

CPP/College of Business Administration Website Re-Design Project

Kim Sawyer Egir

PHASE ONE: Summary and Key Findings

Data sources:

(1) Google Analytics (2) Market Research (3) Competitive Analysis (4) Contextual Inquiries (5) User interviews

Based on my research, I'm recommending that the following items should be considered for design solutions in PHASE 2 - Design of the CBA website re-design project. The Phase 1 Research allowed me to uncover certain issues with the existing site, as well as some opportunities to enhance user experience. I have divided these recommendations into 2 categories: **Organization** and **Content**. Below is a quick look at the recommendations and the data sources that I used. Please refer to the list above for data sources. Pages 2-3 give a brief summary of each of the results from these 5 research areas. Pages 4-15 give a more detailed look at each of these areas.

ORGANIZATION - INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

I'm recommending the following items be addressed for design solutions in Phase 2 of the website re-design project. The Information Architecture of the site is how information is arranged:

NAVIGATION

- **Make it more intuitive** - Organize content based on user expectations **(3, 4)**
- **Make it more user-friendly** - Implement mega-menus or sub-menus to limit clicks **(3,4)**
- **Emphasize/elevate content** - Draw more attention to certain content **(3,4)**
- **Global Navigation** - Main Navigation bar that stays visible throughout the entire site **(3,4)**
- **Restructure existing Navigation** - Consider reorganizing Navigation bar with more descriptive headings, consider adding more categories if necessary **(3,4)**

CONTENT

To enhance the user experience by adding engaging content the following items should be considered in Phase 2 Design of the project:

PERSONALIZATION

- **Focus on visual storytelling** - By focusing on more evergreen (no expiration date), people-focused content rather than event based content we can give students a better sense of what makes CBA unique. Student spotlight stories, student testimonials, "day in the life" type content is engaging to prospective students and could give current students a more positive connection and feeling of belonging that could make an impact on student success and retention **(2, 3, 4, 5)**
- **Use of video** - Effective use of video shows rather than tells the story of a school **(2, 3,)**
- **Branding** - Every page should feel like it belongs to the same place and should remind users where they are **(2, 3)**

PLAN FOR MOBILE

- **Enable skimming** - Enable skimming with effective use of visual content as well and effective headlines and subheads **(2, 5)**
- **Responsiveness** - Ensure the mobile site works just as well as the desktop version **(2, 5)**

In Phase 2 - Plan/Design I will take each of these considerations and develop solutions to prototype and test until we find the one that is the most practical, effective and user friendly option.

CBA Website Re-Design Project / Phase One : Research

Kim Sawyer Egir

Research Overview

Methods: Google Analytics review, Market Research, Competitive Analysis, Contextual Inquiries, User interviews

GOOGLE ANALYTICS

I used 2 benchmark studies to compare the CBA website usage to other university and college website usage over the same time period (see details page for links to both studies). I used two different time periods - **January 1, 2019 - December 15, 2019** to establish a pre-pandemic baseline and then **December 8, 2019 - December 8, 2020** to look at more recent data. For the earlier time period study we see that the CBA website is **averaging** the same metrics as other college and university websites, However, for the more recent time period, the number of users (**90,405** in 2019 vs. **5,441** in 2020) fell considerably. The more interesting numbers that came from the Google Analytics of these periods was that **74.8%** of all users are New Users rather than Return Users in the earlier time period (Jan 1 - Dec 15, 2019) and **69%** during the more recent time period (Jan 1 - Dec 15, 2020). The most visited page this year **January 1 - April 1, 2021** is the **MSA Program** page within the Accounting Department. The limitation of Google Analytics is that it can tell us the *what*, but not necessarily the *why*.

[For more information about the Google Analytics review, see page 4.](#)

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

For the competitive analysis, I compared 6 websites of similar colleges and universities. I used one other school within Cal Poly (College of Engineering) because not only is their site built within Cascade 8 and to CPP branding standards, it also implements some of the elements I think would benefit the CBA site, for example, sub-menus. I used Cal State Fullerton business school because it's regional, and it is another CSU school. I also looked at 3 schools in the UC system - Berkeley Haas, UCI Merage, and UCLA Anderson. I added Michigan Ross to round out the comparison because I thought it had a similar aesthetic and functionality of the Berkeley Haas site.

In comparing these sites, I found features that could enhance User Experience on the CBA site: **Intuitive Information Architecture**, Effective use of **Sub-menus** or **Mega Menus**, **Personalization**, and a focus on **Responsive** site design for a continuing influx of mobile users.

