COMPANY NAME

UX Audit Sample (Simplified)

by **SALES4U**

Context

This User Experience (UX) audit of COMPANY's website was done by Sales4U between September 10 and 14, 2018

The three peers below were also analyzed for comparison and inspiration:
- Austin Achieve
- KIPP Austin
- Valor

Positives

- (Homepage) The data points about the schools, educators, and college acceptance establish credibility.
- (Homepage) The vision statement quickly communicates what Company stands for.
- (Donation) Each amount has an explanation of what it affords concretely (e.g. Repair an instrument).
- Genuine photos of actual students are present throughout the site, which gives it a more authentic feel.
- Having 5 schools adds credibility to Company. It must be a good school if it has five campuses.

Biggest Opportunities

1. **Simplifying the Navigation and Site Structure**
   - The header can be greatly streamlined by giving fewer options, and by moving less important elements to the footer menu.
   - Having only one site with uniform navigation which regroups the "Network Home" as well as the school pages will reduce confusion. A clean sub-navigation within the school pages will allow visitors to quickly find the information they're looking for.

2. **Improving the Home Page**
   - The homepage is definitely the most important page of your site. You have a few seconds to capture the attention and interest of visitors. During that time, you need to communicate who your schools are for, why you're different and better, establish credibility, and lead them to take action (enrolling or getting involved).
   - That can be achieved by improving the hero section (what is seen "above the fold" before scrolling down), adding an introduction video, adding a visual list of schools, and clarifying the calls to action.

3. **Improving the Enroll page**
   - The goal of this page is to convert "prospects" into "customers" (enrolled students). Adding elements such as a video, testimonials, distinctions, a FAQ and a clear CTA button will help increase conversions.

1. Simplify the Header

- Studies have shown that 94% of a user's first impressions have to do with visual appeal and navigation. ([source](#))

- The header contains 18 elements, spread across two menus. There are simply too many elements to make a quick choice. Best practices dictate keeping the number of main menu items between 5 and 7. ([source](#))

- <mark>Below is the suggested simplified header menu:</mark>

Our Schools	Our Story	Get Involved	Careers	Enroll
- Elementary Schools - School name 1 (Pre-K3-5) - School name 2 (Pre-K3-5) - School name 3 (Pre-K3-5) - Middle & High School - School name 4 (6-12)				

  - The menu items relating to specific schools (*Parent Resources* and *Calendar*) can be moved to each respective school page.
  - Use a Mega Menu format for the *Our Schools* menu item. ([source](#)) The menu item should also be clickable because users often click on a menu item before knowing it will show a drop down sub-menu.
  - The direct call to action (*Enroll*) should be highlighted to make it stand out ([source](#)).
  - [Valor](#) highlighted their main CTA in their header menu.
  - [KIPP Austin](#) uses a Mega Menu for the *Schools & Programs* item.

- <mark>Some less important menu elements can be moved to the footer menu</mark>. See [Other Misc Suggestions](#).

2. Merge Main Site and School Sites

- The current structure with multiple sites (the main site and one site per school) is quite confusing. Technically, it is all one site, but since the menu for each school is slightly different than the main menu, it feels like they are different websites.

- <mark>Having only one site and consistent navigation</mark> for everything would greatly simplify the structure and navigation, and make it much easier for users to find their way and the information they're looking for. They will also be more likely to take action..

- A better user journey would be for them to simply select a school, then use the sub-navigation on that school page to get the information they need. The header and footer navigation would remain the same as to not confuse the visitor, and they'd know exactly where they are.

- Add a visual indicator to know which school page they're on. A label could be added next to the logo.

- Austin Achieve is a good example to use as inspiration. Here is their High School page, for example. It is presented on one page only, but you could have the links in the content open other sub-pages giving more information about certain aspects of that school.

3. Improve the Hero Section

- The hero section is essentially the first screen of your homepage, before scrolling down. As mentioned above, this section constitutes a large portion of visitors' first impressions, and is thus crucial.

- At a quick glance to the hero section, it is not clear who the schools are for, and how they differentiate against the competition. That would constitute your Unique Value Proposition (UVP). Part of your UVP is mentioned in the following section (*5 schools serving over 2,100 scholars in Southeast Austin, from grades Pre-K3 through 12*). Visitors need to know in less than 3 seconds what you are all about.

  - *"A website needs to tell visitors in a couple of sentences or less why their business is the best choice for the visitor" - Neil Patel* (source)
  - *"A value proposition should be front and center when a visitor arrives on your site." - Shopify* (source)
  - Valor has a good UVP statement on their homepage: *A Full Human Education from the Great Books to Advanced Math & Science.*

- Sliders (carousels) are generally a bad idea when it comes to the hero section (source). Replace the hero section slider with a background video on desktop, and a static image on mobile.

