

Project 2

Redesigning of IDC Website

Guide

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Submitted by

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22M2248 | Interaction Design M.Des | IDC School of Design | IIT Bombay (2022 - 24)

Declaration

I, Anjanesh Indranil, hereby declare that this project report, titled "Redesigning of IDC Website," is entirely my own work. All the information, data, and research presented in this report are genuine and have not been submitted in any other form for academic credit or publication. Any external sources used for reference or citation are properly acknowledged in the bibliography section. I take full responsibility for the content, findings, and conclusions presented in this report.

Ajmen

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Approval Sheet

Interaction Design Project 2 titled "Redesigning of IDC Website" (by Anjanesh Indranil, roll number 22M2248) is approved for partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of 'Masters in Design' in Interaction Design at IDC School of Design, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay.

Guide:

Chairperson:

Internal Examiner:

External Examiner:

For Rocamod Khamleste

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Acknowledgement

This project, as part of my P2 presentation, is an incredible learning experience for me. It provided me with valuable industry-level guidance and insights into broader fields, contributing to both my personal and professional growth. It's challenging to put into words just how grateful I am to my guide, Prof. Jayesh Pillai. He not only guided me at every step but also encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and glimpse what lies ahead in my future.

I'd like to express my deep gratitude to Prof. Ravi Poovaiah, for providing guidance and steering me in the right direction whenever I faced uncertainties. I would also like to thank Mr. Vivin Mathew Varghese, System Administrator for helping me in understanding the management and maintenance of IDC website

Of course, no acknowledgment would be complete without extending my heartfelt thanks to my close friends, peers, and family members for their unwavering support.

Abstract

The "Redesign of IDC Website" project focuses on the transformation and enhancement of the website of the Industrial Design Centre (IDC) at IIT Bombay. This website serves as a vital platform for students, faculty members, staff, and visitors associated with IDC.

Originally developed, the website currently lacks a cohesive design and effective organization of content, resulting in suboptimal user experience. It became evident that a redesign was essential to address content prioritization issues and optimize user interactions. Moreover, the existing design templates did not align with the content, leading to usability challenges.

The project involved a comprehensive case study that involved an indepth exploration of the current website's design, a revaluation of the information architecture, and interviews with key stakeholders. This research identified numerous areas of concern related to the existing design, user interaction, navigation, iconography, and more.

The redesigned IDC Website aims to resolve these issues while introducing a fresh branding identity and a new visual language that aligns seamlessly with the values and goals of IDC. The objective is to imbue the website with a distinctive personality, creating an engaging and intuitive experience for its users. The project encompasses the rectification of existing problems, the infusion of a revitalized brand identity, and the provision of an improved user experience.

Through this redesign endeavour, the IDC Website aims to better serve its community, offering a modern, user-centric, and visually appealing platform that effectively communicates the essence of IDC and its activities.

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Introduction

Motivation

The digital landscape is evolving at an unprecedented pace, and in today's interconnected world, an institution's online presence is often the first point of contact with its community and the broader audience. For IDC the website serves as a vital gateway to the vibrant world of design education, innovation, and creativity. However, the digital realm is not static; it continually demands adaptation and improvement to meet the evolving needs and expectations of its users.

This project is an effort to reimagine and revitalize the digital face of the IDC. In an era marked by dynamic user experiences and digital accessibility, the importance of a user-centric and aesthetically pleasing website cannot be overstated. Hence, it seeks to address the challenges and opportunities presented by the current IDC website, aiming to create a digital platform that not only showcases the excellence of the but also serves as a functional and engaging resource for its students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

The primary objective of this project is to breathe new life into the IDC website, aligning it with the expectations of today's digital audience. Our focus is on user-centric design, improved functionality, and streamlined access to information. The aim is to create a digital space that not only serves as an informative resource but also

creates a sense of belonging and engagement among students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

This project is not just about redesigning a website, it is about creating a digital ecosystem that embodies the ethos of the IDC, a place where design meets technology, and creativity knows no bounds.

Background

The IDC IIT Bombay website serves as an online platform that provides information about the academic programs, people, research activities, events and projects. It also serves as a gateway for prospective students, researchers, and industry partners to learn about and engage with the design community at IIT Bombay. The website typically contains details about courses, admission procedures, faculty profiles, research publications, and ongoing design initiatives. It plays a vital role in promoting design education and innovation in India.

