
IA Document

You're Sew Special

CLIENT

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TEAM MEMBERS



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Introduction to the IA Document

What is IA?

IA or Information Architecture is the structure of your site. This document includes research that Media Force Four is using to build your web site. We've analyzed your requirements, audiences and competitors. Inside, you'll find the requirements for the design of the Your Sew Special web site. It will also provide a concise description of the visual feel, design function and technical aspects for the new web site.

My Company

Your Sew Special creates custom apparel and uniforms for cheerleaders and other types of sports teams. Their previous web site was not complete and they were never able to fully see it's potential. They have asked Media Force Four to build a web site that will serve as a marketing tool for a growing company. A lot of their current and potential customers ask the question, "Do you have a web site?" Based on this, YSS is now pursuing the technology with fresh ideas, a new logo and a growing clientele.



Business Objectives

What is Media Force Four's solution?

The goal of this redesign is to provide YSS with a more functional, concise and complete web site. Their previous web site was not complete and did not meet its expected potential. The redesign will help solve these previous issues by providing fresh new ideas, through proper research, planning, identifying previous problem areas and implementing new innovated ideas.

This process will allow for a more accurate and user-friendly design for the new web site.

Contained within this document are the following components.

- Competitive Analysis
- Content Inventory
- Overall Design Approach
- Interactions & links
- Layout
- Graphic Style & Typography
- Color Pallet
- Technology Use



Competitive Analysis

In planning for the new YSS web site a competitive analysis was performed on four competing web sites.

These sites contain various approaches to design and layout that were analyzed in detail for the planning of the new YSS web site. The results of the competitive analysis are as follows...

Varsity.com

Varsity.com is also a cheer leading uniform design and manufacturing company. They also provide apparel for dance squads. Their introductory home page is not visually interesting, but its simple layout makes choosing one of their three sales topics Cheer, Dance or apparel quick and easy for the user.

Varsity.com uses bright pastel, energetic colors of light blue, pink and yellow on their sub pages, navigation and menu drop down bars. This mainly attracts the young female clientele who will be wearing and purchasing their uniforms. The web site makes heavy use of drop-down menus to manage their content in to related chunks. However the photos and related advertisement placements cause the secondary pages to look cluttered and vibrate against the bright backgrounds of the pages.



The most outstanding competitive feature on this site is a Coloring Book that allows the user to pick a uniform style illustration and then interactively color in their selection by choosing from a standard color pallet and printing the results for planning and ordering. This is an excellent and relevant feature and will be a great sales benefit to simulate but not copy into the new YSS web site.

The coloring book feature makes this site stand out against the clutter of relative ads and the bright vibrating colors. This web site features an overload of information not directly related to the sales specifics of uniforms and dance apparel. This comparison/contrast will help make the new YSS web site easy to navigate while providing better functionality for the user.



Squad-One.com

When the Squad One web site opens there is an immediate Flash animation that let's the user know this is a site to purchase cheer gear. When the Flash animation redirects to the home page, there are a couple of images displaying what Squad One has to offer. There are also "call-out" boxes telling the user about discounts, as well as an advertisement for their custom design center.



Squad One offers cheer leading uniforms, pom poms, camp wear, custom lettering, shoes, jackets, hair care accessories, and other cheer essentials.

Squad One uses burgundy, white, and blue, throughout the site which stays consistent with the colors of the logo. The pages have the same layout throughout the site, except the home page. The imagery used on the site looks professional and displays the outfits well.

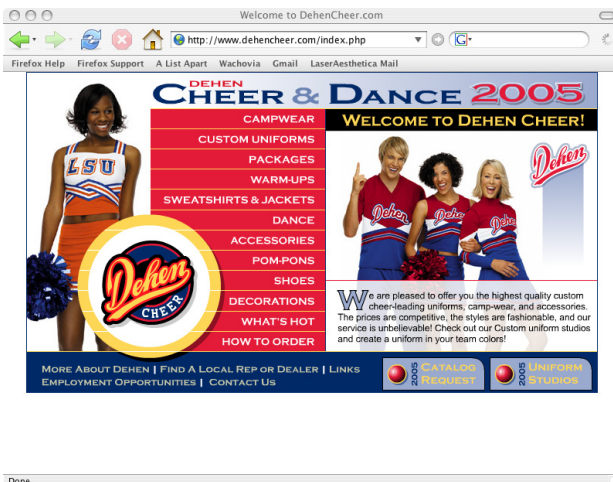
The main selling point for Squad One is the ability to create your own custom design. Users can pick from different tops, skirts and trim styles to change the colors the way they want. They can do this by going to the custom design center, located in the main navigation.

