# From Off-line Company to the www.rocksugar.com

by

Ms. Premwadee Mahapruksarat

A Final Report of the Three-Credit Course
IC 6997 E-Commerce Practicum

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science
in Internet and E-Commerce Technology
Assumption University

November 2002

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# From Off-line Company to the www.rocksugar.com

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IC 6998 E-Commerce Practicum

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| | |
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The Graduate School of Assumption University has approved this final report of the six-credit course, IC 6998 E-Commerce Practicum, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Internet and E-Commerce Technology.

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## ABSTRACT

This report is an analysis and implementation of the strategies of an offline company which set up its own website named www.rocksugar.com.

This study will analyze the company in order to recognize and identify its characteristics. The report is divided into parts. The first part is Introduction which introduces the existence of www.rocksugar.com. The second part is Marketing Analysis. The third part is Situation Analysis, which will define strengths and weaknesses of the company and the website as internal environment analysis and also define opportunities and threats, as external environment analysis. The fourth part is Marketing Plan, which will define marketing strategy by using the marketing mix strategy (4Ps). The fifth part is Website Development Requirements, and the last one is Web Development and Design.

In addition, this report will find out suitable strategies to support and enhance the ability and performance of the company.


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# I. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction to Internet and E-commerce

In the business world, several organizations attempt to extend their marketing channels by advertising in magazines, newspapers, television, and radio. The purposes are to increase income, awareness, and reliability. Online website is one medium that facilitates them to make more contacts with customers via online technology. They include all kinds of business; B2B, B2C, and C2C to use their online media as a tool to get more market shares.

E-commerce comes in any form of computerized buying and selling between consumers and business themselves. E-commerce can be conducted either over secure or dedicated linkages among businesses, granting third party access. Therefore, E-commerce plays a main role for business partners. Introducing a website to present a product or an online service is very common.

### 1.1.1 Overview of E-commerce

E-commerce is the process of buying and selling goods and services with computerized business transactions through the Internet, networks, and digital technologies. It also encompasses activities supporting those market transactions, such as advertising, marketing, customer support, delivery, and payment.

Like Internet, E-commerce has in fact been around for a long time. Large corporations have been conducting electronic transactions via Electronic Data Interchange (or EDI) for years. The problem is that EDI is run on proprietary networks, and uses proprietary software. It is too expensive to be used by smaller businesses. Internet, on the other hand, is an open network. The software that makes the Internet work is in the public domain. Anyone can install it for free. The Internet Service

Providers (ISPs) who sell Internet access are often owned by large companies, which also own telecommunication networks over which Internet is run, but they do not own the Internet itself. This means that accessing and using Internet is relatively inexpensive which in turn means that our business, courtesy of Internet, can operate in the global environment, participating in global networks and markets.

As with many new services, simply defining what constitutes "E-commerce" is not clear and differs significantly according to the source. Various definitions of E-commerce are as follows:

(1) "What is E-commerce? E-commerce supports an entire range of activities - product design, manufacturing, advertising, commercial transactions, settlement of accounts -- using a variety of computer networks."

(2) "E-commerce is about doing business electronically. It is based on electronic processing and transmission of data, including text, sound and video. It encompasses many diverse activities including electronic trading of goods and services, online delivery of digital content, electronic fund transfers, electronic share trading, electronic bills of lading, commercial auctions, collaborative design and engineering, online sourcing public procurement, direct consumer marketing, and after-sales service. It involves both products (e.g. consumer goods, and specialized medical equipment) and services (e.g. information services, financial and legal services); traditional activities (e.g. healthcare education) and new activities (e.g. virtual malls)."

(3) "E-commerce carries out business activities that lead to an exchange of value across telecommunication networks."

(4) "E-commerce generally refers to all forms of transactions relating to commercial activities, including both organizations and individuals, which are based on processing and transmission of digitized data, including text, sound and visual images."

(5) The Internet will also revolutionize retail and direct marketing. Consumers will be able to shop from their homes a wide variety of products from manufacturers and retailers all over the world. They will be able to view these products on their computers or televisions, access information about the products, visualize the way the products may fit together, and order and pay for their choice, all from their living rooms.

1.1.2 E-commerce over the Internet

E-commerce over the Internet is growing out of its infancy. A limited number of detailed pilots have taken place in Thailand which have attempted to provide a trading scenario.

Electronic trading opportunities offer SMEs in particular the chance to compete for business on an international scale. The sequence of trading opportunities in the paper-based world filtering through SMEs is slow and cumbersome. This lack of opportunity prohibits SMEs trading, and competing fairly across the globe. Businesses are being expanded to websites and many trading forums are beginning to appear. This also means that not only goods and services can be purchased, but that services can be offered for sale and rent. The Internet certainly offers an international, cheap and easily accessible 'classified ads' section that no media has ever known.

1.1.3 Business Vision of E-commerce

E-commerce supports business vision of the future. Businesses and trading partners are inextricably linked regardless of which sector they operate in. All members

of a seamless supply chain act in harmony and as a single unit, not as a number of disparate members crudely brought together.

Virtual businesses are established with a customer's staff becoming an integral part of a supplier's operation. Electronic forecasts for forward orders are placed with suppliers who return an automatic confirmation. Such confirmation will automatically raise a request for transport facilities such as cargo space with a shipping line.

Such visions are not restricted to large companies. SMEs will have access to a database of trading information which will provide instant information on possible world wide suppliers or customers. Supporting technology will be available to provide electronic links with such companies and lists of products will be displayed in electronic catalogues for potential buyers to browse and subsequently order from.

The effective use of information is seen to be the foundation of competitive firms in the Millennium. Information and communication technologies have also enlarged the competitive environment and made a truly global marketplace and we are now seeing a shift in trade from "merchandise goods" to services.

1.1.4 Benefit of E-commerce

The global nature of the technology, low cost, opportunity to reach hundreds of millions of people, interactive nature, variety of possibilities, and resourcefulness and rapid growth of the supporting infrastructures result in many potential benefits to organizations, individuals, and society. These benefits are just starting to materialize, but they will increase significantly as EC expands. It is not surprising that some maintain that the EC revolution is just "as profound as the change that came with the industrial revolution".

Benefits of E-commerce are as follows:

(1) E-commerce expands the market place to national and international markets. With minimal capital outlay, a company can easily and quickly locate more customers, the best suppliers, and the most suitable business partners worldwide. Not only is the subsystem cheaper, but is delivered quickly.

(2) E-commerce decreases the cost of creating, processing, distributing, storing, and retrieving paper-based information.

(3) E-commerce allows reduced inventories and overhead by facilitating "pull"-type supply chain management. In a pull-type system the process starts from customer orders and uses just-in-time manufacturing.

(4) The pull-type processing enables expensive customization of products and services, which provides competitive advantage to its implementers.

(5) E-commerce reduces the time between the outlay of capital and the receipt of products and services.

(6) E-commerce supports business processes reengineering efforts. By changing processes, productivity of salespeople, knowledge workers, and administrators can increase by 100 percent or more.

(7) E-commerce lowers telecommunications cost.

(8) Other benefits include improved image, improved customer service, newfound business partners, simplified processes, compressed time, increased productivity, eliminating paper, expediting access to information, reduced transportation costs, and increased flexibility.

(9) E-commerce enables customers to shop or do other transactions 24 hours a day, all year round, from almost any location.

(10) E-commerce provides customers with more choices; they can select from many vendors and from more products.

(11) E-commerce frequently provides customers with less expensive products and services by allowing them to shop in many places and conduct quick comparisons.

(12) In some cases, especially with digitized products, EC allows quick delivery.

(13) Customers can receive relevant and detailed information in seconds, rather than days or weeks.

(14) E-commerce makes it possible to participate in virtual auctions.

(15) E-commerce allows customers to interact with other customers in electronic communities and exchange ideas as well as compare experiences.

(16) E-commerce facilitates competition, which results in substantial discounts.

1.1.5 Limitations of E-commerce

Limitations of EC to consumers are as follows:

(1) There is a lack of system security, reliability, standards, and some communication protocols.

(2) There is insufficient telecommunication bandwidth.

(3) Software development tools are still evolving and changing rapidly.

(4) It is difficult to integrate the Internet and EC software with some existing application and databases.

(5) Vendors may need special web servers and other infrastructures, in addition to the network servers.

(6) Some EC software might not fit with some hardware, or may be incompatible with some operating systems or other components.

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(7) Cost and justification. The cost of developing EC in-house can be very high, and mistakes due to lack of experience may result in delays. There are many opportunities for outsourcing but where and how to do is not a simple issue. Furthermore, to justify the system, one must deal with some intangible benefits.

(8) Security and privacy. These issues are especially important in the B2C area, especially security issues that are perceived to be more serious than they really are if appropriate encryption is used. Privacy measures are constantly improved. Yet, the customers perceive these issues as very important, and the EC industry has a very long and difficult task of convincing customers that online transactions and privacy are, in fact, very secure.

(9) Lack of trust and user resistance. Customers do not trust an unknown faceless seller, paper transactions, and electronic money. So switching from physical to virtual stores may be difficult.

(10) Other limiting factors. Lack of touch and feel online. Some customers like to touch items such as clothes and like to know exactly what they are buying.

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## 1.2 Project Objectives

The objectives of this project are as follows:

(1) Generate more distribution channels of the company

(2) Increase customer and revenue

(3) Create a modern image for the company

## 1.3 Company Overview

LJH Co., Ltd. is a family-owned business located in Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand. It has been under the ownership of the family for more than 40 years and has grown from a small shop to a factory that deals with Rock Sugar and related products. The company was formed to be LJH Limited Partnership in 1957 and came to be LJH Company Limited in 1995. Today the third generation is on the job.

LJH Co., Ltd. is an offline company and does business in a traditional way with the existing customers. To increase the number of customers as well as the amount of revenue, the company needs to expand its distribution channel in order to reach more customers. Internet is one way to respond to this need. Therefore, LJH Co., Ltd. will set up its own website named www.rocksugar.com.

## 1.4 Introduction to www.RockSugar.com

The domain name or URL of this website is www.rocksugar.com. The name reflects to what product we try to represent. Since we are an existing offline company and beginning to start up as an online one, the use of company name as the domain name is hard for the customers to recognize our website. Hence, using our product—Rock Sugar, as the domain name is one of the Internet marketing strategies to promote our new website. Customers who try to search for "Rock Sugar" on the Internet have to think about www.rocksugar.com first. Furthermore, this name is easy to remember, and there is no problem about wrong spelling to enter the website.

## II. MARKETING ANALYSIS

### 2.1 Mission

The company's mission is to become a leader in Rock Sugar industry. We are committed to moving ahead with vision, and are sharply focused on international style management and the application of new technology to access the global market. In addition, we conduct research and development activities to consistently improve cultivation methods, finding efficient and environment friendly methods.

### 2.2 Marketing Objectives

The objectives of RockSugar.com are as follows:

(1) To increase revenues through web-based sales by B.100,000 per month with a 5% growth rate thereafter.

