

### Background

The Denver Art Museum (DAM) located in Denver, Colorado, started as an artists' club in 1890. Galleries were opened in 1949, and a children's center was added on in the 1950's. The currently occupied buildings we opened in 1971, and 2006. The DAM occupies 356,000 sq. ft., and is known for a family friendly atmosphere and interactive activities. The mission of the Denver Art Museum is:

...to enrich the lives of Colorado and Rocky Mountain residents through the acquisition, preservation, and presentation of art works in both the permanent collections and temporary exhibitions, and by supporting these works with exemplary educational and scholarly programs.

### Overall Assessment

The Denver Art Museum has a very nice website design, it is colorful and cleanly designed. Whitespace is used well throughout the site, and balances out the strong use of color also throughout. I like the DAM logo (see below), which uses a combination of sans serif and serif fonts, and black, red and gray colored text. *Denver* is black, *Art* is red, and *Museum* is gray. I enjoy the varying heights and sizes of the font, and its overall small height will be helpful when applying it to basically any form of marketing or communications materials because it will not take up much room and only uses one color.

DENVER  
ART

Nuts and Bolts information buttons such as home, calendar, e-newsletter, FAQ, and press, are located away from the rest of the page and are in the uppermost right corner of the website, this is a very handy place for them. It also occupies the same corner as the search feature.

### Design

The DAM site is colorful and dynamic; it uses angles in its design as well as color screens to delineate information areas. The DAM logo always remains in the top left corner. A graphic runs along the right side of the site from top to bottom, information never appears in here. It seem to me that this may be a space holder for the website, in order to accommodate various browser sizes the

most likely

side graphic is put in place so space is not just white computer screen space no matter the browser representation. The colors used for this side area are much different than those used for the navigation, which are rich and lively rainbow colors, this side is muted and uses tan, browns, and blue. The colors choice look ok, but don't really go with the overall scheme of the website. ✓ *part.*

Consistency of color is well done, such that colors used for secondary and tertiary (etc.) information titles are rendered in various shades related to the parent color of the navigation tab currently being visited. This creates a harmonious balance that does not seem busy at all. Sometimes, too much color in a website can be frustrating if it is not presented in a clean way, DAM succeeds with facing this challenge. Color was well planned and thought out. As you move along in the major areas of the website (Visit Us, Explore Art etc), the "ART" in the DAM logo changes to one of the other colors represented in the navigation bar for each major area and is not shown in the color of the area you are currently visiting. These colors pairs, between the DAM logo "ART" and the navigation, are in fact complementary colors. In the navigation bar complementary colors are not shown next to one another, but instead are placed next to another color that also visually pairs well with it. In the end, if you look at the navigation as a circular layout, top to bottom and where the bottom ends the top begins again, the colors used are the colors of the rainbow in ROY-G-BIV order (minus the indigo). I was especially excited when I noticed this, as it was not apparent to me at first. On a personal note, I found it funny that I too am using a rainbow of colors with similar applications of shade and tones for my professional website.

✓ All typography except for headers and subheaders are in sans serif, (sub)headers are shown in serif fonts; very simple and clean looking. I prefer a sans serif for body text often as well.

### **Navigation and User Interface**

The DAM logo is always linked back to the homepage, which I appreciate. There is an easy to use "search" located in a visible part of the page, top right. It has been my experience that search buttons are sometimes difficult to find in websites. Also, users can interact and take real steps to visiting the museum in person by buying DAM tickets online.

The navigation bar is located along the left side of the page. The tabs extend out to the right from the main navigation button. Secondary and tertiary information topics are located in this expanded part. This expanded information section does not ever extend out into the page body text area, losing visibility of important museum information, but does extend out into the secondary ✓

navigation panel that opens when you go into a major navigation area of the DAM website. When you enter a primary navigation area, another navigation bar opens to the space directly right of the first navigation bar. This new bar is what holds the secondary navigation. While there is a lot of information to go through it is all well organized, and makes for easy user interface. Navigation is consistent, and content presentation is consistent.

### Prescription

This is an incredibly well developed website. It is interactive enough to not be static and stay interesting, but not given so many additives that it is overwhelming or jarring to look at and visit.

Suggested changes or additions to the website:

- ✓ The mission statement of the Museum is only located in the *History* section, putting it ✓ somewhere on the homepage would make it more visible to visitors, and show how important the mission is the Museum.
- This may be a small detail, but, at the top right area of the website there was a small misjudgment of size as it pertains to different background areas lining up together well. Directly to the right of the search box, the darker gray/tan background does not match up with the white space "search" occupies. I would suggest having these two shapes come together perfectly in size, the change would be very small, the difference is not great, but I feel it is still important.

✓ Lots of content, but clean.

Very good observations - points made, artistic eye is appreciated.  
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