The site navigation is very easy to read and use. The consistency stays the same on every page except the home. The site is user-friendly allowing visitors to get the information they need. The overall site has a good design, and the custom design center adds better functionality for users to choose exactly what style and color's they want.



DehenCheer.com

The site opens with a Flash-built home page. The interior pages are a mix of Flash and HTML pages. They provide “call-out” boxes in the lower right hand corner of their home page for “Catalog Orders” and “Design Studio.” The colors used are red, white, blue and yellow, which are the colors used in their logo. The initial appearance of the site is inviting and they have a brief introductory paragraph about their company on the home page. Imagery is professional, sharp and appropriate.



The Catalog Request page contains a form, but the Contact page only provides links and address info. The Catalog Request form was organized and easy to fill out and understand. There is a status indicator on the home page that displays details of the link you are hovering over, but the description of the link is hard to read and find (it’s above the main image on the home page)

Some nice features at dehencheer.com:

- Design Studio
- Simple interface
- Industry clearly represented
- Consistency of color
- Clearly marked categories on home page

Some bad features of dehencheer.com:

- Mix of Flash and HTML is awkward
- Interior page links are spread all-over page (top, left, sub-left)
- Site continues to clutter through secondary and tertiary pages
- Design studio was difficult to find after leaving home page
- When entering a category, sub-categories were not visible (simple text links)



YouthSportsPlanet.com

Yourthsportsplanet.com makes use of a catalog-type layout with large pictures in a table with different template views for each uniform. This layout is a simple approach with a price for each outfit that they offer. The layout is easy to use but leaves something more to be expected from the design. It's a great way to manage their content, but it's very plain and lacks energy.

There is limited text used on this site.

There is a section about the company, as well as information for each uniform in the details section of the product pages. Each uniform has its own name, which serves as a title for the outfit and colors can be chosen on the details page. The only graphics that are used on the Youth Sport Planet web site are images of the uniforms they offer. In the details page of each outfit, there are swatches of colors that you can pick for your team.

This site has no downloads. The navigation for this site uses a simple, four-section navigation. Links to choose from include, home, services, feedback, and help pages. In the services pages there are three sets of products. The navigation for the three sets of product pages uses a next button to move between pages 1,2, and 3. This is efficient and works but there are other ways to address multi-page showing of products. The site is very uniform through out with the feel of a text-based system that was used to build the site, which seems unnecessary because of the shallow depth of content the site contains.

The site's legibility is average, with black text on a pink header for each product. There are no call-to-action, or "call out" boxes to target certain audiences on this site. They only advertise the products they offer on the home page.



Content Inventory

Content Inventory Table

Page Name	Type	Content	Topics	Notes	Location
Home 0.0.0	Category	Graphic, visual intro (Flash)	Other athletic gear (call-out) to sub-page #2.0.1		index.html
About Us 1.0.0	Category	Company history & relevant copy	cheer, athletic, team, spirit, uniform, dance		about.html
Customer Services 2.0.0	Category	List of services offered, turn-around times for each service	What distinguishes YSS from their competitors	"Personal delivery& pick-up / No cookie cut ordering"	customers.html
Specialty Services 2.1.0	Sub Category	Other items offered (shirts, shoes, etc)			
Clients 3.0.0	Category	•Client List •Affiliate List •Client Photos	News about clients & competition on wins	YSS opportunity to showcase their work	
Color Book 4.0.0	Category	Interactive "Coloring Book"	Color Book instructions & purpose	Should be printable & incorporated in ordering process?	
Uniforms 4.1.1	Sub Category	Photos of uniform styles & descriptions	Uniform styles or categories		
Contact Form 5.0.0	Category	•Form contact Info •Optional staff photos	Detailed ordering instructions		

