Designing an Online Presence for Bhutanese–Nepali Refugees

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Abstract

The purpose of this project is to establish an online public platform for the Bhutanese-Nepali refugees of Utica, New York that will promote awareness and build the visual and cultural identity of a growing community. By using current information design technology, new media technologies and social networking platforms; the goals of this community are to promote awareness, educate the community, increase membership and establish a formal venue of worship. This will be accomplished by incorporating a multidisciplinary approach using techniques and technologies of graphic design, web design, web development, and branding to accomplish our goals.
Table of Contents

Introduction & Research Questions........................................................................ 4

Literature Review................................................................................................... 4
  Website design..................................................................................................... 4
  Generating traffic to a website and building an online community............... 15
  Easy to use functionality.................................................................................... 18

Design, Theory & Implementation......................................................................... 20

Findings & Analysis............................................................................................... 27

References............................................................................................................. 31

Appendix: Wordpress Guide.................................................................................. 32
Table of Figures

Figure 1: Categories of Zhang et al. ................................................................. 8
Figure 2: Hygiene and Motivational of Web Design ........................................... 9
Figure 3: A Fluid Grid for Browsers ............................................................... 13
Figure 4: A Fluid Grid for Mobile Browsers ................................................... 13
Figure 5: Initial Logo ...................................................................................... 21
Figure 6: Sitemap .......................................................................................... 22
Figure 7: Initial Website Layout ................................................................. 23
Figure 8: Facebook Page ............................................................................. 24
Figure 9: Wordpress Sub Domain Site ......................................................... 25
Introduction & Research Questions

To begin you need to know who you are designing for, then you have to come up with a plan on how to achieve that goal. To achieve this, one has to understand how to design a website, how to generate traffic to the website and make it easy for the organization to update content on its own.

Developing an online presence for a community outreach organization includes various details that will be required in order for the organization to be successful in their strategy. First the organization needs to have a website developed to act as a central hub for their online presence, then the organization would have to market its online presence in order for the public to become aware of the organization's online home. The organization would have to make the website easy to update and navigate in order for public to maintain interest when visiting the website. The designer also has to make the website easy to update for the client.

So in that respect, three research questions can be formed when developing an online presence for a community outreach organization:

1. How can a designer use theory or theories to design a website for community outreach?
2. What techniques or technologies can an organization use to market itself in order to generate traffic to the website?
3. How can a designer make it easy for the client to take over maintenance of the website?

Literature Review

Website Design

Erin Cho and Youn-Kyung Kim wrote a paper for the International Journal of Design titled, The Effects of Website Designs, Self-Congruity, and Flow on Behavioral Intention where they analyze the effects of web interface design on a consumer's behavioral intention, (Cho et al., 2012). Cho et al., contend:

“To accomplish this goal, web design and design managers must understand the ways in
which consumers choose a particular website among the many identified through searches; interact with and evaluate the site's interface design; and make a purchase from it... In this study, we investigate the concept of flow, the optimal state of focused attention, as a critical affective response generated by the way a website is designed. To this end, we promote the flow concept as a variable mediating the effects of design elements on the behavioral intention” (2012).

This is a very simple understanding amongst designers in that some websites are easier to navigate than others due to the interface present within the design. Cho et al., for the purposes of this paper incorporate the concepts of initial self-congruity and flow. Cho et al., explains self-congruity:

“...consumer behavior is driven by two basic motivational factors: maintenance/enhancement of self-esteem and self-consistency. Self-esteem is managed through avoidance of behaviors that may lead self-abasement... Self-consistency is maintained by avoidance of dissonance between self-perception and actions” (2012).

Cho et al., cites Chebat, Sirgy and St. James, writing, “... found that self-congruity increases the potential for repeated patronage by enhancing brand loyalty” (2012). Cho et al., continues this line of thought by stating:

“The personality of a product may be derived from specific product attributes, appearances, advertising, and branding strategies designed to reflect the type of current or potential customers of the product... The perceived match or mismatch between a consumer's personality and the website's personality influences the extent to which the consumer is willing to explore the site” (2012).

The authors then move on to write about the relationship between self-congruity and website design evaluation, they write:

“... with congruence existing between self-image and product image, positive bias may occur when evaluating product utility and the product may be seen as worthy of purchase regardless of its true functional performance... consumers, they generally decided whether or not a page was relevant to them in 2 to 3 seconds; furthermore, it is this first impression that appears to affect the subsequent judgments of website elements... This is called confirmation bias... driven by the motivation that people are inclined to validate, as opposed to reject, their initial hypotheses about a phenomenon” (Cho et al., 2012).

Cho and Kim also stress the importance of flow to a website, where they claim “During web navigation, the flow state can be achieved when the user has proficient skills, high arousal, and focused
attention. Such an experience likely impacts the user's positive affect and exploratory behavior” (Cho et al., 2012). Cho et al., when writing about flow, stipulates:

“These elements include speed of page loading, quality and predictability of feedback, between user input and site response, ease of navigation, simplicity, fun, utility, and the match between the virtual environment's complexity and the user's competence... flow occurs at the boundary between boredom and anxiety” (2012).

Ultimately, Cho and Kim argue that “consumers are likely to form a quick and holistic judgment of self-congruity immediately upon visiting the site; it is this positive judgment that warrants further interest and exploration of the site” (2012). The authors reason:

“... well-designed web interfaces will create an optimal state of focused attention to the site and lead consumers to be immersed in the site to the extent that they lose the sense of time and place... In terms of web design elements generating the state of flow, the results indicate that the visual design is most critical, followed by information/navigation design... That is, enabling consumers to explore and enjoy the site without security and transactional hassles also seems to be a significant factor inducing the flow state” (Cho et al., 2012).

