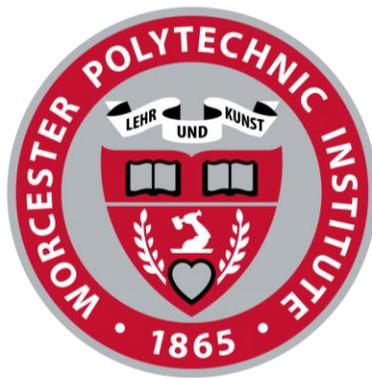


User Experience Assessment and Marketing Improvement for Renew

An Interactive Qualifying Project submitted to the faculty of

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Science



WPI

Sponsoring Agency: Renew, Melbourne, Australia

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This report represents the work of WPI undergraduate students submitted to the faculty as evidence of completion of a degree requirement. WPI routinely publishes these reports on its website without editorial or peer review.

ABSTRACT

Renew is a nonprofit organization that focuses on distributing information to encourage sustainable housing. The purpose of our project was to make suggestions for Renew's marketing and website user experience for future improvements. We compiled a list of positive member testimonials for marketing and a checklist for the upkeep of Google AdWords to help Renew gain more online exposure. For the website, we conducted a comparative analysis of similar websites and collected data from members resulting in a list of suggestions for improvement. Most members were satisfied with the website, but there are aspects that could be further improved. We also produced a list of suggestions to support their Google Analytics so they will be able to monitor if the suggested changes impact website traffic.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Renew is a nonprofit organization in Australia focused on sustainability. Their overarching goal is to help inspire people to live more sustainably in their homes. They publish two magazines, *Renew* and *Sanctuary*, as well as offer memberships, consultations, and advice for people interested in making their home more sustainable. Our project focused on two main deliverables intended to attract and retain new members: suggestions for improving Renew's marketing and suggestions for improving Renew's website user experience.

Methods:

To improve Renew's marketing, we analyzed existing survey data (member surveys collected prior to our project) and data from our own survey for positive member testimonials that could be used in a marketing campaign to showcase members' personal experiences. We also provided Renew with suggestions on how to actively maintain their Google AdWords account. These suggestions consisted of how to pick beneficial (and distinct) categories of search keywords and how to continuously monitor these keywords. Additionally, we conducted a comparative analysis of similar websites, phone interviews, in-person interviews, and a survey. We collected data from members to find out what members found appealing about Renew's website and what areas could benefit from improvement. Our findings were used to make suggestions intended to draw more website traffic and encourage existing and potential members to spend their money on the services that Renew has to offer.

Findings:

Existing Survey Data Analysis: We extracted positive member testimonials from Renew's surveys from the past two years as well as our own website user experience survey. Some examples included:

- *"I constantly recommend both renew and sanctuary to not just friends, but people I meet in the street, at dinner, you name it!"*
- *"Technical information, brings together a lot of practical information and options for small scale changes the people can make."*
- *"Great overview and independent, well-informed expert advice that I can trust because it's independent and the contributors really know and care about sustainability."*

Suggestions for Google AdWords: We created a list of suggestions and a checklist for upkeep of Renew's AdWords account.

The suggestions consisted of:

- Make new campaigns to replace outdated ad campaigns (SHD, Events, Renew, Publications, etc.)
- Make new ad groups for each new campaign based on common search terms

- Allocate more time toward the most important campaigns at the time (e.g. when Sustainable House Day is approaching, allocate a higher percentage)
- Utilize dynamic ads when possible

The checklist consisted of:

- Check usage of keywords to assess usefulness (change the terms if not being clicked)
- Check to make sure that all age demographics can see the ad
- Check how current ads are performing and update as needed
- Create new ads based on upcoming events and/or new publications

Comparative Analysis: We examined Renew’s website in addition to six other similar organizations’ websites and noted the similarities and differences among them. The features for comparison were chosen based on the five pillars of web design for nonprofits (explained in full text). We focused on the beneficial features that other websites use that Renew currently does not use often/at all. Below are the most notable findings from this analysis:

- 5/6 of the other websites used internal ads in multiple places on the website to bring readers to similar articles and events
- 3/6 have social media links at the top of each page in addition to the bottom
- 4/6 have a description of the organization on multiple pages of the website or in the footer
- 3/6 have a place for users to leave feedback on the website
- 4/6 advertise their latest magazine issues on the homepage and multiple other pages

In comparison to the five pillars, Renew does very well in establishing a good brand image and building a community. The website lacks some features that would add to its effectiveness such as user testimonials and encouraging donations.

Member Feedback: We conducted phone interviews, in-person interviews, and a survey to investigate the usability and ease of navigation of Renew’s website. We asked interviewees to perform tasks on the website and to navigate to certain pages to test the website’s usability and provide us with feedback. The survey served as an additional source of information to gather opinions from a larger pool (n = 268 replies). Based on our findings, our suggestions included:

Home page

- Shorten the home page (smaller content boxes)
- The most important features should be placed at the top of the home page

Menu

- Rearrange menu items to be more logical, e.g., move “Events” to be under “What we do” (see Figure i below)
- Reduce the size of the expanded menu to avoid visual obstruction
- Major headers on the menu could have individual drop-down menus

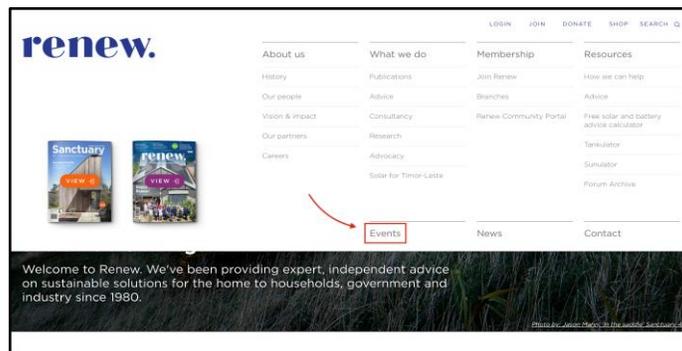


Figure i. Drop down menu

Search bar

- Add a search for functionality option (searching “donate” should bring you to the donation page)
- Introduce a more forgiving search engine (i.e., accepts misspellings)
- Increase the size of the search bar to increase its visibility

Donate page

- Reduce the amount of personal information required to donate so that people are less concerned about release of sensitive information (Figure ii)
- Put links to donate to Renew at the bottom of every article
- Be more specific about the organizational impact of a donation

The image shows a contact form titled "My Contact Details". The form contains the following fields:

- Title: A dropdown menu with "--None--" selected.
- First Name*: A text input field.
- Last Name*: A text input field.
- Phone*: A text input field.
- Email*: A text input field.
- Street*: A text input field with a small location pin icon on the right.
- Suburb/Town*: A text input field.
- State*: A dropdown menu.
- Postcode*: A text input field.
- Country*: A dropdown menu with "Australia" selected.

Figure ii. Contact Info on donation page

Membership page

- Make the differences between membership subscription tiers more clear
- Use a table to compare the benefits of each membership tier
- Add a “Become a Member” button on every page of the website
- Introduce a page that shows where volunteers are needed

Navigation

- Include a home icon on other pages for ease of navigation
- Include social media links at both the top and bottom of each webpage
- Add more internal advertisements (donations, etc.) on different parts of Renew’s website

Accessibility

- Use a darker font to increase the readability
- Add a feature to enlarge text
- Add a feature to read articles out loud

Suggestions for Google Analytics: We compiled a list of metrics that best help Renew monitor their website traffic. These metrics consisted of:

- Traffic Summary
- 404 Error Report
- Bounce Rate (the percentage of visitors who only view one page on the website before leaving)

- User activity once on the website, including how they navigate between pages within the website
- Internal searches

Discussion

At the conclusion of our project, this list of suggestions was presented to the Marketing Team at Renew to help them extend their audience. We expect that by offering these data and suggestions to help Renew attract more members, we can in turn help Australia become a more sustainable country.

CONTRIBUTION PAGE

Kenneth Desrosiers, Hannah Gray, and Yin Zhang all contributed to the research, writing, and execution of this project. In addition to writing, all members took part in editing the report for grammar and content. The following is a breakdown of how each team member contributed to the project and report.

Kenneth Desrosiers

Contributions to report: Kenneth contributed to the report by writing sections of the background containing information on website effectiveness and interviews. He also took part in writing the sections of the methodology and findings containing the comparative analysis, data collection from existing surveys, data collection from members, and suggestions for Google AdWords. Additionally, he worked on the executive summary.

