

Design Workout - Design Iterations

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Introduction

The Aasgard Company website is a relatively simple site with relatively simple content-based goals. Despite this it's extremely poor execution is obvious from not only a visual, but a content perspective. This combination of factors made it an excellent candidate for this exercise.

The Aasgard Company site has a number of fundamental issues that permeate the entire site. Some are visual, like the startling lack of contrast in many pages. This comes in the form of both textual uniformity, which tends to allow the user to get lost in larger bodies of text, as well as in color uniformity, which does nothing to lead the user to the content they are after. In addition, the structure of the content seems to defy convention. Both the Q&A and News pages direct the user immediately to content outside the main site. The first forwards the user to AasgardCo.com's sister site, StartingStrength.com, while the second brings the user to AasgardCo's Twitter page. Both pieces of content, though integral parts of the Aasgard Company and Starting Strength brand, are disjoint from the main Aasgard Company site. I included screenshots of my main focal pages, Home, Store and Contact, as well as a number of other pages to demonstrate how my design iterations seek to improve the site in a holistic way. I chose to address the content organization problems with my visual designs, as well as make visual improvements.

Original Site




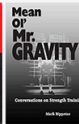


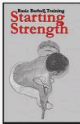

The Aasgaard Company

Publisher & Seller
Only the Best in Strength Training Books, Media and Services

[CONTACT](#) [STORE](#) [NEWS](#) [FAQ](#) [Q&A](#) [HOME](#)

Our Company

The Aasgaard Company publishes and distributes **books** and other **media** that promote the application of science to training and conditioning. The Aasgaard Company also provides training **seminars** and educational symposia for athletes and strength and conditioning professionals. Our philosophy is based on a recognition of the superiority of free weight and barbell training systems. Our intent is to maximize the effectiveness of exercise through the use of classic methods of training and quality equipment. The Aasgaard Company is committed to quality products, prompt service, and making you and your athletes stronger.



HOME

CONTACT


NEWS

FAQ


Q&A

STORE

Products




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Wholesale information

Training




Rippetoe Q&A and Training Discussion at the Starting Strength Forums



Starting Strength: Articles and Resources

Home Page



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Main

[Company Home](#)
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Product Catalog


[Catalog Home](#)
[New](#)
[Books](#)
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[T-Shirts](#)

Search [GO](#)
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Your Cart

Your cart is empty.

[View Cart](#)

 [Click to Validate](#)

Account Options

Username:

Password:

☐ Remember me

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Product Catalog

Special Release, **SSB8T3**

[Books](#)

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[Seminars](#)

[T-Shirts](#)

Book & DVD Special

15% off eligible books and dvd with a product total of \$60 or more.

Ordering FAQ

Please see our ordering information page.

- Card Approval Problems
- General Shipping
- International Orders
- Other International Sources
- APO/FPO/DPO Orders
- 2011 Holiday Shipping

DOMESTIC SHIPPING

Shipping on **BOOK/DVD** orders over \$25.00 using **Media Mail** through the **USPS** is free. Just select the **FREE STANDARD SHIPPING** option when you check out.

Store Page



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The Aasgaard Company

3118 Buchanan St
Wichita Falls TX 76308

Order Inquiries:
customerservice@aaasgaardco.com

General questions:
customerservice@aaasgaardco.com or
(940)696-0829

For DMCA/Copyright Concerns
contact Stef Bradford



Mark Rippetoe
Wichita Falls Athletic Club
rip@startingstrength.com



Stef Bradford, PhD
stef@startingstrength.com

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Products



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Training



Rippetoe Q&A and
Training Discussion
at the Starting
Strength Forums



Starting Strength:
Articles and
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Contact Page



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Articles, Videos, Q&A and TRAINING DISCUSSION can be found at our
Starting Strength site.

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Rippetoe Q&A and
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at the Starting
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Q & A Page



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FAQ

- Ordering, Orders**
 - Why do you need my phone number?
 - How do I cancel an order?
 - Sometime I ended up with more than one order. How do I cancel it?
 - I got my order and it is wrong or damaged. What do I do?
 - My DVD isn't playing sound across both speakers. Is something wrong with it?
 - My DVD isn't playing right in some players. Is something wrong with the disc?
 - Can I buy Starting Strength 1st ed and 2nd ed?
- Payment**
 - What payment types are accepted?
 - Why is my credit card being rejected?
- Shipping**
 - Has my order been shipped?
 - International**
 - Do you ship products internationally?
 - Special address requirements
 - What are international shipping costs?
 - What is the estimated delivery time for international orders?
 - Will you mark the package as "gift" to limit taxes imposed for import?
 - What is the total that will be marked on the package?
 - What other sources are there for international customers?
 - Domestic (USA)**
 - What shipping methods are available? How long do they take?
 - Do you ship to PO boxes?
 - What shipping method do you recommend?
 - APO/FPO/DPO**
 - What shipping methods are available? How long do they take?
 - Special concerns for APO/FPO
 - What shipping method do you recommend?
 - Holiday Season Shipping Dates**
 - Multiple item order discounts
 - Wholesale Pricing
 - USA only: Free Standard Shipping
- Special Requests**
 - Can my order be sent as a gift?
- Sales Terms & Return Policy**

