

Delicious Byrony

INT2038 - DESIGNING FOR THE USER
DESIGN DOCUMENT

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1. Abstract

I propose to build a Flash-based magazine website for the fictional publication *Delicious Byrony*, which publishes information, news and reviews about free eBooks based on out-of-copyright literature. The website will specifically publish reviews of e-books in the genre of Gothic horror, as well as provide information about eBook reading software and hardware.

The website will function as a digital link between the magazine and the Internet, where eBooks will generally be sourced. The site will provide links to free eBooks and websites that publish them, as well as to reviews and comparisons of eBook reading software and hardware.

The website will be designed using the Flash CS3 IDE using Actionscript 2, and deployed on an XHTML web page.

2. Goals

I intend to build this website with the following goals in mind:

- The web site should be viewable on a wide range of browsers and operating systems. The site must be respectful of a user's desktop resolution.
- The site must be professionally written and appropriate for the content matter.
- The site must be visually appropriate, fonts and colours used must be fairly neutral, perhaps representative of words on a page.
- Video and audio content, perhaps in the format of a Flash screencast, should be included on the site.

The site should be clearly defined and easily interpreted by users who may not have encountered the site or any similar media before. The site should explain its content and goals on the front page, and should have a common structure and navigation that adheres to established conventions.

3.0. User experience

3.1. Audience

The target audience will be the same group as the mother publication – adults with an interest in reading old literature – perhaps 30 years of age upwards. Thus, the visual appearance and accessibility of the site must adhere to this group. Some knowledge of using web sites can be assumed, but the site must adhere to usability and accessibility conventions. Also, the site must be visually designed to complement the mother publication – it should have neutral colours that do not detract from the content of the site. With this in mind, the site should not discriminate against any other target group, and should have reasonable accessibility to all users.

3.2. Competitive analysis

The site will be placed in a small niche on the Internet. Detailed searching reveals that most eBook related sites are either e-commerce stores hoping to sell their wares to users, or marketing sites that sell reviews of e-books in order to generate positive publicity. *Delicious Byrony* can therefore be an impartial information source about eBooks – what they are, where to download them, how to view them, etc.

Perhaps the closest site is *Planet eBook*, which publishes eBooks of out-of-copyright literature and provides them freely to the public. I will make reference to this resource on *Delicious Byrony*.

