PIXEL

INTRODUCTION

We used the heuristic evaluation as a guiding framework for your website redesign. Our team of usability specialists systematically analyzed the current site against well-established usability heuristics to uncover design flaws. This critical assessment enabled us to identify key areas for improvement, ensuring that the redesigned website now offers a more intuitive, engaging, and user-friendly experience. By addressing the identified needs and barriers, our redesign focused on creating a seamless interface that aligns with customer expectations and enhances overall user satisfaction. View the provided design mock ups to see applicable recommendations.

Document Key

22 These numbers correspond to specific highlighted areas within the screenshots of your current site, provided on the right.

! Any comments marked with an exclamation point (!) represent recommendations or items that do not correlate directly with your current site.

? Any comments marked with a question mark (?) indicate suggestions that are optional or items that necessitate your input or additional discussion.

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Navigation & Structure

1 The website's layout should be updated from its current personal blog appearance to a more modern and standard contemporary design. The new layout should facilitate easier navigation, present content more effectively, and provide an overall cleaner aesthetic.

2 We recommend dedicating a new page for news, updates, press, and announcements, distinct from the blog content, in order to focus content organization. This strategy aims to consolidate all informative articles in one location while maintaining a dedicated space for timely news and announcements.

3 The "Beauty Library" sidebar may confuse users due to its prominent placement, despite being a less critical feature. Recommend relocating it from the main view on every page to a dedicated sub-page to streamline user navigation and focus.

Engagement & Interaction Recommendations

? A main call to action is missing. This guides users towards a specific goal or endpoint on your website. Determine the primary action you wish users to take—be it sharing the museum's content on social media, making donations, or engaging in another form of support—and clearly communicate this to enhance user engagement and achieve your desired outcomes.

4 Rather than featuring an isolated PayPal donate button, it's important to provide an explanation surrounding the purpose and use of the donations, or linking to the page with this information.

Compliance & Transparency

! Including a privacy policy link or page on your website that details how visitor data is handled is essential for transparency and compliance with data protection regulations. This addition helps build trust with your audience by openly communicating your data usage practices. This is typically a link in the footer.

! Cookie consent requirements should be met. Users should be informed of data usage and give consent before storage. Reasons for accepting cookies and benefits must be clearly stated. Include a cookie notification, guidelines, and a section for accepting the site's terms and conditions for users."

Content Clarity & Purpose

5 The website's purpose is initially unclear to new visitors, creating confusion about whether the site is a personal blog, an affiliate bookstore, or a museum. The term "museum" gets lost in the header, furthering this point. To remedy this, the hero section on the homepage should present a clear and concise statement that articulates your organization's identity and mission, explaining the "who, what, and why." Your currently imagery is strong and helps adds to the clarification.

! To transition your website's perception from a personal blog to an online museum, we recommend rephrasing "blog posts" as "articles." This terminology enhances the site's academic appeal, framing your content as comprehensive research on makeup's history and cultural significance.

? Recommend clarifying that your museum is virtual with no physical space by adding a clear description in a prominent location. This will prevent confusion for first-time visitors who might otherwise search for a physical address.

! Clarify the purpose of the Beauty Library(where ever this ends up on the site) in your copy to prevent assumptions that it's merely an affiliate link collection, which might mislead new users into thinking the site is profit-oriented.

! Display your founding date prominently to underscore your museum's credibility and showcase your longstanding expertise, setting you apart from other makeup museums.

! Emphasizing the collection's breadth, with over 2,500 objects dating back to the late 19th century, adds historical context and significance.

Design / UX / UI Recommendations

6 The current presentation of your website's content, characterized by large blocks of text, can be overwhelming and deter user engagement. To enhance readability and retain user interest, we strongly recommend restructuring your copy into smaller, more digestible "chunks." This approach entails organizing content into distinct sections with clear headings, utilizing bullet points for concise information presentation, and incorporating callouts and images to break up text and add visual interest. The importance of this recommendation is supported by research from the Neilson Norman Group, which highlights that 79% of users scan web pages, with only 16% reading content word-for-word. See the

design mock ups for examples of this concept.