(2) To enhance "information channels" with established customer base to provide additional options to receive information from the company.

(3) To meet the needs of customers outside the immediate serving area through web accessibility.

(4) To retain customers to generate repeat purchases and referrals.

(5) To generate additional sales to cover all expenses of support for the website as an individual profit center.

(6) To generate more distribution channels of the company.

(7) To create a modern image for the company.

### 2.3 Target Market

We would like to expand the distribution channel by generating more customers on the website. Since most of our existing customers are Chinese around the country, we would like to generate other sections of customer by using geographic and demographic strategy.

Since Rock Sugar is more expensive than ordinary sugar, it is used in particular to provide higher value of food or dessert, and for coffee and tea. Rock Sugar offers restaurants a unique and elegant alternative to ordinary table sugar. Its smooth taste and unique crystal sparkle will give customers a lasting impression of a great meal.

Our target markets are as follows:

(1) Hotel and Restaurant – Using Rock Sugar in some food or drinks at those places can increase their image.

(2) Coffee Shop – Using Rock Sugar is one kind of additional sweeteners in the cup.

(3) Food manufacturer – Using Rock Sugar to be an important ingredient in some food is a must, such as Bird's Nest, Herbal Drink, and Chinese Cake.

(4) Retailer and Distributor – A company or whoever would like to sell our products.

(5) Chinese community – The Chinese have used Rock Sugar in daily life. It is a Chinese tradition.

(6) Foreign customers – This is the most important target through which we try to increase revenue by using Internet. A website is needed to contact with foreign customers and to present our products to the outside world.

## 2.4 Business Model

The aim of this site is not to earn direct sales online, but to increase the number of customers, which will generate revenue later. We will generate revenue through initiating product sales to the target audience that we would not realize through the real company. It will be measured on the basis of revenue generated each month compared to our stated objective. On a secondary basis, we will also measure and track traffic to the site and document what activities that traffic contributes to the other objectives of

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the site including sales leads and information dissemination. The overall goal of the site in terms of increased sales is 7-10% over the next year.

### 2.5 Website Positioning

"Number one leader in Rock Sugar" is our positioning state. We provide the best quality product, and also provide many styles and packaging of products to satisfy customers' demand. We use the website to inform our customers of our existence on the Internet and to present that we are the leader in this kind of product.

### 2.6 Market Needs

Rock Sugar is a particular product, used widely among Chinese for decades. The Chinese have used Rock Sugar in savory dishes since ancient times and have developed a repertoire of this sweetener. A well-known dessert in which Rock Sugar is one of the ingredients is bird's nest. Rock sugar imparts a smooth, more "cordial" sweetness than ordinary sugar (granulated sugar). Further more, it is used as a delicious confection enjoyed by children and adults alike. It is also used as a unique, elegant sweetening alternative to ordinary table sugar for coffee and tea in fancy hotels and restaurants. Since Rock Sugar is more expensive than ordinary sugar, it is used in particular to provide higher value of food or dessert, and for coffee and tea. Our website seeks to fulfill the following benefits that we know are important to our customers.

(1) Selection – A wide choice of current and tasteful products with convenience in ordering and product viewing.

(2) Accessibility – The customer can visit the site and view the products. They can also communicate with the company through email or phone to have access to additional assistance after reviewing the information on the site.

## 2.7 Customer Delivered Value

The customer delivered value is the difference between total customer value and total customer cost. Customers decide to purchase from the company that offers the highest delivered value. The company can increase its total customer value by improving its products and services.

2.7.1 Total Customer Value

(1) Product Value

(a) We provide many kinds of "Rock Sugar" product.

(b) We provide good quality product. Customers accept in its flavor and color.

(c) Products can be customized to meet customers' desire in the matter of size, weight, or product type.

(2) Service Value

(a) Products ordered are delivered to the customers within 2 days in metropolitan area.

(b) Damaged products can be refunded or changed with new products.

(c) Website provides useful information to customers such as "recipe with Rock Sugar", "What is Rock Sugar?", and "How to make Rock Sugar yourself".

(d) Picture and feature of each product is displayed on the screen to make customers feel as if they were shopping in the store.

(e) Website provides email at info@rocksugar.com for any requests, suggestions, comments, and questions.

(f) We offer sample product to the customers on request.

(3) Image Value

(a) Our website will be one stop information source of Rock Sugar.

(b) Our website creates good corporate image and looks smart with modern technology.

(c) We provide details of contact information on the website. Its reliability will make a good image of the company.

(4) Personal Value

(a) Our staff are well trained and service-minded. Operation staff are highly experienced in production to produce good quality products.

(b) Our delivery staff know the route well in the area they are responsible. The product ordered will be delivered to the customers on time and will be handled with great care.

2.7.2 Total Customer Cost

(1) Monetary Cost

(a) Transportation cost is reduced because customers do not have to go anywhere to buy the products.

(b) The price is low since we are the manufacture. This can cut off the cost for middle men.

(c) Cost of telecommunication is also reduced by using Internet.

(2) Time Cost

(a) Reduce time of transportation.

(b) Reduce time of waiting for quotation.

(c) Reduce time of checking and comparing the products.

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(3) Energy Cost

(a) Customers do not have to carry a bag, walking around the supermarket and finding for the products.

(4) Psychic Cost

(a) Customers feel comfortable to ask questions via email because some people feel embarrassed to inquire about some doubt directly.

(b) There is no need to fight with hectic traffic.

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# III. SITUATION ANALYSIS

## 3.1 SWOT Analysis

**Strengths:**

(1) Long establishment: LJH Co., Ltd. has been established for more than 40 years. Thus, we have more advanced business experience in Rock Sugar industry.

(2) Professional management: All the management of the company has been working in the field for more than 40 years, and hence we have professional management skills. Therefore, we are confident to direct the company with efficiency and effectiveness.

(3) Family business: Since LJH Co., Ltd. is a family business, our management team has more open-minded communication.

(4) Local company: LJH Co., Ltd. is a local company. A successful Chinese businessman founded it in 1960. The company is now well-recognized under the new generation management. With our long outstanding reputation, we are committed to do the business with our Chinese customers in the traditional Chinese way. However, we are expanding our target consumers to a new Thai generation and mass production industry.

(5) Own delivery unit: We have our own delivery facility, and our delivery staff are professionally trained. As a result, we are capable of delivering our product to anywhere in the country.

(6) Product Quality: Our products have high quality standard in taste and appearance which also match our customer preference.

(7) Focus on only one product: Our website sells only Rock Sugar, which makes the customers confident in our product and in the fact that we are the leader in Rock Sugar.

(8) Product differentiation to serve individual customer: We can present customers with products that interesting to them on an individual basis. It is a powerful direct marketing tool.

(9) Minimum investment: Since we are a small start-up online company, the hardware, software and other office expenses are limited for a small size operation.

(10) Recognizable domain name: The domain name—RockSugar.com is registered. It is a very easy to remember domain name, and it directly represents the product we are selling.

(11) Easy navigation: The website provides easy navigation through the website.

**Weaknesses:**

(1) Little experience in E-business: We are a newborn company with a spot background in the internet-based business.

(2) Few IT staff: There are very few staff that are knowledgable in IT technology. That may cause a problem in website maintaining in the future.

(3) Customers' skills needed in dealing with IT: There is a need for customers' skills to deal with computers and Internet web browsers.

(4) No payment gateway support: There is no payment gateway provided in the website.

(5) Unavailability of product price on the website: We do not specify the price of each product via the website. Customers have to contact the company directly.

**Opportunities:**

(1) Internet world: The number of Internet users is growing daily along with the high percentage of Internet shoppers. More and more organizations are using Internet to reach the global market easily at a low cost.

(2) Cost effective and convenient: Organizations need to control their cost, and they would like to obtain convenience to help reduce some of their costs. Doing business online is one way in which the organization can exploit the advantages of being able to do business at a lower cost but effectively.

(3) Exporting: Exporting has been encouraged to raise the economic growth in Thailand.

(4) Government support: Thai government has been concerned about the economic stability. There are many supports given to Thai companies such as the policy on export, network infrastructure and e-commerce, and SMEs support.

(5) New technologies: New technologies are being developed to support e-commerce infrastructure. It shows a positive trend in the e-commerce in Thailand.

(6) Bank support: The banks have an increase interest in the e-commerce business, and have been developing their own infrastructure in order to provide services to support electronic transaction.

(7) Less online competitors: There are many offline competitors competing in this small market; therefore this is an opportunity to generate revenue via the website which has less online competitors.

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(8) Offline payment: Security is often cited as a major barrier to E-commerce. Prospective buyers feel insecure over online payment; hence we don't use the online payment system.

**Threats:**

(1) New competitors: A low entry barrier leads to a possibility that one or more new competitors could enter into the same kind of business everyday. Furthermore, there are multiple types of existing competitors who could easily adopt some functions and finally are capable of offering the same value.

(2) Lack of laws: E-commerce registration is still in process. Many legal issues are yet unresolved. Government regulations and standards are not defined clearly in many circumstances.

(3) Law of different countries: Different countries have different laws, regulations and tax policies. When it goes to international cases, it could lead to conflict at the end.

### 3.2 Competitive Analysis

We focus on our competitor in Thailand. Our main competitor is Mitrphol Co., Ltd., a big sugar company. Other competitors are offline ones.

**Analysis of Mitrphol Co., Ltd.**

**Strengths:**

(1) Well known company: Mitrphol Co., Ltd. is the most well-known and the most recognized sugar company. Furthermore, Mitrphol Co., Ltd. is the biggest sugar company in Thailand.

(2) Sugar Expert: Mitrphol Co., Ltd. is famous in many kinds of sugar products. Most people think about Mitrphol first when they think about sugar.

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(3) Advertising: Mitrphol Co., Ltd. has used many forms advertising to achieve brand awareness by the customers.

(4) Exporting: Mitrphol Co., Ltd. has more experience in exporting and maintains good relationship with its existing foreign customers.

(5) Many product varieties: Mitrphol Co., Ltd. offers a wide variety of sugar product to its customers.

(6) Offline and online business: Mitrphol Co., Ltd. has offline stores to support its online business.

(7) Logistics: Mitrphol Co., Ltd. has a good supply chain management. It has a good distribution channel throughout the whole country.

(8) Good quality of products: Mitrphol Co., Ltd. has produced top quality products. It has set up the operations to international standards of ISO 9002 and ISO 14001.

(9) Website attribute: Mitrphol.com web page is attractive. It provides easy navigation through the website.

**Weaknesses:**

(1) Less variety of "Rock Sugar": Although Mitrphol Co., Ltd. has a wide variety of sugar products, it has less variety of Rock Sugar compared to our company which emphasizes only on "Rock Sugar".

(2) Website content: There is too much content in Mitrphol.com which may bore the customers.