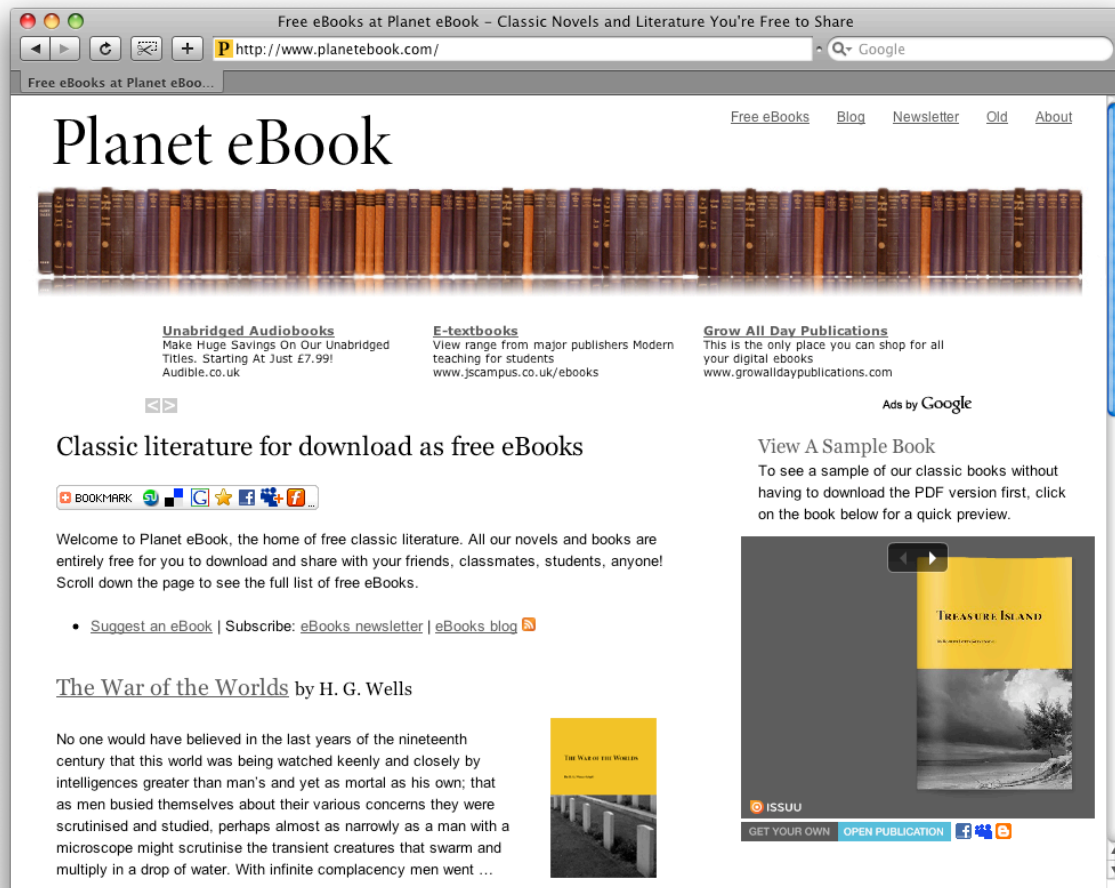


Figure 1 - Planet Ebook (<http://planetebook.com>)

4.0. Content

4.1.1. Page content

The site will have the following sections as will be published at the climax of this project.

Home page

The home page will be the first the user is presented with when the site loads. On it will be visible the site logo, the navigation, and the site footer – these common elements will be displayed on every page. In addition to this, the home page will content a text area with a welcoming message and an explanation of the site’s purpose and resources.

Book library

The library page will contain a visual grid of the eBook reviews that have been published on the website, as well as a text area explaining the purpose of the page. The individual books will link through to their specific review.

Software

The software page will contain an image of a commonly used piece of eBook-reading software (perhaps *Adobe Reader*), as well as a text area explaining what eBook reading software is. The page will link to commonly used software, as well as to an on-site screencast demonstrating some eBook software in use.

Hardware

The hardware page will contain similar content to the software page, instead presenting information about eBook reading hardware, and links to reviews of such.

4.1.2. Video and audio content

The site will publish a Flash-based screencast, which will guide the user in searching for, downloading and opening an eBook in reading software on the OS X operating system. Further tutorials would show the same process on Windows and Linux systems.

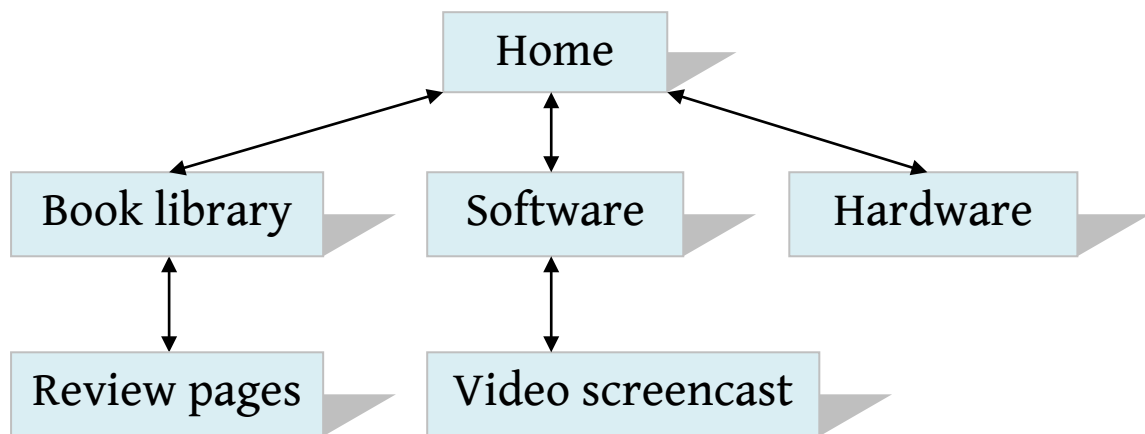
4.2. Functional requirements

- A modern web browser:
 - Firefox
 - Safari
 - Internet Explorer 6 or above
- Flash 8 player plugin for aforementioned browser.
- A working internet connection (high-speed required for audio-visual material).

5.0. Project Structure

5.1. Architectural blueprints

The following diagram shows the navigational and physical structure of the site. The site adheres to the “three click” usability convention where any page on the site must be accessible in a maximum of three mouseclicks.



6.0. Visual design

6.1. Photoshop mockup

The following is an initial design mockup in Photoshop, which I used as a template for the final site in Flash.

