



Increasing Overcomers' Arena online presence through design

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**Increasing Overcomers Arena online
presence through design**

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It is vital for organizations to maintain a strong online presence for them to attract the attention of their potential users. The purpose of this research was to create a website for Overcomers' Arena that aids their online presence. The project was done under the supervision of Mivisions. Using user experience design framework, we designed the website which was implemented with the WordPress content management system.

This bachelor's thesis report is divided into two main sections. The theoretical section outlines the guiding principle by which the project was developed. The empirical section describes the steps undertaken in creating a working website for Overcomers' Arena. The objectives of the thesis project were to develop a functioning, dynamic website that can be edited easily by the organization and to develop the website further using WordPress. During the project, I was able to achieve all the set objective by developing a seven-page dynamic website.

Keywords: Website, WordPress, User experience design, Double diamond framework

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1 Introduction

Marketing is usually an expensive venture for most organization however properly utilizing user-centric website development techniques coupled with social media marketing, helps to position an organization near their users regularly at little cost. A website serves as a tool for any organization to market and advertise itself easily (Yi Jiang 2017). Creating a good website is highly dependent on good user-centric design because they are usually used in the absence of the website developer and designer hence, they make most of their surfing decision based on their perception (Friedman 2001). In this project, a dynamic website was created for Overcomers arena to increase their online presence and members.

1.1 Background Information

Overcomers arena is a Christian religious organization in Finland with the mission to introduce more people to Christ. The organization was founded in 2018, presently it has no form of online presence including a social media account. The project is done with collaboration with Mivisions international. Mivisions international is a business service and consultancy firm that offers value-driven solution solutions to companies interested in entering a new market, they offer six major services which are market entry service, Academic training, business consulting, concept testing, brand testing and Information support service.

1.2 Methodology

Action methodology was utilized in this project, it is a research technique that requires the researcher and the client to work together to create a solution to the research problem. It is a research methodology that solves real-world challenges in a collaborative way with its goals oriented towards change (IOWA state university, 2019). Interviews and surveys were conducted to collect data during the research. comparative analysis was done among similar website to understand the industry design standards and ways innovative design can be implemented. The data gained from the comparative analysis was matched with the data derived from the interviews and the survey to create the design concept which was later developed into a working product with WordPress content management system.

1.3 Limitation

The major challenge faced during the project is the lack of data. Since the organization is new with little to no online presence majority of the data and research add to be done for the first time including the content such as pictures videos and written post. Finding the right type of content to use was complex because we aimed to make it look natural and genuine as much as possible hence we have to wait for programs to be organized before content creation.

1.4 Thesis structure

The thesis is structured into five chapters. The first chapter contains the introductory segment, background section, methodology and the limitation. The second chapter contains the literature review which studies website for organizations and user experience design with in-depth analysis of Jakob Nielsen Heuristic evaluation and the double diamond design framework. The third chapter discusses the project requirements, it provided details on the wants of the clients. The fourth chapter describes the projects implementation and the final chapter gave a conclusion on the thesis project.

2 Websites for organizations

A website is a group of webpages that can be accessed under a common domain name. website can be created and managed by different people which can be individuals, organizations and group of people to serve different purposes such as documentation, job search and commercial reasons, this purposes can be divided into two major segments which are provision of information and undertaking a task (freeservers 2019).

Having an online presence is important to organizations because they provide easily accessible information to their users, staff members and the general public. When creating a website for an organization, concise information is germane. Before designing a website, the contents and elements of the website should be determined. (Wix 2011). Understanding what content should be on a website will help determine what structure will properly motivate users to be active on a website.

The first interaction a user has with a website is an opportunity for the organization to capture their interest. The website homepage is what web visitor will first see when they first encounter a website which can cause lasting impact on a person's perception of the brand. To create an effective homepage, it must have a call to action, about us section, clear navigation, a smart footer and clear navigation structure (Andrews 2019).

People relate better with personal stories, when we tell stories, we can communicate experiences directly to people's brain (Gowin 2011). Story telling is an important aspect of mod-ern website design, it connects audience to the brand in a way that stands out from the internet. Telling hard cut basic facts is no longer enough to drive user engagement (Pierson 2015). Users' needs to relate with a brand on a personal level which includes user testimonies on platforms like social media and website.

Community engagement is key to the success and continued operation of the organization (pride surveys 2017). Hence, it's important for an organization's website to be designed with

fostering community engagement and interaction in mind. To create a website that satisfy the users and other stake holders an understanding of user experience design is germane.

2.1 User experience design

User experience design is a process of designing products that focuses on how users satisfaction will be increased when the product is used, it is referred to as a human centered way of designing products (Lamprecht 2019). While the concept of user experience has been in existence for long, the term user experience was developed by Don Norman in his book the design of everyday things. User experience design seeks to make users experience better irrespective of the product, it ensures that a product is useful, usable and desirable.

A product is useful when it solves a problem and adds value. There is no limitation to what a useful product can be as far as it adds value to the person using it. the idea of usefulness is subjective hence a product does not need to be useful to everyone, but it must at the very least satisfy the need of a specific group of people.

Just adding value to a user is not enough to enhance a user's experience, product usability is at the core of a good user experience design. Product usability is the scope to which a user can use a product to achieve a set goal effectively and efficiently (Quesenbery 2001). To create a useable product, Jakob Nielsen propose a set of principles to be conscious of in his 1994 article titled 10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design (Nielsen 1994), these principles are referred to as design heuristics.

2.1.1 Jakob Nielson design heuristics

Jakob Neilson heuristics of design are sets of principles developed by Jakob Nielson to guide people in creating effective digital products. The ten heuristics are design touchpoints that can be used to test if a design is usable.

1. Visibility of system status:

A product interface should always provide feedback on what is happening in a sensible time (jain 2015), the users must always know what is happening, where they are and the result of their activities.

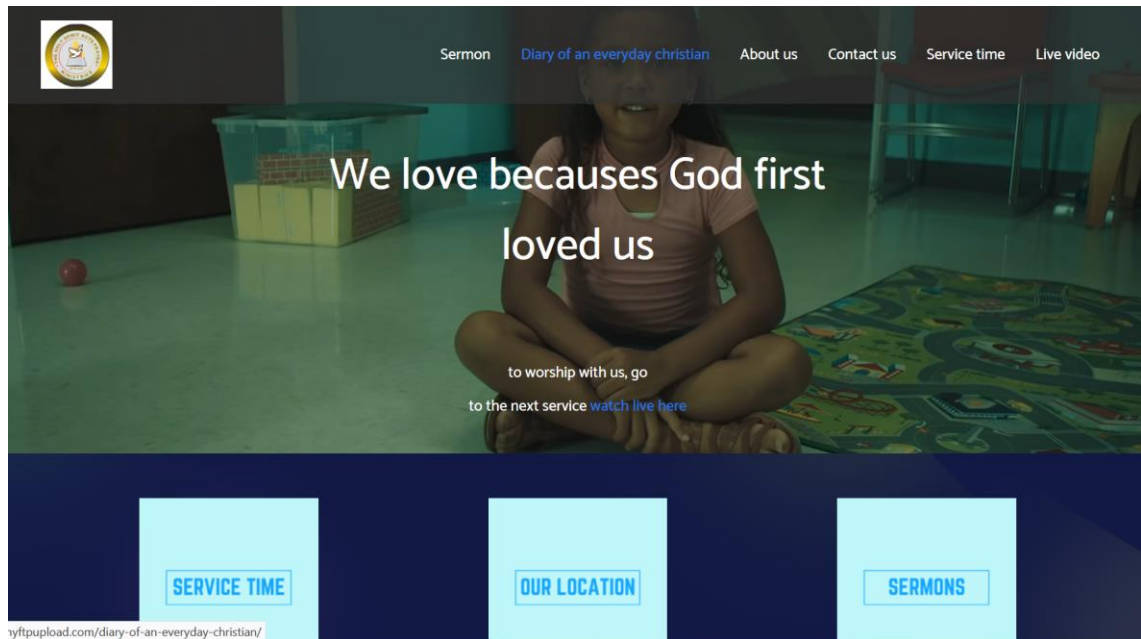


Figure 1: showing the menu button hovered

2. Match between systems and the real world:

The product should be use user-friendly phrases and elements (Pande 2018), designers should desist from using system inspired terminologies. Product designers should consider the users background, environment and culture when making decisions for example, the colour red in China symbolises positivity, while it symbolises war and danger in Nigeria.