Contributions to project: Kenneth contributed to the project by scheduling and conducting the phone and in-person interviews, analyzing data from existing surveys, analyzing data from the interviews, and creating the user experience survey. He also helped in coming up with suggestions for website improvement and researching Google Analytics.

Hannah Gray

Contributions to report: Hannah contributed to the report by writing the introduction and sections of the background containing information on marketing, comparative analysis, interviews, and surveys. She took part in writing sections of the methodology and findings that contain the comparative analysis, data collection from members, and suggestions for website improvement findings. She also contributed by writing the discussion and conclusions section.

Contributions to project: Hannah contributed to this project by scheduling and conducting phone and in-person interviews, analyzing the data from the interviews, coming up with suggestions for website improvement, creating the comparative analysis table, helping to create the survey, taking notes from all meetings, and keeping the team tasks organized.

Yin Zhang

Contributions to the report: Yin contributed to the report by writing sections of the background containing information on sustainability, website effectiveness, and surveys. He participated in writing sections of the methodology and findings containing the data collection from existing survey responses, data collection from members, and suggestions for Google Analytics. He also worked on the format and added the figures to the report.

Contributions to the project: Yin Zhang contributed to the project by scheduling and conducting the phone and in-person interviews, analysis of the data from existing surveys, analyzing data from the interviews, and helping to create the survey. He also brainstormed the suggestions for website improvement and did research on Google Analytics.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 1976, a group called “Friends of the Earth” formed to campaign against the use of uranium in Australia. They wanted to form a new group that was proactive on green energy and technology; thus, the Alternative Technology Association was born. Over the years, they have rebranded to be called Renew, but their mission remains the same. Their overarching goal is to help inspire people to live more sustainably. They publish two magazines called *Renew* and *Sanctuary*. While *Renew* focuses on sustainable technology one can integrate into their home (solar power, water-saving strategies, etc.), *Sanctuary* focuses on home building/modifications that make one’s home more environmentally friendly (green home building materials, outdoor greenhouses, etc.). In addition to the magazines, Renew offers consultations, advice, and conducts research to help people reduce their negative impact on the environment. In the government and industry arenas, they strongly advocate for easy and affordable access to sustainable solutions. For the general public, they host events to inspire and teach people the importance of sustainable living.

Renew is an organization that cares about its clients and the world we live in. They show their passion in many ways, the most profound being their vision statement, where they strive for a “world in which communities thrive in a way that does not cost the earth” (Renew, n.d). They support this vision statement with a mission and a set of attainable goals. Their mission is to “inspire, enable, and advocate for people to live sustainably in their homes and communities” (Renew, n.d). By 2025, Renew wishes to make living a sustainable lifestyle a common expectation in Australian households, as well as become increasingly more affordable and accessible (Renew, n.d).

While Renew is a successful nonprofit organization, they wish to extend their audience. Since most of their members are in the 65+ age range, Renew wants to attract more homeowners to their website. Renew enlisted our help to make suggestions to improve their marketing and website user experience to attract and retain new members.

The deliverables for our project consisted of creating suggestions to improve Renew's marketing and website user experience. To improve Renew's marketing, we analyzed existing survey data for positive member testimonials and offered suggestions for Google AdWords to gain additional online exposure. To improve the website user experience, we conducted a comparative analysis, phone interviews, in-person interviews, and an online survey to find out what members found appealing about Renew's website and what areas could benefit from improvement. We used our findings to make suggestions to the organization to draw more website traffic and prove to potential clients that they should spend their money on the services that Renew has to offer.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In preparation for our project, we researched the relevant topics needed to produce our deliverables. We researched branding and Google AdWords to help Renew improve their marketing. We also researched website effectiveness, accessibility, comparative analysis methods, and best interview and survey practices to improve Renew's website user experience. The following chapter outlines the key points from our research.

2.2 SUSTAINABILITY

Earth's climate has changed drastically over time. Though the Earth's climate naturally fluctuates, global warming now is mostly attributable to human activities. Climate change leads to a plethora of global issues, including global temperature rise, decreased snow cover, and sea-level rise (Weeman & Lynch, n.d.). By living a more sustainable lifestyle, humans can reduce their carbon footprint and decrease the use of fossil fuels. Sustainability can not only alleviate environmental deterioration, but also reduce the cost of daily life, thus most developed countries have put a great emphasis on sustainable development.

Australia is no exception to global climate change. Australia's climate change is evident by the continuously increasing temperatures over the past decades. These changes will continue to worsen and become irreversible without appropriate action (Berti, Davis, & Zaleski, n.d.). The Victorian government realizes that population and energy management are the two main causes of climate change. By popularizing sustainable living, they can combat global climate change and lessen Australia's contribution to the global carbon footprint (Berti, Davis, & Zaleski, n.d.).

The general public in Australia must see the benefits of sustainable living in order to solve this problem. In Victoria, only fifteen percent of the population is implementing sustainable practices (City of Melbourne, 2018).

Melbourne, one of the most populated cities in Australia, holds a leading role in Australia's push for sustainability. The city published the advantages of sustainable houses to the general public, including lowered cost of living, short construction time, and less total waste (Elemental Green, 2016). In addition to the Melbourne government, nonprofit organizations like Renew are devoted to helping people achieve a more sustainable lifestyle.

2.3 MARKETING

While Renew has valuable information about sustainability, they want to distribute it more effectively. Without views, the information Renew has to offer cannot be seen. A website's viewership is heavily dependent on its marketing. There are five areas of marketing that companies should focus on when offering a digital service: quality, uniqueness, relevance, personalization, and branding. When it comes to marketing for a nonprofit, branding is the most important of these five areas. A website's branding often serves to prove its credibility. The more credible a website's branding, the more likely people are to pay for the product. Credible branding can include photos, quotes, and user testimonials. (Wolk & Theysohn, 2007)

Another important factor in attracting more viewers to a website is a high ranking in Google search results. There are many strategies an organization can employ to make sure their website is at the top of search results, one of which is Google AdWords. Advertising on Google enables a website to be displayed at the top of Google search results as an ad when given the correct search terms (The Digital Nonprofit, n.d.). To create ads that use search keywords, one must first create

ad campaigns. Campaigns are categories of ad groups and are meant to separate different ad topics into general groups (e.g., Publications or Events). Ad groups are specific categories of search keywords that are grouped together under a certain campaign. Organizations that use AdWords must bid on search keywords that they think will be beneficial in attracting more clients. When a user searches for a keyword on Google and clicks on an ad, the organization that owns the ad must pay the amount they bid for that specific keyword (Google, n.d.). Another type of advertisement AdWords offers are dynamic ads. Dynamic ads do not require bidding on search keywords, as these ads display in search results when a user searches a phrase similar to one on an organization's website. While most companies must pay for advertisements, nonprofit organizations can receive a grant from Google through a program called Google for Nonprofits. This grant was awarded to Renew and consists of \$10,000 per month that can be used on Google AdWords. With this grant, nonprofit organizations can gain more exposure without spending funds on Google ads.

2.4 WEBSITE EFFECTIVENESS

Why Effective Websites are Important

The internet is the most popular way for consumers to engage with a company because it allows them to do research when making a purchase decision (Sherman, 2019). According to the eCommerce Foundation, 88% of consumers will do research before making a purchase online or in stores (Sherman, 2019). With internet browsing at an all-time high, a website's attractiveness has a direct impact on its success. In the case that a user does not find what they are looking for, a well-designed and attractive website will still leave a good impression on the user and they might return to the site in the future (Sherman, 2019). Since a large part of the consumer's

decisions are based on the website's appearance, an attractive website is also an effective website. The effectiveness of a website can mean success or failure for a company; therefore, a high quality and attractive website is essential for success in a highly competitive market.

What Makes a Website Effective

There are a few factors that contribute to the effectiveness of a website. First, the website should be designed to fulfill the needs of its target demographic while offering a unique service (Juvina & van Oostendorp, 2004). According to Shepard and Fell (1998), websites are designed to “provide content that is valuable to the specific markets the provider wishes to target”. Creating content catered towards a specific demographic ensures that all content is clear and consistent. It is important for companies to clearly present what they can offer and prove why it is the best option for their potential users (Zielinski, 2016). Websites should also cater the language on the site to match their ideal client so the user can easily find the information they are looking for without being overwhelmed (Crowley & Harad, 2015). Organizations that have highly technical language on their website make it difficult for new visitors to navigate and understand what is being offered. It is important that the language used on a website not only caters towards the targeted demographic, but also welcomes newcomers in an easy to understand way.