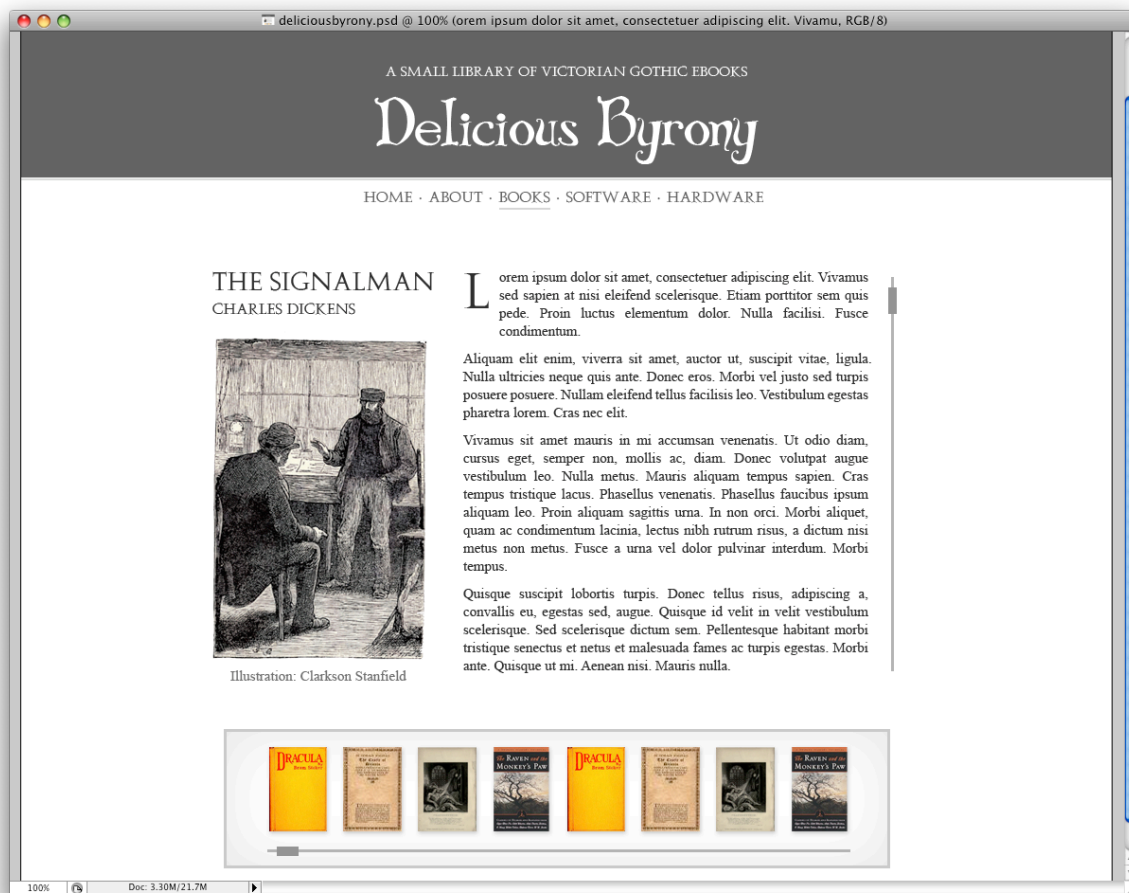


Figure 2 – Photoshop Design Mockup

6.2. Site identity

The site will display the same logo used in the mother publication, the titular *Delicious Byrony*. The type face is “Bibliothèque” in white, displayed on a dark gray background.



Figure 3 – Delicious Byrony Logo

6.3. Site colours

Colours used on the website should be similar to those in the mother publication. The site will use neutral grays and blacks on standard white, in

order to create the most legible display area. Colour will be provided by images of book covers and eBook software/hardware.

Content	Colour
Main logo	#FFFFFF
Header/footer background	#515151
Content background	#FFFFFF
Text colour	#515151

6.4. Fonts

The following are the fonts intended to be used on the site. They will be required to be embedded within the Flash document.

Content	Typeface
Logo	Bibliotechque
Headings & navigation	Augustus
Main text	Times New Roman

6.5. Screen mockup

The following is a screen mockup of a review page in the Flash IDE.