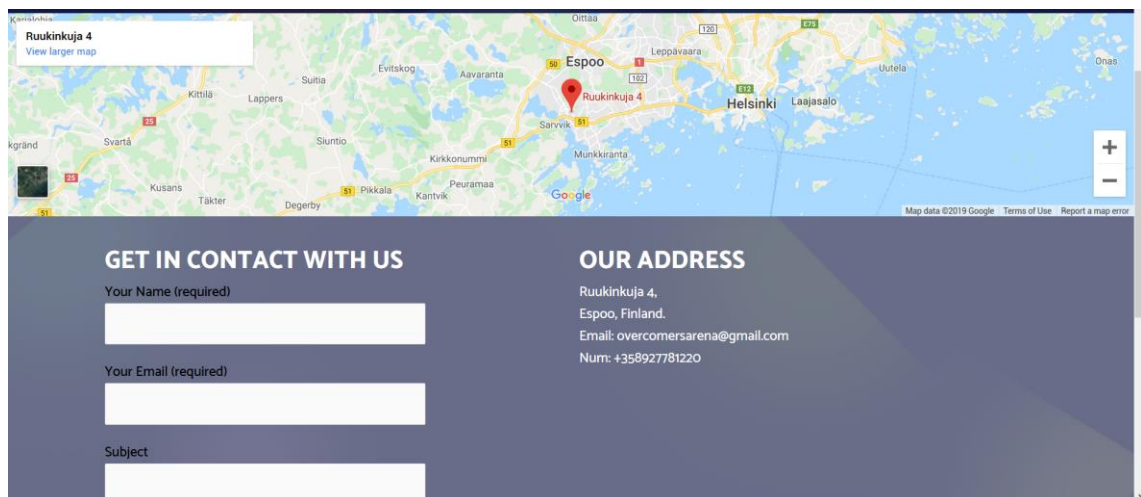


Figure 2: using google maps to show location

3. User control and freedom:

Product interfaces should make users feel like they have total control over all aspect of the product. Interfaces should have emergency exit and support undo and redo. Giving users clearly marked emergency exit and control makes the user have confidence in the usage of the product

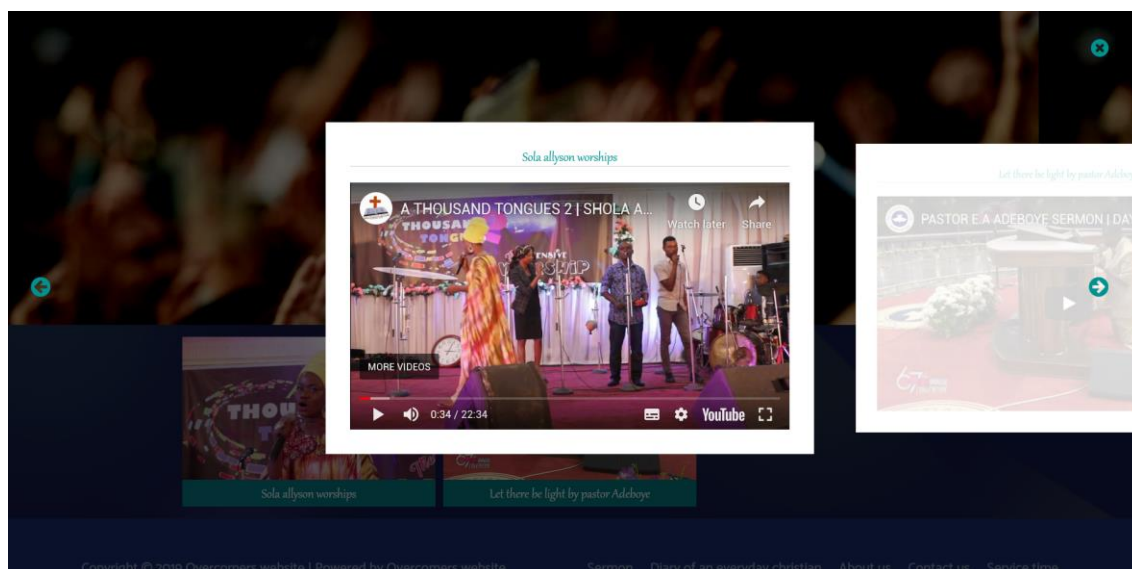


Figure 3: video media in the sermon page has arrow buttons for easy control and it showcases a close button for easy exit.

4. Error prevention:

Interfaces should not only have good error messages, it should seek to prevent the errors from occurring in the first place. Conditions that are likely to generate errors should be removed and users should be encouraged to confirm their choice before proceeding.

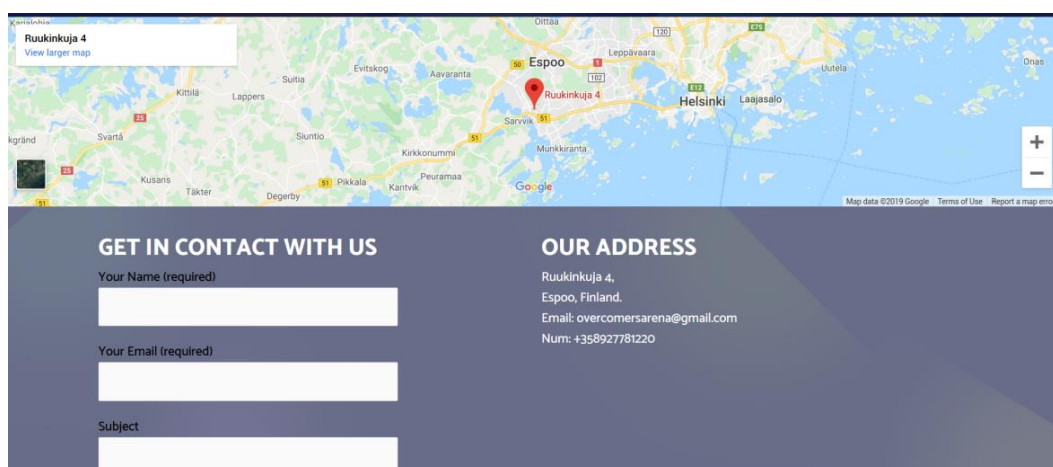


Figure 4: google maps helps prevent users from going to the wrong address

5. Consistency and standard:

Icons and user interface elements should conform with the general standards, reinventing the wheel is usually not the best solution when it comes to common elements for example, the thumbs up icon used as a like button. Using the thumbs up icon for an alternative purpose like a sharing tool will not only confuse the users but it will challenge their mental map on how the thumbs up tool should work. Its important to consider platform guidelines when developing and designing a digital product (Pande 2018). Following set platform guidelines will ensure that our product is consistent with the global standard which will enhance product usability and delightfulness.

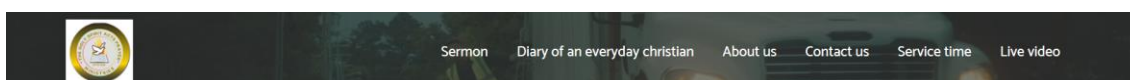


Figure 5: menu arrangement follows global standard with logo to the left and links to the right

6. Recognition rather than recall

Actions and options to be manipulated should be made obvious, users should not be forced to memorize information on the page. Cues should be added to the user interface that aids remembrance for instance suggestions offered in a search bar helps users identify what they are searching for without remembering the complete search query.

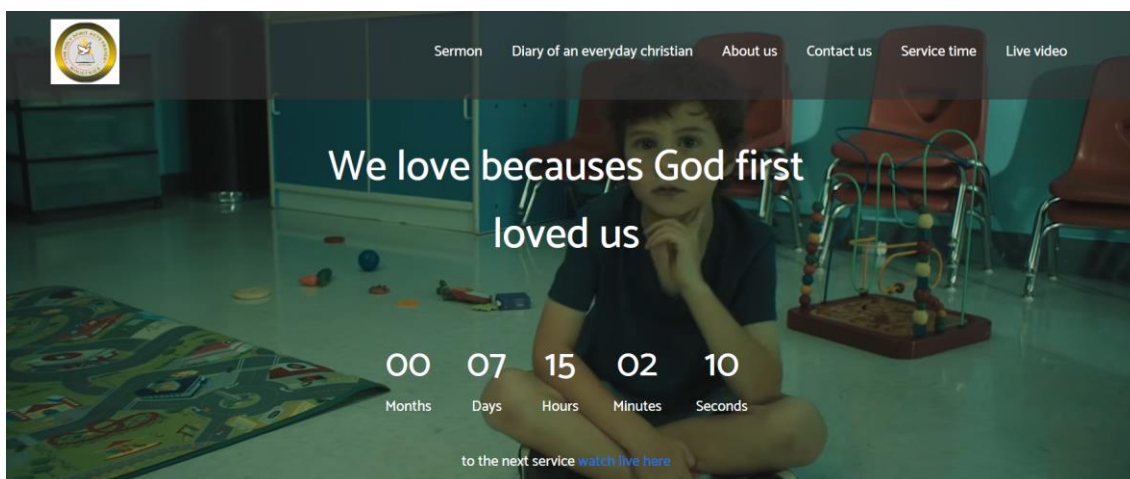


Figure 6: a countdown to the next service

7. Flexibility and efficiency of use:

Products should be designed to enable both beginners and skilled users. users based on their skill level should be able to interact with a product efficiently for example action objects should be available on the interface for beginners to easily access while, shortcuts and accelerators should be made available to skilled users to speed their interaction with the product.