In the case of a nonprofit organization, there is a specific set of factors that affect website effectiveness. According to Webalive (2018), there are five pillars of web design that are catered toward nonprofit organizations: 1) establishing a good brand image, 2) user testimonials, 3) encouraging donations, 4) building a community, and 5) having a target demographic. These pillars can be used to analyze a website based on its specific features. An example of an effective

website that meets these five pillars is Oxfam Australia (Webalive, 2018). This website has a good brand image as one trying to end world hunger, it encourages donations on their homepage, and it provides the chance to become a member on the homepage.

A major part of any website is its call to action. A call to action is “the part of a story, webpage, advertisement, or piece of content that encourages the audience to do something” (Leaning, 2019). For a website’s main message to be effective at holding the user’s attention, they often have a short sentence or phrase that tells users what they can accomplish with the service being offered. A few examples of action phrases are: “get started”, “grow your business”, and “change your career” (Leaning, 2019). On the other hand, some traits of calls to action that deter users include the phrase being too long, not conveying the value of the service, and using vague language (Wainwright, 2012). Having a strong and concise call to action is essential to a website’s success. Without a strong call to action, visitors might not see a reason to pay for the services being offered. An example of a website with a concise call to action is Feeding America. Feeding America’s call to action is both action-based and concise by telling viewers to “make giving a family tradition” (Feeding America, n.d.).

Website Accessibility

When designing a website, it is important to consider the ease of use for all users. According to Kurniawan and Zaphiris (2005), many older people are less willing to use the internet. Certain web design strategies can be used to ensure that older people are not discouraged from using websites. For example, having an option to change font size on the website would let older people and people with poor eyesight feel more comfortable spending time on the website.

People with vision impairment are another audience that requires certain accommodations to make website browsing easier. According to the 2007 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (in which Australia was in attendance and accordance), it became law that websites must “promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems” (Vandenbark, 2010). Some suggestions made at the convention include options for captions on all video content and text equivalents on all non-text elements. By making a website more accessible, more people will feel comfortable using the website.

2.5 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

When trying to attract more users to a website, it is beneficial to know what other similar organizations are doing to attract their users. Conducting a website comparative analysis consists of analyzing multiple websites and taking note of the similarities and uniqueness between the sites. The purpose of a comparative analysis in the case of a nonprofit is to gain an understanding of people’s interests in a niche and their interaction with the community. This can help nonprofit organizations see what is effective in their niche (PESTLE Analysis, 2019).

2.6 INTERVIEWS

Interviews are an effective way to gain highly personalized and in-depth information from a subject. While there are several ways to structure an interview, semi-structured interviews are most valuable for allowing subjects to express their ideas and opinions on their own terms (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). To conduct a semi-structured interview, a rough outline of general questions is used. General questions allow for the subject to fully express their own opinions, rather than being led to a specific answer.

Another important part of interviewing is to follow basic ethical rules, including enforcing confidentiality and providing informed consent. It is important that people being interviewed know that their responses are confidential. According to the SAGE Handbook for interviewing, informed consent means informing the research subjects about the main goals of the research and the expected format of the interview (Steinar Kvale, 2007). Providing subjects with a layout of how the procedure will be conducted gives them confidence to answer each question fully.

2.7 SURVEYS

Surveys are a useful way to collect data from a general population. Creating clear, descriptive questions is the most important part of the surveying process. It is important for every question to be relevant to the survey so that the survey respondent does not become overwhelmed with irrelevant questions. Leading and biased questions should be avoided. A leading question is a question that is worded such that it leads the respondent to a desired answer. A biased question is worded in a way to induce bias into the answer. In addition to writing an effective survey, the survey must be distributed in an unbiased way to attain the most accurate results. An example of an unbiased survey distribution is to email it out to an alias or entire group, rather than giving it only to certain individuals. By thinking about questions carefully and distributing them to a suitable sample group, a survey can be a major source of useful and representative data in a project (Qualtrics, 2015).

2.8 OUR PROJECT

The goal of this project was to work with Renew to improve their marketing and website user experience. The previous sections outline the relevant factors considered when producing

our deliverables. We devised the methods used to produce these deliverables based on the research in the background.

3. IMPROVEMENT OF RENEW'S MARKETING

This chapter focuses on suggestions to improve Renew's marketing. We analyzed existing survey data that Renew gave us as well as our own survey for useful member testimonials that can be used in future marketing campaigns. We also developed suggestions for the use and upkeep of Google AdWords so that Renew can gain as much online exposure as possible.

3.1 ANALYSIS OF SURVEY DATA FOR USE IN MARKETING

3.1.1 METHODS OF SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS

We were provided with data from five surveys, four from Sustainable House Day (2018 and 2019 pre and post event surveys) and one from Renew Readers 2018. Sustainable House Day is Renew's annual, one-day event that showcases sustainable houses across Australia for the public to visit. The Renew Reader survey included people's opinions on the *Renew* magazine. Each survey received 800-1,000 responses. We also analyzed our website user experience survey (268 respondents) for positive testimonials to include in the list. We extracted text responses that stood out as positive testimonials that could be used in future marketing campaigns to attract more public interest. From these we learned what members like about Renew.

3.1.2 FINDINGS FROM SURVEY ANALYSIS

The survey responses were overall complementary toward Renew as an organization. Quotes extracted from the survey data are provided below:

- *“A source of valuable information and a starter for planning one's own actions.”*

- *“I constantly recommend both Renew and Sanctuary to not just friends, but people I meet in the street, at dinner, you name it!”*
- *“Bought a subscription as a gift for my architect.”*
- *“I believe the information is unbiased and the content is of wide-ranging interest.”*
- *“Great overview and independent, well-informed expert advice that I can trust because it's independent and the contributors really know and care about sustainability.”*
- *“They have relevant articles.”*
- *“Technical information, brings together a lot of practical information and options for small scale changes the people can make.”*

In addition to analyzing the existing survey data for text comments, we extracted complementary responses from our own website user experience survey as well (described Appendix C). Additional text responses extracted from our survey are provided below:

- *“As a building design professional, I love having publications such as Renew on hand to flick through with clients, and help inspire new material uses. I find the magazine is an informative, attractive, relevant resource, which I enjoy receiving.”*
- *“Access to research / reliable & trusted source of information / helps me to make decisions on what to do to my house to improve it.”*
- *“Brings latest up to date information on renewables and energy efficiency in housing and technology related to those areas.”*
- *“Interesting articles and links to trusted sources.”*

- *“Information is up to date, comprehensive and trustworthy.”*
- *“Keep up the great work I love the improvements from the old ATA site.”*
- *“As a member of a Renew branch, looking to support environmental goals, the website looks good and helps attract members and attendances.”*
- *“KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK :)”*
- *“I love Renew and what they are presenting.”*

3.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR USE AND UPKEEP OF GOOGLE ADWORDS

3.2.1 METHODS FOR SUGGESTIONS

Renew received a grant through Google for Nonprofits for \$10,000 per month indefinitely to use on Google AdWords. Using AdWords allows a company to gain more exposure online by specifying keywords that, when searched for, will display an ad leading to Renew’s website at the top of Google’s search results. To formulate suggestions, we conducted research on official Google support pages to learn more about how Google AdWords works. Additionally, we met with a former employee of Renew who is knowledgeable about AdWords. In this meeting, we looked at Renew’s AdWords dashboard and reviewed the areas that needed improvement. We then compiled a list of suggestions based on what we found. These suggestions will help Renew to attract more people to their website.

3.2.2 FINDINGS FOR SUGGESTIONS

We created a list of initial suggestions and a checklist for weekly upkeep that Renew can use to gain more online exposure. These suggestions are reinforced by the Google support pages and

our conversation with our sponsor (Google, n.d). The list of suggestions and the checklist can be found below.

List of suggestions:

- Make new campaigns to replace outdated ad campaigns (New campaigns for SHD, Events, Renew, Publications, etc.)
- Make new ad groups for each new campaign based on common search terms
- Allocate more time toward the most important campaigns at the time (e.g. when Sustainable House Day is approaching, allocate a higher percentage)
- Utilize dynamic ads when possible

Checklist for weekly upkeep:

- Check usage of keywords to assess usefulness (change the terms if not being clicked)
- Check to make sure that all age demographics can see the ad
- Check how current ads are performing and update as needed
- Create new ads based on upcoming events and/or new publications

These suggestions and the checklist were created with our sponsor's goals in mind. Knowing that Renew wants to attract more users to the website, helping them find ways to do that through Google AdWords was a main driver of our efforts in creating these lists. If Renew adheres to these suggestions and follows the checklist weekly, we expect that they will notice a rise in overall website traffic.

