



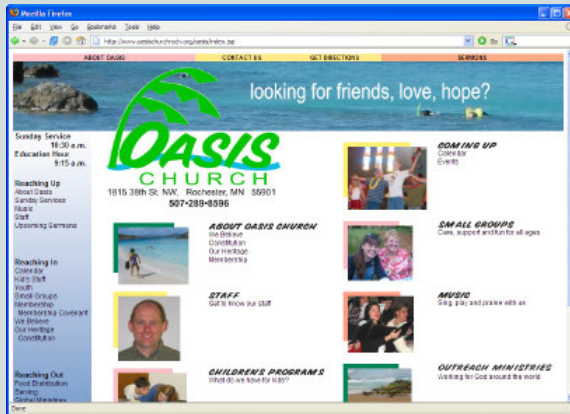
## Rapid Review From Brian Wold

Prepared for Oasis Church

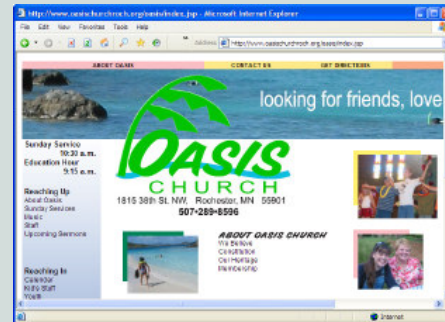
<http://www.oasischurchroch.org/>

Request Date: 3/24/05

Report Date: 3/26/05



Mozilla, large screen



Internet Explorer, small screen

## Review

### Overall/First Impressions

My eye immediately goes to the green logo, which is good. However, I notice "Oasis" and the tree art; my eye misses the fact that this is a church (not good). In fact, the snorkelers and beach photo make it look like Bermuda - while that might be an interesting metaphor for a church, I think it's a design mistake. Further, the tropical motif isn't consistent with the definition of "Oasis" as a fertile spot in a desert, and the more I think about that mistake, the more annoyed I am about it (not good).

My eye also finds the photo of the pastor, because that shot is cropped so much tighter than the others.

In general, first impressions are decent. Perhaps it's not fair to expect a church site to have seamless design, and I think most people would react favorably to the church after only seeing the site.

## Design

I like the bright colors. However, some color choices are odd, such as the repeat of yellow in the top banner (“contact us” and “get directions”) or the proximity of the pink and salmon photo backgrounds. Good use of white space to set off those bright colors, although it’s a little inconsistent (see the tight margins in the left-hand navigation column). Also, those bright colors can get pretty garish on subpages, especially when other logos are introduced which have conflicting colors.

Subpages are consistently bright and use matching colors; however, the layout is problematic. The page header is very heavy. Since the page is designed for monitors no smaller than 1024x768, content is quickly lost either below the screen bottom or (gasp!) to the right. The title banner graphic of the page is far right, which draws the eye away from the start of the content - and may not be visible at all! Likewise, the home page return links (lower right) are often off the screen.

Some of the subpage photos are great, but they take up a lot of space on the page.

## Ease of Use

- Note that at 800x600 screen resolutions (a shrinking category, but still relevant), much of the home page is cropped (see snapshot 2, above). Worse, on subpages, some of the most important text and links require scrolling to read.
- There are a ton of links on the Home Page: eight categories, each with subsections, plus the lengthy column on the left. On inspection, these are duplicate links, presenting a second navigational scheme - this will confuse people!

## General Notes

- I notice the “Youth” category is at the bottom, below everything else. Is that really what you want?
- The page seems to be loading slowly. Might be my internet connection, but since much of the Home Page content is in graphics with no alt tags, and since the top image seems to be holding everything else up, the page is pretty unusable until it loads completely. Remember, most users are still on dialup...
- Most images do not have size attributes. On slow connections, people will read the text as the images load - but here, the text keeps jumping as each image causes the page to redraw.

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## Recommendations

### Top Recommendations

- The pages have no HTML titles. Search engines typically display these in results. At least put one in for the Home Page...
- Most images do not have ALT tags. For accessibility and to improve findability for search engines, add ALTs for all images - especially major ones.
- Move the “return to Home Page” link and logo on all subpages to the upper left corner of the page. Make the logo clickable as well.
- Remove the entire left-hand nav from the Home Page (except Sunday schedule). This’ll simplify the Home Page considerably. Introduce the left nav on subpages with the same eight categories as on the home page right.

### Suggestions

- Consider moving “get directions” on all pages to just below the Sunday services info.
- Make text hyperlinks a contrast color (probably a darker hue of the logo green) and underlined (you can change the underlining on hover and/or on visited if you like the interactivity.)
- Add height and width values for each image.

### Follow Up Ideas

I always recommend testing with actual users - any person on the street is a potential audience and will tell you a lot about the effectiveness of the site. In this case, though, I’d address some of the design obstacles first and then get additional feedback.

### Thank You

Thanks for the opportunity to review your site. Please note that this review is intended to be a quick overview - focusing on first impressions much as a first-time visitor will do when they visit your site. In-depth reviews, user analysis and testing are available; however, in keeping with the “no sales pitches” promise, you’ll need to contact me if you’d like to discuss additional services.

Your opinions are important to me: if you have feedback or suggestions about this service, please send me an e-mail message.

