asi®
Signage Innovations™

Untangling the Complexity of a Convoluted System

ASI's Website Navigation and Information Architecture Redesign

CLICK STEP TO NAVIGATE TO SECTION

Step 1

OVERVIEW

Navigation, a quintessential part of the user experience.

Step 2

RESEARCH

The cornerstone of any design project.

Step 3

RESULTS

To improve overall user satisfaction.

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Overview

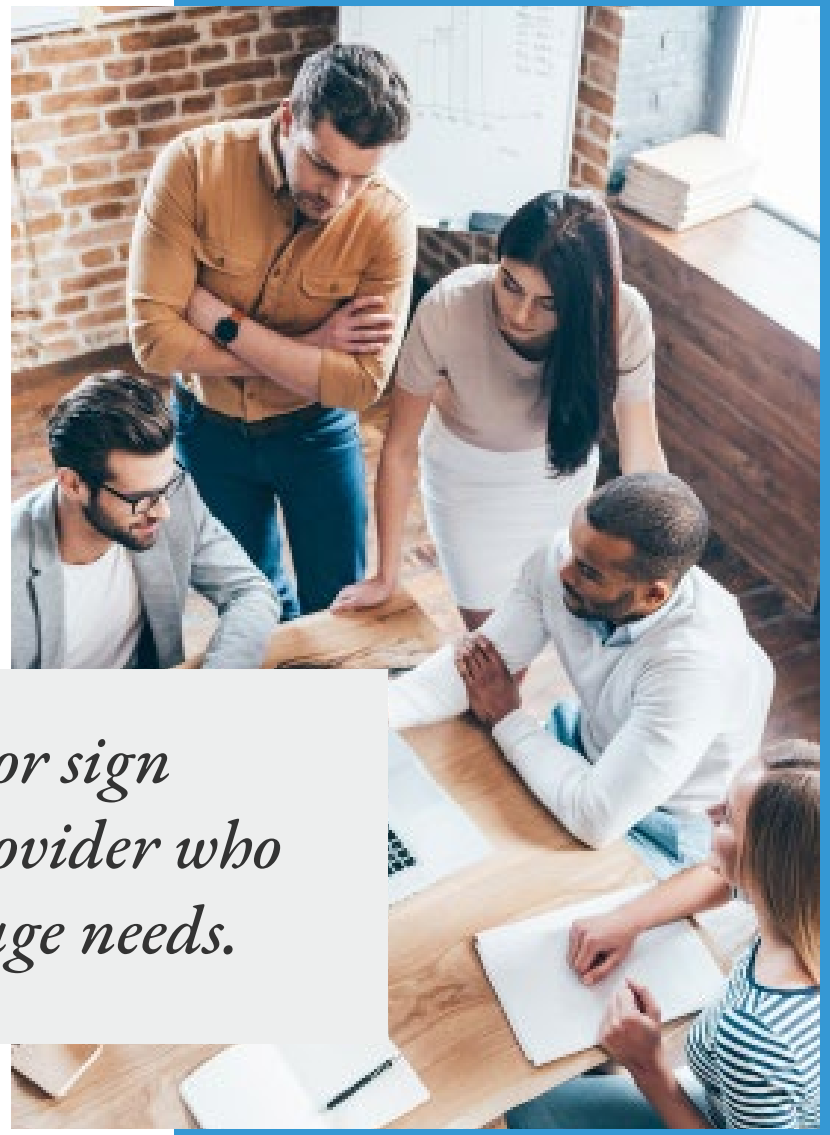
Navigation is a quintessential part of the user experience and website strategy.
It can help improve discoverability, readability, and reduce mental load.

BACK TO TOP

OVERVIEW

Company Overview

ASI, a national architectural signage company, specializes in turn-key solutions. Over 40 years ago, they differentiated themselves in the market by creating an innovative type setting system for interior signs and they continue to be a respected source of innovation and knowledge within their industry.



A common misconception is that ASI is just an interior sign company as opposed to a turn-key signage solution provider who can meet complex interior, exterior, and digital signage needs.

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OVERVIEW

Industry Position

The signage industry is a broad market that has a variety of stakeholders, decision makers, and applications. ASI specializes in serving the relationship driven architectural market.

COMMERCIAL

$200K AND ABOVE

Large Exterior Signage
Viewed from Great Distance
Reveals Construction Elements

Bid Projects, Highly Competitive

ARCHITECTURAL

$50K - $200K PROJECTS

Interior, Exterior, and Digital
Elegant Design, Quality Materials
Wayfinding, Design-build

Negotiated Sales, Relationship Driven

COMMODITY

BELOW $50K

Graphic Communication
Banners, Generic Signage
Little Customization

No Hassle Ordering, Top of Mind

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OVERVIEW

Problem **Statement**

In signage, wayfinding is the art of seamlessly guiding visitors through complex campuses.

However, after years of adding products and content elements, ASI's own website signposts had become tangled and cluttered, resulting in user confusion and a less-than-ideal browsing experience. The company decided that while migrating platforms they would also take the opportunity to reorganize the information and navigation of the site.

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OVERVIEW

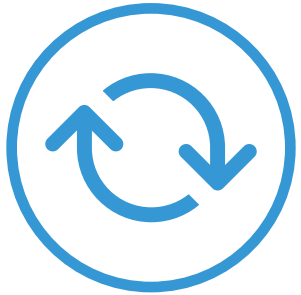
Project Goals

ENHANCE FINDABILITY

Evaluate classifications and hierarchy. Implement navigation that facilitates easy, quick access to high demand content.

OPTIMIZE CONTENT

Simplify the global navigation, restructure and refine information, and reduce content complexity.



ESTABLISH CONSISTENCY

Ensure uniform look, consistent functionality, and user-friendly wayfinding across all sections of the site.

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OVERVIEW

Sparrow Kelley

Over the course of 18 months, I led a team of five, comprising designers, copywriters, and researchers, and collaborated with an external web development team to restructure and redesign the global navigation of ASI's website.

MY ROLES

- Team Lead
- Information Architect
- Navigation Designer
- UX Designer

MY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Content Inventory & Audits
- Current & Future State Sitemaps
- Card Sorting & Tree Testing
- Classification & Labeling

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Research

As the cornerstone of any design project, research equips us with the necessary knowledge to be trusted partners in addressing our clients needs.

BACK TO TOP

RESEARCH

User Demographics

The established user profile of ASI clientele includes architects and facility managers between the age of 45-60, who look to ASI for a complete signage solution.

While they have proficiency with Microsoft Office and email they are often limited in their use of advanced or new technology. They most often use their computer to access the ASI website as opposed to tablets or mobile phones.

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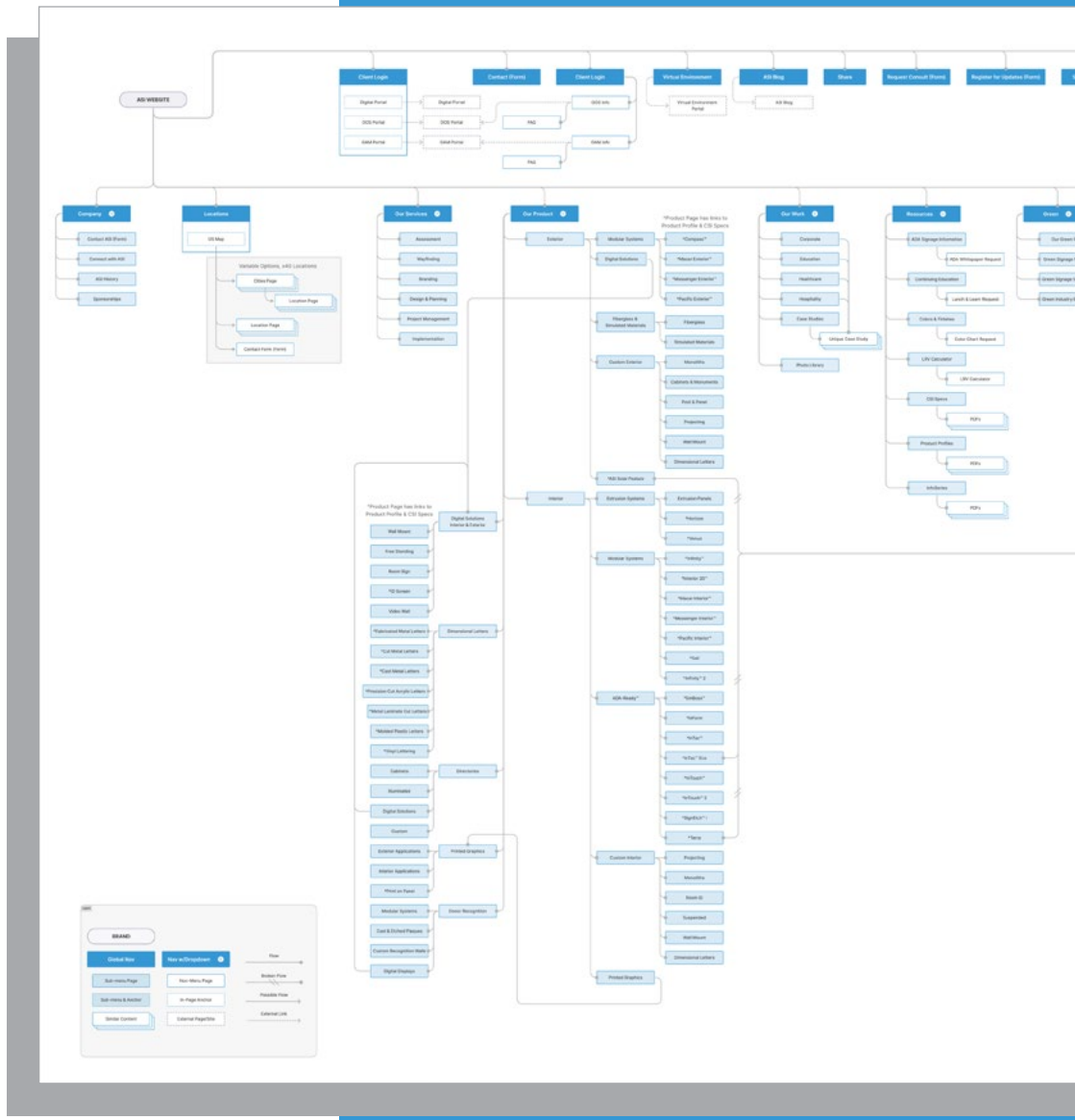
RESEARCH