4. IMPROVEMENT OF WEBSITE USER EXPERIENCE

This chapter focuses on suggestions to improve Renew’s website user experience. We made suggestions by conducting a website comparative analysis between Renew and other similar organizations’ websites as well as analyzing feedback from Renew’s members. We conducted phone interviews, one-on-one computer sessions, and a survey to gain an understanding of people’s opinions about Renew’s website with respect to usability, attractiveness, and quality of service. Additionally, we researched effective ways to use Google Analytics to monitor the website traffic.

4.1 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SIMILAR WEBSITES

4.1.1 METHODS FOR COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

We conducted a comparative analysis of similar organizations’ websites in the sustainable design/house media space. By analyzing and documenting other organizations’ strengths and weaknesses on their website, we gained insight as to how we can help Renew. Our sponsor provided us with a list of thirteen organizations that work alongside Renew in the sustainability media space. We then reviewed the elements of each website. We chose six websites (from the thirteen candidate websites) to compare in a table that were the most similar to Renew as an organization (nonprofits, publications, and government sustainability websites). The table was generated to compare the presence/absence of certain attributes that Renew and the six other organizations have on their websites in relation to the five pillars of effective web design. The areas for comparison consist of attributes that each had on their homepage and other pages of their websites. These attributes were chosen to fit within the five pillars of web design

(Webalive, 2018). The purpose of the table is to showcase the common attributes for each pillar of web design that similar websites have and how Renew compares to them.

4.1.2 FINDINGS OF THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SIMILAR WEBSITES

Table 1 compares the presence/absence of key attributes between the websites of Renew, four other publications (Renew Economy, Green Magazine, The Owner Builder, and Tree Hugger), and two Victorian state websites (Sustainability Victoria and Environment Victoria). Although Renew has a clear target demographic (homeowners interested in sustainability), this attribute cannot be quantified, so it was purposely left out of the comparative analysis and the table.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis

Features of Websites		Renew	Renew Economy	Green Magazine	The Owner Builder	Tree Hugger	Sustainability Victoria	Environment Victoria
Establish a Good Brand Image	Has a description of the organization on multiple pages		✓	✓			✓	✓
	Has social medias linked at the top of the home page			✓			✓	✓
	Has social medias linked at the bottom of the home page	✓		✓		✓		✓
	Has a strong call to action on the home page	✓		✓			✓	✓
	Has a strong call to action on multiple pages	✓		✓			✓	✓
	Does not have monetized ads on the website	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
	Has most recent social media posts embedded on the home page			✓			✓	
User Testimonials	Has a place to leave feedback on the website		✓		✓	✓		
	Has a forum on the website				✓			
	Has a place to leave comments on articles		✓		✓	✓		
	Has a place to share pages to ones own social medias	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Encouraging Donations	Has a place to donate on the home page	✓	✓					✓
	Has a place to donate on multiple pages		✓					
	Has incremental donation buttons visible on pages							✓
	Does not require excess personal information to donate		✓					
	Has internal ads to bring users to donate		✓					
	Specifically states where the donation money will go	✓						✓
Building a Community	Place to subscribe to newsletter on home page	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Place to become a member on the home page	✓						
	Advertises latest events on the home page	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Advertises latest new on the home page	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Advertises latest magazine issues on the home page	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
	Advertises latest magazine issues on multiple pages			✓	✓	✓		✓
	Shares current articles to Facebook	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Posts regularly on Facebook	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Posts regularly on Twitter	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
	Posts regularly on Instagram	✓		✓			✓	✓
	Posts regularly on Youtube	✓					✓	
Additional Info	Has a search bar on the home page	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Has carousels for news and/or articles on the home page			✓			✓	
	Has a dropdown menu with topics on the home page	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Makes use of white space on the website		✓	✓				✓
	Has internal ads to bring users to other articles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

General Impressions from Comparative Analysis

Renew compares well to the other websites analyzed. Renew's website excels within the pillars of establishing a good brand image and building a community. Renew's website is missing some features that would allow them to excel within every pillar, such as the pillars of encouraging donations and user testimonials. By adding features to the website to encourage donations in more places and allow users to leave comments on the website, Renew could further improve their website.

Analysis of each Pillar of Effective Web Design

Renew's website has features that add to its overall effectiveness as well as features that detract from it. We analyzed effectiveness based on each of the five pillars of effective web design (Webalive, 2018).

1. Establishing a good brand image

Renew has already established a meaningful brand image. Based on the table above, Renew has most of the attributes for establishing a good brand image, however there are a few areas that could be further improved. Four of six other websites have a description of their organization on every page, which helps them establish their brand image. In addition, three of the other websites have their social media links at the top of the page, while Renew's links are only at the bottom. Lastly, two other websites have their recent social media posts embedded on the page. If Renew utilized these additional features, it would benefit their brand image.

2. *User testimonials*

User testimonials are a powerful tool that can encourage others to do further research on Renew as well as join the organization (Webalive, 2018). Currently, Renew allows people to share articles to their personal social media accounts via clickable icons on the page. On the other hand, Renew is missing a few key features on their website that are essential to collecting user testimonials. These features include a forum, a place to leave feedback, and a place to leave comments on articles. Three of the other websites had a place to leave feedback, and one had a forum. Being able to leave feedback allows the website to make changes for improvement. Forums allow members of a website community to share their opinions and experiences on relevant information, as well as ask questions. Based on the user testimonial pillar, Renew could benefit from adding a section with user testimonials on the website.

3. *Encouraging Donations*

Three of the other websites accepted donations. One of these websites had a place to donate on almost every page with internal ads that encourage donations, and one showed buttons of increasing monetary value so the user could pick a donation amount from a predetermined list. One website did not require a donor's personal address to donate, while Renew does. Renew could benefit from all of these features. As a nonprofit that relies on donations, it is extremely important to encourage donations in the most effective way possible.

4. *Building a community*

With a *Renew* magazine subscription, subscribers become a member of the organization. This establishes a sense of community for the members. According to the table, Renew satisfies

all of the criteria for building a community except for advertising its latest issues throughout the website. Creating more ads to latest issues would allow more people to subscribe to the magazines, thus becoming members of Renew's community.

5. *Having a target demographic:* Not assessed, as discussed above.

4.2 USER EXPERIENCE ASSESSMENT BASED ON MEMBER FEEDBACK

4.2.1 METHODS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Phone Interviews

We conducted six 10-30 minute phone interviews with Renew members to gain information on website user experience. Their ages ranged from 51-69 years old and they were asked to look at the website before the interview or have the website in front of them during the interview. The interviews were semi-structured (the interview structure can be found in Appendix A). We asked the interviewees what they found appealing about the website, areas where they thought improvements could be made, and what they thought about the ease of use. We then analyzed the data based on groups of answers (opinions on navigation, functionality, and organization of the website, etc.) to help us understand people's opinions about the usability and effectiveness of the website.

In-Person Interviews

We conducted eight one-on-one computer sessions to gather more specific information about the website user experience. These in-person sessions ranged from 40 minutes to 2 hours depending on the interviewees' age and familiarity with computers. The interviewees were

Renew members that volunteered to come to Renew's office in Melbourne to participate in our study. Two interviewees were younger (25-30 years old), while the other six were 60+ years old. Their backgrounds included a retired website user experience analyst, a retired scientist, a construction worker, and a public employee for the city of Melbourne involved with the sustainability division. The varied ages and backgrounds of our interviewees gave us insight into how people think when using the website and how their age affects their navigation. Throughout the session, the interviewees were asked to perform various tasks on the website, such as navigating to the donation page and finding the *Sanctuary* magazine web page (the full structure of the session can be found in Appendix B).

Online Survey

A survey was sent to Renew members in order to gain an idea of the general member population's opinions about the website usability. Survey respondents were able to answer questions about the website effectiveness and fully express their thoughts through the open response questions (the full survey can be found in Appendix C). We received 268 responses and analyzed the data for similar answers as well as unique opinions from the respondents.

4.2.2 FINDINGS FROM ALL SUBJECTS

General Impressions

We created a list of feedback that is representative of the study participants' opinions. Ten of fourteen interviewees said that Renew's website was clean and easy to navigate. They also thought that the pictures on the website were professional and attractive, which made the website seem trustworthy. One interviewee pointed out that the arrangement of the website made it look

professional and interesting while still easy to navigate. Another said that the website was better than any they had seen recently. All interviewees thought the content of articles was generally high quality and useful to them. The general impressions of the website were overwhelmingly positive. No interviewees said that the website was hard to navigate or poorly organized. Since the website is already satisfactory from the perspective of many members that we interviewed, the comments below are meant only to provide suggestions for further website improvement. The subsections of suggestions are ordered in the order of navigation from the home page onward. After the comments on specific pages, there are subsections based on overall navigation, accessibility, and ease of sharing information.