Orders and Items

- Why do you need my phone number?**

A phone number provides a way for us to quickly contact you if there is a problem with an order. Phone numbers can be important for international orders as they provide a way that you can be reached if there is a problem with your package at Customs or during delivery. **Please note that some credit card issuers require a correct phone number for any transaction approval.** (Back to Top)
- How do I cancel an order?**

FAQ Page

Starting Strength

[Home](#)
[About](#)
[Contact](#)
[Products](#)
[Resources](#)
[Forums](#)



Most recent updates

- Utilizing Intuitive Training
- SS:BBT3 Pulling Mechanics 2
- SS:BBT3 Learning to Press
- SS:BBT3 Pulling Mechanics
- Wanna Bet?
- Platform: The Squat - Bar Position

Products

- Seminars**
 - Starting Strength Seminars
 - Starting Strength Training Camps
- Books**
 - Starting Strength
 - Practical Programming
 - Strong Enough
 - Mean Ol' Mr. Gravity
 - More Books
- Other**
 - Starting Strength DVD
 - T-shirts

Search

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Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Utilizing Intuitive Training

by Bill Starr

[At] some point, any athlete who really wants to move ahead of the pack has to take it upon himself to adjust and revise his routine. Doing what everyone else is doing works well in the beginning, but to continue following the herd even when things get sticky is not the right path to the top.

Article: [pdf](#), [Kindle](#)

[Resources Page](#)

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Posted by [ssb](#) in [Permalink](#)

Monday, November 14, 2011

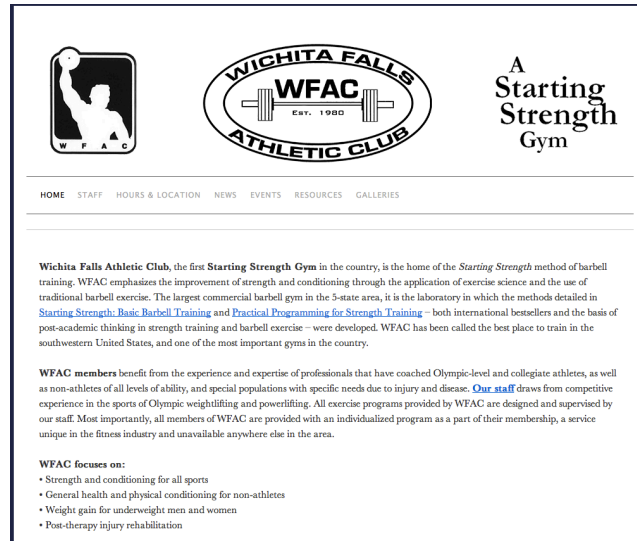
SS:BBT3 Pulling Mechanics 2



EVENTS

- [Starting Strength Seminar](#)
 Atlanta, GA
 January 20-22, 2012
- [Starting Strength Seminar](#)
 Redmond, WA
 February 24-26, 2012
- [Starting Strength Seminar](#)
 Costa Mesa, CA
 March 9-11, 2012
- [Starting Strength Seminar](#)
 Brooklyn, NY
 April 13-15, 2012

Starting Strength Page



Gym Page

Problems With Home Page

The home page has a number of main problems that I wanted to address. The major issues that I saw are listed below:

- Lack of contrast
 - Although underlined, links are still difficult to distinguish because they are gray, while the text is black and the background is white
 - The main navigation links don't have give any feedback on mouseover
 - Headings are the same size and font as body text, making it difficult to distinguish the message from the title
- Lack of context
 - There are pictures of what looks to be books and potentially a DVD in the center of the page, but they are given no context, so their presence is confusing. They are clickable, which is the only saving grace.
- Confusion because there are no calls to action
 - The most distinct elements on the page are the colorful book covers, but they are given no context, so it is initially unclear what is supposed to be done.
 - The menu is repeated at the bottom of the page, with some strange categorical additions forwarding the user to four sections of the site through poorly highlighted links

Problems With Store Page

The store page completely changes the look of the site, abandoning its established conventions for navigation, layout, and content styles. It also offers no immediate way to purchase items. Given that the home page offers immediate links to specific products, but the

store page does not, I feel that there could be some significant improvements made to the purchase interface progression.

