SEEMA RAO

UX RESEARCH PORTFOLIO

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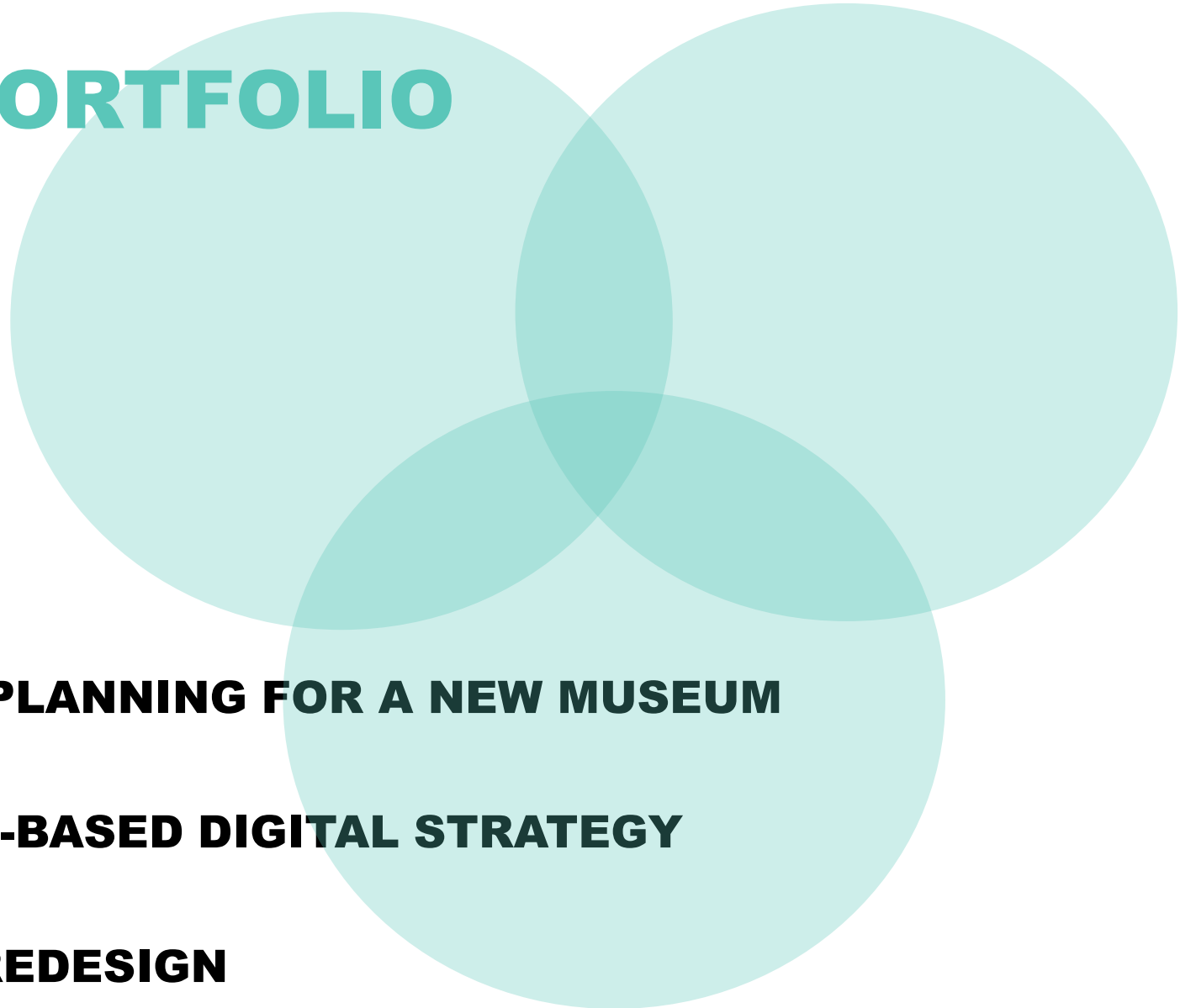
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About Me

RESEARCH I leverage design thinking to help shape the development of products and services based on user needs. I have over fifteen years of experience performing user research, designing user workflows, and crafting unified strategy.

COMMUNICATION I love sharing ideas. With more than 22 years of technical writing, I've communicated on social media, to press, and in signage. I've taught and lectured on writing and UX communication.