6 Leveraging more imagery on your museum website can boost user engagement by showcasing your exceptional collection visually. By interspersing text with compelling images, you not only enhance the site's appeal and readability but also facilitate quicker comprehension and a deeper connection with your audience. This approach not only breaks the monotony of text but also highlights your museum's artifacts, making the user experience more interactive and reflective of your museum's value.

7 Your logo becomes obscured against the intricate background graphic. It is recommended to place the logo on a solid background color and position it prominently at the top left of the page for better visibility and brand recognition.

8 Instead of square images, use standard aspect ratios like 16:9 or 4:3 for website images, ensuring compatibility without the scaling or spacing issues often encountered with square images in responsive design.

9 Social icons should be updated. They look outdated. Doesn't reflect Twitter rebranding to "X".

! Many external links on the site do not open in new windows/tabs. Enabling this improves user experience, reduces bounce rates, and prevents confusion.

Voice / Tone Recommendations

? To enhance your website's tone, infuse academic language and terminology, emphasizing a research-oriented approach. This shift in language will help to reposition the website not just as a source of information but as an authoritative educational resource in the field of makeup history, aligning the tone with a more academic and scholarly narrative.

HOME PAGE

1 The homepage content currently lacks a clear visual hierarchy, making it challenging for visitors to intuitively grasp the narrative of your organization. It should function not just as a table of contents for your site but also as a compelling introduction to your brand or organization's story, encompassing who you are, what you do, and why it matters. The hero section ought to quickly convey the essence of your organization, and as visitors scroll, they should gain a comprehensive understanding of your purpose and offerings. Key elements of your site must be prominently displayed to ensure easy access, allowing users to find important information or sections with minimal effort, ideally within one click, without having to navigate extensively through menus. See the provided design mock up for an example of this.

2 The page's layout, featuring three vertical columns, creates a cluttered appearance, making it difficult to discern which elements are most important or where to focus attention. Simplifying the content to emphasize key information would enhance clarity and user experience.

3 Your organization's value proposition should be prominently displayed at the top of the home page. This is the who, what, and why of your organization. This will help the user immediately understand what your website is for.

3 Home page should feature a "hero" image that should be bigger and more visually engaging.

3 This style of imagery in the header is strong and a recommended way to continue displaying the collection throughout the site.

3 The following, found on your social media, can be used in place of a value proposition. "The Makeup Museum: where cosmetics and art intersect. Devoted to the exhibition, preservation & research of cosmetics from all eras and cultures." Note: This statement is worded slightly different across your social media accounts. It should be consistent everywhere.

! Its recommended that the homepage feature sections including an about/general overview of the museum, a highlight of a current exhibit, an overview of the museum's collection, and the display of the most recent news and/or articles. Additionally, there should be a prominent call to action, guiding visitors on how to get involved or make a donation. See design mock up for example.

4 The Exhibitions get lost in the blog feed. Recommend making this stand out more and also showcasing actual samples the exhibit.

5 Clicking the links under Beauty Library they take you to a new website, without opening a new window.

6 Remove the text "FeedBurner RSS" link and/or ensure it opens in a new window. This link leads users offsite, without a clear way to return.

6 On the Email request form, it's not clear what a user is subscribing to. It is a mailing list or RSS feed? It should be clearly stated why you are asking for their email address.

7 Clicking on the images display widget takes you offsite to https://snapwidget.com/?ref=iblw. Images should be embedded on the site.

PIXEL

SUBPAGES

Museum Information Page

❶ We recommend changing the title of the page to "About the Museum, or simply "About" for better clarification.

❗ We recommend adding scaled back info from the staff page either to this page or a subpage under this in the navigation.

❗ We recommend streamlining and revisualization of content as described in the general section above.

❷ We recommend the following content refinements:

Prominently list that the museum operates virtually, highlighting the innovative approach to accessibility and engagement this format offers. This clarification ensures that visitors understand the digital nature of the collection and the opportunities it presents for global outreach.

Introduce a more in-depth section for museum-related inquiries, integrating a contact form for streamlined communication. Opting for a contact form over a direct email address mitigates spam and organizes incoming requests. Include specific prompts for photo permissions and other common requests. Highlight that the museum does not provide formal valuations.