Home Page

We asked in-person interviewees to spend time on the home page and provide feedback on features that they found appealing and features that needed improvement. During this time, only half of them scrolled down to the

bottom of the page. Four

interviewees thought that the

“How we can help” dropdown box

was too large (Figure 1). Two

others pointed out that several of

the other boxes on the page seemed to be too large as well. They thought that the “Make a

donation” and “Become a member” boxes took up too much space and that it might be more

effective to have them higher on the page. Two of the interviewees also mentioned that the color

scheme used on parts of the home page does not look as professional as other pages, and that

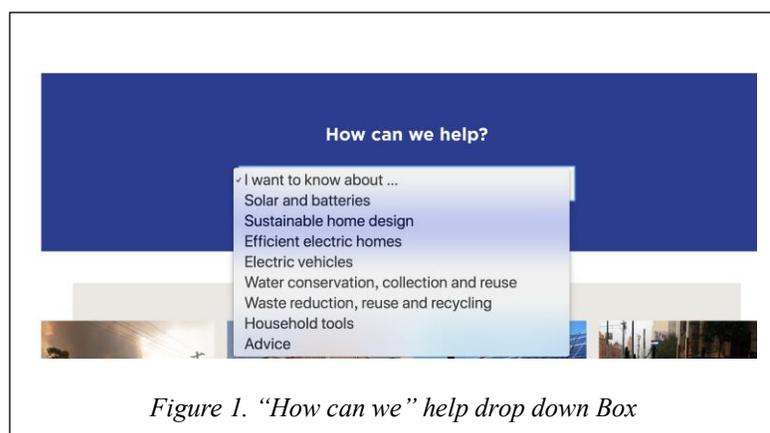


Figure 1. “How can we” help drop down Box

colors that complement each other more would make the website look more cohesive (Figure 2). From these points, interviewees began to discuss what they thought would improve the home page. One thought that the magazines should be advertised higher on the page since Renew mainly sells magazine subscriptions. Four of them thought that a shorter and more compact home page would be more useful, as well as look better.

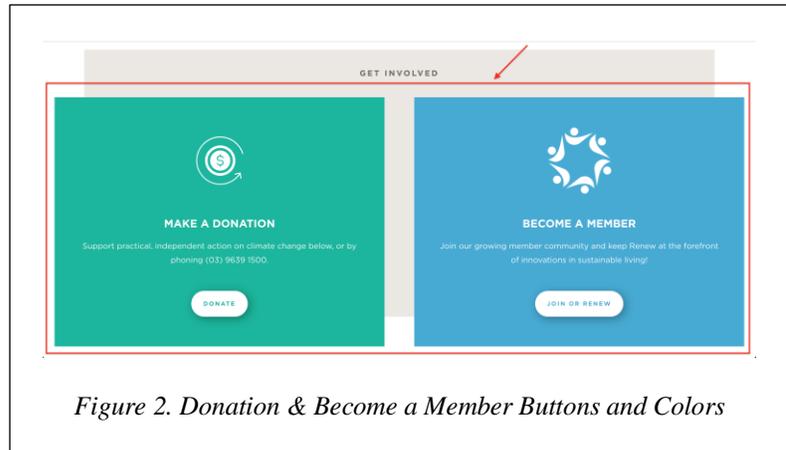


Figure 2. Donation & Become a Member Buttons and Colors

Suggestion list about the home page:

- Shorten the home page (smaller content boxes)
- The most important features should be placed at the top of the home page
- Use a more consistent color scheme
- Advertise magazines higher on page

Menu

The majority of the interviewees were discontent with the organization and size of the menu on Renew’s website. The menu has large headers that serve as categories for navigation on the website. Figure 3 shows that three of these categories (Events, News, and Contact) are positioned significantly below

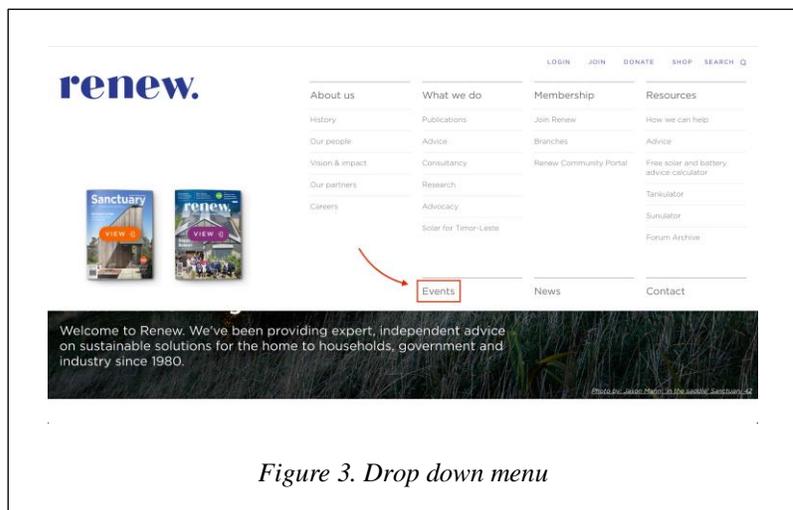


Figure 3. Drop down menu

the rest of the large categories, giving an impression of multiple or layered menus. Five interviewees found that categories like “Events” on the lower part of the menu were difficult to find because they were scanning the major categories along the top of the menu, not the bottom. Consolidating the menu items was a suggestion from most interviewees. Some suggestions included moving “Events” to be under “What we do” and moving “Contact” to be under “About us”. By rearranging the menu categories to be more logical, it would be easier for people to find specific pages that they are looking for.

Eleven of fourteen interviewees had trouble with the menu covering too much of the page when expanded. Most of these interviewees (who were 60+ years of age) were not very tech oriented. When scrolling on the website, they frequently put their mouse over the menu, which caused the menu to cover more than half of the page. The bottom portion of the webpage not covered by the

menu was the only visible part of the page (Figure 4), and this caused great confusion. One interviewee suggested that the major headers on

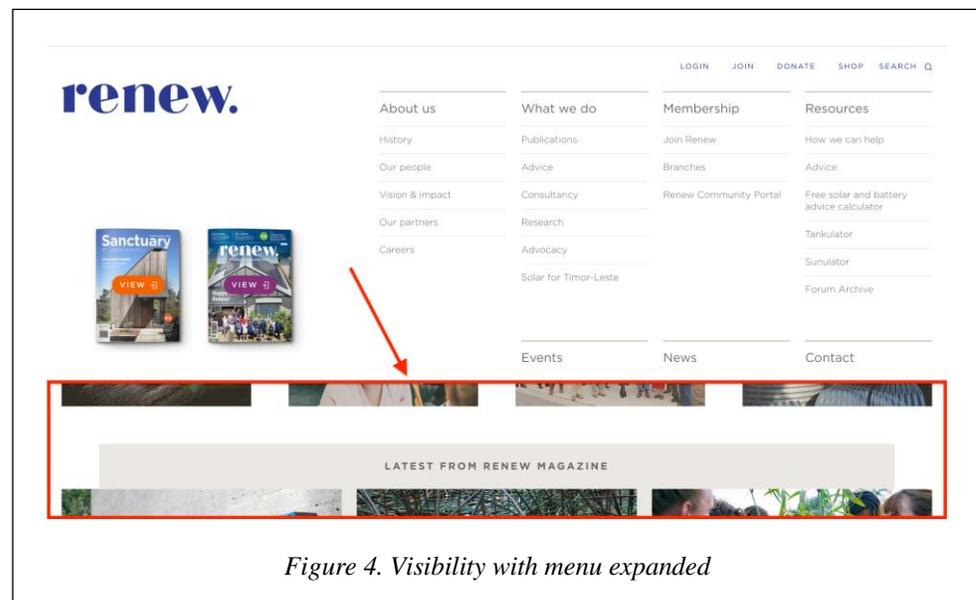


Figure 4. Visibility with menu expanded

the menu should have their own dropdown menus; the whole menu should not expand when putting the mouse over one header. This could help with the visual obstruction of that occurs when the entire menu drops down.