STRATEGY I have more than two decades of experience creating and implementing strategy. I excel at synthesizing research and assessing risks to develop stellar strategies.

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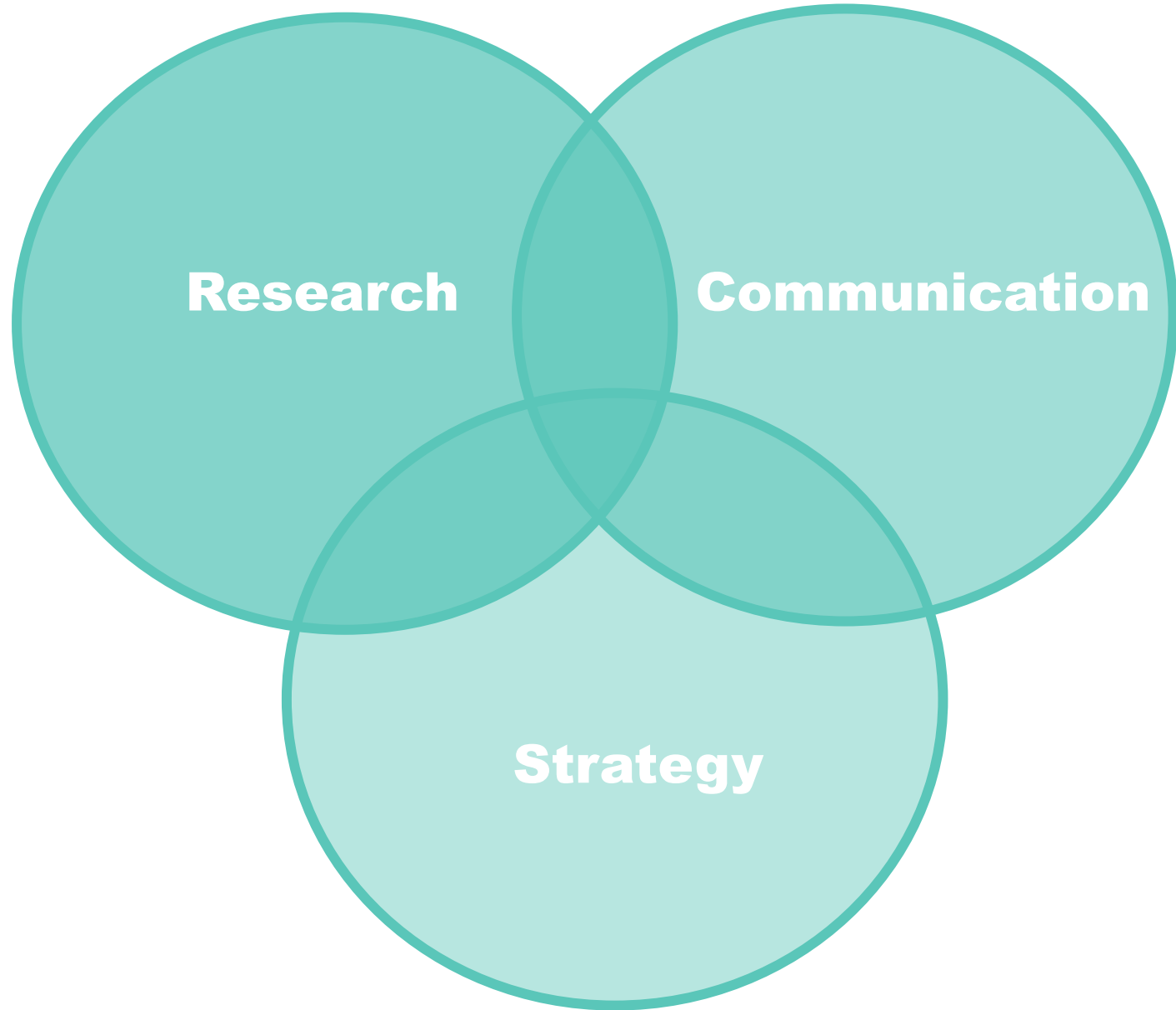
Mixed Methods

FINDING THE RIGHT METHODS
I have a range of experience planning and implementing research projects. From front-end and generative research to summative and evaluative research, I like to implement hybrid strategies that offer qualitative and quantitative data.

