# THEME AND UX FINDINGS PORTION OF WEBSITE AUDIT FOR

# GRACE ORMONDE WEDDING STYLE MAGAZINE

https://weddingstylemagazine.com

C Jaszewski

# THEME AND UX FINDINGS

WSM relies on a Omega-based custom theme that is both minimal, while being fully responsive.

## Messy, Inconsistent Layout on Home Page and Many Inner Pages

Many pages, particularly the front page, have a messy, inconsistent feel, with no image focal point. This arises from the freeform layout of individual "cards" that don't align into a grid or rows. This may be an intentional design decision, but it can hamper accessibility and navigability. Note: this problem only occurs on the desktop version of the site. The mobile version does not have this issue.

### Recommendation

Consider revitalizing target pages with a more consistent, grid layout.

### Effort Required

Moderate/major. May require designing a new page layout (or two) that is grid-based.

## Too Many Images Are a Hover/Zoom

Almost every image on home page and category pages has a hover that "zooms" into a tinted overlay with text. Hovers that provide a surprising effect or additional text can attract a user's attention but when most images have a hover the effect is no longer special and just becomes annoying/overwhelming. The "zoom" feature adds to the problem.

Other hover issues:

| Issue | Image |
|---|---|
| In many image hovers, there is very very long text that's hard to read at a glance.<br><br>The text is also serif, all caps and italicized text which is hard to read when it's longer than a headline (and some would argue, even then isn't ideal). | FEATURED WEDDING VENDOR: KONSTANTINOS FLORAL DESIGN & DECOR GROUP<br><br>*SPECIALIZE IN CREATIVE EVENT DESIGN, THEMED CUSTOM-BUILT ENVIRONMENTS, AND SOPHISTICATED ARTISTRY AS THEY TRANSFORM SPACES ON A DRAMATIC SCALE*<br><br>FEATURED WEDDING VENDOR: KONSTANTINOS FLORAL DESIGN & DECOR GROUP |
| On many images, text on the hover effect is just a duplicate of the text below the image, which doesn't provide any additional value to the user. | *W SOUTH BEACH*<br><br>W SOUTH BEACH<br>Miami, Florida, United States<br><br>Just steps away from the Atlantic, W South Beach offers a cutting-edge oasis in the cosmopolitan heart of South Beach. Iconic design and swaying palms set the stage for an unforgettable experience, where the pulsating...<br><br>VIEW PROFILE > |

| On some pages, information is hidden until the viewer rolls over the image. That information should be shown below the image. |  |
| --- | --- |
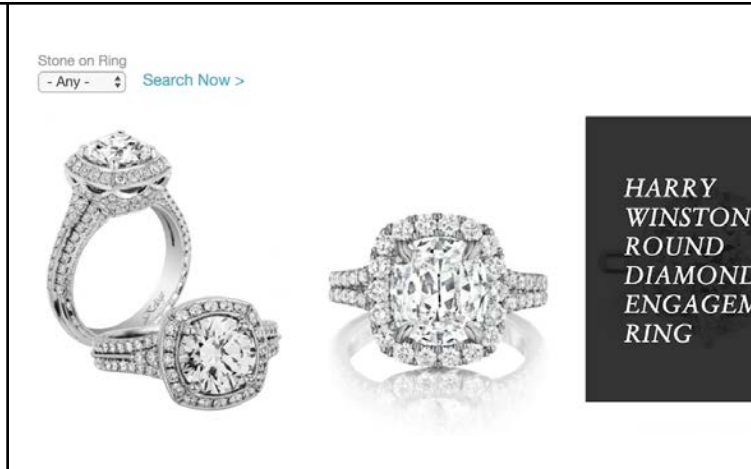
**Recommendations**

- Use hovers sparingly (once or twice per page for something you really want to draw attention to).

- Don't hide valuable information under a zoom overlay.

- If zooms must stay:

    - Consider removing the "zoom" effect and have a less splashy gentle overlay with text appear.

    - Shorten text on the overlay so it can be read at a glance.

    - Ensure text on hover doesn't duplicate text underneath image.

    - Change font to a san serif that is easier to read.

**Effort Required**

Moderate. Need to change hover behavior on all hover images.

## Menu/Navigation Issues

- The main navigation menu is long. There are a lot of main navigation menu items (11), and if i resize the page, it wraps onto two lines.

- Some menu items are similar to others. Site visitor wonders, "Does wedding destination show me venues?" What's the difference between "wedding destinations vs. honeymoon? Isn't the honeymoon a destination?" What's the difference between "real weddings" and "inspiration? Don't i get inspiration from seeing real weddings?"

- The most important nav item (Wedding Vendors) doesn't have a drop-down menu. Some of the items provide drop-down mega menus, but the one I'd want to have one (Wedding Vendors) does not. Finding a vendor category requires a lot more clicks and effort than it should. I have to either:

    - Click **Wedding Vendors**, then scroll down the "Vendor" page to see all the categories, click selection

    - Click **Wedding Vendors**, then using the vendor search fields (which also have issues).