Chart Legend

Page Name A way to refer back to a given page and show relationships with other pages

Type Identifies pages as a main topic category or subcategory

Content A brief summary of the content on the page

Topics Planning Meta data for search engine topics & primary page content

Notes For any additional information that doesn't fit in main area

Location URL address of the page



About Your Design

Design Approach

The following information will provide YSS staff with a better understanding of the tools and design decisions for the content on your web site. These critical design decisions will help in creating more a usable and accessible web site for all users. Other design considerations are made to entice the user to return to the site for future purchases along with expanding the YSS present client base and business contacts.

Branding & Identity

The YSS in-house Graphic Designer has presently established the company's identifying logo. The red, black and silver "Y" shape represents the nature of athletics, cheer leading and sportsmanship. This logo will be incorporated on all pages of the new web site design.

Graphic Style & Typography

Graphics used on the web site are important in establishing the athletic nature and energy of the cheer leading uniform sale business along with youthful athletic sports activities.

Color

The main logo branding colors of red, black and silver will be boldly present on the home page but not over powering on sub pages. A white or grey background base will give a clean, professional and readable focus for the content and graphical elements on the pages.

This will also distinguish YSS from their competitors (Varsity) web site which uses very bright, vibrating colors against numerous cluttered articles.

Complimentary and contrasting colors of yellow, blue, orange, and grey will be incorporated on specific call-out sections, links and text areas to enhance the energetic tone of the web sites athletic theme.



About Your Design

Typography

Specific fonts will be used to establish the look and consistency of the web site along with complimenting the branding and athletic theme and energy of the web site.

Arial

Sample – Standard web sans serif font used for readability and browser compatibility. This font will be used for large block content areas including articles.

Verdana

Sample – Standard web font sans serif font but with slightly more spacing between lettering is an alternative to Arial also used for readability and browser compatibility.

Times

Sample – This is a serif font with bold block lettering that is similar to lettering used on school athletic uniforms and logos. This font or (PC equivalent) could be used on some article headers and points of interest on the web site.

Page Layout

The layout of the YSS web site should stay consistent through out the site but should also give the appearance of a fun, active and energetic place to support the athletic and uniform team theme. This can be accomplished by using sectional text boxes or areas of content in various colors, floating graphics of energetic uniform models youth and other clothing items provided by YSS.

Links & Interactive Scope

Link interactions are necessary to enable the user to navigate through a web site quickly and easily to find the information they are looking for. The visual aesthetics of the link buttons for this web site should be rectangular in shape and long enough to support the page titles. Contrasting colors should compliment the page back ground but also contrast for readability. Any drop down arrow indicators for sub menus should contrast the color of the navigation button. Oval button shapes would be too soft and non complimentary to the athletic branding of the main logo and block lettering in school and cheer team insignia.



Technology

The web site design process will require the use of various programs to produce and maintain. They include the following...

- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe Illustrator
- FTP (File Protocol Transfer) program to upload files to web server
- Macromedia Dreamweaver or other web design software.

This site will also require the following to be viewed on various monitors according to the user base analysis.

- Internet Explorer (IE 5.0 or above)
- Screen resolution of at least 800 x 600 or above.



Audience Definitions

Creating a web site that caters to users looking mainly for custom fitted cheer leading outfits, or other sports will be essential for YSS. The main users are located within the southwest region of the USA. These users will come to the site to get information about the kind of uniforms YSS has to offer. They are looking for the web site to display some of YSS current clients. The users want to see exactly what YSS is capable of doing.

These users are friendly, and want to see a friendly site. They spend the majority of their time offline. These users may check back to see what kind of specials YSS has to offer. These users know what they want and need the web site to give it to them.