Suggestion list about the menu:

- Rearrange menu items to be more logical, e.g., move “Events” to be under “What we do”
- Reduce the size of the expanded menu to avoid visual obstruction
- Major headers on the menu should have individual drop-down menus

Search Bar

The search bar was another feature that caused trouble for the interviewees. As shown in Figure 5, the search bar

is in the top right-hand corner of the page. When asked to perform tasks involving the search bar, the majority

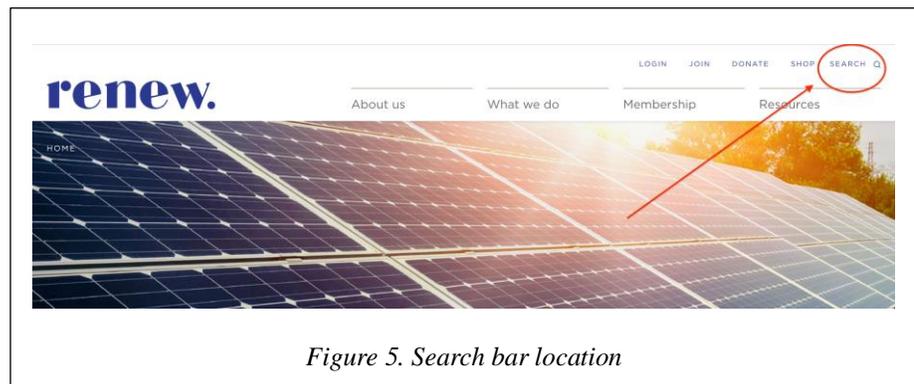


Figure 5. Search bar location

of interviewees had trouble finding it due to its small size. Another issue the interviewees voiced about the search bar was its strict search functionality. When searching for information on Renew’s website, the search function did not show any relevant results if the search terms were misspelled. Twelve interviewees were 60+ years old, and one talked about how his poor eyesight caused him to misspell words when typing on a keyboard. This interviewee said that when he misspelled words, it discouraged him from navigating the website further because of irrelevant or nonexistent search results. He suggested that the search engine could be similar to Google’s, where it prompts the user with “did you mean...” after a misspelled search. Four survey respondents also mentioned they would prefer a more forgiving search engine.

Additionally, a different interviewee explained how he would like the website's search bar to search for functionality as well as content. When asked to visit the donate page, he typed "donate" into the search bar only to find articles that had the word "donate" included in them instead of the actual donation page on the website. The search results are separated by different categories: Renew, *Renew* magazine, *Sanctuary* magazine, and News (Figure 6). This

interviewee suggested that Renew should add a new search result category



Figure 6. Search categories

for specific pages on the website. By implementing these suggestions, the search bar would be easier to use.

Suggestion list about the search bar:

- Add a search for functionality option (searching "donate" should bring you to the donation page)
- Introduce a more forgiving search engine (e.g., accepts misspelled words)
- Increase the size of the search bar on the home page

Donate Page

When navigating to the donation landing page, three interviewees mentioned that the call to action was somewhat vague and the banner photo was not relevant to anything Renew does, as seen in Figure 7. These interviewees suggested that explaining the positive impact of a donation was a convincing way to make people want to donate.



Figure 7. Call to action and Banner on Donation Page

Three interviewees said that encouraging people to donate money was something Renew could do more. One

suggestion was letting people choose what they want to donate towards. They did not know that Renew already

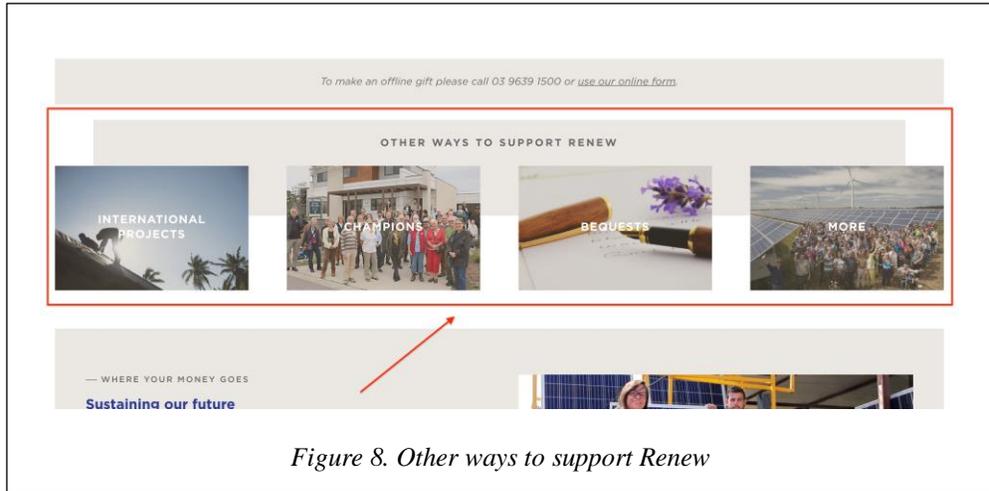


Figure 8. Other ways to support Renew

allows people to do so (as seen in Figure 8), so they suggested that this option be more clear and higher on the page.

Two interviewees suggested that Renew put links to donate at the bottom of every article. On the donation page, three interviewees liked how they could select some predetermined dollar

amount or specify a custom dollar amount (Figure 9). They also thought that having the incremental donation buttons directly on



Figure 9. Increments in donation

article pages would be beneficial and encourage more people to donate.

When donating, security was a major concern of a lot of the older people, who were reluctant to donate if they needed to put in their address and contact information (as seen in

Figure 10). They said the fields for address and personal information should not be mandatory,

and there should be a way for users to donate anonymously if desired. Also, one interviewee wanted Renew to integrate PayPal as an option to donate. PayPal is a widely accepted form of secure payment for

The image shows a web form titled "My Contact Details". It contains the following fields:

- Title: A dropdown menu with the option "--None--".
- First Name*: A text input field.
- Last Name*: A text input field.
- Phone*: A text input field.
- Email*: A text input field.
- Street*: A text input field with a location pin icon.
- Suburb/Town*: A text input field.
- State*: A text input field with a location pin icon.
- Postcode*: A text input field.
- Country*: A dropdown menu with the option "Australia".

Figure 10. Contact Info on donation page

online transactions, and people tend to prefer it to directly putting in their card information (PayPal, n.d.). Since nonprofits like Renew rely heavily on donations, encouraging donations on the website is extremely important.

Suggestion list about the donate page:

- Reduce the amount of personal information required to donate so that people are less concerned about security
- Add a way to donate with PayPal
- Put links to donate to Renew at the bottom of every article
- Be more specific about the organizational impact of a donation

Membership Page

Since one of Renew's main sources of income is selling memberships, it is important for people visiting the website to be aware of their membership benefits. The membership page on Renew's website features a three-column setup that compares the membership tiers side-by-side

as displayed in Figure 11. Five interviewees liked the side by side comparison and said that it made deciding on which tier to pick easier. However, they also thought that the descriptions were redundant and could deter new visitors from reading the entire writeup. Four interviewees mentioned that a better way to display the same information is by using a table to outline the benefits of each tier. One interviewee also mentioned that changing the upper level tiers to say “all of the benefits of Magazine Only plus...” would cut down on redundancy and increase clarity.



Figure 11. Membership Description

Two interviewees thought that it would be beneficial to have a box that says “Become a member” on every page so that it is unlikely to miss for newcomers to the website. An interviewee mentioned that they would like to see a page displaying the activities that need volunteers in the future. Since *Renew*'s members are passionate and involved, they would like to see more ways that they can volunteer their time to help *Renew*.

Suggestion list about the membership page:

- Make the differences between membership subscription tiers more clear
- Use a table to compare the benefits of each membership tier
- Add “Become a Member” button on every page of the website
- Introduce a page that shows where volunteers are needed

Navigation

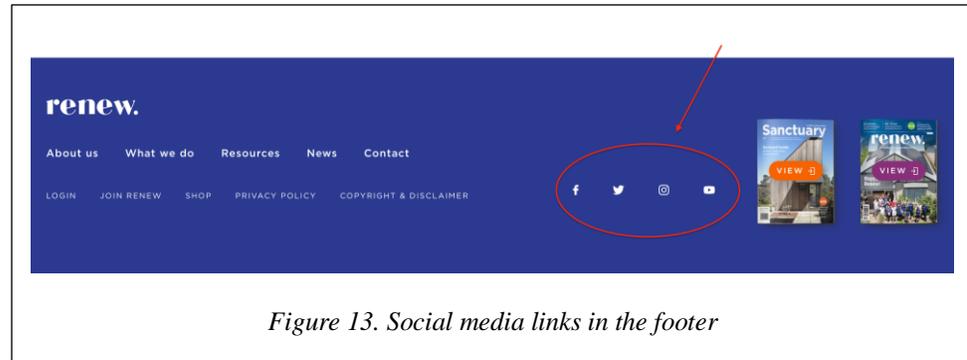
While navigating Renew’s website was easy for several in-person interviewees, there were some issues that arose with others. When asked to return to the homepage, six interviewees from the in-person interviews knew to click the Renew logo (a standard homepage link approach found in many websites), but two of the older interviewees did not know how to return home other than clicking the back button on their browser. They suggested that a home icon would make it easier for them to navigate to the homepage. Additionally, four of eight in-person interviewees experienced difficulty in finding the *Sanctuary* magazine website. The website link in the menu is a picture of the front cover of a *Sanctuary* magazine with the word “View” centered on it. Four interviewees thought this meant to view the latest issue of *Sanctuary* due to the label of the button in Figure 12. The suggestion from those interviewees was to change the “View” button to “Visit Sanctuary Website”, as well as advertise the magazine in more places on the website. These comments also apply to the *Renew* magazine as well.