### Recommendations

- You can remove the word "wedding" from the navigation items to visually shorten the nav menu (visitors are aware they're on a wedding site).
- Consolidate some menu navigation items.
    - Could have a "Destinations" main heading, with "wedding," and "honeymoon" as subcategories
- Add a drop-down mega menu for "Vendors."

### Effort Required
Minimal (removing the word "wedding) to minor (adding drop-down menus).

## Breadcrumbs/Orientation Not Consistent with Menus/Navigation

Getting oriented when clicking deeper into a website is important. It's nice to be able to "back out" a level, without having to do another search or multiple clicks back into a menu. Well-constructed bread crumbs help with this.

Breadcrumbs become especially important for navigation when:

- viewing the site on mobile devices, because the main menu is hidden in a hamburger menu.
- a user doesn't arrive at content from clicking down through home page (maybe they landed there after a Google Search).

There are breadcrumbs on the site, but they don't often match the menu items. However, breadcrumbs that leave out steps, or worse, don't match headings in the menu may confuse a user.

Example 1:

On menu I click **Inspiration > Luxury Wedding Ideas > Reception Lighting**.

When I arrive, the breadcrumbs say Home>Inspiration>Planning>Lighting for the Wedding Reception. However, "Planning" doesn't exist on the navigation. I can click "Planning" and it goes to a page not named "Planning." (This example looks like a page name got changed in one place but not site-wide.)

Example 2: I click **Wedding Vendors > Castles & Mansions**

However, once I click on OHEKA CASTLE to see the detail page, breadcrumbs change to this. It's changed from "Wedding Vendors" to "Wedding Destinations." I no longer see "Castles & Mansions."

Home > Wedding Destination > Oheka Castle

Example 3: If I go to WEDDING VENDORS and do a search for BRIDAL SALONS, the breadcrumbs show this

Home > Wedding Vendors > Vendors

### Recommendations

- Ensure breadcrumbs accurately show the path a user has taken to get to the current page.
- Make all breadcrumbs clickable links where possible.

### Effort Required

Moderate. Would require reviewing site information architecture and possibly streamlining it, ensuring pages are titled properly, and that all page levels appear in breadcrumbs.

## Search Issues

### Sitewide Search

- There's a sitewide search box present, which is good.
- However, the search results are often not relevant, and don't show links to category landing pages.
  Example:  If you do a  search for "dresses" you would expect to see one of the results for the category page of "WEDDING DRESSES" (but you don't).
- As mentioned earlier, search results are not links.
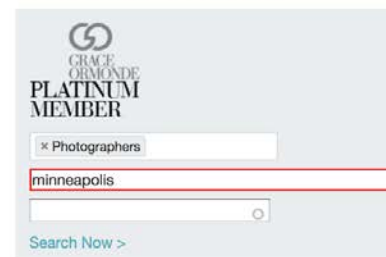
### Category-Page Search

- **Placement of search fields box is on wrong side.** Usually searching and filtering options are on the left side of a page. Newsletter signup boxes are on the right. Since the box is on the wrong side and not titled SEARCH (and instead titled, "Grace Ormonde Platinum Member"), users might not immediately realize

it's a search box, and in fact ignore it because they think it's a newsletter signup. Search boxes are on the right side on other category-level pages.

- **Speaking of "Grace Ormonde Platinum Member,"** when a user sees that, I suspect they wonder, "What does that mean? Oh I don't want to sign up for that." Then they might see the "search now" at the bottom and then realize it's for searching. But then they might wonder, "can i only use that search if I'm a Grace Ormonde platinum member? I don't' know what that is." You don't ever want the user to have to stop and think.

- **Search Doesn't Give "No Results" Feedback**: If I enter "Minneapolis" in the field and then click SEARCH NOW, i get a mysterious result: a blank page, and a red line around the field, which doesn't tell me what's wrong. It could be that there aren't any photographers in Minneapolis, but if that's the case, it should show "No results for Minneapolis."



- **A bigger problem:** You can't clear out the error. Refreshing page doesn't get rid of the red box either. You have to click "Wedding Vendors" to start over.

### Recommendations
- On sitewide search results, if there's a content category that is close to what user searched for, offer that as a clickable search result.
- All search result titles should be clickable, so you can remove any "view link" text.

- On Wedding Vendors page, put search fields box on the left, so users don't mistake it for a newsletter signup box.
- Put a title like "Search Vendors" at the top of the box, and remove the "Grace Ormonde Platinum Member" icon from the top of the search fields. If all vendors shown on that page are GOPMs, consider retitling the page something like that.