Ping Zhang, Ruth V. Small, Gisela M. von Dran and Silvia Barcello's authored a paper titled, A Two Factor Theory for Website Design. Zhang et al., claim, “Website evaluations or usability studies have been fruitful in the past several years. There are conceptual discussions on what should be evaluated and how to do it... A proliferating list of evaluation criteria for websites provide little guidance to web designers as to the relative value of features” (2000). Instead the authors decided to apply Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor theory, where they report:

“Factors, having the potential to lead to job dissatisfaction, were called hygiene factors by Herzberg, if they were present, they tend to provide the basic conditions needed in normal work environments. They satisfy the basic physiological, safety, and social needs in the workplace. Such factors include company policies, supervision, working conditions. If not adequately provided, hygiene factors contribute to dissatisfaction with work life. Factors, having the potential to lead to job satisfaction, were called motivators by Herzberg. They tend to be more intrinsic to or under the control of individuals and appeal to their need for growth and advancement, responsibility, achievement, and recognition. When motivators were present, individuals felt satisfied with their work, when absent, they felt not satisfied, but not necessarily dissatisfied either. Herzberg concluded that the presence of hygiene factors is necessary, but not sufficient for work satisfaction” (Zhang et al., 2000).
In their study, the authors applied Herzberg's two-factor theory to a web environment. They claim that according to Herzberg's theory, website hygiene factors would be those that provide the basic architecture and content of a website (Zhang et al., 2000). The authors claim, “An example of a feature that may be defined as a hygiene factor is 'live/broken links', because if a link is live or functional, users will be frustrated and dissatisfied. Motivating factors, on the other hand, are those that contribute to user satisfaction” (Zhang et al., 2000). Zhang et al., argue that “The presence of motivators will enhance satisfaction with the website, while their absence will leave users feeling neutral, but not dissatisfied as long as the fundamentals or hygiene factors are in place” (2012). Once data was collected by the authors and analyzed using cluster analysis, they initially resulted into a total of thirteen categories, two of which were merged (privacy and security) as suggested by the data (Zhang et al., 2000). Zhang et al., provided the following results:
Using the categories as determined by Zhang et al., study, the authors were able to determine both hygiene and motivational factors for website design:
The authors have come to the conclusion, that “In an increasingly competitive web environment, motivational websites may prove to be a competitive advantage” (Zhang et al., 2000). Eventually however, the authors believe that four fundamental questions need to be answered:

1. Which individual differences and needs account for variations in evaluation?

2. Does the accelerated pace of change in the web environment contribute to user expectations that today's motivational factors are considered to be hygiene factors tomorrow?

3. Does the domain of the website or the specific task performed influence user perceptions and what it motivational or hygiene?

4. Are some features and categories more or less important in creating user satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

Dave Gehrke and Efraim Turban composed a paper titled, *Determinants of Successful Website Design: Relative Importance and Recommendations for Effectiveness*. In the study, the authors
determined five major categories: page loading speed, business content, navigation efficiency, security, and marketing/customer focus (Gehrke et al., 1999). Gehrke et al., obtained their information by conducting an extensive literature review using forty-seven papers from mid-1997 to April 1998, and over forty websites that yielded over one hundred issues related to web design (1999). The authors also surveyed one hundred and thirty online consumers and potential online consumers in Long Beach, California (Gehrke et al., 1999). Upon completion of the literature review, Gehrke et al., submitted their recommendations for web design based on category.

**Page Loading Speed:**
- Keep graphics simple and meaningful.
- Limit the use of animation and/or multimedia plug-in requirements.
- Use thumbnail graphics.
- Use progressive rendering.

**Business Content:**
- Use clear and concise text with proper spelling and grammar to describe the business.
- Make regular changes to the website.
- Limit registration forms and the amount of requested information on them.
- Create a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section.
- Avoid 'Under Construction' pages.

**Navigation Efficiency:**
- Use well labeled, accurate (no broken) links.
- Keep navigation consistent.
- Use distinctive hot buttons.
- For large sites, use a site map.
- Avoid links that open pop-up advertisements.

**Security:**
- Stress the use of security.
- Protect your copyrights.
- Generate a confirmation page after a consumer makes a purchase.

**Marketing/Customer Focus:**
- Create awareness, generate traffic, drive sales.
- Promote your site using search engines.
- Publish an email newsletter.
- Find out what the customer wants.
Designing an Online Presence for Bhutanese–Nepali Refugees

- Give users something to do.
- Provide as many payment alternatives as possible.
- Be up front about business practices.
- Create a domain name that is easy to remember.
- Avoid using visible hit counters.
- Place internal links before sending users away from the website.
- Ask for the order and offer discounts, incentives.

Gehrke et al., conclude their study by declaring that “Users... want content and service, and they want it fast. This demand will continue to drive Website design toward speed, navigation efficiency, simplicity, and elegance with an emphasis on customer focus and security (Gehrke et al., 1999).

Max Luzuriaga wrote an article for webdesign.tutsplus.com titled, Designing for a Responsive Web on how designers should design websites that can work in normal browsers and mobile devices.

Inspired by Ethan Marcotte, Luzuriaga writes of the designer's role:

“It’s important to understand that a website is not one or the other, it’s a marriage of both design and code, each depending on one another to create a seamless experience. To truly learn how to design a website, you must understand how the design will later be implemented in code, even if it’s only a rudimentary understanding” (Luzuriaga 2011).

