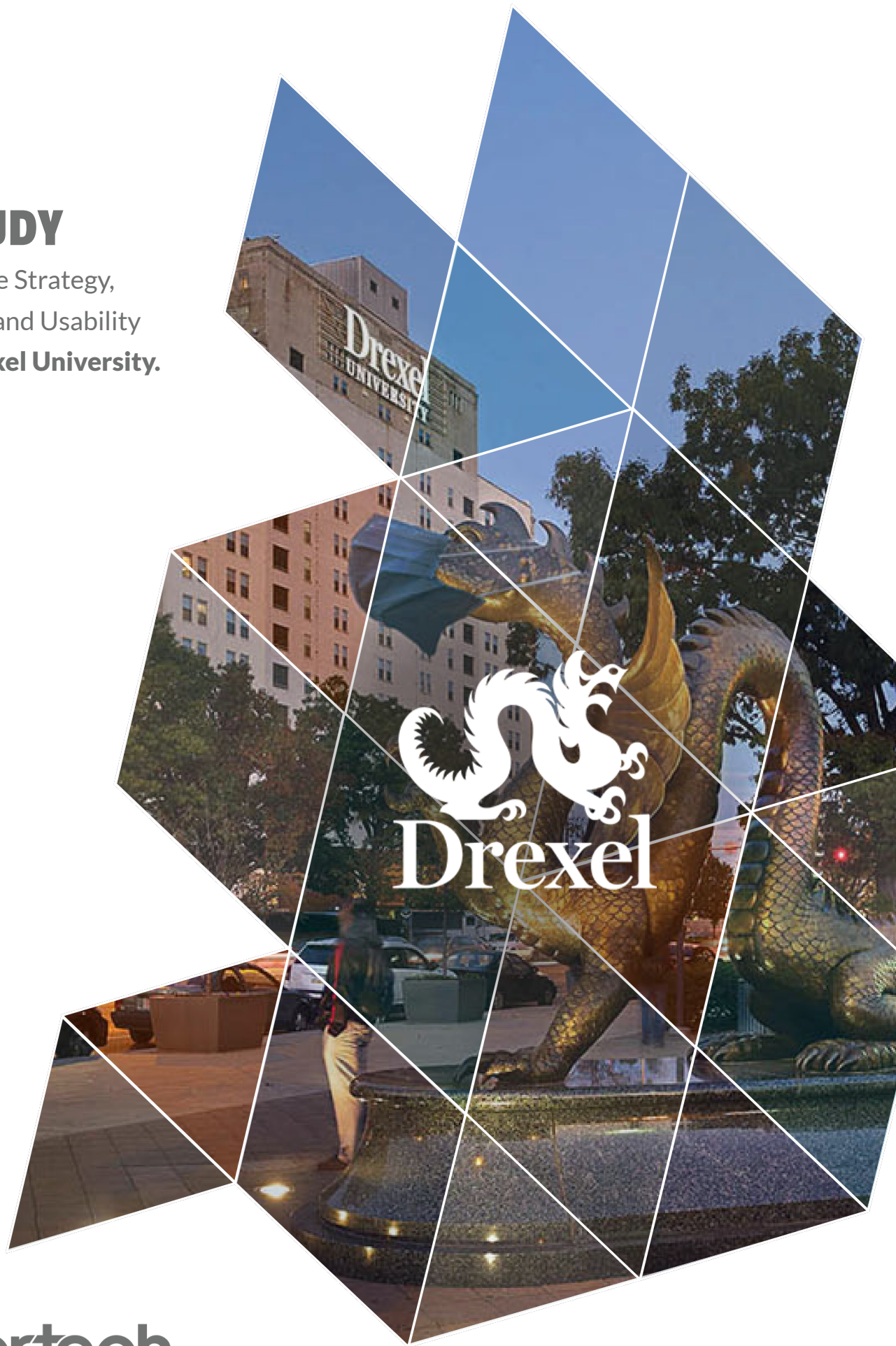


CASE STUDY

User Experience Strategy,
User Research and Usability
Testing for **Drexel University**.



