



Content Strategy Report: Competitive Audit and Analysis

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March 17, 2013

Executive Summary

This content strategy report for Reel Grrls provides an analysis of the Reel Grrls website and the solutions to improving the website. The analysis first involved auditing the Reel Grrls website and the five other websites covered in this report, and choosing the best of the five other websites being audited. The chosen website belonged to the Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls.

The analysis then involved creating and analyzing page description diagrams for determining the content to be improved, and making recommendations for improving the Reel Grrls website based on the audit and the diagram.

The current Reel Grrls website serves users well, but there are issues which can be solved. The main issue found in the competitive audit was the presence of redundant content and elements throughout the website. Other issues include the large amount of content on some pages, especially the home page, as well as some links in the website pointing to nonexistent or former pages.

The first recommendation from this report is to modify the content on the home page to lower the amount of content but raise its effectiveness, by choosing and consolidating page content and elements. The second recommendation is to add more news features and posts to the home page by utilizing the existing Tumblr blog and its posts, to give the home page more current activity.

The third recommendation is to change the left column found on most pages so it would show announcements and upcoming events, instead of the current redundant links. The fourth recommendation is to add additional social media button links such as links to Flickr, Pinterest, and YouTube, so some social media presences are not left out.

The main sections of this report include:

- Current Website Situation – The current state of the website, and potential problems
- Example Website – The similar website this report will use for comparisons
- Recommendations – What should be done to the website to improve its effectiveness
- Prioritization of Recommendations – Which actions should be taken first
- Appendices
 - Appendix A – Competitive Audit & Analysis Spreadsheet
 - Appendix B – Competitive Audit & Analysis Websites
 - Appendix C – Home Page Description Diagram
 - Appendix D – Stay in Touch Page Description Diagram

Current Website Situation

The current Reel Grrls website serves users well by providing more than adequate information, and by having a consistent page layout.

Each page has the same top, with the Reel Grrls logo, social media buttons, a “Donate Here!” image link, a search box, and a main navigation bar. Each page also has the same bottom, with an address and telephone number, social media buttons, selected links, and the website’s copyright and design information.

The home page provides a basic overview of the organization, with orderly and properly spaced content. Included on the page are different categories of featured content, as well as embedded feeds of the organization’s Facebook and Twitter pages. The other pages are grouped into categories and subcategories which are indicated in the top navigation bar.

Each page outside of the home page has a left column with links to the Photo Gallery page, the Videos page, and an undefined registration page. At the bottom of the column is a short paragraph describing the organization’s purpose and mission.

While the Reel Grrls website is effective in conveying its message and purpose, the website can be improved through various means in regards to the content found on each page. An analysis of the Reel Grrls website discovered the presence of redundant content and elements throughout the website. Some links in the website point to nonexistent or former pages. Also noticeable is the length of

the home page due to the high amount of content on the page.

To determine the effectiveness of the current Reel Grrls website, a competitive audit was done on the Reel Grrls website and five other websites of similar organizations: Ghetto Film School, Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls, Powerful Voices, Global Action Project, and TVbyGIRLS

(Appendix A and B). The audit was based on multiple different measurements and heuristics, with each on a 0-2 scale, with zero being the lowest score and two being the highest score. Reel Grrls had very good audit results, and had the second highest score in the audit with 49 out of 58 points. The only organization which had better audit results was the Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls website, with a score of 52 out of 58 points. For the purposes of this competitive analysis, the Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls website will be used to compare to the Reel Grrls website.

Example Website: Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls



Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls is a nonprofit organization founded in 2004 which “empowers girls and women through music education, volunteerism, and activities that foster self-respect, leadership skills, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration”, by the offering of events and programs mainly related to rock music. The organization has a comprehensive website which helps convey the style of the organization and provides easy access to media for displaying of skills.

The Willie Mae website has many similarities to the Reel Grrls website, including similar categories and pages, the focus on visual media, and the connections to social media. Each page has the same top and bottom sections, as well as the same left column. Top column includes the organization’s logo, a main navigation bar, and a search box. The bottom column has a donate button, social media buttons, and the website’s copyright and design information.

The left column shows selected announcements of upcoming programs and events, and each announcement is in the form of an image link to the appropriate page. Notable throughout the website is the use of a logo and/or image accompanying each program and event. The home page contains recent stories and news articles related to the organization and its events, including a link to older posts in a blog format.

