

Homework 3

I decided to stick with the letter of the request from the textbook, and I am going with the following...

- a. Visit the websites of two art museums that sell online memberships, provide their names and URLs to their website.

Two art museum websites I found within the local Detroit, Michigan area which offer memberships choices are...

DIA

<https://www.dia.org/>

Cranbrook

<https://cranbrookartmuseum.org/>

There are many other art museums I reviewed like the art museums at Wayne State University and Oakland University. However, after much research all I could find was places to make donations, but no actual membership options.

- b. Examine each museum website and then provide a written paragraph where you describe the process that a visitor would follow to shop for memberships on each website.

DIA

For the DIA (Detroit Institute for the Arts), the method to access the membership screens is clicking a link near the upper right hand corner of the homepage, which takes you to this screen <https://dia.org/support> . From there you can choose to Become a Member with this link <https://tickets.dia.org/membership/313/join> . This link is in the left-center portion of the membership webpage screen. When choosing to become a member, you are shown a scrolling screen with over 10 membership option choices. From \$100 for 2 people membership for 1 year up to \$25,000 membership for 1 year of 4 adults, their children and grandchildren and 10 VIP tickets, and other discounts. There are also teacher memberships also for 5 years for \$5000 which include events notifications and other items of interest to educators.

CRANBROOK

For the Cranbrook Art Museum, there are 2 methods on the homepage to get to the membership screens. The upper right area of the screen contains dynamic rollover menus which show with the mouse is rolled over the words. The words “Join and Support” show a drop-down menu with the membership choice as the first selection of this drop-down. The other method to get to the membership screens is to scroll the homepage down about 1 full page of distance and the left side contains a choice to pick the membership link. Both of these methods from the homepage take you to this webpage <https://cranbrookartmuseum.org/membership/> . The method to scroll down 1 page-full of content shows what looks like a button with the word “Membership” in it, but in fact it is not a button it is a label. The button below that is labeled “Learn More” is where you need to click. The membership webpage at the top center contains what looks like a link, but it is a named anchor tag which scrolls you down the same webpage you are already visiting <https://cranbrookartmuseum.org/membership/#levels> . It looks like there are 8 levels of membership, but it is really only 7 levels. The first choice is called Explore Cranbrook which is really 2 admission tickets for \$110. The memberships are 7 levels from \$75 to \$2500. Each is hidden below a dynamic button below an image, which shows the actual benefits of that level of membership.

- c. Evaluate how well each site describes its membership options and encourages a visitor to purchase a membership. Also, consider ease of shopping, how clearly the site describes membership options, and where the website makes a convincing case for buying a membership.

DIA

For the DIA, the membership choices are straightforward and easy to compare by simply scrolling down the webpage. Since the choices are organized in monetary increasing order, it is easy to compare differences and added benefits each membership provides when compared to the one above and the one below. There is a join now button on each level that takes you to the purchase screen with the monetary amount you have chosen. The purchase screen is straight forward and provides places to make additional donations and choose to renew annual membership automatically. Attractions like discounts at the café and bookstore are advertised. Also, events which require a separate ticket are provided as the membership levels increase. The join now buttons take you to a webpage where the choice is a Query string within the webpage removing the need for separate webpages for each level of membership.

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The Cranbrook screen is a mess of rows and columns of buttons which expand hidden text below the image. But it does not change the webpage you are currently on, so the text was on the webpage all along. The text was not shown without clicking the drop-down at the bottom of each image. The comparison is a miss-mosh of horizontal scrolling and vertical scanning with your eyes to see the choices and benefits of each level of membership. Each join now button takes you to a different membership screen based on the URL. For example, <https://cranbrookartmuseum.org/product/individual-membership/> is the individual membership webpage, while https://cranbrookartmuseum.org/product/companion_plus/ is the companion plus membership webpage. Choosing higher levels of membership provide other Cranbrook attractions to entice membership levels increase, for example, the Institute of Science and the Cranbrook House and Gardens.

- d. Provide at least one recommendation for improving each of the websites you have chosen.

DIA

There is little to add as suggestions for improvement with the DIA membership webpages. It is professional, easy to navigate, and excellent all around. If there is anything to say, it might be that clicking the membership links takes you to this webpage first <https://dia.org/support> which is really an information page about membership and other auxiliary groups and items related to memberships. This is not the real membership joining details webpage here <https://tickets.dia.org/membership/313/join> . This overall is excellent also as it provides information which may entice you to donate and/or find out more information with the DIA before joining.

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There are not enough words for all the improvements the Cranbrook Art Museum website should engage in to improve the membership purchasing experience. The Companion Plus Membership is named Basic Membership when the detailed information is shown. This is just a tiny example of the overall lack of care this website takes. It has lots of large pictures as enticements, which is good, but labels looking like buttons with buttons looking like labels are another small example of trouble. I personally think that the rollover dropdown menus (which Cranbrook has plenty of) is one of the greatest sins of the web. Confusion and scrolling are everywhere. Important information is hidden. Membership, not being right in front of the top of the homepage as a call to action, is a big red flag for improvement.