- There is no need to repeat the logo in the hero section, it is already at the top-left of the page.

- The call-to-action (CTA) button to Enroll (*Apply Today*) should be very obvious and attract the visitor's attention, and so it should be bigger. It is currently too small in relation to the text and image.

- On mobile, the text in the hero section is too small and makes it difficult to read. Adjust the text size based on the device it is viewed from.

- The CTA should be consistent throughout the site. Using two different CTAs for the same thing is confusing (*Enroll* and *Apply Now*). *Enroll* seems more clear and could be used across the site.

- Austin Achieve and KIPP Austin both have a good hero section containing a high quality genuine static image that integrates well with the text on top, and no slider. The image on Austin Achieve is crisp, wherease on KIPP Austin they have a CTA button that clearly stands out with a contrasting color.

4. Make the Popup Clearer and Mobile-Friendly

- (Desktop) A lead capture opt-in popup appears when loading the homepage, offering visitors to submit their name and email. It is however not clear what opting-in will do for them. Will it subscribe them to your newsletter? Will it initiate the process of enrolling them to one of the schools? ==Add a line of text that explains the purpose of the opt-in - what they will get.==

- (Mobile) On mobile, avoid the traditional popup format which takes most of the screen, with an X to close the popup. Google penalizes sites with an intrusive popup on mobile, and should be avoided ([source](#)). ==Opt for a mobile-native experience, such as a small overlay panel that takes no more than 15% of the screen.== ([source](#)) Allow the user to expand or close the panel by using the swipe gesture or a big X easy to tap.

5. Add an Introduction Video

- According to a study about web use, the average attention span in 2012 is 8 seconds, down from 12 seconds in 2000. That means that you only have 8 seconds to capture the attention of your visitors. ([source](#))

- Introduction (explainer) videos tell a story. For example, Work.com, a social performance management platform owned by Salesforce, recently added an explainer video to their homepage and increased conversion rates by 20%. Approximately 30% of the page visitors watch the video and approximately 50% of those viewers watch the video in its entirety ([source](#)). An introduction video would have a positive impact on your conversion rate (the percentage of visitors that enroll as students).

- The average introduction video is watched on average for about 2.7 minutes, compared with 28% of website text shown to be read on average. ([source](#))

- Text and images are enough to communicate information, but video does it more effectively, is much more engaging and can communicate the vibe of the schools. It will help you capture the attention of your visitors. ==Add an introduction video on the homepage, or alternatively a different video on each school's page.==

- [Austin Achieve](#) has a good intro video for each school page, and it's the first thing people see when they land on that page. They are very likely to want to play it to get a "feel" for the school.

6. Add a Visual List of Schools

- The only way to open a school site directly from the homepage currently is to select it in the header menu or by clicking on the small *View School Page* links in the section *Five Schools*. Those links do not stand out.

- ==A visual list of schools with a photo for each (similar to what you have on the [Elementary Schools page](#)) would make it much easier for visitors to choose the school they're interested in.== That list could also be categorized by level (Elementary Schools and Middle/High Schools). The average person is distracted in

eight seconds ([source](#)), and since people can digest images faster than text, it makes sense to use images to present your schools.
  - On desktop, they could be fitted on one row.
  - On mobile, they could be laid out one after another, with full-width images.

- <mark>Remove the map from the homepage</mark>, which doesn't add value in this section. Instead, have a map on each school page.

7. Improve the Call-to-Action Section

- The *Join Us* button is confusing, because it is not obviously about careers. It may be understood as a button for students to enroll. <mark>Change *Join Us* to *Join Our Team* to increase clarity.</mark>

- <mark>The third number (*100% college acceptance*) is not aligned with the CTA button *Get Involved*.</mark> The button does not make sense at first glance.
  - Option 1: Change the statistic to reflect something about how much community support you have.
  - Option 2: Change the button label to be about enrolling as a student, because the promise is that they'll be accepted to college.

- Both [Austin Achieve](#) and [KIPP Austin](#) have a section with 3 clear calls to action. KIPP Austin added icons for each, but Austin Achieve's version looks more professional.

- Based on the principles laid out in the [StoryBrand book](#), <mark>a site should ideally have a main CTA and a secondary CTA.</mark> Your main CTA being *Enroll*, the secondary CTA could be *Get Involved*, depending on what you value most (finding teachers or getting support from your community). As for the *Join Us* CTA, it would be enough to have a link in the footer menu to the Careers page. This means that this CTA section could be replaced by a CTA section only about getting involved, since the main CTA (*Enroll*) is already featured prominently in the header menu and the hero section.