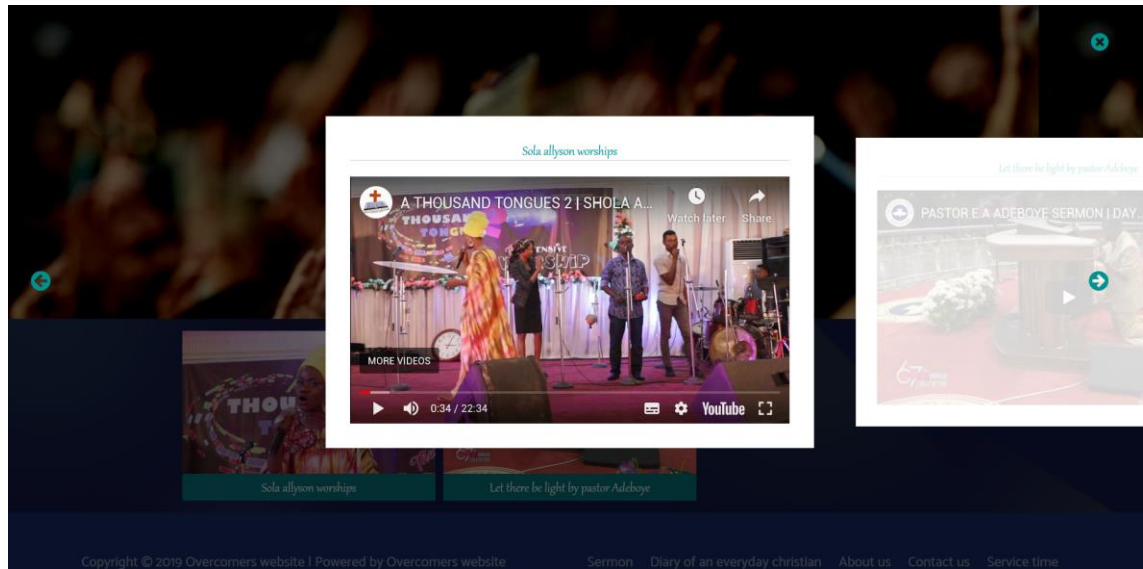


Figure 7: video media in the sermon page that allows users clicks on buttons for a functions and it allows shortcut uses for skilled users

8. Aesthetic and minimalist design:

The product should be free of irrelevant content and contents that are not used regularly. Only those content that are necessary to achieving user's goal should be included in a product. However, minimalist design is not just about removing content it is about presenting information that is important to a product's usability (Pande 2018).

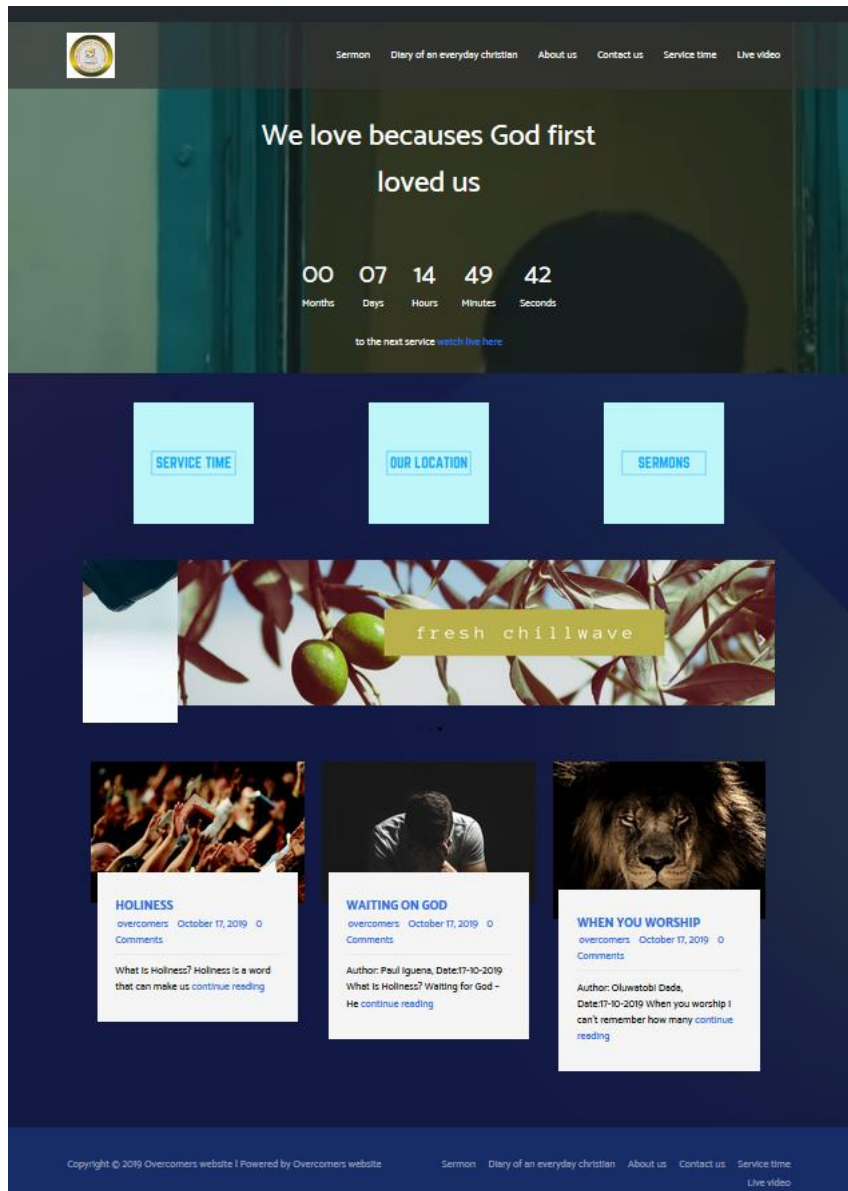


Figure 8: homepage using a lot of empty space

2.2 Double diamond model

Double diamond is a model developed by the design council. The double diamond model takes the approach of broad thinking and convergent thinking when creating the design and development stages (Schneider 2015), it places high importance on initially creating many ideas from which the ideas are streamlined to the most effective idea. it's described an organized and creative process of problem solving. The double diamond model was released as a direct result of a lengthy study that involves large organizations such as Microsoft, Sony and Lego.

In search of how corporate people process data, they discovered professionals across all organizations uses similar framework when innovating and solving complex creative challenges irrespective of the different ways they were working (JustinMind 2018).

The double diamond model divides the creative process into four stages which are discover, define, develop and deliver. These stages serve as blueprints for professionals to organize their creative and development activities which improves their creative process. The picture below shows the pictorial description of the double diamond.

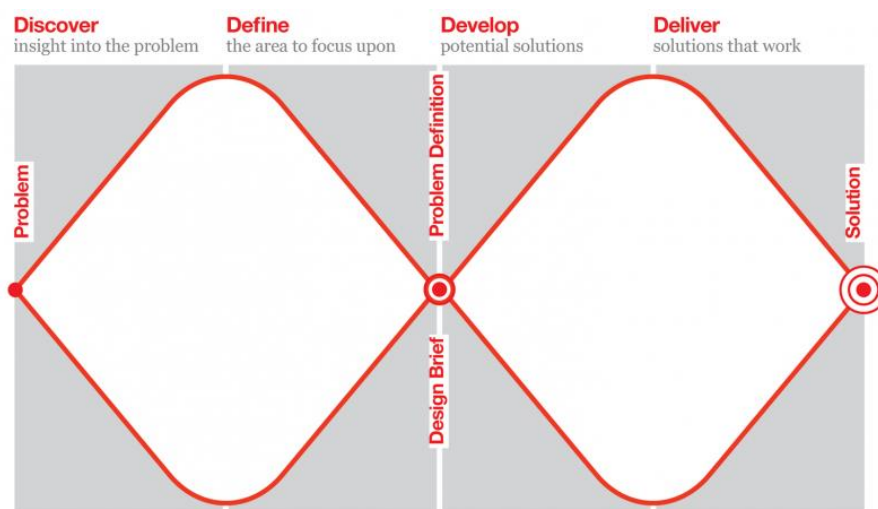


Figure 9: pictorial description of the double diamond (JustinMind 2018)

Discovery:

This is the first stage of the double diamond model, it involves the study of all the variables that affects and influences the problem to be solved. The discovery phase helps to promote a broad range of ideas. It seeks to understand what the challenge is and the different ways it can be solved (Design council 2015).

Discovery mostly involves physical interaction can with potential users. Having physical interaction like voice interview and workshops allow the designer to have a detailed knowledge of the problem they are solving and how best they can be solved. In the discovery stage, the designer tries to understand the problem through the eyes of the potential users.

Define:

The definition phase is the process of filtering through all the data gotten in the discovery phase which provides insight on the challenge to be solved. The insight derived from the large

pool of data is used to create a structure that is to be followed when developing a solution for the challenge.

The definition phase is convergent by nature, it is the start of the narrow-minded thinking approach discussed above hence; it concentrates on the most compelling opportunities to pursue (Schneider 2015). The filtered information should be studied inadeptly to identify potential bottlenecks and obscured opportunities (JustinMind 2018). The definition phase seeks to elaborate on the different aspect of a business, it ensures everyone involved in the product development understands the context properly.

Develop:

Once the challenges have been clearly defined and understood, we should start the search for the best possible solution for all the stakeholders. With a defined vision in place, we should explore numerous options and validate them. Initially, focus should be on quantity over quality (Eissa 2019). The development phase is the actual implantation phase, it involves a large amount of different people from unique discipline working together as team they ideate, develop the best possible solution, and test the solution with actual users. This teams differ from technical professionals such as engineers to unskilled workers like cleaners. the main thing to be consider selecting a team member is that they should have the expertise required for the development of the project. The development phases involve various activities which includes the following.

