

TCO 620 Managing Multimedia Projects

Multimedia Product Evaluation

Assignment 2

Team 1

Final

November 7, 2011

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Executive Summary

Introduction

In the early days of the Internet, connections were slow and functionality was limited. With faster load times and more elegant tools at their disposal, designers and developers can now take advantage of images, video, audio, and interactive elements to pump up the “wow” factor of their websites.

Today’s website visitor is often bombarded with content, sights, sounds, and interactions. Do these multimedia elements attract visitors and encourage them to read, view, listen, and participate, or do they cause the visitor to abandon the site? Do they convince visitors to dive into and interact with the content, contribute to discussions, purchase products or donate to a cause, or cause the visitor to post negative reviews of the site?

Our team found three websites that made extensive use of multimedia elements to convey their message to a wide audience. Keeping the theme of each site in mind, we examined the elements to determine whether they added to or detracted from the message. Our team also analyzed the overall design and verified that the interactive elements worked as intended. The “wow” factor was very high for each site; however, we looked past this to determine whether the sites delivered on their implied promise to engage the visitor in a useful endeavor.

Overview

The evaluation team reviewed the following multimedia products:

- One Day on Earth (<http://www.onedayonearth.org/>)
- We Choose the Moon (<http://www.wechoosethemoon.org/>)
- Highrise Prologue (<http://highrise.nfb.ca/prologue/index.php>)

These sites look at life on a grand scale. *One Day on Earth* records one day in the life of humankind, using a variety of social media tools. *We Choose the Moon* meticulously chronicles man’s first moon landing, employing historical images, videos, and audio. *Highrise Prologue* documents the suburbanization of the world’s citizenry, using a unique design.

With such grand themes, the evaluation team was concerned about the complexity of the sites. However, in reviewing the sites, we found the content to be engaging, the designs to be appropriate for the subject matter, and the media to be an integral part of the sites.

To evaluate the sites, the evaluation team developed a rubric covering five categories: Media, Site Design, Content, Functionality, and User Motivation and Interest. Each category was allotted 20 points for a total of 100 points. The categories and sample criteria for each are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Team 1 Rubric

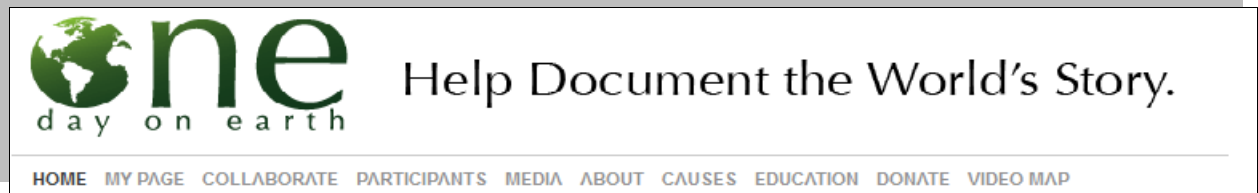
Evaluation Categories and Sample Criteria	Rating
<p>Media (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple media elements are used (video, graphic, interactive, animation, text, etc.). • Media elements are appropriate and add to the site and overall meaning. • Images are displayed appropriately, without distortion, and in a visually appealing manner. • Permissions were obtained for all images. 	20/20
<p>Site Design (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is well-organized and uses a clear, logical flow. • The design is consistent from page to page. • Multimedia is placed appropriately within the page structure. • The site uses dynamic components that are easy to use or easily learned. • Overall design is appropriate and pleasing with regard to font, colors, and use of screen space. • The implementation of the overall design in each section is well executed. 	20/20
<p>Content (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introduction is evident. • The content is presented consistently, clearly, and distributed logically throughout the product. • The site provides credit information. • Transitions between pages are effective. • Content is compelling and original. • The content is appropriate to the chosen delivery format. • The content is presented in an understandable way, appropriate to where and how the multimedia is delivered. • The content is appropriately targeted for each level of the intended audience. • Objects are represented accurately, truthfully, responsibly, and sensitively. • Fact is distinguished from editorial. • The voice and tone are appropriate and consistent. • Visual grammar is obvious or easily learned. • Icons are understandable. • Content is regularly refreshed and updated to stay current. • Users can alter the presentation of the information. • The site does not have grammatical or spelling errors. • The site explains unusual words or acronyms. 	20/20
<p>Functionality (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media plays as intended. • All links work. • Navigational tools work adequately. 	20/20