Content Audit

To begin I conducted a thorough audit to identify valuable content that would need to be migrated.

I started with a basic Information Architecture (IA) tree to understand the structure of the site and the order of where content resided. I then moved to creating a sitemap to better understand the existing navigation flow.

VIEW SITE MAPS



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RESEARCH

Audit Findings

- ✗ Overall structure too wide & deep
- ✓ Verbiage aligns with brand identity
- ✗ Product lineup overly complex
- ✗ Good content was hidden or buried
- ✗ Multiple layers of sub-navigations
- ✗ Inconsistent look & function of menus

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RESEARCH

User Research

Next it was vital to understand our users' needs, behaviors, and pain points in relation to how they interacted with the ASI website.

We began by reviewing the Analytics, which showed that the most often visited pages were:

1. Case Studies landing page
2. Location map and pages
3. Resource pages such as: Construction Specifications Institute Documents (CSI Specs), Product Profiles, and Light Reflectance Value (LRV) Calculator

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RESEARCH

User Personas

Our team pulled quantitative data from Google Analytics and compared it with qualitative information provided by key stakeholders to more clearly understand who we were optimizing the site for.

I created 6 relatable personas in recognizable scenarios to help visualize challenges and frustrations visitors may encounter. I included factors such as project needs, signage experience, and technological proficiency.

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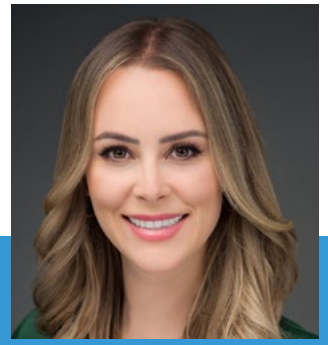
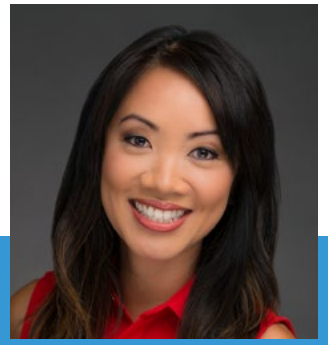
RESEARCH

User Personas

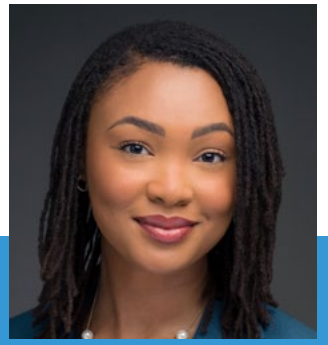


COMPETENT CLARA
Envr. Graphic Designer
Experienced User



EXPERIENCED EMMA
Architect
Experienced User

NAIVE NADIR
Facility Manager
First Time User



RUSHED REGINA
Interior Designer
Returning User

ECO-FRIENDLY EVAN
Architect, LEED Project
Returning User

VIEW USER PERSONAS

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RESEARCH

Card Sorting

Then we moved our focus to the product lineup, which our audit had shown to be overly complex; containing extraneous and obsolete products.

We conducted remote card sorting exercises with key stakeholders to validate and refine our proposed content redesign.

Product was first color coded by interior, exterior, digital, and other. Pink was used for new products and categories.

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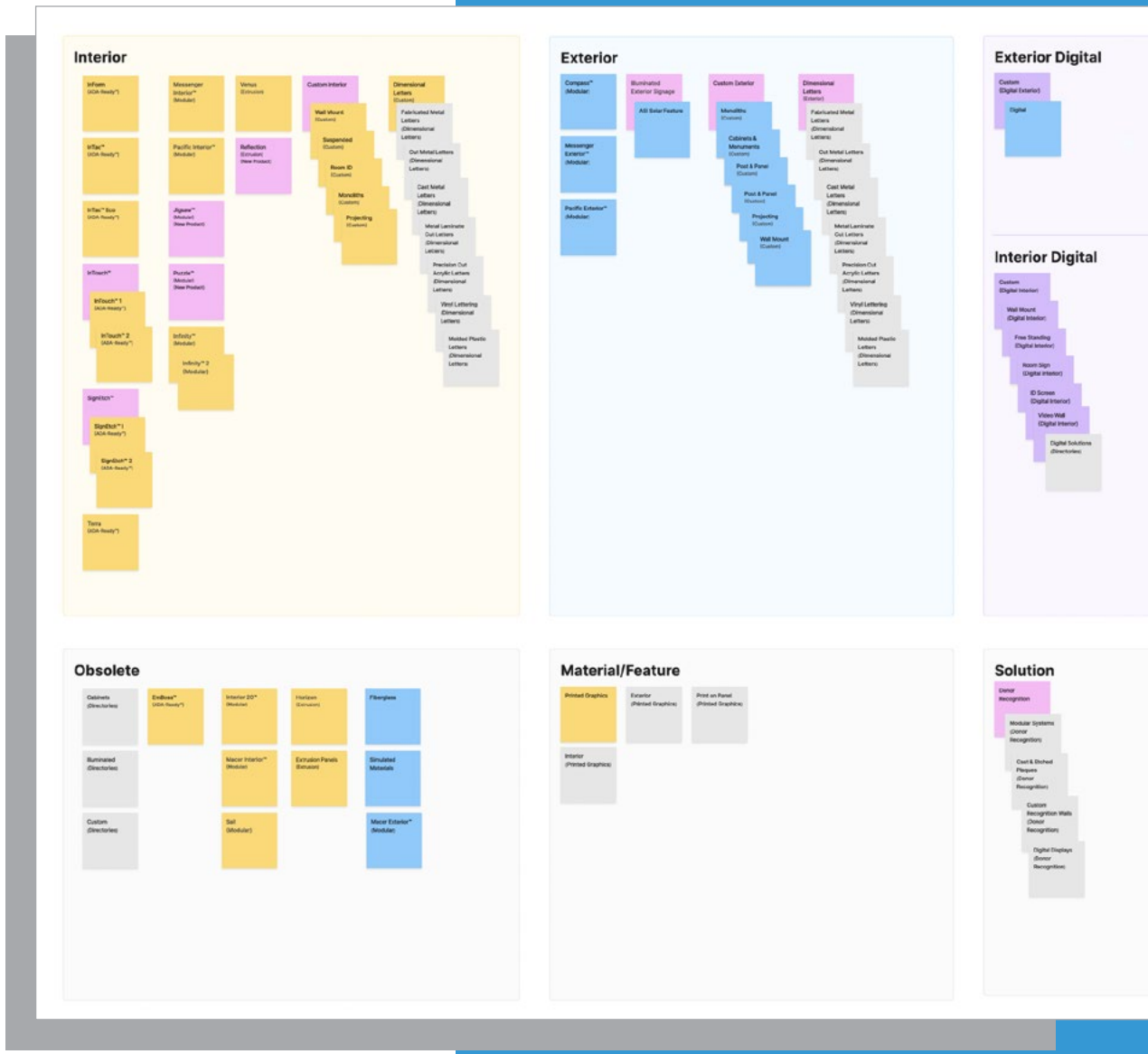
RESEARCH

Card Sorting

Our aim was to simplify the categories into Interior, Exterior, and Digital signage. But as we worked through the exercise their feedback showed that some product listings were not products at all. Some were shifted to materials or features of products and Donor Recognition was moved into the “Solutions” category.