The Problem

Numerous issues surfaced during both primary and secondary research. Among the most significant problems uncovered was the lack of proper organization and outdated content on the website. Some of the key identified problems include

- he absence of a structured content organization that aligns with priority and user requirements.
- Content accessibility for students, staff, and visitors without clear distinctions, raising privacy concerns.
- The website's lack of distinct branding and a cohesive visual identity.
- Content stagnation and outdated information, no longer relevant to today's era and society.
- Opportunities to enhance user experience, such as implementing smooth transitions and micro-interactions.
- Several links redirecting users to even older website versions, causing confusion among visitors.

These issues collectively contribute to a less-than-optimal user experience and necessitate attention and improvements.

Target Users

The IDC website serves a diverse range of users with interests in design and innovation. Primarily, it caters to prospective students seeking information about the various design programs and courses offered by the institution. Researchers and academics also utilize the website to access faculty profiles, research publications, and details about ongoing design projects. Industry professionals often visit the

about ongoing design projects. Industry professionals often visit the site to explore potential collaborations with the center and tap into the innovative design solutions developed at IDC.

Additionally, current students and alumni use the website to stay updated on the latest happenings, events, and opportunities within the design community at IIT Bombay. In essence, the IDC IIT Bombay website is a hub for students, researchers, industry partners, and design enthusiasts to connect, learn, and collaborate in the field of design.

Objective

The objective of the project is to redesign website. It includes:

- 1. Structured Content Organization: The objective here is to reorganize the website's content in a way that aligns with user priorities and requirements.
- 2. Branding and Visual Identity: Establishing a distinct branding strategy and visual identity for the website. This includes designing a cohesive visual style, incorporating the institution's branding elements, and creating a memorable online presence that reflects the institution's values and mission.

- 3. Content Relevance and Currency: To address content stagnation and outdated information, the project's objective is to conduct a comprehensive content audit. This involves removing obsolete content, updating existing materials to align with current trends and societal needs, and implementing a content maintenance plan to ensure ongoing relevance.
- 4. User Experience Enhancement: The goal here is to enhance the user experience by implementing features like smooth transitions and micro-interactions. This will make the website more engaging, user-friendly, and enjoyable for visitors, ultimately improving their interaction with the platform.

Overall, the project aims to transform the website into a user centric, visually appealing, and up to date platform that effectively serves the needs of its diverse user base while addressing the identified issues.

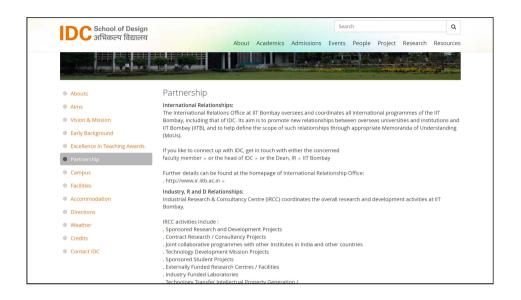
Research Work

Primary Research: Heuristic Evaluation of website

A comprehensive heuristic assessment of the website was carried out to pinpoint issues. This involved a thorough examination of the website, an analysis of its information structure, and interviews with both existing users and newcomers. Additionally interview was taken from the the identified issues that require attention included:

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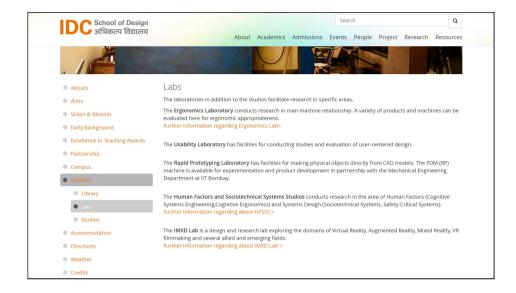
clickable links are having the body text color, makes it difficult for the user to distinguish between links and text.

Feedback:

missing color state for normal links.

Suggestion:

all the states of a clickable link, i.e, normal, hover and click must have different style for the ease of user for better accessebility.



Problem:

the state of the links changes to body text color when clicked which creates a confusion for the user about which link was active.

Feedback:

wrong color selection for clicked links.

Suggestion:

all the states of a clickable link, i.e, normal, hover and click must have different style for the ease of user for better accessebility.