### 3.3 Cost Benefit Analysis

**Cost of the web system**

The cost of the whole system includes manpower cost, hardware & software cost, implementation cost and maintenance cost.

Table 3.1. Cost of the Web System.

| DESCRIPTION | ANNUAL COST (Baht) |
|---|---|
| Website Development | 35,000 |
| Website Infrastructure | 13,000 |
| Expensed Hardware & Software | 75,000 |
| Expensed Equipment | 10,000 |
| Website Maintenance | 12,000 |
| Website Promotion | 12,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **157,000** |

**Return on Investment**

We expect the income from our website B.55,000 per month. By this expectation, we will have ROI within 3 months as the figure shown below:

Total of Investment = B.157,000

Expected Income = B.55,000 / month

Expected ROI = 3 months

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# IV. MARKETING PLAN

## The Marketing Mix

### 4.1 Product

"Rock sugar" is crystallized sugar that is fun to consume. It is one of the oldest forms of candy. Long time ago, Rock Sugar was used as a home remedy to treat certain illnesses. The Chinese have used Rock Sugar in savory dishes since ancient times and have developed a repertoire of this sweetener. Rock sugar is a fabulous way to see what crystals are about. It has granules larger than those of regular granulated sugar. It is not as sweet as regular granulated sugar. It is grown from a saturated sugar solution. The size and shape of sugar crystal obtained depends on many factors, including temperature, concentration, impurities, the size of the container, etc.

There is another kind of Rock Sugar called "Caramel Rock Sugar". It comes in the form of amber-colored crystals, the result of sugar cooked until it begins to color.

Since Rock Sugar is a unique product, it is used widely among Chinese for decades. The Chinese have used Rock Sugar in savory dishes since ancient times and have developed a repertoire of this sweetener. A well-known dessert that uses Rock Sugar in the ingredients is bird's nest. Rock sugar imparts a smooth, and more "cordial" sweetness than ordinary sugar (granulated sugar). It is a unique and elegant alternative to the consumers. Furthermore, Rock Sugar is used as a delicious confection enjoyed by children and adults alike. It is also used as an elegant sweetening alternative to ordinary table sugar for coffee and tea in fancy hotels and restaurants. Since Rock Sugar is more expensive than ordinary sugar, it would be used in particular way to provide higher value of food or dessert, and used for coffee and tea.

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Our marketing has to emphasize the benefits of our unique combination of technological expertise, ergonomics, and high quality of product. We need to sell pride of ownership and workmanship, and prestige. That has to come out in our packaging, finishing, shipping, and collaterals.

Our website provides many kinds of Rock Sugar which has high quality in its taste. The products that we provide are as follows:

**Rock Sugar on a string :**

White Crystals in a case (6 boxes x 2 kgs.)

Amber Crystals in a case (6 boxes x 2 kgs.)

Brown Crystals in a case (6 boxes x 2 kgs.)

**Rock Sugar Crystals :**

White Crystals in a case (6 boxes x 2 kgs.)

Amber Crystals in a case (6 boxes x 2 kgs.)

Brown Crystals in a case (6 boxes x 2 kgs.)

White Crystals in bulk (30 kgs.)

Amber Crystals in bulk (30 kgs.)

Brown Crystals in bulk (30 kgs.)

**Crystal Stick :**

White Sticks in a case (12 boxes x 12 pcs.)

Brown Sticks in a case (12 boxes x 12 pcs.)

We also use product differentiation strategy to increase customers' satisfaction. We offer customization of products in size, weight, packing, packaging, or others to meet customers' desire.

### 4.2 Price

We base our pricing on cost (material costs, labor costs, overhead costs, etc.) and perceived value. We will maintain our pricing position as a premier provider. We intend to maintain our separation from the lower end of the business.

We do not show the list of price on the website since the price is also up to various customers. We have a good relationship with our existing customers and the price for old customers may be lower than new customers.

### 4.3 Place

4.3.1 Company Location

Production Plant : Bangkok

Office : Bangkok

The production plant and office are in the same place which provides convenience in management. The management of production and business are able to be controlled comfortably and efficiently.

4.3.2 Assortment

We use just the specialty distribution channel instead of covering all channels of distribution. This can prevent transportation damage and reduce cost of transportation. The fewer the channels, the faster it is in getting money. The assortment can also add value to the image of the company.

4.3.3 Channel of Distribution

Unlike the offline company, the online marketing channel is an additional channel to help the company sell the products directly via the Internet. The more successful is our online marketing, the more traffic and customers we will bring to our site. Eventually, our company will use both traditional channel and online marketing channel in our strategy.

The benefits of the online marketing channel are as follows:

(1) Customers can find realms of comparative information and focus on objective criteria such as products, companies, services, promotions and other factor comfortably.

(2) With online service, customers do not have to face salesperson or open themselves up to persuasion and emotional factors.

(3) Customers can view the products 24 hours a day wherever they are. This can help customers in making purchasing decision faster.

### 4.4 Promotion

Since we are a start up online business, we have to promote the website to anyone who is interested in "Rock Sugar".

**Website Promotion**

(1) Submit the website to search engines:

Since most Internet users find the sites that they are looking for through the use of search engine. We have to submit the website to popular search engines. We will submit the website every 3-4 months so that search engine will not forget us. We use meta tags on our website and especially on index page. When search engines add our homepage to their database, the first thing that they look for is a special tag with the description and keyword of the page.

The search engines we intend to submit are Google, Lycos, AltaVista, Infoseek, Thaiseek, and Thaihotsearch.

(2) Submit the website to other E-shopping malls or government website

We will also submit the website to other E-shopping malls or government websites which support trade or export such as www.thailand.com, www.directory.thailand.net, www.thaimarket.net, and www.thai2biz.com. This is the easiest way to make customers come to us. They can search for product type in those E-shopping malls and can contact us even though they don't know our existing website before.

(3) Add links

By having other sites linked to our site, the company will undoubtedly increase traffic to the site. If the site has some relationship with the subject matter on another site, we will contact the owner of that site to see if we can trade links. These simple link exchanges benefit both parties involved, and best of all it does not cost either party.

(4) Print the URL everywhere

We will attach the URL, www.rocksugar.com to materials such as email, email signature, business card, letter head, and any documents to push people to come to the website.

(5) Automated email

We use automated email to inform our customers of the existence of our website, www.rocksugar.com.

(6) Banner swapping

Banner swapping is a direct link between websites. Every time another company's web page is accessed, our company's banner will be displayed, giving the viewer the opportunity to click on it and be transferred to our website.

(7) Online classifieds

There are millions of free classified ads programs. A lot of them are even divided on topics, so we will add our website to where it belongs. This is a good method to get a steady amount of traffic to the website everyday.

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# V. WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Once we have determined the general look and navigation of the new site, we will accomplish the following tasks:

(1) Define initial site layout and general design characteristics.

(2) Product selection for site.

## 5.1 Website Outline

(1) Welcome Page: Welcome page is the gateway to enter the site.

(2) Company Overview: Provides the company's background and mission

(3) Products: Provides product's information and specification, and the order form.

(4) Recipe: Provides recipe for cooking with Rock Sugar.

(5) What Is Rock Sugar?: Provides the information of Rock Sugar.

(6) History of Rock Sugar: Provides the information of Rock Sugar history.

(7) Make It Yourself!: Provides the method of making Rock Sugar at home.

(8) Contact Us: Provides the contact information of the company and the form to fill in and submit to the company.

(9) Site Map: Provide website structure.

## 5.2 Front End

We have the basic elements of the site in place at www.rocksugar.com. It possesses some of the functional components that we want to keep including:

(1) A URL that is not ideal, but tolerable.

(2) Identifiable home page.

(3) The ability to select and view the products.

(4) Contact information.

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(5) Product information and recipe.

(6) Good look and feel of graphic design characteristics.

(7) Quick speed.

(8) Easy navigation through the site.

A redesigned sign is desperately needed to attract additional traffic, support easier and quicker navigation, and hopefully result in increased sales.

## 5.3 Back End

Our back end features should include the following:

(1) Web hosting with 98% uptime through the local provider.

(2) Statistics to determine page views, unique users, banner impressions, sponsorship impressions and clickthroughs.

(3) The ability to enable visitors to gain easy access to product information, visuals, and robust email system.

## 5.4 Resource Requirement

The system consists of two applications. First application is the database application, which is created by Microsoft Visual Basic 6.0. This application is used to update the information of products and other information. It will also show the customer information, but cannot be added or edited in this application. Second is the webpages application that is created by using Personal Web Server as a server and programmed by HTML and ASP languages.

### 5.4.1 Hardware Requirement

The following table shows the minimum requirement of the system hardware that will be used in the system:

Table 5.1. Hardware Requirement.

| HARDWARE | SPECIFICATION |
|---|---|
| CPU | Duron 750 MHz |
| RAM | SD 256 MB |
| Hard Disk | Maxtor 20 GB |
| CD-ROM | 52 x |
| Floppy Disk Drive | 1.44" TEAC |
| Removable Drive | Handy Drive 64 MB |
| Monitor | Philips 15" (105 S) |
| Modem | 56 K (V 90) External |
| Printer | - HP LaserJet 1100<br>- Lexmark 3200 |
| Scanner | CanoScan N 340P |
| Digital Camera | Fuji |

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5.4.2 Software Requirement

The following table shows the software that we use to create website.

Table 5.2. Software Requirement.

| FUNCTION | SOFTWARE |
|---|---|
| Operating System | Microsoft Window XP |
| Web Server | Personal Web Server |
| Web Browser | Internet Explorer |
| Graphical Creator | Adobe PhotoShop 7.0<br>Adobe Illustrator 10<br>Macromedia Flash MX<br>Swish 2.0 |
| Web Design Creator | Macromedia Dreamweaver MX |

## 5.5 Future Development

Future development will be assessed after the website has been launched and user tested.

The objectives of the site redesign will include:

(1) Increased speed.

(2) Enhanced navigation.

(3) Additional products added.

(4) New information and recipe added.

# VI. WEB DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

Website management is a key issue for many companies. The company can keep all those web pages in the right order and have them searchable, and placed on the site map. This can be a very costly and time-consuming task for web masters. If the company design the site and architect a powerful normalized database and have it power the website, we find that it solves many of these issues for us.

The following are the steps to be taken before beginning to build a successful website:

(1) Research the number of websites that we like, sites that are in our industry and most importantly, our competitors. Use this research to create our wish list and to benchmark our future progress.

(2) Develop a wish list of what we want our site to have, along with the desired look and feel.

(3) Seek advice from professionals with experience in designing, developing, implementing, and enhancing E-business applications.

(4) Set objectives and get feedback on costs and timelines.

(5) Implement.

(6) Review the results.

## 6.1 The Goals of the website

(1) To use the website as a promotional tool for the offline company, LJH Co., Ltd.

(2) To provide basic information and picture of products to the customers.

(3) To create a customer database for the company.

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(4) To meet the needs of customers outside the immediate serving area through web accessibility.