Listen

Explore

Test

- **FIELD STUDIES**
- **USER INTERVIEWS**
- **STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**
- **SURVEYS**
- **CONCEPT MAPPING**
- **LISTENING LABS**

- **NEEDS ASSESSMENTS**
- **COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS**
- **USER PERSONAS AND STORIES**
- **TASK ANALYSIS**
- **JOURNEY MAPPING**
- **HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN**
- **PROTOTYPE TESTING**
- **CARD SORTING**

- **USABILITY TESTING**
- **BENCHMARKING TESTING**
- **A/B TESTING**
- **HEAT-MAP TESTING**
- **ANALYTICS RESEARCH**

Case Study 1
Concept Planning for A New Museum

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The client wanted to assess the capacity for a new science museum in the region, who the audience might be, and what the ideal concept would be.

I conducted mixed method research to understand:

1. What is the level of interest for this type of cultural attraction in the region?
2. What concept would maximize the potential audience?
3. What are the essential aspects of the museum that would draw the biggest and most engagement?

Potential Audience

Potential Concept

Potential Activities
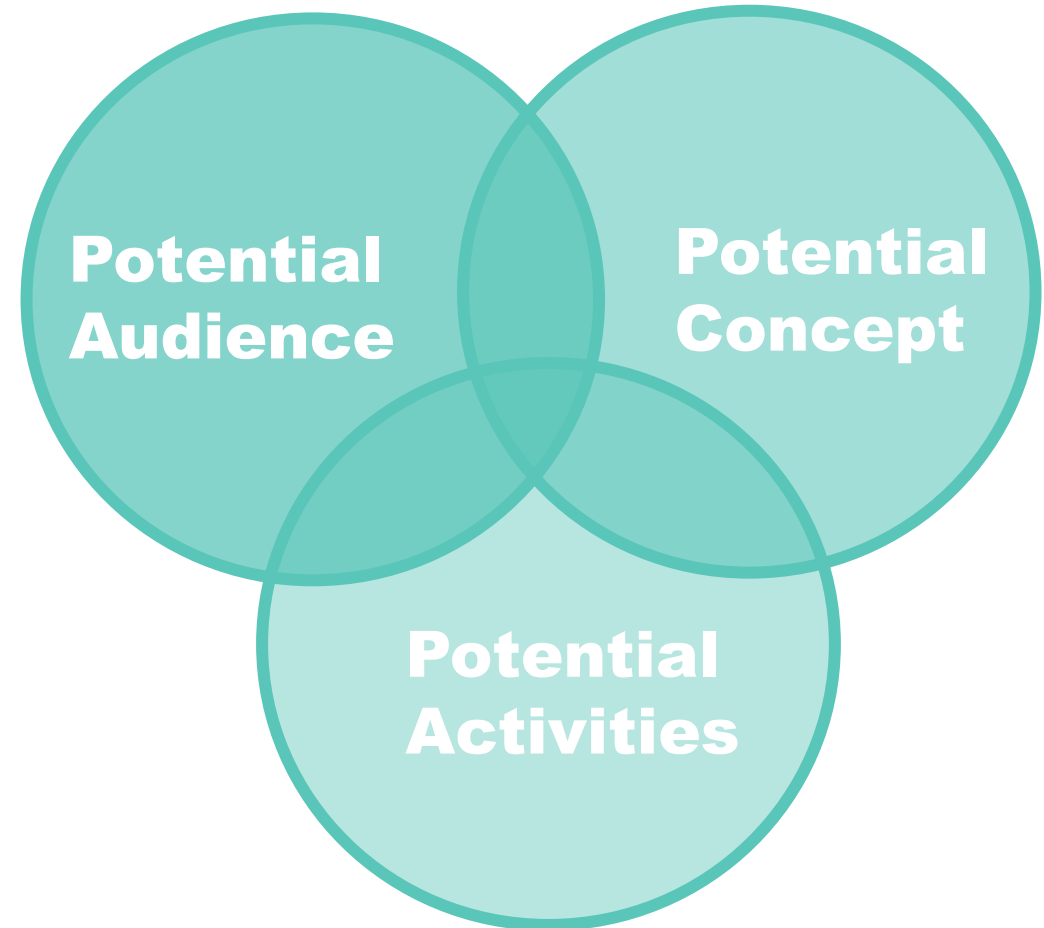
Case Study 1

RESEARCH SETUP

INVESTIGATE THE MARKET

- Performed a competitive analysis of regional museums to understand audience scale
- Investigated social media of similar types of museums to draw conclusion of most popular content
- Performed a survey about interests in museum