[For Competitive Analysis Diagram, see page 10.](#)

MARKET RESEARCH

"The website is the center of the prospective student journey"

85% of students rank the website as the number one research tool. In my market research I hoped to discover more about what current students and especially prospective students are looking for when they visit a school's website. Students are looking for what sets a school apart and schools can do that through more **Storytelling**. This can include more **video content**, "day in the life" type images and video campus tours. Students are trying to envision themselves on campus and participating in activities. It can also include student testimonials. Students are interested in what their peers have to say. Another few key points are the limited attention span and **use of mobile** that make the need to format information for **skimming content** crucial. Adhering to school **branding** standards is also critical for context.

[For detailed Market Research and sources, see page 11.](#)

(continued on page 2)

CONTEXTUAL INQUIRIES/INTERVIEWS

I interviewed 7 current Cal Poly Pomona students to ask about how they typically use the CBA website. In addition to answering questions, I asked them to perform a few tasks while I observed their interaction with the website. Some key discoveries during these interviews were that most of the current students - **71% never** use the CBA website. They are using MyCPP, CPP Connect, MyBar, Handshake, etc. They are also getting their information **via e-mail** rather than visiting the site. When they do visit, they are looking for specific information usually pertaining to **Curriculum, minors, majors, advisors and faculty info**. They also struggled to find information that would be relevant to them, such as student organizations. When I asked students to find student organizations on the CBA website, the task had a **43% FAIL rate**. Another key finding was that most student scroll to the very bottom of the page to use the links or start with the search bar immediately, rather than using the top Navigation bar.

[For Contextual Inquiries summary, see page 12.](#)

PROSPECTIVE STUDENT USER INTERVIEWS

I sent essay interview questions to 10 high school students and 1 college freshman who had all recently gone through the process of searching for and applying to schools. I'm still awaiting some responses. Some of the students were on spring break at the time the questions went out. At the time of writing I have 3 responses from the high school students. Of the 3 who have responded, they all applied to 5 or more schools, so they have done a fair amount of research on schools and their websites. They spoke of "envisioning" themselves on campus and having a "gut feeling" after visiting the campus.

As of today, I have just 3 responses, but will hopefully receive a few more to get a better sample size.

[For User Interviews summary, see page 15.](#)

GOOGLE ANALYTICS

2020 Google Analytics Benchmarks for Higher Education Websites

<https://www.oho.com/blog/2020-google-analytics-benchmarks-higher-education-websites>

These benchmarks studies compare colleges and universities website usage from **January 1, 2019 to December 15, 2019**, and **December 8, 2019 to December 8 2020**, based on the three metrics that are most useful in measuring user engagement: **Session Duration, Pages Per Session and Bounce Rate**. When reviewing the Google Analytics for the CBA website for the same time period we see that The CBA site is roughly average or above in 2019, but falls slightly in 2020. User numbers fell drastically in 2020 by **80,533**. There were **90,405** in 2019 vs. **9,872** in 2020

Time frame for study: **January 1 2019 - December 15 2019**¹

BENCHMARKS

Avg. Session Duration: 2:05	Pages Per Session: 2.5	Bounce Rates: 57.44%
		Bounce Rate 40%-60% “good” ¹

CBA RATES

Avg. Session Duration: 02:37	Pages Per Session: 3.37	Bounce Rates: 50.46%
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A more interesting number from the review of Analytics from this time period is the New users vs. Return Users. **New Users** account for **74.8%** of all users vs. **25.2%** Return Users.

2021 Google Analytics Benchmarks for Higher Education Websites

<https://www.oho.com/blog/2021-google-analytics-benchmarks-higher-education-websites>

Time frame for study: **December 8 2019 - December 8 2020**²

BENCHMARKS

Avg. Session Duration: 2:10	Pages Per Session: 2.3	Bounce Rates: 57.36%
		Bounce Rate 40%-60% “good” ¹

CBA RATES

Avg. Session Duration: 01:59	Pages Per Session: 2.45	Bounce Rates: 61.11%
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New Users account for **69%** of all users vs. **31%** of Return Users.

A review of Google Analytics can tell us the *what*, but not necessarily the *why*. For example, if someone is spending a lot of time on a page it can mean that the page is interesting and engaging, but it can also mean that the user is wasting time trying to find what they are looking for. It helps to have good qualitative data to gauge user behavior, such as the contextual inquiries also conducted in the research phase of this project.

The data from 2020 is surprising. I would have expected the site usage to increase, rather than fall as dramatically as it did. According to the OHO study:

*“Regardless of the industry, there’s no denying that the COVID-19 health crisis changed the way users engage with content on the web. Just within the first few weeks of the pandemic, streaming services saw a 20% increase in streaming traffic, Zoom’s daily users tripled, and in March flight search traffic dropped to 1/4th the volume of the previous year.”*²

¹2020 Google Analytics Benchmarks for Higher Education Websites

<https://www.oho.com/blog/2020-google-analytics-benchmarks-higher-education-websites>

²2021 Google Analytics Benchmarks for Higher Education Websites

<https://www.oho.com/blog/2021-google-analytics-benchmarks-higher-education-websites>