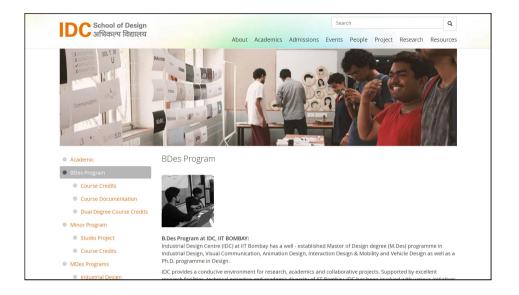
repetition of topic in heading and subheading takes up space and increase the time of accessibility and create confusion.

Feedback:

reduntant use of topic name in the hierarchy of content.

Suggestion:

review of the content is required to remove the redundancy in the hierarchy.



Problem:

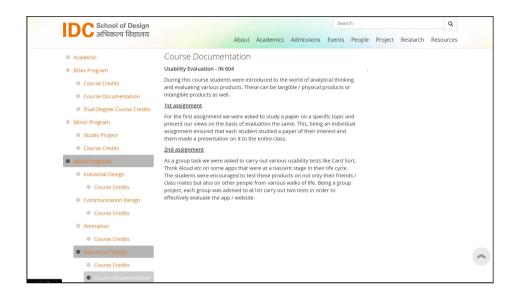
the small square tile containing the picture serves less relevance to content as the big banner is already there. It also takes space which leads to extra scrolling for checking content.

Feedback:

redundant use of similar images.

Suggestion:

all the images used can be checked based on the relevancy and the irrelevant ones can be removed.



incomplete and missing content in certain pages creates a sense of doubt in the mind of user.

Feedback:

addition of pages without collecting all the content.

Suggestion:

review of the content is required to add the missing content and till then the page should be kept hidden from the users.



Problem:

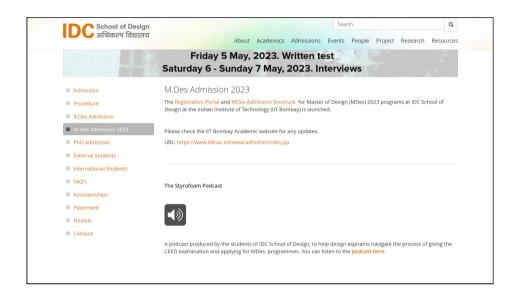
the navbar in the bottom of the screen comes after scrolling of the whole page and hence user might miss it.

Feedback:

incorrect placement of the navbar.

Suggestion:

the navbar should be kept on the top of the content for easy accessibility



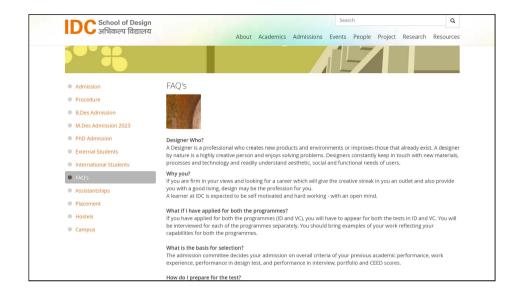
the icon and text both are embedded with link but the icon doesn't seems clickable.

Feedback:

redundancy of links in the same page.

Suggestion:

the icon and the link can be combined inside a component to avoid redundancy with change in style of the icon.



Problem:

all the FAQ's may not be necessary required for the user to access and hence user needs to scroll through the whole page in search of the answer of its own doubt.

Feedback:

missing dynamicity in the design of the content.

Suggestion:

the answers of individual question can be inside dropdown which activates when clicked on that question.



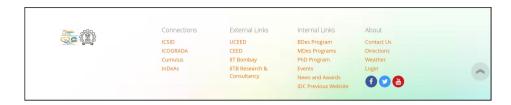
the search bar and the search button has an misalignment in terms of size and placement.

Feedback:

the design lacks cohesiveness among the design elements.

Suggestion:

creating a strong visual style guidelines to be followed for all the design elements.



Problem:

the logos used are squashed together and have different aspect ratio than the original which gives unpleasant visual experience.

