

Interface Redesign: Dynamic Drive

www.dynamicdrive.com

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Executive Summary

The Dynamic Drive website contracted with INP Associates of Washtenaw Community College to create a new interface layout for the website (www.dynamicdrive.com/). According to the common complaints of users, the website will concern the current interface design, and incite for the redesign of the current site. The complaints involved the design of the Navigation menu, position of the Navigation labels and, the length of the page. The interface redesign of the Navigation bar will appear closer to the sides and top of the page making no scrolling up and down necessary for small pages, like the front and others in the site. The interface redesign targets these issues, as well as others, proposing a solution that resolves the problems.

This material is organized into four major sections, with an appendix containing screenshots of the current page and sub page design. The sections are:

- **Analysis of Current Interface:** The current interface is deconstructed into component elements and the strengths and limitations of the current design are discussed.
- **Redesigned Interface Wireframes:** The order of interface elements is presented for both Home page and Sub page.
- **Analysis of Redesigned Interface:** Discussed solutions for the proposed interface and how interface issues are resolved.
- **Implementation Options:** The approaches to implementing the redesigned interface are introduced, with thoughtful attention to their benefits and disadvantages.

The redesigned interface offers a number of benefits over the existing interface, including the following improvements.

- Position of the global navigation menu and change the visual look and the position.
- Not easy to read in the website is very ordinary, no differences between the Global Nav's and the text.
- Reduce scrolling up and down.
- The links to the left and right sides should change the background color to provide esthetics pleasing and eye catching.
- Add a drop down box for the DHTML script categories links.
- Change the bottom Global Nav to add the same labels as in the top and left Global Nav, to keep consistency.
- Make all the sub pages consistency with the Home page, like Global Nav's.

Analysis of Current Interface

The interface for the Dynamic Drive website *dynamicdrive.com* (see Appendix A) uses a type of Navigation bar which causes the users some confusion in the way to find the global navigation. The position of the navigation is not very clear and quick to find in the present position in the website. The size of the page requires scrolling down to access a diversity of links. Leaving the top navigation bar away, an example: in a case when users need to look at a certain part of the page, and then do a search, they have to leave what they were doing, to scroll up. Some link has an explanation under it, causing the page to scroll down. The global navigation, the graphical global navigation bar, as well as the entire content area, are fixed-width, align-center, and are designed for optimal display at 800 x 600. The site colors are muted simple but not very easy for users to distinguish information to the links on the left and right side. There is no image, which makes the site to download very fast using a 56k modem.

Interface Elements

The Dynamic Drive *dynamicdrive.com* interface includes the following components, which will be put forward in some structure (changes are made in some components) addicted to the redesigned interface:

- The position of the two global navigation menu
- The writing names in the global navigation
- The reduce scrolling up and down make the home page smaller in height.
- The links to other pages, on the right and left side will be with a different background color.
 1. Take out the links in the central part of the page and make a drop down box.
 2. Leave the link named explained at once
- The bottom menus will keep consistency with the top navigation
 1. Keep the sub pages consistency with the home page.
- Additional search box in the bottom of the page.

Strengths

Strengths of the *dynamicdrive.com* interface are its observance to certain interface design principals and to some of the visual perception. The site appeared well designed; the colors are simple and easy to read. The fonts have right size for the users to read. The design of the global navigation is close to each other making easy and comfortable to the users to work. In the center of the page is the part the information that will appear well spaced, and no presence of images and pictures which makes a very fast navigation even with dial up connection. Columns of graphics and the text maintain the same position and consistency. The Gestalt rules of proximity and similarity are used to good effect in the global navigation and boxes which contain other links.

Analysis of Redesigned Interface

The members voiced concerns related to the organization and presentation of the site, as well as a few needed enhancements. The redesigned interface for *dynamicdrive.com* will provide a number of benefits over the present interface. The improvements concern the graphical navigation bar; the navigation is a lot more visible and legible with the new format. In addition, a new drop down box has been added with other links that will reduce the space that existed on the previous interface allowing less scrolling up and down. At the same time the users will be able to read and check the other links. Another search function for the page has been added to the bottom, so users can use a search function when they are at the top or at the bottom of the page.