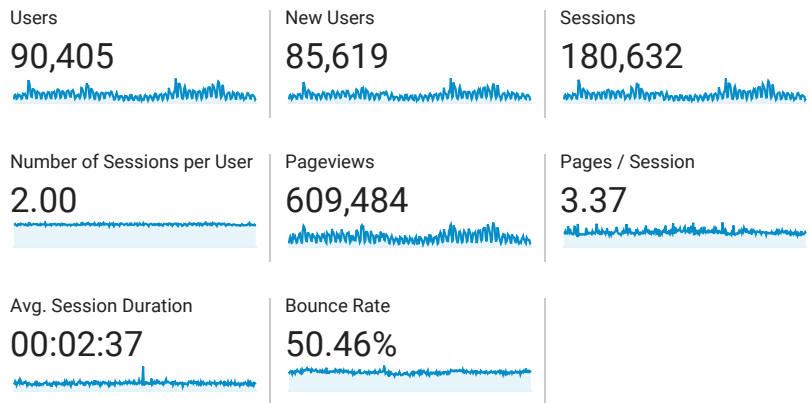
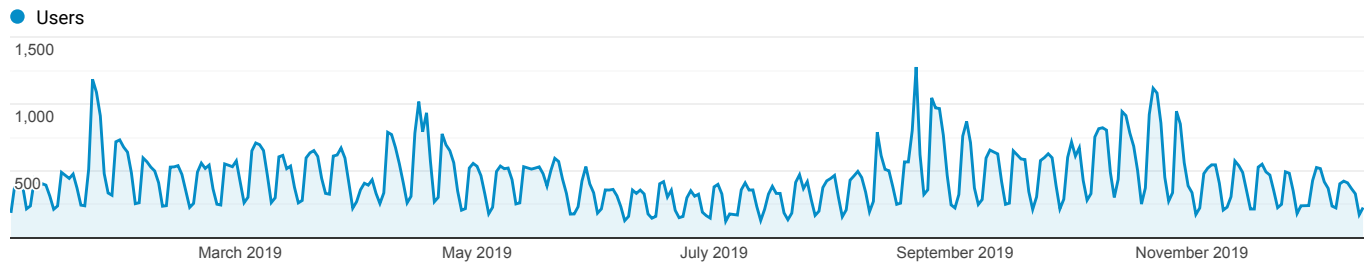


Audience Overview

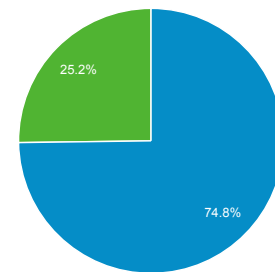
All Users
 100.00% Users

Jan 1, 2019 - Dec 15, 2019

Overview



■ New Visitor ■ Returning Visitor



City	Users	% Users
1. Pomona	26,783	25.10%
2. Los Angeles	9,866	9.25%
3. San Diego	3,829	3.59%
4. Ontario	2,731	2.56%
5. Rancho Cucamonga	2,381	2.23%
6. West Covina	2,170	2.03%
7. Riverside	1,921	1.80%
8. Chino	1,588	1.49%
9. Walnut	1,400	1.31%
10. Chino Hills	1,366	1.28%

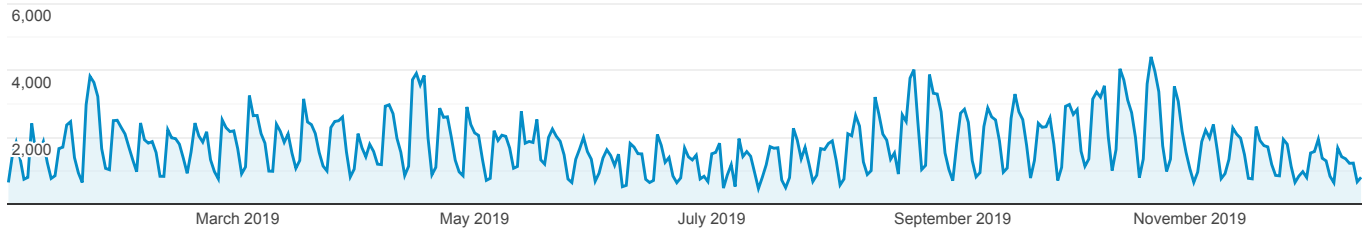
Overview

All Users
100.00% Pageviews

Jan 1, 2019 - Dec 15, 2019

Overview

Pageviews



<p>Pageviews</p> <p>609,484</p>	<p>Unique Pageviews</p> <p>450,125</p>	<p>Avg. Time on Page</p> <p>00:01:06</p>	<p>Bounce Rate</p> <p>50.46%</p>	<p>% Exit</p> <p>29.64%</p>
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Page	Pageviews	% Pageviews
1. /~cba/index.shtml	43,156	7.08%
2. /~cba/academics/index.shtml	26,818	4.40%
3. /~cba/student-success-center/index.shtml	25,826	4.24%
4. /~cba/computer-information-systems/index.shtml	18,179	2.98%
5. /~cba/our-faculty/index.shtml	12,913	2.12%
6. /~cba/graduate-business-programs/programs/MBA.shtml	12,707	2.08%
7. /~cba/international-business-marketing/index.shtml	11,565	1.90%
8. /~cba/management-and-human-resources/index.shtml	11,423	1.87%
9. /~cba/finance-real-estate-and-law/index.shtml	10,681	1.75%
10. /~cba/accounting/index.shtml	9,914	1.63%