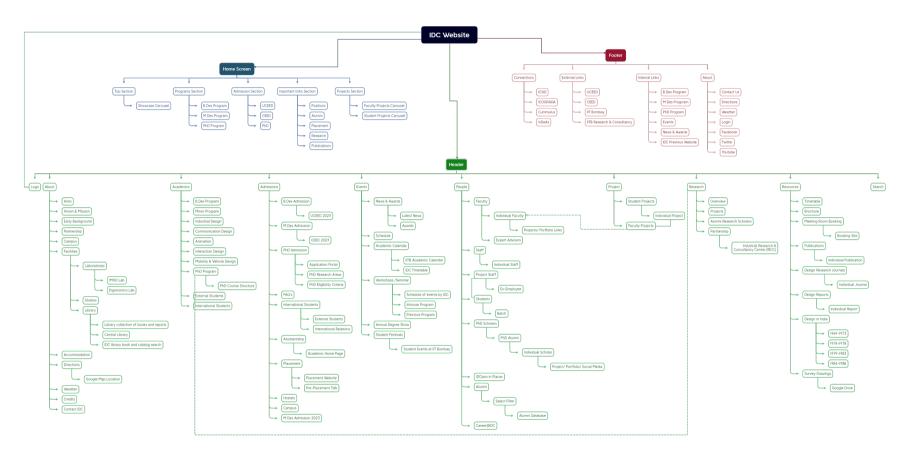
Feedback:

using undynamic container for the images or logo.

Suggestion:

original aspect ratio for the logos or pictures needs to be maintained and better placement of the logos.

Primary Research: Information Architecture of website



link to information architecture

Research Work

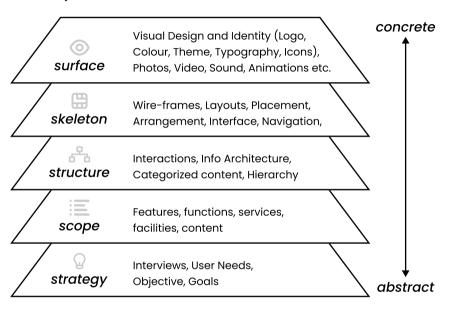
Secondary Research: Technological exploration

Developing any website involves two essential components: frontend and backend development. Frontend development focuses on creating the user interface and experience. It starts with designing the website's layout and appearance, followed by coding in HTML, CSS, and JavaScript to build the site's structure, styling, and interactivity. Frontend frameworks like React or Angular may be used for efficiency. Integration with backend APIs is crucial to display dynamic data such as course schedules and event updates. Rigorous testing ensures compatibility and usability.

On the other hand, backend development deals with the server-side logic and data management of a website. An interview was conducted with Mr. Vivin Mathew Varghese, System Administrator of IDC to understand this part. This part involves selecting a backend programming language (PHP), designing a robust database (MySqL) to store information like student records and faculty profiles, and developing APIs for data communication. Security measures, including user authentication and authorization, are implemented to protect sensitive data. Next, a content management system (CMS) is created to allow administrators to update website content easily. In the case of IDC website, DRUPAL is used as it is an open sourse platform. But the Drawback of DRUPAL is in maintaining and updating content which require a learning curve, especially for those who are

new to it. Additionally, scalability, performance optimization, and regular maintenance are essential for long-term success.

Five Layers of Garretts Model



Research Work

Secondary Research: Benchmarking

Benchmarking a college websites is essential for the redesign. It ensures that the new design aligns with industry standards and best practices. By studying and comparing the functionality, user experience, and visual appeal of other college websites, the valuable insights were gained into what works effectively for similar institutions.

This process helps identify trends, innovative features, and potential areas for improvement. Additionally, benchmarking provides a basis for setting realistic goals and expectations, ensuring that the redesigned website meets or surpasses the standards established by peer institutions, ultimately enhancing its overall performance and user satisfaction. Some of the key findings from the benchmarking are below:



- An intelligently structured header that prominently highlights crucial primary functions, while relegating secondary functions to a less prominent position, ensures an efficient and user-friendly website navigation experience.
- Leveraging the image carousel space to incorporate significant links and featuring a compelling catchphrase is an effective strategy to instantly capture the user's attention while offering convenient access to essential information.
- Introducing a secondary color into the color scheme enhances visual hierarchy, allowing for more effective differentiation and organization of visual elements.



- The semi-transparent image as a background for a specific section not only serves to delineate its boundaries but also elevates its visual allure, thereby enhancing the overall aesthetic appeal.
- A unified and consistent style to all website elements creates a cohesive and harmonious design, resulting in a more visually appealing and integrated overall web design experience.



- A uniform style for both icons and the logo significantly contributes to the holistic visual identity of the website.
- No irrelevant links in the footer. It helps in keeping the design uncluttered and clean.
- Display of copyright statement is essential as the website has many projects and data listed on the website.

