


Current RPI Alumni Landing Page

- Content numerous, lacks clear direction
- Tasked with increasing alumni registration and participation



Rensselaer


ALUMNI RELATIONS

RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE - TROY, NY, USA

why not change the world?™







Search

[create your account](#) | [login](#) | [support](#)



Rensselaer

Alumni Association



[Alumni Homepage](#)

[Alumni Directory](#)


[Events](#)

[Giving to Rensselaer](#)

[Classes, Chapters & Groups](#)

[The Alumni Network](#)

Support the Rensselaer Alumni Association Endowment Fund and give today.



The RAA Endowment helps support the goals of your alumni association.

Visit the [Giving to Rensselaer](#) page and designate your gift to "RAA Endowment Fund."

Regional Chapters Welcome the Class of 2018

Events take place across the country - join us in your area!

Support Rensselaer through the RAA Endowment Fund

Help the RAA achieve its mission.



Garde named Dean of Engineering


Appointment effective July 1.

An Evening of A Cappella with VoicePlay


Featuring all four Rensselaer a cappella groups!

Upcoming Events

[D.C./Baltimore – Incoming Student Reception, Upper Marlboro, MD](#) 
8/2/2014 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM
[Houston – Welcome and Sendoff for the Class of 2018](#) 
8/2/2014 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM



REUNION HOMECOMING



October 9-12, 2014

Get ready for an out of this world experience! [Visit the webpage for details.](#)



USER EXPERIENCE NARRATIVE

By Leslie King

October 17, 2013

The Rensselaer Alumni

- Alumni who have earned their Rensselaer Ph.Ds. and stay on campus to become professors, becoming engaged alumni in a very familiar place.
- Recent graduates who are starting new careers near their East Coast hometowns, and social-media savvy. They somewhat stay in touch with fellow alumni and will return to the campus in 15 years.
- Let's highlight the recent graduates category

Current Website User Experience

- Suffers from high drop-off rates, according to Google Analytics.
- Only 3% navigate to another page from the landing page.
- Users cannot find the information they need.
- They cannot register for events and chapters easily, if at all.
- They do not enjoy the text-heavy content with a legacy, three-column design.

A Recent Example

- Allie Alumna is a new graduate, looking for a job.
- Business Directory had NO companies for Pennsylvania?
- System did not indicate that she had to be logged in to view the list.
- She might look at the website in two years to look for a redesign.

What Do Users Need and Want?

- They need to find a job.
- They want to network with businesses or other alumni for career opportunities.
- They need to find chapters and events and *actually register*.
- They expect a current, clean, delightful design with minimal clicks or taps.
- They want to use the site according to UCD principles; designed for they will actually use the site according to their mental model, not how RPI *wants* them to use it (conceptual model).

What Users Will View and Experience


- Call to actions to register and log in on the home page and all banners.
- Redesign is similar to Facebook and LinkedIn that prominently display login or registration fields.
- More white space and photos, and less text.
- “View Public Site” link for visitors.
- Less information for those who do not register or login.
- “Why Membership Matters” will compel registration for discounts, extra newsletters, members-only events.
- Custom web page content for their local chapter, clubs, athletics, major, graduation year, etc.

Redesign Conclusion

- Better reputation and user experience.
- Up-to-date design standards with responsive mobile.
- Repeat visitors and increased engagement.
- Businesses will want to participate.
- Events and Chapters registrations will grow.
- Alumni will donate with careers in full swing.
- Positive public relations, goodwill and community awareness.
- Inspire other departments to redesign other parts of the site.
- Student applications and enrollment will surge in numbers.

User-Centered Design of RPI Alumni website

“Andy Average” by Leslie King

<p>Andy Average</p>  <p>Your Average RPI Alum</p>	<p>Andy Average</p> <p>Age: 35</p> <p>Hometown: Nashua, NH</p> <p>RPI Connection: Graduated from RPI with a degree in engineering (things it was probably Mechanical). Liked RPI well enough while he was there; has some fond (but vague) memories of his days in Troy.</p> <p>Technical Experience: Average</p> <p>Personal characteristics: Nothing out of the ordinary; good guy; fairly stable; favorite color: beige</p> <p>Interests: The usual things</p>
--	--

- ☉ Analysis of your user population (potential customers) and their traits; tasks that you expect people to do; predictions of potential trouble spots; a plan for finding real people to match the user population you’ve been assigned.
- ☉ Two stories to be told:

1) Back Story of Andy Average's Life

family, interests, career, quirks

Andy has a comfortable Mechanical Engineering career in his hometown of Nashua, NH. He hopes to be promoted to manager in the next year at [Sparton Technology Corporation](#), where he has worked for the last eight years. His job responsibilities include designing manufacturing equipment and modifying machining processes to increase profit margins. He doesn't work much overtime, perhaps five to ten hours per week.

Andy married his college sweetheart, Allie, and they have two children, an 8-year old girl and a 5-year old boy. Besides the occasional dinner with friends, they carefully save their money and have already started two 529 Plan college funds for their children. They have been able to save money to put a 20% down payment on a 3-bedroom, 2-bath one-story house in the western suburbs of Nashua. Andy only has a 15-minute commute across town to work.