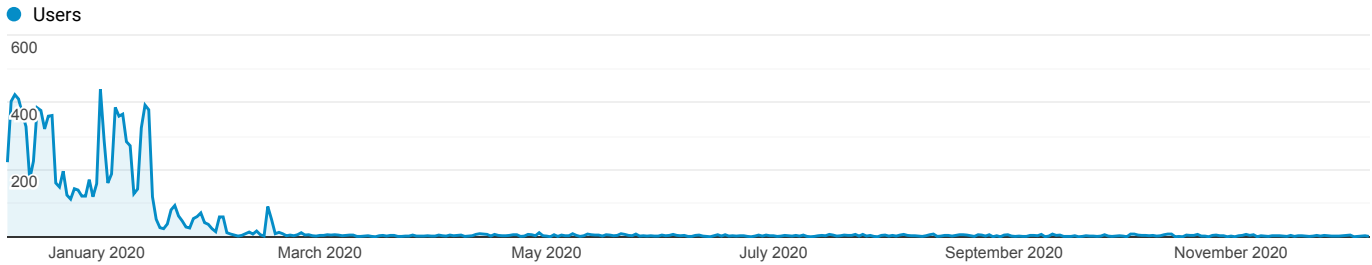


Audience Overview

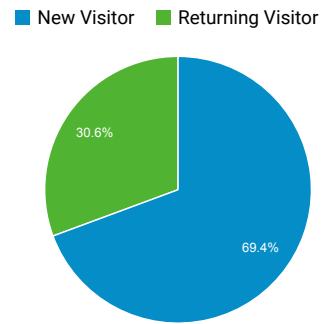
Dec 8, 2019 - Dec 8, 2020

All Users
 100.00% Users

Overview



Users 9,872	New Users 7,705	Sessions 14,095
Number of Sessions per User 1.43	Pageviews 38,820	Pages / Session 2.75
Avg. Session Duration 00:02:08	Bounce Rate 57.11%	



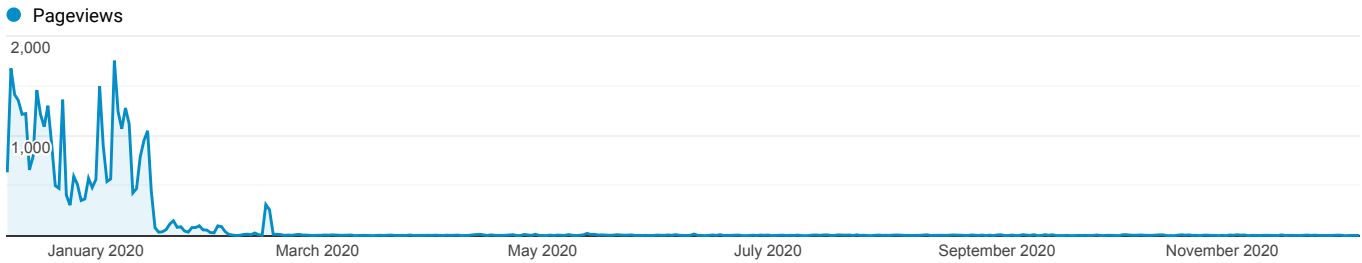
City	Users	% Users
1. Pomona	1,614	15.36%
2. Los Angeles	962	9.15%
3. San Diego	350	3.33%
4. Ontario	316	3.01%
5. West Covina	239	2.27%
6. Rancho Cucamonga	233	2.22%
7. Riverside	208	1.98%
8. Chino	194	1.85%
9. Chino Hills	183	1.74%
10. (not set)	169	1.61%

Overview

All Users
100.00% Pageviews

Dec 8, 2019 - Dec 8, 2020

Overview



Pageviews 38,820	Unique Pageviews 29,828	Avg. Time on Page 00:01:13	Bounce Rate 57.11%	% Exit 36.31%
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Page	Pageviews	% Pageviews
1. /~cba/index.shtml	2,663	6.86%
2. /~cba/academics/index.shtml	1,633	4.21%
3. /~cba/computer-information-systems/index.shtml	1,286	3.31%
4. /~cba/student-success-center/index.shtml	1,180	3.04%
5. /~cba/current-students/deans-list.shtml	925	2.38%
6. /~cba/management-and-human-resources/index.shtml	751	1.93%
7. /~cba/finance-real-estate-and-law/index.shtml	686	1.77%
8. /~cba/international-business-marketing/index.shtml	637	1.64%
9. /~cba/graduate-business-programs/programs/MBA.shtml	624	1.61%
10. /~cba/finance-real-estate-and-law/curriculum/course-catalog.shtml	613	1.58%