Figure 12. Links for Sanctuary & Renew magazine

Within article pages, only two of the in-person interviewees were able to easily find the social media links. Four in-person interviewees did not scroll to the bottom of the article page to where the social media links are located; so they suggested that it would be useful to include social media links at the top of the page in addition to the links at the bottom of the page (Figure 13). In addition to more social media links, seven interviewees said that their experience would

benefit from
internal ads to
similar content on
the article pages
because internal



ads can minimize the amount of effort needed to navigate the website. More people would be encouraged to spend time and engage with the website if they had the ability to easily navigate to social media, other articles, and other parts of the website.

Suggestion list about navigation:

- Include a home icon on other pages for ease of navigation
- Include social media links at both the top and bottom of each webpage
- Add more internal advertisements (donations, etc.) on different parts of Renew’s website

Accessibility

Accessibility is a key factor to a website, and when the demographic of people using the website is mostly 60+ years old, it becomes an even more pressing factor. Since six of eight in-person interviewees we interviewed were in the 60+ age range, accessibility was a common topic of discussion. The consensus among the older interviewees is that they had trouble seeing the writing on the pages. Five interviewees said that this was due to the font being too small and the color of the font being too light (Figure 14). These five interviewees all agreed that if the font was larger and darker, it would be easier for them to read. Four interviewees said they would

prefer an option to enlarge text on article pages. Another two said that they would like to see a feature to have the article read aloud to them. As the majority of Renew's members are 60+ years old, having



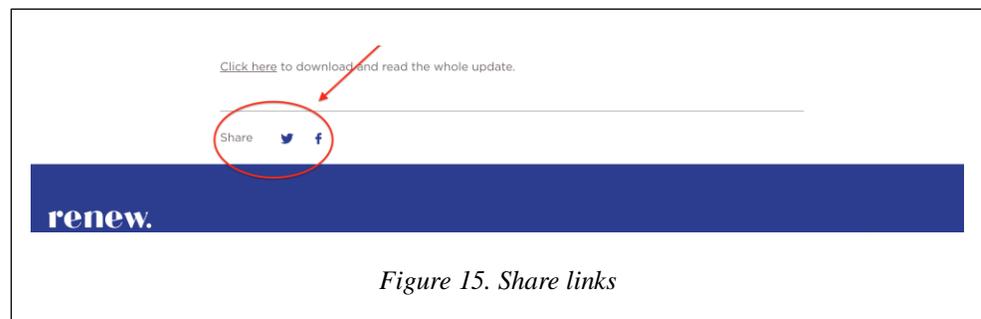
these two options would increase the usability of Renew's website for that demographic.

Suggestion list about accessibility:

- Use a darker font to increase the readability
- Add a feature to enlarge text
- Add a feature to read articles out loud

Sharing Information

The website also has a feature that allows people to share articles to their Facebook or Twitter accounts (as seen in Figure 15), but four interviewees did not know what that meant or how to do it. One interviewee said that he has a Facebook account and would be



interested in sharing an article to his page, but he did not know how to. Two other interviewees

mentioned that it was a good idea to help spread information, but wished it was easier to find. Some said that having a box above articles that said “If you liked this article, share it to your followers” with the clickable icons below might make it easier for people to find and utilize. Another feature that an interviewee mentioned he would like to see is a way to save or bookmark articles for future reading, or a way to email articles directly to friends and family. Overall, the members wanted a better way to share information so that other people can benefit from it and enjoy it as well.

Suggestion list about sharing information:

- Make the share buttons more clear
- Add a way to bookmark articles
- Add a way to email article directly friends and family

“New to Sustainability” Page

Five interviewees agreed that sustainability has a steep learning curve and that Renew’s information is written at a higher level than an average person would understand. Some in-person interviewees thought that people interested in sustainability but new to the information would be discouraged from learning more about Renew since they are unfamiliar with the information. These interviewees thought that it would be helpful to make a “New to sustainability” page to introduce newcomers to technical topics. This page might include key terms and definitions, small DIY projects, and overviews of basic sustainable practices. An interviewee also thought that having more FAQ pages would be beneficial to help answer people's questions about Renew, as well as a FAQ page for Sustainable House Day. This could help spread Renew’s message and information to more people in Australia and get more people interested in sustainable housing.

4.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR THE USE OF GOOGLE ANALYTICS

For Renew to monitor their website traffic, we provided suggestions about creating a new Google Analytics dashboard. Renew currently has two Google Analytics dashboards: one for “Website Performance” and one for “Website Overview”. These two dashboards consist of

important parameters such as traffic summary, top internal search terms, 404 errors report, etc. The dashboards also contain some metrics that are less useful to Renew, such as the brand of mobile phone used to view the website and some displays that do not have titles. Some of the metrics on the dashboards are redundant and do not seem to be in a logical order. Renew also wanted to be able to monitor the traffic from the *Renew* magazine and *Sanctuary* magazine pages. As seen in Figure 16,

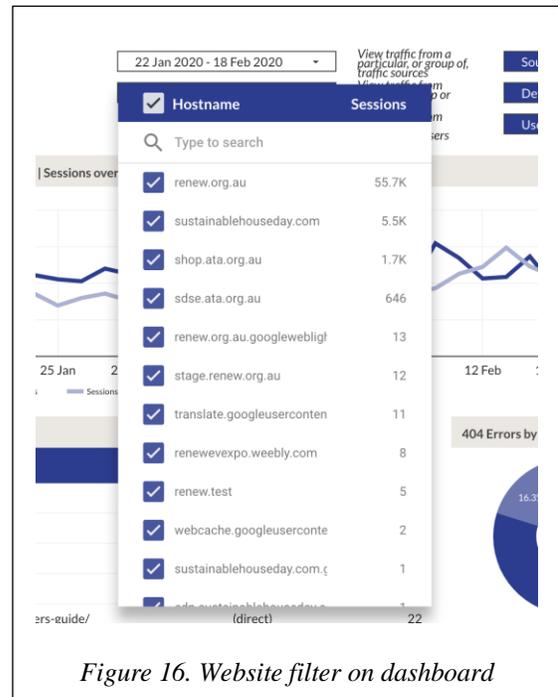


Figure 16. Website filter on dashboard

the dashboard allows them to filter the websites to see the traffic information for the selected website. Therefore, Renew could add the *Renew* and *Sanctuary* magazine pages to this website list. By adding *Renew* and *Sanctuary* to the website list in addition to creating a new and more concise dashboard, Renew could more efficiently monitor their website traffic. This will be especially useful if/when Renew updates their website and makes use of Google AdWords, allowing them to easily monitor if their changes have made a difference in the website traffic.

We wanted Renew to be able to easily access the most important data, so we suggested that they make a new dashboard that consists of the following metrics:

- Traffic Summary
- 404 Error Report
- Bounce Rate Report (the percentage of visitors who only view one page on the website before leaving)
- User activity once on the website, including where they navigate between pages within the website
- Internal searches

We listed metrics to include on the new dashboard that will be beneficial for Renew to make sure they can efficiently utilize the limited space on their dashboards. By making a new and more logical dashboard, they will be able to easily monitor the most useful data.

5. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

From our research and data collection, we successfully produced each of our deliverables. We compiled a list of positive member testimonials that can be used to strengthen Renew's marketing, as well as a list of suggestions for maintaining their Google AdWords account. To improve Renew's website user experience, we collected data from similar websites as well as data from interviews and a survey. We used these data to formulate a list of suggestions for further improvement for Renew. These findings were presented to Renew's marketing team at the conclusion of our project. The research and methods we conducted were intended specifically for Renew, but many other organizations could benefit from this method of analysis as well.

While our work was focused on the desktop version of the website, Renew could benefit greatly from doing a similar analysis on mobile devices. Based on data presented on Renew's Google Analytics dashboard, about 51% of website viewers use a mobile device. They could achieve significant results for the user experience on mobile devices by following a similar method as we did for the desktop version of the website.