More clearly highlight the museum's availability for press interviews, speaking engagements, consulting services, research assistance, book contributions, and collaboration on various projects. This section will underscore the institution's role as an active participant in the cultural and academic community.

Enhance the page with a more comprehensive historical narrative, detailing the museum's evolution, additional milestones, and key achievements. This expansion will provide visitors with a richer context and deeper understanding of the museum's significance and mission.

Consider adding images showcasing personal interactions, or participation at relevant events. These visuals can humanize the museum and illustrate engagement with the cultural sector.

Collections Page

❸ Considering that the inventory gallery's integration is slated for Phase 2, it is important to turn this page into a showcase for your collection in the interim. This should include showcasing a selection of some of the most interesting or significant items, accompanied by descriptions, serving to pique users' interest in anticipation of the upcoming features.

❗ This page should also emphasize the collection's breadth, with over 2,500 objects dating back to the late 19th century, adds historical context and significance.

❹ Elaborate on what the PDF download is, describing it's contents in more detail. Consider collecting email addresses to build a contact list and enhance engagement.

❗ Consider including periodic updates and details that delve into the digitization process, and timeline.
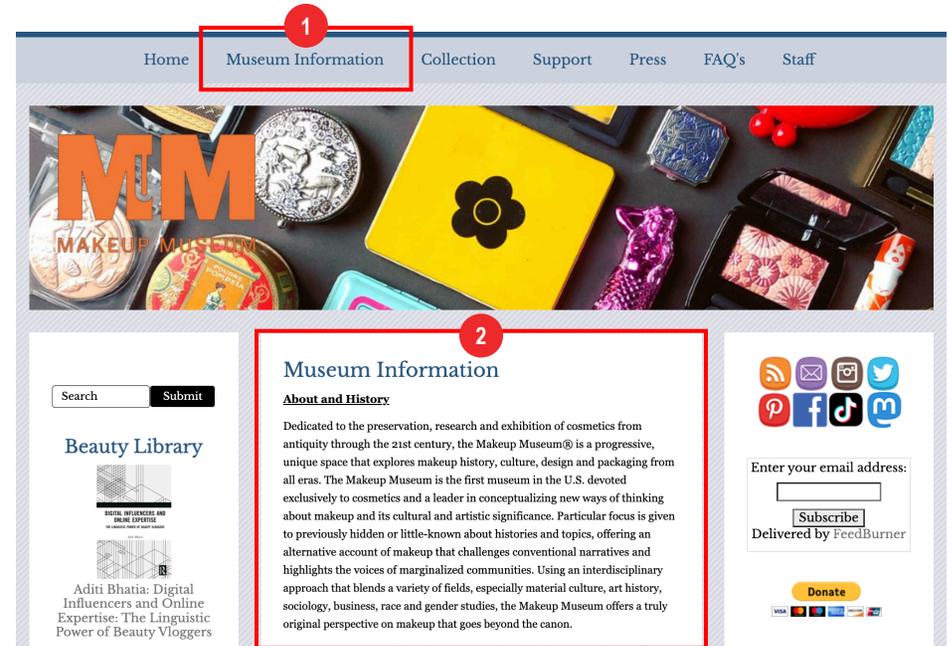
Support Page

⚠️ Clarify whether the donations contribute toward a specific initiative or goal, and consider incorporating a progress tracker to update and share achievements. This enhances transparency and showcases the various ways individuals can support your cause, creating a more engaging and informative donor experience.

Press Page

❺ Recommend turning the press page into an online "media kit" containing company details, press releases, images, testimonials, recognitions, and assets like logos for streamlined media access. See examples at https://www.mazzamuseum.org/media-kit/ and https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/media-kit-examples for guidance.

Staff Page

To enhance the professionalism and appeal of your museum's staff page while maintaining its unique charm, consider the following improvements:

❻ Consider streamlining the staff listings to minimize the images of stuffed animals, which might give the site a more casual, blog-like feel. Retaining a single or group image with them can add a touch of playfulness without compromising professionalism. This subtle adjustment can enhance the perception of your site as a dedicated and professional entity.