Evaluation Categories and Sample Criteria	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users can progress intuitively throughout entire product in a logical path to find information. • Navigation paths are useable and consistently structured. • A site map is provided. • Help is provided and relevant. • Users can stop, exit, or resume the presentation. • The presentation works across platforms and with different browsers or users are informed if the presentation is optimized for specific platforms or browsers. • If necessary, the user can print all or parts of the information found. • The user is provided with tools or methods to interact with the content including plug-ins, installation instructions, etc. • The multimedia records a history of user interaction which can be used to vary the information presented and/or reflect user interest. • Users are provided a way to comment. 	
<p>User Motivation & Interest (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site engages the audience through novelty, humor, game elements, testing, adventure, unique content, or surprise elements. • The site encourages the user to return. • The content is appropriate for the users. • The visual design reflects the user needs. • The product shows significant evidence of originality and inventiveness. 	20/20
Total Points	100/100

Evaluations

Site 1: One Day on Earth

<http://www.onedayonearth.org/>



Overview

One Day on Earth is an annual event where thousands of participants throughout the world each create a short video to document a single day over the 24-hour period. The first *One Day on Earth* event, 10.10.10, resulted in the creation of over 3,000 hours of video from participants in every country of the world. Over 60 non-profit organizations also participated. Currently over 18,411 participants have signed up for the next event, 11.11.11. These participants will create original videos on November 11, 2011 and subsequently post them to the *One Day on Earth* site as a method to document that one day throughout the world.

The *One Day on Earth* web site functions as a social networking platform for all participants and includes general public access to the participant video through links on the web site. Anyone that signs up for an account can participate in the event as well as use all functions on the web site. Guests can only view videos, comments, and most other posted materials.

The site contains the following sections:

- Home – The Home page provides links to other sections of the web site. It also includes the latest activity and news, a featured archived video, and links to participating organizations. From the Home page, users can select from over 50 languages to display the text.
- My Page – This page is a personal page in the manner of Facebook. Participants can post photos and comments, invite fellow participants to be “friends,” and follow event activities.
- Collaborate – On the Collaborate page, users can search for and join existing groups or create a new group. Groups are organized by regions, techniques, causes, people things, events, and educational.
- Participants – This page spotlights selected participants and provides a method to search for participants and groups.
- Media – The Media page provides links to mentions of *One Day on Earth* in popular media throughout the Internet. From the page, participants can create their own blog posts and follow other posts of others. Other links bring users to videos and photos about *One Day on Earth* or to the *One Day on Earth* Viewer app that displays participants’ submissions on their profile page.

- About – The About section includes a history of the organization, a list of sponsoring organizations, instructions for participating, guiding principles of the event, frequently asked questions, video submission guidelines, legal forms, contact information for the organization, contact information for web site support, and a way to invite others to join the event.
- Causes – Like the Collaborate page, users can search for and join existing causes or create a new cause on the Causes page. Causes include poverty, environment and nature, education, gender equality, human rights, migration and refugees, health care, humanitarian aid.
- Education – The Education section provides access to educational toolkits, collaborative education projects, and groups for educators, and online classrooms. Instruction is available about creating media for the event as well as incorporating the event in schoolroom curricula.
- Donate – The Donate link on the Home page opens a new browser window or tab and brings users to a PayPal-sponsored site where they can donate through various payment types to the “Creative Visions Foundation.”
- Video Map – The Video Map opens in a separate browser window or tab. By clicking icons placed on a Google Maps display of the world, users can select videos from the most recent *One Day on Earth* event, 10.10.10, to view. From icons displayed on top of the map, users can view a list of all videos, staff likes, or causes. The user can also change the graphic style of the map from satellite view to geographic view.