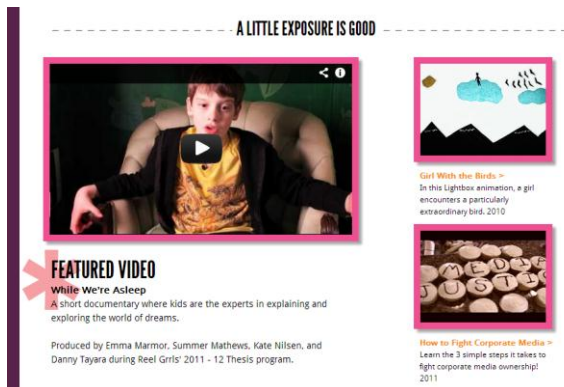
The differences found in the Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls website shows that Reel Grrls website can be improved on to be more effective at its role of serving users.

Recommendations

The following recommendations for the Reel Grrls website are directed mainly toward the home page, and for the common elements shared by multiple pages, including the left column and top and bottom page sections. These areas are easily comparable to their counterpart on the Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls website. Also, the home page gives the first impression of Reel Grrls to interested people, and this means having an effective homepage is important.

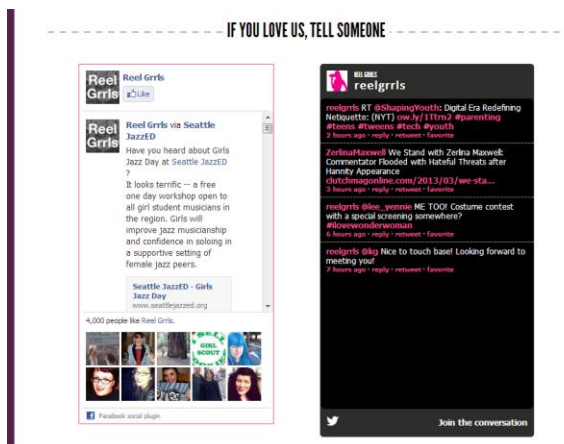
Home Page Length & Content

The Reel Grrls home page is 2,645 pixels long, while the Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls home page is 1,509 pixels long. While having significant amounts of content on the home page can be beneficial to expressing the message of Reel Grrls, it can also be problematic. New website users who find the website through a search engine are not as likely to scroll down a long page, when compared to existing users. Additionally, having more content on the home page can be an issue for people accessing the website from mobile phones and older computers. This is due to the risk of slower internet speeds and slower computer processing speeds. To solve this issue, the content on the page should be changed so the page will be shorter and less computer-demanding, and so users will be more likely to look at the whole page.



Featured Videos:

The featured videos section uses a lot of the page in relation to the amount of content it contains. Additionally, all of the featured videos are from the main Reel Grrls YouTube account, and there are no direct links in this section to the two Vimeo and the two YouTube accounts maintained by Reel Grrls. These missing links should be added to the section, and only one video should be featured in this section.



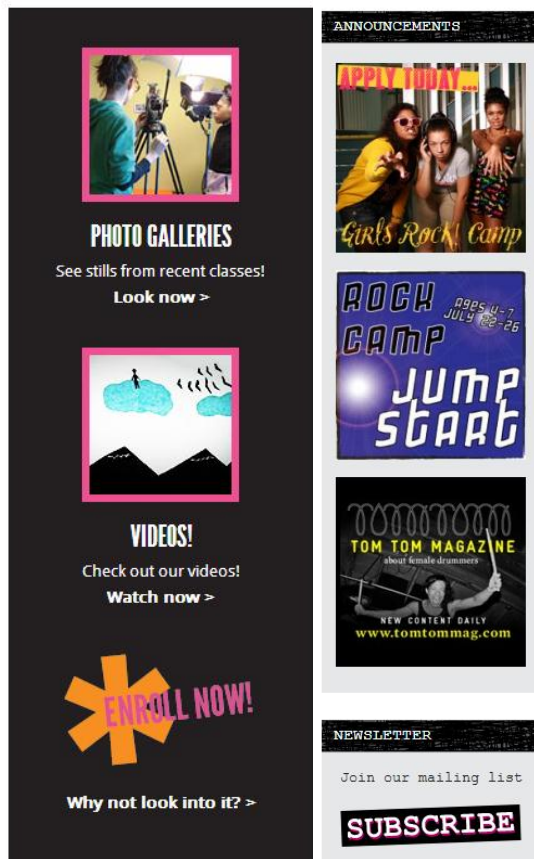
Social Media Feeds:

The social media plugins at the bottom indicate that Reel Grrls has an active presence on Facebook and Twitter. The disadvantage of these types of plugins is they can be an issue for people using mobile phones and older computers. Additionally, people interested in the feeds are usually already subscribed to them, and have no need for the feeds on the website. The feeds should be removed or modified to be smaller, and only the basic Facebook/Twitter profile information should be shown instead.