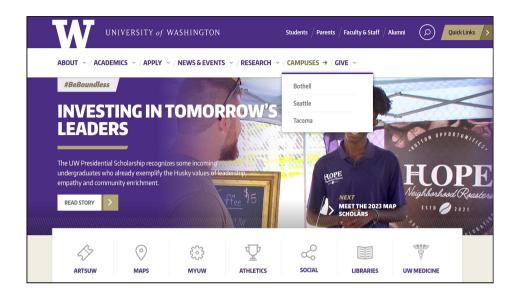


- The abstract shapes and imagery as a background element introduces an element of dynamism into the design, infusing it with a sense of vibrancy and movement.
- High contrast between the background and text color substantially improves the website's readability, making it easier for users to consume and engage with the content.

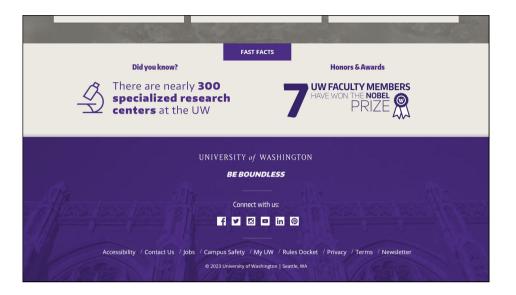




- Having a dynamic header on the homepage significantly contributes to an improved design, enhancing its visual allure and overall aesthetic appeal.
- As the user scrolls, the header automatically contracts, thereby expanding the available space for the body content, optimizing the user's browsing experience and ensuring seamless navigation.



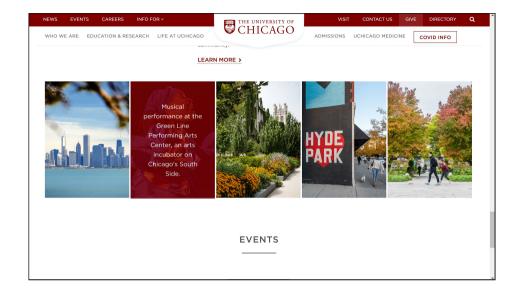
- Incorporation of microinteractions, like altering the state of elements on hover and click, serves as an effective means to enhance both the accessibility and the holistic user experience, thereby improving user engagement and satisfaction.
- The gradients layered over images proves instrumental in bolstering the legibility of text presented atop the images, ultimately resulting in an optimized reading experience and a more aesthetically pleasing visual presentation.



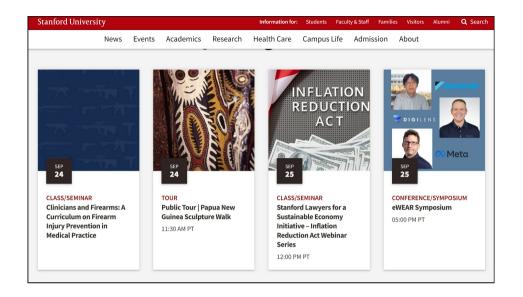
- Here, typography is leveraged strategically to guide the user's attention toward specific areas which has proved to be instrumental in facilitating navigation and ensuring a more intuitive and user-friendly browsing experience.
- Typography definitely helps particularly when certain areas of the website demand specific attention from users. It serves as a powerful tool to direct and emphasize critical information, enhancing the overall effectiveness of user engagement.



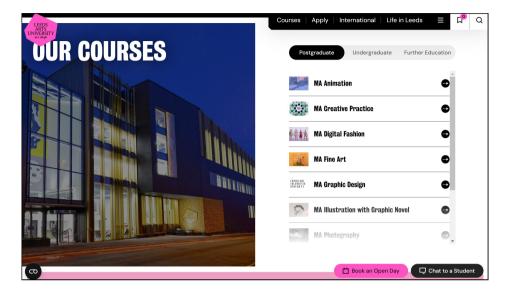
- Photographs that depict college life, including workshops, seminars, lectures, and celebrations are showcased that serves as a valuable means for external visitors to gain insight into the college's vibrant atmosphere and activities.
- Furthermore, images sourced from social media platforms are integrated directly into the photo album, complete with indicators of likes and comments, effectively showcases the wide-reaching impact and engagement of the college's social media presence.



