said the categories on the search bar are useful and cover everything needed to navigate the site. They liked how all the tabs seem to have a similar format. Participants also liked that when you click on one of the menu bar options it brings you straight to the page instead of opening a new window.

A few participants expressed that there are too many choices on the homepage. They suggested fewer broader categories (e.g., "Business", "Recreation", or "Exploring") to simplify the homepage. Some mentioned that better organization of the menu options could be done for greater navigational ease and increased awareness of all available features.

Preferences from Competitors' Websites

The menu bar was identified early in the process as an element to improve in redesign. As such participants in the beta test groups were asked about the types of menu bars that they preferred. Participants were asked their impressions of four different types of navigation bars: static top, top with fly down menu, top with fly down and sub menu, and top with detailed fly down.

Participants overwhelming preferred the static top and the top with fly down menu and thought those would be the best option for the Mt. Hood Territory site. Participants preferred the navigation of the See Monterey and the Snohimish, WA sites over others they were presented in the static top and top with fly down categories.

Figure 8. See Monterey Site

Participants thought this navigation bar was intuitive and easy to read with relevant information. They liked the specific options on the tabs (e.g., Food & Wine, Where to Stay, etc.) and that you could access information by topic or location. Participants felt like this navigation bar was a fair representation to all groups outside the Monterey region. Lastly, they liked that the roll over effect is soft and sticks a little before it goes to the next item.

Figure 9. Snohomish, WA Site

Participants liked the clean and simple look of the fly down menus on this site. They said the constant width of the drop down is pleasing and it does not feel too overwhelming. They noted that one of the strengths of this site is that when you click on an option from the drop down it reproduces on the left so you can navigate to those areas (breadcrumb effect). Participants also liked that if you click on the menu without the drop down it takes you to page that you can

further navigate. They said that feature helps if you are "stuck" on the page and cannot click on any of the sub menus.

Participants had two negative commented about the site: 1) that it feels a little dated, "like web 2.0" and 2) that the contrast could be better.

SUMMARY

Using a simpler navigation is desirable for all the different kinds of audiences that will be using the site. More complicated navigations can feel overwhelming and be confusing for people. The navigation should be easy to read (font on Travel Oregon and San Juans site was noted) and have specific options on the tabs (like Monterey). A soft rollover effect is preferred as well as breadcrumbs. The navigation and drop down menu should contrast to increase readability.

Internal Pages' Search Function

During the navigation tests some potential visitors commented that the search function on the internal pages was somewhat unhelpful and most chose to pull up all options rather than searching for specific areas. They also stated that the search function is not effective in searching for specific names of places, like Mt. Hood Museum or that the search function did not work for Marquam and they were unable to find the winery in this specific location. On the calendar of events page they said that there were too many "rules" to entering the dates or the search function would not work. Overall, most said that the search function was somewhat sensitive and/or difficult to use.

Features

Features that pstakeholders had positive experiences with and particularly liked were *Teletales, Restaurants, What's Happening, and Trip Advisor.* Additionally, many participants really liked the subscription e-newsletter because it was accessible and comprehensive. The visual tour of the Mt. Hood Territory was also high on the participants' list. The video is very well done and some participants suggested it be displayed more prominently on the homepage. The trip advisor link is considered important because of road conditions in and around the Mt. Hood area and should be kept on the page with other features. The *Travel Planner* was also a feature that participants used regularly. The *Great Winter Getaways* feature was thought to be useful for both locals and travelers coming in to the county. Only a few of the interview participants reported having used or explored the *"Got Company Coming?"* feature of the website. The most common reason for not having used the feature was unawareness that it existed. For those participants that did have prior knowledge and experience with the feature, they thought it was a "neat idea" and a "good thing".

Social media and *Coupon Savings* were mentioned by stakeholders both as a features that were loved and features that were not particularly liked.

Features Improvements and Additions

TELETALES

Locate closer to the top of the page (i.e., above the fold) so visitors do not overlook this important feature.

TRAVEL PLANNER

Update with real live photos.

COUPON SAVINGS

The coupon graphic was not appealing to several participants and the placement was also questioned. One suggestion is that it be placed with other similar features and move a feature like *Teletales* above the fold.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Improve the design of the calendar and decrease its prominence on the homepage.

As the calendar was another feature identified early in the process that could be improved, various calendars were presented in beta test group meetings to find out what aspects are most desirable.