UNDERSTAND THE AUDIENCE

- Performed a stakeholder study of staff in analog institutions to hear about trends
- Performed 1-on-1 interviews about leisure attitudes and behaviors
- Conducted focus groups of potential visitors to refine concept recommendations

DEVELOP THE STRATEGY

- Ran a participatory design session to refine the initial concept
- Conducted a card sort analysis of potential concepts
- Compared draft concept against analog museums

Case Study 1

CONCLUSIONS

The client learned:

- While there is an interest in more cultural offerings in the region, the audience wants a museum experience that is active rather than passive.
- Potential audiences are willing to travel if the museum experience is incredibly engaging, however these tourist audiences will not be repeated visitors.
- An ideal strategy requires developing an outstanding, once-in-a-lifetime experience that draws broadly.
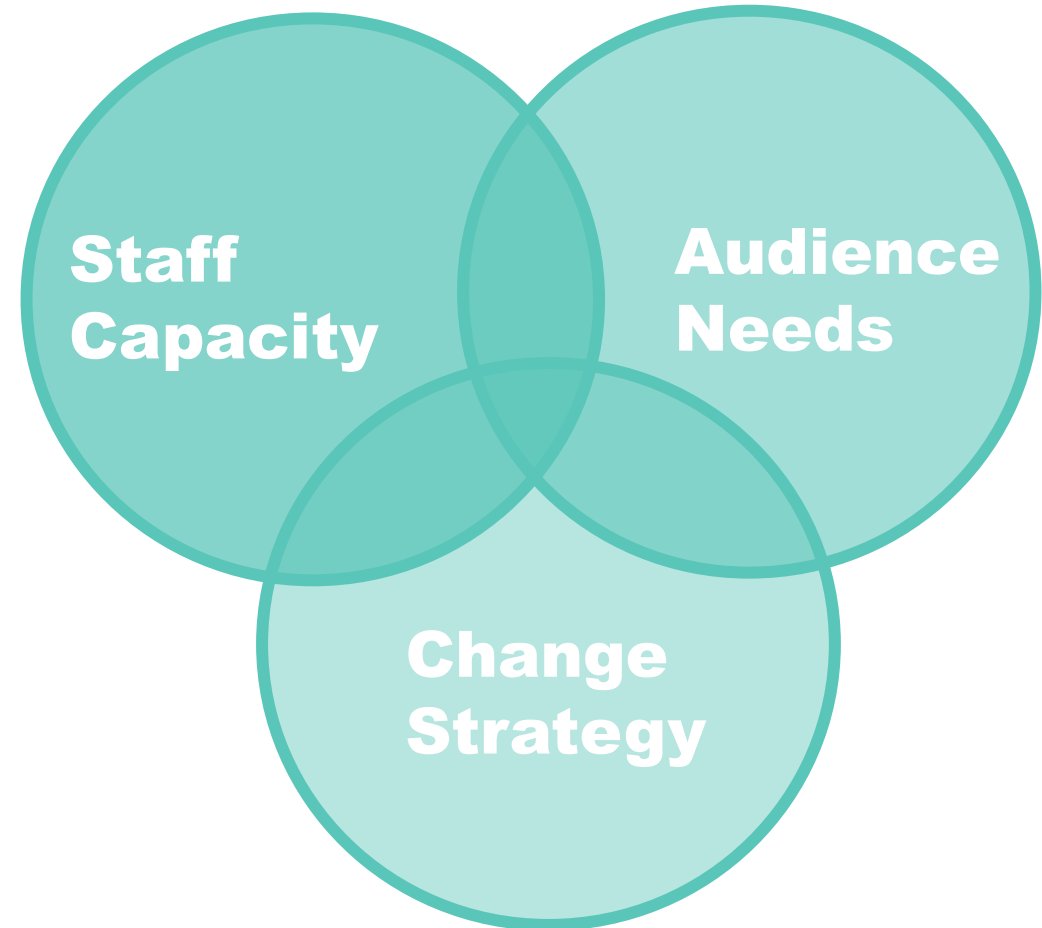
Case Study 2
RESEARCH-BASED DIGITAL STRATEGY

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The client needs to develop an enterprise-level strategy for all digital in the organization.