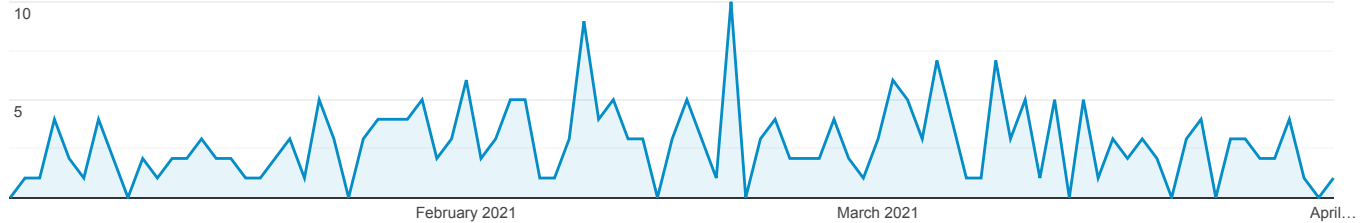
Audience Overview

Jan 1, 2021 - Apr 1, 2021

All Users
100.00% Users

Overview

Users



Users

222



New Users

203



Sessions

261



Number of Sessions per User

1.18



Pageviews

317



Pages / Session

1.21



Avg. Session Duration

00:00:39

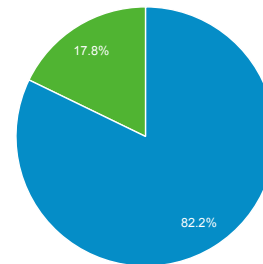


Bounce Rate

85.06%



New Visitor Returning Visitor



Top Ten visited pages on CBA website January 1 - April 1, 2021

Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Entrances	Bounce Rate	% Exit	Page Value
	317 % of Total: 100.00% (317)	275 % of Total: 100.00% (275)	00:03:02 Avg for View: 00:03:02 (0.00%)	261 % of Total: 100.00% (261)	85.06% Avg for View: 85.06% (0.00%)	82.33% Avg for View: 82.33% (0.00%)	\$0.00 % of Total: 0.00% (\$0.00)
1. /~cba/accounting/MSA-Program/index.shtml	64 (20.19%)	46 (16.73%)	00:01:56	46 (17.62%)	76.09%	71.88%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
2. /~cba/news-events/news/juniper-donation.shtml	18 (5.68%)	15 (5.45%)	00:00:11	15 (5.75%)	86.67%	83.33%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
3. /~cba/news-events/news/bronco-startup-challenge-2019.shtml	11 (3.47%)	11 (4.00%)	00:00:59	11 (4.21%)	72.73%	72.73%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
4. /~cba/news-events/news/new-staff-11-15.shtml	11 (3.47%)	10 (3.64%)	00:00:32	10 (3.83%)	90.00%	90.91%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
5. /~cba/news-events/news/cbarn-2016.shtml	10 (3.15%)	10 (3.64%)	00:02:00	10 (3.83%)	90.00%	90.00%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
6. /~cba/news-events/news/mtf-15.shtml	10 (3.15%)	9 (3.27%)	00:01:06	9 (3.45%)	88.89%	90.00%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
7. /~cba/news-events/news/stukent-2019.shtml	10 (3.15%)	10 (3.64%)	00:00:00	10 (3.83%)	100.00%	100.00%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
8. /~cba/news-events/news/aacsb-recert.shtml	9 (2.84%)	8 (2.91%)	00:03:12	8 (3.07%)	87.50%	88.89%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
9. /~cba/news-events/news/forbes-rezvani.shtml	9 (2.84%)	7 (2.55%)	00:09:07	7 (2.68%)	85.71%	77.78%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
10. /~cba/news-events/news/sans-award-pike.shtml	8 (2.52%)	7 (2.55%)	00:00:37	7 (2.68%)	71.43%	75.00%	\$0.00 (0.00%)

Competitive Analysis

RESEARCH RAMP-UP FOR CAL POLY POMONA - COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION



STRENGTHS

- Created in Cascade 8 CMS within CPP guidelines
- Top Navigation with sub-menu

WEAKNESSES

- Inconsistencies within departments
- Inconsistent Top Nav bar
- Faculty Info hard to find
- Top nav could be better organized with less options



STRENGTHS

- Consistent and Intuitive Navigation with effective Sub-menus
- Informative, well-organized

WEAKNESSES

- "Community" in Navigation confusing/mislabeled, has some overlap with "Welcome"
- Few images, graphics, few branding elements. Generic.



