

Discover The Baird Difference

Competitor Analysis for landing page creation

Competitive Analysis

About Us pages are gateways for narratives that humanize a business in a user's eye. In an age when businesses are launching different ad cycles to remind clients what makes their business unique what makes a page compelling enough for the user to believe the story?

This competitive analysis will identify and evaluate key usability strengths and weaknesses with a focus on the visual design of Baird's competitors' About Us or Who We Are site sections. The analysis will cite instances of strengths and weaknesses of Baird's competitors and provide direction on how it can be applied here.

Goal

With the success of the Imagine campaign, and coming off of the firm's 100 Year anniversary, Baird is shifting it's branding to Imagine 2.0 or Discover The Baird Difference. The campaign's goal is to illustrate what qualities exemplify Baird over its competitors.

Considering the firm website will be relaunched with a new design within Episerver by early/mid 2021 a custom and responsive landing page needs to be developed based on that design that can be then transitioned into the site infrastructure. This page will represent a new direction for Baird and serve as the site's Who We Are base.

Competitors

The following are a list of direct and indirect competitors that will be used for the analysis. Direct competitors represent businesses that Baird competes with as a whole, while indirect competitors may only compete with a facet of the business.

DIRECT

Goldman Sachs
Morgan Stanley
Raymond James

INDIRECT

Advantage Capital
PIMCO

Goldman Sachs

<https://www.goldmansachs.com/our-firm/people-and-culture/index.html>

Strengths

Photography

Chosen photography is either staged or stock, but it feels natural. I feel like I am looking at the organization and not just what they want me to think it's like.

Content Themes

The page offers a lot of insight into the organization, and it doesn't come off as reaching. The themes listed make sense for the page's purpose.

CTAs

The page offers a lot of choices to the user, but it's not overwhelming. There's one prominent CTA at the top of the page, but secondary CTAs are designed differently while still offering users the choice to explore more.

Weaknesses

Content Flow

Though the content theme is strong, the flow is questionable. Narratively the page jumps around a bit, and it feels as if some content has been elevated more or so due to the times.

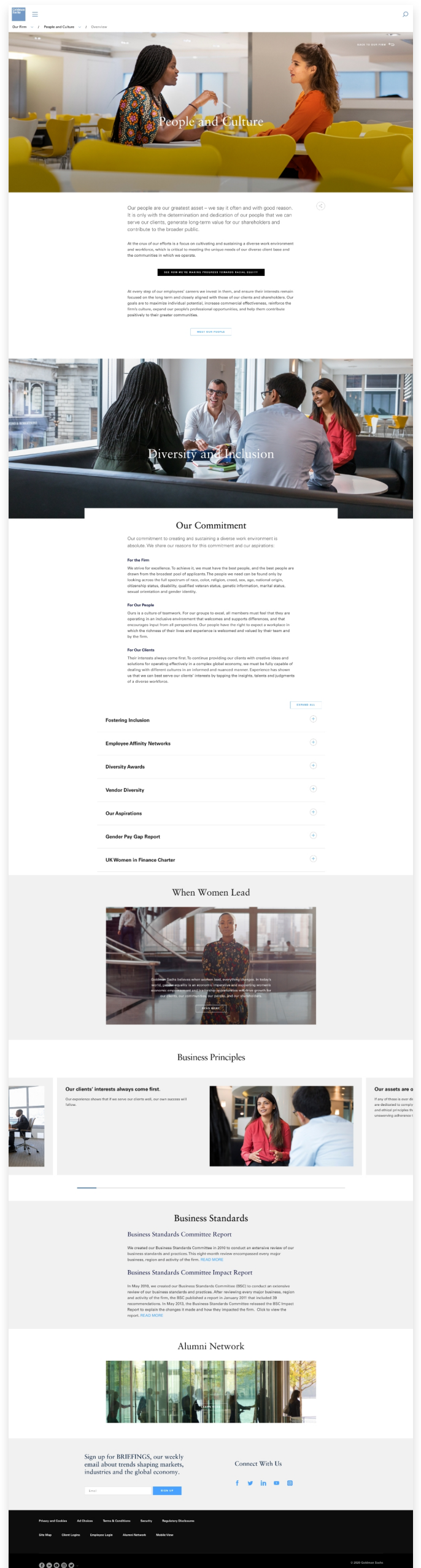
Accordion

The accordion feels like a last minute addition in order to add extra information to the page without adding bulk.

Additionally, some of the content hidden behind the dropdown are just links which one could argue should be more easily accessible to the user.

Slider

The slider feels out of place, but more or so because the content isn't balancing with the size. It feels like this feature was utilized to add imagery to the page, but it would be more successful if the dimensions were changed.



Morgan Stanley

<https://www.morganstanley.com/about-us/morgan-stanley-core-values>

Strengths

Messaging

Looking at this page I know exactly what Morgan Stanley is trying to communicate. The message comes through strong and clear.

Simplicity

The page is minimal, but it's not a negative since the message is so strong. I don't feel distracted by filler photography or other items.