Primary users:
Cheer leading coaches
Guardians of cheerleaders
Secondary users:
Coaches
Guardians of any other sport participant

Primary users have the following:
High school or college degrees
Cheered in past, Instructs cheer leading or has some part in cheer leading
Needs a site that will allow them to change the colors of the outfits
Needs a company that will custom make uniforms to fit their cheerleaders
Ability to print out the uniforms on the site so they can show YSS what kind of design they want when YSS comes to them


Secondary users have the following:
High school or college degree
Coaches some kind of sport team
Watches their child participate in sports
Needs the site to display important information that will instruct them about the process of getting a custom fitted outfit or design.



User Personas

Name and Photo	Short Description
<p data-bbox="152 348 456 495">Sharon Woods Cheer leading Coach Age: 48 Gender: Female</p> 	<p data-bbox="557 348 1446 573">Sharon Woods coaches a high school cheer squad where she teaches high school algebra located in Tampa Florida. She's been teaching for 27 years, and coaching for 20. She teaches 8 to 3, and coaches after school 3 to 7. Sharon earned teacher of the year for devoting so much time to teaching and cheer leading.</p> <p data-bbox="557 579 1446 762">Sharon likes to browse the web to get information about school and cheer leading. She mainly searches the web for affordable and stylish cheer leading uniforms for her cheer squad. Sharon likes easy to use web sites that displays the information she needs.</p> <p data-bbox="557 768 1446 1031">Sharon owns a 2003 pc with a cable connection, and knows how to use all the software on her computer. Sharon makes 40,000 a year, has 3 kids, a husband, nice house, and 2 dogs. Sharon is known as super mom that finds time to do just about everything. Right now Sharon is hosting a car wash for her cheer squad to earn extra cash to go towards their new cheer outfits.</p>
<p data-bbox="152 1129 480 1276">Amy Golden Secretary/Soccer Mom Age: 26 Gender: Female</p> 	<p data-bbox="557 1129 1438 1318">Amy Golden has a daughter and son ages 15 and 12 that play soccer for their church. Amy is in charge of finding a company that will create each team members' uniforms to custom fit their bodies. Amy uses search engines online but hasn't found exactly what she's been looking for.</p> <p data-bbox="557 1325 1466 1549">Amy is up to date with technology and is web savvy. She currently shops online and finds that easy with her busy schedule. Amy is looking forward to finding a company that will cater to what her church soccer team needs. Since her schedule is so busy she would prefer the company to come to her, than having to figure out a way to bring all 26 kids to them.</p> <p data-bbox="557 1556 1466 1661">Amy enjoys spending time with her kids. She sometimes helps with carpooling for her church soccer team. Amy is an all around mom loved by many.</p>



<p>Eddie Hills Head Coach Age: 43 Gender: Male</p>	<p>Eddie Hills begins his 2nd season as head cheer leading coach at the Savannah College of Art and Design. A former cheerleader and gymnast, he has coached tumbling since 1985 and has conducted private lessons, camps and clinics in both the United States and Canada. Eddie rarely uses his computer except to check e-mail. He finds using the internet a bit of a challenge. His current experience with web sites were chaos, he would get lost all the time. Football season is coming up and his cheer leading team has a new routine. Eddie wants new uniforms but is very skeptical about searching online; he would prefer to search in a catalogue. Eddie wants to be able to search online and find a company that will make uniforms without getting lost. Eddie spends the majority of his time teaching new routines and helping with tumbles. He has 2 daughters, 3 sons, a wife, and a nice house. Eddie loves his job, and could never see him self-doing anything else.</p>
	

