The Background.

The SelfDesign Learning Community is among the largest distance/distributed learning schools and personalized learning programs in British Columbia, Canada.

Funded by the BC Ministry of Education, SelfDesign enables learners to complete K-12 by exploring their passions and taking the lead in their own learning and life.
There was a disconnect between the program and the demand. Understanding options, making clear choices, and registering appeared complex and difficult.

SelfDesign offers unique award winning learning programs for children from K-12. Children are supported by personalized guidance from BC-certified educators.

There is a significant and growing demand for alternatives for public education that truly supports children, and specifically for personalized distributed learning.

There was a disconnect between the program and the demand. Understanding options, making clear choices, and registering appeared complex and difficult.
The Problem.

The brand values were not aligned with the strength of the program.

Core value propositions were getting lost in the communication.

The experience of registering was unduly complex.
The Task.

How to create an enriching brand experience and a better connection?

How to share a clear and compelling story, that clearly presented core values and helped parents and families make informed choices?

How to create a rewarding user experience, present complex information clearly, and make registering easy?
Ground Zero
The Assessment
We began by conducting a comprehensive review of the existing landscape.
we experienced a fragmenting maze of websites…

multiple sites/domains with hundreds of links/choices,

an architecture that was difficult to encompass and navigate.
we encountered content overload…

a tangle of information, philosophy, instructions and data

with no hierarchy, clear value proposition or call to action.
and multiple personalities and identities.

each site and program represented a different version of the organization identities became confused and visitors were disoriented
we needed a paradigm shift…
There are just so many things to say about what we do, who we are, what we believe - what we have understood about how children learn and what education really means - what we have distilled about conversation and families, how to support parenting and lifelong learning. We know about passion-based exploration - about what children really need to grow, and the role of educators - and we have so many programs to offer... from this...
to this...

My child’s education is crucial to me.

How will my needs be met by what you do?
Design Review

We reviewed the content.
We reflected, discussed and considered.

We presented our findings and made key recommendations.
create common ground with language.

identify selfdesign as different from conventional education programs, articulate those differences, and express their value.

and...

in pursuit of that differentiation, use common language in a clear communication that expresses selfdesign’s unique learning programs and culture.

- simplify language.
- create clear communication.
- avoid invented terms.
- limit jargon.
- use language to create a shared space.
We developed a Project Plan and collaborative workflow that engaged the internal communications team.
2 - TECHNICAL PLAN

Plan

The content plan is to review the existing website content, and create an inventory of all pages of content, and review the content, relevance, or redundancy. Once the inventory is completed and reviewed, additional content is needed and can be created and added to the site.

Content is performed by creating a spreadsheet, or database of all existing pages and pages in the scope of our content. Each page is a unique ID, and should also contain the following fields for reference:

- The content of the page needs to be called something. The title is the headline of the content, but it should be unique and specific.
- Location of the content on the website.
- URL to the location of the actual HTML file, not a symbolic link or external text.
- Type of content. Essentially this is identifying the type of page or which template will be used: for example is the page a product, a service, or a press release.

Note: content plan prepared by Darren Reed, with Self-identified, August 2013.
3

Identity Redesign

We designed a clean new identity, that supported a clear brand vision.
4

A Brand Guide

We developed a Brand Guide to support the adoption and integration of the new brand.
Branding Guidelines

Typeface for General Use
- The font of choice for all public facing communications is the Condensed family.

Usage Guidelines
- The font is to be used with ample leading.
- The intention is to create light, airy readable blocks of text.
- The condensed family is to be used for Headings, Titles, etc.

Optional Typeface for Display Use
- Optionally the Museo Condensed font family can be used as required.
A New Website

In parallel to brand development, we began a comprehensive site redesign to bring everything back under one roof.
5.1 Architecture and Content

We wrote a clear compelling story and presented it within a coherent architecture.
Site Navigation

The site navigation is designed to support a content architecture set through Progressive Disclosure. It is also designed to contain a small area without overcrowding. The SD.org site brings together sites, and the navigation is designed to provide a simple way to navigate...
5.2

Site Design

A simple clean look - fresh, sparse and engaging, drew people into the organization and its programs.
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**Start Learning**

**K-9**
SelfDesign supports families in experiencing the freedom and joys of learning. K-9 learning allows the unique spirit of a child to evolve naturally, today and into the future. Learn more...

**10-12**
SelfDesign can prepare you for college and university, immediate entrepreneurship, apprenticeship, and more. Create a high school program fitting your unique self. Learn more...

[link to selfdesign.org]
A collaborative process.

This project’s success was due to a strong collaborative effort.

- learners and parents, families
- SD internal IT team
- the SelfDesign board
- site development team
- business consultant team
- project steering committee
- internal communications team
- vanilla five creative project team