

KERRI-ANNE ELLIS

THESIS PROJECT – RESEARCH REPORT



- a. Foreword
- 1. Elevator Pitch
- 2. Initial brief
- 3. Competitor websites and comparable productions
- 4. A Brief Understanding
 - a. Women and the Web
 - b. Understanding Publications on the Web
- 5. Focus Group / Project Plan (Business, Commodity, Firmness, Delight)
- 6. Testing
- 7. Future Development
- 8. Conclusion

FOREWORD

This project has been a whirl wind of learning from first hearing about the challenge ahead, to the completed thesis you see before you.

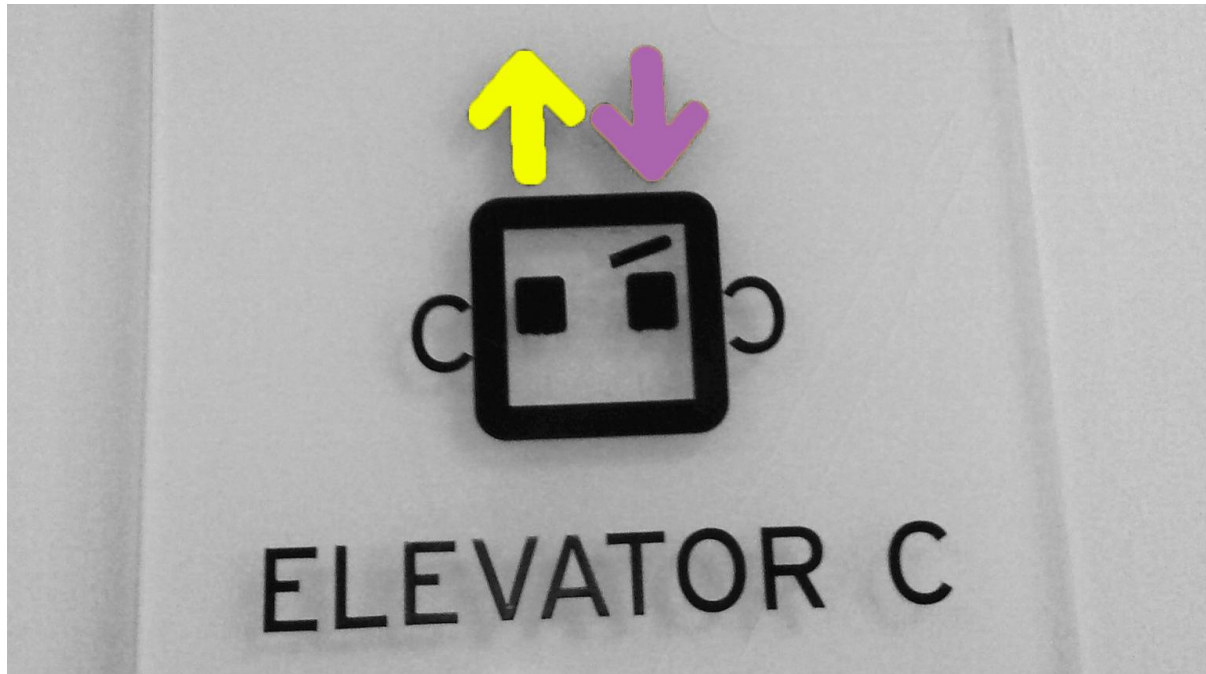


Originally, Getting Lippy was to be a cosmetics site for busy women, allowing for the exploration of the online magazine industry, but doing so using a safe topic area.

However, as I learnt more about the web and the wealth of possibilities it had to offer it seemed I was selling women short by rehashing a topic that had been sold to them time and time again. My plans for the original ‘busy women’ angle would have certainly found its place online, but this option seemed, on the whole, safe and thus unrewarding. Of course, the original plan has its place in the journey of the site as a whole. The frustration I felt trying to be a, ‘small fish in a big pond’ led me to my final result, thus you will find the original research report, potential design and other work included in the appendix.

The change in direction came when I simply could not think of how to visually represent the cosmetics site. I wanted it to be feminine but strong and because this was not seemingly possible I realised the cosmetics site was not how I wanted to present women online. I instead wanted to create something unique and unusual. And this is where Getting Lippy – The Online Boozepaper was born...

THE ELEVATOR PITCH – PROBLEM AND VALUE



Through publications and magazines, the Web presents the unique opportunity to create niche communities of like-minded people, however weird and wonderful those minds may be. Getting Lippy will join this assortment of small ventures as a mock newspaper, with its unique selling point being that it's written by women, currently underrepresented in comedic offerings. Getting Lippy will present their random drink-fuelled conversations as mock hard hitting news pieces and magazine articles. I will act as editor to this group of women to ensure quality and consistency. To fulfil the magazines aim of presenting female humour to a larger audience, the target readership will not be limited to women; rather, the common ground will be a shared sense of humour. Although revenue is something worthy of consideration for the future, the first phase of the project is to create this community of people who are seeking niche content online and keen to share a joke or two.

INITIAL BRIEF

THE PROBLEM

The problem addressed by this project is two-fold. Firstly, there is the larger issue of the under representation of female comedic worth and sense of humour. Any glance at the 'top 100' comedians list will see a distinct lack of female representation. Arguably, this is not because women are simply not funny, but that their style of humour has not been given the right platform or means of expression.

The second part of the problem is the state of the magazine and newspaper industry. Print publications are in decline, partly due to the explosion and availability of a vast wealth of free, quality content online with even the most niche of needs represented. This new breadth of content available has meant with all the success stories of online publications, there are many stories of even major players finding the challenges of the webs limitless possibilities intimidating and unpredictable.

HOW THE NEED HAS BEEN MET WITH COMPARABLE WEB-PROJECTS

Magazines and newspapers are thoroughly represented online, with most major publications now publishing their entire print content on the web (including supplements).

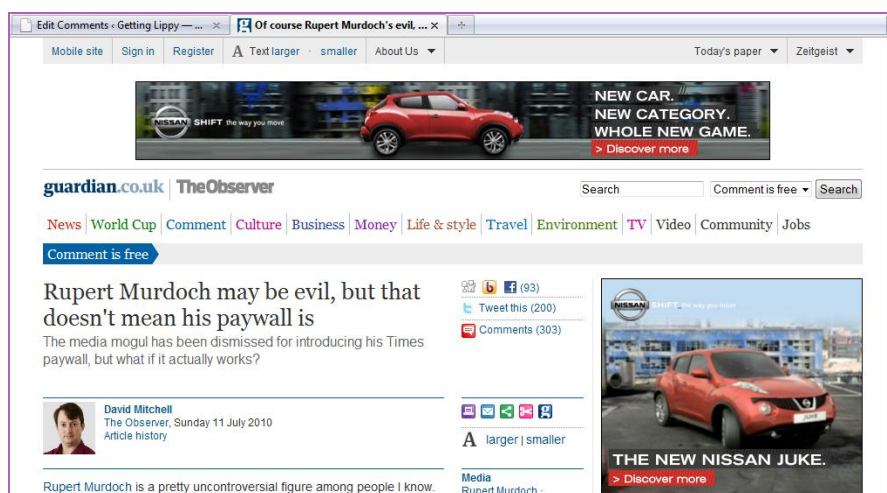


Figure 1 – The Observer, part of the Guardian group.

The Guardian is one such example, allowing its audience members to interact and engage with their content in ways they were unable to before. Previously the 'Letters to the Editor' page was the most notable form of public engagement with the news media but they are having to adapt their relationship with the public by embracing new ways of communication. However not all are finding this transition to be smooth, as the revolution of free content online has meant a shift readers needs and expectations. Smaller ventures are finding room to thrive in the online environment, often not shackled by the responsibility of also being available in print, and it's these smaller ventures which are most comparable with the aims of Getting Lippy. Tina Brown, Editor and co-founder of *The Daily Beast* commented that, "The exciting thing of doing something online is that you can suddenly find an audience."¹

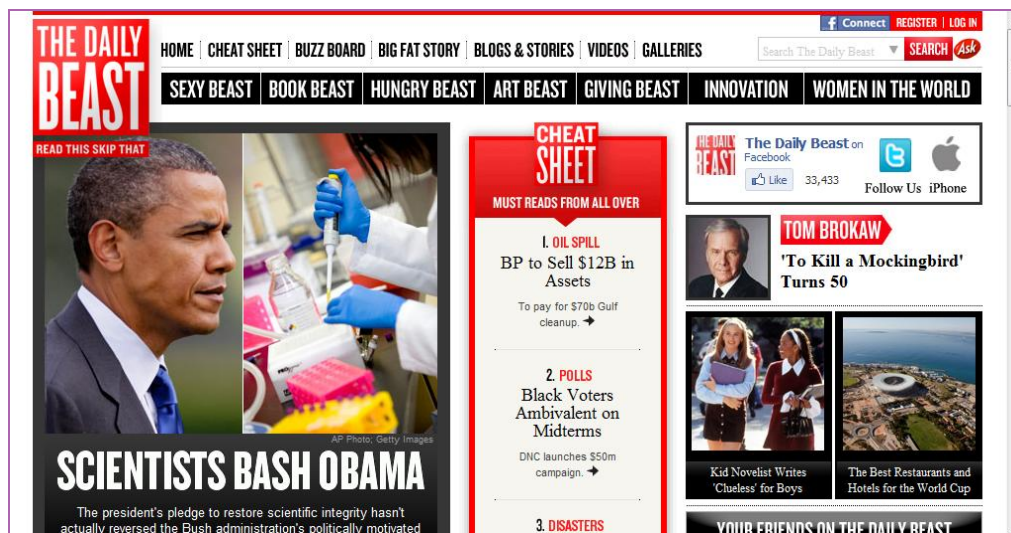


Figure 2 - Tina Brown's the Daily Beast

Her site has 4.6 million unique visitors per month, a figure which even surprised Tina herself. This site is successful due to the quality of its content and its ability to embrace web design, interactivity and technology. *The Daily Beast* is able to combine pictures, video, a forum and reader comments to create a true sense of community and a continuously evolving site.

¹ Ken Whyte Interviews Tina Brown at CMDC, *Masthead*, Ken Whyte, <http://www.mastheadonline.com/news/2010/20100414902.shtml>, (accessed 18 July 2010).

The web even has on offer sites similar to that which I am proposing. *The Daily Mash* in their own words is, 'a satirical website covering national and international news with spoof stories, commentary and opinion'².



Figure 3 - The Daily Mash Satirical Newspaper

This advert-heavy satirical newspaper relies solely on the quality of its writing to draw its audience and is the best of its kind, insuring repeat visits. It clearly has not had the same level of investment as *The Daily Beast*, but still thrives online due to its loyal readership.

For all their differences, the two projects are also quite similar. Content lead, they use standard online magazine layouts and best practices to get as many people reading as possible. They have taken a 'let our audience find us, whoever they may be', approach and have not attempted to second guess who their audience may be.

Both these sites have noted an important factor. Stay true to yourself and the readers will follow if they want it. You can't force it, you just have to hope people share in your vision.

However there is far more content available online and it is worth comparing a site with the 'female' angle involved to see what methods are used here. A search on Google in to female publications produced the following result.

² About Us, *The Daily Mash* <http://www.thedailymash.co.uk/about-the-daily-mash/> (accessed 16 July 2010)



Figure 4 - The Complete Woman Magazine

This web project uses strong feminine stereotypes to tap in to its target audience. This type of project seems to represent how women are currently being address online, which is in a very predictable, 'pink' way. However, it can still be a useful project to analyse. It deals with magazine, not news articles, and its writing style is suited to this. It has used the low start up costs and profit potential of the web to start something which is seemingly successful and well read.

It can also serve as an 'anti-example' of how I don't want my site to look and feel.



AND WITH NON WEB-PROJECTS

Perhaps the most famous satirical publication is *Private Eye*, which crudely comments on the current issues of the day using pictures and articles. The magazine continues to be a success with subscription numbers still very strong, but even this project has an online presence.


HOW THIS WILL CREATE VALUE

From the initial research it is obvious that publications are finding they can exist comfortably online and satire has even been able to thrive as their content is able to reach a wider audience easily and cheaply. However, it is particularly in the area of female comedic writing that the web lacks representation and there is still room for something new to exist in this area. Further to this, the topics covered by Getting Lippy won't be 'what's in the news' it will be the random musings of women in the pub that inspires others to say 'I always thought that!'. Its emphasis is to create something unique but appreciated.

UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION

This site will be unique because of its writers. Strong, intelligent and very funny women able to create audience drawing content online.

