

05 Selected Projects

Madison Public Library: Building a Toolkit for Public Libraries

Project Details

odeck.org 2023 - 2024 | Status: Live, Open Source, Archive

Organization Contact

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About the Project

Public libraries are increasingly shifting toward hands-on, experiential learning—STEAM, maker programs, and arts activities—where outcomes are qualitative and harder to measure. Traditional metrics like attendance couldn't capture the full impact. Madison Public Library set out to build a toolkit that would help librarians systematically collect and share meaningful stories, not just numbers. But there was a challenge: assessment tools often feel cold and clinical. To gain adoption, the toolkit's brand needed to feel approachable, vibrant, and human-centered—countering the fatigue many educators associate with evaluation tools.

Brand Strategy

The brand development began with a naming framework. It needed a name that connected to the toolkit's core function—organizing observations into something clear and insightful—while sparking curiosity. After rounds of brainstorming and iteration, Observation Deck was selected, evoking both perspective and clarity. From there, the visual direction drew inspiration from the color wheel—a symbol of systemization, sorting, and creativity. The brand needed to balance organization with energy—a structured tool that still feels lively and engaging.

Logo & Identity Design

The final logo reflects the toolkit's key function: categorizing and tagging data. Color dots subtly embedded in the wordmark reference its tagging and sorting capabilities. A playful exclamation mark introduces energy and approachability. The circular structure nods to a color wheel—a visual metaphor for multi-faceted yet cohesive data organization. The resulting identity is modern, inviting, and dynamic, softening the idea of "assessment" into something more creative and empowering.

Extending the Brand: Site Design

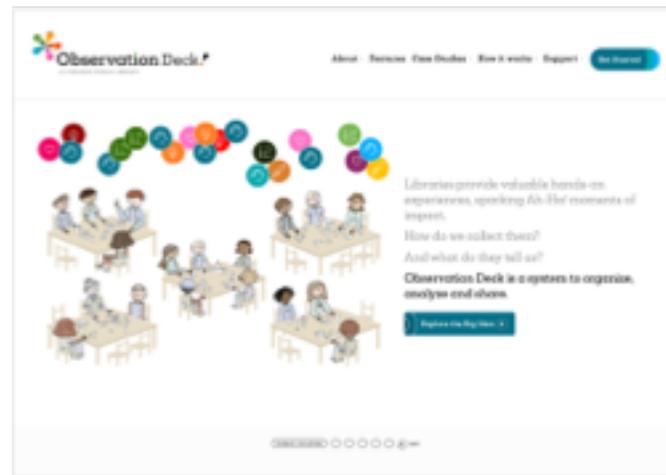
Since Observation Deck was a completely new concept, its product website relied on storytelling to communicate its power. On the product website, visitors are greeted with animated illustrations that bring the toolkit's functions—collection, organization, and analysis—to life. Scrolling animations were used to show how the tool helps librarians capture qualitative impact. This approach made a complex tool feel accessible and engaging, matching the approachable tone established in the brand.

Result

Observation Deck's branding turned a potentially intimidating concept into an inviting, intuitive identity that librarians nationwide could connect with. The name, logo, and storytelling-driven website worked together to build confidence and excitement around a tool designed to help libraries better demonstrate their impact.



Logo Design



Illustrated and animated campaign slider for website



Site scrolling animations to communicate toolkit's main features