8. Improve the Enroll Page

- The purpose of the *Enroll* page is to convert prospects into enrolled students. In order to optimize conversions, you must capture their interest, establish credibility and value, address their concerns, and eliminate any friction to them applying.

- [Austin Achieve](#) has a good format for their [Enroll page](#).
  - Sections include a great hero image with a big headline and CTA button, *Our Commitment*, *Meet Our Scholars* video, Distinctions, Testimonials, FAQ, and a big CTA button.
  - The video gives visitors an idea of what the students are like, and it qualifies new potential students by the same token.
  - The distinctions and testimonial establish credibility.
  - The FAQ answers questions they may have.

- ○ The big *Enroll Now* button attracts the attention and makes the action to take very obvious.

- [KIPP Austin](#) has a few good components as well:
  - ○ An introduction video about the school
  - ○ A testimonial from a parent
  - ○ A link to the FAQ
  - ○ A clear call to action for visitors to enroll (*Apply Now*)

- <mark>Add the following elements to the Enroll page to increase conversions</mark>: ([source](#))
  - ○ A killer headline
  - ○ A persuasive subheadline
  - ○ Pictures and a video
  - ○ Some text (a clear explanation of what your offer is, and the benefits of enrolling)
  - ○ Trustworthy testimonials, disclaimers, and other credibility
  - ○ FAQ
  - ○ A clear CTA button to get them to take action and fill out the form
  - ○ Contact information and optionally a Live Chat

Other Misc Suggestions

- There are various issues with the current navigation:
  - The Cafeteria Menu link opens a new navigation.
  - The *Parent Portal* link does not allow the visitor to go back to the school site.
  - The link *Apply for Enrollment* opens the main site's Enroll page where visitors have to select a school (it doesn't keep the context of the school site they were on).

- (Mobile) Make phone number tappable and standing out

- Remove section *Want to learn more about Company? Follow us on social media.* The social media icons are already and email are already in the footer

- (Store) Integrate the store within your site (with the same header and footer) instead of opening another site (www.SpiritShop.com)

- (Store) In the main page, all 4 images look almost identical. It'd be better to differentiate more clearly

- (Footer) Find a more meaningful label for the menu item *Required Postings*

- (Footer) Remove *Our Board of Directors*

- (Footer) Open social media icons in a new tab

- (Design) The current design needs an update to improve the brand quality. According to BlueCorona, about 40% of prospective online visitors stop engaging with a website that does not look inviting. (source) Also, some of the pages are not showing properly on mobile, and should be fixed to ensure a good user experience.

- Below is a suggested footer menu, inspired in part by Austin Achieve. When clicking the *Subscribe*, it would open the step 2 of the subscription, which asks for more information (first name, which school, role)

Spanish	**Store**	
Contact Us	**Staff Links**	
1000 Roadname Rd, Austin, TX 78744 Phone: 512-555-5555 Email: info@company.org	**Staff Login**	Email address
	Media	SUBSCRIBE
	Required Postings	

- The public notice is a plain blurb of text, and could be made to stand out more visually if it is important.

- Several of the pages are missing a page title, which is important to establish context. Without it, visitors may not know where they are on the site. Make sure that each page has a clear title.

- [Austin Achieve](#) has a great layout for *For Parents* resources, to use as inspiration.

- [Austin Achieve](#) has a Messenger chat button in the bottom right of their site to easily ask them a question.

  - According to econsultancy, live chat has the highest satisfaction levels of any customer service channel, with 73%, compared with 61% for email and 44% for phone. ([source](#))
  - When presented with the choice of phoning or using live chat, over 60% of millennials prefer to use live chat when wanting to ask a question. ([source](#))
  - Live Chat is 400% less expensive than phone support, and that chat agents can on average do the work of 15 email support employees. Customers who chat before purchasing have a 40% higher conversion rate. ([source](#))

- [KIPP Austin](#) has a good video about the teachers in the *Join Our Team* page.

- [Austin Achieve](#) has a great looking calendar layout for each of its school pages.

ANNEX A: ANALYTICS

Users

- 5875 users on average per month
- 52% mobile, 45% desktop

Traffic Sources

- 54% organic
- 18% direct

Most Popular Landing Pages

- Careers
- [Back to school guide](#)
- EPA school
- STP school

Most Popular Pages

- Careers
- STP school
- Back to School
- AMA school
- EPA school
- Academic Calendar
- Enroll
- [Back to school guide](#)
- REAL school

Page Speed

- Average page load time: 6.44 sec
- Mobile
  - Slow page speed (5.1s [FCP](#), 6.5s [DCL](#))
  - Low optimization: 48/100
- Desktop
  - Slow page speed (3.1s FCP, 3.9s DCL)
  - Medium optimization: 64/100