For a responsive web design, Luzuriaga argues that one of the pillars of a responsive web design is the fluid grid (Luzuriaga 2011). Luzuriaga dictates:

“Essentially, it means that your grid, which was traditionally measured in pixels should now be thought of in terms of percent of the total page width. The actual calculated width of each column in a responsive web site changes every time the browser window changes size, and cannot be guaranteed to be the same across different devices” (2011).

That means that the design implemented for the website will not have the exact same pixel measurement for each column and that the designer should take measures to insure that the grid scales without issue (Luzuriaga 2011). For example, Luzuriaga states that designers should refrain from using textured borders in the columns of the website; no horizontal gradients and if you do have a textured background in a column, the designer should make sure it is one that can be tiled easily (Luzuriaga 2011). Luzuriaga then suggests that designers should be thinking with proportions:
“Here the developer, using CSS media queries, will adjust the font size to better fit the screen. This is a design decision... To help the developer as well as to help maintain the integrity of your original design, you should decide what text on the page should remain constant, that is, stay the same size at any screen width, and what text should be adjusted. A good example of the constantly-sized text would be body copy, or small headers that act as a larger version of the body copy” (Luzuriaga 2011).

According to Luzuriaga, the designer cannot think of creating the text in a responsive website as a point size as that would be a mistake in responsive web design. For example, Luzuriaga writes, “x should always be 1.5 times as big as y” in comparison to “x should always be 20pt bigger than y” (2011); constant values in responsive web design according to Luzuriaga is meaningless (Luzuriaga 2011).

Luzuriaga continues his article on responsive web design by writing about media queries. Media queries are a way to apply CSS rules to the page based on the size of the displaying browser. Luzuriaga continues, “The incredible power of this is that you can adjust, and indeed re-design, the entire layout of your website to fit a smaller or larger browser than the one for which you originally designed” (2011). Using media queries, designers can identify groups of elements on any website that must stay together for any layout (Luzuriaga 2011). Luzuriaga formulates, “Building your site with these modules in mind makes it easy to imagine how your layout will adapt for different viewpoint sizes” (2011). For examples, see Figure 3 and Figure 4 as provided by Luzuriaga.
Luzuriaga articulates:

“... the modules are in different places, they still display the same information as the original, just in a form more easily digestible by mobile devices or other, differently-sized browsers” (2011).

The key to the design of any website lies in the wisdom of three principles which are simplicity, consistency and clarity (Eristi 2009). Suzan Eristi claims that when designing a website, that the designer has to consider “Cultural qualifications contain the priorities, interests, personal perceptions,
Designing an Online Presence for Bhutanese–Nepali Refugees

and values of the audience characterized as user” (Eristi 2009). Eristi then lists five cultural dimensions that designers should consider when developing a website to achieve said principles as determined by G. Hofstede:

- **Power Distance (PD)**, expresses the distance between societies in which hierarchy is perceived as power, and the ones that have no sense of hierarchy as power in the context of the distances between hierarchical importance, emphasis, and hierarchical relations.
- **Individualism-Collectivism (IDV)** describes the distance between collective preferences brought by the social life of the cultures where environmental factors (family, friends, colleagues etc.) are dominant and personal preferences in decision-making process of individuals in social life.
- **Masculinity-Femininity** (MAS) dimension contains the highlights between men and women over the content of social roles and differences between highlights and degrees in different countries.
- **Uncertainty Avoidance (UA)** dimension is about the competence range over decision-making and application processes.
- **Long-Term Orientation (LTO)** Hofstede separates eastern and western countries. He emphasizes that eastern countries mostly focus on application and virtual behaviors while western countries focus on belief and the search for truth (Eriste 2009).

Eriste then starts to discuss the design process, starting with metaphors; Eriste defines metaphors “... are cultural highlights that lead to permanence in the images of the design and content” (2009). The next component according to Eriste is navigation, which is defined as, “... is the motion of the control panels and dialog boxes of menus within the arrangement of designing process” (2009). Finally, Eriste defines appearance, “... is how the design emerges (with visuals, sound, and text content etc.)” (2009). Eriste then agrees with Hofstede in declaring that “Five cultural dimensions that Hofstede (1980) has designated are indeed considerably effective on finding ways about how interactive media designs can be adapted to cultural differences in different countries” (Eriste 2009). Eriste therefore declares:

“Therefore, designer is supposed to define some criteria related to web site in parallel with cultural values in the design process... Web design components which reveal the cultural elements in a web design can be listed as language, page layout, symbols, color,
visual images, and sound/music... For example, features like the position of buttons, flow direction of page either horizontally or vertically, and page layout balance of the design as a whole make up the cultural quality of page layout. Cultural quality of page layout should be arranged in a way that can facilitate the readability of the structure, content, and information access in the web page” (Eriste 2009).

Eriste conducted a study of fifteen university websites from different parts of the world. After concluding her study, Eriste determined:

“Significant differences across regions can be observed when sites are grouped in themselves. In the sites from Europe, designs focus more on the page use and screen display whereas, in Far East and Islamic countries, a layout flowing from top to bottom is apparent for both English and native language contents, which stems from the typographic features and their alphabet. The use of this quality is quite applicable for countries from Far East and Islamic cultures; however, it has limitations on the international basis... As a result of this change, intercultural interaction has increased, the perspectives of cultures towards each other have evolved; and due to this evolution, ways to reflect cultural identities as a need for global life have changed drastically” (Eriste 2009).