- Ideation / brain storming
- Low fidelity wireframing
- High fidelity wireframing
- Mind mapping
- User journey creation
- Service blueprint creation
- Tasks flows
- Asset creation
- Product creation
- Product testing

Deliver

it is the last stage of the double diamond model which revolves around the final concept (Copenhagen Business School 2013). It includes the final testing, error correction and launching. The delivery phase also includes post-production activities such as pitching and marketing. This phase or any other double diamond model phases is by no means a linear curve hence, they can be iterated at any time of the product design and development if the need arises.

In short, user experience design is not a means to an end, it's an iterative long-term process which involves various teams and stakeholders such as the customers, product users, developers, marketers, investors, sales representatives etc. irrespective of the projects we are developing we need a high-level blueprint to follow of which the double diamond model has provided us with an effective and flexible approach to design thinking and problem solving by dividing the model into two main parts which are, *designing the right thing* and *designing the things right* (Schicker 2018).

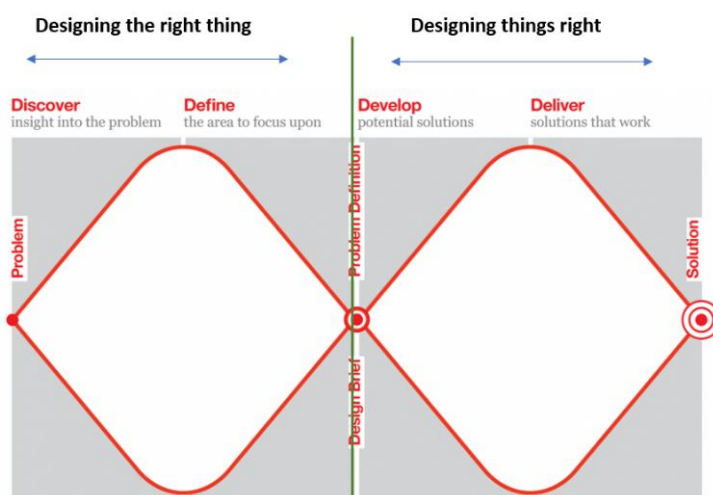


Figure 10: pictorial description of the double diamond showing its main parts

2.3 Content management system

Content management system is also referred to as CMS is a software that can create edit, organize and publish content on the internet, a content management system allows users both skilled people and people with limited software development and technology knowledge use the application effectively. Content management systems possess high level of flexibility because of the concept of themes and plugins.

Content management themes are code files that defines how the content management system looks like. (powel 2019). The themes vary from payed themes to free ones, they provide extra functionality to a site. Themes can be specialized for instance, a theme can be more tailored to a ecommerce website while some are more suitable for port-folio website.

Plugins in content management system are applications that can be installed into a theme to add or change the behaviour of a theme. Since most content management system is an open source product, plugins and themes can be developed by anyone with the appropriate skills.

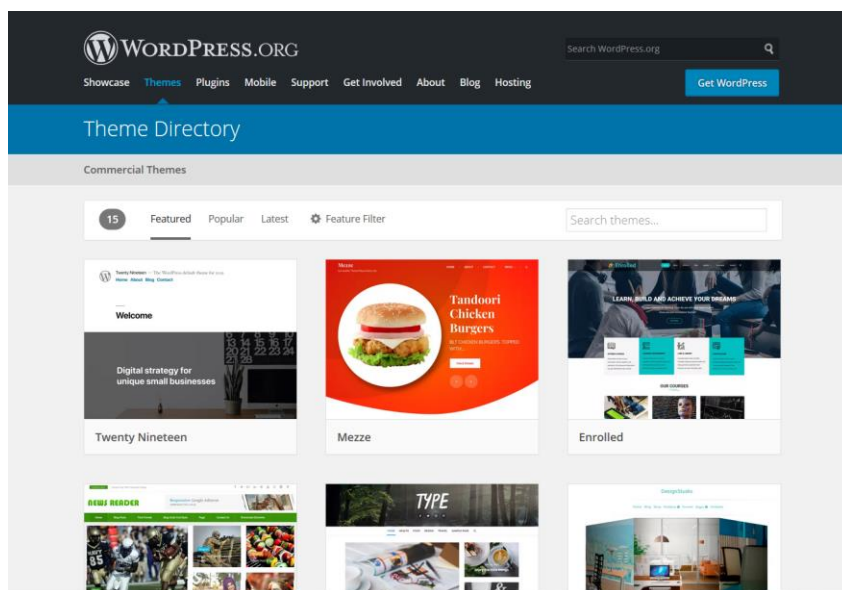


Figure 11: Snapshot of WordPress themes directory

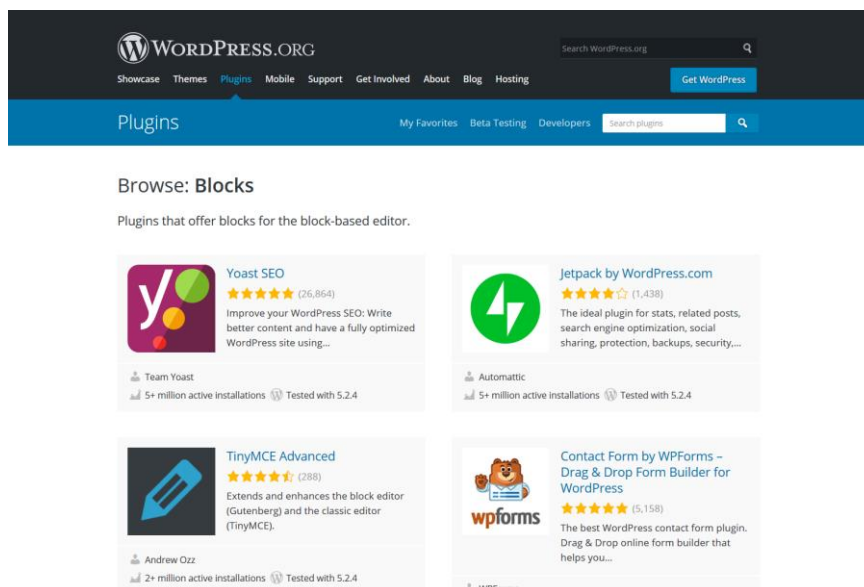


Figure 12: snapshot of WordPress plugin directory

There are a lot content management systems available today which includes Drupal, Webflow, Drupal, Joomla, Radiant, TextPattern and many more. In this project, we will be using WordPress because it's the most used content management system with 34% of the internet websites powered by WordPress (Barron 2019), it's also the tool I am comfortable with.

3 Implementation

This chapter journeys through the processes I undertook while developing the Overcomers arena website using double diamond model. The developmental process was divided into four major phases which are the discovery phase otherwise known as the research phase, definition phase, developmental phase and the delivery phase.

Discovery and definition phase:

To commence the project a meeting was setup to discuss the needs of the organization and how best to solve the challenge. The main problems Overcomers arena were having are visibility on the internet and the absence of quality information that are easily accessible. We decided to use a two-fold strategy to tackle their challenges which are social media presence development and website development. The responsibility of the web development was given to me while that of social media was given to another team member. To commence the website development, Overcomers arena provided us with a list of requirements they would like to be implemented in the website which are as follows.

- Creation of a dynamic website
- A website that can easily be edited by the organization
- The website should have live-streaming capabilities
- The website should be mobile friendly

We created a survey to understand who the potential users are and what they want in the website. The survey results showed most of the respondent expects to have a blog on the website and a means to participate with the organization's program when they are not physically present.

Website design research

User demographics and experience

How old are you

15 to 25

26 to 36

37 to 47

48 to 58

59 and above

Gender

Level of education

No education

Secondary school certificate

Vocational education

University education

History of eye defects

No eye defects

Color blindness

Long sightedness

Short sightedness

Other: _____

Rate your computer literacy

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

zero familiarity Professional

Website design research

Website look and feel

Do you follow any blog or vlog

Yes

No

What comes to your mind when thinking of a church website

Your answer _____

What is the most important feature in a church website

Your answer _____

How often do you attend church a week

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

rarely frequently

How do you get to know about overoomers arena

Friends

Street evangelism

Option 3

The internet

Other:

How do you find church-related information

Your answer _____

Figure 13: Screenshot of survey questions

After the survey, I interviewed six of the organization members and two non-members which the result of the interview further emphasizes the survey results.

3.1 Development phase

Before I started the development of the website, I undertook a comparative analysis of similar websites to understand what other church organizations are doing well and the various ways I can innovate effectively.



Figure 14: snapshot of different church website

From the comparative analyses I discovered that majority of the websites were divided into three main sections which are the main header which features an introductory sentence, the second section which contains information about previous events and upcoming events and location, then the third section contains miscellaneous information such as lost and found items and other locations.