STRENGTHS

- Intuitive Mega Menu
- Effective use of Call to action buttons on hero image area
- Minimal design prevents information overload
- Every page is branded - looks like it all belongs to BH.

WEAKNESSES

- Minor inconsistencies between programs/faculty pages.



STRENGTHS

- Persistent Top Nav with sub-menu.
- Effective personalized content (i.e. "Day in the Life" videos")
- Colorful Call To Action buttons for degree programs, as well as menu options

WEAKNESSES

- Competing nav menus - Global vs. page specific



STRENGTHS

- Effective use of sub Menus
- Effective use of personalized content: videos, student and faculty testimonials, etc.

WEAKNESSES

- Navigation issues, broken links
- A lot of small text, hard to scan
- Inconsistencies from page to page, all branded, but not consistent



STRENGTHS

- Effective use of video and testimonials
- Mega Menus / Sub menus
- Personalized content

WEAKNESSES

- Some graphics seem like buttons but aren't clickable
- Competing menu on sub pages

PROVISIONAL PERSONAS

Provisional Personas are preliminary representations of possible user groups that might use the CBA website.



PROSPECTIVE STUDENT
Traditional, non-traditional

GOALS

- Find program information
- Get a feel for campus and culture.
- Find application information

PAINS

- Overwhelmed
- Not sure what to look for
- Undecided about degree program/career path



CURRENT STUDENT
Traditional, non-traditional

GOALS

- Find advisor information
- Find Program information
- Find Student Organizations
- Find News and Events

PAINS

- Outdated information
- Busy schedule, no time to hunt for info



FACULTY/STAFF MEMBER
Current, or prospective

GOALS

- Keep up to date contact info for students
- Exhibit certain works, honors, qualifications, etc.
- Prospective - look for teaching positions

PAINS

- Keeping information current
- Unable to change content themselves



DONOR, COMMUNITY PARTNERS
Current, prospective

GOALS

- Find opportunities to get involved
- Find causes to support
- Find students for Internships

PAINS

- Outdated information
- Limited Information
- Limited personalized content

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

MEGA MENU

All of the sites in this comparison study utilize some form of sub-menu or a "mega-menu" in their global navigation. Websites are using these menus to help users drill down to the content they are looking for with as few clicks as possible. This type of menu allows for a minimal design that progressively reveals more and more information in context.

PERSISTENT GLOBAL NAVIGATION

In addition to mega-menus, most of these sites also use a global navigation bar that remains visible throughout the site. This allows users to return to other parts of the site without always having to return to the landing page every time.

PERSONALIZED CONTENT

This content makes the site stand out by comparison to other sites. Personalized content helps users get a feel for campus and/or culture. Personalized content can be the deciding factor in some prospective students decision on whether or not to apply and/or attend.

RESPONSIVE DESIGN

Percentage of device usage as of March 2021 breaks down to:

Mobile 54.25%

Desktop 42.9%

Tablet 2.85%

<https://gs.statcounter.com/platform-market-share/desktop-mobile-tablet>

MARKET RESEARCH

In my market research I came across OHO Interactive, a digital marketing firm that specializes in website development for higher education. I found 3 articles there that I thought would be valuable for this project.

How Website Personalization Can Increase Undergraduate Enrollment

<https://www.oho.com/blog/how-website-personalization-can-increase-undergraduate-enrollment>

“The website is the center of the prospective student journey”

The first article stresses the importance of the school website for prospective students.

*“According to our research results, prospective students report that a college or university website is the top place they turn to find answers. Our aggregate data from eight years of student surveys reveals that **85% of students rank the website as the number one research tool.** Noel Levitz E-expectations report ranks the website as the “most influential information resource.” In both sets of data, we see that prospective students rely on the website more than email, chat, guidance counselors, or talking to admission counselors. As one admission client put it, “all paths to admission lead through the website.””*

The rest of this article talks about “personalization” by mining tracking data. That is not something I recommend for the CBA site. When I talk about “personalization”, I mean more storytelling and trying to make personal connections with students.

Recap: 2019 Higher Education Digital Marketing Bootcamp

<https://www.oho.com/blog/recap-2019-higher-education-digital-marketing-bootcamp>

“Before you can start elevating stories on your campus, you need to break free of the mindset that stories and news are the same. Stories are who people are. They’re more evergreen, thematic, and proactive than news stories, which are generally more of a snapshot in time (something happened, and here’s how it happened).”