VIEW CARD SORTING PDF



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RESEARCH

Additional Findings

During the card sorting exercise, with our stakeholders collaboration, we were able to identify additional industry verticals listed on the site that could be sorted into the “Solutions’’ category. These included Government (GSA), Sustainable Solutions (Green), and ADA Compliance.

We incorporated their feedback and added these new sections to ASI’s previously existing “Solutions” which included Corporate, Education, Hospitality, Healthcare, and Cultural.

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Results

By organizing and structuring information effectively we can help users find what they need and ultimately improve overall satisfaction.

BACK TO TOP

RESULTS

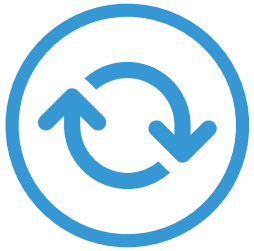
Project Goals

ENHANCE FINDABILITY

Update classifications and hierarchy. Implement navigation that facilitates easy, quick access to high demand content.

OPTIMIZE CONTENT

Simplify the global navigation, restructure and refine information, and reduce content complexity.



ESTABLISH CONSISTENCY

Ensure uniform look, consistent functionality, and user-friendly wayfinding across all sections of the site.

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Enhance **Findability**

After evaluating the classifications and hierarchy of the site we made the following changes to ensure the navigation facilitated easy, quick access to high demand content.

- Updated global navigation category names to more descriptive and intuitive verbiage
- Reorganized the hierarchy of drop down menus
- Shifted content for established users to an extended footer

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RESULTS

Category Names

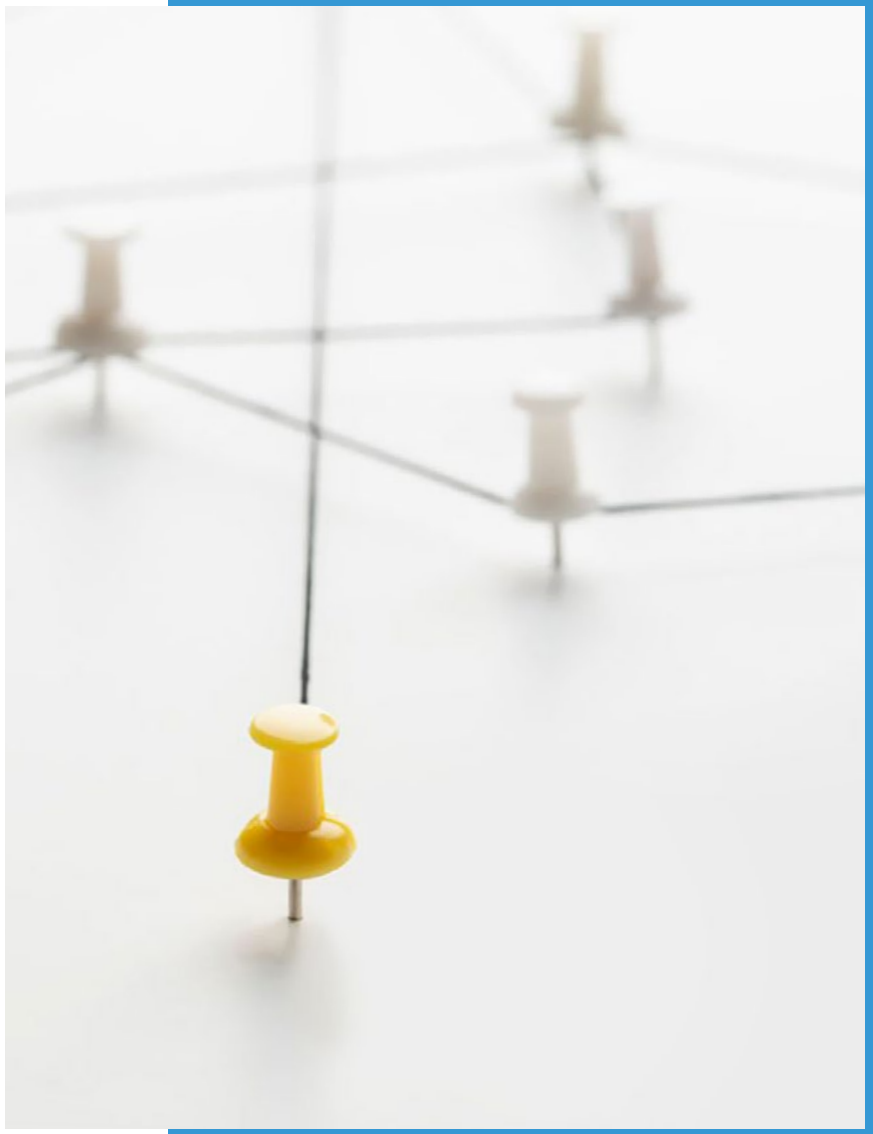
We streamlined the naming convention of the global navigation, removed extraneous words such as “Our”, and updated the verbiage to be more intuitive.

Our Services → Solutions

Our Work → Success Stories

Our Product → Sign Selection

Our Blog → News



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RESULTS

Menu Organization

We structured each category based on the most effective way to access its content allowing users to navigate and access content more intuitively.

- **Sign Process** was organized chronologically, walking the visitor through the entire solution process
- **Sign Selection** was organized by Interior, Exterior, then Digital to align with the order established by the brand. Then their subcategories ordered hierarchical, by importance
- **Solutions** was organized by hierarchical, with important solutions such as ADA and Sustainable Solutions at the top

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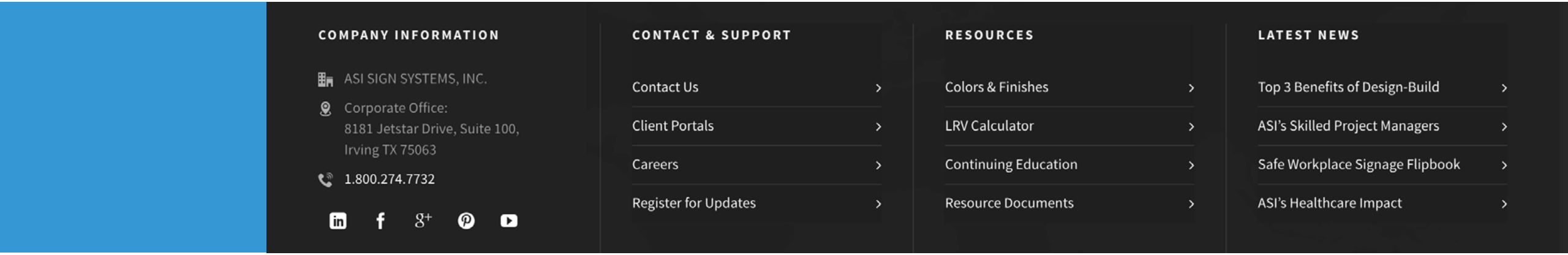
RESULTS

Extended Footer



Many returning users accessed the site for industry information. While important, these resources didn't need prime space in the global navigation. To address this, we added an extended footer.

Additionally, to minimize frustration for established clients, contact forms were removed where possible. Then we consolidated documents like CSI Specs, Product Profiles, and White Papers into one location, reducing the number of page changes needed to find them.

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Optimize Content

Using the information my team gathered from our research, we then moved on to revising and condensing the sites information by implementing these tactics:

- Streamline the global navigation for better user accessibility
- Reduce complexity by restructuring and refining the sites information and product line up
- Shift the site's focus from Product to ASI's Total Signage Solution

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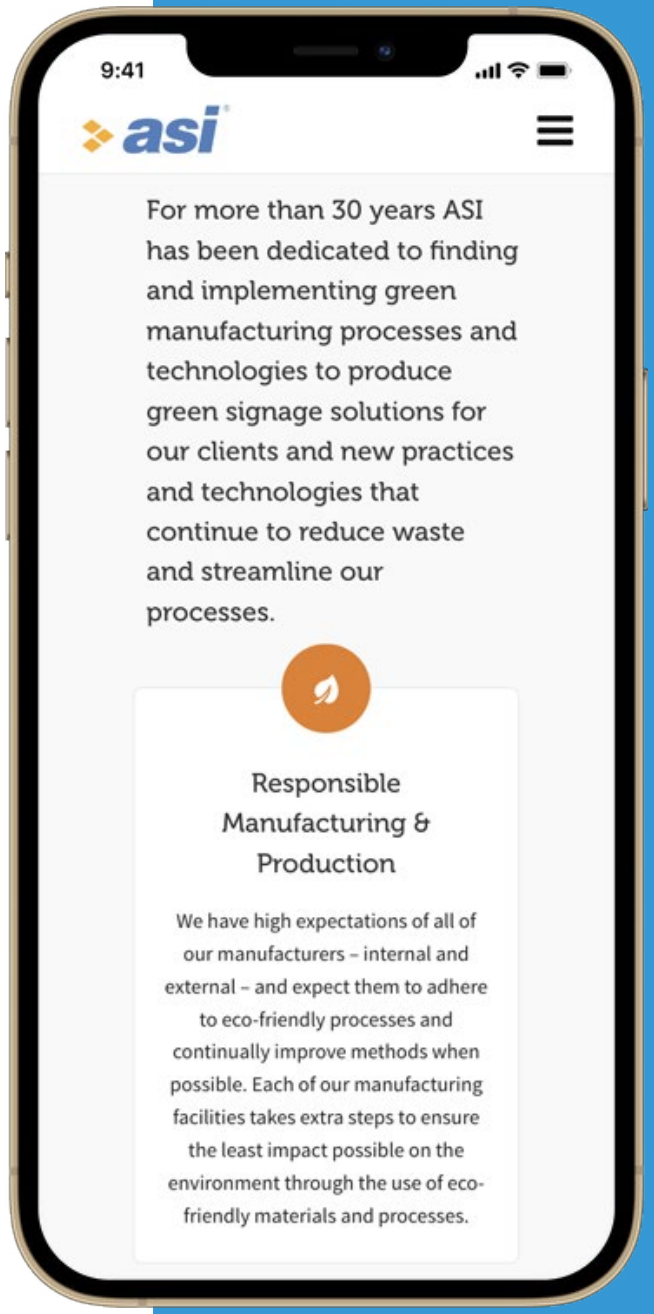
RESULTS