COMPETITOR WEBSITES AND COMPARABLE PRODUCTIONS

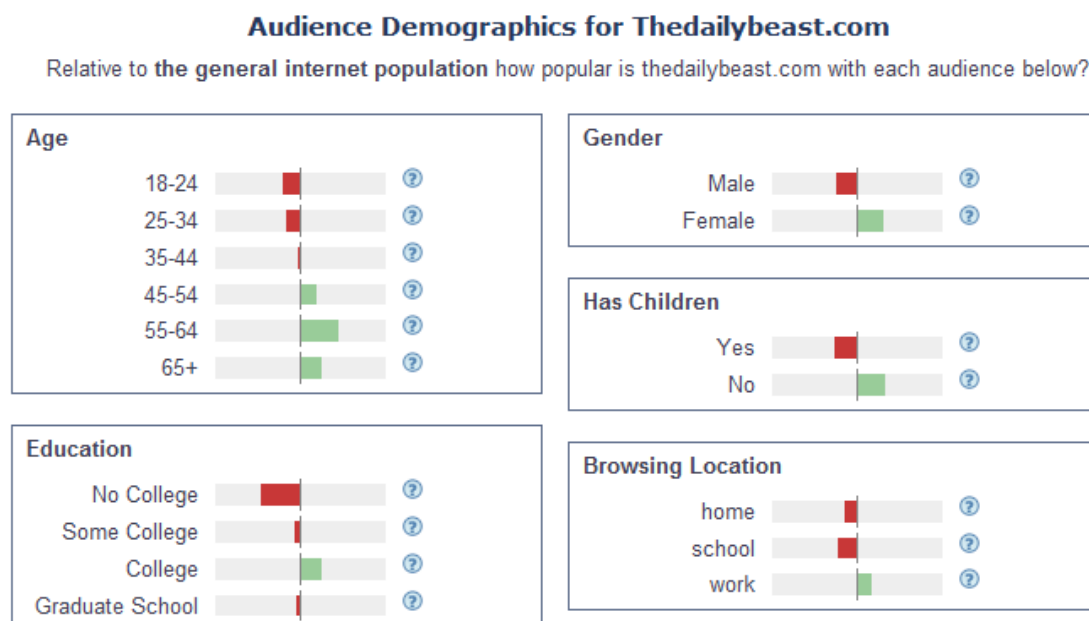
 = Business  = Commodity  = Firmness  = Delight

Our initial research reveals general trends in online magazines in terms of format and approach. Generally we find a communal blog approach where journalists contribute separate articles which are then arranged by their appropriate category as part of an elaborate content management system.

THE DAILY BEAST – ONLINE NEWS AND SOCIAL COMMENTARY

Although the Daily Beast does not deal with the same content as Getting Lippy, it provides an excellent overarching example of how an online magazine should be run. It has used content, an appreciation of website interaction and excellent design to draw itself an audience of around 4 million unique visitors a month. This is an excellent example as it's also an online only publication, starting around a year ago and not being able to rely on loyal print readership that are happy to convert to online content.

Daily Beasts Demographics are as follows (courtesy of Alexa.com):



We can see that their audience is in the older age bracket (45+) and are largely female. *The Daily Beast* has successfully targeted busy women (they view the site at work) and they are without question a success story for gathering loyal readership.

BUSINESS

Tina Brown said of her own business approach, 'We were lucky in a way to start in the deepest recession since 1929. Our business plan required us to focus on traffic first, then in the second half of the year on advertisers—which was a good thing because there weren't any. Now we have started to reel 'em in.'³ Brown has wisely allowed the time for the business to develop a customer base before investigating potential revenue streams. Currently the site's business is to understand the online magazine market, rather than try and pre-empt it.

COMMODITY

The content is organised in a logical and thought out manner with articles organised as you would expect in a print publication, in to topic areas. Also the information architecture allows for regular columnists to fit naturally in to a subject column whilst maintaining their status as regular contributors. All this can easily be navigated from the homepage, or from the navigation tab on every page. This is part of the business approach to truly understand the readers interaction with the site and has benefited the audience greatly. The readership are also actively encouraged to comment on news stories, with Brown saying herself, 'I love the smart, engaged audience arguing with us and one another.'

FIRMNESS

The site is based on a content management system which has been fabricated to allow for multiple users to contribute their content, whilst maintaining the integrity of the information architecture through accurate categories. The content is available in various forms, from written articles to video content and this site has used the full capabilities of the web for communicating information.

³ The Daily Beast Turns One, *The Daily Beast*, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2009-10-05/the-daily-beast-turns-one/> (accessed 17 July 2010)

DELIGHT

Despite the standard online magazine structure (the busy homepage, grid layout and horizontal navigation) *The Daily Beast* has secured uniqueness in design through bold headings and consistent use of typography. A simple white background frames the grid layout and a bold red colour is used to highlight sections throughout the site. Rather than adapting a print design to fit online, *The Daily Beast* has been able to create its own online personality.

Advertising will be appearing on the site but currently it is all about quality of content

The Daily Beast's tag line 'read this skip that' is a subtle appreciation of how their readership uses the content on their site.

The content is organised in various ways, to guide the reader through by columnist, or by content.



The site uses a wealth of technology, from video to java script, all on a CMS designed to allow multiple users to contribute.

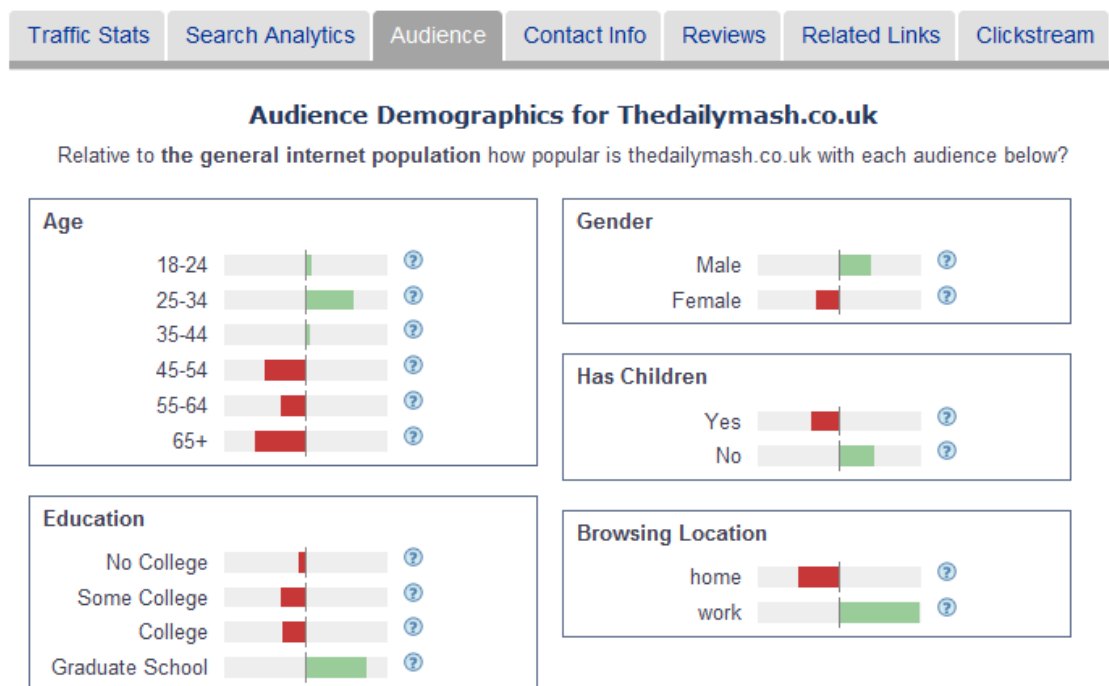
The exaggerated headings and punchy red design lets you know immediately which site you are on. The red implies danger and power.

Readers are encouraged to interact with the site, even on their personal networking pages.

THE DAILY MASH – SATIRICAL NEWS ONLINE

Wikipedia defines *The Daily Mash* as a British satirical website providing parodic commentary on current affairs and other news stories⁴. The content of this site is similar to that proposed for Getting Lippy and is one of the most popular sites of its kind. It is often adult in its humour and is unashamedly scathing in its approach. Through its sense of humour, *The Daily Mash* has been described as insightful and has gained loyal readership through consistently quality content.

Daily Mash's Demographics are as follows (courtesy of Alexa.com):



The demographic is decidedly different to that of *The Daily Beast*. It has a largely young male educated audience. This is a significant observation in the target audience of online magazines. When we add a satirical and comedic angle the age and gender of the readership changes. This begins to support the idea that female comedic needs are currently underrepresented online.

⁴ The Daily Mash, Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Daily_Mash (accessed 17 July 2010)

BUSINESS

The revenue stream for this site is a basic 'pay-per-click' model and is aggressive in its placing of adverts. The site also has a shop where promotional t-shirts and other merchandise can be purchased. They also have a strong market for their books, showing a continued reliance in print publications to make money.

COMMODITY

The Daily Mash has a similar structure to *The Daily Beast* in that it is a traditional grid based layout where the most recent news is displayed on the homepage, whilst the navigation allows for exploration of the archives. The main news articles are positioned to the left of the page, whilst content such as videos are placed rather untidily to the right. The impression is that the main focus of the site is its written content. Users can subscribe to the newsletter but are not encouraged to comment on stories and no forum is available. Authors are also not a significant factor in the stories and are displayed more as a constant stream of consciousness.

FIRMNESS

The site is based on a simple layout, perhaps Wordpress or something similar. A simple drop down menu is used but generally the site is simple and based around multiple contributors adding articles to the site.

DELIGHT

In terms of design the site is very simple. In the same manner as *The Daily Beast* it is a simple grid layout with a white background but the only real design flair comes in the logo, which is in a wiggly, playful font. Generally though simple web fonts are used and links have simply been left in blue. For this site, content is king.

The site has a pay-per-click revenue model and adverts are placed in attention grabbing sections of the site.

The advertising is often in video form and is very much geared to a young male audience (beer in this example).

The site does not include a forum or ability to comment, but it does have an app, Twitter and Facebook page.

The site is very simple and seems cheaply put together.



The site is not author lead, rather the audience are expected to read the stories in chronological order and know from which news stories they originate.

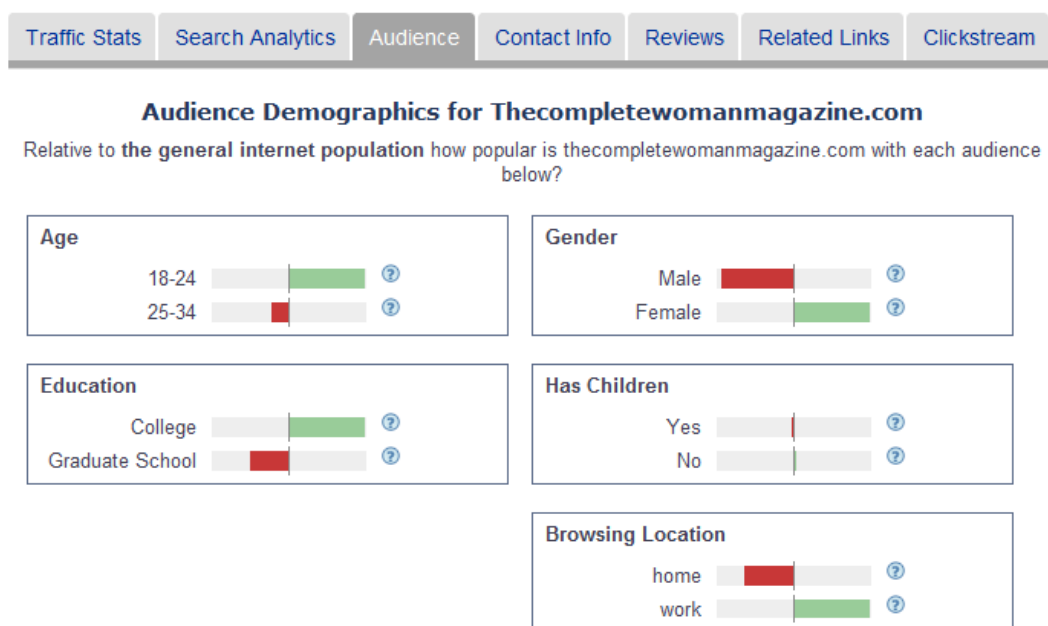
The site relies on other means of income including merchandise and books.

The site has no real artistic flair to it, but this is not necessary for the site. Its shackled together look helps highlight that the site is content lead.

COMPLETE WOMAN MAGAZINE – TARGETING THE FEMALE MARKET

Complete Woman Magazine helps represent the form women’s magazines have made online. Although Getting Lippy won’t actively target women, it’s important to understand women’s place in the marketplace.

Daily Beasts Demographics are as follows (courtesy of Alexa.com):



Young women at work are the main audience for this site, showing that the obvious approach towards women has worked. Although this shows what audience a site like this can expect, what is more interesting is that, due to the subject matter, we can expect that the authors are women and this is where it has strong similarities with Getting Lippy. It is these pink stereotypes of femininity I plan to avoid, but in order to do so it’s necessary to understand them.

BUSINESS

Although site generally seems to be a labour of love, there is a revenue stream which comes from pay per click adverts. They seem to be placed in respectable places on the site showing that money is not the main focus.

COMMODITY

The site is split in to lifestyle categories such as 'Money' and 'Beauty' and the articles are actively called blogs to secure the online feel. The homepage, as with other sites in the magazine style , provides an opportunity to see the latest and most popular features. However the archives are neatly organised and can be accessed through the navigation. The articles are not 'news' rather they are more 'features'. This is similar to the approach of Getting Lippy and it is clearly a concept which women are comfortable with. A newsletter is available for readers to sign up to.

FIRMNESS

The site appears to be a Wordpress blog allowing for mutiple users to easily contribute. It also means that design is easy to implement.

