

Hemmings

Hemmings.com Q2 Overview

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Hemmings.com Q1 Recap

“Low Hanging Fruit”

Our goals for Q1 were to return the Hemmings.com site to an acceptable performance baseline and find and fix major painpoints. We solved glaring problems and completed some complex short-term projects to gain momentum for the web team.

Q1 Activity Overview

Product Goals

- Launched ‘iui’ Mobile Site
- Fixed worst usability issues
- Total redesign of blog
- Mobile-enabled blog
- SEO review
- Classifieds ranking system
- Improved email product

Technical Goals

- Completed performance audit
- Moved to new servers
- Analytics improvements
- Basic classifieds search
- Email system conversion
- Data analysis / cleanup
- Moved accounts to https
- Adopted ticket system

Business Goals

- Facilitation online ad sales
- Sportingnews DART move
- Engaged SN sales group
- Tested AdSense (not good)
- 500 participant user survey
- Laid groundwork for Q2 changes



Quarter 1 Plan

Hemmings.com Q2 Overview

The current Hemmings classifieds system was designed in 2006 and, compared to our competition, is a substandard experience for browsing, searching and placing classifieds. Classified browsing accounts for approximately 85% of site traffic and couples closely with the print business. In order to better compete and promote Hemmings' image as a premier classifieds destination this system needs to be rethought from the ground up.

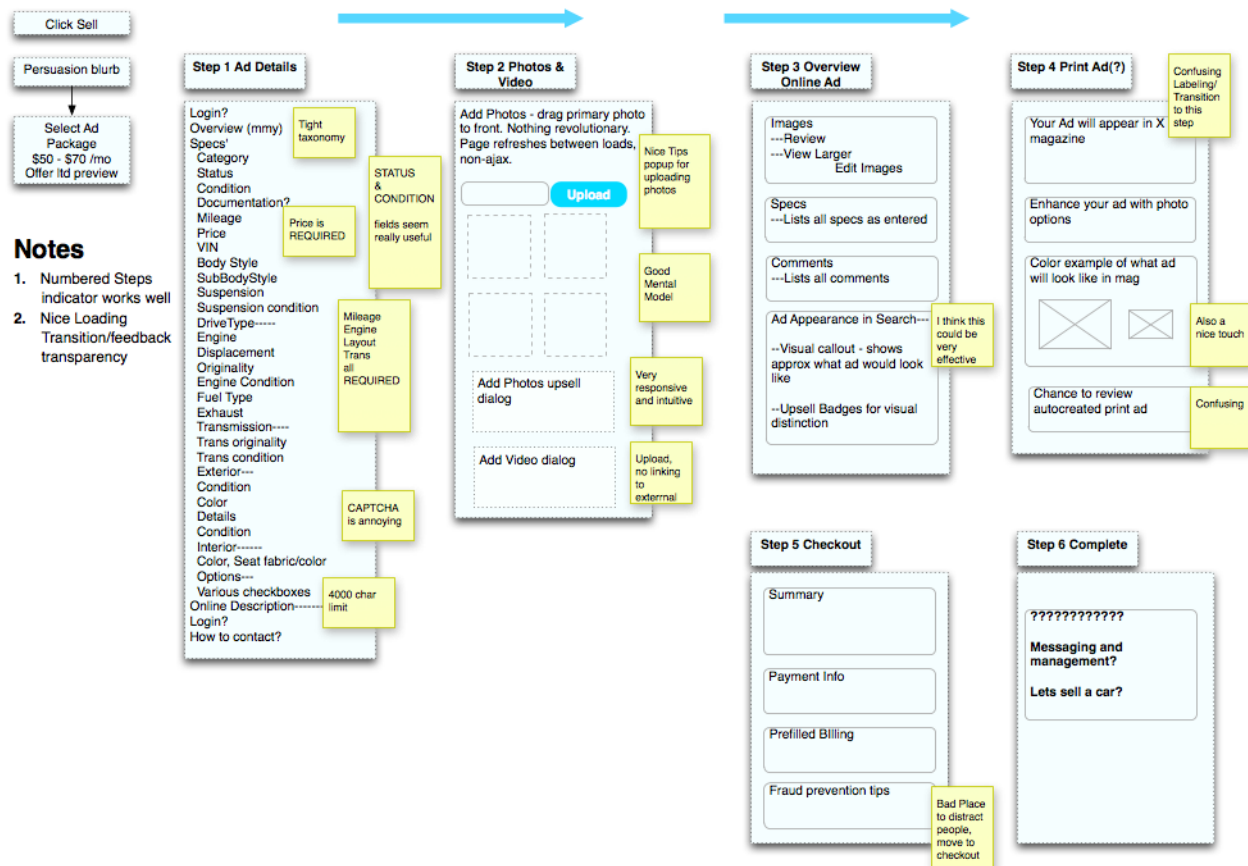
Last year Hemmings attempted to redesign portions of the classified system in committee and the results were incremental and unsatisfactory. The system affects many stakeholders and revenue streams and implementing change is extremely sensitive and difficult.

