SKSN Symposium Slides Transcript

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1- This year, our group, CG1, which consisted of Doria, Nicky, Marina, Kyle, Natasha, Olivia O, Olivia S, Anna, Jason, and Josiah, worked with SKSN, a residential school located in India. Each student had differing skills and backgrounds, which allowed us to come together to complete our internship of creating a new website for SKSN. Within this presentation, we will discuss what SKSN is all about, our goals and how we achieved them, and we will take you through the transition from the old SKSN website to the updated website we created.

2- SKSN is a nonprofit initially started as a residential school that provided education for low income children with physical disabilities in India. SKSN began with the belief is that everyone is entitled to an education, regardless of their ability, gender, race, or caste, with their moto being "educating hearts as well as minds" Now, in 2020, it is a co - ed day and boarding school that hosts a mixture of both abled bodies and disabled students ranging from the ages of 4-18. The school operates based on 4 key components: Education and sports, health and hygiene, social inclusion, and craft ventures. Each day, students attend classes ranging from math, to history, to language. The goal is to provide students with multiple different career choices whether that is higher education or the vocation path, thus, SKSN also provides artisan works vocational training for students. And while this learning takes place in the classroom, SKSN also places a high emphasis on learning outside of the classroom particularly from sports. . The students enjoy dancing and playing traditional Indian games and have even been able to compete in the UK Mini Games. And even better, SKSN hosted the first ever 2010 Indiability games with students participating from all over. For the health and hygiene pillar, SKSN has focused on teaching proper hand washing technique to the students and keeping them on a nutritious diet to help them gain weight. Another major aspect of SKSN is its strive towards social inclusion for students with disabilities who unfortunately face many prejudices. For example, they have created a temple on their campus to allow students to pray because they were not allowed inside the temple nearby due to their disability. Additionally, the inclusion of abled bodied students has also increased social inclusion and taught the abled bodied students about disabilities to help end the stigma around them in India. The school also works hard to ensure that all students will be able to integrate into society upon graduation, live self sufficient with a job and even a family if they choose.

3- Here we have some pictures of the students of SKSN during their everyday life. Some include pictures of assembly which they meet every morning to do meditations and learn about school announcements. Others are in the classroom where students are learning from all different types of teachers.

4- Our goals for the internship. SKSN's website was last updated in 2006. Much of the information housed on the website was outdated. The information was presented in lengthy text entries, and paragraphs were wrapped around pictures in unintended and disorganized ways. There were dozens of pages and subpages to navigate through, and this increased the number of clicks required to locate a desired section of the site, including how to donate to SKSN. In response, our goals were as follows: to update the content on the website to accurately reflect current operations and leadership, to reduce information density and deliver content in bullet points

rather than paragraphs, to improve the formatting and arrangement of text and pictures on the site, to condense information into fewer tabs and pages, and make it easier to find out how to donate, to reduce the number of clicks required to navigate around the website. Achieving these goals was important to modernizing the look of SKSN's virtual presence, as well as improving the user interface, and presenting the information in a way that would attract more readers.

5- There were many issues with SKSN's website that we found would need to be addressed when we would go to create the new website. The first issue we found with the SKSN Website was that it was not fit to the screen. As shown in the pictures attached, the website only covered a small portion of the screen, which makes the organization look unprofessional and steers people away from wanting to donate, as they won't be sure if this is a trustworthy organization due to the unprofessional nature of the website. As you can see in the pictures of the website I have attached to this slide, the tabs on this website are sort of all over the place. The first problem that we noted was the fact that many of the tabs were very long and used paragraphs to explain what their organization is. This is an issue when creating a website for an organization like this because many people will not want to spend the time to read full paragraphs. Instead, as a team we agreed that it would be much more sufficient for them to shorten the information presented in the tabs into more of a bullet point type format. On the contrary, some of the tabs presented only had very short blurbs of information. This makes the website look unprofessional as this could have easily been put into a more concise format, integrated into one of the previous tabs. Again, we agreed as a team that this would need to be fixed in the future web design. Lastly, we found that the website had no direct donate button for any potential donors. Instead, they wrote, as seen below, that donors should visit their partner organization Indiability to donate. This, again, will drive away potential donors as it causes the website to look almost sketchy in a sense. That being said, we agreed that on the updated version of the website, there should be a direct donate button. Overall there were many technical errors and issues of outdated information on the SKSN website that the content team was able to go back and edit so that when the design team designed the new website they were able to make it clear and concise and a better use of information for the SKSN organization in the future.