(5) To enhance "information channels" with the established customer base to provide additional options to receive information from the company.

(6) To retain customers to generate repeat purchases and referrals.

(7) To generate additional sales to cover all expenses and support the website as an individual profit center.

(8) To create a modern image for the company and to improve customer service.

(9) To expand the market place to national and international markets with minimal capital outlay.

## 6.2 Intended Audiences and Product Discussion

We would like to expand distribution channel by generating more customers on the website. Since our existing customers are mostly Chinese around the country, we would like to generate other sections of customer to generate more revenue.

Since Rock Sugar is more expensive than ordinary sugar, it is used in particular to provide higher value of food or dessert, and for coffee and tea. Rock Sugar offers restaurants a unique and elegant alternative to ordinary table sugar. Its smooth taste and unique crystal sparkle will give customers a lasting impression of a great meal. The customers can purchase our products for food or dessert objective, or to re-sell. Another idea is to re-bag the Rock Sugar under their own company's name in a convenient unit to sell.

Our intended audiences are as follows:

(1) Hotel and Restaurant – Using Rock Sugar in some food or drinks at those places can increase their image.

(2) Coffee Shop – Using Rock Sugar is one kind of additional sweeteners in the cup.

(3) Food manufacturer – Using Rock Sugar to be an important ingredient in some food is a must, such as Bird's Nest, Herbal Drink, and Chinese Cake.

(4) Retailer and Distributor – A company or whoever would like to sell our products.

(5) Chinese community – The Chinese have used Rock Sugar in daily life. It is a Chinese tradition.

(6) Foreign customers – This is the most important target through which we try to increase revenue by using Internet. A website is needed to contact with foreign customers and to present our products to the outside world.

These intended audiences are determined by the top management or the owner of the company.

### 6.3 Creating Scenarios

The following are the scenarios for the audience to explore our site.

(1) Firstly, the audience accesses our site by typing www.rocksugar.com.

(2) The audience will see the "company overview" page. They can learn more about our company.

(3) The audience can go to other pages by clicking link buttons at the left of the web page which appear on every page. They can navigate through the site without getting lost.

(4) The link buttons are linked to the following pages: "company overview", "products", "recipe", "what is rock sugar?", "history of rock sugar", "make it yourself!", "contact us", and "site map".

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(5) If the audience goes to the "products" page, they can view the product detail and pictures which will be divided into 3 categories.

(6) In the "products" page, current account customers can go to the order form to place the order. New customers who wish to open an account have to give us a call so that we can set up a direct account to order online in the future.

(7) In the "contact us" page, the audience can fill the form to contact us for further information.

## 6.4 Site Content

The site contents can be categorized into the following menu:

### 6.4.1 Welcome Page

As the audience enters into www.rocksugar.com, they will see the welcome page first. This page does not contain any content, but just for making the site impressive.

### 6.4.2 Company Overview Page

We make our website have an identity in order to communicate to the audience as if it were a person. The audience will be able to know who www.rocksugar.com is so that they will know more about us and our experience in this business.

This page also displays the "company mission" to make the audience trust in the company and product quality.

### 6.4.3 Products Page

This page provides product information regarding Rock Sugar product and its specification. The products will be categorized into 3 types namely, "Rock Sugar on A String", "Rock Sugar Crystals", and "Crystal Stick". Each category page provides the size and weight of product packaging to the audience.

The Products Page also provides the order form for current account customers.

6.4.4 Recipe Page

This page provides recipe of food and desserts which use Rock Sugar. Example are White fungus with Rock Sugar, Braised fresh ham with Rock Sugar, and Stewed Bird's Nest with Rock Sugar.

6.4.5 What is Rock Sugar Page

This page provides the facts about Rock Sugar. The audience will be able to know what Rock Sugar is and how it is made.

6.4.6 History of Rock Sugar Page

This page provides the information of Rock Sugar history. The audience will be able to know its history and its use in the past.

6.4.7 Make it Yourself! Page

This page provides the method to make Rock Sugar easily at home. The audience can enjoy this fun and scientific activity.

6.4.8 Contact Us Page

This page provides the company's contact information in detail, including company name, address, telephone number, facsimile number, and E-mail address.

This page also provides the contact us form. The audience can fill in the form and submit it to communicate with us or for further information.

6.4.9 Site Map Page

This is to help the audience to understand website structure easily and find the thing they want without getting lost in the website.

## 6.5 Content Identification and Functional Requirement

Table 6.1. Details of Content Identification and Functions in the Site.

| Menu Name | Description | Type | Format |
|---|---|---|---|
| Company Overview | Provides the company's background and mission | Text, Image | Word, Photoshop |
| Products | Provides product's information and specification, and the order form | Text, Image, Link | Word, Photoshop, Programming Language |
| Recipe | Provides recipe for cooking with Rock Sugar | Text, Image | Word, Photoshop |
| What is Rock Sugar? | Provides the facts about Rock Sugar | Text, Image | Word, Photoshop |
| History of Rock Sugar | Provides the information of Rock Sugar history | Text, Image | Word, Photoshop |
| Make It Yourself! | Provides the method of making Rock Sugar at home | Text, Image | Word, Photoshop |
| Contact Us | Provides the contact information of the company and the form for customers to fill in and submit it to the company | Text | Word, Programming Language |
| Site Map | Provides website structure | Image | Photoshop |

## 6.6 Site Structure

Table 6.2. Site Structure.

| Page Name | Description |
|---|---|
| ❖ **Welcome Page** | Welcome page which is the gateway to enter the site |
| ❖ **Company Overview** | Company's background and mission page |
| ❖ **Products** | - Product page which will be divided into 3 pages according to each type of products.<br>- Product specification page<br>- Order form page |
| ▪ Rock Sugar on a string | Rock Sugar on a string page |
| ▪ Rock Sugar crystals | Rock Sugar crystals page |
| ▪ Crystal stick | Crystal stick page |
| ▪ Order form | Order form page |
| ❖ **Recipe** | Recipe page |
| ❖ **What is Rock Sugar?** | Rock Sugar fact page |
| ❖ **History of Rock Sugar** | Rock Sugar history page |
| ❖ **Make It Yourself!** | How to make Rock Sugar at home page |
| ❖ **Contact Us** | - Company's contact information page<br>- Form filling page to contact the company |
| ❖ **Site Map** | Site map page |

## 6.7 Site Map

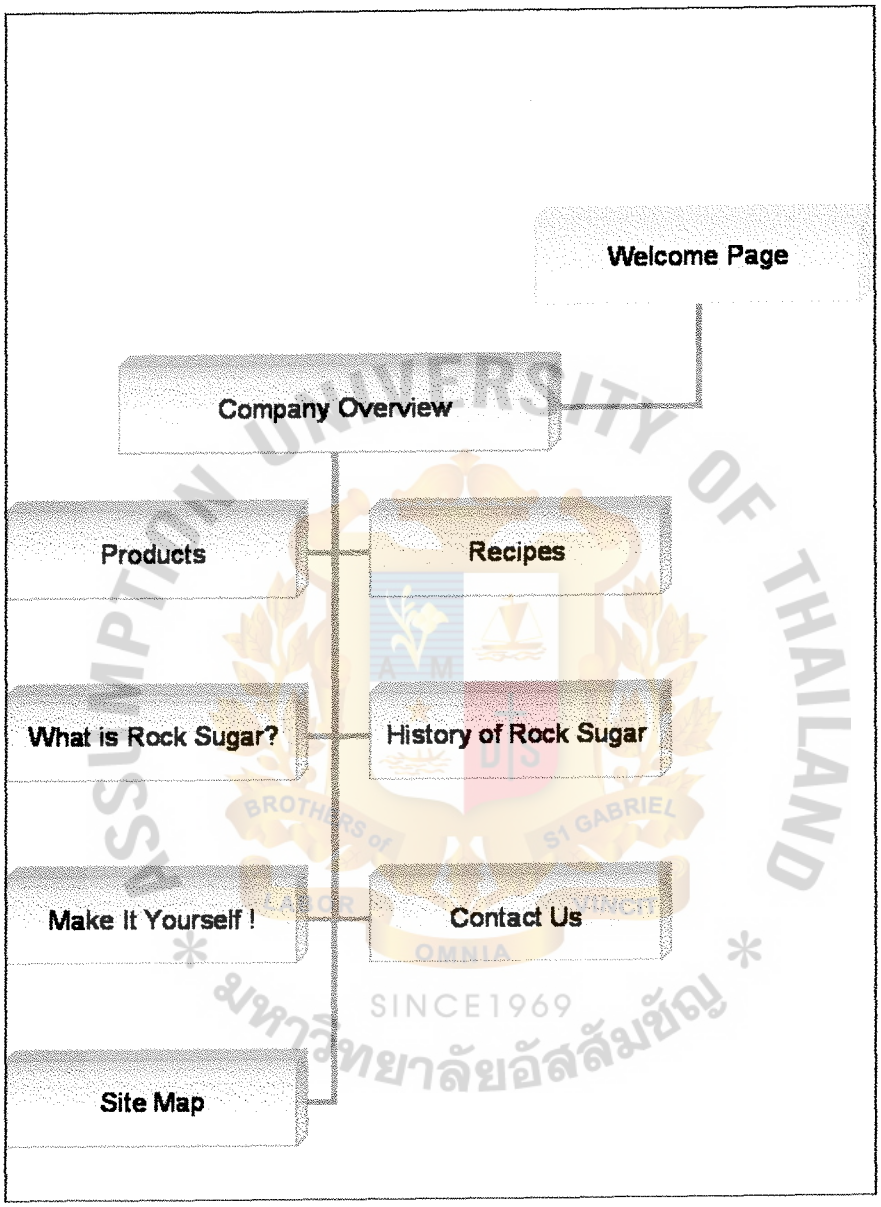


Figure 6.1. Site Map.