Comprehensive Review

The following table lists observations and a rating for each evaluation category.

Table 2: One Day on Earth Evaluation

Observations by Category	Rating
<p>Media (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The web site uses multiple media elements including video, graphics, interactive maps, and text. No animation or audio elements, except those in video submissions, are included. • Media elements are not always appropriate nor do they add to the site and overall meaning. It seemed odd that a web site devoted to filmmaking actually displays very few motion elements. Only after navigating to a video, a process that often takes at least four steps, can the user experience an element with motion. This general overall inertness of the site does not seem to add to the meaning of the event or organization. • Some images are displayed with some distortion, perhaps when a participant submitted a low-quality image. • In theory, permissions were obtained for all images. Participants retain copyrights to their videos, though <i>One Day on Earth</i> retains a nonexclusive, royalty free license to all videos. Generic release forms for those who appear in videos are available to participants. <i>One Day on Earth</i> owns the copyrights to the remaining images of the web site. 	14/20
<p>Site Design (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is usually well-organized and generally uses a clear, logical flow. However, some links lead to unexpected jumps in logic or organization. For example, the Donate link from the Home page transfers users to a PayPal 	14/20

Observations by Category	Rating
<p>site without warning. The PayPal site has its own design and, without explanation, provides a form to donate to the “Creative Visions Foundation.” (No connection between this foundation and <i>One Day on Earth</i> is provided on the form, though a text link to the foundation appears at the very bottom of the form.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design is generally consistent from page to page. Each page contains a common header and footer. The header contains the <i>One Day on Earth</i> logo and slogan (“Help Document the World’s Story”). The footer contains the copyright notice and links to view the terms of service, report an issue with the web site, and design a web site badge. <i>One Day on Earth</i> graphics, such as logos and icons, are consistently used and appear to be similar stylistically. • Multimedia is not always placed appropriately within the page structure. For example, videos on the Video Map are sometimes obscured by pop-up panels that overlap the video content and even other panels, making for a messy display. • The site uses dynamic components that are easy to use or easily learned. The Video Map, which functions as a way of finding videos by zeroing in on a region of the world depicted on a Google map, may confuse users who are new to Google Maps. Information panels that pop up and overlap the map and the video must be frustrating for some users. • Overall design is appropriate, pleasing, and consistent with regard to fonts and colors. Screen space is often wasted with large headings and graphics. Some section names and their icons (for example, “Causes”) are quite large, forcing content to be displayed further down on the page, in turn causing the user to scroll a great deal to view content. 	
<p>Content (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introduction is evident. From the Home page, users can find information about participating in the <i>One Day on Earth</i> event. They can view several short videos that describe the event and show bits of videos from the 10.10.10 event. They can find a short history description under the About section. • The site provides credit information for videos, comments, blogs, photos and other content submitted by participants. For all other content and design, the only credit seems to be the copyright statement in the footer of pages. • Not all content is compelling and original. The videos submitted by participants are very interesting, though they range in filmmaking skill from amateur to pro and in storytelling skill from simple to sophisticated. Likewise, many blog discussions are thought-provoking. However, most other web site elements are static, familiar, and consistent rather than compelling and original. • The content is appropriately targeted for each level of the intended audience. Three types of users are served from the Home Page: guests who only want to view the videos; donors who want to contribute to the organization; and participants, who are further segmented into groups and causes. The site’s navigation helps to steer each type of user to the content targeted for them. • Content is regularly refreshed and updated to stay current. Many of the functions are like those of Facebook, so comments or blog posts appear 	15/20