Not only are these personalized stories more engaging to students (especially prospective students) but they can have a longer shelf life than current event stories and could be easier to maintain. One of the number one complaints from the students in the contextual inquiries was out-of-date information. Another section of this post talks about some of the features of a user friendly landing page. They recommend:

- *“Users have a tendency to skim content, so techniques like using shorter paragraphs, writing meaningful subheadings, and relying on bullets can really improve the user experience.*
- *Adherence to brand standards is especially critical for landing pages. You may be directing users to the page from multiple channels, and you want to provide them with context.”*

“I love reading what actual students have to say about the school. This is usually one of the most important factors that helps me choose a school.”

<https://www.oho.com/blog/recap-2019-higher-education-digital-marketing-bootcamp>

Panel Highlights: What Prospective Students Expect from College Websites

<https://www.oho.com/blog/prospective-students-higher-ed-website>

At the Digital Marketing bootcamp mentioned above, a group of six High School students share their thoughts on their college search process. Some of the main points that came up were:

- **Prospective Students Rely Heavily on Mobile**
- **Elevate Your Video Content to Engage Prospective Students**
- **Guide Prospective Students Through the Application Process**
- **Show (Don’t Tell) How Great Your School Is**
 - A typical day in the life of student
 - What makes a school special
 - Students participating in campus clubs, activities, and study abroad programs

CONTEXTUAL INQUIRY INTERVIEWS

To help me understand how current Cal Poly Pomona students interact with the existing website I recruited 7 students to observe and interview. Participation was voluntary and held via pre-scheduled 15 minute zoom sessions. I started by asking some basic questions about themselves and a few about the website. I then asked the students to share their screens with me so I could observe them interacting with the CBA website. I asked them to “think out loud” so I could try to follow along with their thought process as they moved around the site. Below is a snapshot of what I learned.

BASIC INFORMATION:

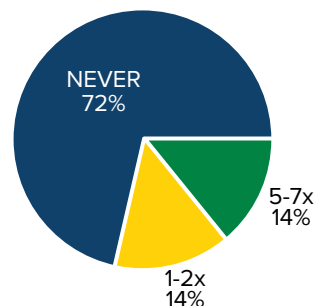
Age: 20-39

Major/Dept.: 2 FRL, 1 HRT, 2 IBM, 1 MHR, 1 MHR/ACC double major

QUESTIONS:

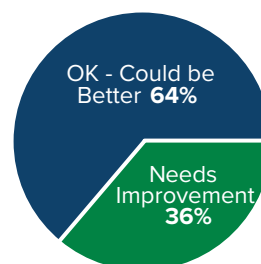
1. How many times a week do you visit the CBA website during a typical week when class is in session?

- a.) 5-7 (almost daily)
- b.) 3-4 times
- c.) 1-2 times
- d.) Never

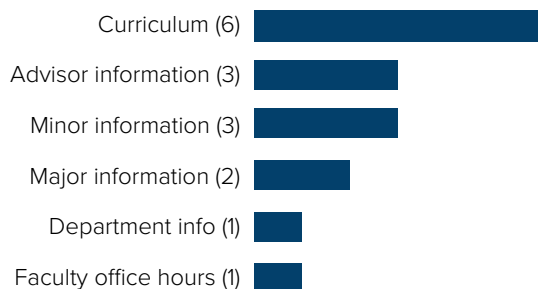


2. How would you describe navigating the CBA website?

- a.) Extremely easy
- b.) OK - could be better
- c.) Needs Improvement
- d.) Extremely difficult



3. What information are you typically looking for when you visit the CBA website?



TASKS: Some overall observations of the tasks:

- The “Our Faculty” option in the main Navigation bar is a dead end. Several students went there to try to find faculty members contact information, advisor information and more. The CBA directory link goes to the Dean’s staff rather than faculty.
- Students are using other technology to stay connected and get information. Several students said they get their information by email in addition to using CPP Connect, MyBar, Handshake, etc.
- Students are bypassing the top navigation menu and going immediately to the search bar to find information.
- Students are bypassing the top navigation menu and scrolling to the bottom of the page to use the underlined links.

(continued on page 2)

TASKS

I came up with 5 generic tasks to test the students on. Admittedly, these tasks were created as an “outsider”, meaning I only had my own assumptions and ideas about what typical college students would be looking for on a typical college website.

1. Where would you go to find out how to make an appointment with your academic advisor?

83% success rate

Completed Task: **5/6 CBA students**

Could not complete the task: **1 student**

N/A: **1 Student** (HRT major) doesn't have a CBA advisor

My goal for this task wasn't necessarily to have students book an appointment with their academic advisor (through CPP Connect, etc.), but if they, more generally, could find information on the *website* about academic advisors. Again, as an outsider, to me, that seemed like useful information to have on the website.