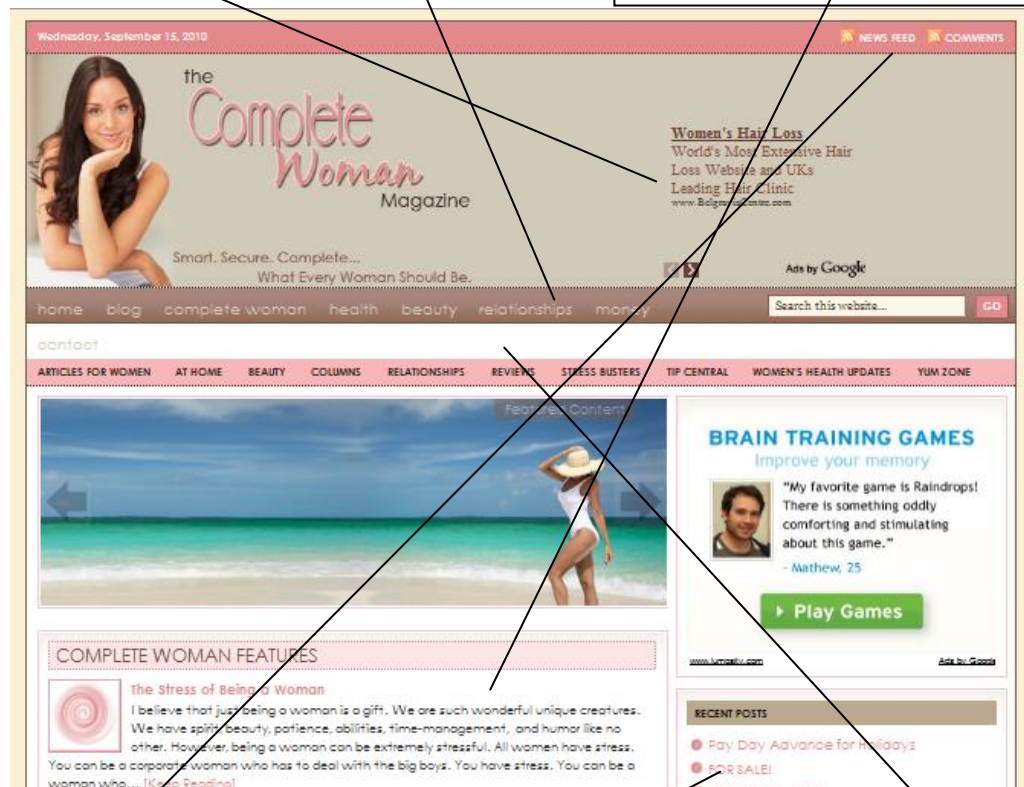
DELIGHT

The website throws every female stereotype at you. Its pink, with a picture of a happy, pretty women in the header. The layout is in a grid based style which helps keep the content methodically organised and easy to navigate. Generally, however, little imagination and originality has gone in to the design. In order to guarantee the female audience it seems it has been blatant in its design approach. However, the fact the site has so successfully drawn in its target audience shows that perhaps some of these stereotypes shouldn't be over looked and can help with understanding women on the web.

Advertising is scattered throughout the site, but has been adjusted to be blend in with the site.

The design of the site plays to many female stereotypes, mostly with the use of pink.

Chronology is not necessarily important to the site, as the topics are over-arching women's issues. Thus, only the homepage implies a chronological order.



The site is logically categorised and has a news feed and allowing for comments.

The site has widgets, such as a 'recent posts' section which implies a Wordpress site.

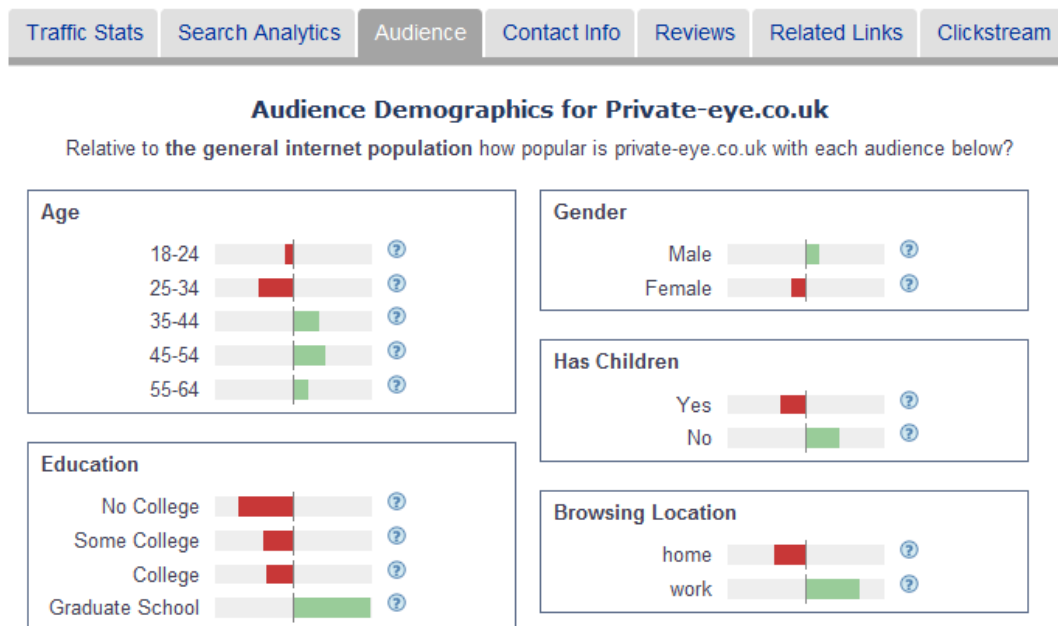
The design is unoriginal and lacks uniqueness.

PRIVATE EYE – AN OFFLINE PROJECT ONLINE

Private Eye is a magazine well established in the consciousness of the British public.

Wikipedia even says of the magazine, 'As the UK's best-selling current magazine, such is its long-term popularity and significance that many recurring jokes in *Private Eye* have entered popular culture from its pages.'⁵ Offline its success is clear, and its unapologetically crass style is something Getting Lippy shall strive for. Thus, it's necessary to investigate how it has transferred to an online presence and what kind of audience it is attracting to it.

Private Eye's Demographics are as follows (courtesy of Alexa.com):



Again, we see males are the main audience members of this magazine online, although unlike *the Daily Mash*, they are slightly older. This supports the argument that comedy writing, particularly in this style, is currently dominated by men. By the looks of the authors on the site, it is also dominated by male writers. Thus there is a trend for comedic magazines to be written by men, for men, and this seems to be established even before the web, in print publications. This has helped identify a gap in the market and but also provides strong examples of how to successfully execute the satirical style online.

⁵ Private Eye, Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Private_Eye (accessed 15 July 2010).

BUSINESS

Private Eye relies on two elements for its income. Firstly there is the standard pay per click advertising we can see throughout the site. But also there is the active encouragement to buy print subscriptions. Although much of the content is offered online, not all of it is and loyal fans are being persuaded to also keep their loyalty offline as well as on. You are even able to buy gift subscriptions. The *Private Eye* has a long history of regular subscribers and can for some time rely on their loyalty. The impression is that this website is to attract a new audience to the publication.

COMMODITY

The site has more 'footer' type headings in its horizontal navigation (including 'subscribe' and 'contact us' which are all repeated in the footer) where as article categories are placed down the side. Although this does not appear greatly unusual in terms of information architecture it does create an heirarchy where actions (subscribing) are giving priority over navigating the articles. The site also includes a level of interactivity, from 'eyeplayer' which offers audio and video content and also online games. Audience members are not allowed to comment on articles instantly, but they may through contacting the editor through email in the traditional 'letters page' style.

FIRMNESS

The site does not seem to have a group blog feel to it. The articles are taken straight from their print publication and pasted online. On investigating the source of the site it seems it is entirely based on tables, an old fashioned approach to web design. Although this is probably left over from when the site was first built, it shows a lack of desire to invest too much time and money online.

DELIGHT

Further to the lack of investment online, the *Private Eye* has showed little imagination in its design. It continues its use of the *Private Eye* font and logo in the header that is available in the print publication. Elsewhere, little originality has been implemented in the design and little personality has been placed in to it. The white background fits the other styles and the homepage is a grid layout highlighting the latest news. Generally, however, its more of a holding space for offline content rather than a well loved and nurtured website.

Little effort has gone into the design of this site, including the layout. Content seems crammed and typography is not really considered to help ease this issue.

The main focus of this sites business seems to be getting new people to sign up for the content, and eventually to the print publication.

The site has a strange hierarchy of 'actions' over 'navigating'.



Readers are encouraged to follow online (aka spread the word)

The sites old fashioned structure is apparent in crushed appearance and unreliability. Parts of pages often don't load.

The only part that appears not to be on the 'default' setting is the logo, and this is taken from the print publication.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

BUSINESS

As online newspapers and magazines find their place on the web we can see 'safe' approaches being used for their business models. Rather than approaching new ideas of paywalls and freemiums, these sites are currently sticking to pay per click advertising with some supplementary offline revenue streams. It seems these ventures are tentatively entering the business side of online newspapers and magazines.

COMMODITY

When it comes to sites dealing with general social commentary, audience participation is actively encouraged. This is different for sites that deal in humour and satire who would rather have greater control of the content and not allow the audience to contribute to it. In terms of interactivity, video and audio are popular mediums, but the written word is ultimately the drive behind the site.

FIRMNESS

Generally these sites are set up in such a way that multiple journalists and contributors can submit to the site without technical knowledge and this ranges from elaborate to simple content management systems.

DELIGHT

On the whole the sites base their design on an online magazine layout. This means that latest news and features can be navigated from the home page. The archives can then be accessed from the categories in the navigation. They tend to be white with personality injected in to the headings and colouring. The grid is not just about design, it is also about information architecture as the grid allows for a large amount of content to easily be navigated.

A BRIEF UNDERSTANDING

Whilst understanding the make-up of websites similar to my proposed site is helpful for the development stages, some wider understandings are necessary to answer my two fold problem of women's representation in comedy / online, as well as the state of the magazine industry.

WOMEN AND THE WEB

Even though Getting Lippy is being created by women, not necessarily only read by them, understanding how this gender uses and enjoys the internet will help us know whether this proposed website, a kind of 'anti-stereotype', has its place. If the sexes are using the web in very predictable ways, then the idea of pioneering something new which challenges the female role might not be viable.

However, the marketing research company comScore have written a document entitled, '*Women on the Web. How Women are Shaping the Internet*' a study which sets to understand how we are using and being represented online. In the summary of their findings one conclusion was particularly noticeable, 'Boys will be boys but on the Web just like in the offline world, gender stereotypes only go so far.'⁶ The report explores whether there is such a thing as 'Women's content' and finds, through analysing audience data, that although some of the old rules do apply (baby sites for example are a female dominated area) that actually women enjoy the full breadth of the web, especially social sites and that, 'women across the world are driving some of the most mainstream aspects of the internet experience today.'

The study is limited in that it doesn't also consider age a significant factor but understanding that women are not a 'specialised' web area and are happy and capable of enjoying all aspects of it. Websites created by women don't have to stick to the usual subjects to thrive

⁶ Women and the Web: How Women are Shaping the Internet, ComScore, Linda Boland Abraham et al [http://www.comscore.com/Press Events/Presentations Whitepapers/2010/Women on the Web How Women are Shaping the Internet](http://www.comscore.com/Press%20Events/Presentations/Whitepapers/2010/Women_on_the_Web_How_Women_are_Shaping_the_Internet) (accessed 16 August 2010)

as gender stereotypes do not necessarily play out online. This provides the perfect opportunity to play with the 'rules'.

PUBLISHING AND THE WEB

The world of newspaper and magazine publishing is seeing a significant to shift from print to online. In fact, the total worldwide users of UK online newspapers is increasing by 9.6% each month (52.3m in August 2009 to 54.7m in September 2009).⁷

The content is often free, can be accessed almost anywhere (and with new technology being released all the time which certainly makes this true) and the breadth of content available has increased with every possible opinion, taste and need being able to be fulfilled.

Print publications, often with high overheads (such as office space, printing costs etc) would have to be commercially viable and popular productions in order to be a success and thrive. However, the internet means even publications with a small audience can exist, with the current popularity of blogs and blogging websites showing how for no cost at all, writers can find an audience across the globe in even the most specialist of subjects.

This means people are no longer limited to popular publications, rather they can find something entirely unique which speaks to them.

This phenomenon has been identified as, 'The Long Tail'.



Figure 5 The Long Tail

⁷ Webwindows. ABCe statistics reveal an impressive rise in the UK papers online figures. Available at: <http://www.webwindows.co.uk/latest-news/abce-statistics-reveal-an-impressive-rise-in-the-uk-papers-online-figures.html> (accessed 18 August 2010).

Chris Anderson's book on the subject describes a whole new economic model for the media and entertainment industry. Anderson notes that the problem previously was that our entertainment media lived in the physical world, and thus became victim to poor supply and demand matching and the desire to only produce things with a mass market, not a niche one. He notes, 'in the tyranny of physical space, an audience too thinly spread is the same as no audience at all.'⁸ However, with the invention of the digital world this 'hits-driven economics' is becoming a thing of the past as we live in an age of abundance, not scarcity. Popularity no longer holds the monopoly, as everything has a chance to exist in the online world.

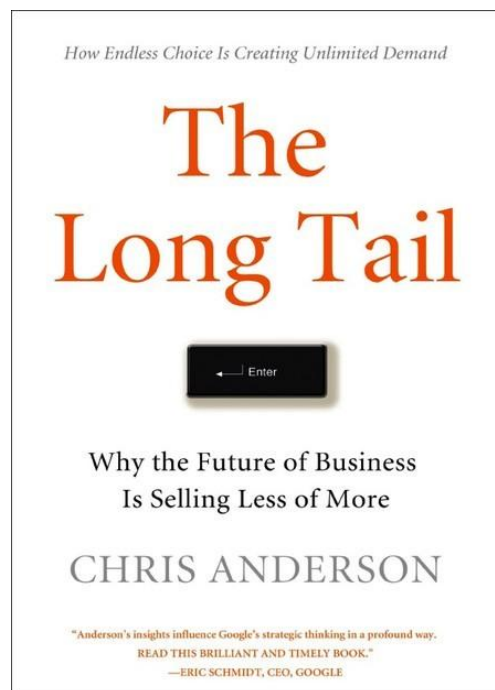


Figure 6 Chris Anderson's Book - The Long Tail

Thus, female comedy can find its place, as the online world may be the very platform it has needed to thrive. The site will not initially rely on profit, rather on finding its audience which according to the Long Tail model, is out there and ready to find new things and unique content.