Observations by Category	Rating
<p>immediately. Video submissions are uploaded by participants themselves. The <i>One Day on Earth</i> organization updates other web content frequently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users have very limited opportunities to alter the presentation of the information. The web site functions very much like Facebook, but users can alter only placement of content on their personal page. Users can select the language of the web site text. The video map for finding is powered by Google, so users can toggle between Google Maps geographic and satellite views. Users can expand the video player, powered by Vimeo software, to full screen and can control the volume. • The web site has a few writing errors. "My organization supports poverty" is the text on a button in the Causes section. "Espaol_Acuerdo.pdf" is a misspelled link to the Español Acuerdo form. 	
<p>Functionality (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media plays as intended. Vimeo is the site's video host and services partner. Vimeo provides the technical specifications for videos as well as the embedded video player. Participants can upload multiple video files, but a single file cannot exceed 500 MB in size. Vimeo accepts all resolutions in the following file types: asf, asx, avi, divx, dv, dvx, m4v, mov, mp4, mpeg, mpg, qt, wmv, 3g2, 3gp, 3ivx and 3vx. As long as participants submit valid files, media should play as intended. • No broken links were found. Navigational tools work adequately. Users can progress intuitively throughout the entire product in a logical path to find information. Navigation paths are generally useable and consistently structured. • Neither a site map nor Help is provided for the web site. • Users can stop, exit, and resume the video presentations. The Vimeo video player allows users to pause the presentation, share with others on most social media sites, and mark for viewing later. • Users are not informed if the presentation is optimized for specific platforms or browsers. • Users can print some materials in linked PDF files. When the web site pages are printed, the output seems to lose most formatting, perhaps because the style sheet is lost or not optimized for printing. No print link or icon is provided on the pages. • The multimedia does not record a history of user interaction. Users can tag videos as "Like" or "Later" to retrieve previously viewed content. <i>One Day on Earth</i> does tailor the content to history of user interactions. • Users are provided a way to comment. Users post comments to videos, other participants, groups, and on their personal pages. Users can comment about the web site content or design or about any technical issue from the Contact page in the About section. 	16/20
<p>User Motivation & Interest (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site engages the audience primarily through unique content provided by the participants and through adventure provided by the world-wide filmmaking event. The educational aspects of the event and of the many videos, plus the material in the Education section of the web site should be engaging for educators and students. The web site itself does not have any remarkable surprise elements, novelty, humor, or game elements. • The site certainly encourages users to return. Participants should want to 	19/20

Observations by Category	Rating
<p>return because of the ease of uploading videos, the ability to trade comments with others, and the challenge of participating in the annual event. Guests should want to return to view the many hours of short, often fascinating videos by citizens from around the world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The content is appropriate for the users, and the visual design generally reflects the users' needs. The product, specifically the web site elements, does not show significant evidence of originality and inventiveness. Instead, the product adopted functions similar to Facebook and a somewhat spare, almost motionless presentation. The designers may have elected to serve their varied audience with familiarity rather than originality. The true cleverness of the product is in the video elements, all designed and produced by the event participants.	
Total Points	78/100

Site 2: We Choose the Moon

<http://www.wechoosethemoon.org/>

Overview

We Choose the Moon is a multimedia documentary which depicts the July 1969 Apollo 11 mission to the moon. The site was created for the 40th anniversary of the lunar landing. The site is powered by AOL and all images and documentation are provided by the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. The purpose of this multimedia project is to provide an interactive platform for anyone interested in the historical moon landing. Since the site is also for the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, the purpose is also to show President John F. Kennedy's role in the mission. Generally, the users are students learning about this historical event, as there is a downloadable certificate of completion. Additionally, it is designed for the casual user to see the events of the mission and the historical impact it provided.

The site was designed by The Martin Agency in Richmond, Virginia (<http://www.martinagency.com/>) and Domani Studios (<http://domanistudios.com/new/>) in New York, New York, who utilized Flash to create the website. The site contains only one section, a minute-by-minute interactive depiction of the trip to the moon. While the user can interact with other websites, such as the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum and AOL, there are no other significant sections to this website.



Each interaction with the multimedia is uncomplicated and fully self explanatory. This simplicity only adds to the site, making the interaction more of an experience rather than just a multimedia website. The appealing visual effects encourage the user to interact with all available multimedia.

Comprehensive Review

The following table lists observations and a rating for each evaluation category.