I conducted mixed method research to understand:

1. What is the digital awareness/ capacity of the staff?
2. What are the digital needs for the organization to meet the mission?
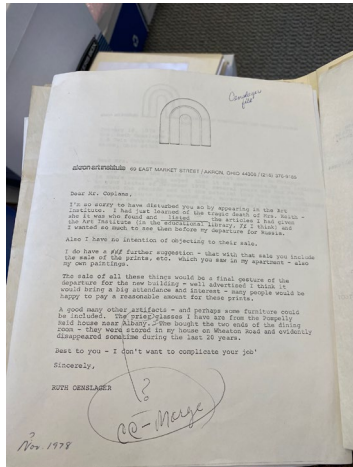3. What is best way to implement digital change?

Staff Capacity

Audience Needs

Change Strategy

Case Study 2

RESEARCH SETUP

UNDERSTAND NEEDS

- Performed a needs assessment
- Performed a survey to understand staff capacity
- Assessed each existing system for strengths and weaknesses

UNDERSTAND WANTS

- Performed a stakeholder study of staff in analog institutions to understand their digital strategies
- Performed 1-on-1 interviews with staff to understand their desires
- Conducted focus groups of external potential users for their desires

PLAN FOR SUCCESS

- Performed concept mapping with staff of the strategy
- Conducted surveys of potential digital audiences and existing audiences
- Created user personas and user stories
- Developed a plan with a clear timeline

Market Research Report with Focus Groups
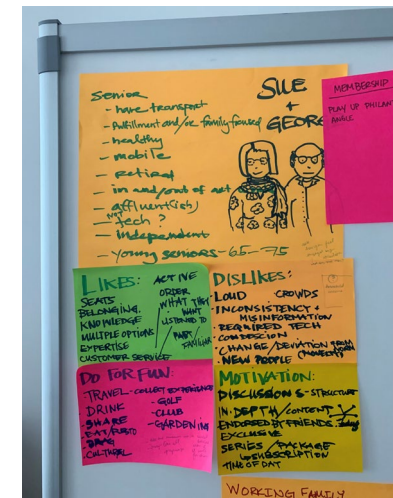
Case Study 2

CONCLUSIONS

The client learned:

- Digital needs were expansive but doable. Systems would need to be upgraded concurrently as staff needs and audience needs were equally important.
- Potential audiences wanted seamless technology. Digital content should be loaded into existing systems, like YouTube or Instagram, to increase reach. Chatbots and other boutique technology had high costs and low returns.

Akron Art Museum's Digital Strategy

Our digital will offer transparency on the dynamism of our collection and organization.

Digital is:

- A purveyor of enjoyable, exemplary content
- A presence complimenting the collection and onsite programming
- A focus on centering on community and fostering a culture of "many voices" (rather than a disembodied institutional one)

Our digital will be seen as:

Thoughtful, surprising, sociable, and relevant

Our principles:

1. **Our collection is core:** Our collection and mission are our core competency. Our digital will use rigor.
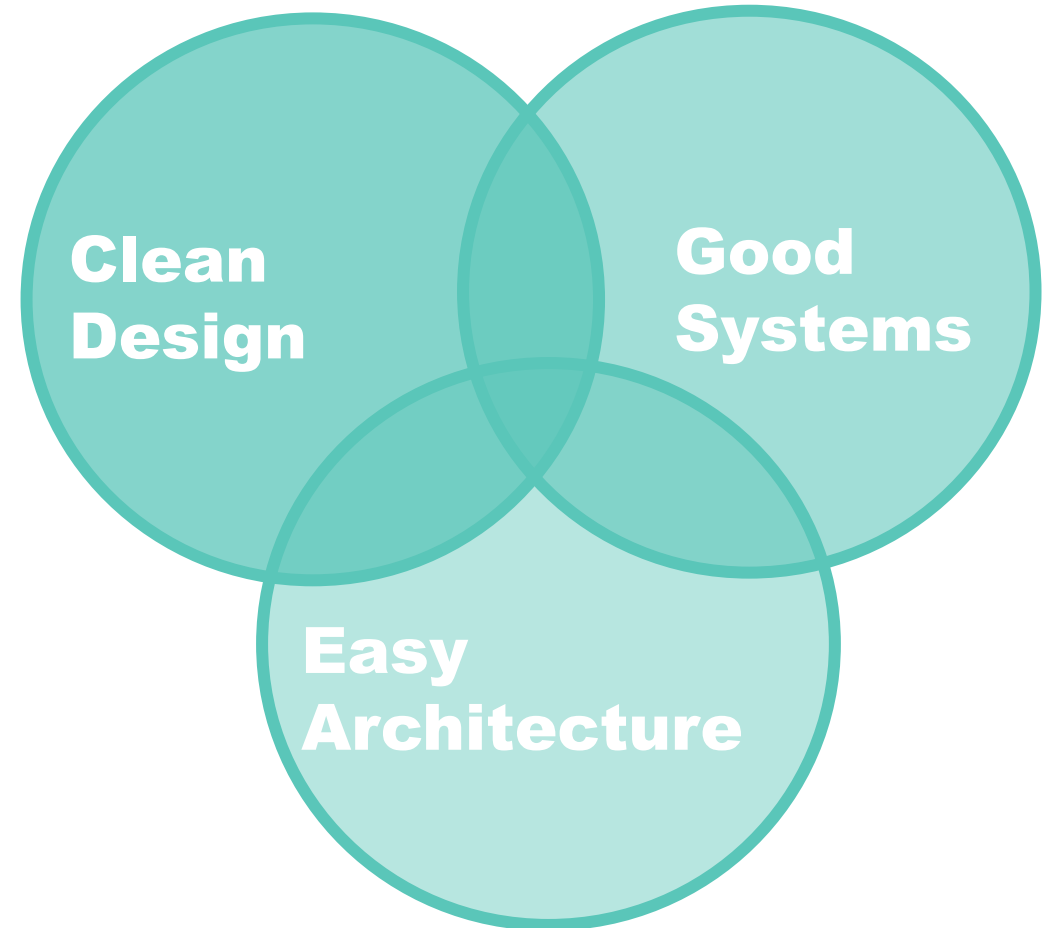
Case Study 3
WEBSITE REDESIGN

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The client had an outdated website that needed to be upgrade. With the platform change, there was the opportunity to transform the information architecture and design.

I conducted mixed method research to understand:

1. What do audiences need from the ideal website?
2. How can the client increase engagement through better web design?
3. What are the best ways to organize information?

Clean Design

Good Systems

Easy Architecture

Case Study 3

RESEARCH SETUP

INVESTIGATE WHAT WORKED

- Used Google analytics to assess which pages were post used
- Performed heat-map analysis to understand user behavior
- Cataloged existing page content (content audit)
- Scoured online reviews to understand general attitude toward the website
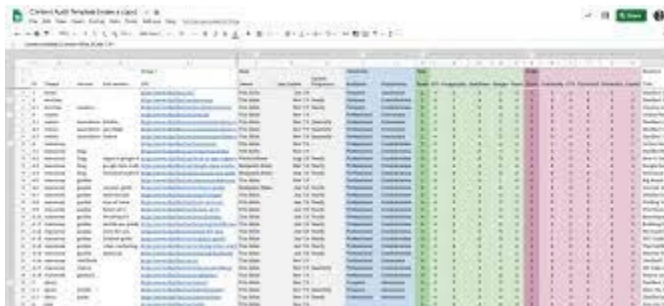
UNDERSTAND THE POTENTIAL

- Performed a competitive analysis of websites at analog institutions
- Interviewed website users about their needs and behaviors
- Performed stakeholder interviews of key staff and donors

DEVELOP THE STRATEGY

- Created user personas, user stories, use cases, and a potential journey maps through the site
- Developed wireframes and did paper prototype testing
- Did A/B testing of clickable wireframes
- Implemented the roll over

AKRON ART MUSEUM EVERYDAY
#AAMEVERYDAY
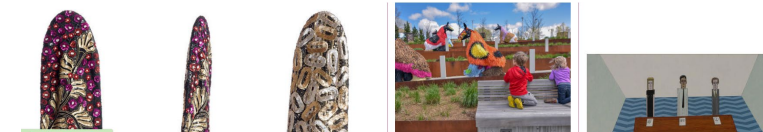
Case Study 3

CONCLUSIONS

The client learned:
- A clean, stripped-down website featuring high quality images and simple text is ideal
- A simple interface for implementation (i.e. Wordpress) with clean templates is important
- A style guide will ensure the website has an overall unity

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