6- To edit the content, we divided the previous website into six sections, which we would translate into six tabs within the homepage on the new website. These tabs include: About SKSN, Our Students, Day in the Life, Curriculum, Alumni, and Photo Gallery. We decided on these tabs by combing through the previous website and examining which main information was most highlighted. We then formed these six tabs and went through all the text on the previous website to determine which content we could add to which tab. We accomplished this through continued contact with our supervisor to evaluate which content was outdated, and which content was necessary. As the previous website contained long paragraphs of countless information, this tasks was as tedious as it was important, as we needed to make sure we were able to convey SKSN's message and essence through our updated content without creating an overflow of information for the website audience. On the next slide, we can look at the content team's progress as they edited the About SKSN tab.

7- On the left, we see the original text that was in the previous website of SKSN. After analyzing popular websites, the content team realized that effective websites outlined the most important information in the fewest words; more specifically, websites are most effective when they do

not contain long paragraphs of filler information, but in fact, limit themselves to bulleted or short bursts of information. With that being said, we needed to condense and edit the left picture of the previous About SKSN information to the right picture. The right picture is able to highlight the main points without overflowing the audience with unnecessary information. We were able to edit all the information for each of the six tabs, similarly to what we see here.

8- Analyze, Learn, Frame, Finalize. On the design team side, our process consisted of these four steps: analyze other websites to see what we want to implement in SKSN's website, learn how to code a website in a way that would allow us to finish the project in the allotted time, create a framework for the website for SKSN's information to sit on, and finalize the website by adding in SKSN's information. By following these four steps, we were able to keep ourselves on track while choosing the best methods for ultimate success.

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10- Once we know what features we wanted on the website we began to design. Our primary goal for creating this website was to have an intuitive UI and implement the updated content. The website was to have a minimalist design, having the user easily navigate through a simple, yet pleasing, design in order to present SKSN as well as we could. We designed the website over the course of several weeks in March and early April, luckily the move to online didn't stop our ability to design. Primarily working with HTML and CSS, we could manipulate every aspect of the website that we needed to create. The website is static, nothing changes for the user visit to visit, which means our focus was on creating the templates that determine how the page is laid out and its appearance -- we didn't need to worry about a backend to support changing content. We created HTML layouts to build the structure of the page content, this included creating a common header and including links to other pages. Once the page layout was in place we wrote CSS to style the page. This helped to create a UI that was pleasing to look at and guided the user's attention to the important parts ot the page. The minimalist aesthetic of the website is carried throughout, simple design features are intuitively placed throughout the website, showing high attention to detail while not distracting the user with too much information. While we have not currently deployed the website, we are hoping to have it live shortly.

11- We focused on four key features when designing the new website. First, the new navigation bar across the top of the web page includes easily accessible dropdown menus that reflect the improved content organization. Second, we created pages that scale well no matter the size of the user window or whether the user chooses to navigate on a mobile or desktop device. Third, we opted for a simplified color scheme that still reflected the integrity and flare of the original website but that improved upon readability and accessibility. The website predominantly features black or dark text on a white background which improves the user's ability to distinguish text. Finally, the addition of new photos and engaging media elements such as the "Day in the Life Page" that include a fun and dynamic design allow the user to better connect with website content and understand what the school looks like today.

12- As you can see in these comparison photos, SKSN's name and new logo are boldly visible when you open the new homepage. The visual language of the original website is carried through with a color scheme of red, white, and black, but the new simpler layout has greater clarity and visual impact. Bright new photos grace the homepage showing the spirit of SKSN. Individual pages are welcoming such as the updated "A Day in the Life" page which dynamically presents an hour by hour schedule in an easy-to-read format. Each tab is easily identified as belonging to SKSN with the logo and name of the school at the top of each page. The website greets users with bright colors and beautiful images that present the amazing work that SKSN does everyday.

13- As we have created the framework for the new website, there is more that is needed to be added to it, as what we have created leaves a lot of room for more to be built off it. Through our collaboration with SKSN, we have learned valuable lessons regarding global engagement which have formed us all into global citizens. We wanted to give a big thanks to Sneh, the executive director of SKSN, for giving us this opportunity to work with such an amazing organization - this is truly an experience that we will never forget. We would also like to thank all the members of GSP who have helped us work on this internship throughout the year - we could not have done it without the amazing help from facilitators, GSIs, and the lead team at GSP. To end, this experience has given us more than we can even begin to comprehend, and we are so happy to have gotten this opportunity.