Table 3: We Choose the Moon Evaluation

Observations by Category	Rating
<p>Media (20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The website used multiple media elements to portray their message. This media included video and audio files, photographs, animation with multiple views, and text. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Animation of Apollo 11 during the mission – The animation of Apollo 11 is extraordinary. By clicking the Change View button, the user is able to alter the view of the space shuttle in order to see all sides. Additionally, the animation allows the user to experience the entire mission, from the liftoff through the lunar landing. Every step of the mission is 	20/20

Observations by Category	Rating
<p>documented, even so far as to provide footage of the space shuttle as it separates from the command module, then rejoins prior to the moon landing, and the landing itself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Audio and Video Files – These include actual footage from the astronauts and Houston Command, video files from the astronauts and various points throughout the mission, and a video file from President Kennedy’s commitment to the mission. Audio and visual files are not only mission-related, but also candid and personal. ▪ Photographs – Photographs include those of President Kennedy, the astronauts, and other pictures at various points throughout the mission. The photographs are not interactive but the galleries are. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These media elements were appropriate and were vital to the overall meaning of the project. • There were no issues with images, video or audio. Actual audio between the Apollo crew and Houston was clear and non-abrasive. • All permissions were obtained for images, video, and audio and the media elements were correctly cited. • A loading icon provides a visual cue of progress whenever the application moves forward in the storyline. • The site provides volume adjustment throughout the project and the user can fit the multimedia to the screen’s maximum. • The user can play audio files while an automatic audio file is playing in the background. This background audio is automatically softened so the user can hear the new audio file. 	
<p>Site Design (20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is very well organized and utilizes the logical flow of the mission events to move the story forward. • The design is consistent throughout the project. • Multimedia is appropriately placed and utilized effectively and efficiently. • The site is easily navigated and interactive objects are easy to locate and use. • The design is appropriate, easy to read and the use of the dark color adds to the whole effect. • The site has a full screen or normal screen option. • The implementation of the overall design in each section is well executed. • The first impression of the site is reminiscent of a complicated cockpit; however, the site is simply designed and intuitive. • There is no alternate text for the animation, but there is alternate text for all photographs and video files. • All videos, audios, and photographs are credited. • The only issue with site design is the addition of a news feed from AOL at the bottom right corner. This is small and fairly inconspicuous. The expectation is that world events during the 1969 mission would be featured; however, the information provided was current news. The inclusion of this feature is probably due to the fact that AOL is supporting the project. There is also a link to AOL news at the top of the page. 	20/20
<p>Content (20)</p>	20/20

Observations by Category	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an obvious introduction and ending, and all content is clearly, consistently, and concisely presented. • All assets are credited. • Transitions move the story along and are extremely effective. The storyline is adhered to and well prepared. • The content is compelling and original and is delivered in an effective and appropriate way. • Objects are presented in a historical, factual format; therefore, content is not updated due to the historical nature of the project. • The voice and tone of the project are appropriate and consistent. • Any acronyms are explained. • Icons are understandable and interact with the storyline in an appropriate fashion. • While users may change the view of the animation, this is only a limited feature. • The site does not have any grammatical or spelling errors. • The content is succinct and appropriate for the subject matter and the target audience. 	
<p>Functionality (20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The functionality of the media is exceptional. All media plays as intended and all links work, as do all navigational tools. The navigational tools are intuitive and logically placed. • A site map is provided, but it is not a traditional site map as it is integrated into the project. • Help is provided and it is limited to navigation only. This, however, is sufficient for the project because there are no other sections in the project. • Users have the freedom to start and stop the presentation at any point in time. • It is not known whether the program works on multiple platforms. The multimedia was only tested on a PC and Internet Explorer. However, since the site was awarded Site of the Year by the Favorite Website Awards (FWA), it is assumed that these are non-issues. • Users are allowed to print, but they are printing only pictures of the website, not any specific information. • The user's browser is assessed for necessary plug-ins at the beginning of the project. If plug-ins are necessary, the user is prompted to download them. • The user cannot alter any portion of the information provided due to the nature of the project. This does not detract from the project at any point. • Users are provided a way to comment, but it is not clearly evident. 	18/20
<p>User Motivation & Interest (20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is very informative and entertaining. The animation is inventive and unique and the originality is spectacular. • Even though the site replays the same information each time the user visits, it is evident that users could return again and again for a richer experience. All media available in the site is purposeful and appropriate. 	20/20