⁸ *The Long Tail*, Chris Anderson, Arrow Books Limited 2007.

FOCUS GROUP

Understanding the web academically is a worthwhile venture. It makes the seemingly unrestricted world of the web appear tameable by recognising patterns of behaviour and audience needs. However, as a relatively new academic subject there is still so much to learn and understand about how the web works. It is as complicated as understanding human behaviour itself.

Thus, before beginning this new project I felt it was important to rely on more than just online theories, but to actually speak to those with the creative input in the site to get a collective understanding of what we would like to achieve. Like Tina Brown who launched content she believed in and hoped her audience would find her, we too took this approach.

The Group consisted of 8 women ages 24 – 28 all within the same friendship group. The group discussed all aspects of the site including commodity, business, firmness and delight. Coupled with the research, this group decided on the purpose and focus of the site.

The group began by creating a manifesto - a paragraph for understanding what the site would be dealing with and to help focus its purpose.

MANIFESTO

We love a rant. And we don't mean the tantrum you threw just after lunch, we mean those moments of oral glory after a pint or 7, when you have firmly mounted your high horse and are delivering the diatribe of your life. That random niggles, thought or stream of consciousness you had sober, that suddenly becomes your sermon on the mount, your time to shine, your moment in the spotlight. Why DO people wear Crocs? Why IS your boss such a w@nker? And why don't they introduce guns to dating? But most importantly, what would happen if you wrote them down as if they were GENUINE pieces of news and presented them in online magazine form? Come confabulate with us, where the truth is a million miles away, and facts and logic are utterly ignored.

Cos we're not the only ones who do it... Are we?

This summary paragraph helped define the content from which the rest of the site would revolve. Getting Lippy would be first and foremost a kind of personal blog with multiple contributors. The content would be shared jokes and memories of times we have shared on our evenings out. It would consist of unique content that we all greatly believe in, and from this we would hope to find an audience to share in this. However, with no overheads and no need to make a profit, even a small audience means the site will fulfil its purpose of providing niche content, a place to store happy memories and allowing funny women a voice online.

PROJECT PLAN

BUSINESS

From the analyses of competitor sites and comparable productions we can conclude that advertising is a main source of income for these sites, even if overheads are low. This certainly provides a potential avenue for a small advertising profit and the previous examples have not been hindered by them.



Figure 7 - Advertising on Private Eye

There is also the added revenue of offline products such as subscriptions and books based on the sites content.

However, this method should be approached with caution. Evan Schwartz in his book, 'Webonomics', makes the valid point that, "On the Web, the main commodity in limited supply is the attention of the busy people using it. The underlying battle in the Web

economy is the ability to command and sustain that attention."⁹ My focus group also agreed with this. Our main attention should begin with the content.

Thus, as part of the first phase of my website it is sensible to take the *Daily Beast* approach of finding and understanding the audience before I try and sell to it. This allows for monetary revenue to be a 'distant mountain' that can be climbed later, when the sites quality and following is strong. It means that in the initial stages the websites content will not be adulterated by the needs of advertisers and its purpose can carry itself with integrity.

It would be unwise, however, not to explore the potential of advertising, and although the more established sites were able to rely on banner advertising from appropriate suitable sources, for the less well established and smaller sites it seems Google AdSense is a good starting place.

The article, *Make the most of adsense*, proposes the following as one approach to securing suitable adverts through Google.

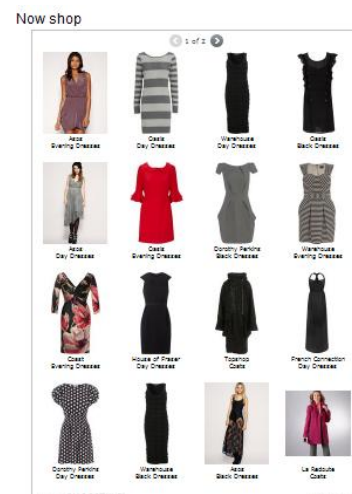


1. Niche Sites.

Targeted niche sites that have a clear theme, tend to generate more advertising revenue simply because it is

*easier to achieve decent search engine placement. Be warned though, you want to chose a niche where there is a sufficient number of advertisements available.*¹⁰

The model, although flawed in places, does offer easy revenue and for those with enough traffic, it can be a profitable venture. This is not the only pay per click option, however, with more sophisticated methods, such as this advert from Shopstyle. It uses cookies from your previously



⁹ Schwartz, E., 1997. *Webonomics: Nine Essential Principles for Growing Your Business on the World Wide Web*, Broadway.

¹⁰ Write Touch 4U, 2009, *Make the Most of Adsense*, [Online] Available at: <http://writetouch4u.blogspot.com/2006/03/make-most-of-adsense.html> (Accessed 8 December 2009).

viewed websites to target items it thinks you will want to buy. This very specific marketing encourages more clicks per view.

Both options can be easily installed and can be placed in ways that are either aggressive and in contrast to the site, or more subtly and in keeping with the look. This type of advertising has opened up business opportunities to even small ventures. It does not require any real technical, or even business knowledge and significant money can be made. Users of the internet are quite used to seeing banner advertising as well as other forms. With pop up adverts being quite intrusive, other means are not considered in too poor taste.

For the future phases of my website this form of online advertising would be well suited. To begin, however, the content will need to speak for itself before advertising can be considered.

COMMODITY

From my research there is a genuine mix of levels of interactivity with the site. Those dealing with humour tend to command more control by disallowing audience participation, whereas more news based sites encourage discussion and opinion.

Failing the ability to comment, all are harnessing the power of social networking sites to directly impact their audience and to encourage a little promotion through online discussion. This creates a community who are all able to congregate online, either through social networks, or on the site itself.

Therefore, beyond the content it was necessary to consider how the audiences will interact with it and be lead to it.

Social Networks

The standard social networks will all have a Getting Lippy page, including Twitter and Facebook. These will be used to encourage family and friends to be part of the first wave of audience members, and through their online recommendations, more readers would follow.



Figure 8 Getting Lippy's Twitter Page

It's through sharing in this manner that people can discover Getting Lippy, simply through word of mouth. Therefore a social networking approach has both a promotional purpose, as well as retaining audience members through 'reminding' them of Getting Lippy's presence.

Newsletter

The idea of retaining visitors is an important one. It is one thing to have a constant stream of one-time readers look at your site, but much better than this is to attract loyal audience members who visit time and again. By seeing what options the analysed sites offered, and also in discussing the least intrusive form of achieving this, we decided to look in to Newsletters. Debbie Lynn Butler in her article, '*7 Benefits of Having an Ezine Or Online Newsletter For Your Business*' notes that optional newsletters mean you are able to stay in the forefront of people's minds.¹¹ A newsletter can enter someone's inbox just at the right time to remind them of the fun they could be having on our site. The benefits of a newsletter outweighed any thoughts on the extra work they would create.

¹¹ 7 Benefits of Having an Ezine Or Online Newsletter For Your Business, *EZINE Articles*, Debbie Lynn Butler, <http://ezinearticles.com/?7-Benefits-of-Having-an-Ezine-Or-Online-Newsletter-For-Your-Business&id=4805672> (accessed 18 July 2010)

Forum

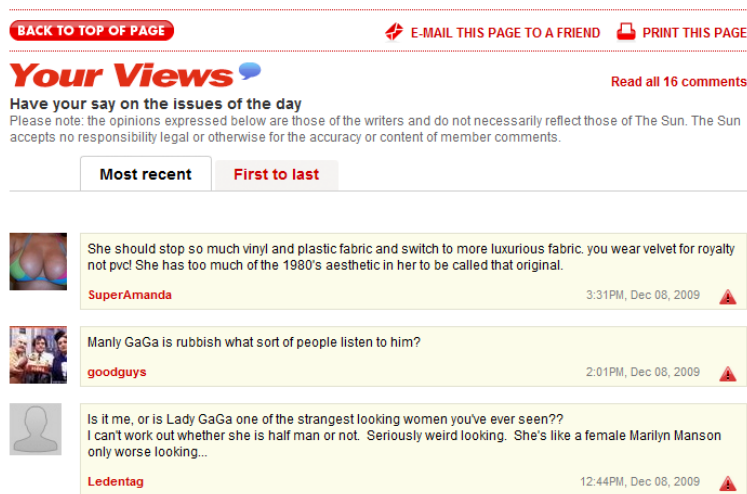


Figure 9 The Sun Forum

Forums are another way of allowing the audience to interact with the content.

This online discussion tool allows for people to voice their opinion and converse with each other.

This option certainly has a lot of positive elements. It means that

not only can people interact with the content, but with each other.

However, when exploring this option further it seems that the technology necessary to make a well functioning forums is expensive and in some aspects hard to personalise.


Also, my focus group found this option unnecessary. Firstly, the Facebook page provides a discussion area which can be used with the same effect, however more importantly, a common way of allowing this kind of discussion is to have a 'comments' section accompanying each article.

Comments

A comments section is an incredibly easy to install and popular part of most blogging, magazine and newspaper sites. It embraces the idea that the media no longer get to simply share their own opinion, rather everyone is allowed to discuss, understand and shape the content before them. This allows the same community benefits as a forum, but in a much more focused way. There is no 'general chat' rather discussion directly based on what is in front of them.






As a small site with only few administrators this kind of focused conversation is easier to monitor and handle and keep the site's focus on the content.

Comments (15)

 Add your comments

Here's what readers have had to say so far. Why not add your thoughts below, [or debate this issue live on our message boards](#).

The comments below have been moderated in advance.

Newest	Oldest	Best rated	Worst rated
 View all			
Nicola looks so much better with her hair like this! It knocks 20 years off her!			
- Beth, Morpeth, UK., 19/9/2010 08:34			
Report abuse Click to rate   Rating  66			
I love her red hair - she is an attractive girl but seems to be ill at ease when picked out by press and photographers - unlike her bandmates .			
- Me - somewhere, uk, 19/9/2010 08:32			
Report abuse Click to rate   Rating  35			
To be honest, I think most people would sooner look at a pictures of Alf Roberts.			
- Oliver, London, England, 19/9/2010 08:18			
Report abuse Click to rate   Rating  24			
She's might not be conventionally beautiful, but she's a stunning young lady all the same!!			
- Mike W, London, 19/9/2010 08:10			
Report abuse Click to rate   Rating  71			

single

She says she's no English rose



► Mother of Mel's love child 'in plot to shake Gibson down for millions,' claims his other ex
Oksana wants to destroy star, alleges Violet Kowal



► Jerry's Hall of fame: A celebration in pictures of the Texan model's life
Intimate images from her stellar career and personal life



► Julia Roberts is sitting pretty – on a £32million make-up deal
Hollywood actress is on verge of five-year deal with Lancome



► 'I was content and satisfied,' says LeAnn Rimes ex-husband after she blamed divorce on marrying too young
Dean Shermet rebuffs



Figure 10 Daily Mail Comments Section

Content Format

A lot of sites are now using a varying degree of formats to express information to their audience. This includes the written word, video, games, interactive platforms and sound. With sites such as Getting Lippy often being presented in a variety of formats, often word and video, it is necessary to consider how many ways the content should be formatted.

As the ethos of the site is about the stories formed on nights in the pub, it seemed crude to present this in video format. An eye-tracking study in to how a website's audience view video showed that although it can have its advantages, on the whole you should 'avoid using video if the content doesn't take advantage of the medium's dynamic nature.'¹² The 'joke' of the site is that the pub stories are articulated in a rational and well thought out way, even though their inspiration comes from somewhere completely opposite to this. To simply stick on a drunken video felt like it would distort the point. When Getting Lippy has a real sense

¹² Eye Tracking Study of Web Video, Alertbox, Jacob Neilson, <http://www.useit.com/alertbox/video.html> (accessed 14 August 2010).

of its direction and audience it may be worth adding in video content, but at its beginnings it seems a much more worthy venture to rely on the written word.

Structure

As online magazines grow in popularity, so do conventions in how the site should be displayed. An 'e-zine' on the whole has a homepage which includes various ways of accessing the wealth of content, whether by category, date, author etc. With Getting Lippy it seemed important, due to the unusual nature of the content, to include the manifesto. New visitors to the site could be instantly introduced to the purpose of the content before them and they can sign up to newsletters / comments etc.

From this analysis and discussion the interactivity and format of the site was decided.

The basic structure would be as follows:

Homepage – Header navigation as standard on all pages, plus the ability to view content in chronological order as well as 'extras' such as social networking, encouragement to write stories, the manifesto, the authors and a general feel of what lies ahead in the site.

Category pages – Audience members are able to navigate the stories by category and this option will be available in the header navigation on all pages.

Articles Pages – each article will have its own pages and will include the ability to comment.

Newsletter – Users will be given the option to subscribe to a newsletter

Social networks – Twitter, Facebook and an RSS feed will be available.

About Us – The audience will have the opportunity to understand where the site comes from

Login / Register – This will be necessary to comment and allows for comments to remain easily monitored.