Andy lives stress-free and enjoys spending relaxed, leisure time with his family and friends. This year they will go to the [Downtown Nashua Fall Restaurant Week](#) event with another family, and meet at Nancy's Diner for 50s-style American food. They take a one-week vacation every summer to Bar Harbor, Maine, to enjoy the coastline and bicycling in Acadia National Park. They spend their winter vacation at home between Christmas and New Years, where their family members gather for Christmas dinner and New Year's Day brunch.

In his spare time, Andy builds WWII model airplanes that are two feet in size, made of wood and actually fly by remote control. His latest project is on his workbench in the garage, a P-51 Mustang in navy blue. He just has to attach the landing gear so that he can test the radio transmitter controls while it is on the ground, then it is ready to fly.

Andy lives within a three-hour drive to the Troy campus and has been thinking of a weekend visit for either homecoming or for hockey and soccer games. He hasn't been on campus since he was 21 years old, and wanted to show his wife and kids where he earned his undergraduate engineering degree. Some of his neighbors and one high school classmate graduated from RPI and have talked about visiting as well.

2) How Will Andy Average Use the Alumni Website that we are Developing?

Andy thinks that Homecoming weekend would be a perfect opportunity to show off the campus and see other alumni as well as current students. He will use the alumni website to register and login, find events, and look at new pictures of the campus and Troy area to see what changes have happened in the last 14 years.

He initially will click on the Rensselaer home page that he had bookmarked several years ago.

At the top of the new Alumni home page, Andy will view a Register call to action link as well as an Events section. He is also interested in using quick links for specific info on Alumni-only news, chapters, finding other alumni names and related businesses, class and club info, and perhaps to make a donation or buy RPI clothes from the online campus store.

Andy wants to stay in touch with the Alumni Association more proactively, so he will register to receive more emails about on-campus and local chapter events and sports team news. He will click on the Register Now link in the top of the page and complete the registration process using his name and RIN. On subsequent visits he will log in to be able to browse the alumni and business directories, read engineering-specific news, and view sports team schedule and scores. This information is based on his registration profile, which includes major, graduation year, Greek or other clubs, athletics, gender and current location.

Andy will want to find and join the closes local chapter, so he will click on the “Chapters” navigation link, which opens a new page. He will see a Google map of the northeastern US and choose Boston. He will either click on their red map pin or from the chapter list to view their page alumni.rpi.edu/boston. He will see specific sections on Chapter, Athletic and National Events, and photos from a recent Boston Red Sox outing.

The Alumni website will have select hero photos of the campus, but not a dedicated section. Andy doesn’t remember seeing a ferris wheel on campus, which formerly was the hero image for Homecoming 2013. He will look for a “Campus Tour” link on the alumni home page. This opens a new page which has secondary links to view a Photo Tour, Rensselaer 360° interactive panoramas, and a Virtual Tour.

RPI

username pw login
create your account

Events chapters Directory Donate Social

Alumni

My Local Chapter

GreekLife
Clubs / Fraternity
Sorority

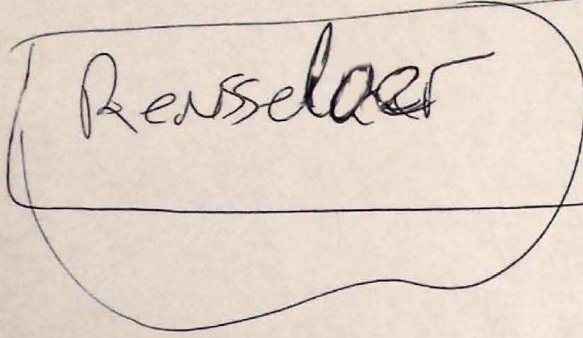
Social Feed

Please Login & Register

Events

My Donations

(Login Page)



Register

A hand-drawn registration form. It consists of four rectangular input fields stacked vertically. Below the last input field is a small circle, likely representing a submit button.

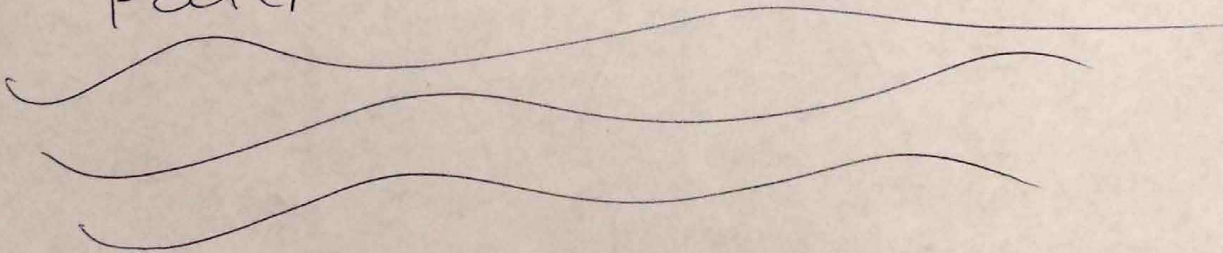
Login

A hand-drawn login form. It consists of two rectangular input fields stacked vertically. Below the second input field is a small circle, likely representing a submit button.