From a visual perspective, the page could do with some layout adjustment to make sure that it conforms to the look and feel of the rest of the site. It could also use some work on visual highlighting of key content, like specials or featured products.

From a simple interaction perspective, the page moves the navigation away from the top and places it on the side. It also changes the menu from horizontal to vertical, shrinks the font size of the links quite a bit and changes the order of the links. All of these things lead me, as a user, to feel that the site is unfamiliar and confusing.

Problems With Contact Page

The contact page is honestly the best of the three pages, but still has a number of significant issues:

- It contains very little contrast in the typefaces used.
- The content section seems to be disjoint, both in layout and in styling, from the header section.
- For a page whose primary purpose is to display what are essentially key-value pairs of data in the form of a label and a value. (e.g. “Order Inquiries:” and an email address)
- The same email address is listed for two separate issues, which seems unnecessary. There is no request for subject specification in an email, so by not providing a contact form, the authors are creating more work for the user, not less.
- There are two bizarre images in representing two more contact names and email addresses. Those individuals are also not given titles or any other kind of internal context (Mark’s contact information lists him as being associated with the Wichita Falls Athletic Club, Aasgard Co’s other sister company. There are no other mentions of the gym within the site.)

Overall Iteration Plan and Progression

In my design iterations, I attempted to develop solutions to the basic problems that I’ve listed above, as well as make incremental improvements on my own designs throughout the process. I sought to also provide a uniform look and feel for the site through each iteration phase to ensure user familiarity with each page regardless of the iteration.

Home Page Iterations



Iteration 1

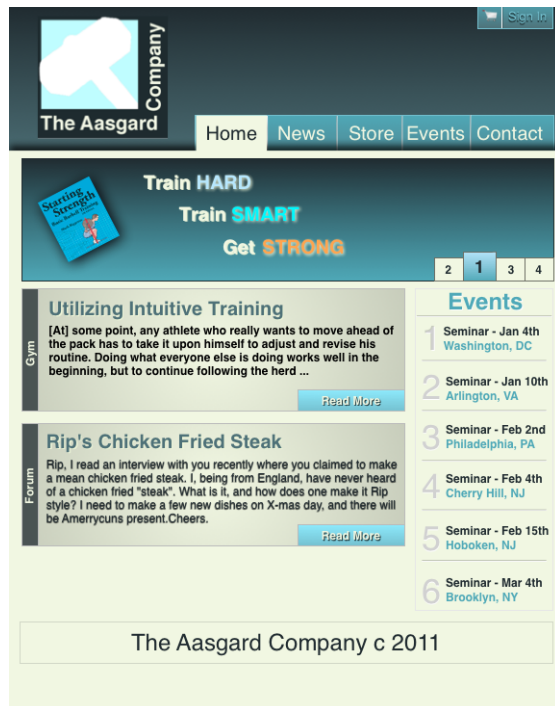
I had a number of goals for this first iteration:

1. Provide feedback on what page the user was currently on
2. Make the large block of text on the original home page more accessible by shortening it and highlighting both the text as a whole and it's salient points.
3. I wanted to give some more significant context to the primary content links on the page through images and boxes
4. I wanted to provide greater contrast in both text and color



Iteration 2

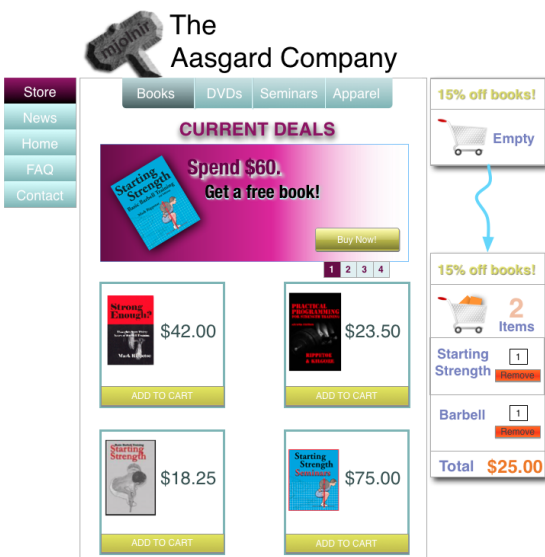
For this iteration, I wanted to utilize a more cohesive color scheme, make more prominent the major paths available to the user and bring the shopping cart / account functionality into the forefront in an unobtrusive way. The result is a more compact, relatively high contrast interface that is much more orderly than the original or the first iteration.