Students were able to complete this task fairly easily though they had different ways to accomplish it. Some went right to the student success center via the bottom links, some used the “current students” bottom link, some went right for the search bar and entered “academic advisor CBA”. Only 1 student used the top navigation to go to the student success center. Another relied on technology beyond the website: ***“I would just email him and he would send me a link in Handshake”***

2. Can you find the contact information for one of your professors?

100% success rate

Completed Task: **6/6 CBA students**

Could not complete the task: **1 student (HRT major)**

Although this task had a 100% completion rate, the path to getting the right information was clumsy and often started with students going to the “Our Faculty” link in the navigation bar. One student remarked ***“It would be great if one of those was my professor”*** referring to the faculty that come up on the Our Faculty page. 2 out of 6 students easily navigated to their department and to their faculty without any issue. 2 of 6 students entered their advisor's name in the search bar. 1 student was already in CPP connect and used a “Dept. A-Z” directory there. 1 student searched several links before finally heading to their department for the information. One of the students said they would typically use Outlook or Blackboard to find it. Several students tried the “Our Faculty” link before finding the right path.

3. Can you find information about the Bronco Startup Challenge?

66% success rate

Completed Task: **4/6 CBA students**

Could not complete the task: **1 student Unfamiliar with the event**

All 4 students that found the Bronco Startup Challenge did so via the search bar. The first link that came up in the search results was for the year 2019, there was also a broken link. Eventually they were able to find the information for 2021. One student had been involved in Bronco Startup Challenge for 2 years but couldn't find it. Another student said they heard about it via e-mail. One was surprised that it didn't have it's own section in the Navigation because ***“it's a pretty big thing”***

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4. Can you find information for the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation?

75% success rate

Completed Task: **3/4 CBA students**

Could not complete the task: **2 students** were already on the page from previous task

Unfamiliar with the Center: **1 student**

2 students easily navigated to Academics-->Centers. 2 other students I didn't include in the count were already on the page after finding information about the Bronco Startup Challenge in the previous task. 2 students gave up after trying "News and Events" and "About" sections in the main Navigation. 1 student used the search bar. "Centers" is in the main Navigation bar but it seems to be overlooked rather easily.

5. Where would you go to find information about student groups?

57% success rate

Completed Task: **4/7 students**

Could not complete the task: **3 students**

Only 1 student was able to easily navigate to student organizations by using the bottom links. The other 3 students who eventually found their way there had tried one or two dead ends first. Several students mentioned MyBar. One student assured me that student groups were not on the CBA website. This is the task that sparked the most debate among the students. I heard some interesting feedback, including:

A student told me that the groups weren't on the CBA website but on MyBar but that can be confusing, they said:
"I wanted to join a group my freshman year but I didn't until my sophomore year because I didn't know you had to go about it a completely different way"

Another student who was active in groups like using MyBar, but she thought it would be great to have club information on the website. She told me about a situation of an Engineering student she knew who joined a finance group she was a part of. She said he was always complaining about never receiving the emails about club information and even meetings because he wasn't in the College of Business and the Finance club was "technically" a business club. She also made a really poignant statement about groups that ties back to the personalized content on school sites. She said, *"Any time students get involved it really changes their attitude towards school, they feel more connected and just a bit more drive..."*

Finally, I asked if they had any thoughts about the website in general. Here are some of their responses:

"Every time you asked me to do a task I started at the homepage but it was just a waste of time"

"My biggest issue: so much expired information"

"This reminded me of why I don't use it"

"Once you get the hang of it, it's not too difficult, but when you first see it, it can be hard to find things"

"MyBar is awesome, CBA is a little too much on the eyes. I like the main site though. I like the colors, it's like CPP and cool"

"If I try, I can figure it out. If it would be more user friendly for where the information is that could be better."

"...As a student consumer the main take away for me is that it's not super intuitive. If I'm a student, I'm probably just looking for either clubs I can join or I'm trying to look for course information, and I think from that standpoint of these tabs up here only like 1 of these does that for me."

PROSPECTIVE STUDENT INTERVIEWS

I really wanted to get the perspective of prospective students, i.e. high schoolers or new college freshman who had just gone through the process of researching, visiting and applying to schools to attend. I have a friend in the Bay area who is a math tutor working with high school students. She reached out to 10 of her students to answer some written questions. I also sent written questions to the freshman sibling of one of the students in my contextual inquiry study. At the time of this writing I have only received 3 responses, but I still think it's valuable information. I sent the requests at the exact wrong time - the start of spring break for some, or the end of spring break for others. I'm still hoping some more results will trickle in so I can get a better sample size, but in the meantime, these are some of the highlights of the results.

Overview:

- 3 Students, aged 17-19
- All of the students planned on applying to 5 or more schools
- Students are trying to “envision” themselves on campus. They are looking for campus tours, videos and images that give them a “feel” for campus and campus life.
- They value Student Testimonials
- All students started researching school with guidance counselors, friends, family and school websites.
- Even though some students were frustrated with a school's website it didn't ultimately determine whether or not they applied to that school.
- Students relied on “gut feeling” after visiting a school in person.