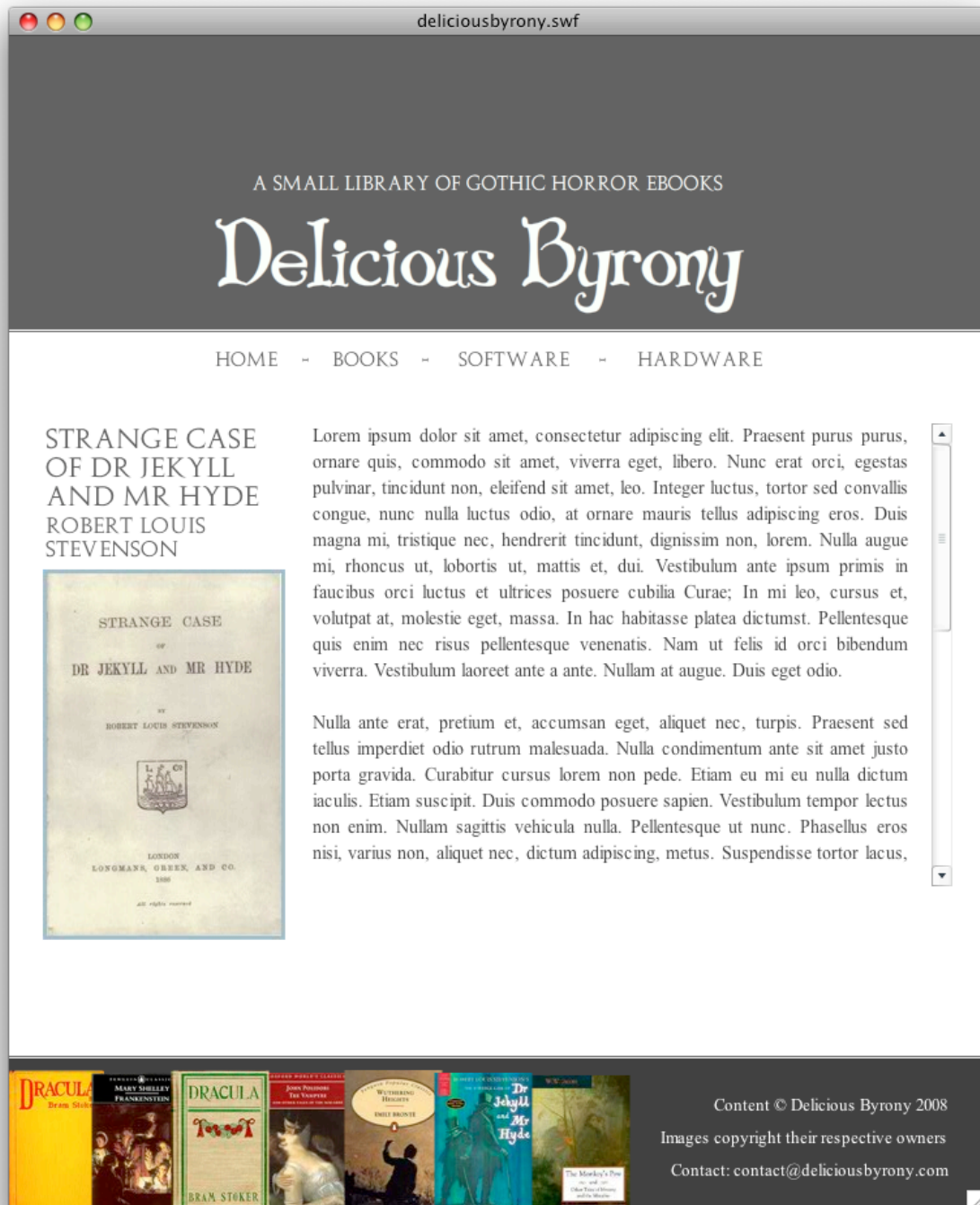


Figure 4 – Screen mockup in Flash IDE

Design notes

- Site logo, global navigation and footer are clearly marked and conform to common guidelines.
- Book title and author clearly emboldened on the left of the review, captioning the book cover image.
- Review content text is appropriately sized, with good line-height and colour for ease of reading.

7.0. Bibliography

7.1. Books

- *Essential Actionscript 2.0* published by O'Reilly, written by Colin Mook.