## 6.8 Defining Navigation

(1) As the audience enters into www.rocksugar.com, they will see the welcome page first. The welcome page is shown below:

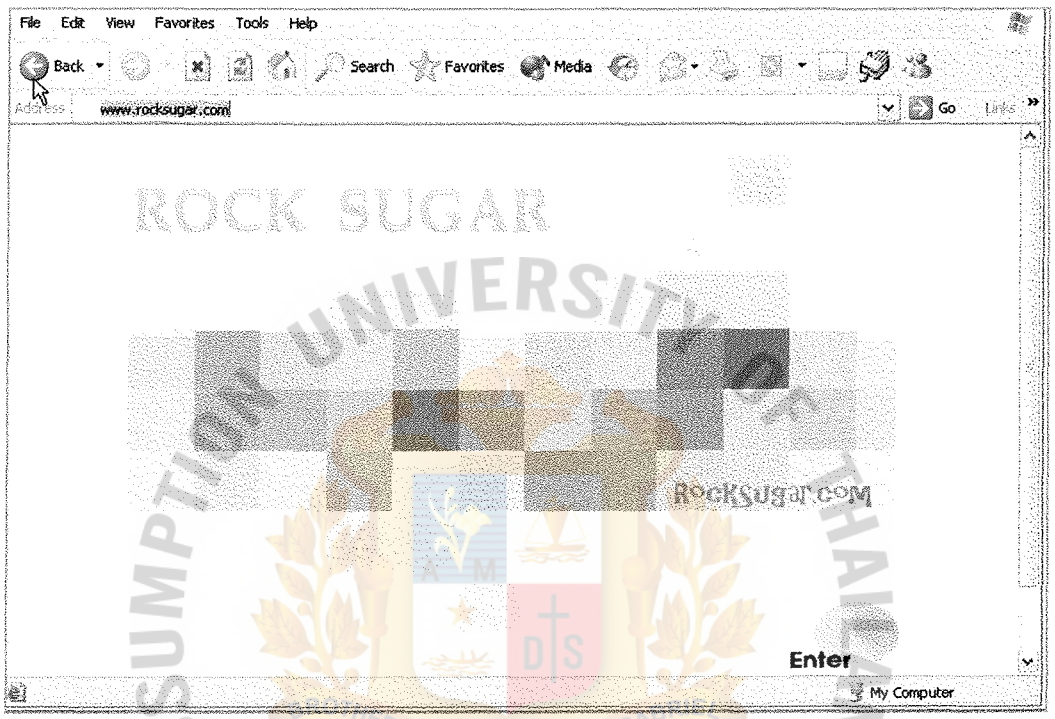


Figure 6.2. Welcome Page.

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(2) The audience then presses the enter button to access to the main page.

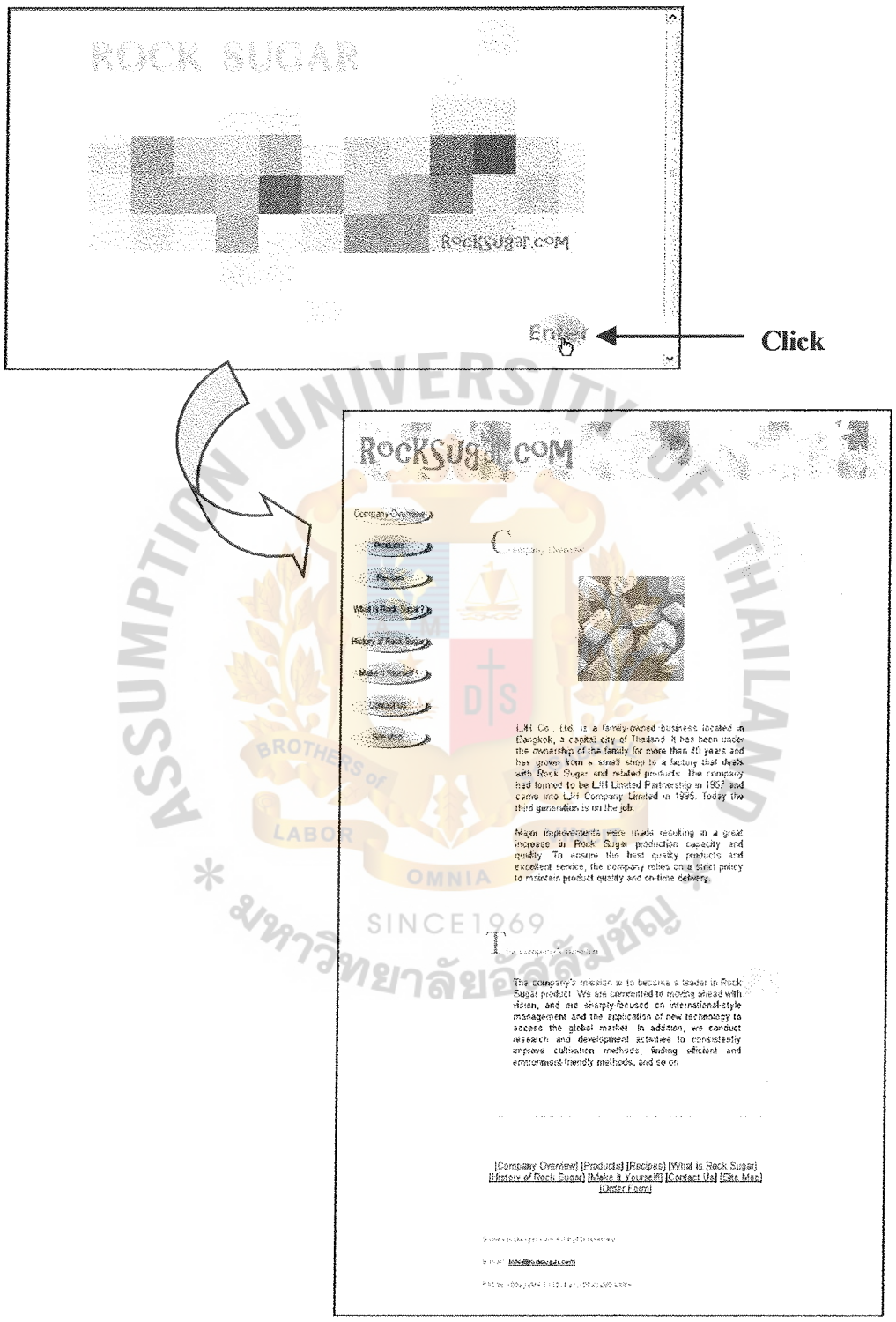


Figure 6.3. From Welcome Page to Main Page.

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(3) The audience will see the "Company Overview" page and they can navigate through the website by clicking at link button on the left of every page.

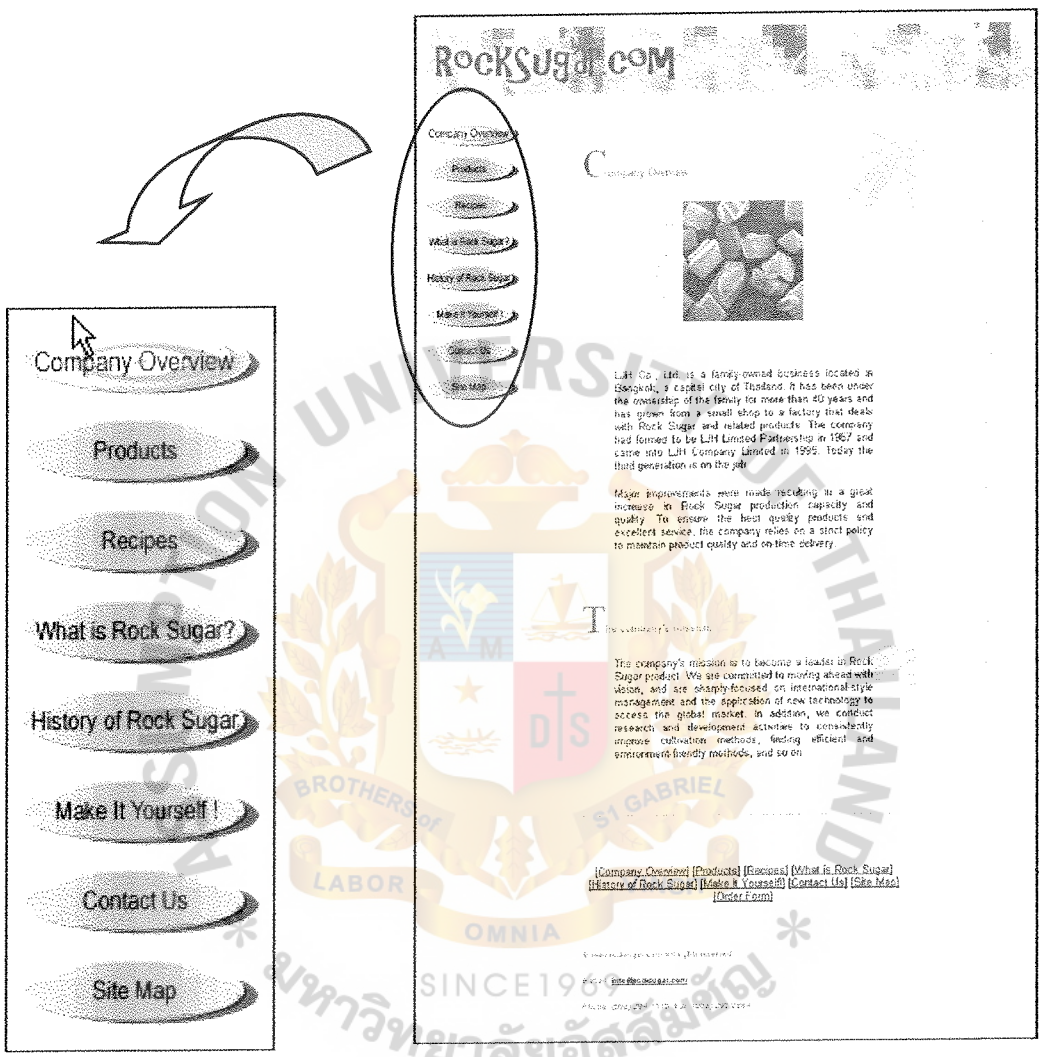


Figure 6.4. Clicking at Link Buttons to Access Other Pages.

(4) Another way to access to other pages is clicking at the links at the bottom of every page.