**Generating traffic to a website and building an online community**

A designer has to build a website with search engine optimization (SEO) in mind. Luckily Google provides an easy to use document (http://goo.gl/ji7N) that can help any designer design an SEO friendly website. Basics include creating accurate page titles by using title tags, according to Google, a title tag tells both users and search engines what the topic of a particular page is. Google summarizes some best practices for these basics which are accurately describe the page's content, create unique title tags for each page and use brief but descriptive titles. Google also advises to make use of the “description” meta tag as it can give Google or other search engines a summary of what the page is about. Google also advocates that web designer's should improve the structure of URLs as it can lead to better crawling of your documents by search engines. Google also suggests that a designer consider navigation, as the navigation of a website helps visitors find content they want in a timely manner and to plan out navigation based upon a website's homepage. Google also recommends that a designer prepare two sitemaps, one for users and the other for search engines called and XML Sitemap that
could be submitted to Google Webmaster Tools. A very important factor Google seems to iterate would be to include quality content and services on a website; Google articulates creating compelling and useful content for your visitors. Google encourages designer's to add “alt” attributes to images placed on the website as it displays specific alternative text for images if one cannot be displayed., images should also be saved using common file formats. To continue Google also advocates to use heading tags appropriately as they emphasize important text. Google also emphasizes that designer's should make use of free webmaster tools in which they provide an example by indicating that Google webmaster tools help webmasters better control how Google interacts with websites. Other search engines such as Yahoo! and Bing offer webmaster tools as well.

The website is a digital hub so when the client is ready to take over maintenance of the website, it would be time to start learning how to use the website to start building a community. Authors Sanna M. Kallioranta, Richard P. Vlosky and Scott Leavengood wrote an article titled, *Web-Based Communities as a Tool for Extension and Outreach* which attempts to do just that. Kallioranta et al., in their introduction state, “The Internet is not only the global super-warehouse of information but is also a modifying tradition models of social interaction. In the broadest terms, the Internet can be described as an online community” (2006). The authors then continue to write about online communities:

“A community can be described as a group of people who share social interactions and links between themselves and the other group members and who occupy the same area for some time... the Internet can facilitate the creation of networks and sustain community ties, thus forming meaningful and supportive relationships... On-line communities do not require spatial proximity for members... People can have numerous reasons for seeking an on-line community involvement, including a shared interest, a desire to interact and/or cooperate with like-minded people regardless of proximity, an opportunity to conduct discussions with experts, educational interests, entertainment, and conducting commercial transactions” (Kallioranta et al., 2006).
Kallioranta et al., also discuss characteristics of a virtual community as established by Driskel and Lyon circa 2002:

- **Spatially liberated** Place does not matter. Members need not be in close proximity.
- **Socially ramified** More heterogeneous in social characteristics such as race, religion, income, etc., than face-to-face communities.
- **Topically fused** A narrow focus on a specific topic.
- **Physiologically detached** Lacks an element of trust due to limited information and social cues about the other community members.
- **Limited liability** Ties keeping the community together are weak. Leaving and changing community is common (Kallioranta, 2002).

Kallioranta et al., continued to articulate:

“On-line communities must create and maintain tangible reasons for people to join, stay, and be active in the community... We have observed that seven foundation elements of on-line communities are fairly common... These are 1) mission and focus, 2) content, 3) sociability, 4) roles, 5) technology and usability, 6) trust and 7) participation motivation” (2006).

The authors also address the challenges of creating and maintaining online communities in which they argue, “... much of the money invested in on-line communities is wasted because companies have done a poor job in designing and implementing these tools” (Kallioranta et al., 2006). The authors write that when trying to establish an online community, one should also have a “... thorough understanding of the target group's characteristics is needed to build an effective and successful on-line community” (Kallioranta et al., 2002).

Kallioranta et al., also provide examples of online communities in their paper such as the Louisiana Forest Products Community (www.laforestproducts.org). The website was designed for the purpose of facilitating business exchange and promoting forest-sector economic development in Louisiana. The authors report:

“One especially attractive motivation for developing the Website is that the LFPC allows small rural companies to have the same exposure and market opportunities as large companies. The Community is a collaborative effort of key institutions in industry, government, not-for-profit development organizations, and academia. Funding for
Website development was provided by the Louisiana Department of Economic Development and the Louisiana Forest Products Development Center, part of the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center” (Kallioranta et al., 2006).

The website is divided into five distinct sectors: (1) Primary Wood Products (2) Secondary (value-added) Wood Products (3) Engineered Wood Products (e.g., laminated veneer lumber, glulam beams, parallel strand lumber) (4) Equipment Manufacturers and Distributors, and (5) Logging and Harvesting and each segment is a stand-alone sub-community (Kallioranta et al., 2006). On the website there are three-hundred company site members. The authors also report that manufacturers present on the website can search for raw materials and equipment for their companies (Kallioranta et al., 2006).

**Easy to use functionality**

All the previous authors and articles presented discussed the best design practices and how to generate traffic to a website but they failed to explain how website owners can update content on their own. The best way to do that is through a content management system (CMS) such as Wordpress, Joomla or Drupal. Smashing Magazine published an article by Robert Hartland detailing what a CMS is defined as:

“...is a Web-based solution that makes it easy for a company to manage website updates internally. For many companies, updating a website is not something to look forward to because it can be a lengthy and, over time, expensive process. Most companies search for easier means of accomplishing their goals. The solution that many large and small companies have found is a CMS. The easy-to-use application allows your company to control its online identity with little to no knowledge of Web design” (2009).