7.2. Software

- Adobe Photoshop CS3
- Adobe Flash CS3
- Coda 1.6.1

7.3. Websites

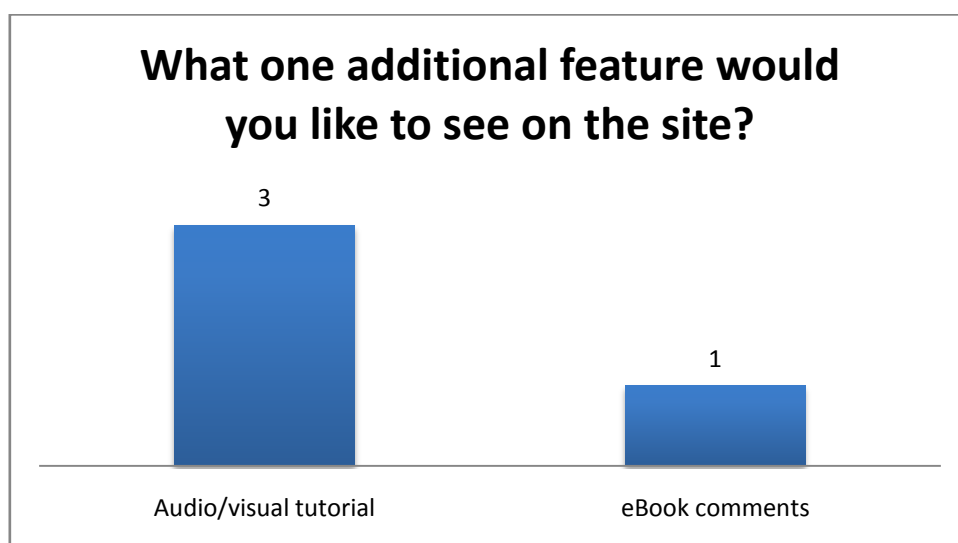
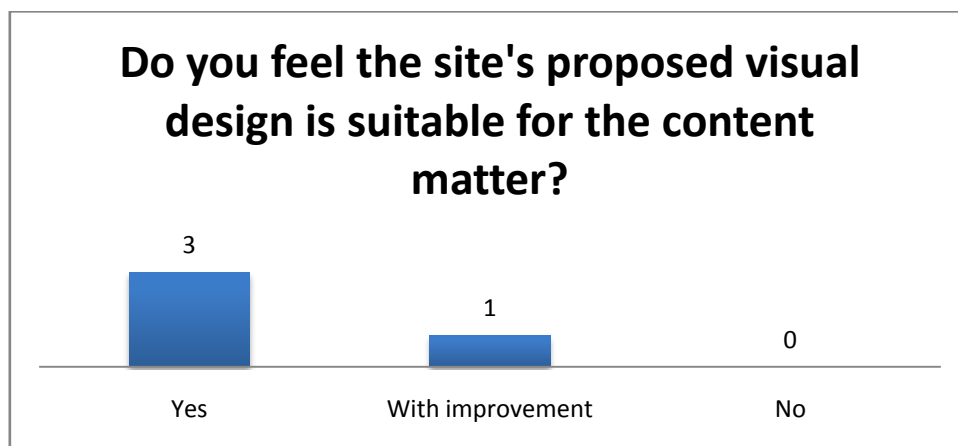
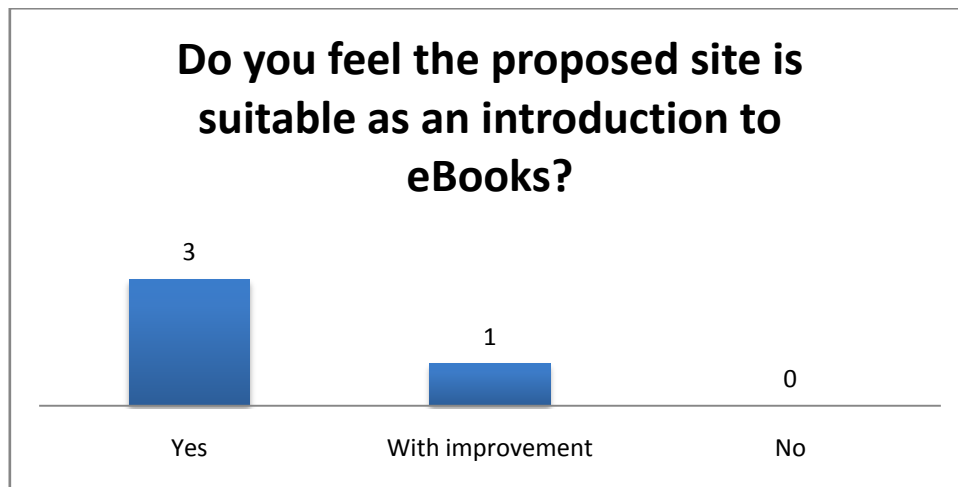
- Planet eBook (<http://planetebook.com>)
- Wikipedia (<http://wikipedia.org>)
- daFont (<http://dafont.com>)