News and Features

The Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls home page contains recent stories and news articles related to the organization, which shows the reader that the home page is relatively active and ever-changing. In contrast, the Reel Grrls home page only contains links to upcoming programs, with the Reel Grrls Tumblr blog being the location of news and other posts. The issue with this is that the Tumblr blog is not easily accessible from the Reel Grrls website, with the link being located under the “About” category in the navigation bar.

A solution to this would be to have short portions of the most recent Tumblr posts featured on the home page, with each having a link to the full Tumblr post. Alternatively or additionally, a more prominent link to the Tumblr blog should be featured on the home page, so people would be more aware of the blog.



Reel Grrls

Willie Mae
Rock Camp

Left Column

The left navigation column is shown on all pages outside of the home page. The current featured links on the column are redundant with links found in the top navigation bar. Additionally, the “Enroll Now!” image link in the column links to a nonexistent page, and shows an error page when clicked on. This error occurs on every page that shows this column.

Similar to the Willie Mae website, Reel Grrls should use the left column to show featured announcements and events. This would better utilize the column as it would show more recent content which can be of greater interest to website users.

For a consistent website layout, the left column should be shown on all pages, including the home page.

Follow us on:



Social Media Buttons

The social media buttons shown on the Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls website (the top example) link to the organization's Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, YouTube, Flickr, and Vimeo pages.

The buttons shown on the Reel Grrls website (the bottom example) link to the organization's main Vimeo, Facebook, and Twitter pages, as well as an email link. What is not included and should also be given buttons are the organization's Flickr, Pinterest, and YouTube pages. On a related note, there should be a mention of the differences between the Reel Grrls pages and the Reel Grrls Workshops pages.

Prioritization of Recommendations

While all of the given recommendations of modifying the Reel Grrls website, they are not equally important, since each element on every Reel Grrls website page is different in importance to the user. A page description diagram for the Reel Grrls home page (Appendix C) and the Stay in Touch Page (Appendix D) is used to show the relative importance of each page element and section, whether or not it applies to the competitive analysis.

For the home page, the high priority sections are the featured videos and the top social media buttons. The medium priority sections are the social media plugins and the "Check Us Out" section. The low priority sections are the "Donate Here!" link, the bottom social media buttons, and the bottom navigation. The modifications which apply to the most important parts of the page should be done first, with less important modifications potentially being done later.

For the Stay in Touch page, the high priority sections are the top navigation, the social media links, and the mailing list form. The medium priority sections are the top social media buttons, the left column/navigation, and the "Enroll Now" link. The low priority sections are the "Donate Here!" link, the bottom social media buttons, and the bottom navigation.

The page description diagrams show that the low priority elements are the same, but medium and high priority elements differ due to the different content in each page. For example, the left column is not present in the home page, so the column does not show on its diagram. Also, the social media plugins are not present in the Stay in Touch page, so the plugins do not show on its diagram. The top social media buttons are at different priority levels due to the presence of social media links in the Stay in Touch page that are not present in the home page.

In order to prioritize the recommendations, the effects of the modification have to be examined on any other affected pages, due to the shared content and elements throughout the Reel Grrls website. But overall, the priorities are roughly equal across the website, so implementing solutions is not an intensive task.

Conclusion

The Reel Grrls website is currently a very well-done website, and the recommended modifications to the website, and especially the home page, would not significantly impact any other unmodified areas of the website. Overall, the number of improvements and the types of improvements are straightforward, and the improvements can be modified to fit future concerns or needs.

These improvements and modifications to the Reel Grrls website would help Reel Grrls in achieving its goals and aspirations by making it easier to convey its message and purpose. The increased integration of social media platforms with the main website due to the recommendations would also help broadcast Reel Grrls and its values.

While Reel Grrls already has an effective website to offer and work with, it is always a good thing to keep improving on it.

References

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Appendices

Appendix A – Competitive Audit & Analysis Spreadsheet

Appendix B – Competitive Audit & Analysis Websites

Appendix C – Home Page Description Diagram

Appendix D – Stay in Touch Page Description Diagram