Observations by Category	Rating
<p>The site is beautifully organized and designed. These components alone make the user want to return, even after completing the entire site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The content is appropriate for novice and experienced users, and the visual design is intuitive.• Younger users might be motivated by the certificate of completion at the end of the project.	
Total Points	98/100

Site 3: Highrise Prologue

<http://highrise.nfb.ca/prologue/index.php>

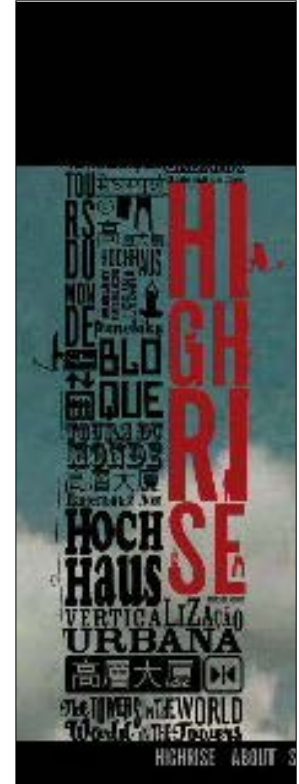
Overview

Highrise is a multi-year, multimedia documentary project started through the Film in Residence Project (FIR 1.0) of the National Film Board of Canada. This group began the project as a way to use film and other media to document their research of “Global Suburbanization.” The *Highrise Prologue*, the first product created by Highrise, is an interactive Flash media product designed to introduce and share Highrise with the global community. The group uses the apartment building as a symbol of global suburbanization. The *Highrise Prologue* examines high-rise, concrete-slab apartment buildings in cities around the world. However, instead of looking at the top metropolitan cities in the world, Highrise chooses to examine “second-tier cities where most of the world really lives.”

The *Highrise Prologue* website is designed to keep the user thinking about the high-rise apartment building. The Menu Bar on the left is a picture of an apartment building. The different pages of the site are segmented by the different “floors” of the apartment building. Each “floor” of the site is an individual interactive Flash presentation. The user has the choice to either allow the site to proceed on its own or to have a user-led experience by selecting which “floor” to view.

“Floors” of the *Highrise Prologue* menu include (from the top down):

9. Suburban Planet – Begins the presentation by talking about global urbanization. Worldwide cities are growing, but they are growing fastest at “the fringes, the margins, the suburbs.” This is the main idea behind Highrise.
8. Segregated City – Uses Toronto, Canada as an example of a city which is segmented and branched out from the once all important downtown.
7. Reshaping Suburbia – Uses video to dispel common myths about suburbs. It paints the picture that suburbs are thriving culturally and socially.
6. Academic Discovery – Cites the research project behind Highrise. Highrise is part of a seven-year, international, interdisciplinary, collaborative research project headed by urbanist Roger Kail of the Cities Institute at York University in Toronto, Canada.
5. Highrise is... - Explains where Highrise started with the National Film Board of Canada and the FIR 1.0 project.
4. First Project – Explains the interdisciplinary nature of Highrise. The group is not simply creating documentaries, but seeking change and interaction while documenting the lives of individuals around the world.



3. 10 Towers – This “floor” is the actual project. It displays the 10 cities around the world that Highrise has documented. These cities include Bangalore, India; Bogota, Columbia; Beirut, Lebanon; Nairobi, Kenya; Frankfurt, Germany; Tashkent, Uzbekistan; Dongtan, China; Marseilles, France; Toronto, Canada; and a ‘?’ which allows the user to nominate an additional city, suburb, or specific high-rise.
2. Future – Explains the future plans for Highrise including additional projects and documentaries on more “towers and the people who live in and beside them.”
1. Collaborating – Contact page for submitting ideas and/or comments to Highrise.