Global Navigation

By restructuring content and relocating established client resources to an extended footer, we reduced the global navigation height from 340px to 220px, significantly decluttering the interface.

Additionally, we introduced a shrinking, sticky global navigation that minimizes on page scroll, and added a “back to top” icon to further facilitate navigation. For mobile and tablet devices, the menu was streamlined even further with a hamburger icon.



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GLOBAL NAVIGATION BEFORE

GLOBAL NAVIGATION AFTER

SHRINKING GLOBAL NAVIGATION

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RESULTS

Site Restructure

Based on our research, we removed unnecessary content, consolidated similar sections, and reorganized information into clear, logical categories.

We improved content flow by prioritizing key information, resulting in a more concise and readable site structure making it easier for users to find what they need quickly.

VIEW SITE MAPS

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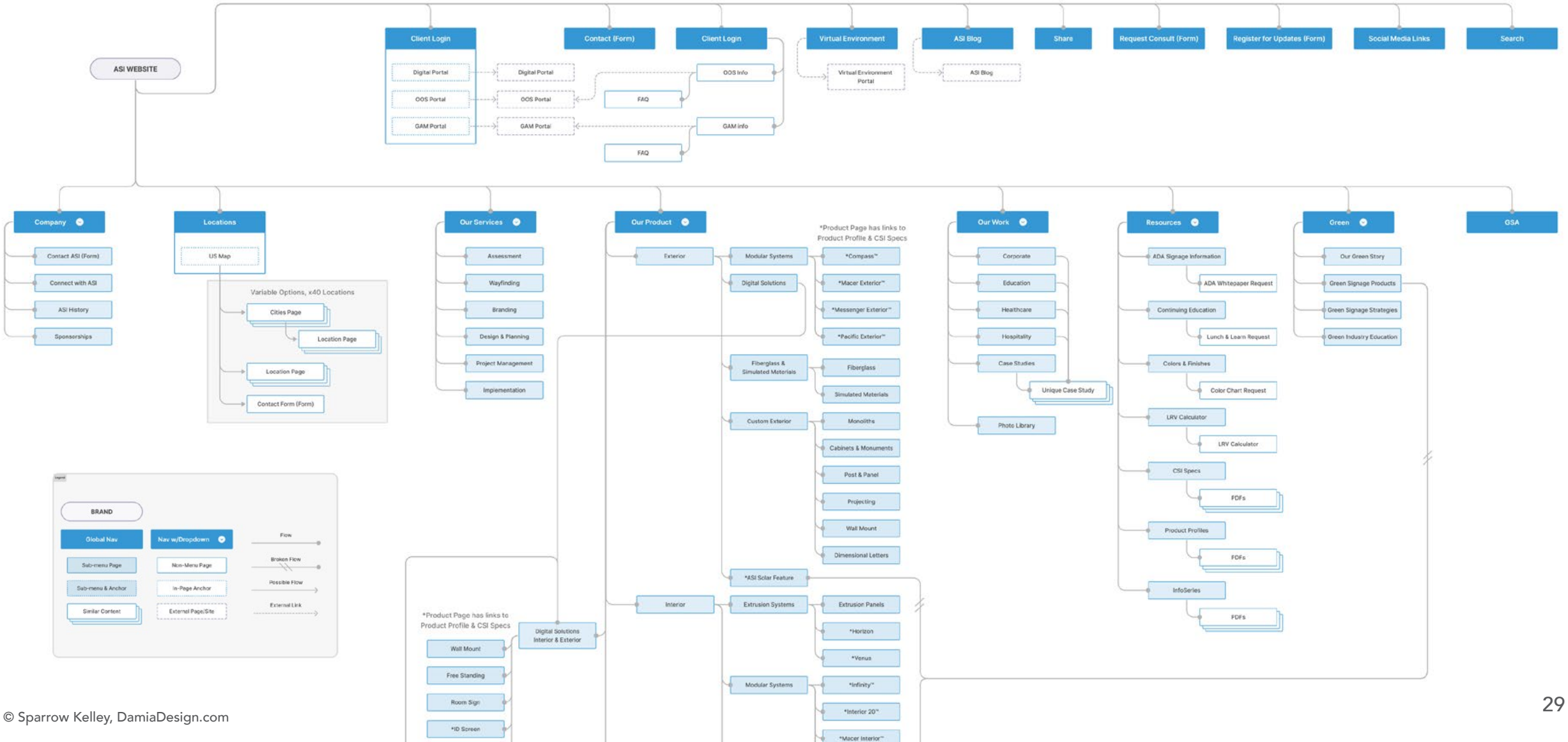
Original Sitemap



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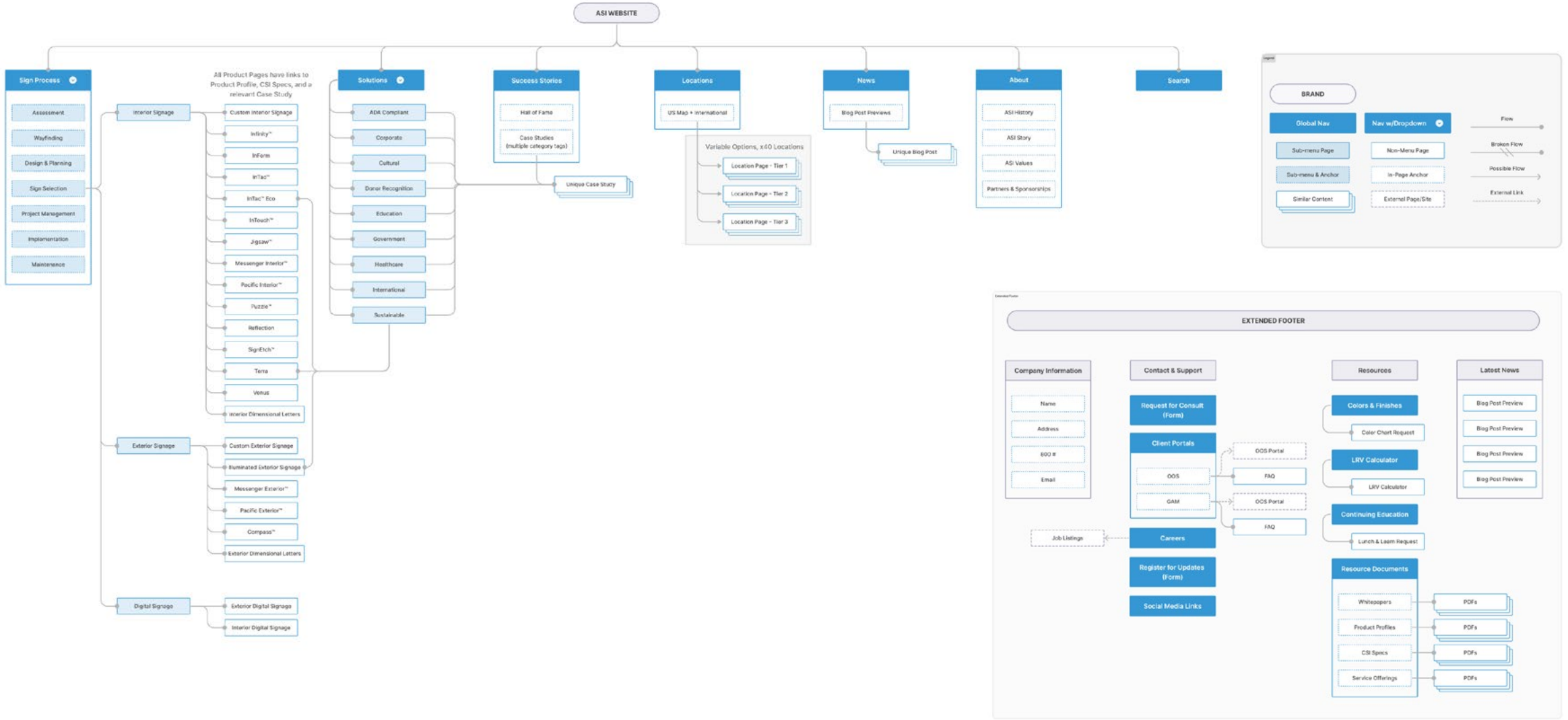
Restructured Sitemap