Contact Us – Users are being encouraged to contribute and sign up, which means it may be necessary to get in touch.

FIRMNESS

The first consideration for the site's firmness was which hosting site should be used. As many of the group involved in the project are environmentally aware the natural choice seemed to be www.ecowebhosting.co.uk.

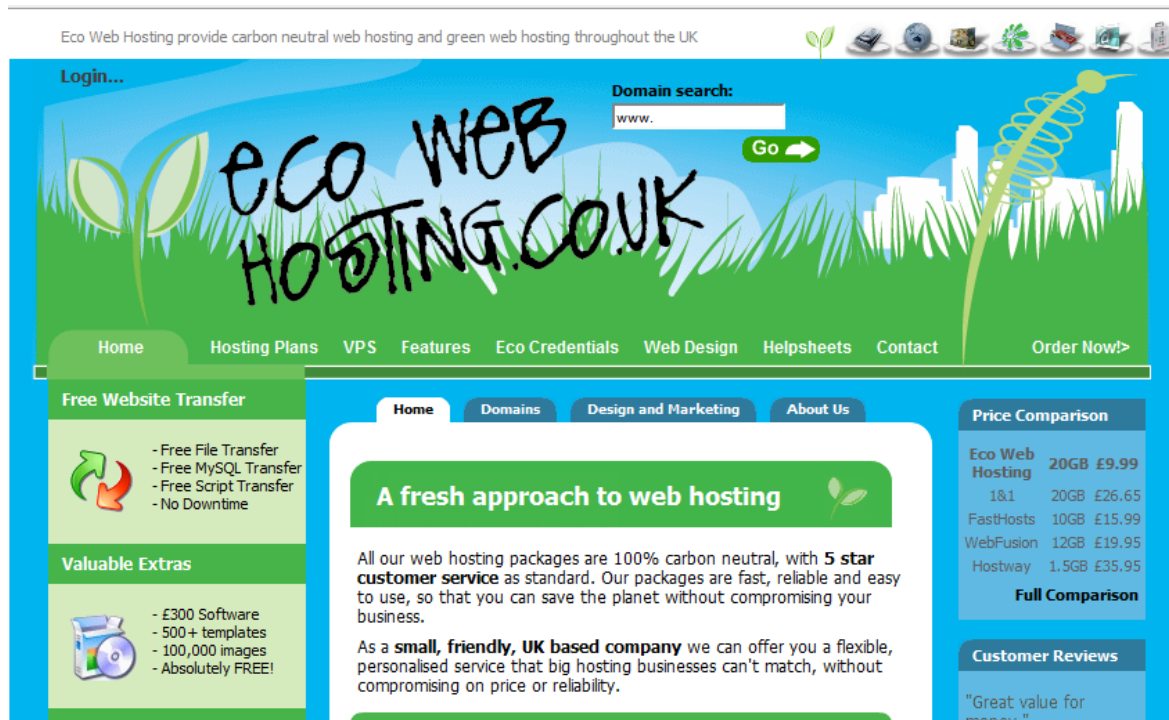


Figure 11 www.ecowebhosting.co.uk homepage

This host carefully works out its carbon footprint and plants trees to offset this. Also, as a small, friendly, UK company my server is in the same country as its made and the personal service will be appreciated by a small venture such as mine.

Also, as the site includes dynamic content and multiple contributors, a content management system has to be considered.

There is a wealth of systems such as this available, requiring varying degrees of technical knowledge to construct and operate. Drupal is one such example, with templates to start a site quickly and a wealth of options available to give the user as much, or as little control as possible.

However, in researching the possibilities such as Drupal, Silverstripe and Joomla, one solution presented itself time and again and has received wave reviews in terms of its usability and ease of installation.

Wordpress is part of the ecowebhosting package, and with one simple click can be installed on your domain name of choice.

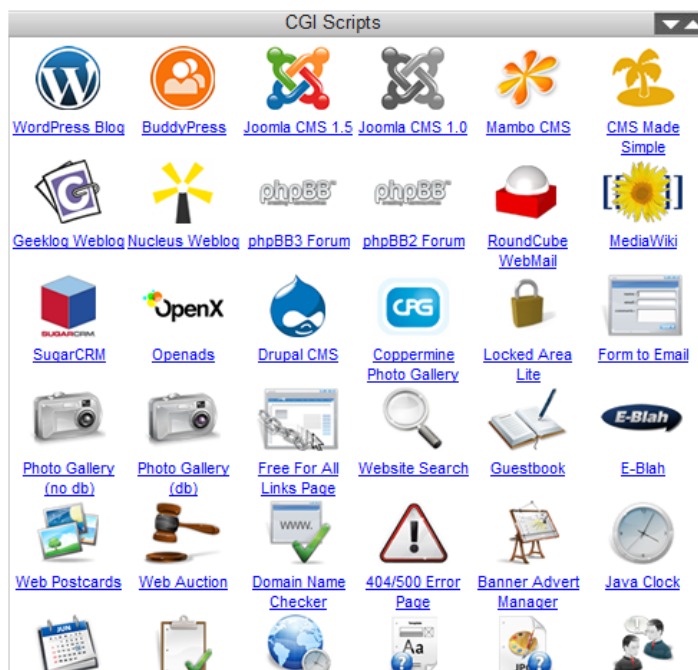


Figure 12 ecowebhosting Control Panel

This blogging software has extended its user potential by combining an extremely easy to use conventional blogging format, with a wealth of easy to install widgets to personalise your site.

This means my authors can contribute their own content easily, but with some technical knowledge Wordpress also allows for control over every aspect of the design.

This option provides the perfect platform for Getting Lippy. By

considering each author to be a 'blogger' the technology is readily available to make this possible.

Wordpress also provides ready-to-use templates which allow for dynamic content to sit in and flow easily. When looking in to the options available the most obvious choice was the Arthemias theme. The other examples seemed overly complicated and relied too heavily on pre-existing graphics to make up for poor information architecture. Arthemias, however, is a very minimalist feel with a wealth of php based features already included. Even the commenting section had been considered with gravatar.com being used to give subscribers their own personal picture next to their comments. The theme had spent time considering what a magazine producer would need, including a 'latest' and 'featured' section to make the homepage a strong beginning to the site.

DELIGHT

In my analysis of the competitor websites the aesthetic theme is clear. Minimalist, white based with injections of strong colours.

However, on the whole, the sites based on humour and satires don't make as much effort in their appearance. It seems in this case, content is king, but Getting Lippy wanted to pioneer a unique look to go with its content.

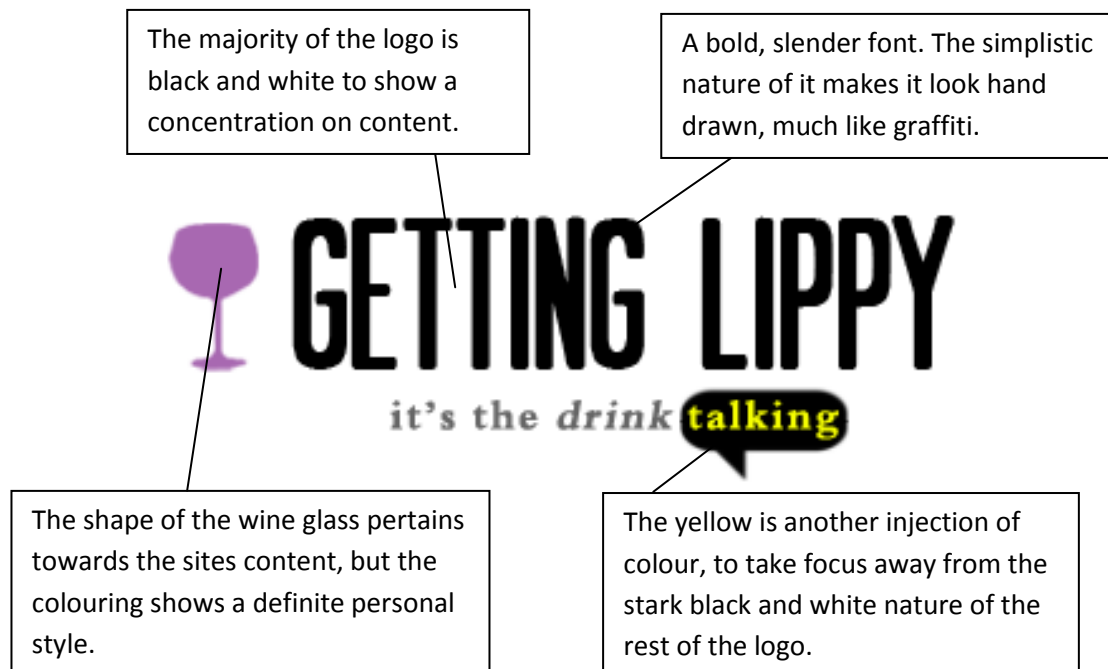
In order to aid this process a mood board was created.

MOOD BOARD



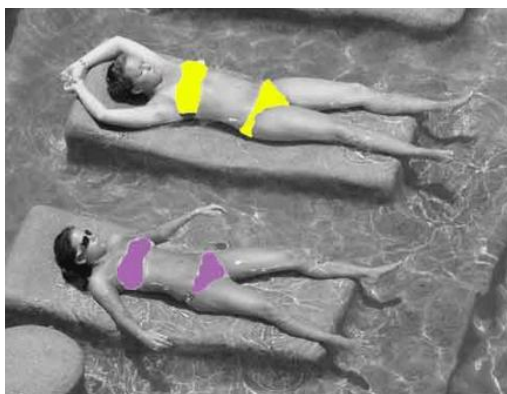
This mood board provides a spring board from which to base the design. Drinking and laughter are common themes and these are interjected with strong and bold design features such as graffiti and self expression.

From these ideas, the logo was born.



From this the whole idea of a black and white 'formal' look is to suit the mock newspaper aspect of the site, whereas the injections of colour let the audience know there is something unusual here. This logo sets the bar for the rest of the site.

One other significant design feature that will differentiate this site from the others are the



pictures. To keep with this 'formal' mixed with 'fun' feel the photographs will be black and white with shapes crudely coloured over with the Getting Lippy purple and yellow colourings.

The black and white makes the photograph seem artistic and serious, whereas the shapes are childish and silly, the two elements of the concept in one

design feature.

As the site is very content driven the typography used on the site will be very important. It will determine the bulk of the site and by making wise decisions now, the correct messages can be subconsciously conveyed.

Using a Wordpress theme, and being online in general, means fonts are limited. However, by using intelligently using those available, it is possible to create a user friendly and professional look to the site, instantly.

As the bulk of the site is a bold but stark white background I decided to go against the web convention of bulk text in sans-serif and rather used a serif font to my advantage. The added detailing in these fonts allows for the eye to be naturally drawn across the line and this means that bulk text is easier to read, but also adds its own subtle patterns through the wording.



Figure 14 5am Gender Fontsheet Courtesy of MyFonts.com

In contrast to this the headings are to be created using a free font (courtesy of myfonts.com) called '5AM GENDER' and this is more of a noticeable design feature. The creator noted, 'I started this font because I liked the letters at the end of the Batman series,'¹³ and this is evident in its comic style. It is impactful but playful. The font is 'gangly' in nature and this amusing without being obviously so. Hence it is perfect for getting Lippy as its statement font.

¹³ <http://new.myfonts.com/fonts/krayonink/5-am-gender/>

TESTING

When testing a website it is important to consider the following factors.

- HTML / CSS Validation
- Browser Independence
- Flexibility
- Speed
- Accessibility

HTML / CSS Validation

The site was made using XHTML strict and CSS. In order to aid the speed and functionality of the site, the standard conventions were used. When tested in the validator provided by W3 the site passed these elements *except* for some of the widgets. These are created by other sources and although can be edited to a point, large changes can cause them to stop functioning. Thus, a reasonable level of adjustment is made to the markup, but not at the cost of functionality.

Browser Independence

The site was built for Firefox, and then adjusted to suit Internet Explorer. The nature of the Arthemias theme meant I was not able to have a separate style sheet for IE and thus had to adapt the CSS to suit both of these popular sites.

The most popular browsers (Firefox, Opera, Internet Explorer, Safari and Chrome all for Windows) were tested live, for all others www.browsershots.org was used to analyse browsers on Windows, Linux and Mac.



Figure 15 Browsers being tested in browsershots.org

The most notable differences are in Internet Explorer. Some margins are different, especially the footer, but this minor difference does not effect usability and is part of the nature of the web. Not everything will look the same in every browser. In terms of functionality, everything still works and this is the most important issue.

Flexibility

The site was created in a 15.6" screen on a Dell computer. Although most site elements were tested before launch, it was not until various users began accessing the site that some issues came to light.

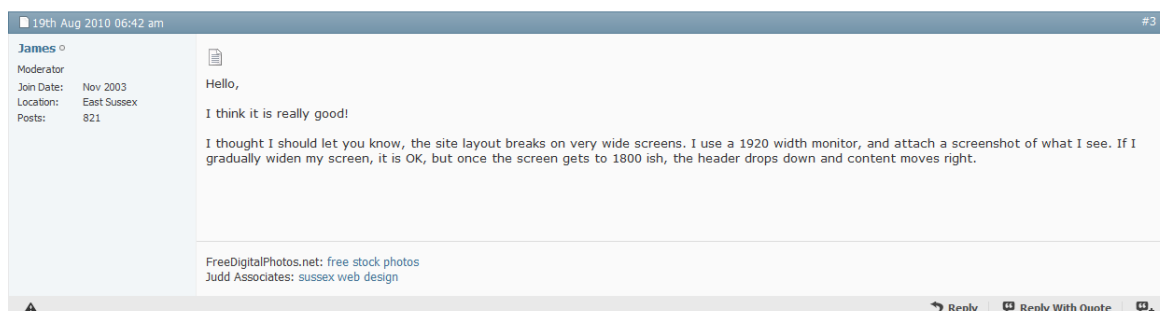


Figure 16 www.websitearchitecture.co.uk Forum

This issue was quickly resolved with the addition of a container div in to the themes stylesheet. It meant the header no longer strayed from the rest of the content.

