

ExhibitFiles

Competitive Analysis

Summary

The proposed functionality of the ExhibitFiles website can be distilled into three main categories: *Collection*, *Critique*, and *Community*. As one of our starting points for the project, we decided to examine a cross section of sites from various industries to better understand how they organize their collections, allow users to critique content, and nurture their online communities.

ExhibitFiles does not have any direct “competitors,” so we reviewed sites from within the creative world that have similar feature sets. In addition, we closely reviewed websites from other realms that are standouts in specific areas. (For example, Epinions.com, has developed a robust community based critiquing feature.) Overall the sites ranges from a professional journal to a state-of-the-art photo sharing site, to a museum collection, and even a commercial stock art site.

The analysis presented here is broken down into two sections: *Sites* and *Comparison of Features*. The *Sites* section includes a description and images of each site. The *Comparison of Features* is a table listing all of the major features for each site, categorized by *Collection*, *Critique*, and *Community*.

All of the sites presented here are compelling for different reasons. Some have incredible content, others excel in their niche. While still others are just universally appealing, have a profound simplicity of use, or demonstrate innovation in Web technology. We urge you to visit and engage yourselves with these sites to experience their features first hand. To fully access many of these websites, you will have to set up a user account and log-in. However, all of the sites are free, so enjoy yourself out there.

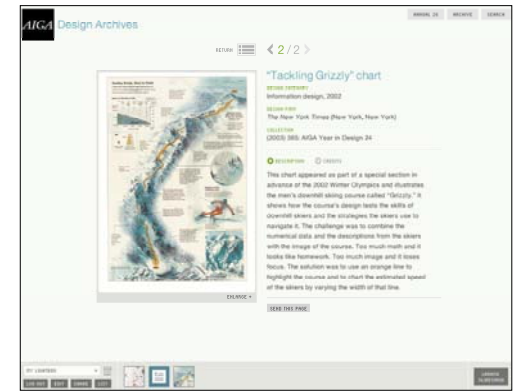
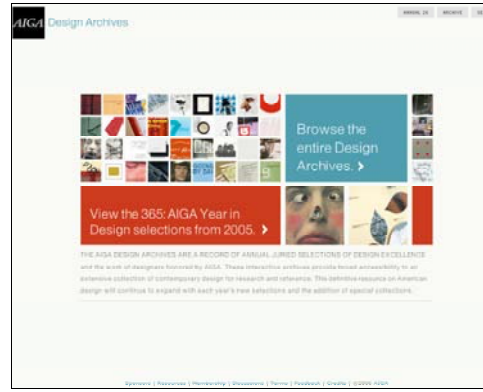
Analysis by Kevin Silver
Edited by Jim Spadaccini
Ideum | www.ideum.com

Sites

AIGA Design Archives

<http://designarchives.aiga.org>

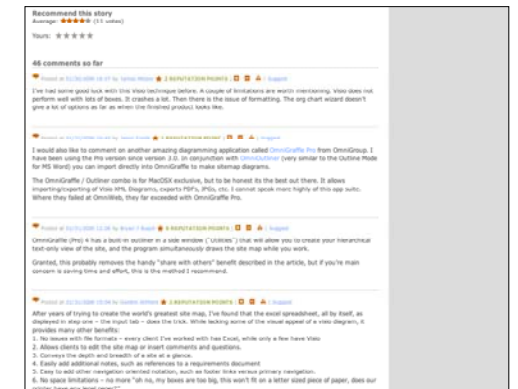
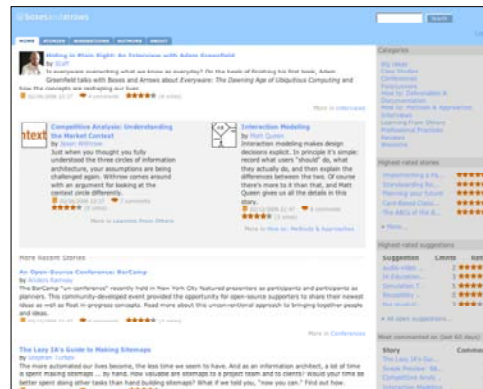
The AIGA Design Archives is an online collection of works selected for Design Excellence or otherwise honored by the AIGA. Users can browse the collection and add works to their “lightbox,” which can then be shared with other users or launched as a slide show. *Visually appealing and highly functional.*