**Effort Required**

Moderate. Would require:

- Ensuring pages are tagged/titled properly so as to appear in search results.
- Changing page layouts so search fields are on left side and page title appears at top.
- Update category-level search so "No Results" appears if there are no results, instead of blank page and red-lined box.

## Internal Site Linking Issues

**Search Results Should Be Links**

Also, sometimes there are areas where I'd expect something to be a link, and it isn't. Here, I'd expect that "CASTLES & MANSIONS" would be a link, but it isn't. (Additionally, it SHOULD be a link, and you can delete the "view link" text.)



Here, "Inspiration" in the breadcrumbs isn't a link, even though it's a Main Nav item.

**"Tags" Aren't Clickable**

On the WEDDING VENDORS section, there are what look like category tags under images, but they aren't clickable. I'm assuming they're included to show what categories the vendor is included in, but they aren't useful to the user if they aren't clickable.



**FOUR SEASONS RESORT NEVIS**
Nevis & St. Kitts, Caribbean
Destination Wedding Locations, Luxury
Honeymoon, Wedding Venues

**Recommendations**

- Search results should be links.

- Don't use "view link" or "click here." Make relevant text into the link.

- Breadcrumbs, categories and tags should all be clickable.
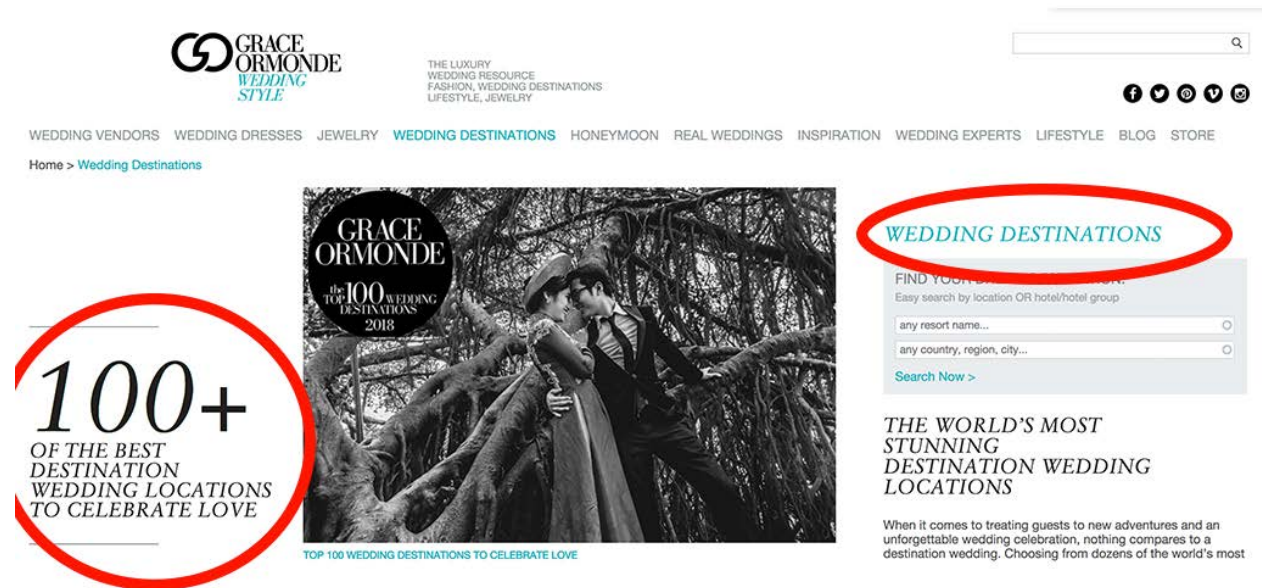
**Effort Required**

Moderate. Would require:

- Ensuring that search results are clickable links.
- Remove "view link" from search results
- Ensuring anything that should be a link is made into a link on all site pages

## Page Title Issues

On category pages, I thought the text in blocks (that often start with 100+) was the page titles, so, it was weird that they appeared to be links. After a while I realized that

page titles are in a small blue font on the right side. I had thought those were just the title for the box underneath them.



## Recommendation

Page titles should be at the top of the page, and should be either left aligned or centered.

## Effort Required

Minor to moderate. Would require changing page template to make page title more prominent. Depending on how the pages are constructed, might be as easy as moving a block or might require major coding.

## Fonts Not Consistent Around Site

Font, font styles, and font sizes are not consistent around the site, sometimes not even on parallel pages within sections.

## Recommendation/Effort Required

Minor (hopefully). Ensure that there's a house style guide for fonts/styles/sizes used on the site and also that fonts are styled on a page template, not styled with inline CSS on individual pages.

## A Thorough Content Audit Can Provide More Comprehensive Information

This high-level UX Audit touched on some obvious UX issues. A more thorough UX and Content Strategy audit will give you more detailed information on how to best optimize your site information architecture and content to help users quickly find information they need.