After the comparison, a sitemap was created to show how information will be organized on the website. The website will have five main pages with four subpages

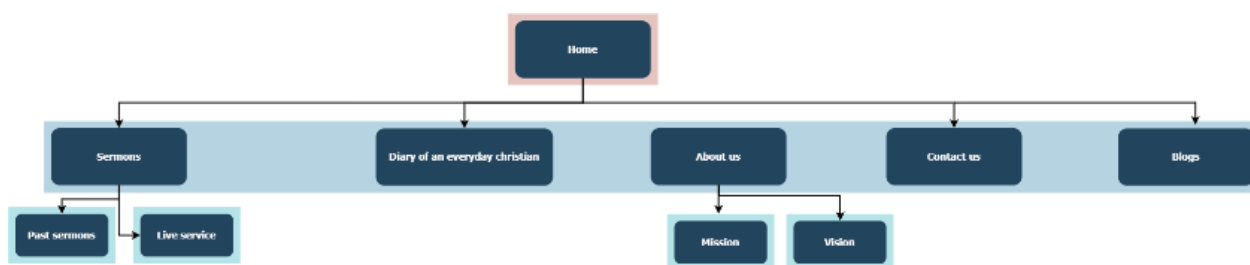


Figure 15: Overcomers arena website sitemap

We proceeded to create our prototype. A prototype is a model from which a product is built, prototyping is not limited to digital products it can be done for virtually every product from mechanical products like cars to service based products like a salon. We utilized two different type of prototyping methods which are low fidelity prototype and high fidelity prototypes.

Low fidelity (lo-fi) prototypes are sketches of products based on an idea. Low fidelity prototypes are usually incomplete, the main use of a low fidelity prototype is to conceptualize an idea to see if it solves the problem at hand. Low fidelity prototypes are usually done with only a pen and a paper. Complex material is not required to create a good low fidelity prototype. The only tools required is writing tools and a place to write on, the writing tools varies from pencils to chalk while the place to write on includes papers, boards and even hand papers. Low fidelity prototypes are created using simple shapes without any complex styling to represent the elements of a products for instance circles can be used to represent a profile picture and wobble lines can be used to represent text.

High fidelity prototype is used to visualize how the actual product will look like, it gives depth to the low fidelity prototype by replacing them with placeholder elements or sometimes with the real contents. High fidelity prototypes help designers define how elements are structured on the products. On a high level. High fidelity prototypes define the colour, size, spacing, opacity and other similar design decision.