Boxes and Arrows

<http://www.boxesandarrows.com>

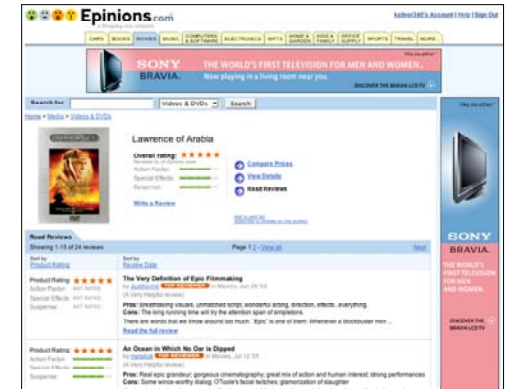
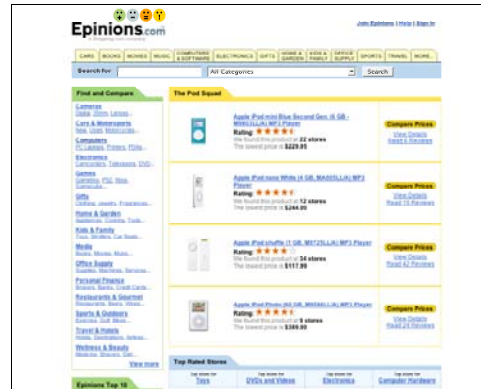
Boxes and Arrows is a online professional journal for Information Architects. The site recently incorporated numerous community features to allow users to have greater editorial control. For more information about the features read Boxes-and-Arrows Under the Hood (www.boxesandarrows.com/view/under_the_boxes_and_arrows_hood). *A good example of a site that fosters professional collaboration online.*



Epinions

<http://www.epinions.com>

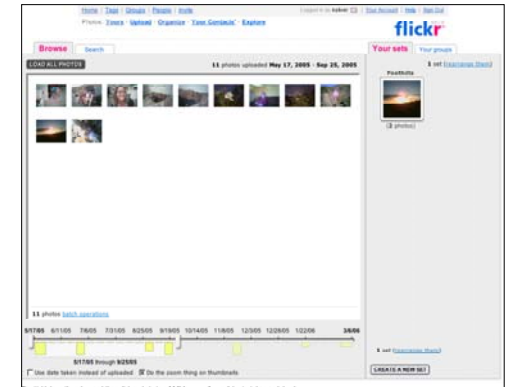
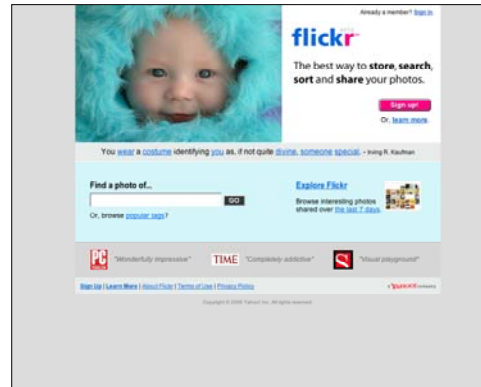
Epinions is a review and rating site for consumer products, movies, music, and more. This site features community based functionality in which reviewers are rated as “Top Reviewers” and their subsequent ratings are weighted accordingly. You can read more about it in their FAQ (<http://www.epinions.com/help/faq>). *They have online community based critiques down to a science.*