 Use of microinteractions to provide a brief description of photographs enhances comprehension for both external visitors and newcomers, offering valuable context and insight into the images.



- Bigger cards size of event while prominently featuring event dates and concise descriptions empowers users to make informed decisions about attending events, enhancing their engagement and participation.
- Multiple events or workshops arranged in a horizontal display conveys a dynamic and active atmosphere, leaving visitors with the impression that the college is a thriving hub of activity and a vibrant place to be.



 A toggle feature is implemented that reveals additional information when a specific topic is selected. This not only conserves space but also introduces an interactive element for users, enhancing their engagement and facilitating efficient content navigation.

Key Observations and Insights

Based on both primary and secondary research, significant problems, needs, and concerns related to the user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) have been pinpointed. The following are the key observations and valuable insights gained from the research work:

- Differentiating link styles for normal, hover, and click states enhances user accessibility.
- Content review minimizes redundancy and streamlines the content hierarchy.
- Removing irrelevant images maintains visual coherence.
- Temporarily hiding pages with incomplete content streamlines user experience.
- Placing the navbar atop content improves accessibility.
- Combining icons and links reduces redundancy while enabling style changes.
- Dropdown answers enhance content organization and user engagement.
- Visual style guidelines ensure design consistency.

- Preserving original aspect ratios for logos and images prevents distortion.
- Eliminating unnecessary footer links declutters the design.
- Displaying a copyright statement demonstrates professionalism.
- Dynamic elements, like expanding headers on scroll, enhance aesthetics.
- Microinteractions with brief image descriptions improve user comprehension.
- Gradients layered over images enhance text legibility.
- Typography effectively guides user attention.
- College life photos offer insights into the institution's atmosphere.
- Social media image integration showcases reach and engagement.
- Toggle features conserve space and add interactivity.

Visual Identity - Expanding Color Palette

The current color palette offers minimal choices for establishing a clear visual hierarchy, comprising only one primary color and two text colors. To enhance visual hierarchy, it's crucial to broaden the color palette by introducing secondary colors. This expansion was achieved by utilizing the color wheel, incorporating both analogous and complementary color schemes to add secondary colors into the palette.

Current color scheme Analogous colors Complementary color Updated color scheme EE7202 FD983D FECA3C FFFFFFF CCCCCCC 145365 333333

Visual Identity - Typeface Selection

The current website relies exclusively on the Open Sans font throughout its design. While Open Sans is widely acknowledged for web development, it does come with its own set of limitations. To overcome these drawbacks, the redesigned website will adopt the Ek Mukta font, which effectively addresses many of the limitations associated with Open Sans.

Open Sans

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog 0123456789

Characterstics of Open Sans Font:

- ✓ Readability
- ✓ Versatility
- ✓ Multiple Weights and Styles
- ✓ Web-Friendly
- ✓ Localization

Ek Mukta

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog 0123456789

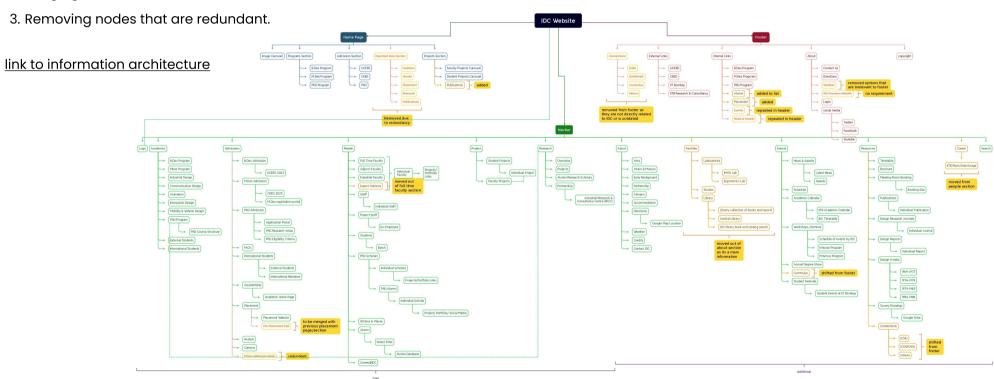
Characterstics of Open Sans Font:

- ✓ Readability
- ✓ Versatility
- ✓ Multiple Weights and Styles
- ✓ Web-Friendly
- ✓ Localization
- ✓ Designed locally
- ✓ Supports multiple Indian languages
- ✓ Less recognized then open sans
- ✓ Designed for the Indian audience
- ✓ Has a better readability