Another improvement will be the addition of a background color to the left box and also to the new box on the left side of the page. Also, on the bottom of the page will appear the bottom navigation, which will keep consistency with the global navigation.

Another advantage of the new interface is the links that exist on the central box of the current page. Now they are placed in a drop down box saving a lot of space. In addition the explanation that appeared under the links has been cut off taking the links from the bottom of the left box. In addition, a new box on the right side of the page will make users to easily to identify between the information in the central of the page and the links on the right side, a position that in the current page was no line to divide between the two tables. This affects the scrolling of the page allowing shorter and better scrolling for the users.

The final improvements concern better placement of the sub navigation links and enhanced accesses to search functionality on the website: This is done by keeping consistency between the home page and all the sub pages of the website. Placing of sub navigation and the top logo with the search engine placed in the same location so users will have a better navigation.

This is an excellent outcome because visitors see the website as a simple utility for quick and easy use. This fact places the website in a valuable position as a provider of templates or advice to start projects. To reinforce our position as solutions to which people return, the site was redesigned with the visitor feedback in mind. The navigation provides fast access to any section of the web from any page. Also, the computer printout of any page on this website is a good advertisement for offline users.

Implementation Options

Redesign of the Dynamic Drive web site *dynamicdrive.com* can be implemented, offering different advantages and disadvantages. For the approaches, the design could be coded in a left-aligned code and use a table coded in HTML. The first row rowspan 3 and contain the title and the search function; the second row have rowspan of three and is empty from the left to the right side, is placed to put the banners ads.

The third row have three columns the first two are left-aligned and the column in the right side is right aligned. The first column colspan 2 is use as the menu bar, which has a new format, making it visible and legible with new background color; the second column in the first row contain the main navigation, the third column on the right side contain the other links that will change in the sub pages.

Fourth row have one column the center box, which is the main box, contains the report and information that users are looking for. Both left navigation and top global navigation export the information to the main box. On the right side is the new box with the links that on the previous page appeared on the on the same side, in addition with new background color which will make easier to identify between the main box to the links on that box. on the main box the links that appear spread on the previous page. Now appear inside a drop down box which allows more space in the main box, cutting off the scrolling up and down. Now users don't have to scroll down the page to check the links, like they had to on the previous page. Furthermore, taking the explanation the existed under every single link on the previous page leaves more space in which to add more links. The link names are well explained.

The fifth row has two columns. The first column has the bottom graphical navigation and the global navigation mixed. This makes it easy for the users to go to other areas in the website that they are looking for in the case that the main box has a long report or a lot of information, they will not need to go up to top global navigation Instead, they can click in the bottom. The second column has the search function like the global navigation; it can either be done at the top of the page or at the bottom, in case the user is on the bottom of the page.

The last row has a single column which contains the partners and the web site address which was the reason of this report. Also, copy right and the presence of other links which include *dynamicdrive.com*, and *terms of use*.

In short, this report is an excellent outcome because visitors see the web site as a simple utility for quick and easy use.

Figure 1: Home Page Top

The screenshot shows the top portion of the Dynamic Drive website. At the top left is the logo "Dynamic Drive" with the tagline "DHTML scripts for the real world" and a "no right click" button. Below this is a banner for "VONAGE THE BROADBAND PHONE COMPANY" with a "GET A FREE MONTH OF SERVICE WHEN YOU SIGN UP FOR VONAGE." offer and a small portrait of a man. The main navigation area includes a "Menu" sidebar with links like "FAQs list", "Recommend DD", "Code Services", "Awards", "DHTML books", and "Contact Us". A central "New Revised Hot Submit M Zone" menu is followed by a welcome message and a search bar for "Need a web host?". A "DHTML script categories" list includes "Menus & Navigation", "Scrollers", "General Images", "Image Slideshows", "Mouseover Images", "Form effects", "Window and (i)frame", "User/System Preference", "Other", "Document effects", "Links & tooltips", "Calendars", "Date and Time", "Dynamic Content", "Mouse and Cursor", "Text animations", and "DHTML Games". A "Recent Scripts" section lists "Amazon style drop in...", "Vertical text script", and "Floating iframe". A "Sponsored by ValueWeb" section offers hosting packages. A "Notes" section mentions a "Terms of Usage update August 13th". A search bar with "Online Tools" and "Go!" is present, along with a "Featured Update- Scrollable menu links" notice.