flickr

<http://www.flickr.com>

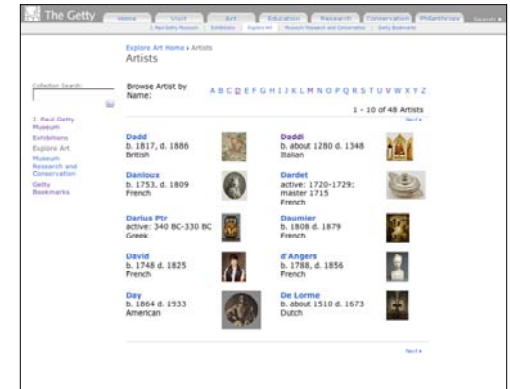
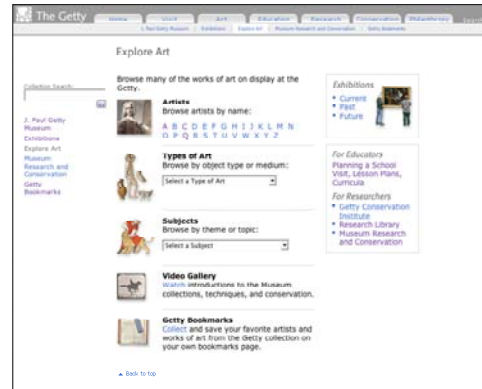
flickr is the ultimate Web 2.0 community sharing site. The toolset available to users on this site is very robust. It includes ways to manipulate and manage images and image collections. User-based tagging, sharing, and comments are an integral part of this site. *Powerful features and community comes first.*



The Getty: Explore Art

<http://www.getty.edu/art/gettyguide>

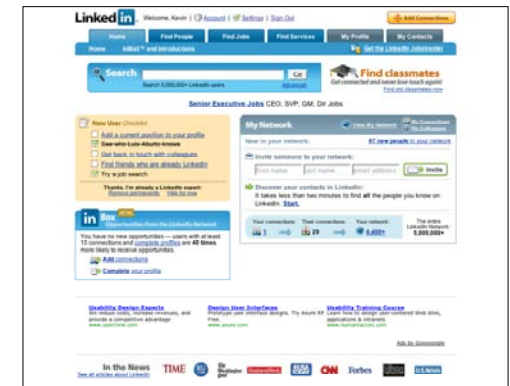
The Getty has an extensive online gallery of many of the works of art in their collection. Users can search and bookmark items for later use and even print out a map of the museum denoting the physical location of each selected item. Visitors can search by artist, types of art, or subjects. *Exciting content, straight-forward presentation and design.*



Linked in

<http://www.linkedin.com>

Linked in is a social networking site that enables users to maintain and develop professional connections with others. Users are able to create extensive profiles and manage their networks via the tools provided. *Advanced social networking features.*



ma.gnolia

http://ma.gnolia.com

ma.gnolia is a social bookmarking site where users can add and share websites with others. There are strong community-building features here, including user profiles, tagging, and ability for users to create groups.

Ranks high in terms of usability and the visitor experience comes first.

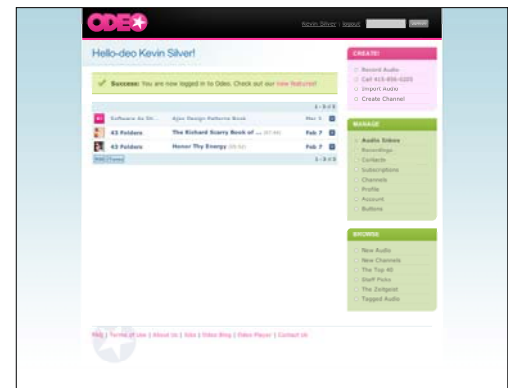
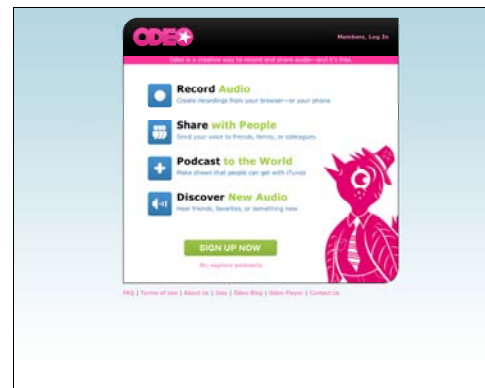


ODEO

http://www.odeo.com

A Web 2.0 podcast collection and creation site. Users can add existing podcasts to the collection or create their own either by phone or via a Web browser. The website has other interesting features such as the ability to tag podcasts and to create groupings known as “channels.”