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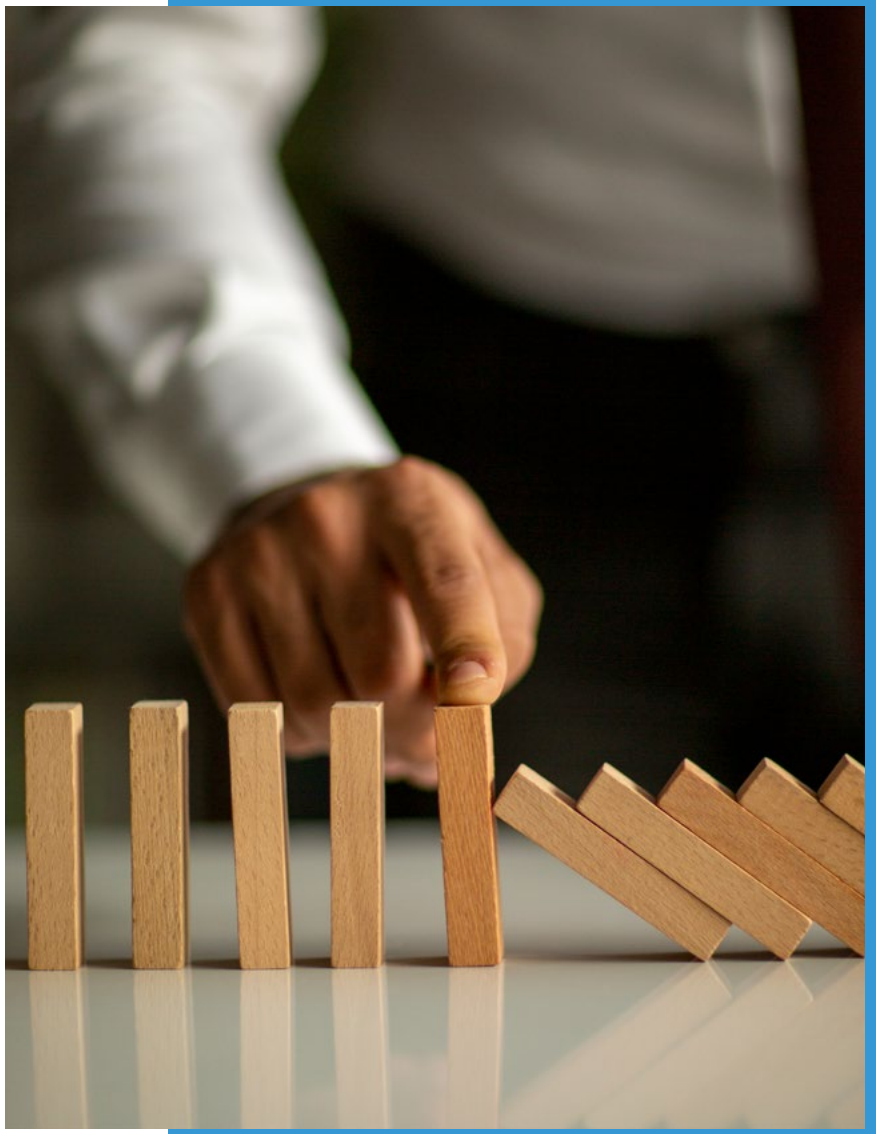
RESULTS

Focus Shift

ASI desired a shift away from the industry perception that they only offered individual products. Instead, they wanted to emphasize their Total Signage Solution. To communicate this integrated approach, two main changes were made to the structure of the site.

Success Stories (Case Studies) was elevated to the first tier of the global navigation to prominently showcase real-world examples of their sign process.

Sign Selection (Products) was moved under “Sign Process” as one of many steps in their Total Signage Solution.



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RESULTS

Success Stories

Case Studies were the highest visited location on ASI's website despite it being a sub-category of "Our Work" Visitors valued seeing real life completed projects, often seeking Case Studies similar to their project's needs or recently completed in their area.

Additionally, ASI boasted one of the largest and most diverse Case Study repositories in the industry. To help bring focus to these examples of their Total Signage Solution it was renamed "Success Stories" and became one of the six categories of the global navigation.

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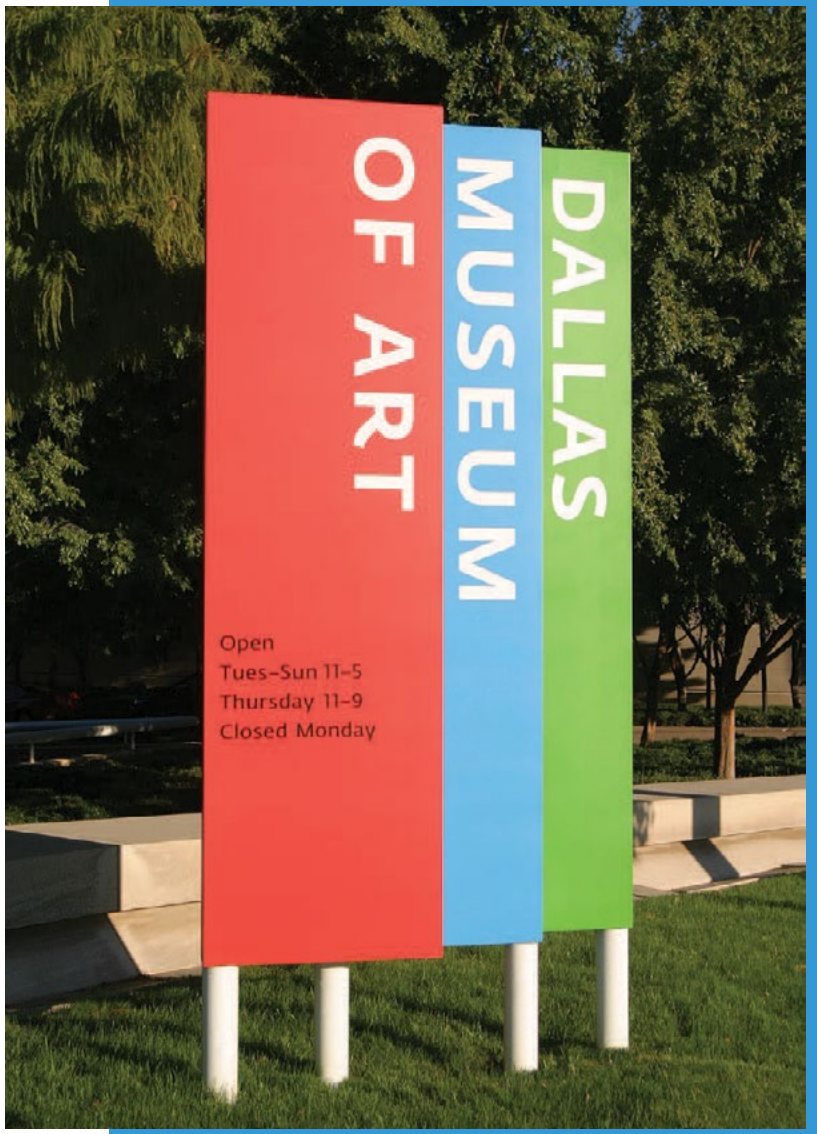
RESULTS

Sign Selection

"Our Services" was renamed "Sign Process" and restructured to illustrate how ASI could meet clients' needs through every step of the process. Since signage is just one element of this comprehensive service, "Sign Selection" was moved under the "Sign Process" category.

While A/B testing revealed that users preferred having products in the first tier of the global navigation, ultimately ASI chose to move forward with the shift, reinforcing their role as a trusted partner throughout the entire signage journey.



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Establish Consistency

Finally, to unify all recent updates and build user trust, we embarked on creating a cohesive, streamlined user experience designed to seamlessly guide users across every aspect of the site.

- Implement a streamlined and uniform look
- Establish consistent functionality and landmarks
- Improved user-friendly wayfinding

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RESULTS

Uniform Look

INCONSISTENT SECONDARY MENUS

On some pages the secondary menu was under the global nav, others it was on the right side with a various different looks, typography, and icons, and still others had secondary menus in both places that contradicted each other causing considerable confusion.

To ensure that every page felt connected we established a consistent visual design throughout the site, minimized redundant secondary menus, and standardized the color scheme and typography of the many and varied secondary menus of the site.