We are using a methodical research-based approach to redesigning this system. In March we began conducting contextual interviews and compiling competitive research aimed at creating documented insights to drive the redesign. We aren't sure what form the new system will take or what our final scope will be but we tentatively plan to complete research and synthesis by May 7th. At that time we will present and defend our plan in front of hemmings stakeholders to get broad buy-in.

Design and construction will follow with a planned launch target of July 1st. Normal maintenance and several parallel projects will have to be worked in with this schedule. This is an aggressive plan with limited resources available but we have a lot of momentum and buy-in from Hemmings leadership to push forward.

Example Competitive Flow Diagram from AutoTrader Classics

AutoTraderClassics Ad Placement Flow

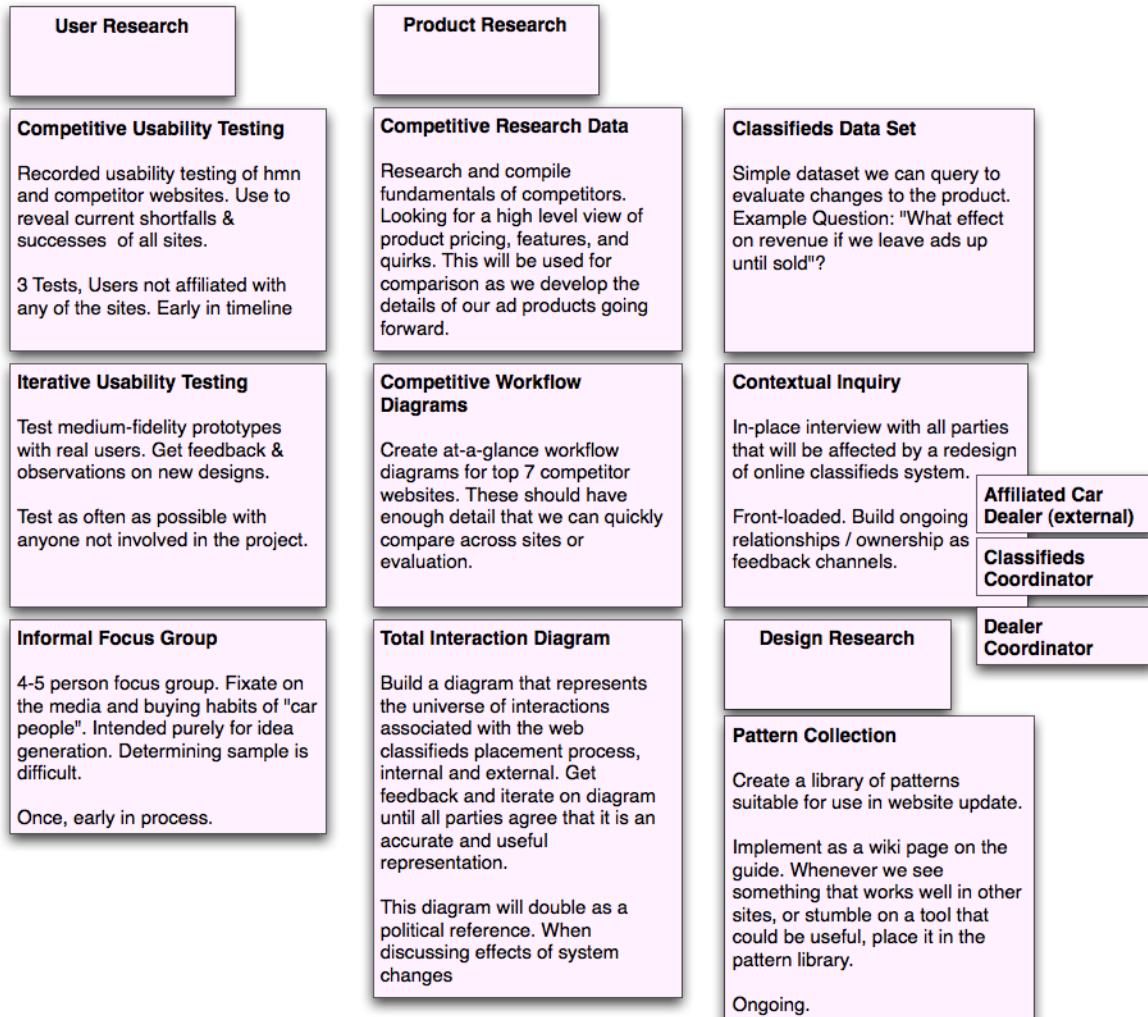


Hemmings Classifieds System Q2 2010

Design Planning Document

March 15

Phase 1. Research



April 21

Phase 2. Synthesize and Plan

Research Synthesis

Revisit transcriptions and diagrams generated from raw research. Generate an exhaustive list of insights gained and arrange into logical groups. Insights take the form of statements, observations.

Semantic / Temporal Diagrams

Creative, lateral thinking look at the industry, competition, psychology of car buying etc. Reframing all of our research and assumptions. Purely generative, helps us center our focus.

Generate Design ideas

Combine our accumulated design patterns with accumulated insights and start generating usable design ideas.

Refinement

Settle on core, successful design ideas. Assemble a document that details these ideas with low-fi examples of how we might implement and some documentation of how we arrived at the idea.

Start internally (web team) attacking these ideas and anticipating issues.

Design Argument

Surviving business, design and interface ideas gathered together and a design recommendation is created. In the form of a wireframe or prototype that will be used to argue for the design within Hemmings.

This is presented to stakeholders and users for evaluation. We have to defend all recommendations with research and identify the risks.

Design Spec

Final recommendations for design. Get everyone to sign off on approach and agree to support the process moving forward.

Spec will be thorough enough to identify major problems before we start coding.

May 7

Phase 3. Design and Construct

Data Design

Change core classified and user schema to support construction.

System Design

Create and Implement any supporting systems (faceted search engine). Build supporting objects and optimize for performance.

Visual and Interface Design

Get professional visual design resources. (Berman?)

Construct

Code it.

July 1

Phase 4. Test, Educate, Deploy

Integration Testing

Confirm new design works with existing systems. Educate hemmings staff of any implications.

Test Test Test

Beta Test with users. Usability testing with users. Performance Benchmarking.