Weaknesses

No CTA

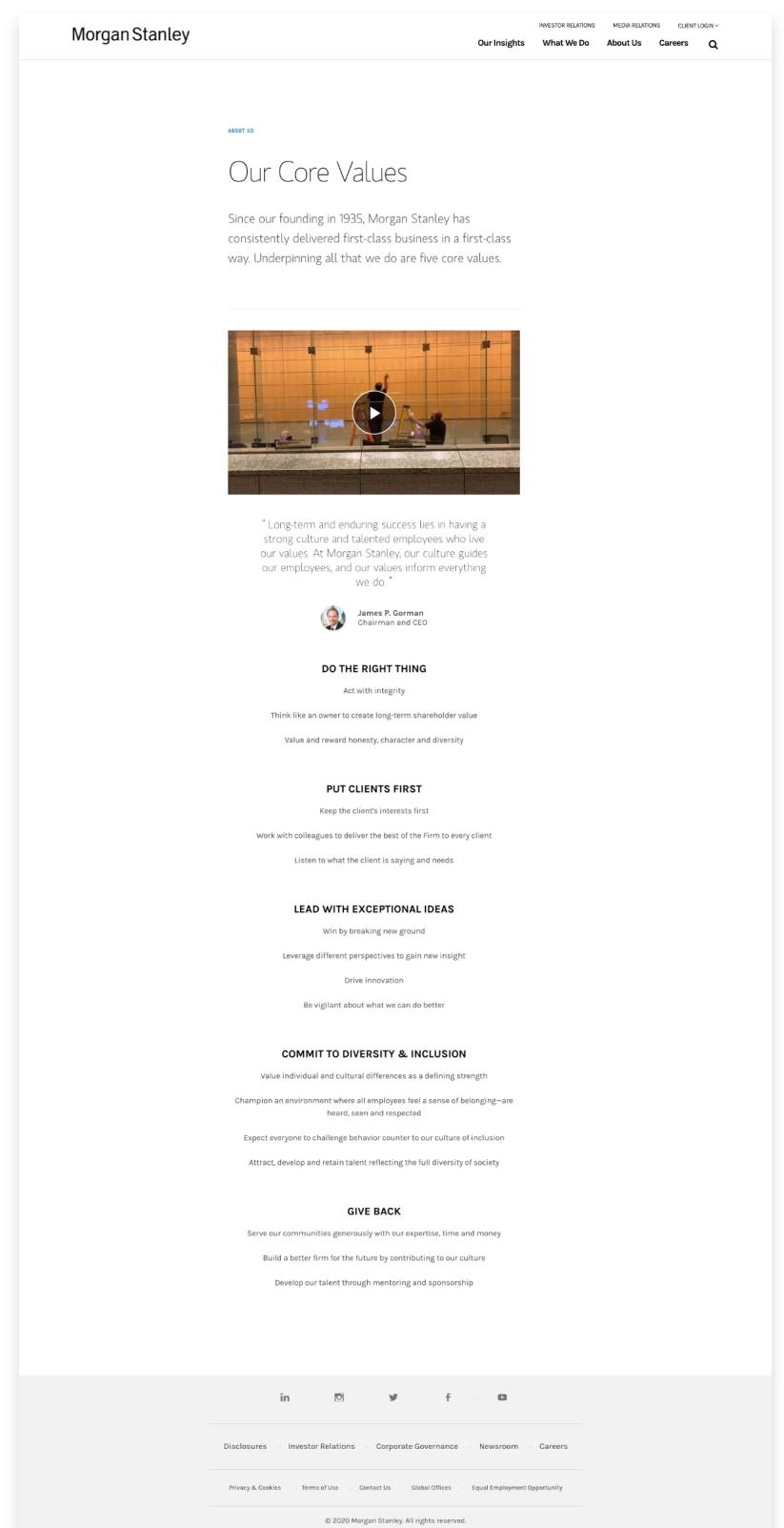
There's no call to action on the page trying to direct user's on their next step. I'm assuming this page must not be leveraged in any campaign, but not even having a single CTA raises the question as to why this content wasn't folded in elsewhere.

Video

The video is just a time-lapse of workers installing a new window decal with company's values at an office. It's odd that it has such prominence on the page considering it doesn't add anything. It may have been more interesting to try and utilize this as a background feature.

Formatting

The page formatting is reminiscent of something you'd see in print. It's asymmetrical and from a design standpoint that has it's own appeal, but I wonder if the standard user would be off-put by it.



Raymond James

<https://www.raymondjames.com/about-us/values-mission-and-pledge>

Strengths

Messaging

The language here is very concise and neat. There's not any filler, and because of that there's a sense of honesty that comes across.

Video

The video is strong. It's the page's content bundled up into one neat package.

Weaknesses

Personality

There's no personality to this page. It's pretty dry. They've applied the bare minimum of styling needed. It doesn't feel like it's any different from a normal content page.

Content Flow

With the video tucked in at the bottom I thought it would be more relative to just the culture content. However, the video encompasses everything and should have more prominence on the page since it packs such a punch. I almost didn't think to even watch it.

No CTA

Yet again, no call to action for user's on what to do next. The least they could have done was add a contact us today button.