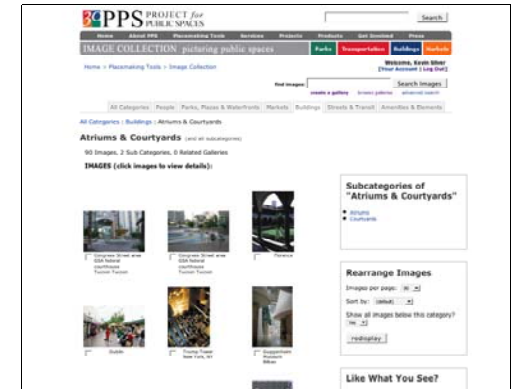
Powerful Web technology and relatively simple to use.



PPS - Image Collection

<http://www.pps.org/imagedb>

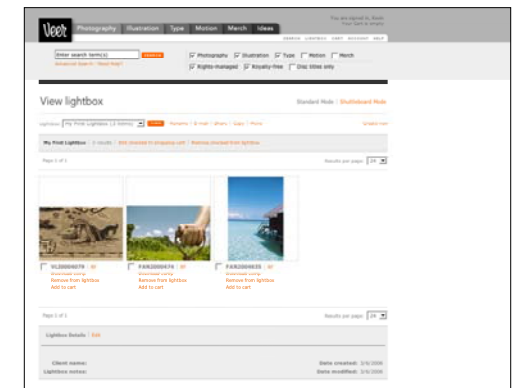
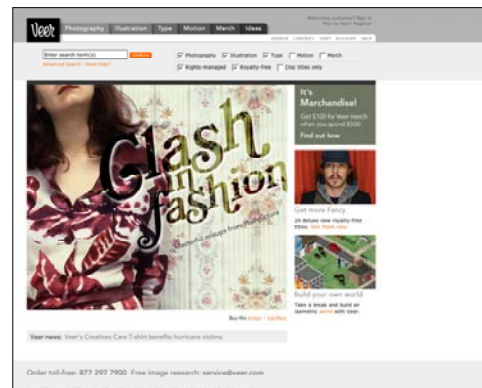
The Project for Public Spaces website has a wealth of information, most notably an image collection of photographs of public spaces. Users can save images into their own *lightbox* and share their collections, which can then be viewed as slide shows. *Compelling content that is logically organized and presented.*



Veer

<http://www.veer.com>

Veer is a commercial stock art site. It features a robust advanced search function as well as a powerful *lightbox* tool, where users can save selected images and then manipulate them using the “shuttleboard mode.” Both the lightbox and shuttleboard can be shared. More than just images, the site collection also contains motion graphics and type. *A wide range of media types presented in a well structured environment.*



Comparison of Features

Collections All of the represented sites have a collection of some type: photos, product reviews, podcasts, or people.

Browse Methods	Sites	AIGA Design Archives	Boxes and Arrows	Epinions	flickr	The Getty Explore Art	Linked in	ma.gnolia	ODEO	PPS Image Gallery	Veer
	Category, Types (object type or medium)		X	X	X		X	X			X
Subcategory				X			X			X	
Collection		X	X								X
Highest Rated			X								
Most Commented			X								
Most Active Author			X								
Most Active Contributor			X								
Latest Comments			X								

Comparison of Features

Collections *(continued)* All of the represented sites have a collection of some type: photos, product reviews, podcasts, or people.