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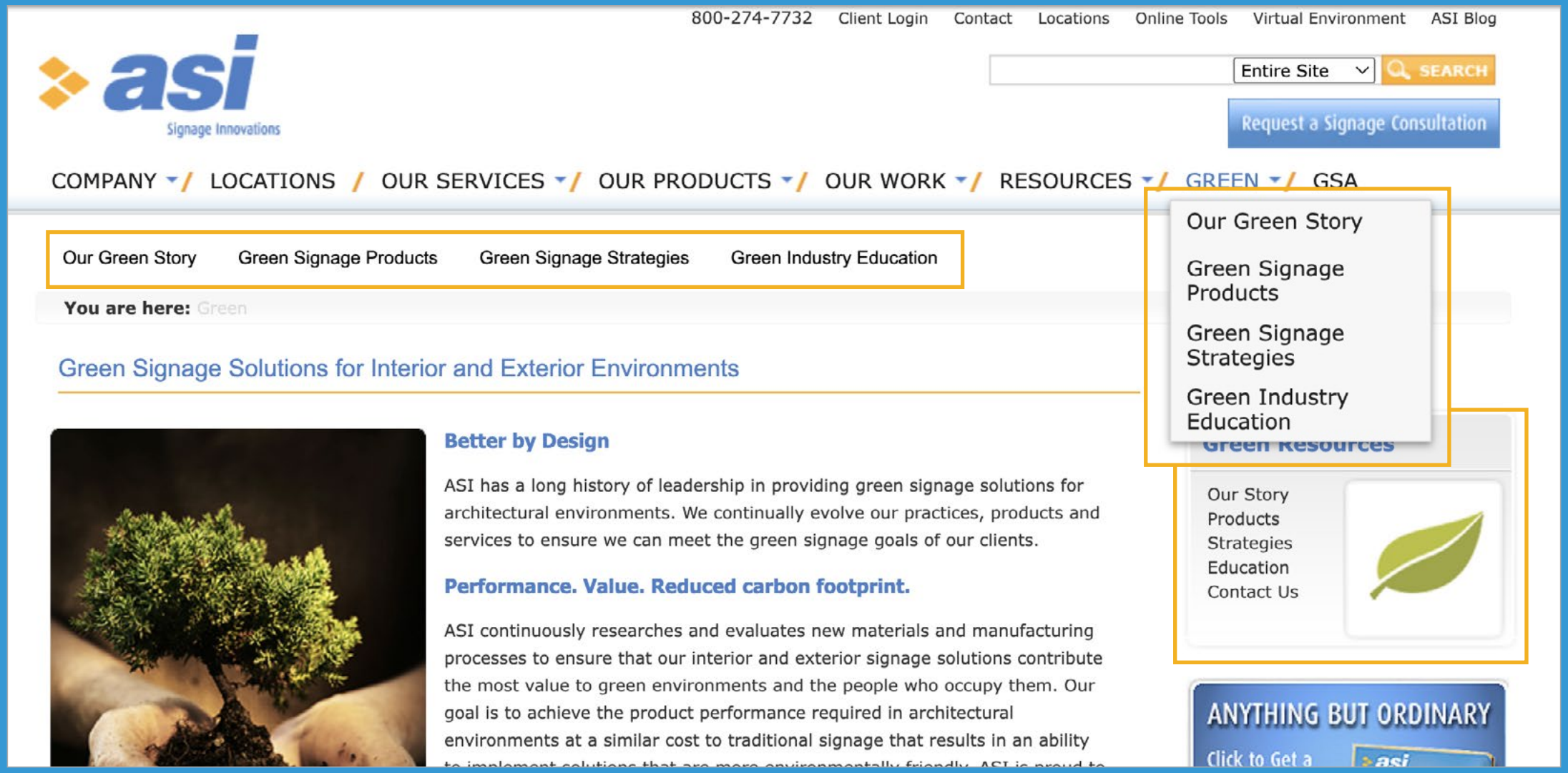
GREEN SECONDARY MENUS BEFORE



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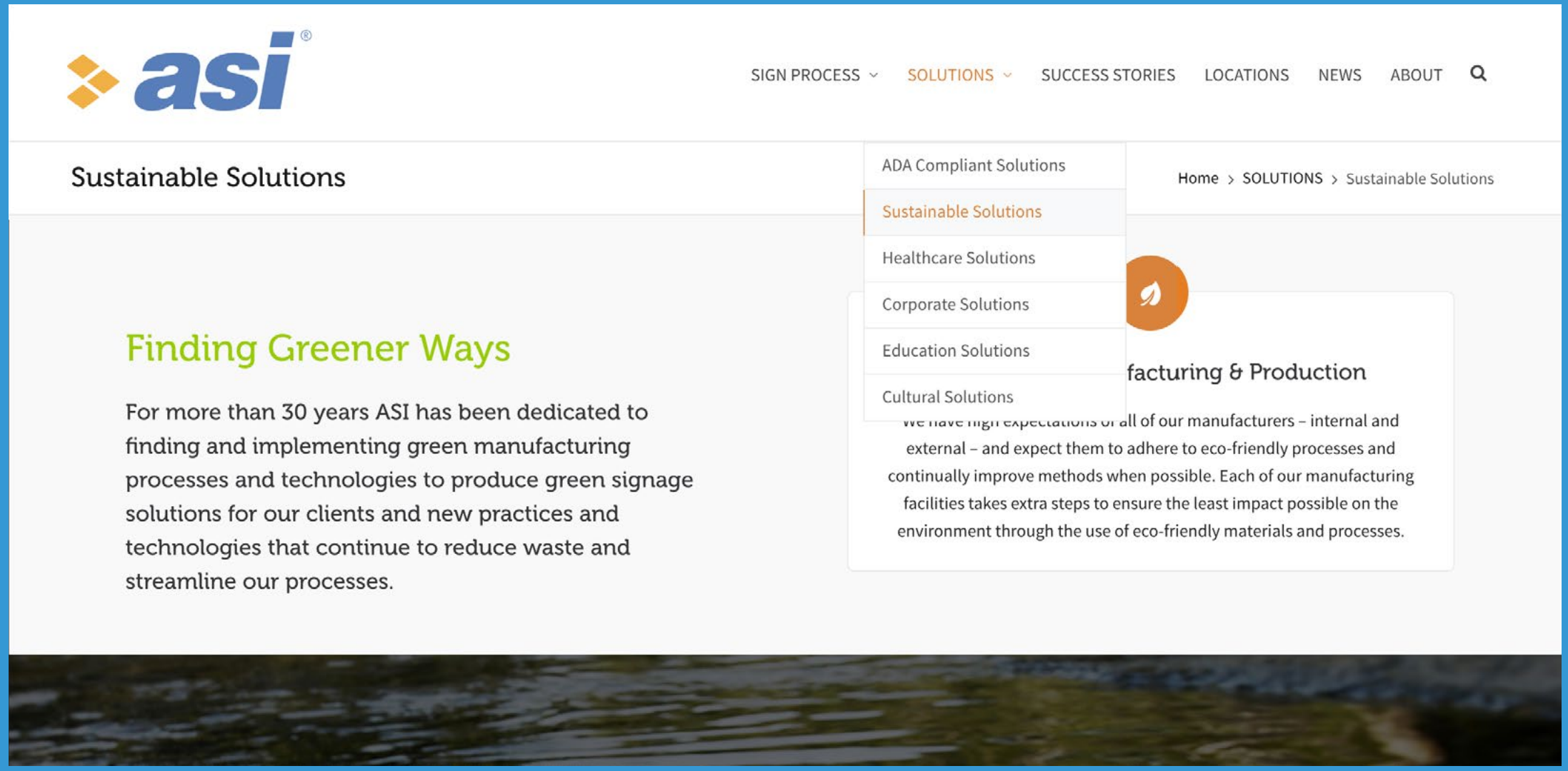
GREEN SECONDARY MENUS AFTER



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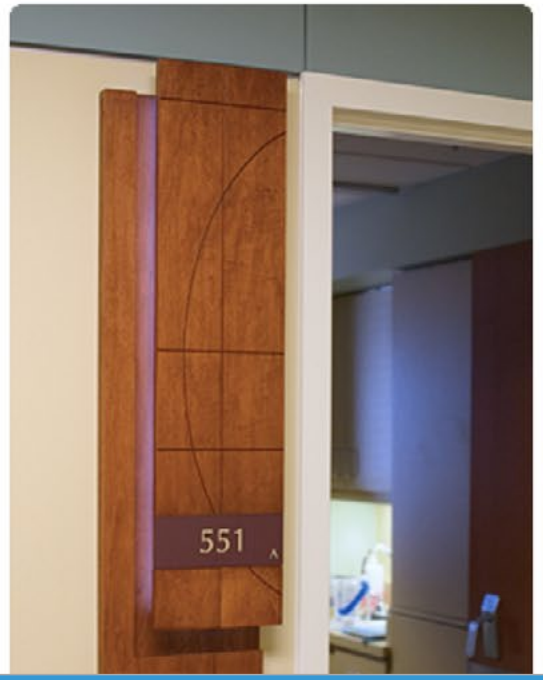
PRODUCT SECONDARY MENUS BEFORE

COMPANY / LOCATIONS / OUR SERVICES / OUR PRODUCTS / OUR WORK / RESOURCES / GREEN / GSA

Exterior | Interior | Digital Solutions | Dimensional Letters | Directories | Printed Graphics | Donor Recognition

You are here: Our Products / Interior / Custom Interior

Custom Interior Signage Solutions for Architectural Environments



Custom Interior Signage for Architectural Environments

ASI's team of experienced consultants, project managers and installers applies the proven techniques associated with our proprietary modular interior signage systems to meet the same strict quality standards for your custom solution.