User Scenarios

	Scenario	Needs	Feature	Behavior
Sharon Woods	Sharon wants to browse the internet to find information about custom cheer leading outfits.	Guidance	Search engine	Sharon goes to google search and types in custom cheer leading outfits.
	Sharon wants to find out information about your sew special.	Information	About page	Sharon goes to the about page, reads the information about YSS, and gets the information she needs.
	Sharon wants to order uniforms for her cheer leading squad.	Order form	Services Page	Sharon looks for a shopping cart or shop here link. Sharon becomes confused and clicks on services page. Sharon reads and realizes that YSS will come directly to her with the information for purchasing.
Amy Golden	Amy heard about YSS and would like to see what they are about.	Information	About page	Amy clicks on the about page and gets the information she needs.
	Amy likes what she read so far and would like to check out the clientele for YSS.	Information	Client list page	Amy clicks on the client list page and views all the clients YSS has helped so far. Amy then clicks on a client and there web site pop-ups in a separate window so that Amy can come back and view YSS when she's done.
	Amy would like to see what kind of outfits she could design for her church soccer team.	Visually see outfits	"Coloring Book"	Amy clicks on the link for the coloring book. Reads the instructions and realizes that this coloring book is only for cheer outfits. Amy then clicks on services to view what YSS actually can do. Amy reads that YSS mainly deals with cheer squad but does other things as well. She then clicks on contact us, and leaves her information.

Continued on Page 18

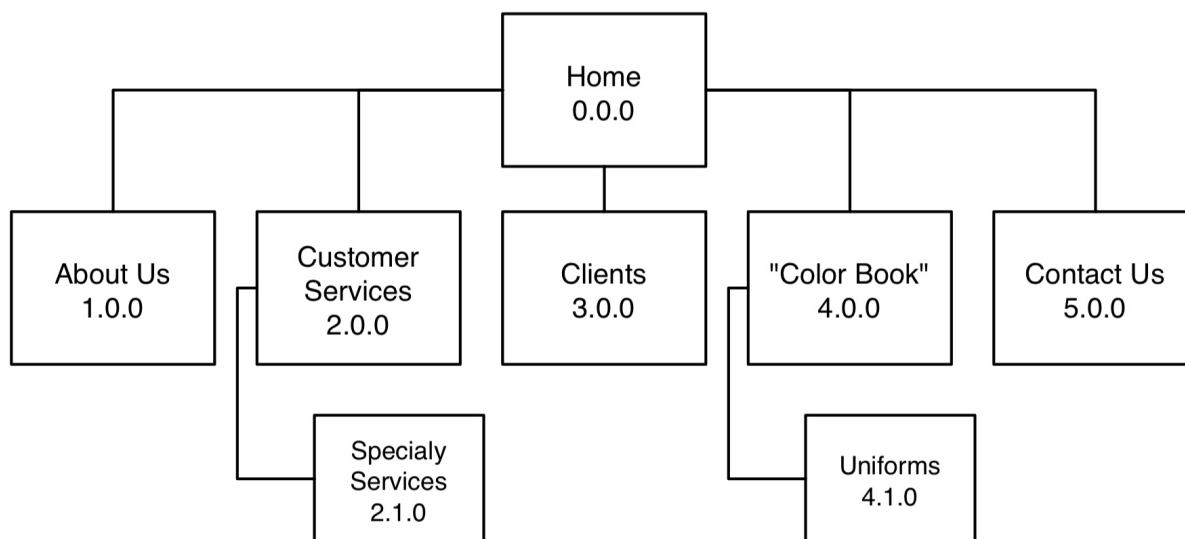


Eddie Hills

<p>Eddie wants to find a company online that will make his cheer leading squad uniforms. He wants to find a location near Savannah Georgia.</p>	<p>Guidance</p>	<p>Search Engine</p>	<p>Eddie goes to yahoo search and types in cheer leading uniforms Georgia. He finds YSS in the search, and clicks on the link</p>
<p>Eddie wants to find how many people YSS has helped with custom fitting.</p>	<p>Information</p>	<p>News page</p>	<p>Eddie looks at the navigation, clicks on news page, and gets the information he needs. Eddie is happy because he knows what page he is on when he looks up in the navigation to select another destination.</p>
<p>Eddie wants to get information to contact YSS about setting up a meeting for his cheer squad to get fitted.</p>	<p>Information</p>	<p>Services page</p>	<p>Eddie clicks on the services page and finds the information for contacting YSS.</p>



Site Map



Wireframes

Media Force Four has made your wireframes interactive, and available online. Simply click the following link or copy and past the link into your web browser.

<http://www.mcands.com/aia/mediforcefour/wireframes>



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