Browse Methods	Sites	AIGA Design Archives	Boxes and Arrows	Epinions	flickr	The Getty Explore Art	Linked in	ma.gnolia	ODEO	PPS Image Gallery	Veer
	Tags Keywords (folksonomies)					X			X	X	
Most Recent					X			X	X		
“interestingness” - The Zeitgeist (generated rating based on numerous factors)					X				X		
Sets, Channel, Gallery					X				X	X	
Groups					X			X			
Your Collection					X			X	X		
Your Contacts					X			X			
Subject (theme or topic)						X					

Comparison of Features

Collections (continued) All of the represented sites have a collection of some type: photos, product reviews, podcasts, or people.

Sites	AIGA Design Archives	Boxes and Arrows	Epinions	flickr	The Getty Explore Art	Linked in	ma.gnolia	ODEO	PPS Image Gallery	Veer
Browse Methods										
Author, Artist		X			X					
Top 10 Channels								X		
The Top 40								X		
Staff Picks								X		
Featured: Linkers, Channels, Galleries							X	X		X

Search Methods

Simple Search (single criterion)		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Advanced Search (multiple criteria)	X		X	X		X	X		X	X

Comparison of Features

Collections *(continued)* All of the represented sites have a collection of some type: photos, product reviews, podcasts, or people.

Sites	AIGA Design Archives	Boxes and Arrows	Epinions	flickr	The Getty Explore Art	Linked in	ma.gnolia	ODEO	PPS Image Gallery	Veer
Personalization										
Lightbox, My Bookmarks, Audio Inbox, Contacts, Your Gallery, Getty Bookmarks, Yours, Wish list (User can create their own collection)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Share Your Collection: Email It to Another (one of your contacts or group)	X				X		X			X
Share Your Collection: Public/Private (The collection or items can be shared publicly or can be made private)				X			X	X		
Share Your Collection: Public (you can not privatize your collection)						X				

Comparison of Features

Collections *(continued)* All of the represented sites house a collection of some type: photos, product reviews, podcasts, or people.

Sites	AIGA Design Archives	Boxes and Arrows	Epinions	flickr	The Getty Explore Art	Linked in	ma.gnolia	ODEO	PPS Image Gallery	Veer
Subscriptions										
Subscribe to new Items within the Collection		X								
Subscribe to Your Collection				X			X	X		
Subscribe to a Group				X			X			
Subscribe to Comments/ Discussions		X		X						
Subscribe to Suggestions		X								

Comparison of Features

Critique Some of the sites allow the community to comment, review, or rate items in collection or other content.

Sites	AIGA Design Archives	Boxes and Arrows	Epinions	flickr	The Getty Explore Art	Linked in	ma.gnolia	ODEO	PPS Image Gallery	Veer
Subscriptions										
Ratings (Allows user to rate an item from the collection – all are star based)		X	X				X			
Reviews, Comments (Allows user to review or comment on the item within a collection)		X	X	X						
Recognition, Reputation, Endorsements (reviewers, comment providers, or members are rated by other users -- “was this review helpful” or “was this a good comment”)		X	X			X				
Comment on a Review			X							

Comparison of Features

Community Some of the sites promote interactions between users.

Sites	AIGA Design Archives	Boxes and Arrows	Epinions	flickr	The Getty Explore Art	Linked in	ma.gnolia	ODEO	PPS Image Gallery	Veer
Profiles (users can create a profile)		X	X	X		X	X	X		
Contacts, People and Contacts (users can create and maintain a list of others)				X		X	X	X		
Groups (allows users to form groups with similar interests, etc.)				X		X	X			
Group Discussions				X						
Messages (allows users to form groups for people with similar interests or affiliations, etc.)							X			
Web of Trust (network of reviewers or comment providers you found useful)			X							

Comparison of Features

Community Some of the sites promote interactions between users.

Sites	AIGA Design Archives	Boxes and Arrows	Epinions	flickr	The Getty Explore Art	Linked in	ma.gnolia	ODEO	PPS Image Gallery	Veer
Suggestions (suggested topics, rated)		X								
Send Invite to Join the Community (users can send invitations to non-members to join)				X		X				
Featured Member (the site features its members)			X							



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