Speed

Although generally the site loads quickly it is worth testing this to see if further content will cause issues.

#	Domain name	Size	Load Time	Average Speed per KB
1	www.gettinglippy.co.uk/index/	24.27 KB	1.39 seconds	0.06 seconds

Figure 17 Iwebtool Website Speed Test

The initial tests show a decent speed (considering the amount of pictures / content) and the Yslow tool for Firefox gave most speed areas a grade A for efficiency.

This speed is minimised through a number of factors including a single style sheet, minimal java script and even minor factors such as defining image sizes rather than expecting the browser to do this. The image files are even saved in the lowest resolution in .png format.

Accessibility

The site can be accessed and read in an html format and is written using XHTML standards. All images have been given 'alt' tags and care has been taken to make the site friendly to those using bigger fonts.

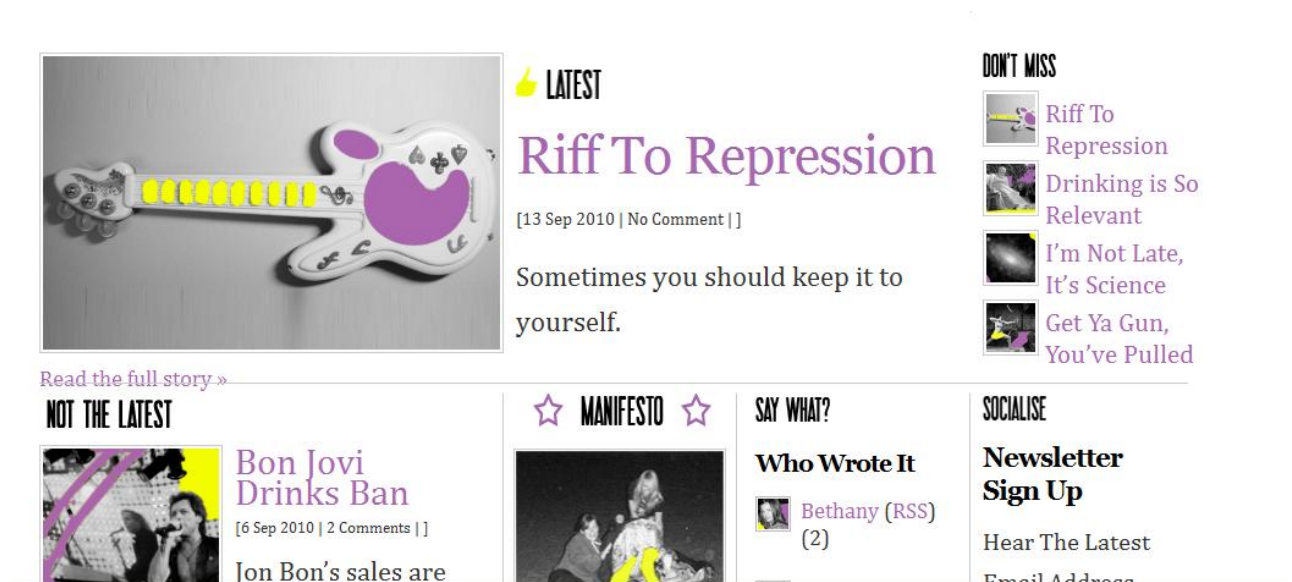


Figure 18 Getting Lippy with the font sized increased by x 4

The difficulties in making the site 'bulletproof' have occurred due to the use of a pre-existing Wordpress theme. Although it proved priceless in creating the site from scratch, it meant adjustments were limited. As much modification was made as possible to make the site workable.

ANALYSIS

The analysis of my site helps identify patterns of behaviour in my users which can be used to improve their online experience and make the future phases of development accomodating to their needs.

From the beginning of the idea it was understood that this site had a specialist subject area and it would take time to find its audience, thus the findings shows Getting Lippy's achievements during its very first steps.

Getting Lippy was launched on August 22nd 2010 and the data was taken on September 22nd 2010.

Visits and Visitors

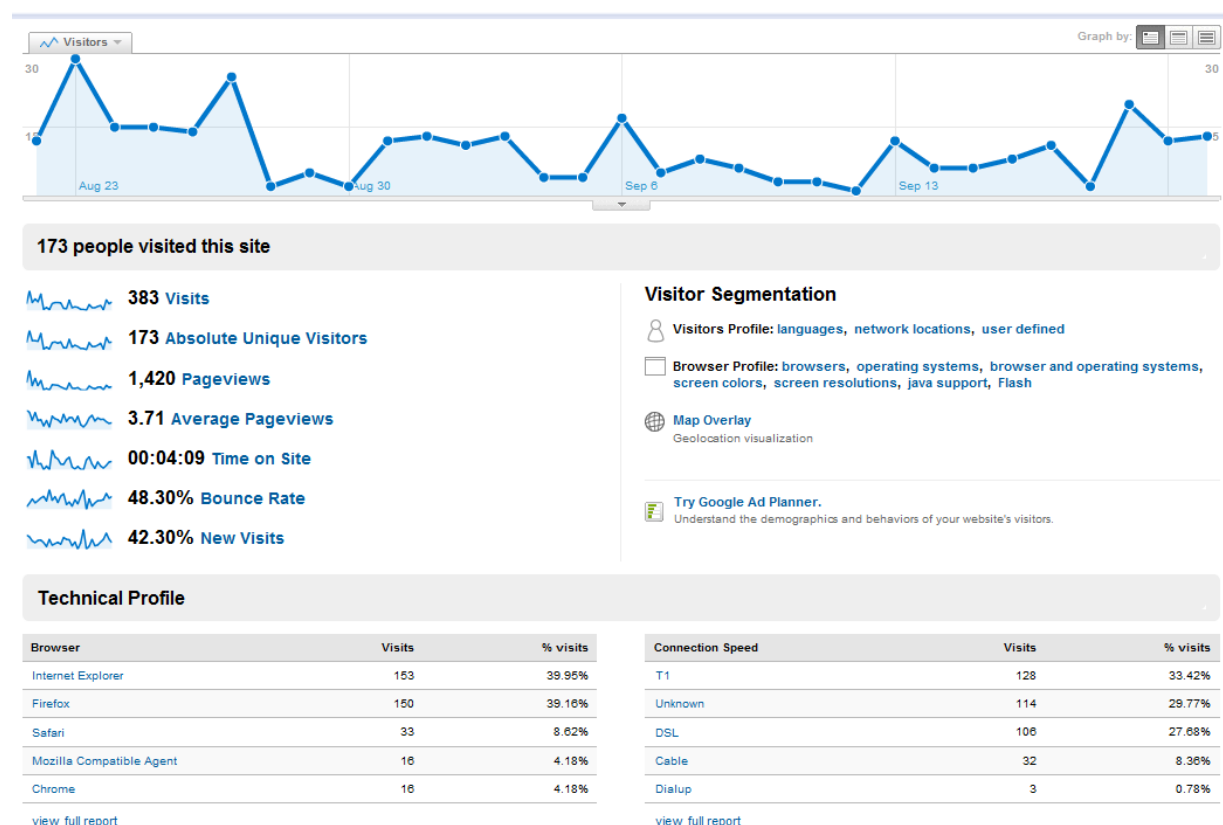


Figure 19 1 Months Visitor data for Getting Lippy

For my first month on the web I decided to experiment with story release volume and frequency. I began with several stories on the site and released three new stories in week one. I then decreased this two in the second week, then one in the third and fourth week.

It is obvious from the graph in figure 18 that activity on the site caused a surge in visits. The highest numbers came at the beginning when the site was launched and the most new content was available. People can find out about new content in a variety of ways; a weekly newsletter (powered by MailChimp.com), Twitter, Facebook and through comedy forums. The surges in visitors show a genuine interest to either discover or keep up with what Getting Lippy has to contribute online.

This is also reflected in the average site time. The 4:09 figure given is about the average time it takes to read around two articles. It is important to monitor this figure. The goal is to increase this time as the site develops with potential new content formats and areas to explore. It is also important to monitor that people are on the site for this time for the content, not because they are lost within the site. However, as a starting figure this average is acceptable and shows people are taking the time to read and not just leave.

This is a positive outcome, with room to get these numbers to rise. If the site were to grow, more contributors would mean more a higher volume of and more regularly launched new content which in turn would encourage higher viewing figures. This helps to demonstrate that people are interested enjoying the content and actively seeking it. For such a niche and specialised website there are a lot of page views and more unique visitors than we could have hoped for, especially with such a fresh idea. These numbers are however still relatively small and can always be improved on.

The figures imply people are exploring the site and trying to find out more about it. This level of intrigue towards the content is very promising and bodes well for insuring more and more loyal visitors to the site. It seems that a simple formula of more content = more visits is perfectly feasible and should be part of the future plan for the site.

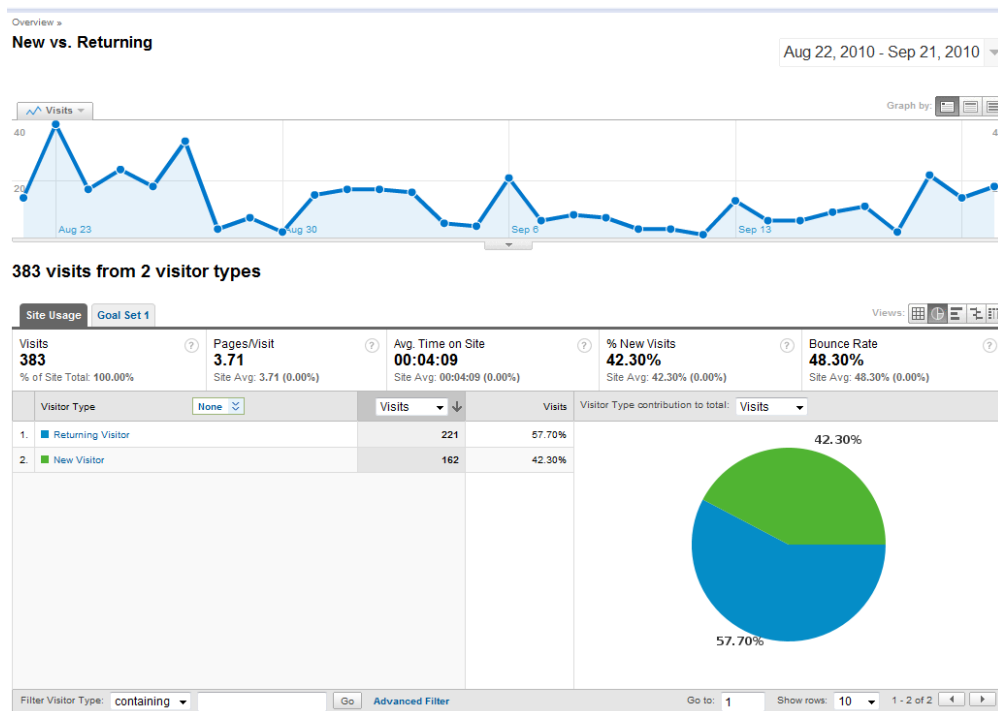


Figure 20 New and Returning Visitors for Getting Lippy

However, during the early stages of the website, the need for new, as well as returning visitors is equally important. These first flourishes online are about finding our audience, and then encouraging them to return to us.

The figures show this is being achieved. The 57.7% returning visitors is a strong starting point from which to gain a truly loyal following, whereas the 42.3% in also desirable in the first few stages of the site. This number should decrease as the aim to draw a regular and loyal readership grows stronger. However new visitors should always factor in to website as eventually they can become part of the loyal readership.

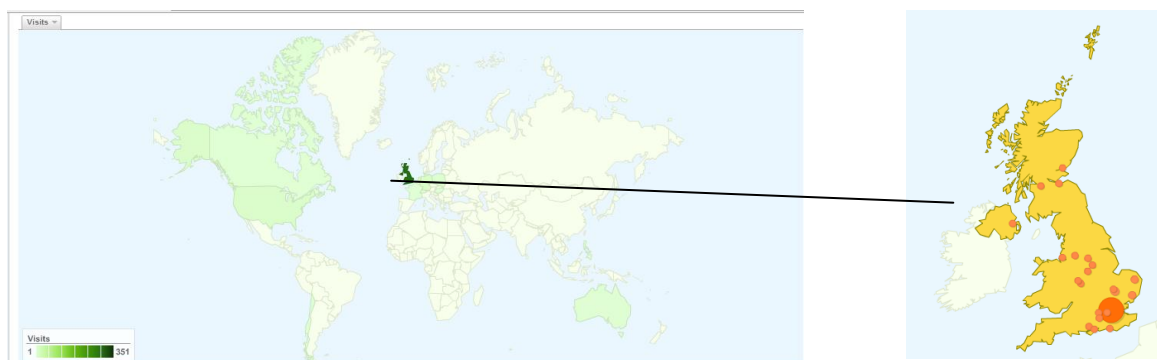


Figure 21 Geographical Viewer Statistics for Getting Lippy

Even in its infancy, new and loyal viewers are logging in across the globe, mostly in English speaking countries where the culture for drinking is similar or understood.