Our custom interior signage solutions are design engineered to maximize value, even when they are made from more expensive materials such as steel and glass, and ASI ensures each custom sign we produce complies with current ADAAG signage guidelines. In addition, our custom interior signage solutions follow universal design principles to ensure important wayfinding information and signage placement meet the needs of your visitors and staff.

ASI knows how to bring interior signage designs to life that are as unique as your business. Utilizing our network of manufactureres and alliance partners, ASI creates custom interior solutions that meet your needs. No matter what shape, size color or material you envistion, ASI can make it

OUR PRODUCTS

- **Exterior**
- **Interior**
  - Extrusion Systems
  - Modular Systems
  - ADA-Ready™
  - Custom Interior
    - Projecting
    - Monoliths
    - Room ID
    - Suspended

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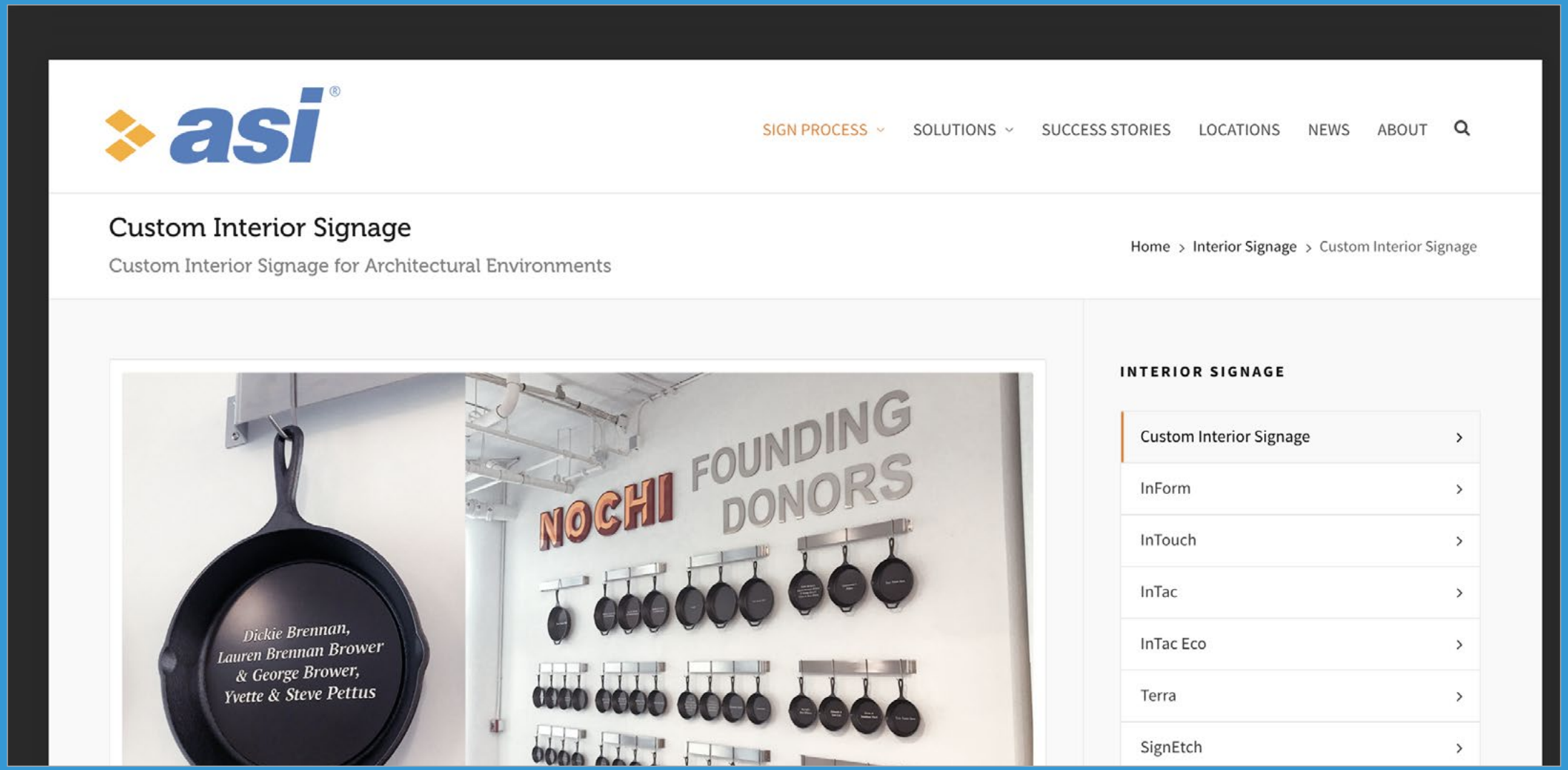
PRODUCT SECONDARY MENUS AFTER



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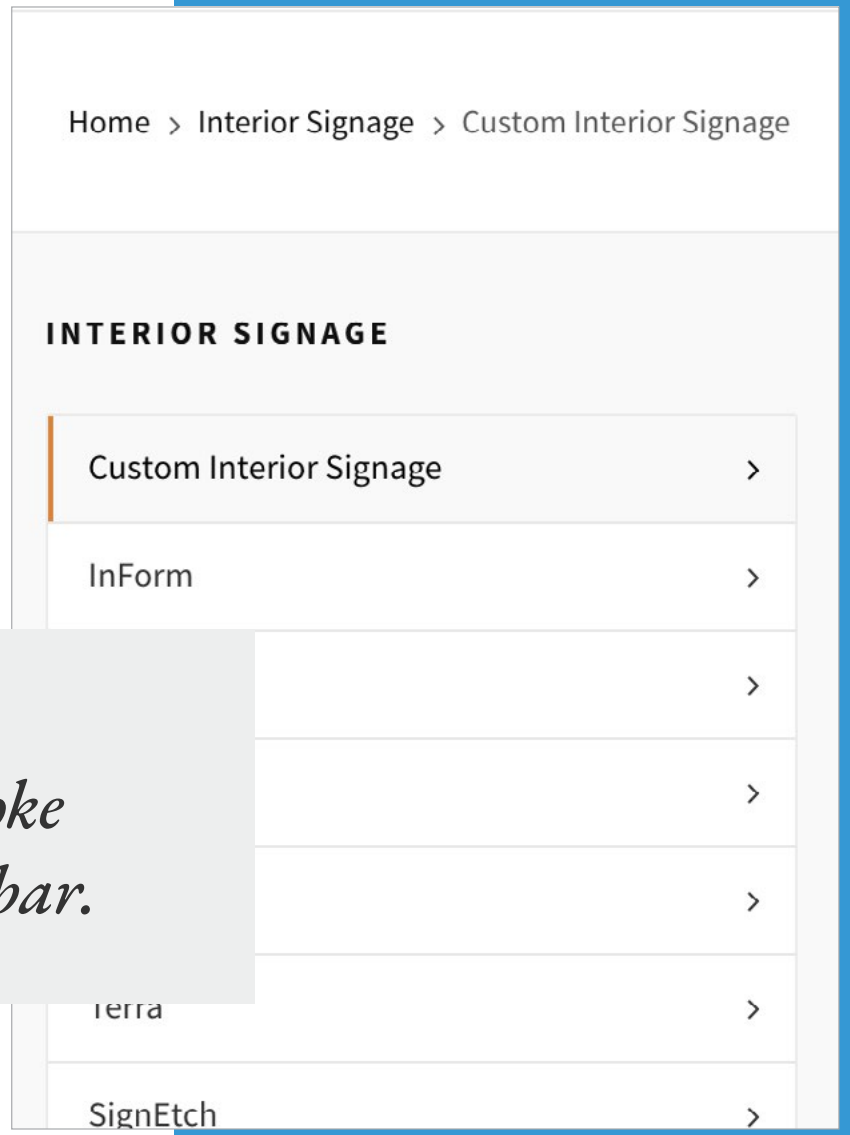
RESULTS

Consistent Functionality

We made sure that all interactive elements, such as buttons, links, and forms, functioned in a predictable and consistent manner across the site. This consistency helps users navigate the site more intuitively, as they can rely on familiar patterns and behaviors.



Throughout the site, subtle brand elements were incorporated, including a half-diamond shape, to evoke the three diamonds in the logo and an orange accent bar.