Figure 2: Home Page Bottom

The screenshot shows the bottom portion of the Dynamic Drive website. It features a "Partners" sidebar with links to "FlamingText", "AnfyJava", "GifArt.com", and "TopHosts.com". A "Dynamic Drive FREE" logo is also present. The main content area includes a "Featured Update- Scrollable menu links" notice, a "FAQs and more" section with links to "Usage Terms", "DHTML FAQs", and "Scripts Help", and a "The More Zone!" section with links to "Cool Text", "TheFreeSite", "NoteTab.com", and "Free Graphics". A "ValueWeb" sponsored section offers hosting packages. A "Notes" section mentions a "Terms of Usage update August 13th". A "Please support our site:" section includes links to "Link to DD" and "Recommend Us". A footer contains copyright information: "Copyright © 1998-2004 Dynamic Drive. Please read Terms Of Use here before using any of the scripts." and an "Internet" icon.

Figure 3: FAQ Top

Dynamic Drive
Dynamicdrive.com

Menu
[Search DD](#)
[Recommend DD](#)
[Email offers](#)
[DHTML books](#)
[Advertising](#)
[Contact](#)

Web hosting
 Sponsored by
ValueWeb
[-\\$9 Dedicated Server](#)
[-Ecommerce Hosting](#)
[-Unix Hosting](#)
[-Professional Hosting](#)

Featured Script
[Rollover buttons](#)
 Turn regular form buttons into rollover menus with this script!

THE PERFECT HOSTING SOLUTION! **1000MB + WEB HOSTING**
 CGI, PHP, MySQL **5Gigs/DAY** **\$7.99/MO**
TRANSFER

[New](#) | [Revised](#) | [Hot](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Submit](#) | [M Zone](#)

-Some of the honorary awards we've received

Dynamic Drive is proud to be recognized by many established sources as the definitive DHTML site on the net. Here are few of the more notable awards we've pulled down over the site's short history:

PC World Today's HOTTEST SITES
 PCWorld Top 100 most useful sites online.

As featured on... Cool Sitings
 Netcape What's Cool

JARS TOP 5% WebApplet
 Jars Top 5%

made online Web Men Talking AWARD
 MSDN Developer

Sight OF THE DAY!

LOCKER GNOME
 Featured site

Winner

Figure 4: FAQ Bottom

"As a web designer, Dynamic Drive is the only script archive whose scripts I feel confident enough to use in my projects. My clients are very happy." -**Albert Miller**

"DynamicDrive.com is so helpful!! I get almost ALL of my DHTML from here and this taught me the basics also! Good job!!!" -**Kelly Ann**

"I recently heard of DynamicDrive from a friend and have found it a great help in website design. After only two days of visiting the site I cannot think of anything wrong with it. Keep up the good work all of you." -**Luke Smith**

"You give me THE drive. Keep up the good work" -**Dave Philippi**

"I'm just a business student and I would be LOST designing my sites without you guys" -**Joshua Burke**

"This is the best code example site in the world. I mean it! I LOVE IT" -**David Redmond**

"Your site is the perfect example of where Less Is More. You may not have billions of scripts like the other archives, but each one actually works, and works great. That's what ultimately matters. I don't go to any other script library other than DD" -**Jason Lee**

"As a web designer, Dynamic Drive has saved my neck more than once. For that, I'm eternally grateful" -**John Chen**

"You guys rock, period. Finally, scripts I can actually use on my site!" -**Kevin Spane**

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