8.0. User testing

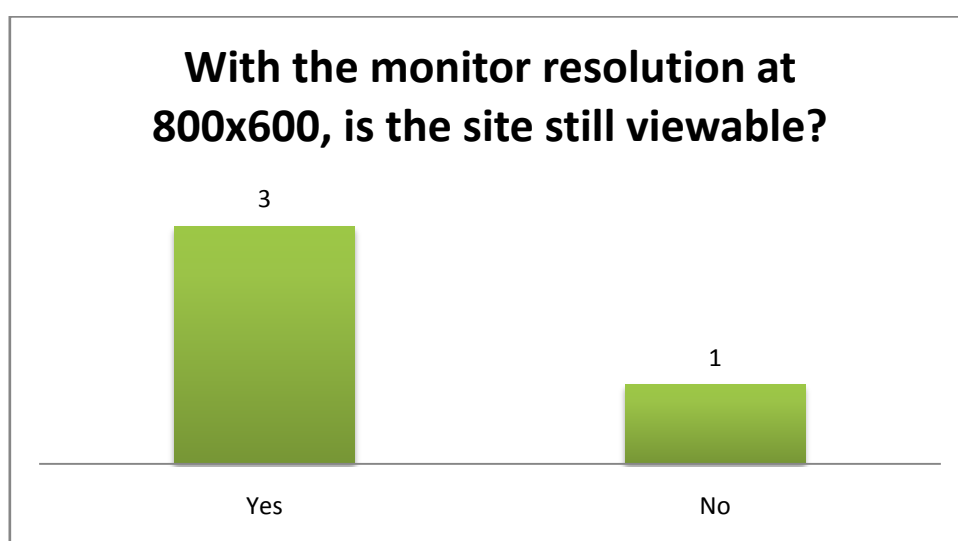
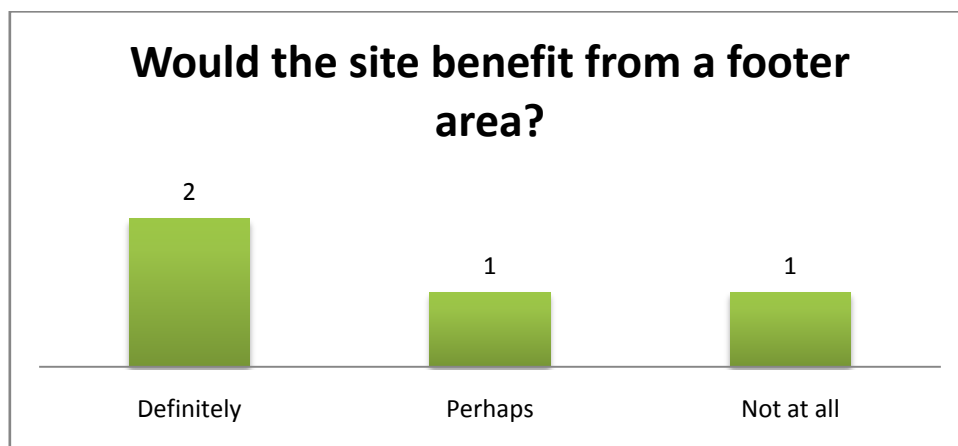
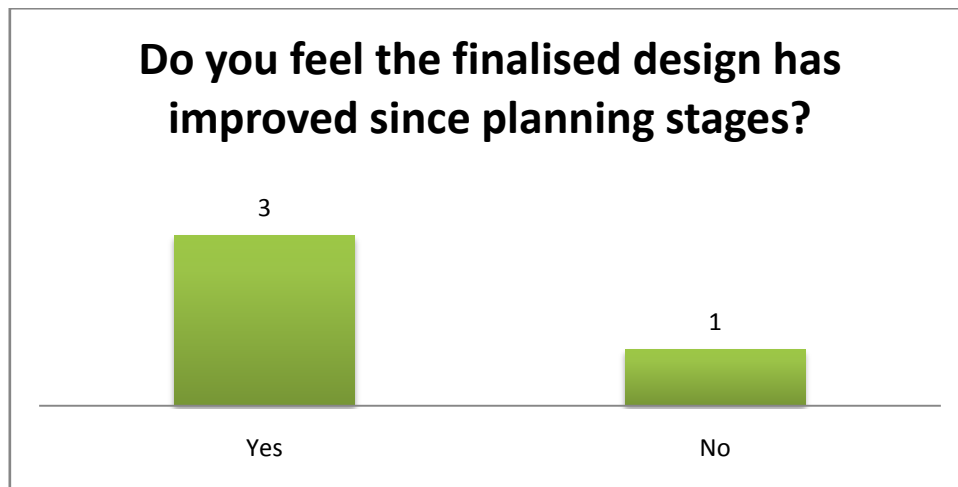
In order to improve the end quality of the project, user testing was employed at three distinct periods of the design process. Firstly, the initial planning stage, then the development stage, and finally the site in its finished state. This should allow measurement of user satisfaction throughout the project, and determine if specific user concerns were addressed.

Using subjects from the aforementioned target audience, I performed one-on-one user testing with four users, and obtained the following:

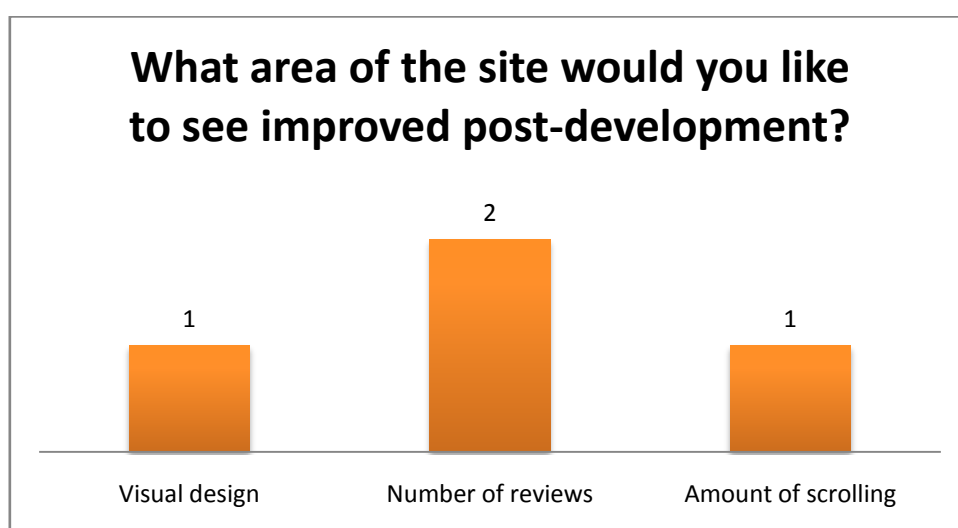
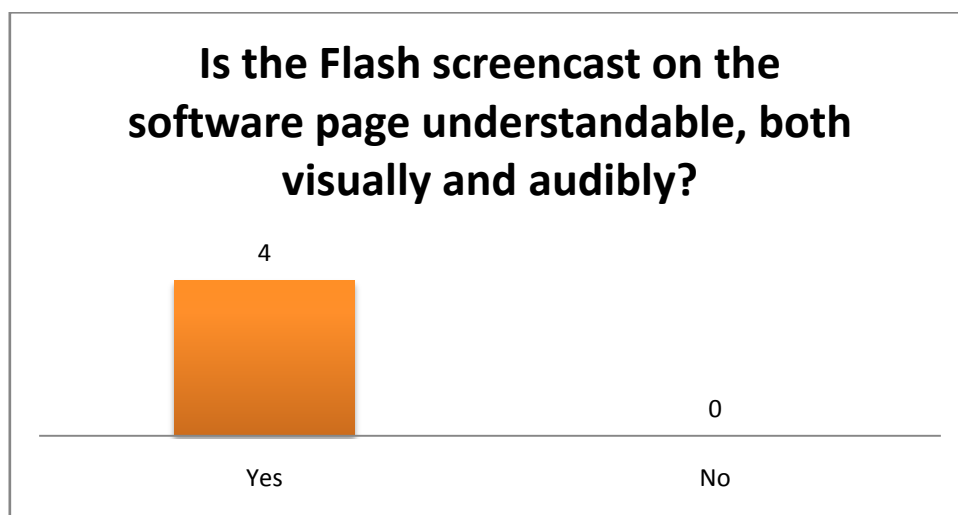
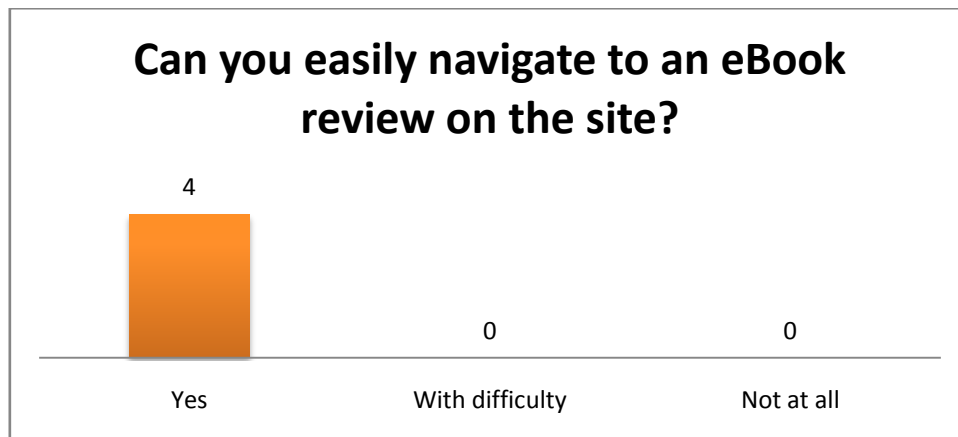
8.1. Planning stage



8.2. Development stage



8.3. Site completion



8.4. User testing conclusions

The performed user testing proved invaluable during the development process, as users provided interesting snippets of information and suggestions during the sessions. I found that beyond the questions asked, many small changes were made to improve the usability and accessibility of the site.

In addition to small changes, a number of sweeping decisions were made in order to improve the site – the number of eBook reviews on the site was increased, the navigation was made clearer and each item separated, text content throughout the site was tuned to