A CMS uses templates, content and meta data (Hartland 2009). Hartland explains the following:

“Templates control how your content looks on the page and are extremely helpful when you have to produce a lot of pages (10+). The template is a graphic wrapper that usually looks the same on every page of the website, regardless of the content. It makes your website’s look and feel consistent. When you want to change the template (say, the color or an image), you have to make the change only once and it will be reflected on every page of your website... Content is created, managed and edited independent of all other CMS elements. Content could be anything from the text on your “About” page to the photo on your company press release. All content is normally managed through a WYSIWYG editor (what you see is what you get) that has integrated photo uploading tools. This helps you create new pages on your website, manage and edit existing pages.
and assign pages to multiple areas without having to copy them... Meta data plays a key part in search engine optimization (SEO). The great thing about a CMS is that it makes it nearly impossible for you to forget to add this information, thus helping your website’s search and index ranking on search engines such as Google, Yahoo and Bing. Meta data contains such information as category, author, publishing date, title, brief description and keywords.” (2009).

A CMS contains primary features, which include easy publishing without any programming knowledge, typography tools, easy to use organization, member management and built-in security (Hartland 2009). Content management system's also offer blogs so that webmasters can regularly update content to their website. Three additional functions a CMS can offer an organization are:

- **Photo Galleries:** Online photo sharing is becoming this era’s scrapbooking. With the increase in social media use, people can easily send everyone they know a link to their latest photo gallery.... Businesses can use this feature to showcase recent events or feature products. By organizing and displaying photos from within your CMS, you can have all of your content in one location (Hartland 2009).

- **Video Management:** helps you organize, edit and distribute video content. You no longer have to upload videos to YouTube or Vimeo and then manage them separately. You can manage your video content just as you manage your website’s pages. You can upload almost any kind of video and then share your albums and videos on your website and on social networks. (Hartland 2009).

- **RSS Feeds:** Syndicate the content on your website. It does not matter whether you update your website daily or monthly, your readers will be sure never to miss an update. Millions of websites publish RSS feeds on a regular basis, and yours should not be an exception. With people’s attention spans shrinking along with their free time, letting users choose the content they want to read through an RSS feed is helpful. (Hartland 2009).

In creating the website in accordance with the aforementioned methods, a designer can design a website, generate traffic to the website and provide easy to use functionality for the website owners in order to easily generate content. The literature provided includes examples of what to do and what not to do when developing a website.

Cho et al., argued for a strong website interface design which would allow consumers to be immersed in the website. Zhang el al., conducted a study in which they were able to determine using Herzberg's theory, motivational factors for consumers to stay on the website. Gehrke et al., developed
Designing an Online Presence for Bhutanese–Nepali Refugees

five primary principles to guide the process of designing a website. Google provided a how-to guide for search engine optimization and Luzuriaga expressed the importance of developing a responsive website due to the proliferation of mobile devices that can access the internet. Kallioranta et al., provided examples of online communities that are developed around websites and Hartland detailed the advantages of using a content management system so that a client can easily update the website once the designer is done developing the site. Eriste also stressed the importance of cultural values when designing a website which would give me a better way to gauge what is important to the client.

Design, Theory & Implementation

Initially, the group (including Julie DelMedico and Mary Christopher) that I am a member of met with Sagar Rijal to discuss developing a website for a new community outreach organization working with Bhutanese-Nepali refugees. Sagar’s initial purpose for the organization is to create a Hindu temple and cultural center to serve the local community and provide religious and educational programs for the public to learn about Bhutanese-Nepali culture and the Hindu religion. Sagar also expressed interest in developing a logo for the organization (See Figure 5). When starting this project, the evaluation objectives that I issued for myself when developing this website were:

1. To create a simple visual and elegant design that would work on both standard browsers and mobile browsers.
2. To build a website that uses search engine optimization and has social networking capability built into the website to make the organization's website easier to find.
3. To provide an easy way for the organization to solicit donations from the public.
4. To implement an update process that would be easy for the client to take over responsibility of the website themselves.
The reasoning that I chose these objectives is because (1) I would argue that an organization's visual communication on the web influences an organization's credibility (2) Search engine optimization would help the organization reach a larger audience (3) The organization will need a digital avenue to collect donations in order to achieve their goal of building a Hindu temple in the Utica community and (4) the client needs to take responsibility for the website as soon as the design process is completed.

The theory used in this design is a conglomeration of findings from author L.J. Kensicki, reported in his paper titled *Building credibility for non-profit organizations through webpage interface design* and other sources discussed in the literature review. Kensicki writes:
“Credibility based on the audience's perceptions of the source has proven to be multifaceted, with several factors affecting overall credibility. For example, previous knowledge about the source itself has shown to have a strong impact on resulting source credibility, but audience perceptions of credibility have also been inferred from source credentials. Safety, qualifications, and dynamism; competency and objectivity as well as expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness within the source have all been suggested to enhance source credibility” (Kensicki, 2003).

Provided below is the original site map for the website which was originally called the Hindu Association of Utica, New York, which worked perfectly for Sagar's domain name, hauny.org.

When designing the website, I intended to website to always be a symmetrical design as described by Kensicki's study. My reasoning behind that choice was that I wanted to organization to have a a credible interface design and make it easy to update. So I chose to use the Wordpress content management system to build the website. The website initially was designed using an educational theme (See Figure 6) provided by studiopress.com as Sagar expressed interest in educating the local community.
The process experience of designing the website was like Kensicki describes citing Sturken, Cartwright, and Dyson “... visual imagery instantaneously affects how we perceive the message and messenger. Visual images are central to how we 'represent, make meaning, and communicate in the world around us.' This is fundamentally important in a culture that has become increasingly visual and within a medium, such as the internet, that relies heavily on the synergy between visual and textual messages” (Kensicki 2003).