Figure 10. Travel Lane County Site
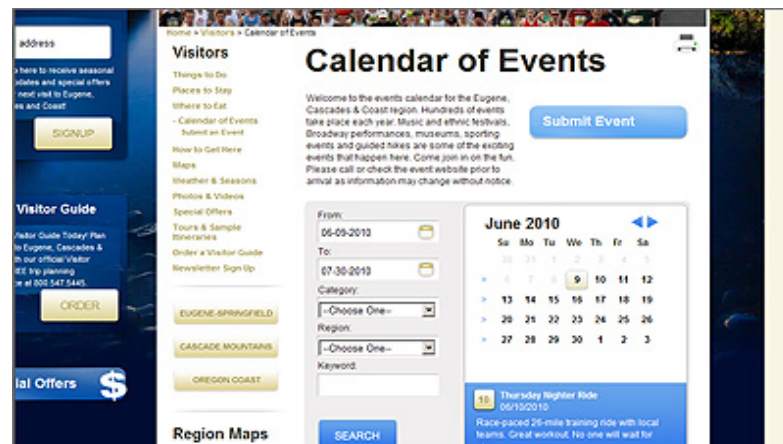
Participants in the beta test groups (staff and potential visitors) overwhelming preferred the Travel Lane County calendar of events to the other options. They liked many aspects of the calendar including: the ability to click on a day on the calendar and have events pop up, that you can search by date range or category, and that you can search multiple categories. Participants also said that the map feature was not ideal and it is preferred to have the map in the details of the event as a hyperlink. Participants were adamant that Google calendar should not be used for this purpose and that icons for the event categories are not particularly useful. It was also noted that the calendar section does not need to include all the branding at the top of the page and that it is "wasted space" that forces people to scroll down.

MAP

Maps were highlighted as a main feature that is needed for the site. Participants thought that a map would give a sense of location, lodging and dining options, and the geographic diversity of Clackamas County, especially for travelers unfamiliar to the region. Interactive maps that highlighted specific areas of the county as well as routes and directions to reach them for expanded transportation information. Users may be able to use a map to estimate distances between different cities and communities.

Participants in the beta test groups preferred (staff and potential visitors) the map feature on the Oregon Coast and Visit Maine sites over others they were presented.

Figure 11. Oregon Coast Site
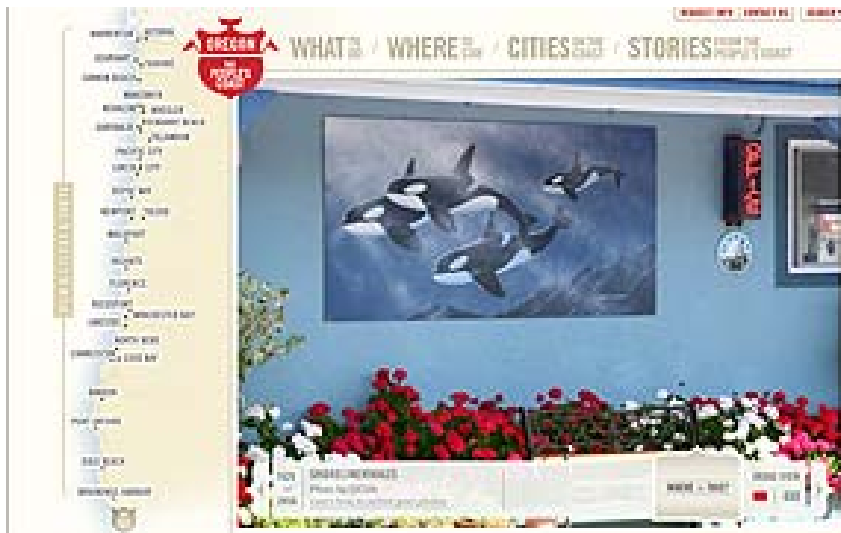
Participants said they liked how the geography of the Oregon coast allowed the organization of the map to be vertical and be the site's menu bar. They said the stars and maps are useful features and the interactive functions of the map would make it easy to plan a trip. Participants also noted that the map only includes featured accommodations and they felt you should be able to see all of the accommodations, not just the featured items.

Figure 12. Visit Maine Site

Participants said the Maine map was "awesome." They liked the functions of it, the pins, the regions that Maine used and the quality information that was provided.

UNIVERSAL SEARCH FOR HOMEPAGE

Nearly all participants said they missed having a universal search function at the top of the homepage. They stated they are accustomed to having this feature on websites and it is frustrating when it is not there.

OTHERS

Participants mentioned several features that they would like to see add to the Mt. Hood Territory site and features they liked on competitors' sites. Those include:

- An expanded testimonials section to the site. This could include You Tube videos, fan photos and having an RSS feed for reviews. This word of mouth approach adds character and experience that travelers often desire.
- Contests or Geocaching is a desirable feature to consider. The idea is to attract more visitors to the site.
- A "Top Ten Things to Do" section.
- Video selector in the dining section (like Loudon County)
- Live chat for quick questions (like North Lake Tahoe)

Conclusion

Throughout the data collection process participants provided honest feedback about the current status of the Mt. Hood Territory website and improvements that should be made. The interviews, focus groups, usability groups and beta test groups gathered different types and levels of input about the site. When implemented, these suggestions will enhance the functionality of the site and help reshape its appearance.

Suggestions that emerged are:

- Clean up and simplify the homepage;
- Assess the color scheme and overall look of the site to ensure it conveys the essence of Clackamas County;
- Improve navigation by relocating and retooling the menu bar;
- Add a universal search function;
- Improve the usability of the search function on internal pages;
- Add maps and interactive capability;
- Improve the look, placement and functionality of the calendar of events;
- Strive for more uniformity in icons;
- Use more photos of the area (with captions);
- Add more cultural and heritage information on the site (i.e., stress the "End of the Oregon Trail");
- Provide more coverage of the county itself. Tell visitors about sweet spots other than Mt. Hood and about scenic by-ways in the area.