Comprehensive Review

The following table lists observations and a rating for each evaluation category.

Table 4: Highrise Prologue Evaluation

Observations by Evaluation Category	Rating
<p>Media (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This site definitely uses mixed media. It is primarily a Flash driven site, but there is text, pictures, interactive elements, graphics, and more. • The elements all tie to the theme of the high-rise. The first element at the start of video is a word cloud that “grows” out of the page in the form of a high-rise tower using the word “highrise” in several languages. The “towers” literally “grow” out of the bottom of the page when you click on the “10 Towers” link. • All of the images display appropriately on my computer. It could possibly take longer for pages to load on a computer with a slower connection. • Permissions were assumed to be obtained. This site is a documentary created under the National Film Board of Canada. 	20/20
<p>Site Design (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is very well designed. The flash videos flow from one to the next seamlessly. The user also has the option of self-navigating through the presentation using the “high-rise” menu on the left side of the screen or the directional arrows on the right side of the screen. The right side also has a pause/play button that can be clicked to stop/restart the presentation. • The design of the site is consistent. The site uses the same “cloud” background as a transition between each segment. Also, all of the elements tie back to the high-rise theme. • The entire page is a multimedia element. The placement of the pictures and towers makes the users’ eye travel across the entire screen. • The site is very dynamic. It is also very intuitive. The presentation will proceed automatically for users that may not know how to go through it manually. • The icons in the lower left corner for turning on/off the automatic presentation are small and not labeled. The purpose of the icons was not clear until they were “clicked on”. However, at any point you can click on the tower menu to navigate at will. • The site uses the page space very well. Fonts and colors adhere to the theme. Bolding and colors outside of the theme are used to bring attention to important words/phrases. 	18/20

Observations by Evaluation Category	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementation of the design of the site was well thought out and well executed. The “tower” menu was initially unclear because of the top to bottom direction of the menu (apartment towers traditionally go from the bottom floor up), however it is understood that the makers of the site were adhering to traditional online menu conventions by using a top to bottom menu approach. There are instructions at the very beginning of the presentation demonstrating to the user that the highrise on the left-side of the screen was the “menu.” However, if the user misses the instructions, the highrise menu could be mistaken as part of the background. 	
<p>Content (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site definitely has an introduction that is very thorough and complete. The only complaint would be that the introduction is the major part of the site/presentation and comprises six of the nine segments of the site. The content is clear and flows logically from segment to segment. The largest chunk of information is on the “10 Towers” segment, which documents nine cities around the world. Although, not all of the cities listed have a completed documentary. Credits for production and direction are available. The user can also click on the Highrise tag in the bottom right corner of the page to go to the full Highrise site. However, the link to the Highrise site is not easily recognizable as a link because it is not clearly labeled. Transitions for the automated presentation are clear and flow seamlessly. The content definitely grabs the user’s attention right away and is original work. The use of Flash here is very effective in that it is widely available to a diverse group of users. The use of the tower menu is also new and original and fits with the theme. It is unclear how often the site content is updated. There were no dates listed on the site except a mention of the 21st century and the dates of multiple awards the site has received. There are no grammatical or writing errors. The tone of the presentation is conversational and friendly and leaves the user open for comments and discussion. The user is able to go between an automated or self-directed presentation. In the “10 Towers” segment, if a tower is selected that has a documentary, the site automatically returns the user to the main presentation; or the user can click on the Return icon at the top right of the screen to return to the main presentation. 	16/20
<p>Functionality (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The media plays as intended. In “10 Towers,” it was immediately apparent which tower had a documentary and which didn’t. The Help link is small in the top right corner. Because it is small and not in the main part of the media, it is easy to miss. There is also a Comments option at the end of the presentation; but if a user had a problem at the beginning, the user might not make it to the end of the presentation. The navigation is usable and consistent. It follows the theme of the <i>Highrise Prologue</i>. 	18/20