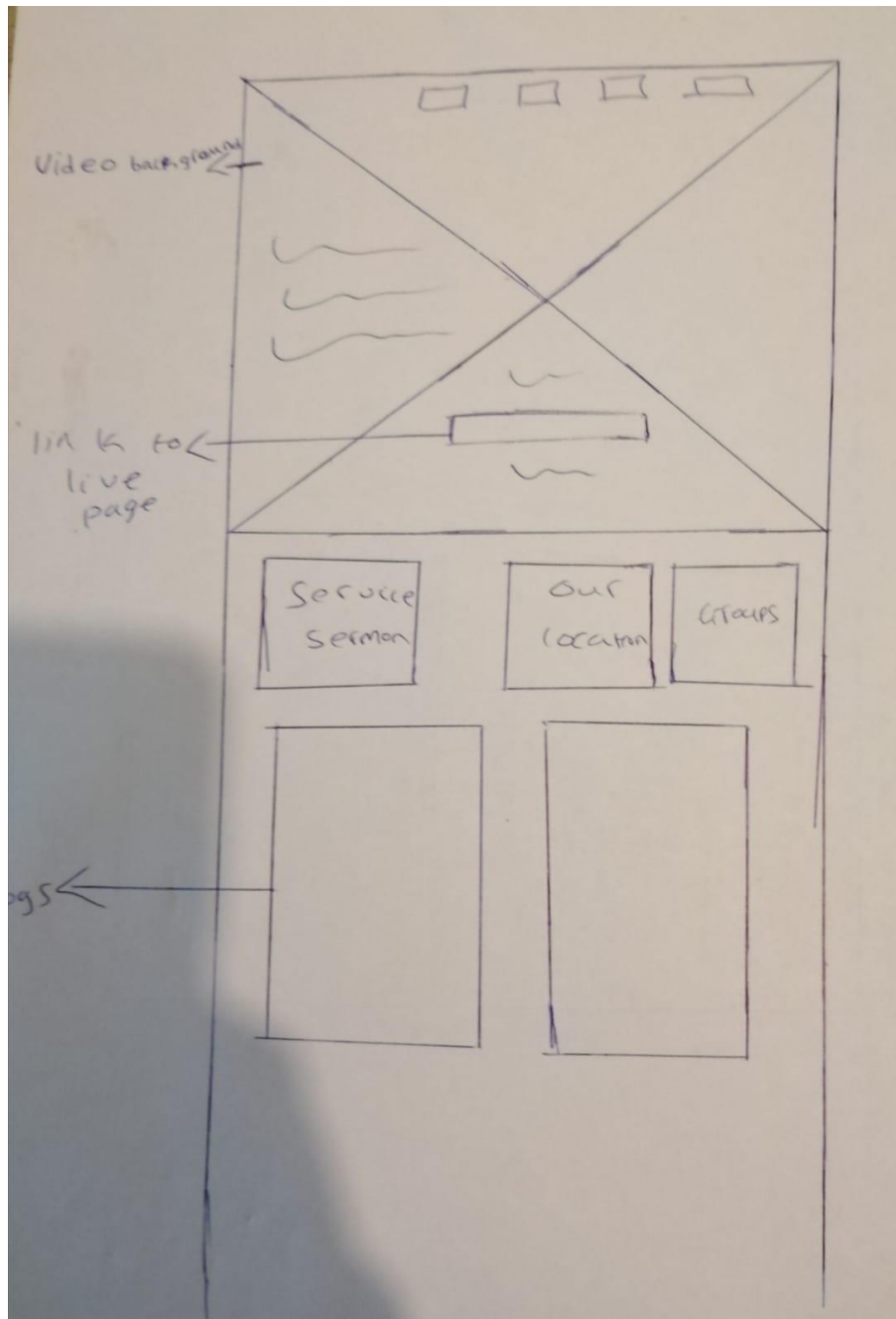


Figure 16: Overcomers home page low fidelity wireframe

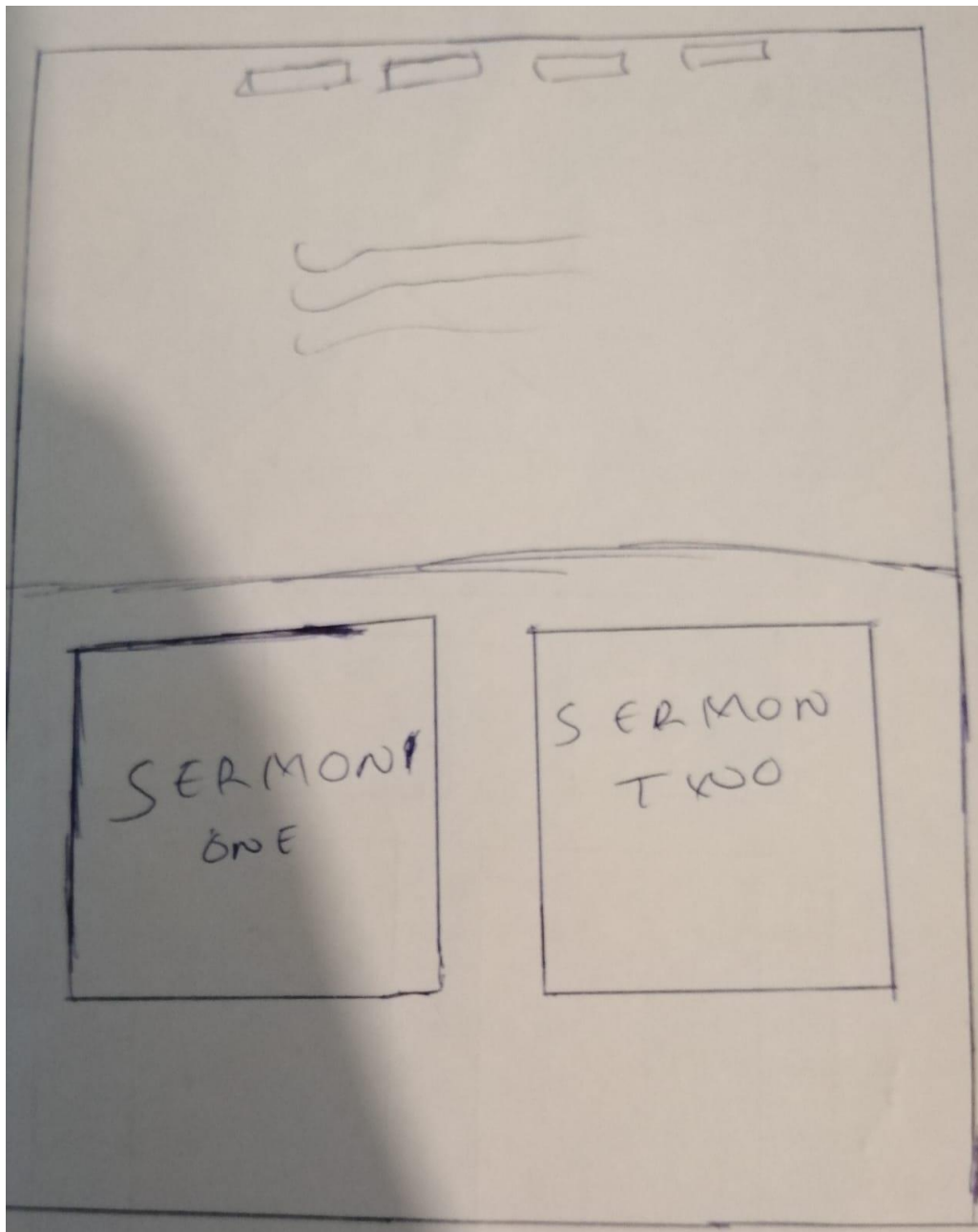


Figure 17: Overcomers sermon page low fidelity wireframe



Figure 18: Overcomers home page high fidelity wireframe

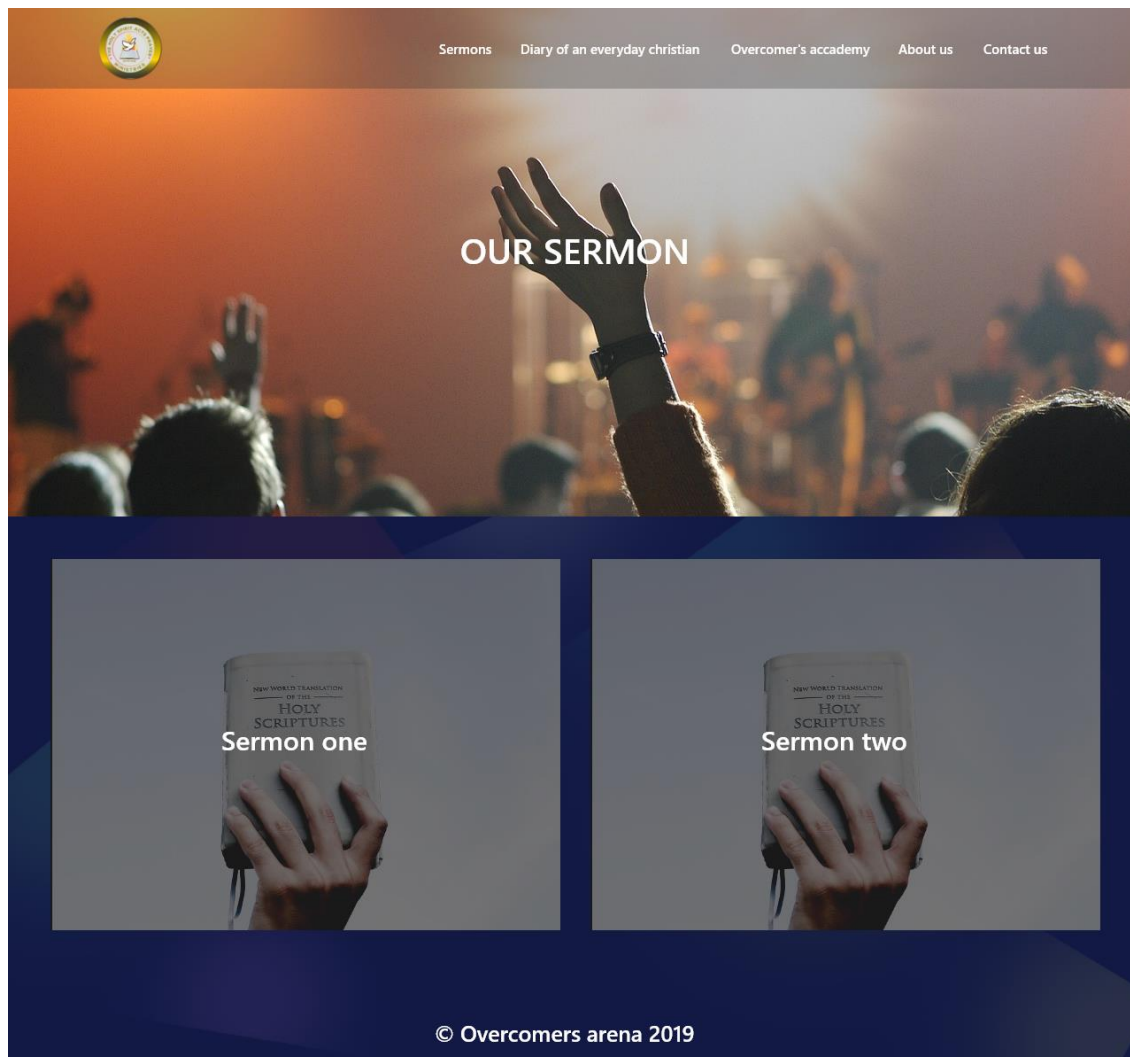


Figure 19: Overcomers sermon page high fidelity wireframe

To commence the development of the website, a WordPress website was hosted on GoDaddy. GoDaddy is a web hosting company and a domain registrar based in the United states of America. The theme we used was Astra and it was edited using Elementor plugin.

Astra theme is a theme made to enhance manipulation with page builders according to Astra website, it's one of the fastest growing website themes with more than 400,000 users. Astra has three main features which are:

- Prebuilt websites:

Astra features an extensive library of prebuilt websites that a user can import and start to using immediately, this websites cut across various sectors and industries they includes ecommerce sites, business sites, portfolio sites and many more.

- Extensive customization:

Astra allow its users to customize most of its appearance. With Astra, users can change complex aspect of the website such as its header and footer however users might be required to pay for some of the changes.

- Extensive page builder support:

Astra was made for page builders. With the theme, users can start page editing on a blank canvas. This will allow users to create complex and unique design that would be ordinarily outside the scope of the theme.

Astra has a free and pro version that requires a yearly payment of \$59 to \$249. For this project we used the free version.

Elementor is a WordPress market leading web page builder that allows WordPress development through drag and drop method. With Elementor, WordPress website developers can create unique looking pages however the length at which the site can be edited is dependent on the theme installed. Since Astra is specially created to be used with page builders, users can change every aspect of the website by starting on a blank canvas. Overcomers seven pages website was created on blank canvases because it was designed from the scratched as shown above hence, we needed to use a tool that allows high level of flexibility which Astra and Elementor offers. The seven pages created are home page, blog page, about us page, contact us page, service time page and live streaming page.

After the development of the website, it was tested with two potential users. during the testing, we gave the respondents two tasks which are to get the address of the organization and to identify when is the next service meeting. Both tasks where done in less than a minute.

3.1.1 Home page

The home page was created with the goal of attracting new members to overcomers and creating easy exploration for its visitors. This was achieved by dividing the website into three main segments which are the header, informative segment and the explorative segment.

The header features an introductory statement that makes potential users feel they are always welcomed and assured them they will always be loved by the organization. It has a video background that shows members interacting together happily and in harmony. And it shows a countdown to the next meeting. This was done to create a sense of urgency for the potential users who are contemplating if they should attend the meeting or not and in the case, they cannot make it to the next meeting a link to watch the live programme is provided to them.

The informative segments provide the important information identified in the research phase to the users in a single click. The informative segment has three main links which are the service time links, location link and the sermons link.

The explorative segments shows three of the recent blogs on the page, the segment allow the website frequent visitor to be informed on the recent activities of the organization.