When I originally used/created this design for the website I created a responsive website as it would work on both standard and mobile browsers using the studiopress education theme and child theme. I was also able to set up the initial website for Sagar, of which I would be able to teach him how to update himself quite easily with a brief training session. All that my group and I had left to do was populate the website with the information as provided by Mary Christopher. Julie DelMedico was
tasked with developing a marketing strategy to promote the website in both online and offline venues.

At this point in the project, the parameters changed as dictated by Sagar. Sagar now was no longer interested, at least with my understanding of having a domain name and the group was tasked with transferring all the work to a subdomain of the wordpress website which would be of no cost. Sagar also insisted on changing the name of the organization against my groups advice to the Association of Hindu Society of Utica, New York. Regardless of the name change, the design process would have to start over, although not completely.

Julie DelMedico, earlier in the course of this project developed a Facebook fan page (See Figure 8) which was titled Hindu Association of Utica, New York. Now at Sagar's request, the name has been changed to the Association of Hindu Society of Utica, New York and during the process of setting up the Facebook fan page she created a new email and password for Sagar to use:

Username: hauny001@gmail.com
Password: SUNYIT123

Figure 8: Facebook page
Using the account information as dictated by Julie DeMedico I set up a free Wordpress blog at hauny001.wordpress.com (See Figure 8) for Sagar to use as the associations website (See Figure 9).

Figure 9: Wordpress Sub Domain Site

Figure 9 is just the base template for the design. Sagar requested using the colors, red and yellow as they culturally important to his people. To design this Wordpress website I am mostly going to follow Kensicki’s theory on webpage interface design, which includes the following four hypotheses, one of which was mentioned earlier in this paper.

1. The non-profit organization with a structured, symmetrical website interface design will be judged as more credible than the non-profit organization with an organic, asymmetrical website interface design.

2. The non-profit organization that has a website with photography will be judged as more credible than the non-profit organization that has a website that does not use photography.
3. The non-profit organization with a website interface design that utilizes cool, muted colors will be judged as more credible than the non-profit organization that uses warm, bright colors in its website interface design.

4. The non-profit organization's website interface design that is viewed as more credible will be more likely to engender intended participation than the non-profit organization's website interface design that is viewed as less credible. (Kensicki 2003).

Problems that I believe will arise within the design and some that have already occurred include a lack of communication between the client and my group due to a language barrier and cultural misunderstanding. Also the wordpress sub domain will limit the design of the website as according to the requirements of Wordpress.com in comparison to the freedom offered by the Wordpress content management system itself. I am also slightly concerned about the credibility of their website given the colors that Sagar requested in comparison to Kensicki's hypotheses.

When Kensicki tested his four hypotheses, he used non-profit organizations specializing in the death penalty and abortion issues. He compared the credibility for each side of the issues and found some interesting results when testing his hypothesis.

“When comparing design styles, there were differences between the death penalty website and the abortion website. When abortion sites were shown in contrast to one another along design styles, the organic asymmetrical website was consistently found to be the most 'believable' (78.9% when compared against the text only site; 69.2% when compared the the asymmetrical site; and 61.7% when compared to the symmetrical site” (Kensicki 2003).

For the issue of the death penalty, Kensicki found something different. The pro-death death penalty websites with a structured symmetrical were found to be the most believable. In this respect given my limited understanding of Bhutanese-Nepali culture I chose to be conservative in the design and create a symmetrical website that would provide an atmosphere of credibility to the website. Regarding photography, the second hypothesis was found to be true as both abortion and death penalty
sites were found to be more credible regardless of ideological position if photography was presented on the website. Kensicki's third hypothesis regarding color was rejected, as fifty-five percent of one hundred and thirty-three students found that sites with bright colors were considered more credible. Kensicki's fourth hypothesis however proved that the credibility of the website interface design was found to be more credible among participants who already had a strong position on either issue. Ultimately Kensicki wrote, “Contrary to previous work in this area, structured websites with strong alignment and symmetry were not found to be uniformly more credible... This may be a reflection of the issue itself... Therefore, this study appears to confirm what good designers have always understood: content is integral in dictating design” (Kensicki 2003).

If any future analysis of this website is to be completed, the only element that is going to make a difference in the website design is how often the owners will update the content. I can make the website interface design as credible as possible but without continual content the website will remain stagnant and lose viewership over the long term. In order to increase the chances of the website being viewed, a social networking strategy and search engine optimization have to be completed as the marketing of the website will be detrimental to its success.

Findings and Analysis

The website was developed as if working for a client, so in that case I decided to treat the project as such. When developing the website I set out to meet four objectives:

1. To create a simple visual and elegant design that would work on both standard browsers and mobile browsers.
2. To build a website that uses search engine optimization and has social networking capability built into the website to make the organization's website easier to find.
3. To provide an easy way for the organization to solicit donations from the public.
4. To implement an update process that would be easy for the client to take over responsibility of the website themselves.

For the first objective, I decided to create the website as a responsive website so that it would work flawlessly with both mobile and standard browsers. Users can view the website without problems using a desktop/notebook computer, tablet or smartphone. For the second objective I followed Google's guidelines and optimized the website for search using both Google and Bing webmaster tools. The third objective I failed to implement as I never received any indication from Sagar as to what he wished to do. The fourth objective was met by implementing the Wordpress content management system so that Sagar could easily update content. To return to my research questions,

1. How can a designer use theory or theories to design a website for community outreach?
2. What techniques or technologies can an organization use to market itself in order to generate traffic to the website?
3. How can a designer make it easy for the client to take over maintenance of the website?