⚠️ Introduce personality and warmth with a fun group photo that includes your partner, family members, or volunteers contributing to the museum's operations, highlighting the collaborative team effort.

❼ Given the current staff page's limited content, it might be more effective to integrate this information into a dedicated section within the "About" page or adding a staff page under the About heading in the navigation.

Virtual Exhibit Pages

⚠️ We will add your Squarespace exhibits to Wordpress, creating a more user-friendly and visually appealing exhibition display. This enhancement will be detailed further in Phase 2.

FAQ Page

⚠️ The FAQ page should not only address common queries but also provide a deeper understanding of your museum, enhance user engagement, and position your site as a helpful resource within the make-up history community. Consider expanding your FAQ's with the following recommendations:

Expand the FAQ content to include detailed sections about the museum's history, mission, and significant milestones. Share insights into the evolution of makeup history as it relates to your organization, providing a rich educational context for visitors.

Present ideas that encourage interaction with your museum. Suggest how visitors can contribute to or participate in your blog, propose setting up virtual exhibits on their sites, or offer private online viewings.
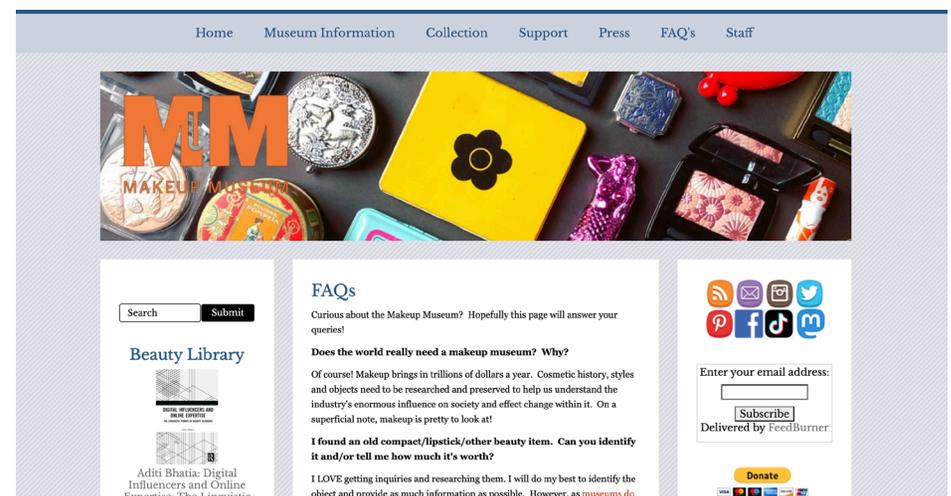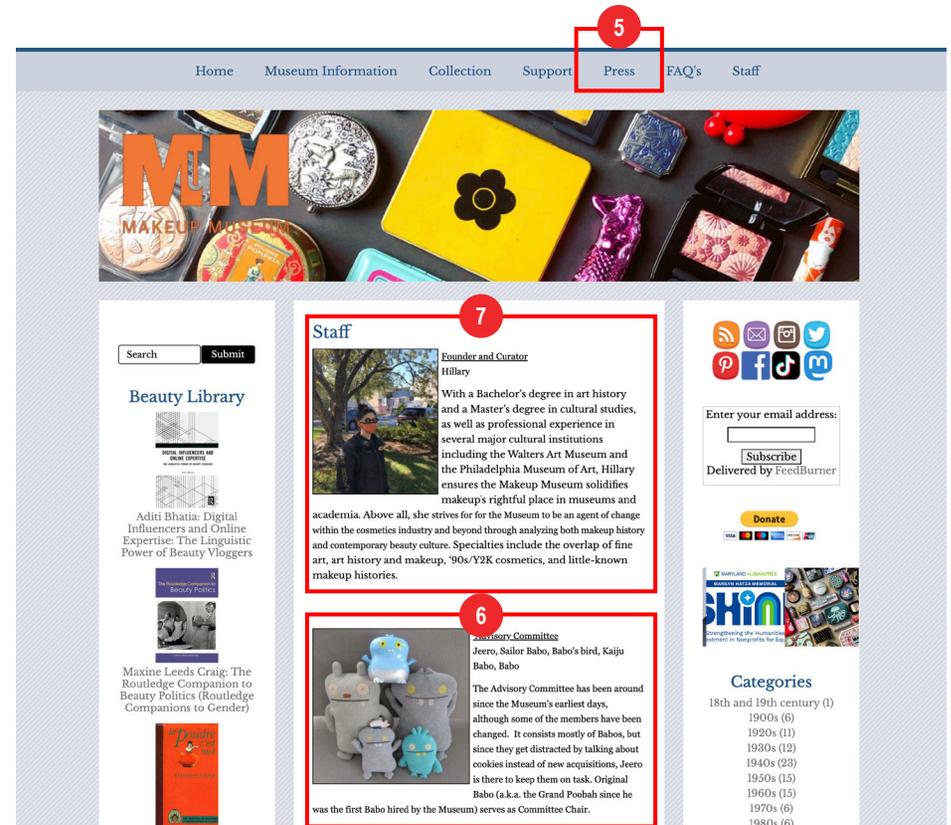
Highlighting these possibilities can foster a community around your museum and its subject matter.