Restructuring Information Architecture

The Information Architecture was restructured based on following pointers:

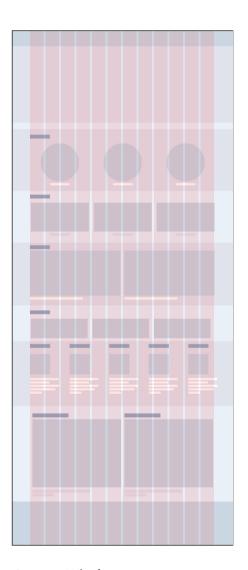
- 1. Relevancy of node placement in the IA.
- 2. Merging nodes with similar information.



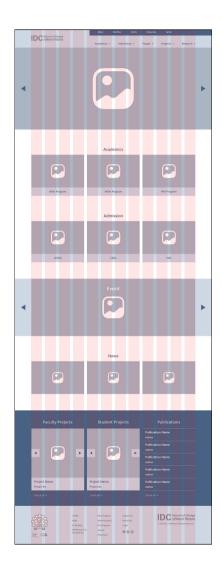
Redesigning Wireframes

Present design of the website lacks proper grid system to follow. In the redesigned wireframe, 12 grid system is used as it provides flexibility in arranging content, making it suitable for a wide range of layouts.

The 12-grid system is a popular choice for website design due to its versatility and balance. With 12 columns, it provides flexibility in arranging content, making it suitable for a wide range of layouts. It's particularly effective for responsive design, ensuring websites look and function well on various devices. This grid system simplifies the alignment of elements and allows for consistent spacing, enhancing visual appeal. Additionally, it aligns with common screen widths, making it practical for contemporary web design. Overall, the 12-grid system strikes a harmonious balance between structure and adaptability, making it an excellent choice for modern website layouts.







Redesigned Wireframe

Mobile Responsive

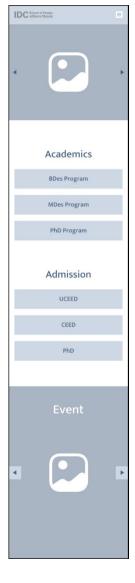
A mobile screen based wireframe is developed for the new design also for a higher compatibility between the devices.

The small cards for individual academic programs were reduced by removing images to reduce long scrolling.

The header is replaced by a hamburger menu which expands on clicking and displays the whole header as a menu. This helps in saving the space and making the website more legible.

The footer was changed from horizontal alignment to vertical alignment with the items aligned at centre.



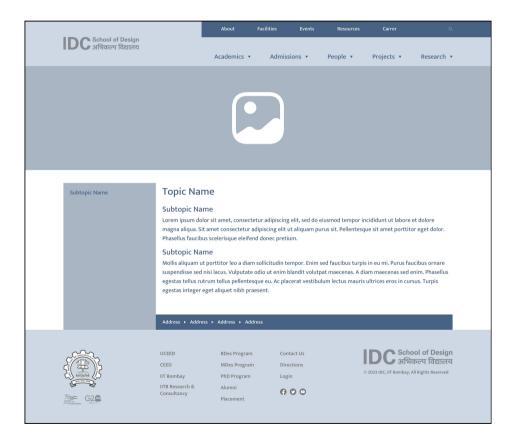






Other screens (Desktop and Mobile versions)

Other than home screen, layout for inside screens containing further information is designed. This includes the side navigation bar. This bar is removed from the mobile version of the wireframe.



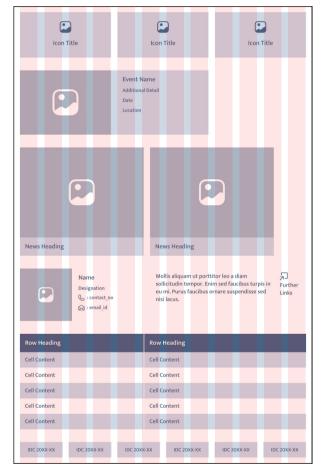
The font size and the hero banner size is reduced to adjust with the width of the mobile screen. This prevents in avoiding the long scrolls.