Iteration 3

For the third iteration, I wanted to utilize the color scheme that I established in the second iteration and continue using the horizontal menu. In iteration two, the message at the top was still distracting and out of place. Although it kept the initial message from the original home page somewhat intact, the text still had no real context and just made me feel a little bit lost. I also sought to pull in some of the essential content that lived in the sister sites of The Aasgard Company. That content lives in the featured articles boxes below the slideshow box, next to the other important content, a schedule of seminars. Since one of the most prominent item categories on the site is the seminars they are selling, I saw fit to include a listing of the upcoming events on the right hand side. For a similar reason, I saw fit to do away with the FAQ section button in the nav bar, since the FAQ section contains content related to the store, and in most other sites, that content lives in a support page of some kind.

Store Page Iterations



Iteration 1

For this first iteration of the store page, I sought to provide some uniformity to the interface, provide immediate entrance to the products for sale and give the user a way to easily browse both featured products and to filter the products by category.

I also wanted to give the user a prominent view of the current cart contents.



Iteration 2

With this iteration of the store page, I maintained the look and feel from the other second iteration pages, while adding a more structured look to the item display. I also moved both the category selection widget and cart view to the side to provide an even simpler, bisected view of the store. In this iteration, settings live on the left, while products live on the right.

I also made an attempt to provide feedback in the interface for deals, as can be seen with the green price on the featured book. Overall, I believe it to be a drastic improvement over the first iteration.



Iteration 3


For this iteration, I kept the look of the third iteration of the home page design, moved the sign in to the top of the page to follow a login convention that has become prevalent in ecommerce sites today and made some simple enhancements to both the category selection and cart view widgets.

As for the item display, I chose to follow a more PhotoJojo.com style design for the item view, while still keeping a featured item section at the top, differentiating items in three ways:

- deal items have ribbons
- deal items have an orange border (unless in the cart)
- deal items live on the top

This iteration also allows for many items to be viewed fairly easily with pagination of the normal product view section (denoted by the box with a drop shadow).

Contact Page Iterations




The Aasgard Company


[Home](#)[News](#)[Store](#)[FAQ](#)[Contact](#)

Address
3118 Buchanan St
Wichita Falls, TX 76308

Order Inquiries
customerservice@aaasgardco.com

Phone
(940) 696 - 0829


**Mark Rippatoe**
rip@startingstrength.com

**Stef Bradford**
stef@startingstrength.com

All Other Inquiries

Iteration 1

For the first iteration of the contact page, I sought to make the main information more available, provide greater contrast for the labels and corresponding information and finally provide a contact form for quicker utilization of the information provided on this page.



We help people MAXIMIZE the EFFECTIVENESS of exercise through classic methods and quality equipment.

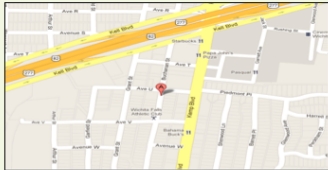
[Home](#)[News](#)[Store](#)[FAQ](#)[Contact](#)

You can find The Aasgard Company at:

3118 Buchanan St,
Wichita Falls, TX 71308

940 - 696 - 0829

customerservice@aaasgardco.com




Hi, my name is and I wanted to speak with someone about . Please get back to me about the following:

The Aasgard Company c 2011

Iteration 2

This iteration is a little bit more interesting. In addition to collecting the contact information on the page and providing a map to the location, I tried to provide a more useful contact form. This form is meant to mimic a letter of sorts, giving the user context for the information they are entering through clues in the surrounding text. It also allows the user to enter the purpose of their message, which would further allow the site to gather subject information for the email and direct messages to the proper address without undue burden on the user.



The Aasgard Company

Home

News

Store

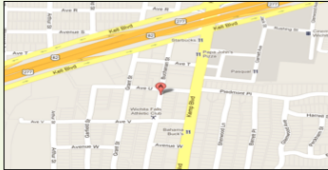
Events

Contact

3118 Buchanan St,
Wichita Falls, TX 71308

940 - 696 - 0829

customerservice@asgardco.com



Send us a message:

Your Name

Your Email Address

You want to talk about

an order

How can we help you?

Send Your Message

The Aasgard Company c 2011

Iteration 3

Because I found the letter style form to be a bit cluttered and confusing, I chose to move back toward the more traditional style of form, but included the same fields to keep the benefits of that form.

There are also a couple of basic visual improvements to the existing form fields that better maintain the look and feel of this iteration phase.