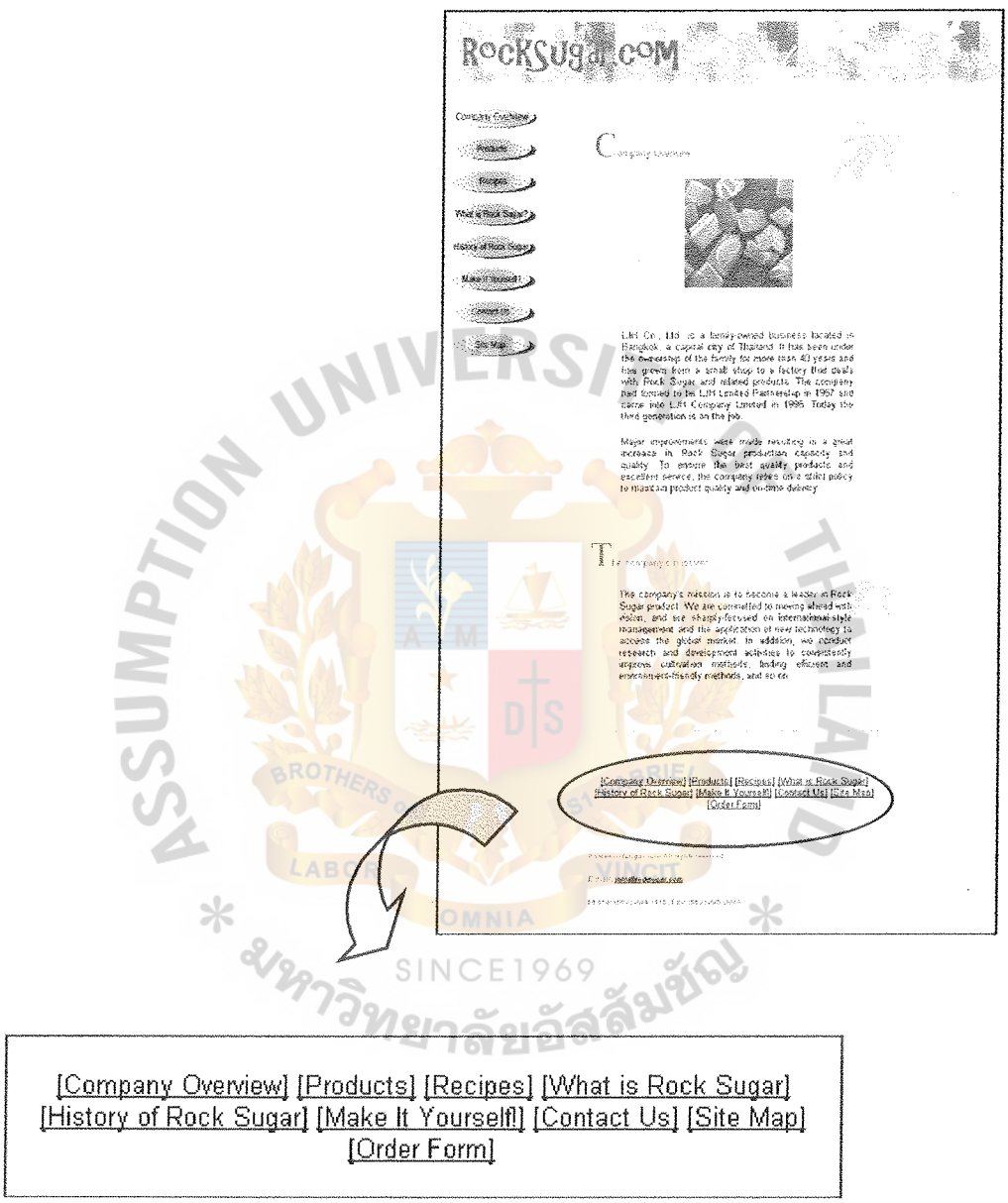


Figure 6.5. Clicking at Link at the Bottom of the Page to Access Other Pages.

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(5) The audience can go to "Products" page to see the product information. They can click at the image of products and link to see product detail pages.

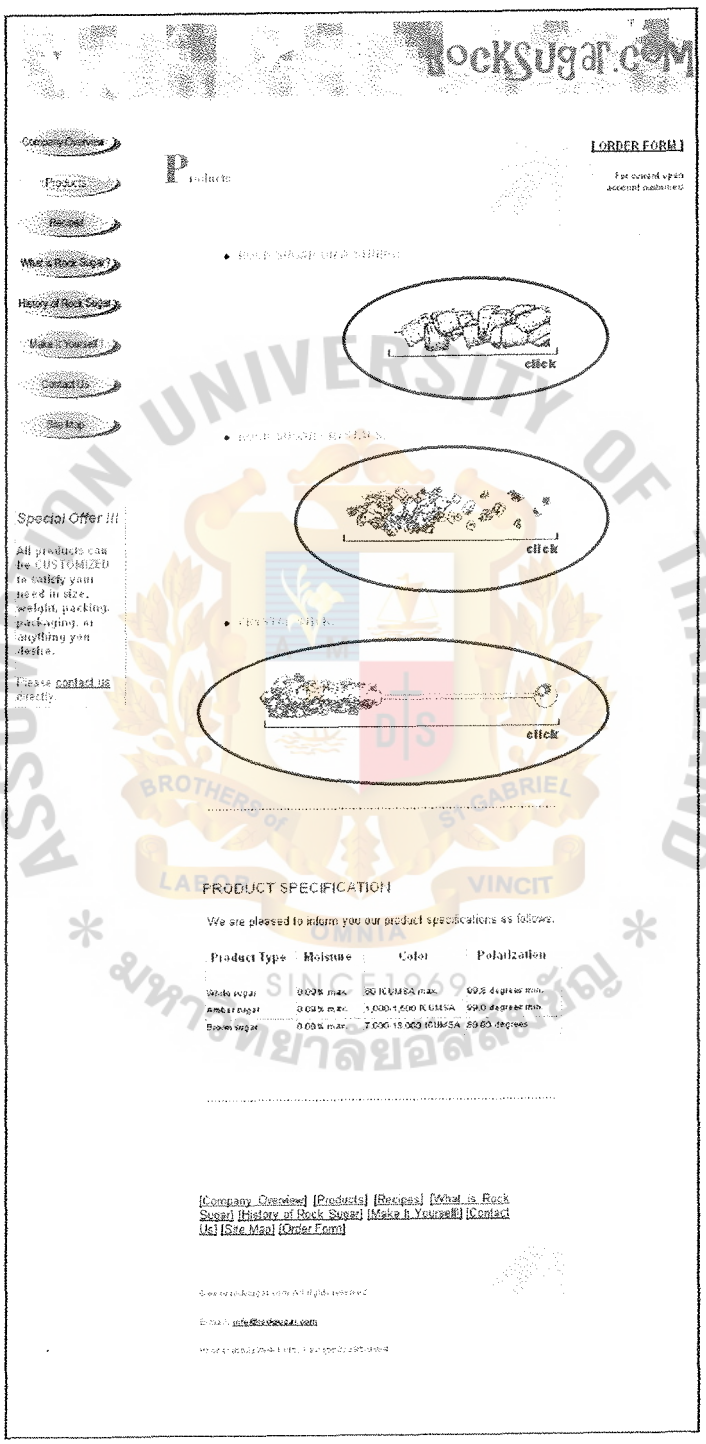


Figure 6.6. Clicking at Product Images to Go to Product Detail Pages.

(6) After clicking at the product images, the product detail pages will appear as shown below:

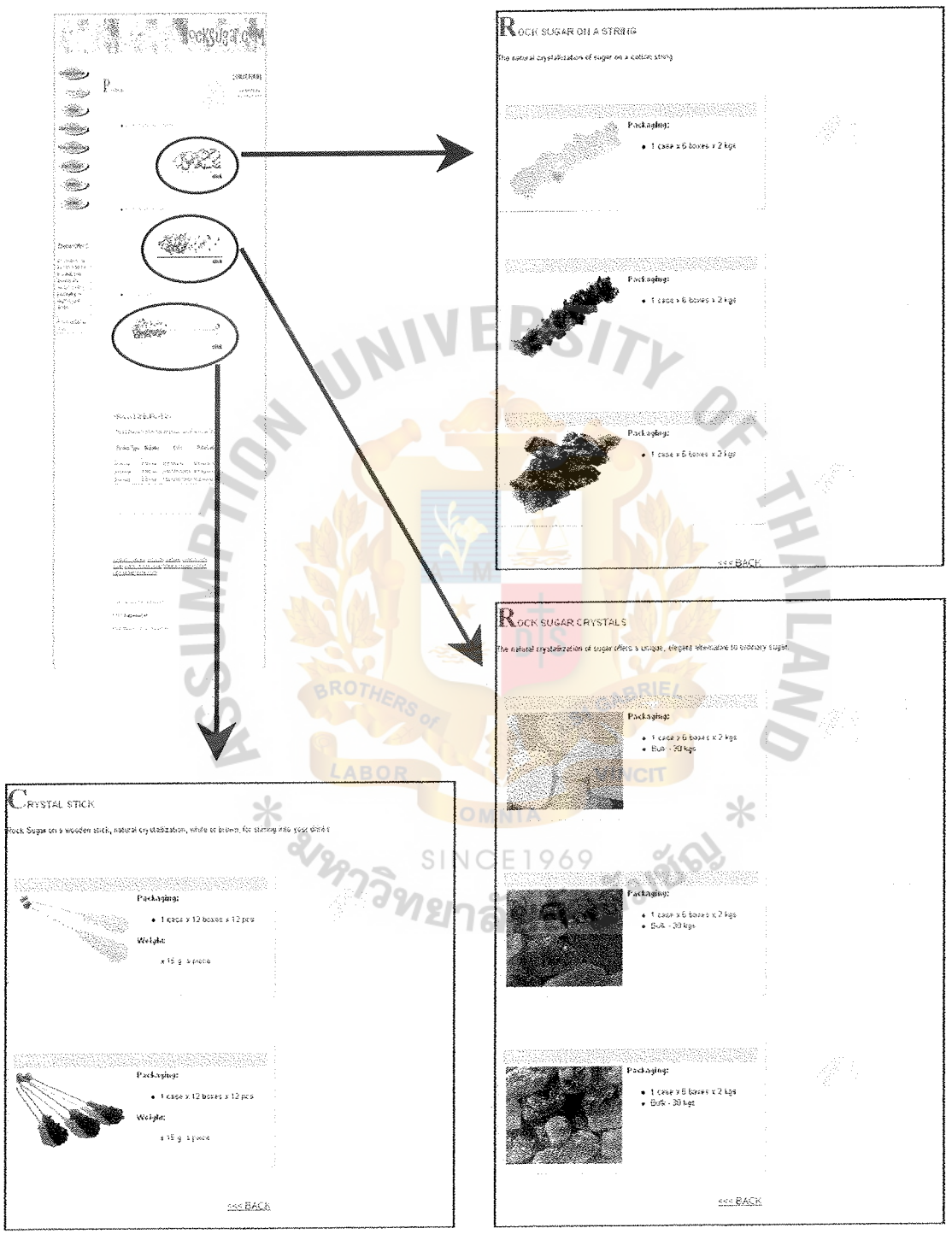


Figure 6.7. Product Detail Pages.

(7) At the bottom of product detail pages, there is a link to go back to the "Products" page. This can help the audience not to get lost.

