

WEB MEMO

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The following document outlines the key objectives, goals, audiences, personas, and content/functionality relevant to the NYSCASA website. It will be used to evaluate website concepts and designs.

OBJECTIVE

NYSCASA is a statewide organization with the primary focus of serving the Rape Crisis Programs of New York State. NYSCASA also works with all populations to prevent sexual assault and exploitation. They do this through legislative work, public education, advocacy and outreach.

The current NYSCASA.org website, outdated both visually and structurally, is no longer communicating the depth of the organization. Information is buried and difficult to access. And updates to the website, internally, have been inconsistent and at times impossible to make.

The objective of this project, therefore, is to create a new Information Architecture and Design for NYSCASA.org that allows for future expandability and better communicates the mission and overall vibrancy of the organization.

GOALS

General:

- To raise visibility for the work NYSCASA is doing in the field of Anti-Sexual Violence.

Specific:

- To improve NYSCASA's ability to provide timely and accurate training, technical assistance, and consultation to individuals or organizations responsible for interacting with people affected by sexual Violence.
- To provide a means for encouraging individuals to get involved in the Anti-Sexual Violence movement.
- To better support the needs of Victims/Survivors/Advocates of Sexual Violence who are looking for Hotline Numbers and Local Prevention, Crisis, or Recovery services.

For Individuals using the website, we would want them to say things like:

- "It's clear from the homepage who this organization is, and that they are really active in the field"
- "It's easy to find local Rape Crisis Programs"
- "There is a lot of information that really helps me to understand more about Sexual Assault"

- “The resources on this website will better help me in advocating for, or working with victims of Sexual Assault”
- “I like to come to this website to see what is happening in the State of New York to improve legislation and public policy as related to Sexual Violence”.

REQUIREMENTS

The site should be:

- *Accessible* to individuals of all abilities, and *sensitive* to the needs of victims/survivors of Sexual Assault.
- *Flexible*, in its ability to expand and grow in the future as more programs and initiatives are launched within NYSCASA.
- *Easy to update* internally, by staff with little to no HTML knowledge.

AUDIENCES

Primary

- **Sacha (Professional Seeking Info about Sexual Assault)**
Sacha is an MD/PhD. He teaches advanced biochemistry to medical students at SUNY Downstate. He’s been asked to provide technical assistance on better specimen-collection practices for sexual assault forensic exams. Sacha is at the forefront of his field, but knows nothing of the actualities of sexual assault—specifically in New York State. *He needs a brief, accurate, and un-watered down background on what happens to a survivor of a recent sexual assault.*
- **Carrie (Educator)**
Carrie is 33 years old. She’s a High School Sex Ed teacher. Carrie lives in an urban area, but was born and raised in a Christian community in Texas. She’s from the abstinence-only school of thought, and only teaches about sexual violence because it’s a district mandate. She’s visiting the NYSCASA website in search of information for lesson plans. She is looking for clear, simple information that she will not find offensive or immoral. *NYSCASA hopes that the information and statistics that she finds on the homepage may make her re-think preconceived notions of sexual assault.*
- **Harry (Law Enforcement)**
Harry is 28 years old, African American. Last week he was called to respond to a domestic violence call with his older partner in an African American inner city neighborhood. Harry felt that there *might be more to the situation than was immediately evident regarding the disabled 12-year-old daughter of the victim. He has limited training in sexual assault or with people with disabilities* and he goes to the Internet to find information.
- **Sophia (Prosecutor)**
Sophia is an undisclosed survivor of sexual violence. At age 50, she’s finally piecing her past together, and

realizing that the violence she lived through really wasn't socially normative even though it was acceptable in the Italian-American enclave where she was raised. *Sophia wants to know more about sexual assault and violence, but does not feel comfortable discussing it with friends or family. She's looking for accurate and honest information to validate her experiences.* A latecomer to technology, it would be great if the website and information within it were easily accessible. Point, click, and read.

Secondary

▪ **Madeline (Victims / Survivors)**

Madeline is 26 years old. She's a student at a state school, and is a victim of sexual violence and needs help. She's worried about using the computer to find information on Sexual Assault Hotlines / Resources - because she knows her boyfriend uses her computer all the time to check her emails to her family. Regardless, she searches the web and comes across the NYSCASA site. *She's looking for any information that will help get her to a safer place - and to recover from her current situation.*

▪ **Sujani (Student)**

Sujani is 19 years old. She's a student at a small, exclusive, private college in the mid-Hudson, and is exploring her sexuality as a lesbian. As a first-generation American Sujani struggles with straddling the values of her South Asian parents and her American community. A feminist, Sujani found out about NYSCASA from a poster on campus. She went to the website for information on *NYSCASA events*. *Sujani is concerned that certain aspects of her current sexual relationship are making her uncomfortable but she is not really sure what constitutes sexual abuse when applied to a same-sex couple.*

▪ **Frank (Advocate for a Victim)**

Frank is 63 years old. He's a father of 5 children, living in California. Frank's youngest daughter, Sarah (age 27), was just 12 years old when her mother passed away. Since then, she's been through a number of ups and downs. 2 years ago, she decided to pick up everything and move to New York City. She quickly became involved with a man named Tom; and at his insistence, moved into his apartment a few months ago when she lost her job. Frank was always a bit leery of Tom. He seemed somewhat possessive and controlling of Sarah's time. He hardly got to speak with her anymore. *Concerned that Sarah is in a dangerous situation, he starts searching the web for information about Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and comes across the NYSCASA website.*

▪ **Pilar (Works at a Sister Organization)**

Pilar is 42 years old. She has been working at NOCASA, a sister organization to NYSCASA for 8 years. She is deeply connected to the Hispanic community where she grew up and travels frequently to her grandparent's home in Mexico. She wants to help her community change the traditional attitudes of men regarding sexual violence. As a single mother of a 19-year-old male college student, *she's interested in fact sheets, statistics and programs involving men in the fight against sexual violence. She is looking for program material that she might be able to adapt to a multicultural environment.*

Tertiary**▪ Aiko (Board Member)**

Aiko is 34 years old. She is an active NYSCASA board member. Aiko, who has a high-powered job, is a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. *Aiko wants to be able to download a PowerPoint presentation that NYSCASA has prepared because she is giving a presentation to the Elks club in the hopes of involving them in a new Men Can Stop Rape campaign. She wants to access the most recent stats about childhood sexual assault to add to the PowerPoint at the last minute. Aiko also wants to be able to find out about board meetings and minutes and the discussion about the new Executive Director search without plowing through piles of email. She wants current email address and phone numbers of her fellow board members at her fingertips. Aiko has spent a lot of time organizing a major fundraiser for NYSCASA and wants to see the results and kudos on the NYSCASA home page.*

▪ Shandrel (Staff)

Shandrel has been working at NYSCASA for several years as a general staffer. Shandrel has a GED and limited computer skills. He is defensive about his lack of knowledge and this makes him resistant to using the computer/internet to make tasks easier and information more accessible to the staff. One of his weekly tasks is updating the constantly changing Rape Crisis Provider information, a critical source of information for all NYSCASA web users. *Shandrel resists these updates to the website because the web program currently used is technical and clumsy and he is terrified that he will not be able add the corrections properly and that the whole website will be ruined.*

▪ Linda (Grant Funders)

Linda is 53 years old. She works for the New York State Department of Health.

She is the grant manager for a media grant awarded to NYSCASA. *She is on the website to be sure that the deliverables proposed (new web site for a campaign addressing young men and sexual violence) for the grant have been met.*