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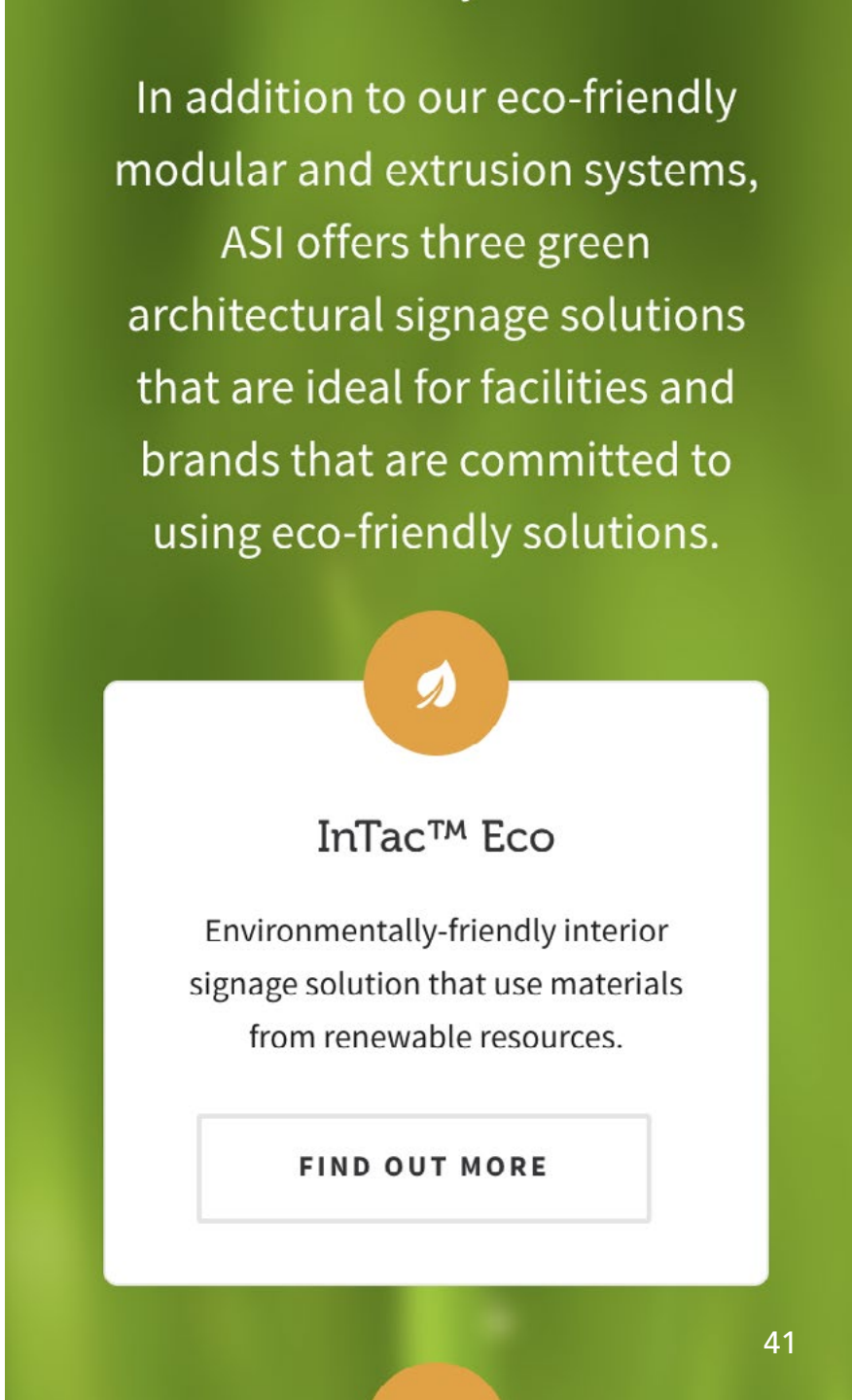
RESULTS

Intuitive Wayfinding

We improved navigation by implementing intuitive menus, clear breadcrumbs, and embedded internal links to relevant content. Some examples include:

- Contact prompt at the end of pages
- Links throughout Sign Process to resources and detailed information
- Product and Lookbook prompts on all Solutions segments
- Links on product pages to supporting resources and related case studies
- Links on case studies to products, affiliate location, and related cases

These enhancements make it easier for users to find the information they need, reducing frustration and improving overall user experience.



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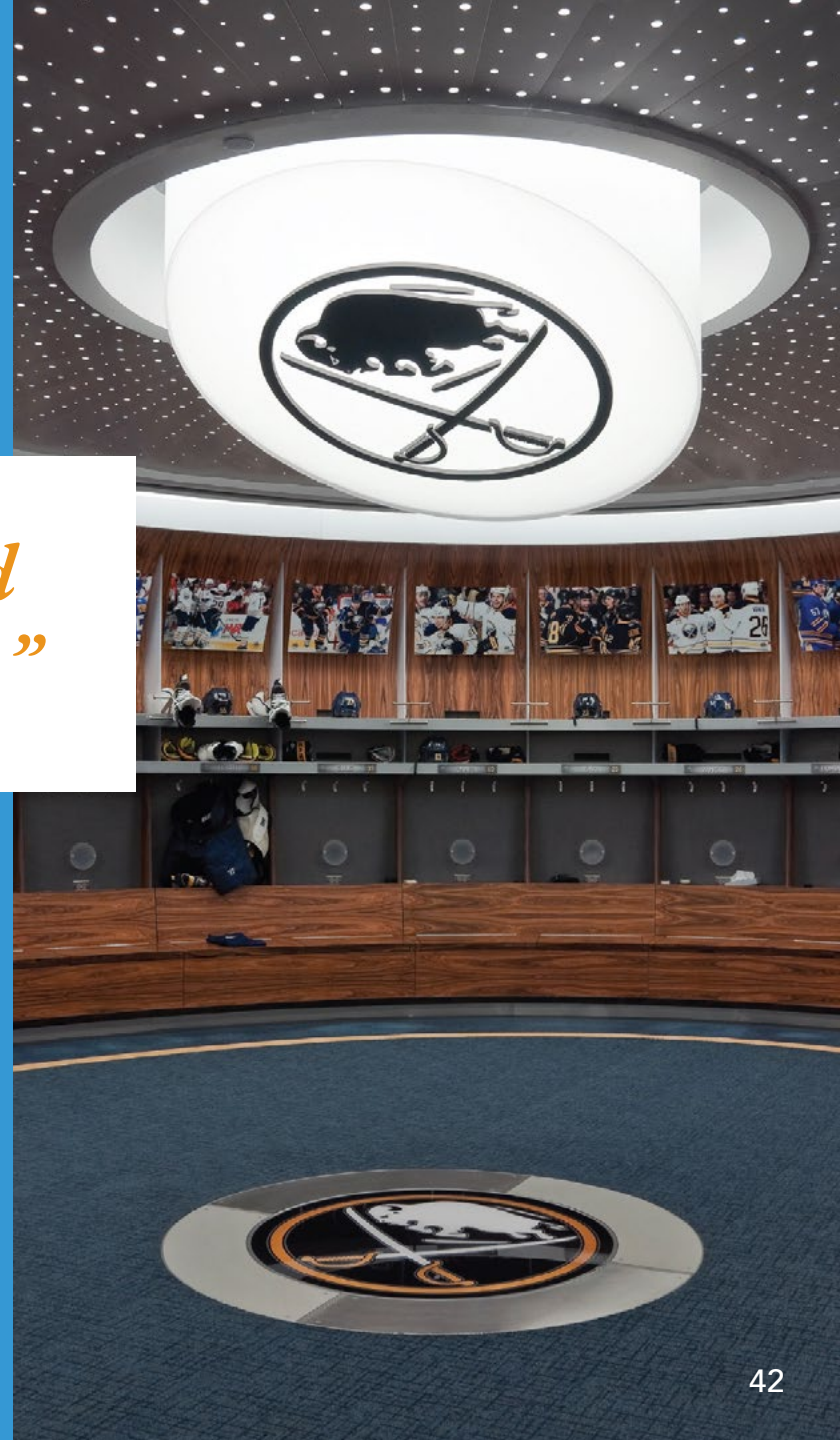
RESULTS

Simplified System

"I strive for two things in design: simplicity and clarity. Great design is born of those two things."

LINDON LEADER

The redesign of ASI's website successfully untangled their convoluted system, enhancing user navigation. By simplifying the product lineup, optimizing content, and establishing a uniform look and feel, the project improved findability and readability.



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RESULTS

Seamless Experience

Key changes, such as reorganizing the global navigation, elevating “Success Stories,” and emphasizing ASI’s Total Signage Solution, effectively addressed user needs and pain points. Consistent functionality and intuitive wayfinding were also implemented, ensuring a seamless user experience.

Overall, these improvements have strengthened ASI’s digital presence, reinforcing their position as a trusted turn-key signage solution provider and boosting overall user satisfaction.

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Thank You

I hope you have found this presentation informative.

Sparrow Kelley

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