To answer the first question, in this case all the literature came together to form a cohesive whole. The most important aspects of web design are the visuals, navigation and programming, for every website you want to keep the visual design simple and easy to understand as that will help with the navigation of the website. This factors into Cho et al., theory of flow meaning that if the user has a good or smooth experience, they are more likely to believe in the credibility of the website. Once visuals are established, navigation is the next important factor of web design. If appropriate navigation is provided, meaning an easy to use menu system and no broken links that usually means that the user can find any information available on the website with little problem. These two characteristics of the design provide both hygiene and motivational factors (Figure 2) for the user (Zhang et al., 2000). In respect to programming, by understanding Luzuriaga's sentiment of a website being a marriage of design and code, a designer is better equipped to design a website that would work on all venues of
To answer the second question is a three pronged solution, search engine optimization, marketing and social networking. From the standpoint of the designer, I can only open up avenues for each of these purposes. Search engine optimization is key to understanding how a website is indexed by search engines, by using webmaster tools provided by major search engines, a designer of a website can make the website viable for search. Marketing is crucial if one wishes to extend their user base into the larger community, by providing a logo for the organization I started the process of creating a brand that they can market into their local community using the refugee center of Utica, New York. In order for the website to be successful it has to start from within their local community and expand into the broader community if they wish to achieve the mission of teaching a “...rich spiritual heritage of Hindu philosophy and religion to devotees of all ages and nationalities” as written on their website. Social networking capability is provided by linking their Facebook fan page to the website. Within the Wordpress content management system, it is possible for them to incorporate a twitter feed if they desire. Using the Wordpress CMS, sharing options are also provided to users inherently making the website social. Therefore when developing this website I thought it was my responsibility to make the website accessible to all groups at least within the Utica community.

To answer the third question; while working in conjunction with Mary Christopher, we were able to create a guide that will allow the new administrator (Sagar) to take over responsibility of the website. We also made it easy by making the website into a content management system where Sagar could easily upload content, photos and embed video. Given the limitations of the website being under a sub-domain, I would not recommend for the new administrator to upload video directly to the website as it could easily eat up there allocated storage as determined by the Wordpress website. There is one final question to answer and that is, what would you do if the client went against your advice. This happened in this project on three occasions when deciding on the name, color and domain registration
for the website. Given that I approached this project like I was working for a client, I treated Sagar like a client. If he was a paying client, I would provide advice and then support his decision regardless of my disapproval because I would want to get paid for my work.

For this project, Sagar insisted on calling his organization the Association of Hindu Society of Utica, New York so I let him do it, I advised him given that a domain name he was already paying for (hauny.org) would meld perfectly with the name the Hindu Association of Utica, NY and it would make more sense and not be awkward in its phrasing. The colors was another issue, I was willing to incorporate red and yellow into the design as they are colors important to Hindu culture, but I wished to incorporate other appropriate colors into the design as well such as purple, green and orange that would reference the Holi festival; red and yellow is reminiscent of the fast food chain McDonald's in the United States, and given that his primary audience currently resides in the United States he would need to differentiate his brand. With the domain registration of the website, I wanted to make sure that any users that hit the website stay on the website; by paying for domain hosting, an administrator will have a better opportunity to keep users on their personal websites as they would not have to surf to third party websites for content such as YouTube or any photo sharing website. With their own domain registered, they would have more storage for content as the purpose of a website is to keep users on your website. In conclusion, working with someone or a group from another culture takes a lot of patience and understanding.
Reference


Appendix

A WordPress Guide for Understanding and Maintenance

By Mary Christopher and Lee Crisman

Questions?

Email Lee Crisman at lcrisman@gmail.com or Mary Christopher at marychristopher13501@yahoo.com
Direction on how to use this guide.

The purpose of this manual is to provide the user with a comprehensive guide for understanding and operating a WordPress.com website and blog. The user is given instruction on what to do from the initial log in step and then how to navigate through different features within the site.

The user will learn:
About the content was created for the website
How to add, edit and delete posts and insert media
How to respond to visitors’ comments
What support services and resources are available if additional help is needed

WHAT IS WORDPRESS?
WordPress.com is a website creation tool and hosting platform that allows anyone to publish online. It is also an open source blogging tool and all of its codes and files are free to use, customize and enhance. WordPress incorporates publishing, editing and maintaining content from a central interface.

![Log in to WordPress](image)

Figure 1

LOGGING INTO WORDPRESS
1.) In your search bar, type the web address: hauny001.wordpress/wp-admin/
2.) The WordPress.com homepage will appear, enter the email address associated with Hindu Society: hauny001@gmail.com
3.) Then enter the password: SUNYIT123
4.) Once both prompts are entered, select log in. This will bring you to the site dashboard.
Becoming Familiar with the Dashboard

Figure 2

The Dashboard is the main control menu for the website that allows the user to add, edit and maintain contents on the site. The user can move back and forth from the Dashboard to the website. These two figures (Figure 2 and Figure 3) display the Dashboard and website homepage.
Anytime a user wants to move from the website back to the Dashboard, (see Figure 3), they should:

1.) Hover the cursor over the Association of Hindu… link and wait for a drop down menu to appear.
2.) When it does, select Dashboard to be taken back to the Dashboard.