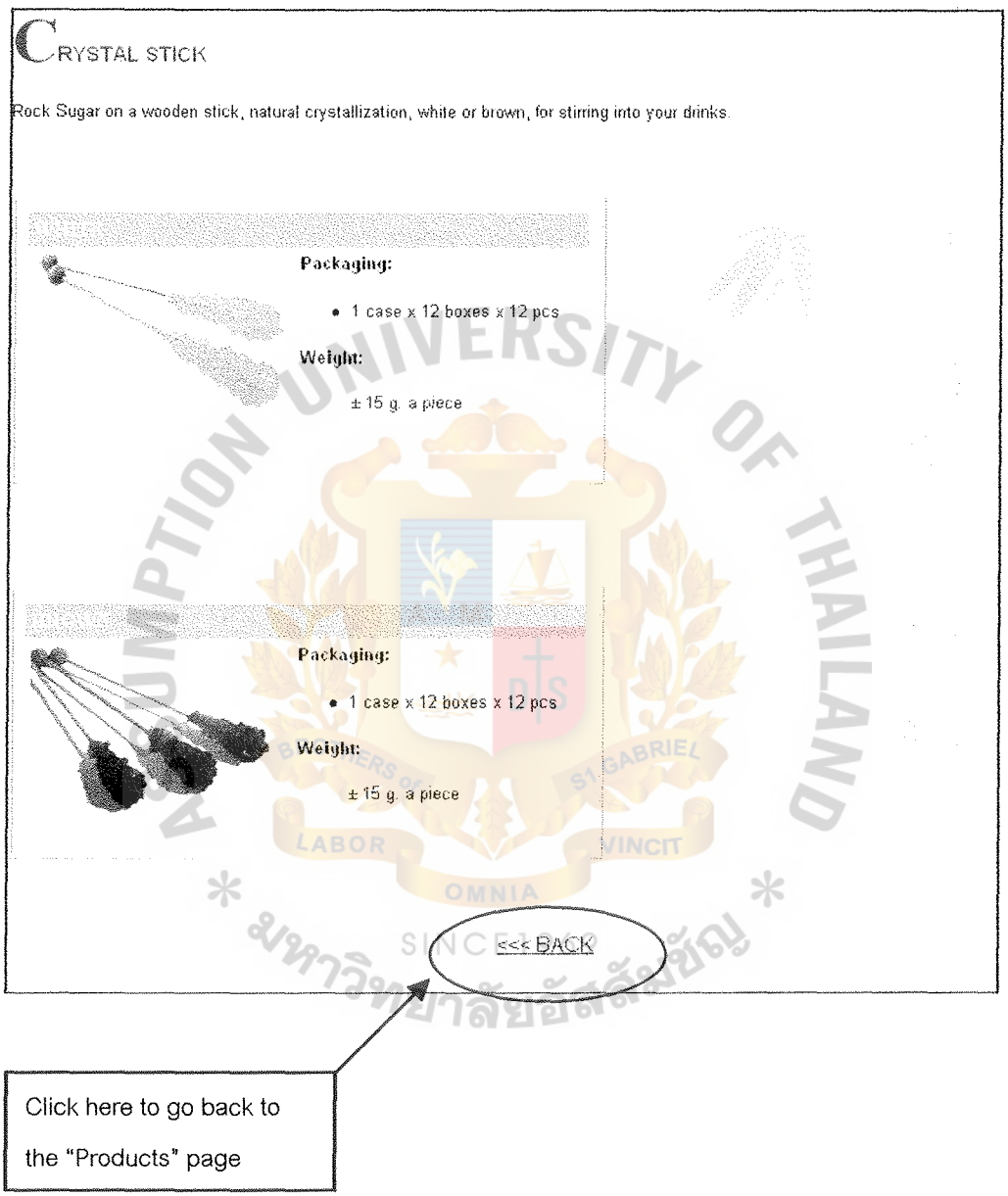


Figure 6.8. Link to Go Back to the "Products" Page.

(5) In "Products" page, there is a link to go to the "Order Form" page. The audience can fill in the form and submit it to the company.

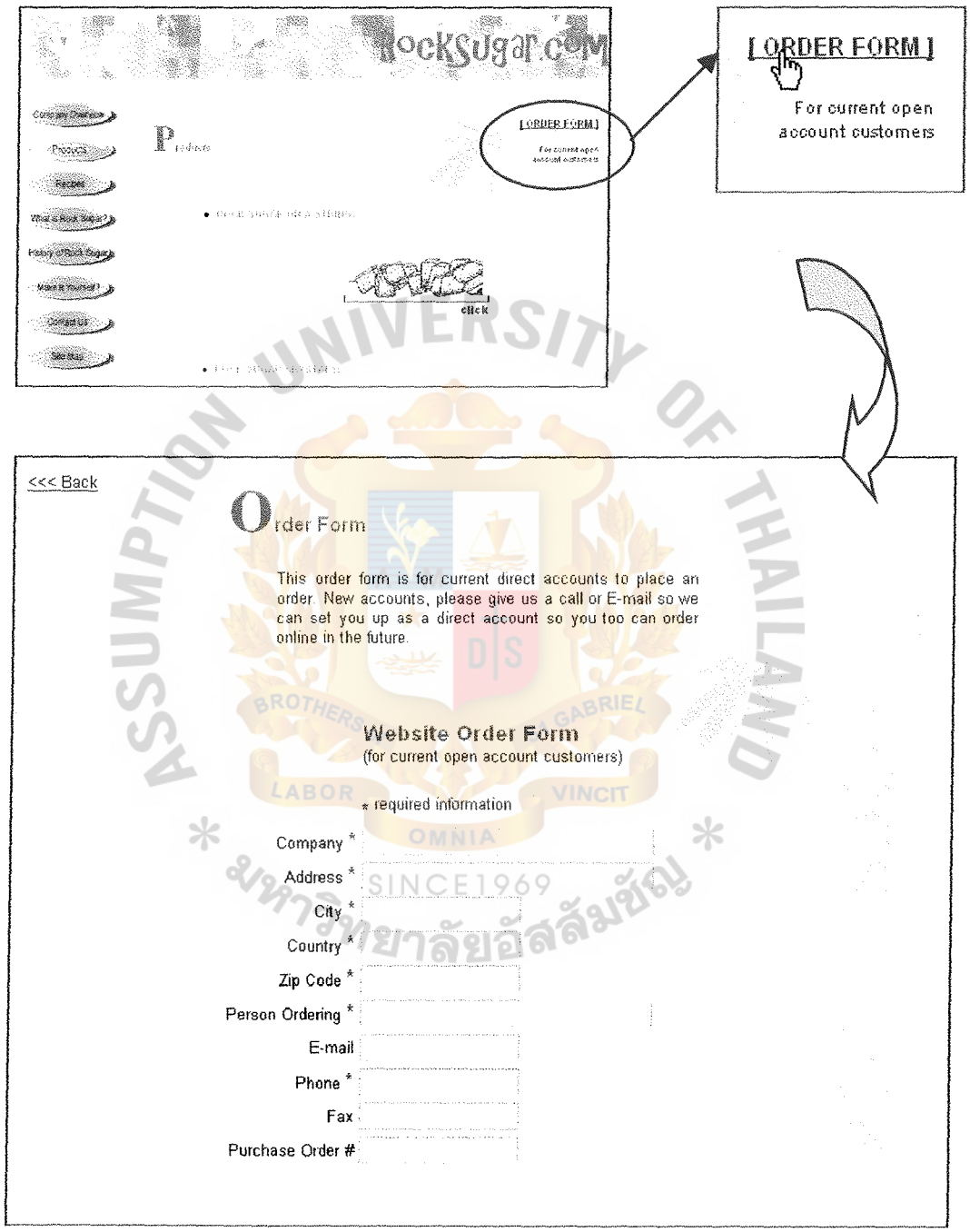


Figure 6.9. Clicking At the Link to Go to the "Order Form" Page.

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(6) At the top left and the bottom of the "Order Form" page, there are links to go back to the "Products" page. This can help the audience not to get lost.

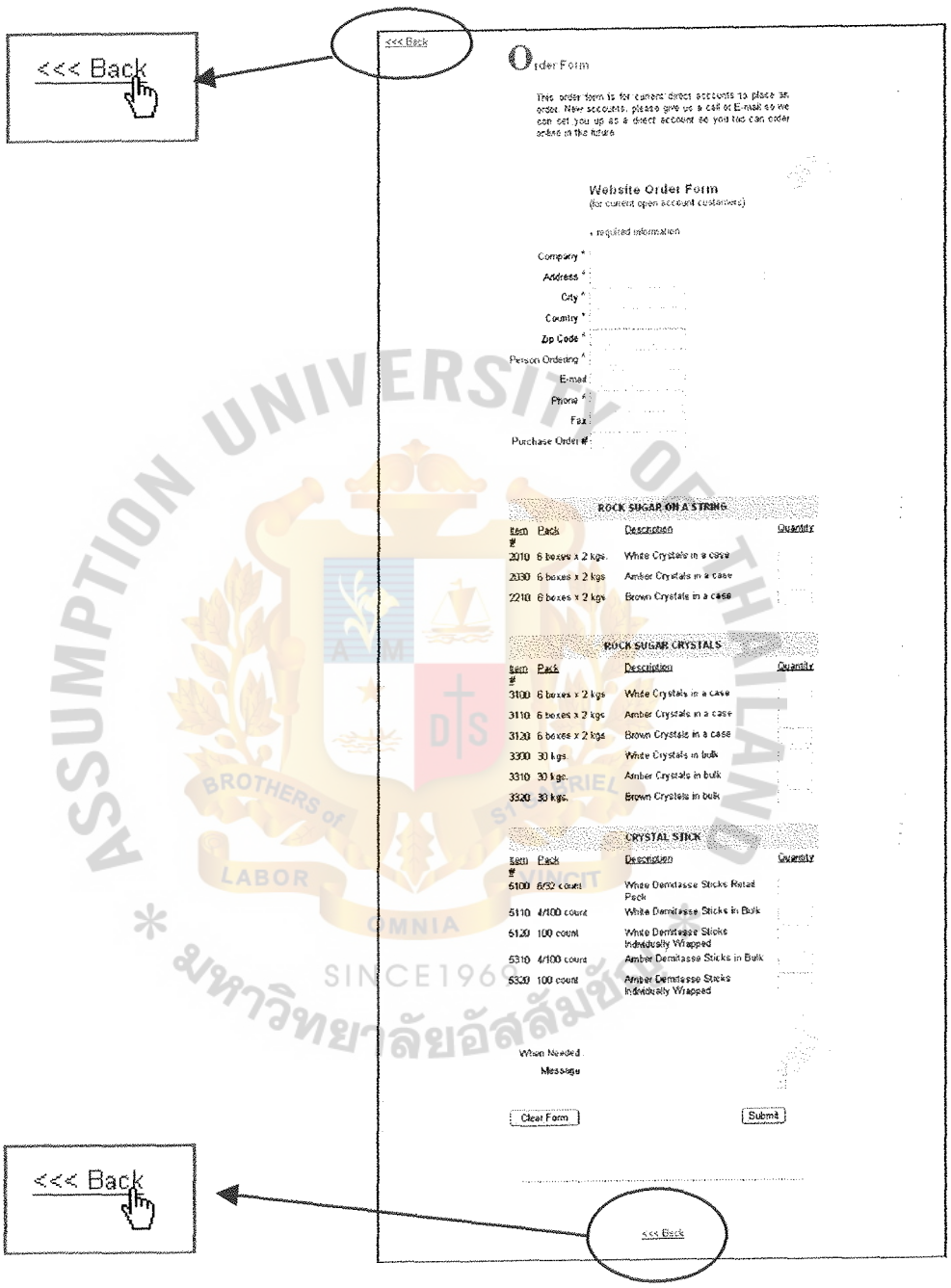


Figure 6.10. Link to Go Back to the "Products" Page.