1 WE FLIPPED THE TABLES ON GRADING AT THIS UNIVERSITY

Learn how students, not teachers, helped us dole out performance scores on this prestigious university's website experience.

Drexel University is a comprehensive global research university ranked among the top 100 in the nation. The University was founded to embrace creative energy, which is evident through their Cooperative Education approach and focus towards innovation.

The University engaged SilverTech to provide User Experience recommendations for the websites within their online portfolio, including drexel.edu and online.drexel.edu, and how prospective students navigate between those environments when considering Drexel University for their higher education. Our objective was to study users and provide strategic changes to the website structure and content that would remove friction in the decision funnel, optimize for conversions, and increase qualified student applications.

THE TRUE TEST OF AN EFFECTIVE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Drexel University maintains a student-centric approach to all of their programs and wanted to see this continue online. The current website structure was organized in such a way that the institution received feedback that

items were difficult to find, and the web users had a hard time deciphering where they needed to go to accomplish their task.

Our engagement began by working with a research agency to do some initial interviews of the target audiences based on known demographic data for campus students and online students, focusing primarily the prospective student. The purpose of this research was to:

- › Understand the prospective student decision-making process
- › Observe how they navigate the intended path on the current website
- › Learn what they know about Drexel University and some of the terminology often used
- › Prioritize needs, motivations, goals, obstacles, and perceptions

The results of the research was ultimately used to create five (5) on-campus and four (4) online personas and journey maps that informed the website experience recommendations.

On Campus Undergraduate Prospective Student

Uncertain Uma

17 Years Old
High School Senior
Pennsylvania



Enrollment Plan

- Full Time
- On Campus
- Undergraduate

Concerns

- Admissions Requireme
- Costs, Financial Aid, an
- Prerequisites
- Social Life
- Campus Life and Activi
- Dining and Housing

State of Mind

- Excited
- Overwhelmed
- Nervous



Online Prospective Undergraduate Student (that has some college credits)

Determined Denise

26 Years Old
Undergraduate Student
New Jersey



Enrollment Plan

- Part Time
- Online
- Undergraduate

Concerns

- Cost and Financial Aid
- Prerequisites
- Flexibility
- Transfer Credit Information
- Time to Degree Completion
- Workload
- Online Learning Experience
- Career Information and Outcomes

State of Mind

- Nervous
- Uncertain
- Determined
- Overwhelmed



2 SERVICES

- > User Experience Strategy
- > User Research
- > Usability Testing

The user experience recommendations provided Drexel University with a comprehensive story about their prospective audiences and what appealed to them including:

- > Content Changes
- > Terminology Changes
- > Nomenclature Changes
- > Structural Changes

However, a story is only one half of the equation. It was important that we test these theories to ensure that the changes to the website did result in a positive effect, and not a costly negative one.

Utilizing the current website as the control, SilverTech completed usability testing for Drexel University Online through the creation of interactive wireframes with the

intended audience. The wireframes incorporated the suggested changes from the personas and journey maps. Participants were asked to complete pre-determined tasks, such as answering the question, “How much is the per credit cost of this degree with a military discount?” Results from the test were markable. The following chart outlines the task, with the percentage of test participants who were able to complete the task:

Question	Current Site % Correct/ Complete	Recommended Changes % Correct/Complete
How much is the per credit cost of this degree with a military discount?	33.3%	84.2%
Where can you find the accreditation information for this degree at Drexel University Online.	16.7%	89.5%
You are interested in finding what type of salary you can expect when you graduate with this degree. Where can you find this information.	0%	78.9%

CHOOSING THE RIGHT CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS)

A portion of this engagement included CMS consultation services to assist Drexel University Online in evaluating and choosing an enterprise-level content management system that would meet the needs of a variety of online users as well as meet the content management and governance needs of the organization.

Change the game