The UK (the .co.uk will help Getting Lippy to appear British in nature) provides GL's strongest following and as the site begins to infiltrate the web, the more places across the country are discovering the site. Although London was where the site began to grow, the newest places of growth are University towns and cities such as Norwich, Manchester and Edinburgh. It may be that Getting Lippy speaks to a student mentality and this observation should be noted in the future as a targeted marketing strategy could hone in on this group. It is important to observe patterns such as these when trying to decipher the main audience for your site.

In order to also focus the site to the needs of my audience, the visitor stats can be used to show how the audience are physically viewing the site.

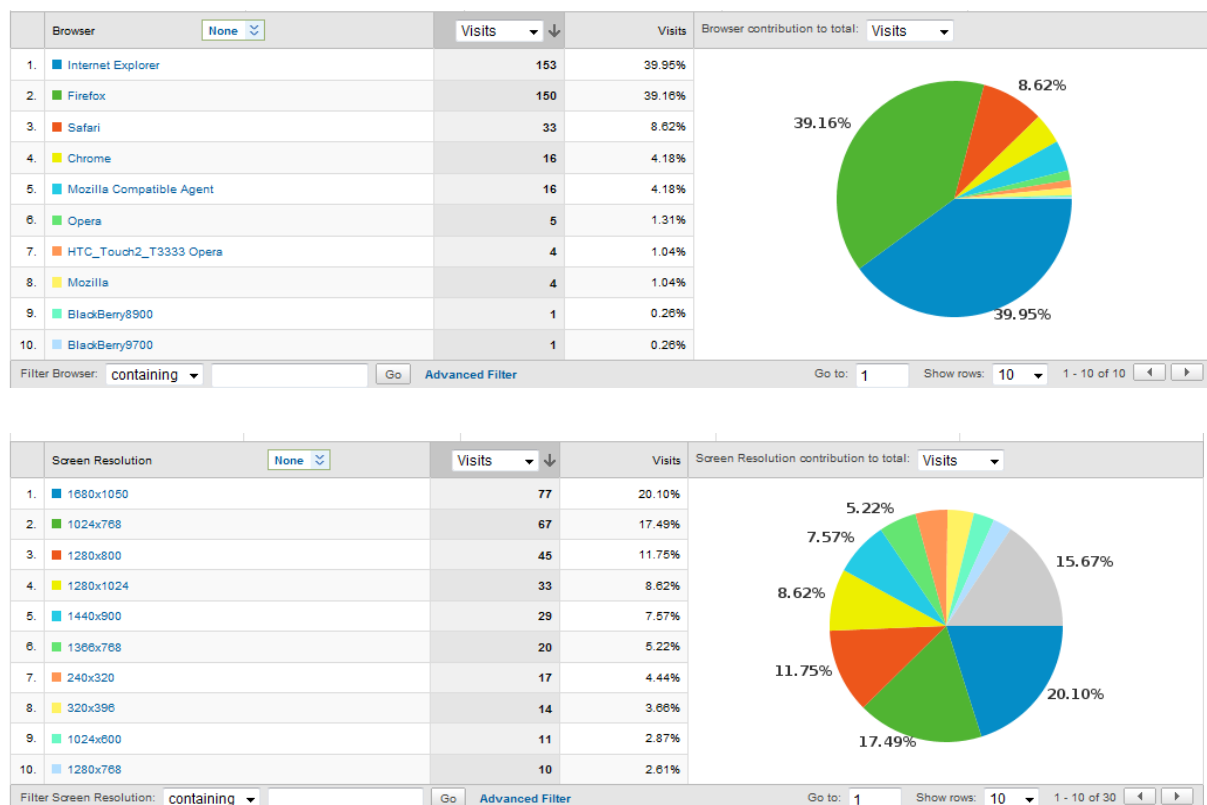


Figure 22 Browser and Screen Resolution Statistics for Getting Lippy

The most popular browsers and resolutions are those that the site was designed for, showing a good standing for Getting Lippy's design to be viewed in its optimum format.

However, it is worthy of note that several of the screen resolutions mentioned, as well as browsers are from mobile phones, particularly 320 x 396, the Iphone resolution. People are viewing the site on the go, and this habit is only set to increase as Smart Phone technology becomes the norm. People viewing on their mobile require small bites, accessible while on the move and it may be necessary to consider creating a site optimised for mobile internet use.

The user experience when exploring the site seems to be meeting the needs of the current audience, with minor areas to be honed as more data is gathered.

Traffic

For future development it is also important to know how people are reaching the site as Getting Lippy explores ways to get its number to grow.

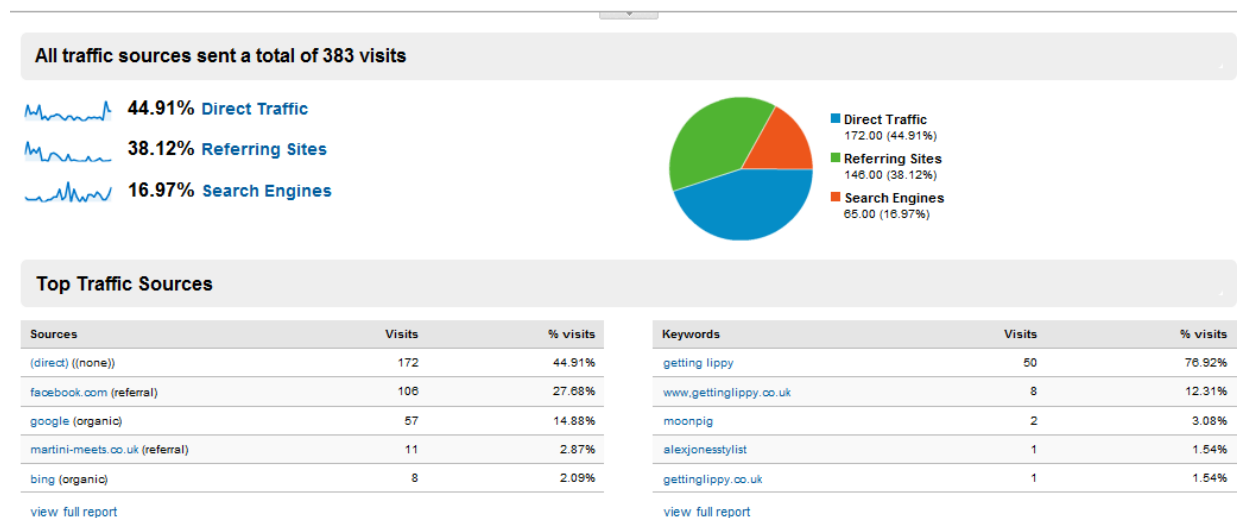


Figure 23 Traffic Report for Getting Lippy

The figure above shows that Facebook is a popular way for people to find the site. This works because through the fan page I am able to remind people of updates and new stories. These updates appear in their news feed and with one simple click the follower is able to view the latest content on

the site instantly. This method helps regularly reignite people's consciousness to Getting Lippy and encourages them to repeatedly visit.

However, even more popular than this route is for people to simply access the site directly, implying that Getting Lippy remains in people's consciousness leading them to log on proactively. This may mean that people are bookmarking the page and going straight to the contents. This finding is certainly encouraging as it shows a willingness to go to the site without marketing aids, people simply want to come and visit.

However, other avenues are being taken to reach the site. From the traffic sources data for the site it is possible to see how a reciprocal link with martini-meets.co.uk is already bringing in some audience members to the site. However, it is important to also develop links with directly relevant content to your own. Getting Lippy has been acknowledged by the Comedy database *Spoof.com* and from this, request for reciprocated links has occurred. After only being online for a month this is certainly a positive step and a link sharing campaign is certainly part of the next phase of the site. This improved the online visibility of my site, but also allows for a word-of-mouth type of marketing campaign as people find Getting Lippy through the recommendations of other reputable sources.

The reason for the smaller amount of traffic through search engines can be simply explained. Due to the very specific nature of the site it is unlikely someone will search directly for the kind of humour and topics available (how would you search for pub rants with a news twist?). The site is more of a word-of-mouth venture, rather than something people are actively seeking. It is more for people meandering through the web to find, rather than pointedly search for.

The traffic findings are certainly no surprise for the type of site created and will be monitored for future changes.

Content

Analysing the content of the site allows us to understand how the audience is drawn in to the content and what aspects they are actively seeking to explore.

	Page	Pageviews ↓	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Bounce Rate	% Exit	\$ Index
1.	/index/	311	205	00:01:44	48.19%	37.94%	\$0.00
2.	/index/about/	54	40	00:01:33	66.67%	37.04%	\$0.00
3.	/index/2010/08/drinking-is-so-relevant/	48	40	00:02:13	70.59%	43.75%	\$0.00
4.	/index/2010/09/bon-jovi-drinks-ban/	38	26	00:04:12	62.50%	39.47%	\$0.00
5.	/index/2010/08/god-save-moonpig/	35	33	00:01:37	64.71%	42.86%	\$0.00
6.	/index/category/all/	35	22	00:01:52	0.00%	25.71%	\$0.00
7.	/index/2010/09/riff-to-repression/	28	21	00:01:41	62.50%	39.29%	\$0.00
8.	/index/2010/09/stockholm-syndrome/	25	23	00:01:24	92.86%	68.00%	\$0.00
9.	/index/2010/08/im-not-late-its-science/	23	19	00:02:42	0.00%	26.09%	\$0.00
10.	/index/2010/08/fingergun/	21	18	00:01:35	55.56%	28.57%	\$0.00

Filter Page: containing Go Advanced Filter Go to: 1 Show rows: 10 1 - 10 of 49

Figure 24 Top Content for Getting Lippy

The index page is the most popular on Getting Lippy and this ties in with the traffic figures. Most people are logging directly on to the site and using this space to navigate through elsewhere. This is again substantiated by the Top Landing Page figures.

Landing Pages

VIEWSSortFilter

Entrances298

% of Site Total: 100.00%

Bounces164

% of Site Total: 100.00%

Bounce Rate55.03%

Site Avg: 55.03% (0.00%)

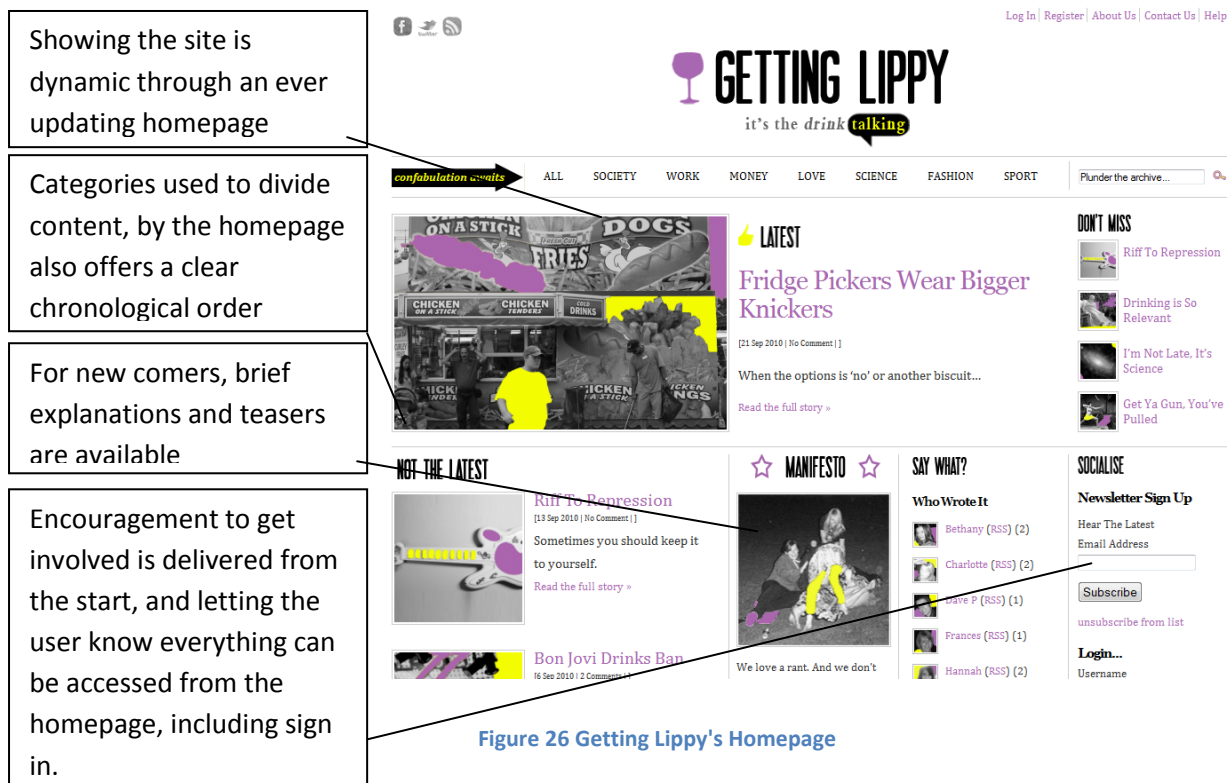
Page	Entrances	Bounces	Bounce Rate
1. /index/	193	93	48.19%
2. /index/2010/08/drinking-is-so-relevant/	17	12	70.59%
3. /index/2010/08/god-save-moonpig/	17	11	64.71%
4. /index/2010/09/stockholm-syndrome/	14	13	92.86%
5. /index/2010/09/fridge-pickers-wear-bigger-knickers/	11	10	90.91%
6. /index/2010/08/fingergun/	9	5	55.56%
7. /index/2010/09/bon-jovi-drinks-ban/	8	5	62.50%
8. /index/2010/09/riff-to-repression/	8	5	62.50%
9. /index/about/	6	4	66.67%
10. /index/2010/08/jinx-touch-moon/	2	0	0.00%

Filter Page:containingGoAdvanced Filter

Go to:1Show rows:101 - 10 of 21

Figure 25 Top Landing Pages

This implies people are using the homepage as a means of navigating, discovering and following the site and this page creates the 'hub' of activity. Some are coming in to the site directly through specific stories, but with such a significant number landing directly on the homepage its worth analysing the page itself to see why this is likely.