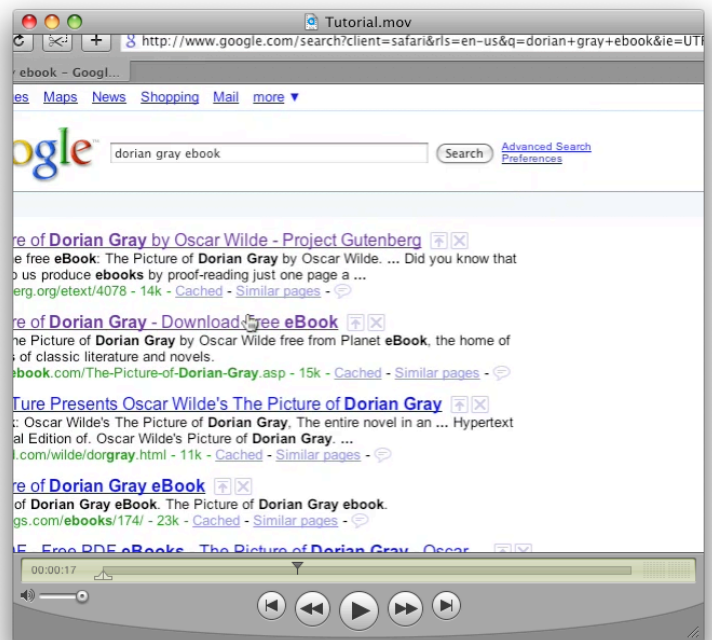


Figure 5 – eBook Screencast

improve readability, and a Flash screencast was added to the site. All this was achieved through both positive and negative feedback provided.

9. Project blog

Throughout the project I produced a sporadically updated blog filled with nonsensical ramblings and some notes on the project and difficulties I faced.

The blog can be viewed at <http://deliciousbyrony.wordpress.com>

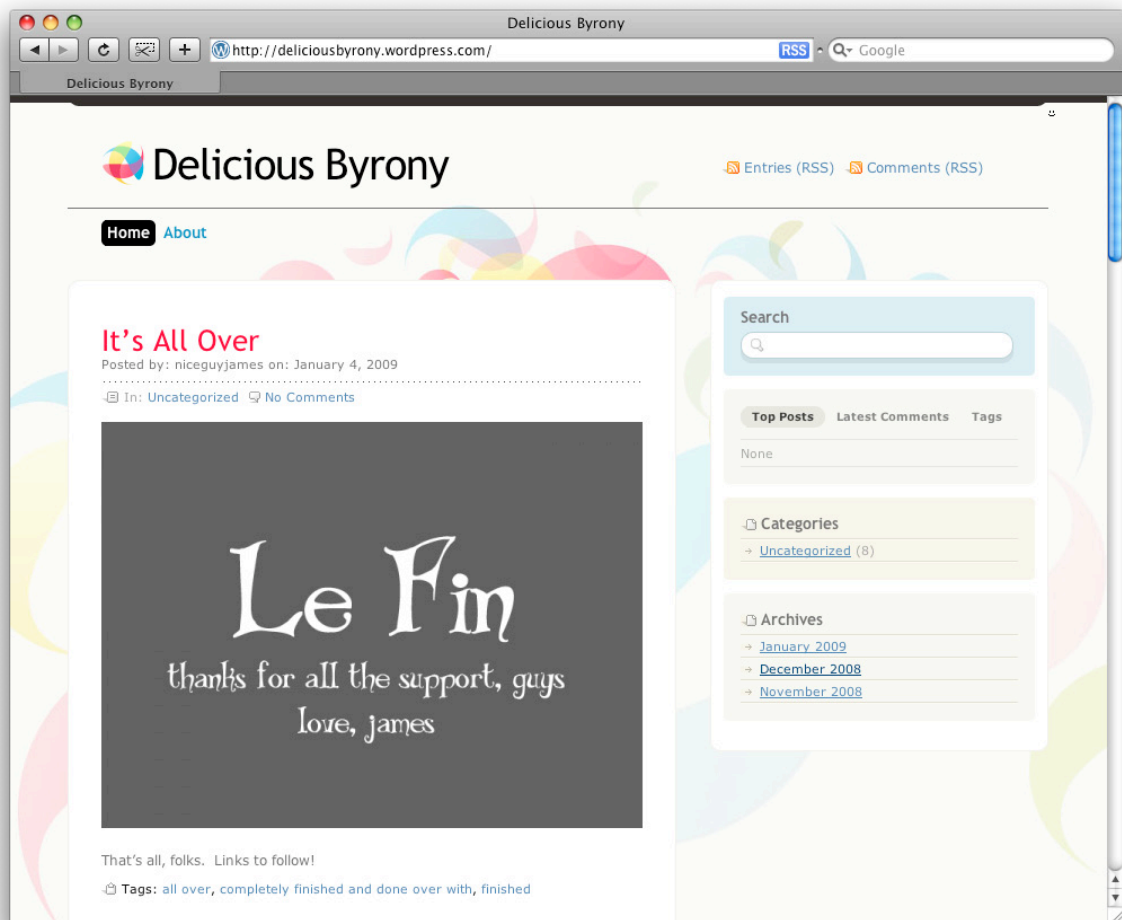


Figure 6 – Delicious Byrony Project Log