**Site Contents**

Content within the website can be accessed through the homepage and Dashboard. It is organized into five category tabs on the top of the homepage. They are: Mission, News, Gallery, Hindu Festivals & Holidays and Contact (see Figure 4). Selecting any of these tabs on the homepage will bring you to content saved under those categories. Editing or adding information to these categories can be done under the Pages icon on the Dashboard (see Figure 2) and is explained in “Editing Content on the Website” section in this guide.

**Figure 4**

**Category summaries:**

The Mission category is featured right on the homepage and is an overview of the goals, visions and history of the Association of Hindu Society. There is a subcategory under Mission called What is Hinduism? that provides information on the Hindu religion.

News is the blog section of the site where posts or stories about people, culture, events or any information relevant to the Hindu Society should be posted.

Gallery is a section of photos. It has a subcategory called Starting Over Utica that features a video of refugees who have resettled in Utica.

Hindu Festivals & Holidays gives an overview of important festivals and holidays celebrated by Hindus.

Contact provides a phone number for Mukti “Sagar” Rijal and a question form that will be emailed to hauny001@gmail.com.
Adding A New Post Under The News Tab

1.) Be in the Dashboard (see Figure 5)
2.) Hover cursor over Posts
3.) Select Add New
4.) This will open a page called Add New Post (see Figure 6)
5.) It is here where the user will name the post by typing in the Enter Title Here box.
6.) Then text for the story should be typed in the large area of white space under the bar of small icons (see Figure 6).
7.) The post can either be published by selecting the Publish icon or saved as draft by selecting Save Draft (see Figure 7).

Figure 5

Figure 6
Figure 7

Publishing a post on the WordPress site means it can be viewed by anyone who visits the page. Posts are arranged in reverse-chronological order.

If a post is saved as a draft, others cannot view it. Only a site administrator (someone with the email/username and password) can see the draft and it will be listed in reverse chronological order with other posts.
Adding Media

1.) Be in the post where the image will be inserted (see Figure 8).
2.) Have the cursor in the desired location where the image will be inserted.
3.) Select Add Media
4.) Another page will open and select Upload Files (see Figure 9).
5.) Then choose Select Files (see Figure 10)
6.) Select the photo from its saved location and select Open (see Figure 11).
7.) The photo will be put in an Insert Media Library, select the desired image so a check mark appears in the corner (see Figure 12) and then select Insert Into Post (see Figure 12).
8.) The post will appear with a code for the image in the spot where it will be inserted (see Figure 13). Select Update for the image to appear in the post.
Inserting a Video

1.) Like inserting a photo or image, have the cursor placed in the post where the video will be inserted.
2.) Open another window or tab and find the desired video. YouTube is used as an example (see Figure 14).
3.) Find the Embed code and select it (Figure 14).
4.) When the Embed code appears, copy the code (Figure 14).
5.) Go back into the post where the video will be inserted.
6.) Paste the code into the post (see Figure 15).
7.) The video can be viewed before being published by selecting Preview (Figure 15).
8.) Then publish the post by selecting Publish (Figure 15).
Editing Website Content

All content on the website can be edited and found through the Dashboard.

1.) Hover the cursor over the Pages icon on the Dashboard and select All Pages when it appears (see Figure 16).
2.) This brings you to a menu of site content. Choose the category that needs editing and hover the cursor over the link (see Figure 17). A small menu bar will appear underneath the title, select Edit.
3.) Now you are in the page or post that needs the editing. Make the necessary changes, but leave coded text exactly as it is within the content (see Figure 18).
4.) When finished, select View Change to see the changes made.
5.) Then select Update to refresh the content (Figure 18).

![Figure 16](image1.png)

Selecting Pages and choosing All Pages brings you to a menu of site content.

![Figure 17](image2.png)

Hovering over any title will bring up a line of options. To edit, click Edit.
Deleting a Post or Image

This is similar to the Editing process in the above section.

1.) Choose which item needs to be deleted and hover over the title until the small menu bar appears (Figure 19).
2.) Select Trash
3.) The item will be removed from that list of content and put into the Trash.
4.) Images are done in a similar way, but start by selecting the Media icon and then select Library (Figure 20).
5.) A list of images stored in the Media Library will appear (Figure 21). Hover of the desired image to be deleted and a small menu bar will appear to the right. Select Delete Permanently to delete the image.
Designing an Online Presence for Bhutanese–Nepali Refugees

Figure 20

Figure 21
Commenting on a Post

Any user (unless blocked by security settings, addressed in the section below) can leave comments under blogs in the News section by:

1.) Selecting the Leave a comment link at the end of the blogs (Figure 22).
2.) The administrator can comment on any post left there by selecting the same Leave a comment link and then responding in the Leave a Reply box (Figure 23).
3.) Then select Post Comment and it will appear as a response.
Comments throughout the site can be viewed in list form by:

1.) Selecting the Comments icon in the Dashboard.
2.) A list will appear (Figure 24) that shows all comment types and allows the user to respond, approve, remove or block to visitor comments.

![Image of Comments icon in Dashboard]

*Figure 24*

**Additional Support and Resources**

There are additional WordPress.com support resources online if this guide does not address questions and concerns a user might have. Some resources include:


WordPress.com forum where staff and experienced peers answer user questions posted in the forum: [http://en.forums.wordpress.com/tags/help](http://en.forums.wordpress.com/tags/help)

Several online videos demonstrate how to navigate the many features of WordPress.com. 
[http://sunyittechnologist.wordpress.com/2013/01/17/creating-a-wordpress-blog/](http://sunyittechnologist.wordpress.com/2013/01/17/creating-a-wordpress-blog/) 
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2aKrA7mCg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2aKrA7mCg)