Even if your museum is virtual, providing information about its location or the environment in which it curates its collection can add a sense of authenticity and presence.

Engage with others who interact with your audience to uncover additional common inquiries.

Conduct competitive analysis and utilize creative Google searches to find what people are asking about related topics in order to add additional information to this page. Answering common questions on your website could also lead to better SEO and increased visits.

Blog / Articles

8 Recommend adding the ability to highlight and/or pin a featured article at the top of the blog page.

8 Consider exploring introducing visual identifier such as graphics, colors, or symbols for articles in your blog to distinguish between different categories, such as curator's corners. Visual cues aid users in quickly recognizing content types, improving navigation and engagement.

8 Incorporate breadcrumb navigation to improve user orientation, enabling visitors to easily trace their steps through the website's hierarchy.

9 Due to the large number of articles, improving your site's category organization with a clear hierarchy could enhance navigability and user experience. Establishing top-level categories with related subcategories beneath them will simplify content discovery. For instance, creating a top-level category for time frames, then under that category, include more specific ranges, such as the 1900s, 1910s, etc.

9 Given the blog's extensive content, introducing additional grouping methods could enhance a users experience. Possibly linking articles by timelines, additional themes to bundle articles/blog posts, and overviews for broader categories with many articles can enhance organization. A "Where to Start" section could guide new visitors, suggesting top or relevant content and offering content pathways.

10 We suggest enlarging the blog's layout and text size for better readability on modern screens and enhancing visual appeal. A wider content area improves user experience without needing to span the entire website width. For image display, use full-width images for impact and a slider or gallery for multiple images to provide a neat, organized look and easy navigation.

11 We advise incorporating "related articles" at the end of each piece, guiding readers to explore similar content. This strategy keeps visitors engaged, encouraging them to continue browsing more topics on the same subject on your site. By clearly directing them to the next piece of relevant content that is connected to what they just read, you enhance user engagement and increase the time spent on your site.