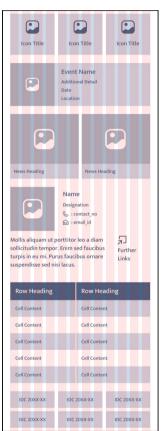


Other elements (Desktop and Mobile versions)









High Fidelity

Header



The header of existing design was having a lot of dropdown which makes it hard to understand the content hierarchy. To give more emphasis on the core information, they were separated and placed on the bottom right of the header for easy access and focus.

Rest of the dropdowns were shifted to top right along with search option. These non-core information were turn to button rather than dropdown as they don't have much hierarchy of information inside it and can easily be accessed through side navigation bar.

Footer



Footer was initially cluttered with a lot of links added to it. The links which were least important or the links which were repeated in header were removed.

The logos were corrected with their original aspect ratio for size. A copyright statement was added to alerts all visitors to website that content is copyrighted and not to be copied without prior authorization.

Background for header and footer

Any faculty or student that has been part of IDC has seen this IDC wall and it links it to their memories of IDC. Hence a lightened version is used in the background of header and footer



Academic and Admission section, home screen

EXPLORE OUR PROGRAMS

The Institute cherishes the hope that its graduates will be the leaders of tomorrow. Their education is patterned with this in view. The Institute provides excellent environment facilitating and supporting the pursuit of excellence.







DISCOVER ADMISSION PATHWAYS

If you are firm in your views and looking for a career which will give the creative streak in you an outlet and also provide you with a good living, design may be the profession for you. A learner at IDC is expected to be self motivated and hard working - with an open mind.







The title for these sections were changed from simple direct headings to a conversational type. Conversational headings often feel more approachable and can engage users on a personal level, fostering a sense of interaction.

Event Section, home screen

Initially, the upcoming events card was too small to get noticed. This was changed to a full width card showcasing all the important details in the card. A link to go to events page is added to explore all events.



News Section, home screen

On clicking on forward button, there was only one news card was getting moved instead of the both. This was changed to both the cards moving to save clicks. Also a background of design circle was added which is an another iconic element of IDC which any IDCians can relate to.





Project Section, home screen

This section contained initially only the Faculty and Students project. As the evolving focus on research and publications, a publications card was added to the project section. This will contain some of the latest publications with a link below to go to publications page.

The background of this section was change to dark. This breaks the monotonous nature of light design and also to bring prime focus to this part.

For all the news cards or the projects card, micro interactions were added such that when its hovered, the image changes from black and white to color photo to bring instant focus for this card.



Side Navigation Panel

News and Awards
Schedule
Academic Calendar
Workshops/Seminars
In-house Programs
Previous Programs
Annual Degree Show
Student Festivals

Events

The boxes around the individual pages shortcuts were removed as it was grabbing the attention despite being secondary element of focus in the screen. Hence it was changed to transparent background with different states for default, hover and active states.

Eliminating long scrolls

Wherever there was information such as semester wise credits, it was all put in in a single page. This required a lot of scrolling if anyone wants to check details about a semester which comes at the end. For this, a toggle option was given in which user can select any semester to check details of that semester.



Clickable Links

Many places the clickable links were given design treatment of a normal subtopic of a page. Thus it avoids the users gaze as a clickable link to check further. Hence, for all the clickable links, a common design was created which prompts the user to click and check the link.



Small information cards

Images were added to improve aesthetic property of the design.



Working Prototype

Figma Prototype

A full working figma prototype was developed to create the experience of the redesigned website.

It will help further anyone to create the original website as the person will know about the interactions with the elements.

link to figma prototype



Design System

Website Design Document

A Design System was developed for the new website to help the developers in developing the website further.

link to design system

Reflections

Initially, this project appeared somewhat straightforward to me, resembling tasks I had tackled in the past. However, after receiving feedback from the jury, I realized that there was more complexity involved than simply giving an appealing form to content. While I have always had an affinity for data visualization, this was the first time I had to rework on an existing website, presenting a challenging but rewarding experience. Designing an educational website posed a significant challenge, especially considering the broad target audience, unlike other projects with a more niche audience.

Restructuring Information Architecture was a particularly enjoyable aspect. Collaborating with Prof. Jayesh Pillai proved to be an interesting and educational experience. The format of our meetings allowed for peer learning, adding an extra layer of value to the collaboration.

On a personal level, I am thrilled to have acquired skills in developing interactive website. Prior to this, my expertise was limited to static websites. Now, with this newfound knowledge, I am poised to venture into the realm of dynamic and interactive websites.