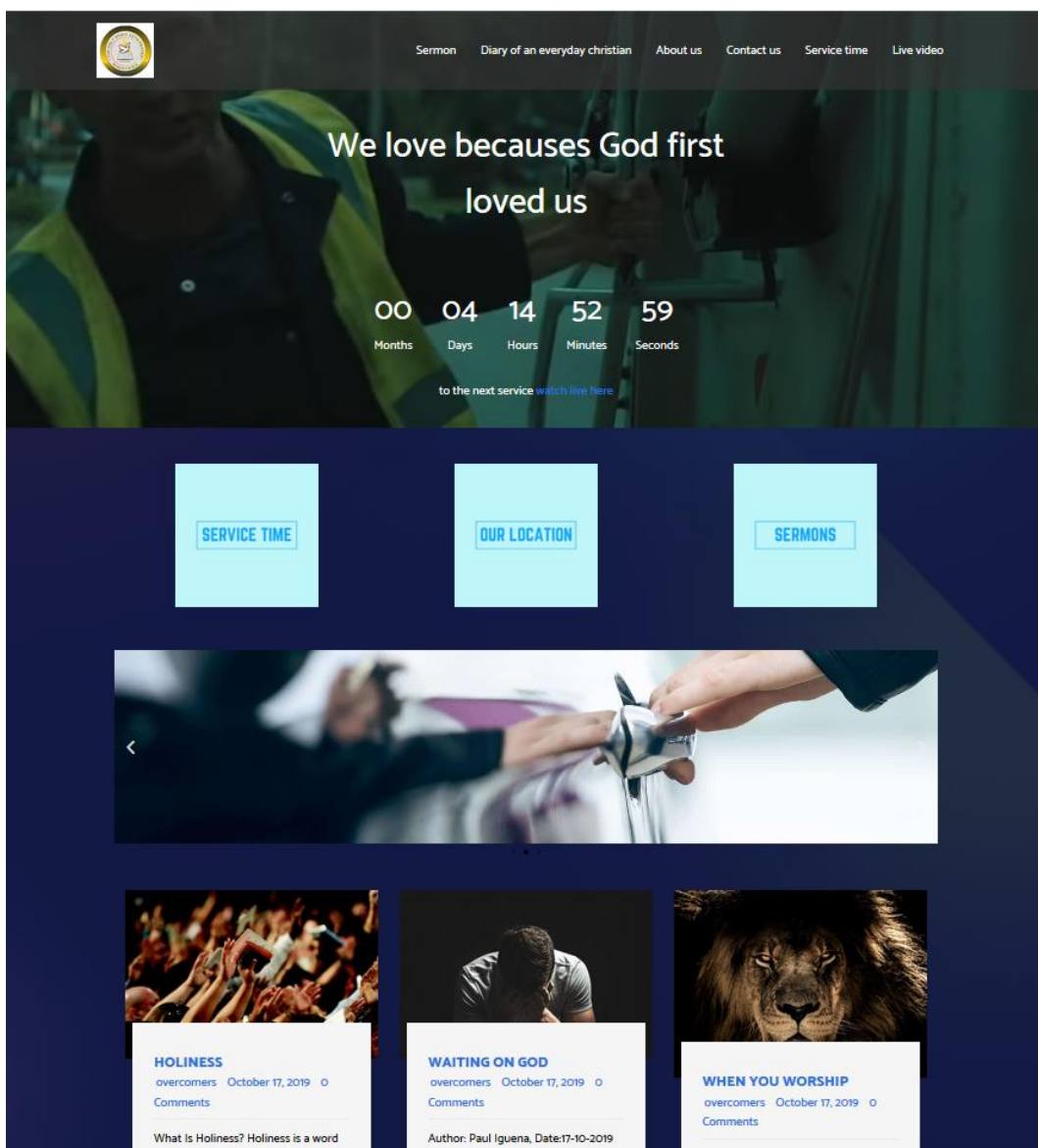


Figure 20: Overcomers home page

3.1.2 Sermon page

The sermon page allows its users to re-watch its programmes by showcasing its past programmes with a video library. “video gallery” plugin was installed on the site to create the gallery.

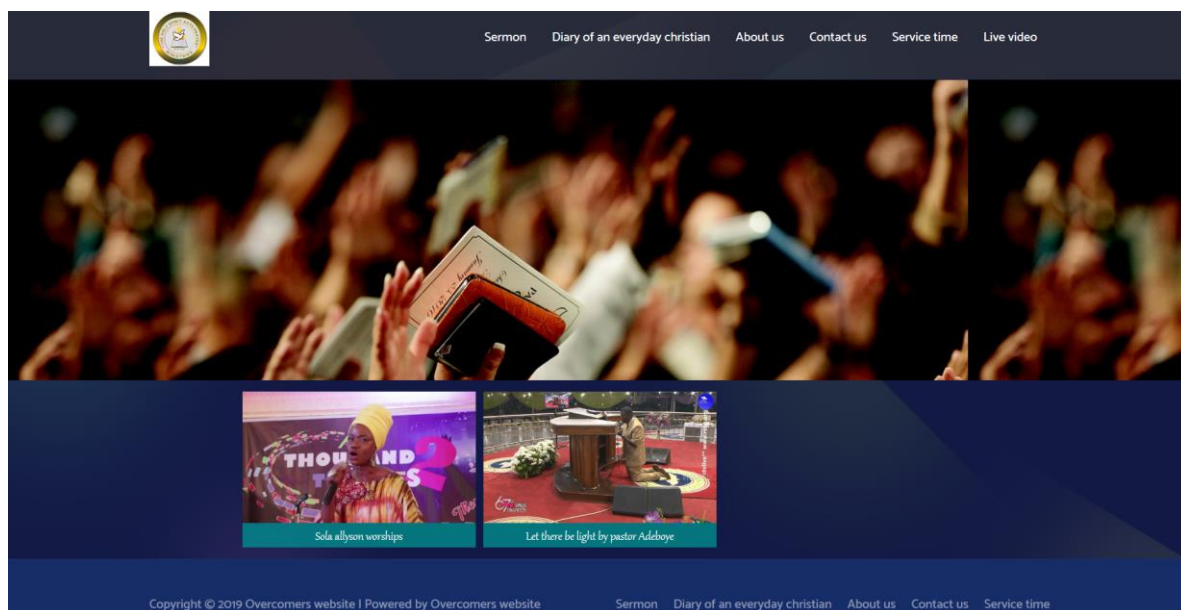


Figure 21: Sermon page

3.1.3 Blog page

A blog was added to the website to enhance engagement. It will serve as a means for Overcomers to create new contents regularly for their members. Since Elementor is a page builder, it does not have the ability to add a blog segment to a page hence, press elements plugin was installed to add the blog segment. The press element plugin also allows me to add a unique blog segment appearance other than the default Astra theme. The name of the blog page was called diary of an everyday Christian.

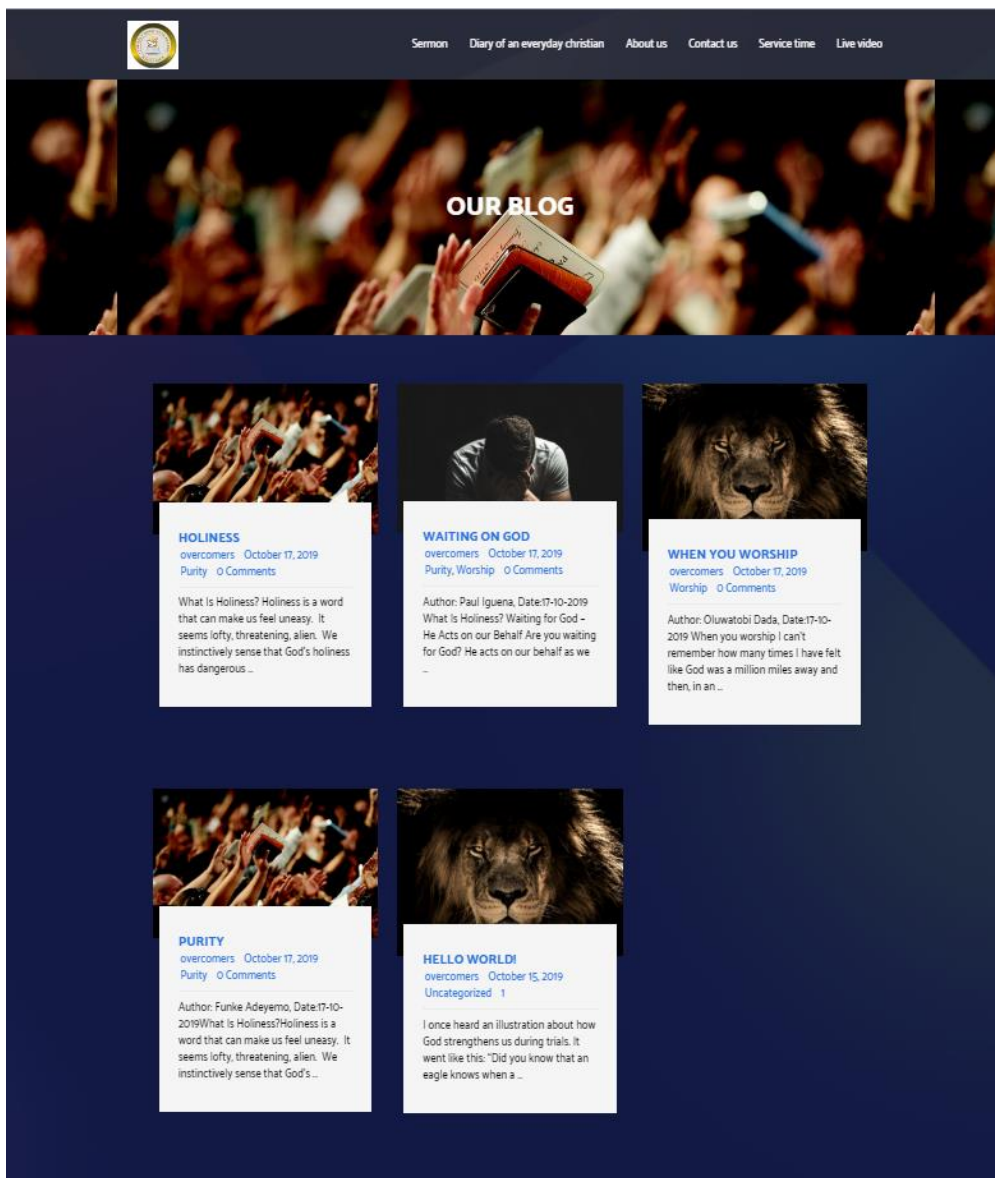


Figure 22: Blog page

3.1.4 About page

The about page gives the website users a brief overview of the Overcomers arena, its divided into four main sections which are brief summary section, vision statement section, identity statement section and the leadership section.



Figure 23: About us page

3.1.5 Contact us page

The contact us page shows the Overcomers address and it allows users send message to the organization directly through a form. The page is divided into two sections; they are the location section which displays the location of the church on google map and the form section. The form was created using a form plugin.