12 Recommend removing Disqus and switching to WordPress's built-in commenting system. WordPress comments offer better integration, resulting in faster load times and SEO advantages, as they are indexed directly on your site. This switch also improves data control and privacy, aids GDPR compliance, and ensures more consistent branding.
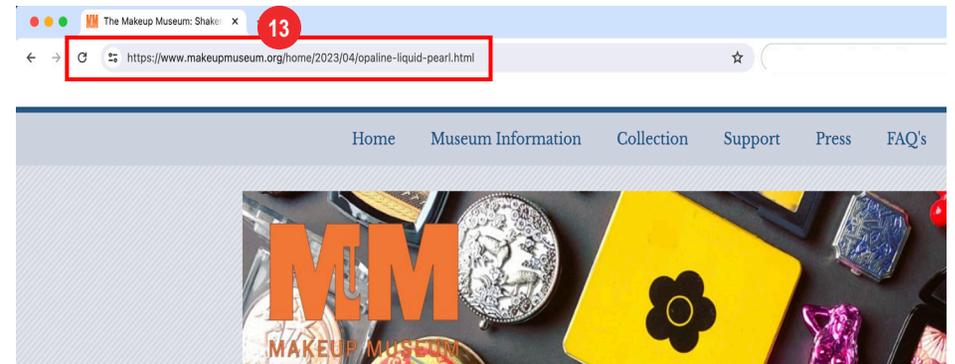
PIXEL
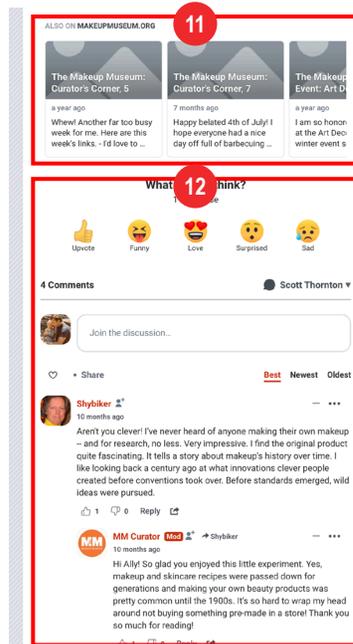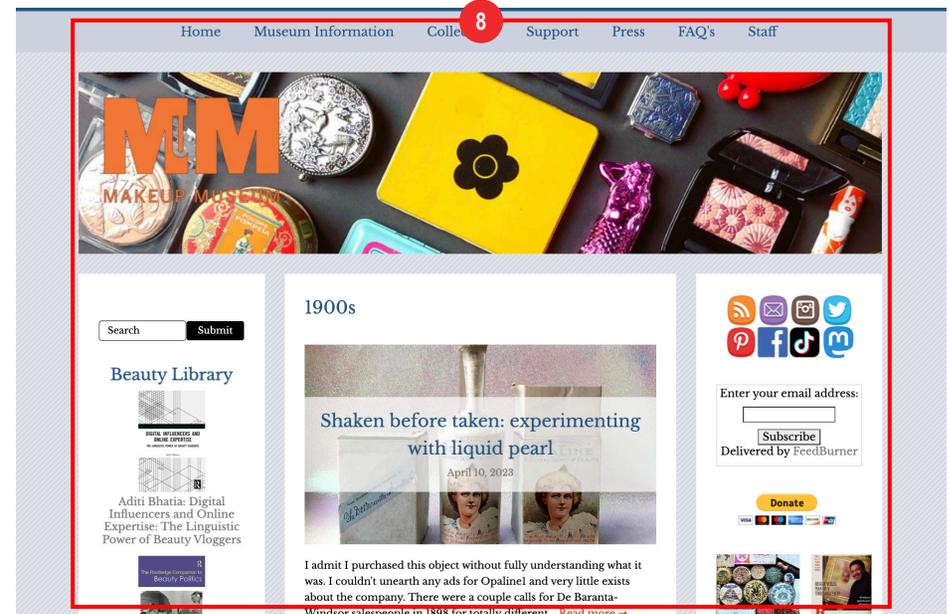
ONSITE SEO

13 It is recommended to modify the URL structure of your website for improved clarity and SEO performance. Remove "/home" from the URL, eliminate the date, and retain only the article name. A concise and clear URL is crucial because it improves search engine indexing, enhances user experience by making the URL easier to remember and share, and supports the content's enduring relevance, as the removal of date stamps prevents it from appearing outdated. Removing ". html" can make your URLs appear cleaner and more user-friendly, which can enhance the user experience and the aesthetics of your website.

14 Typepad is currently auto-generating the "meta description" tag for your blog posts by extracting the initial lines of text from each entry. However, Google's guidelines recommend creating unique and relevant descriptions for each post to improve SEO and search result visibility. Tailoring these descriptions can enhance your site's click-through rates. This should be done moving forward as new blogs are added.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

! Consider adding introductory videos to boost audience engagement and diversify content. This would benefit those who favor visual content. These videos can offer an overview of the museum and feature the owner, adding a personal touch to the brand. This strategy humanizes the museum and caters to various visitor preferences, enhancing the website's user experience.