



THE MARYLAND ZOO

CREATIVE STRATEGY

**THURSDAY, MAY 27, 2010
PROPOSED BY LAUREN BERTIN, INC.**

Engagement Strategy

Engagement & Situation Overview

The Maryland Zoo, formally known as the Baltimore Zoo, was founded in 1876, making it the third oldest zoo in the United States. It remains dedicated to education, conservation and research, and currently houses over 1, 500 animals, representing nearly 200 species.

After years of dealing with financial difficulties and the threat of losing its accreditation, the Maryland Zoo (<http://www.marylandzoo.org/>) is facing at least 2 million dollars in repairs due to the massive damage caused by the 2010 blizzards. The Maryland Zoo is redesigning their website to better demonstrate their strong dedication to their community and wildlife in an attempt to attract more visitors, educators, volunteers, conservationists, donors, etc. The first objective is to create a navigable user experience that is more individualized and personalized by catering to the many different audiences and age groups that visit the website, while simultaneously remaining professional. The second objective is to better abide to the zoo's long-standing aspiration to "embrace (their) long Baltimore history, while (they) continue to grow into an exciting zoo of the 21st century," by incorporating the current technology available that generates an interactive and memorable website experience. Lastly, the Maryland Zoo requires a website that is easily accessible, manageable and adaptable, specifically for the personnel in the Public Relations Department. These objectives must be accomplished at the minimum cost. Our measures of success will be based on an increase in the website's usage, park attendance and donations; in addition, there will be a debriefing, where the revenue from six months before and six months after the release of the website will be compared.

Research

Following are some competitive sites that are being evaluated for best-of-breed aesthetic and feature attributes:

- **The Singapore Zoo** | <http://www.zoo.com.sg>
- **Columbus Zoo** | <http://www.columbuszoo.org>
- **San Diego Zoo** | <http://sandiegozoo.org>
- **The National Zoo** | <http://nationalzoo.si.edu>
- **Prague Zoo** | <http://www.zoopraha.cz/en>
- **The Bronx Zoo** | <http://www.bronxzoo.com>
- **Philadelphia Zoo** | <http://www.philadelphiazoo.org>
- **Zoo Berlin** | <http://www.zoo-berlin.de/en/>
- **Schönbrunn Zoo** | <http://www.zoovienna.at/>
- **Zoos Victoria** | <http://www.zoo.org.au/>
- **Ueno Zoo** | <http://www.tokyo-zoo.net/english/>
- **North Carolina Zoo** | <http://www.nczoo.org/index.cfm>

Some Brand-Personality Attributes

- Friendly
- Committed
- Historical
- Valuable
- Knowledgeable
- Assessable
- Passionate
- Dependable
- Affordable
- Creditable
- Energetic

Target Audiences

Based on a review of the current website as well as other competitive websites, a condensed list of audience profiles has been assembled. The primary, secondary and tertiary user groups are identified with sketch of their conceivable needs in the Audience Analysis visual aid (next page).

The Primary user group for the Maryland Zoo website consists of parents, educators and children/ teenagers. The website will be specifically geared to appeal to these users.

Secondary users include members, tourists and donors. Tertiary users include the press/media, volunteers and prospective employees.

The website should mainly act as a promotional project as well as an educational tool for the primary users. While some users visiting the site may be aware of the basic information regarding the Maryland Zoo, this should not be assumed. Overall, the user experience for all users should be one of enjoyment, which quickly obtains and maintains their attention.

Web User Group	Desired Net Take-Away
<div data-bbox="240 432 315 1839" style="background-color: #2e7d32; color: white; padding: 10px; writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Primary Users</div> Parents	<p>“The Maryland Zoo is a wonderful experience for children and adults alike, and thus the perfect family bonding experience. It is a clean and safe environment and relatively inexpensive and assessable by most means of transportation. The exhibits are very interactive and resource rich, which is great because then the children are really given the opportunity to get out all of their excess energy and learn at the same time about nature and conservation. In addition, the staff is extremely friendly and accommodating, and they even host events for adults!”</p>
Educators	<p>“The Maryland Zoo is one of the most cooperative trip destinations in the entire Baltimore area for teachers to bring their students. Not only is it free if I pre-register, but there is a bunch of educational materials for all subjects provided by the zoo to keep the students entertained prior, during and after the trip. They make what is so often a stressful experience rather enjoyable.”</p>
Children/ Teenagers	<p>“As a child, my experience at the zoo was always memorable. No matter how often I went, I never got bored. I loved feeding the giraffes and animal breakfasts. As I got older, I learned to appreciate the resources they had to offer. The exhibits are easy to understand and also very interactive. I want to go to zoo camp!”</p>

Secondary Users

Web User Group	Desired Net Take-Away
Members	“Joining the zoo is a worthwhile investment, not only do I received discounts and invitations to special events for children and adults alike, but I can use the express entrance on hot summer days. This is great especially since the children usually would complain on long lines during the hot weather. Best of all, if we go twice, it pays itself off, and I can even let the kids buy small souvenirs in the gift shop with the money saved to make their experience more memorable.”
Tourists	“While the zoo is a little far from the city’s center, it is a gorgeous place to go on a nice day, and assessable by other means of transportation than a car. The park is very green, and the brochures come in a variety of languages. In addition, it is very old and full of beautiful architecture, so it also is part of the historical experience that makes Baltimore what it is.”
Donors	“The Maryland Zoo has always had enormous dedication to conservation and education, even in times of financial distress. They are one of the oldest zoos in the country and thus should be properly preserved. And whatever I donate is tax-deductable!”

	Web User Group	Desired Net Take-Away
Tertiary Users	Press/Media	<p>“The Maryland Zoo is respectable, and access to information on the zoo is easy to come by. The Public Relations Department/ Communications Department goes beyond the normal expectations. It really is a great place to bring the family, and we feel a sense of joy in assisting the zoo in informing the public about events and news.”</p>
	Volunteers	<p>“The Maryland Zoo is a respectable place to volunteer. They have reasonable requirements, great discounts and everyone is very warm and loves animals, like me!”</p>
	Prospective Employees	<p>“The rest of the zoo staff seems enthusiastic about their jobs, and everyone loves animals. Every job is respected. There really is a wonderful community here that I could easily become a part of.”</p>

Design Specifications

Executional Considerations:

- Revamped to be more user friendly and navigable for parents, teachers and children
- Modernize by including flash, various multimedia and direct links to social media paradigms
- Capture attention, entertain and leave an impact on user
- A creative translation of the natural world
- Contain minimum scrolling at least on homepage
- Engage as many senses as possible without overwhelming the user
- Make a trip to the zoo easier and exciting (e.g. tickets on phone, interactive maps that print, podcasts to download, etc.)
- Avoid advertisements on homepage