User testing, benchmark testing, every kind of testing. We don't launch until it looks really good. No "Lets launch as-is and fix these issues later".

Deploy

Launch, watch.

Hemmings.com Parallel Focus Q2 2010

Design / Product

Adapt to new design wherever possible

The new blog has established a wide template for the website with a clean, simple design language. Use Jeremy's spare cycles in April to implement this new design across the site as much as possible.

Most of this can be done without making hard decisions, we are basically laying the groundwork for a Q3 optimization activities. This is a good opportunity to eliminate sections of the site that are defunct or unused.

Continuous evaluation of info architecture of site

We know the IA of the site has issues and our navigation can stand improvements. We don't want to change this iteratively - we want to evaluate and plan as we create the new classified system and possibly implement improved IA when we launch the classifieds.

Refactor HomePage where possible

Anything will help - whitespace and subtraction at the least.

Enable Editorial Innovation

We have some lean but dedicated editorial resources. We've promised them whatever cycles we can spare to support them and further their goals. We're getting some momentum on this front and we want to preserve it.

Possible sub-projects will be blog modifications, better integrating twitter and facebook, and shuffling and refactoring existing editorial content. We'll evaluate and prioritize these as they come up.

We want any editorial staff that work with us to look like rock stars.

Tablet Strategy

Work with Jim and Hemmings circ director to create tablet strategy. Will probably leverage existing Texterity relationship (lukewarm success). May use ACBJ's Zinio involvement as pricing leverage (or alternative).

Technical

Repurpose old hardware

Create hemmings admin box and slave database server. We gain redundancy, autonomy and remove some complexity from bizjournals' admin configuration. This will likely be an ongoing task - we will port services at whatever rate we can.

Search

We've hit some roadblocks with Endecca integration. Looming technical questions about faceted views of classifieds and content are going to become more pressing as we move to the build stage of classifieds projects.

SOLR is our backup.

CMS

New admin server + some consulting from Alvin Kreitman will get this process started. Currently low priority.

Business

Continue boosting Ad Revenues

We are seeing improvements in in-house sales. Advocate for internal sales promoting more aggressive, but appropriate, sales efforts.

Further facilitate the relationship between Hemmings and the Sporting News Ad sales team.

Create a syndication portfolio

Work with all internal bizdev staff to generate 2-5 ideas for Hemmings syndication packages.

Create the feeds to enable these and supporting documentation and figure out how to shop these .

Convergence

Continue trying to strengthen relationship between print and digital.