Observations by Evaluation Category	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Flash Player download link stayed open until I clicked the 'x' to close it out. • Not sure if a history is recorded. The presentation is presented as is. The user can choose his or her own navigational path or choose to proceed automatically through the presentation. • Comments are requested and seem to be encouraged. The site expresses its desire for collaboration several times throughout the presentation. 	
<p>User Motivation & Interest (20pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site is engaging because it is so unique in its presentation. The use of movement is well thought out. The pictures used are engaging, diverse, and relatable to a wide scope of individuals. • The site encourages users to return by making the content relatable to a diverse audience. Not all users of this site will have personal experience with the subject matter (suburban high-rise apartments). However, the site does a great job of engaging all users and displaying the subject in a visually stimulating manner. • This site speaks to a core human need. The places we live shape and help define who we are as individuals. By nature, human beings are curious about other people's experiences, and this site seeks to explore that curiosity. 	20/20
Total Points	92/100

Summary

Results

Each site took on a monumental task: to record people's actions on one day of the year, to examine what draws people to high-rise living arrangements in second-tier cities, and to explore every angle of an historical event. A quick look at the Product Score Summary shows that the site, *We Choose the Moon*, garnered the highest score. However, each site had its pluses and minuses, which are summarized below.

Table 5: Summary of Product Scores

Category	One Day on Earth	Highrise Prologue	We Choose the Moon
Media	14	20	20
Site Design	14	18	20
Content	15	16	20
Functionality	16	18	18
User Motivation & Interest	19	20	20
Total	78	92	98

One Day on Earth

One Day on Earth received the lowest score for several reasons. Many of the media elements do not add to the overall meaning of the site. The site's goal is to collect videos from around the world. However, a visitor has to navigate through four steps to access any videos. Image quality is often poor.

Visitors are asked to donate to an organization with no explanation as to the relationship that organization has with *One Day on Earth*. The design occasionally gets sloppy, particularly on the Video Map page; pop-ups obscure content that should remain visible.

The design does a good job of guiding different types of visitors to the appropriate content. Navigation tools are intuitive and consistently displayed throughout the site. Social collaboration tools are easily accessible. Content is updated regularly, keeping the site current and fresh.

Highrise Prologue

The main menu and many of the images on the *Highrise Prologue* website reinforce the theme of high-rise buildings. The consistent and pervasive use of the theme throughout the site was a major design plus.

The site makes extensive use of Flash videos. The visitor can let the content flow automatically from start to finish or choose their own starting point from the main menu. One major issue is that too much content is taken up by introductory material. Only one third of the menu options pertain to the theme itself.

We Choose the Moon

The odd title for this website, *We Choose the Moon*, comes from a quotation by John F. Kennedy. One might write this site off as a static site with no reason to visit again. However, teachers would do well to incorporate this site into their history and science curricula. The site makes extensive use of historical records: video, audio, and images; and it creatively adds animation to the mix. Visitors to the site, whether a history buff or a student, could easily lose themselves in the moment.

There are a few exceptions to the otherwise high-quality design of this site. An AOL news menu whisks visitors away from the site and jarringly returns visitors to the present. The site does not allow downloading content and the option to print is extremely limited.

The engaging nature of this site, its adherence to the theme, and its extensive integration of historical media make this site a winner in our evaluation.

Lessons Learned

This project has expanded our skills in three areas: developing a rubric, evaluating complex websites, and summarizing our findings.

Developing a rubric for interactive multimedia web sites helped us to discover the major quality indicators for such sites. Applying the rubric's criteria to the selected web sites gave us a solid foundation for critiquing the sites individually and as a group. We found that using a numeric rating provides the reader with a quick look at each site's quality; while the use of descriptive text gives an in-depth understanding of the ratings.

In the Executive Summary, we questioned whether multimedia elements encourage or discourage visitors from exploring a site. We now know that multimedia can do both depending on how well, or how poorly, they are incorporated into the overall design of a site. We can use this newfound knowledge when evaluating other multimedia sites, especially sites that we ourselves might develop.