View
site

Forget User Name/pw?

Footer



Narrative of User Experience for Team Redesign
By Leslie King
User-Centered Design
October 17, 2013

Introduction

Rensselaer alumni have typically fallen into two distinct groups: they return for their Ph.Ds. and stay on campus to become professors, becoming engaged alumni in a very familiar place, or they are recent graduates starting new careers near their East Coast hometowns and somewhat stay in touch with fellow alumni, probably returning to campus in 15 years.

The current alumni website suffers from a high drop-off rate, according to Google Analytics reports. Users report that they cannot find the information that they need nor register for events and chapters easily, if at all. They do not enjoy the text-heavy content with a legacy, three-column design. The following story highlights a typical poor user experience.

Allie Alumna was searching for her first job and could not find RPI-affiliated companies listed for Pennsylvania, including Philadelphia. Surely there was a mistake in the Business Directory. She even completed the cumbersome search form and multiple mouse clicks returned nothing. The current design did not indicate that she wasn't logged in, nor that search functions were minimized for non-registered users. Allie left the site frustrated, and does not plan on returning until it becomes more useful. She will perhaps return in one or two years to see if the site has been redesigned, if she has the time.

Our group's Alumni website redesign will address this type of situation with more robust content, streamlined membership, increased company lists, efficient searching, an elegant, current aesthetic design with more white space and photos with less text, and one-click event registration.

Alumni will have a compelling reason to register with their joined chapters, attend events and read latest news. The result will be increased involvement and participation for disengaged alumni. Eventually they may even return to campus to meet old friends at Homecoming or show their families where they earned their degree.

Who Are Our Alumni

The most recent Rensselaer alumni are excited about recently graduating and looking forward to starting their careers. They are active in social media and more than 90% have Facebook accounts, while at least 50% have LinkedIn accounts.

They are motivated to network for job leads or have already started their professional careers at their first company. They are looking to connect with other alumni for job leads or career advice, and are perhaps interested in returning to campus to catch up with underclass friends who have not yet graduated.

Most importantly, our alumni still have an emotional connection to the school and are proud of their degree from a prestigious university. As Rensselaer graduates, they have

received positive reactions while meeting recruiters at job fairs and during interviews with prospective managers and colleagues.

What Do Our Alumni Need and Want?

RPI alumni have been conflicted about the current alumni website design and are unable to find networking information that they need. They can't find the businesses or other alumni to network for career opportunities. They have been unable to join a chapter or register for events due to missing [Join] buttons and inaccurate search results that cannot be filtered to just include their geographic region. They expect a current, clean, delightful design that requires a minimal number of clicks or taps to find chapters, events, other alumni and businesses.

What Alumni Will View and Experience

Our redesign will include call to actions for alumni to register and subsequently log in on the home page as well as banners in every alumni page. The redesign is similar to Facebook and LinkedIn that prominently display login or registration fields. Since they are social-media savvy, this process will be familiar and quick. We offer visitors a "View Public Site" link option for those who just want to browse. The site will indicate to users that less information will display for those who do not log in.

A "Why Membership Matters" link will compel alumni to register to take advantage of discounts, extra newsletters, members-only events, and to view custom web pages for their local chapter, clubs, athletics, major, graduation year, etc.

The redesign will retain the popular red, black and white color scheme while offering more white space and photos, and less text.

Alumni will view will know that they are logged in (or need to register/login). The system will filter Member logged-in displays so that the top listings will include their joined Chapter news and Events, including those in their geographical area. Troy and Hartford campus events will be listed as well as key national and worldwide content.

Members will be able to join a chapter and pay dues, and register and pay for events. The system will auto-fill the registration form fields based on their login information, so that they will not have to re-type their name, address, phone, etc. They can view status about the event date, see who else is attending (including themselves and their number of guests), chapter and event contact information including email, map locations, and cancel their registrations if necessary. Alumni will receive system feedback that their registrations were successful/unsuccessful.

Social media will have a presence but our redesign will not try to replicate Facebook or LinkedIn. Instead there will be links to the various RPI social media pages, and possibly an embedded Twitter news feed.

Most importantly for rapidly growing mobile devices, our redesign will be responsive and display properly for tablets and smartphones.

Conclusion

As a result of our more compelling alumni redesign, the Rensselaer Alumni site will have a better reputation and user experience for alumni. They will want to return and engage with the Alumni Association, and perhaps even donate when their careers are in full swing.

We will increase the number of landing page views and membership registrations with subsequent, regular logins and repeat visits. Events and Chapters registrations will grow. Additional companies with personal contacts will be listed in the Business Directory so that this feature is more relevant and helpful to networking alumni.

The redesign will inspire Rensselaer to redesign their entire website.

Rensselaer will ultimately have increased public relations, goodwill and positive community awareness. Student applications and enrollment will surge in numbers.