Throughout our project, we faced several challenges and limitations. One challenging aspect was to determine how to collect both detailed information about the website and opinions that were representative of the Renew community. The interviews were time-consuming yet provided us with very rich and detailed information. We balanced the need for detailed feedback and representative feedback by sending out a survey in addition to the time-consuming interviews. From the survey, we received feedback from 268 members. The responses from the survey reinforced the strengths and weaknesses that many of the interviewees had with the website,

which showed us that our suggestions were relevant to more than just the 14 individuals that we interviewed.

The findings from our research and data collection support several conclusions about Renew's marketing and website user experience:

Conclusion 1: Renew's marketing could be improved greatly by utilizing Google AdWords.

Our suggestions for the use of Google AdWords and our weekly checklist for its upkeep can be a major source of additional online marketing for Renew. These suggestions include updating the ad campaigns, utilizing keywords that will help the campaigns, and making use of the dynamic ad features. The checklist includes features that the marketing team should check on and update each week, including checking the use of each keyword, checking ad performance, and creating new ads for new events and publications.

Conclusion 2: Renew's website compares well to others.

Upon analysis of Renew's website with respect to the five pillars of effective web design, Renew compares well to the other websites analyzed. There are some areas where Renew is excelling compared to similar websites and some areas where they could benefit from improvement. In comparison to other similar organizations' websites and the five pillars of effective website design, Renew compares well in establishing a good brand image and building a community. Nonetheless, Renew could benefit from user testimonials and encouraging donations.

Conclusion 3: There is an overall sense of satisfaction with the website as is.

When interviewing and surveying members, it often took time for them to think of areas that they thought could benefit from improvement. They were mostly satisfied with the website improvements from the old ATA website and found that the website was overall easy to navigate as well as professional looking with a good aesthetic.

Conclusion 4: There are many suggestions that arose from our findings that could improve the website further.

Even though the interviewees were satisfied with the website overall, there were still some areas where improvements could be made. The list of suggestions discussed in the findings section was a compilation of our feedback from the interviewees and survey respondents and was meant for further improvement. These suggestions included aspects about the structure, organization, and accessibility of the website that could benefit from improvement. Some of these suggestions are simple changes to the wording and layout of the website, while some are more comprehensive and will require more professional knowledge. We expect some of the suggestions to make a significant impact on the website usability; specifically, the improvement of accessibility for people with poor eyesight. Some of the suggestions, however, are less crucial but could still help Renew strengthen their user experience.

Final Thoughts

The work that we have done for Renew enables the organization to make significant improvements to their marketing and website user experience. We hope that the marketing team will find these suggestions useful when they are ready to update their marketing and website.

Renew is an organization that wants to make a difference in the world of sustainability, and by helping Renew improve their marketing and website user experience, we are helping them attract new members. By helping Renew distribute their information about sustainable living to new members, we are in turn helping Australia become a more sustainable country.

6. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PHONE INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

“Hello, our names are Kenneth Desrosiers, Yin Zhang, and Hannah Gray. We are students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the United States. For our junior year project, Renew has asked us to work with them to gather opinions from users of their services about their website usability. If you are willing, we would like you to ask you a few questions about Renew’s website. Your responses will be kept anonymous and completely confidential.” If they are willing, the following questions will be asked:

- 1) Have you recently used Renew’s website?
- 2) How did you hear of Renew?
- 3) For the purpose of our research, what is your age?
- 4) What would you normally use the website for?
- 5) Was there anything that stood out to you as something good about the website?
- 6) Anything that stood out as bad?
- 7) What features do you like the best?
- 8) How easy was it to navigate?
- 9) Is there anything you would like to see more on the website?
- 10) Anything you would want to see less of?
- 11) What do you wish you could use the website for?
- 12) Can you think of any websites you have used recently that you like the design of?
- 13) Do you follow Renew or Sanctuary on any social media?
 - a) If so, which platforms?
 - b) Do you find it useful or informative?

APPENDIX B: ONE-ON-ONE SESSION STRUCTURE

“Hello, our names are Kenneth Desrosiers, Yin Zhang, and Hannah Gray. We are students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the United States. For our junior year project, Renew has asked us to work with them to gather information about how users of their services feel about their website usability. If you are willing, we would like to have you perform a few simple tasks on Renew’s website. Your responses will be kept anonymous and completely confidential.” If they are willing, we will have them follow this structure below with the website in front of them:

- 1) Ask how people found out about Renew and how they decided to become a member
- 2) What do you normally use the website for?
- 3) Have you had any trouble with the website usability/navigation in the past?
- 4) Begin the computer portion: be sure to tell them that if they have any additional comments at all during the interview to please let us know! We want as much info as we can get from them.
- 5) Interviewees will be asked to begin on an article page (linked here: <https://renew.org.au/research/ev-bills-co2-energy/>) this brings them to the page that the article is linked to.
- 6) What can you tell about the organization from this page?
- 7) Do you think that it would be useful to have a short description of the organization on each page?
- 8) Can you easily get to the article from here?
- 9) Would you feel inclined to click on other things on the website from this article?
- 10) Is there something that makes you not want to navigate the website further?
- 11) Could you find Renew’s social media accounts from the article page?
- 12) When you read articles on the website, do you ever share the article to your own personal social media account using the icons?
- 13) Can you navigate to the main page of the website?
- 14) Take a few minutes to look through the home page and point out anything that comes to mind when looking at it.
 - a) Watch to see how far down they scroll on the page
- 15) Can you navigate to where you would donate?
- 16) Would you feel inclined to donate on this page?

- 17) Is there anything that would deter you from donating?
- 18) Is there anything that makes you want to explore the website further?
- 19) Anything that deters your interest?
- 20) Navigate to where you could buy single copies of the magazine?
- 21) Would you ever buy a single copy of the magazine?
- 22) Navigate back to the main Renew website?
- 23) Can you find out what events Renew is doing in the future?
- 24) Can you find the website for *Sanctuary* magazine?
- 25) Say you wanted to know what you get with a subscription, how would you find out?
- 26) Is it clear to you what a membership means from this page?
- 27) After spending this time on the website, do you think it is clear exactly what renews mission is?
- 28) Is there anything that could make this more clear?
- 29) Is there anything that would make the navigation/organization of the website easier to use?
- 30) Did you have any trouble at all reading the font on the pages? Grey font good or bad? Big enough? If it was black would it be easier to read?
- 31) If there was a feature to make the text on articles enlarged, would you use it?
- 32) Do you think there is anything missing from the website that you would expect to see?
- 33) Any final comments?

APPENDIX C: SURVEY STRUCTURE

1. How did you find out about Renew?
 - a. Family and friends' recommendation
 - b. Internet search
 - c. Social media
 - d. Found a magazine in a library/waiting room/etc.
 - e. Events
 - f. Do not remember
 - g. Other: Open response
2. Have you recently used Renew's website?
 - a. In the last week
 - b. In the last month
 - c. More than a month ago
 - d. I don't use the website
 - e. I don't remember
3. How often do you use Renew's website?
 - a. Every day
 - b. A few times per week
 - c. A few times per month
 - d. A few times per year
 - e. I don't use the website
 - f. I don't know
4. How do you normally get to the website? Check all that apply
 - a. Email
 - b. Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)
 - c. Google search
 - d. Website directly via URL

- e. Other: Open response
5. What do you normally use the website for? Check all that apply
- a. Research
 - b. News
 - c. Future events
 - d. Donation
 - e. Learning more about Renew
 - f. Renewing membership
 - g. Buying magazines/books
 - h. Other: Open response
6. What do you like best about the website?
- a. Open response
7. Is there anything you dislike about the website?
- a. Open response
8. Any areas that need to be improved?
- a. Open response
9. Have you ever used the “how we can help” pages on the home page or resource menu?
- a. Have you used them?
 - i. No
 - ii. Yes - what did you use them for? How were they helpful/not helpful?
 - 1. Open response
10. Do you follow any of Renew’s social media accounts across Renew, Renew magazine, Sanctuary, etc.? check all that apply
- a. Facebook
 - b. Instagram
 - c. Twitter
 - d. LinkedIn

- e. YouTube
- f. None

11. How would you describe the website layout?

- a. Extremely intuitive
- b. Intuitive
- c. Neutral
- d. Confusing
- e. Extremely confusing

12. Do you prefer to read magazines in print or online?

- a. In print
- b. Online
- c. Both

13. If you chose in print or online, what makes you prefer one over the other?

- a. Open response

14. Do you have any other comments about the website and website usability that you would like to share?

- a. Open response

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