From the figures, the index page is proving to be the eye catching feature it was designed to be. Crafted to contain enough information to entice audience members, this is combined with strong information architecture to make exploration and drilling down easy and enjoyable. This index is the first impression the site makes and the bold colour choices, friendly layout and intriguing headlines seem to be drawing the audience in to want to find out more. This implies a design success as the index page does the exact job it was created to do; engage and promote. It is being used as the hub of the site from which all activity surrounds. It seems to provide the information the audience requires.

Online Activity – Commenting, Linking and Socialising

Part of the way to encourage people to come and repeatedly visit is through participation. This can be done in a number ways, by either pledging their delight on Facebook, following us on Twitter or commenting on the stories directly on the site itself.

the authors page.
[Contact us](#) and we'll
see what we can do...

jukebox or bar playlist featuring the the song from the otherwise-middling 1980 album
"Slippery When Wet".

While the study freely admits that additional field work will be required to make any
conclusive findings, the early indications point to the stimulation of a previously
undiscovered "rocking-out" gland in the brain's cerebral cortex, the stimulation of which
leads to feelings of euphoria, comradery and the compulsion to shout the first line of the
song loudly, regardless of tonal ability or social implications.

The report is expected to cause debate amongst law-makers and civil rights groups, with a
reasonable desire to curb risky drinking behaviour being tempered by the recognition of the
Right to Party, enshrined in the socio-political thesis by political action group "The Beastie
Boys" back in 1987.

When asked to comment, the Right Honorable Alec John Such, Minister in charge of
knee-jerk reactions to shabby media scare stories, said "Obviously, sensible British
drinkers cannot be expected to foot the bill generated by the plebeian behaviour caused by
this atrocious old song. I thereby heartily endorse the banning of this song, and the entire
back catalogue of Mr Jovi." he then stood up to leave before adding "wait, is that Mozart's
Symphony number 2 in B flat?

Open another bottle of Port, would you?".



 **Getting Lippy** on Facebook
You like this. [Unlike](#)

2 Comments »



Gloriana said:

So true. Whenever I hear ANY Bon Jovi song I feel the need to reach for a
drink. Or for a gun

6 September 2010 at 11:29 am



charlicious said:

You should add ripping of trousers to the above as drunkenly jumping up

Poke, Follow or Feed



Figure 27 The Various ways Users can Bring the Site to life

Figure 27 shows the various ways users are able to show the reach and willingness of others to participate in the site, either through supporting us on various social and site sharing websites, 'liking' us on Facebook , showing dedication on Twitter or even commenting directly on Getting Lippy itself. These features let other users know that the site is alive, buzzing and desirable to be a part of. Audience members don't see viewing figures, but they can get an impression of the sites scope and popularity through these indicators, helping promote the site as popular, alive and inclusive.

In the initial stages numbers are small, but very promising and suit the small team behind the running of the site, with 25 Facebook followers and 19 Twitter followers (not friends and family).

This small start shows Getting Lippy is starting to become noticed online and the idea of this unique sense of humour catching on is becoming realised, through one aspect in particular.

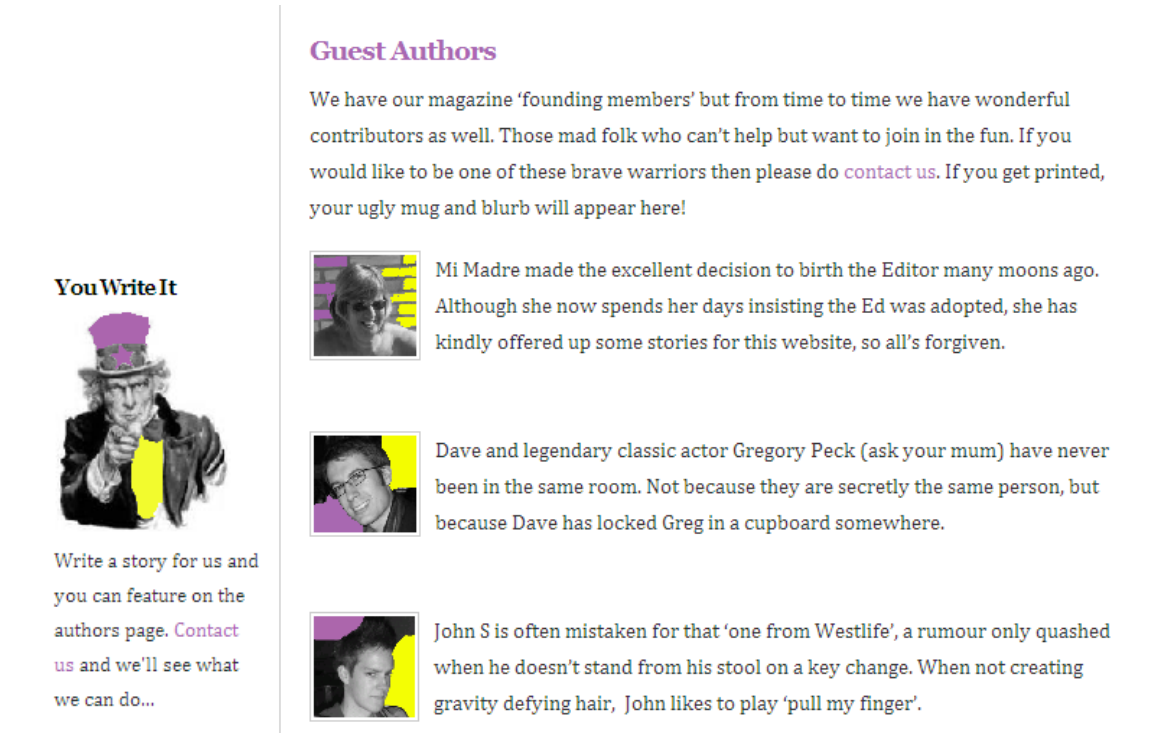


Figure 28 The Guest Author Section and Call to Write

Throughout the site people are encouraged to contribute and guest authors are rewarded with their own section on the 'about us' page. Guests are asked to contribute a photo and a couple of facts about themselves.

To set the bar a family member became the first Guest Author. This helped demonstrate the benefits of becoming involved and also how easy it is to do. From this, and the promotions available throughout the site, this has then lead to two further guest authors who have contributed a story to the site, and one has requested to do so regularly. These have used the contact function, but people are using all manner of methods to pledge their interest.



Figure 29 Twitter Request to Contribute

This implies that the site is seen as an all round social experience, and that the interaction can range from simply reading the content, to commenting, to contributing. The variety of ways to do this, presented by Getting Lippy, appears to suit its readership and caters to any preference for interaction. For example, had Twitter not been available, this reader may not have wanted to join in the joke and add to the sites wealth.

Summary

Currently Getting Lippy seems to have attracted a quality audience, if somewhat small. This suits its bespoke nature and niche content but does create a future aim. Success is not just measured in numbers, but higher volumes are certainly desirable for any site. The first month has been very much an exercise in taking tentative steps in to the public arena, and now it is time to confirm Getting Lippy's place online, to increase numbers and to infiltrate in to people's consciousness further.

However, as the first wave of figures there is a lot to be positive about. People are finding the site, and after only a month online it is beginning to weave its way in to the fabric of the web. The reaction has been positive, and several people a week are signing up to be able to comment, or to follow the site on their various social networks. The site appears alive, active and a desirable venture to join, everything we could have hoped for. The gender of those joining in with the site are a perfect mix of men and women, showing the humour is being enjoyed by a wide demographic and is beginning to fulfil its mission of allowing an outlet for female comedy writing and showing the future of online magazines. They just needed the right outlet.

The figures show how people are using and reacting to the site and from this, future developments can be constructed.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Business

Getting Lippy's intended business focus has always been to build a community of like-minded humorists, keen to sample a new kind of female written comedy. This focus will remain for the foreseeable future and in to the next few phases of the website.

The next phases will see the site become more focused in the type of audience it is attracting and the subsequent months will be particularly telling. The initial analysis has shown a key potential demographic for the site and October onwards is a crucial time to appeal to this group.

Students have recently returned to university, and it seems likely that their age and general lifestyle would suit the GL ethos and sense of humour, with the analysis showing pockets of audience members in University towns and cities already forming. If the business focus is to increase numbers and encourage interaction with the site, then targeting the marketing to one group in particular could help make this possible. An offline, as well as online campaign at Universities, for example, can help lead to a strong following amongst students. Further research would be necessary to find the best way of reaching this demographic, who are on the whole internet savvy, of the social networking generation and are used to being exposed to new and unique marketing schemes, stemming from the internet. Thus, this future focus will also be a learning curve in the new wave of marketing techniques. The old rules do not necessarily apply and patience is certainly a virtue. The *Daily Beast's* plan was to wait a year to progress their marketing, and with a venture as small as Getting Lippy, this kind of timeline is sensible.

Eventually, should these plans be a success and the numbers increase significantly, Getting Lippy could potentially draw in monetary profit. The design has been made with intentional sections and visual 'hot spots' to allow for the future easy integration of advertising, such as the sidebars of the stories. With enough success advertisers would be requesting advertising space from the site and the content could become profitable from this.

Commodity

The current levels of social interaction on the site appear to work. The breadth of ways to communicate appears to offer the audience what they require to interact with the site and on the whole people are finding what they need.

However, as site numbers hopefully increase, the need to remind a greater number of people of new content will become a harder battle, with every method of reminder-marketing possible having to become available to the user. So far the site contains a newsletter as well as all the main social networking functions. However, other forms of subtle persuasion are possible to vary the ways in which people are re-drawn to the site. This includes installing a forum. Community has always been an important element for the site, and as numbers grow, people may want to not only communicate with the site, but with each other as part of encouraging return visits.

However, from the analysis the audience are also accessing the site directly and do not necessarily require a reminder element. For these people, the articles are leading them to the site and so a wise future development would be not only to increase the content available (through more volunteers) but also to diversify it.

Video is a common alternative to written content online. It takes advantage of the benefits of the web in evolving and varying how people are presented with information. You Tube, for example, has proven incredibly successful in offering people a vast range of content from cheap and amateur, to professional and expensive.

By expanding the content to include video not only would users be able to expand their time on the site, new users, more taken with this form of presentation would then be drawn to the site. Thus, future developments not only involve expanding, they include plans to diversify.

Firmness

The issues with the firmness of the current site are mostly from using a pre-existing Wordpress theme. The issues with accessibility and browser compatibility come from the limits of the Arthemias theme and the nature with which it has been constructed. Theme development, as it's known, is actively encouraged by Wordpress as they see it as an opportunity to develop your CSS, HTML and PHP skills, put these skills to work, be creative, have fun and to contribute to the community.¹⁴

Although the Arthemias theme has been incredibly useful in Getting Lippy online and aiding the understanding of how best to construct an online magazine, its limitations will soon become more detrimental than beneficial to the site. The logical next step in this process is therefore to create a theme specifically to support the needs of the Getting Lippy audience.

By building my own theme I can insure the highest standards of mark up, allowing for a reliable, flexible and gracefully degrading structure on which to sit the content. It would be able to adapt and nurture my other future plans, such as advertising and video content, without difficulty allowing for ease of evolution.

A bespoke theme also means that the design of the site could be developed further as a self made option could allow for the most specific eccentricities and also support a wider variety of font choices, one of the biggest design aspects of the site.

Delight

In terms of the design, part of Getting Lippy's initial success is its unique look. A request for a reciprocal link even included the comment that this is the very reason the site remained in his mind. Especially in comparison to other such websites, GL's aesthetic efforts are far greater, but this does not mean they should not evolve.

The largest consideration is the typography. This aspect covers a large part of the site, and is generally an important topic in online design. Currently the site is in 'Georgia', a standard online font available on most computers. Although this currently provides a perfectly

¹⁴ http://codex.wordpress.org/Theme_Development

adequate font, it would be advantageous to the design to develop this further, perhaps to better compliment the heading fonts and to subtly express the playfulness of the site. This will come as developmentss in CSS progress and the web can foster a wider variety of fonts making this desire a focus for much further in the future.

The plans to create a unique Wordpress theme will help create an environment in which current font trends can be supported, whilst also being able to allow for future typographic capabilities.

With the future plans for the site, the most notable change to the design will have to be layout. Plans for greater and more diverse content will mean changes in where items are put for audiences to better find it, and also to potentially accommodate advertising. Bigger sites provide bigger architectural challenges, but the start of the design, the standard grid based layout, has been made as such that rather than dramatic changes being needed, instead only minor adjustments can accommodate the developments.

Generally, however, the future development of the design will form naturally and progress as more people become involved in the making of the site. Although we have begun to accommodate people's ideas through author content, there is plenty of scope to allow the audience to influence every aspect of the site. The idea of community is part of every element of Getting Lippy, and design is no different.

CONCLUSION

Coming soon...

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Coming soon...