The screenshot shows the 'Values, Mission & Pledge' page on the Raymond James website. The page features a navigation menu on the left with 'ABOUT US' and 'Values, Mission & Pledge' highlighted. The main content area is divided into sections: 'Our values' (with sub-sections: 'We put clients first.', 'We act with integrity.', 'We value independence.', 'We think long term.'), 'Our Mission' (with sub-section: 'Our business is people and their financial well-being.'), 'Our Pledge', and 'Our Culture'. A video player is embedded at the bottom of the page, displaying the Raymond James logo. The footer contains navigation links (About Us, Careers, Investor Relations, News & Media, Contact Us), social media icons, and legal disclaimers.

Advantage Capital

<https://www.advantagecap.com/vision>

Strengths

Photography

There's a lot of photography, but the creative use collage doesn't make it overwhelming. I appreciate the mix of candid, staged, and stock photography. I feel like I have a window into the people their business touches.

Content Flow

Narratively the page is arranged in a way that makes sense. I can see the story of the business and how it affects the companies and communities they work with.

Layout

The layout is really strong and visually very easy to follow. It's very enticing.

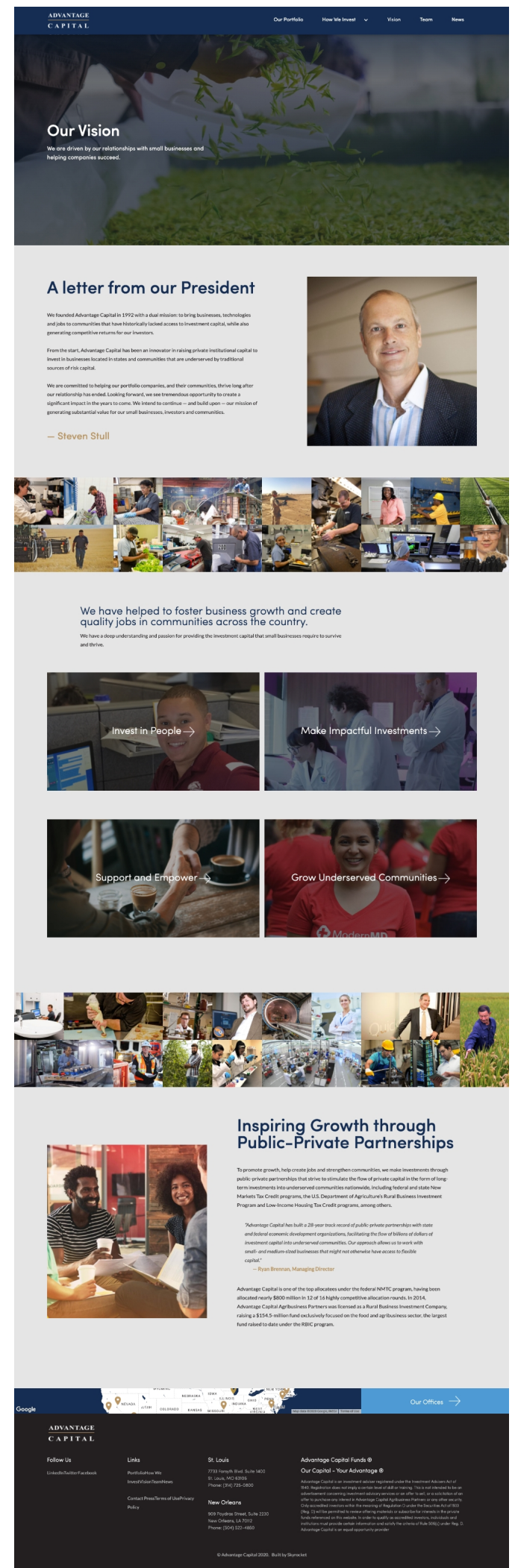
Weaknesses

CTAs

The page does have actions the user can take, but they're not apparent. The four large photos in the center are links to deeper content, but that next action is lost since additional language appears on hover with no indication to click for more.

Responsive Design

The page is really beautiful on desktop, but not so much on mobile. As previously noted the layout for desktop is strong, but they didn't put in the work to make sure it was just as impressive on mobile. Additionally, there's no solution or change to make that hover content on the photos accessible to the user so it's lost on touch screen devices..



PIMCO

<https://www.pimco.com/en-us/our-firm/inclusion-diversity-culture>

Strengths

Photography

Besides a few photographs in the 'Our Programs' slider this all real photography of PIMCO associates. It's a view of their culture and it's refreshing to see how much they have to leverage.

Layout

There's a lot going on, but the page still flows relatively well. It's appealing visually and really gives a lot for the user to interact with.

Responsive Design

The page functions just as well on mobile as it does on desktop which is wonderful.

Weaknesses

Messaging

There's so much content and it's arranged in a way that I don't feel that what PIMCO is about really shines through. It kind of comes off as look at all the stuff.

CTA

What's the page's call to action? Do they want users to watch the video? Are they supposed to click to learn more about PIMCO? I'm not sure, and if it's the latter the button needs more appeal. That copy section is nearly eclipsed by the photography collage and I'm compelled to just keep scrolling.