The screenshot displays the contact page layout. At the top, a navigation menu includes 'Sermon', 'Diary of an everyday christian', 'About us', 'Contact us', 'Service time', and 'Live video'. The main heading 'SPEAK WITH US' is centered over a background image of a person's head. Below this is a Google Map showing the location of Ruukinkuja 4 in Espoo, Finland. The contact form is divided into two columns. The left column contains the following fields: 'Your Name (required)', 'Your Email (required)', 'Subject', and 'Your Message'. The right column, titled 'OUR ADDRESS', provides the following information: Ruukinkuja 4, Espoo, Finland, Email: overcomersarena@gmail.com, and Num: +358927781220.

Figure 24: Contact us page

3.1.6 Service times page

The service time page displays when Overcomers arena has a programme and the time of the programme

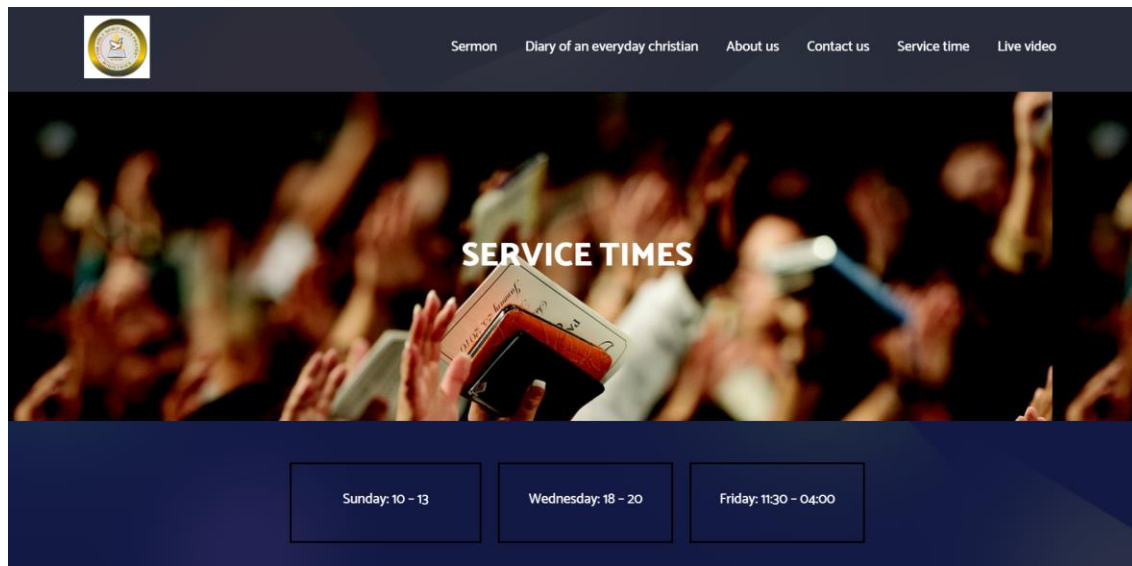


Figure 25: Service time page

3.1.7 Live stream page

The live video page streams live content to the website for its members to participate in a live programme virtually. During the initial stage of the page development, live streaming plugin was used however majority of them require a form of subscription and they were complex to use hence, HTML code was used in displaying the live content. HTML code is a Elementor widget that allows WordPress users to add html code directly into WordPress. Using the direct code method, we added the YouTube live embedded code directly into its dedicated segment. The disadvantage of this method is that anytime a live stream is started, the embedded code will have to be changed to the new one.

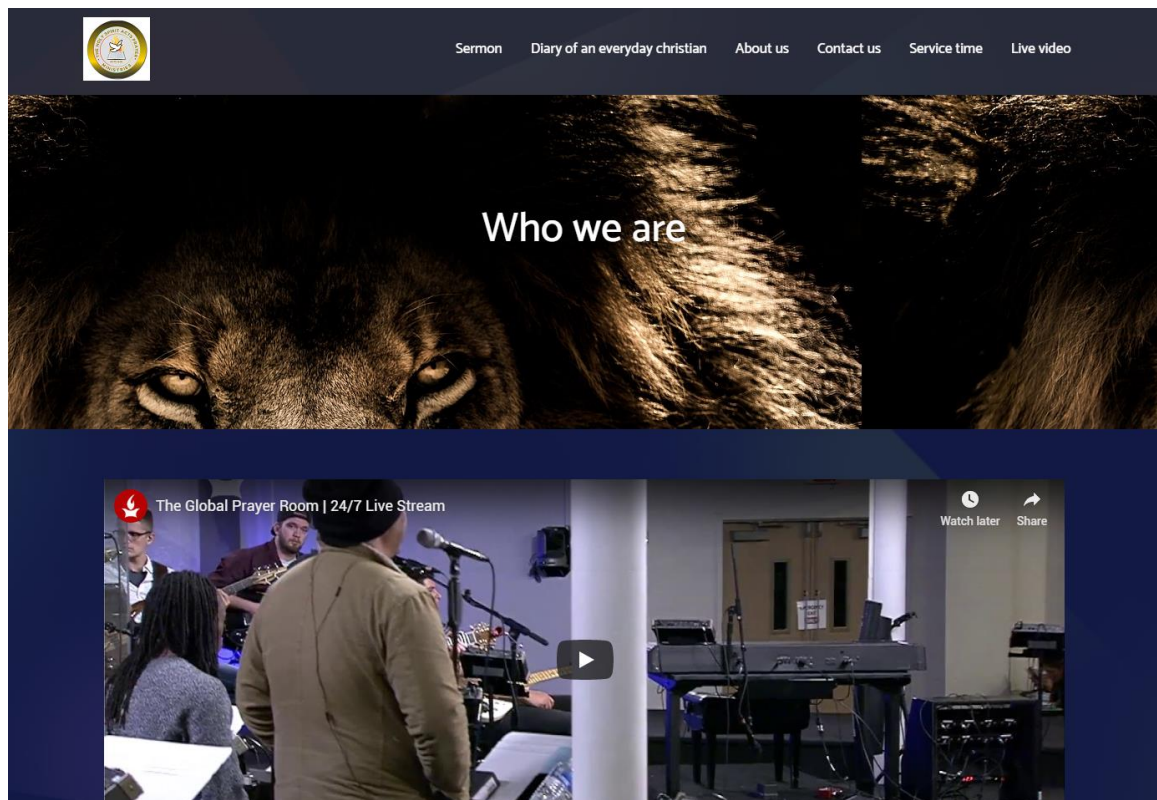


Figure 26: Live stream page

3.2 Website functionality

The website was developed in such a way that new members and revisiting members can interact with Overcomers arena. They can navigate seamlessly throughout the webpage. Users of the website can access any aspect of the webpage in a single click without overwhelming the users with unnecessary information. At a glance, users can know when the next meeting is also, the home page has a segment that update its users on new information in its informative segment.

The design of the website ensures that it can easily be updated without writing any code. There are templates that has been created to ensure that the appearance of new content is consistent throughout the website, to update a content they just have to login into the WordPress admin page and use a template that has be created for them.

3.3 Recommendation for future development

For overcomers arena to increase their online presence optimally, they will have to invest in an effective site engine optimization also they should utilize website analytics such as google analytics to properly understand the behaviour of people on their website. Website development should not be the final stop in the journey to improve their online presence, Overcomers arena should dedicate themselves to building an influential social media

platform. I would recommend Overcomers arena to use Twitter, Instagram and Facebook this is because, they create a platform that can impact their followers emotionally however platforms like Linked and reddit have an opposite effect and they will not work.

4 Training and guidelines

To properly manage the website properly, a training was organized for the information technology department of the organization. After the website development the WordPress credentials was given to them for the future management of the website. The training was an oral presentation hence, there was no written document. During the training, I explained how to create a post, change images, set the count down and I gave a general description of how the Elementor plugin work so in case they want to change the design in the future.

The design guidelines were also explained to them. I explained the logic behind the image sizes, background pattern and other design attributes. I also explained how WordPress works and how to use it. to conclude the training, they were introduced to online WordPress tutorials to further broaden their understanding. By the end of the training the whole department was able to make changes to the website. Using Elementor as their major tool.

5 Conclusion

The objective of this project stated in the first chapter has been largely achieved by the creation of the website. Overcomers website utilizes WordPress content management system to create a website that satisfy the users requirement. WordPress makes it easy for its users to edit their website. However, the developmental tool used in any product is only a fraction of the developmental process. User cantered design is germane to any successful product because it solves a user problem through the eye of the user which leads to the creation of a product that matches a user profile.

Overcomers arena website was created using the double diamond design framework, the framework allows the website developer to understand the user mindset. During the research phase it was discovered that the members of the organization will like to have access to constant inspirational blogs from the leadership of the organization. This discovery led to the inclusion of the blog section on the website, without researching the website potential users we might have not included it in the website.

While user centred design is important when developing a product, it can exclude other stakeholder in the design decision process because of its focus on the users. A good product design is one that put all stake holders' interest in mind while designing the product. While

this might slightly inconvenient part of the stakeholders or all of them, there will be good level of overall satisfaction. This ideology serves as the foundation of the website by developing for two main users which are the content consumers (the website users) and the content producers (Overcomers information technology department). Our decision to use WordPress as our development tool is a direct reply to the content producers need which is to easily communicate with their users, we also implemented the content consumers' needs through Jakob Nielsen heuristics of design with the double diamond as its guiding framework.

As the organization grows, there will be need for Overcomers arena to change their website content and design, it will be important for them to communicate with their current and potential users to identify the best course of action.

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