(7) When the audience goes to the "Recipe" page, they will see the page as shown below. In this page, the audience will see the recipe list first. They can click at the name list to link to that recipe (in the same page) without scrolling to find it.

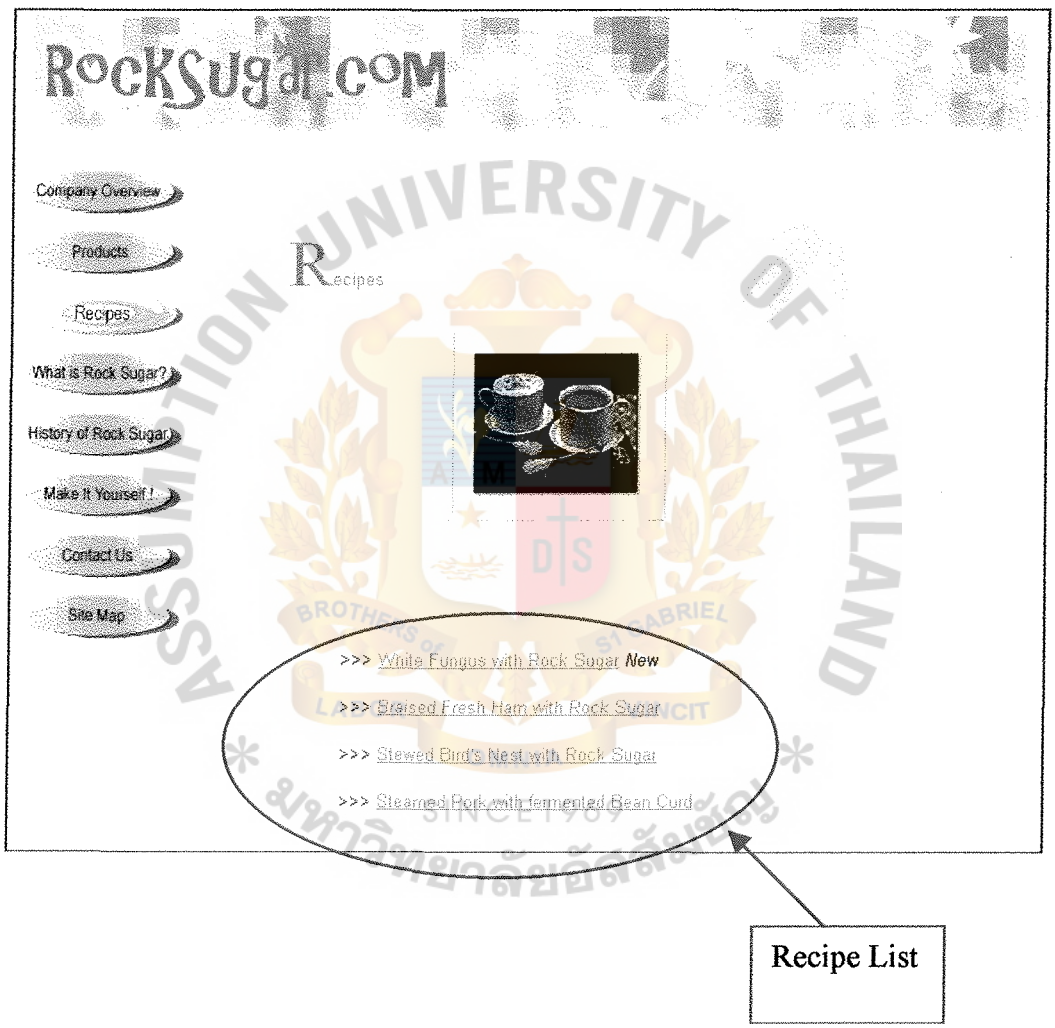


Figure 6.11. Recipe Page and Recipe List.

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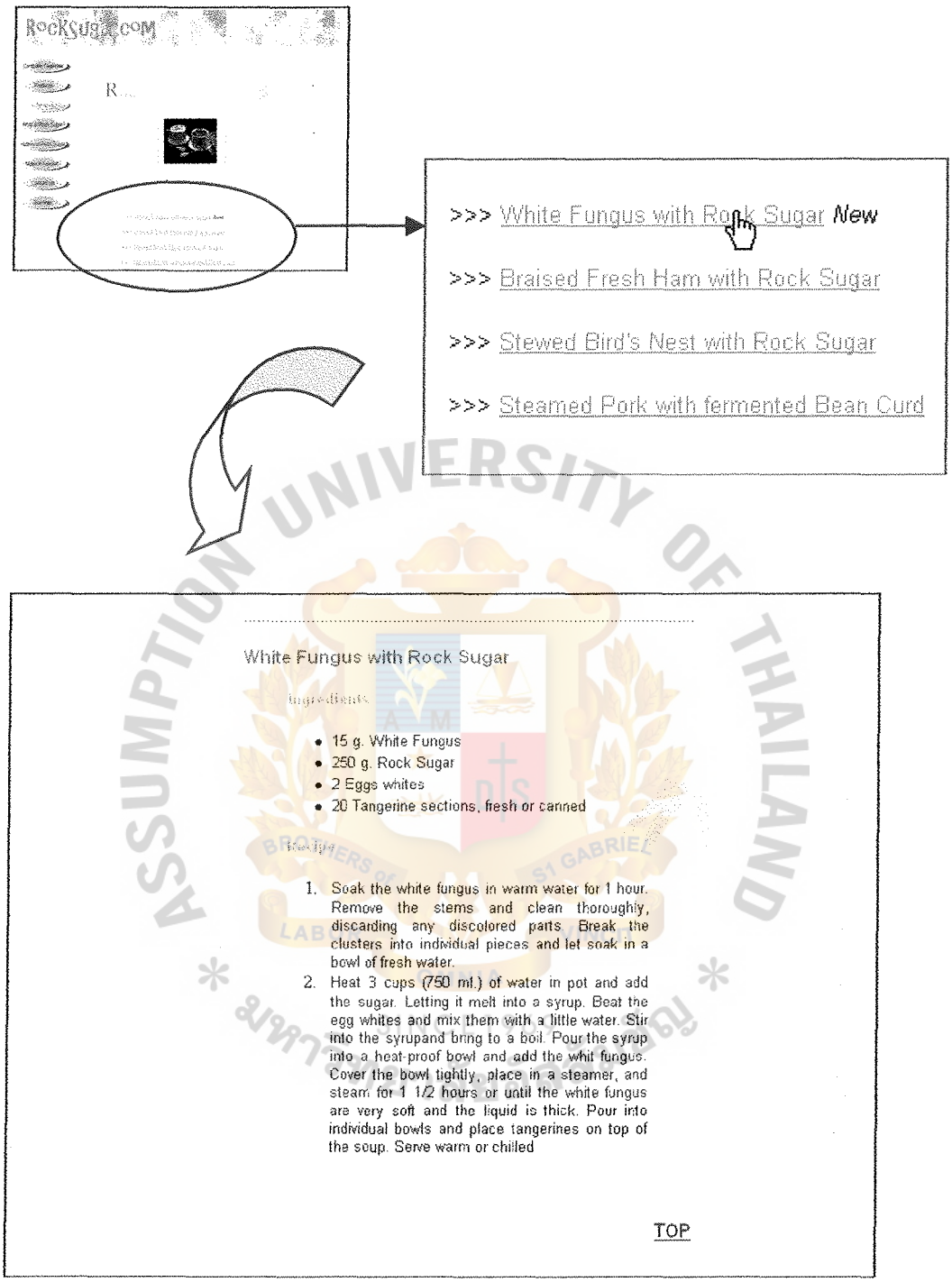


Figure 6.12. Clicking at Recipe List and Link to See Its Detail in the Same Page.

(8) At the bottom right of each recipe, there is a link to go back to the top of the page to see other recipe lists. This can help the audience so that there is no need to scroll up to the top.

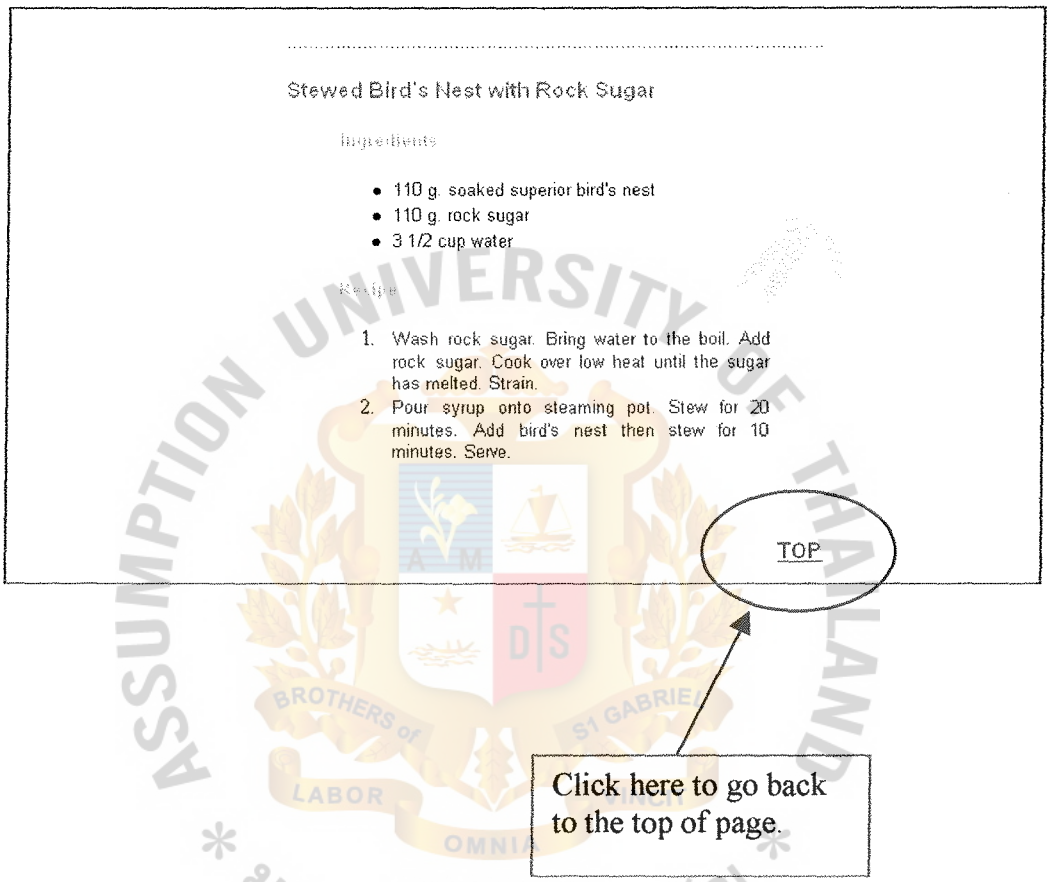


Figure 6.13. Link to the Top of Page.

(9) When the audience goes to the "What Is Rock Sugar?" page, they will see the page as shown below.

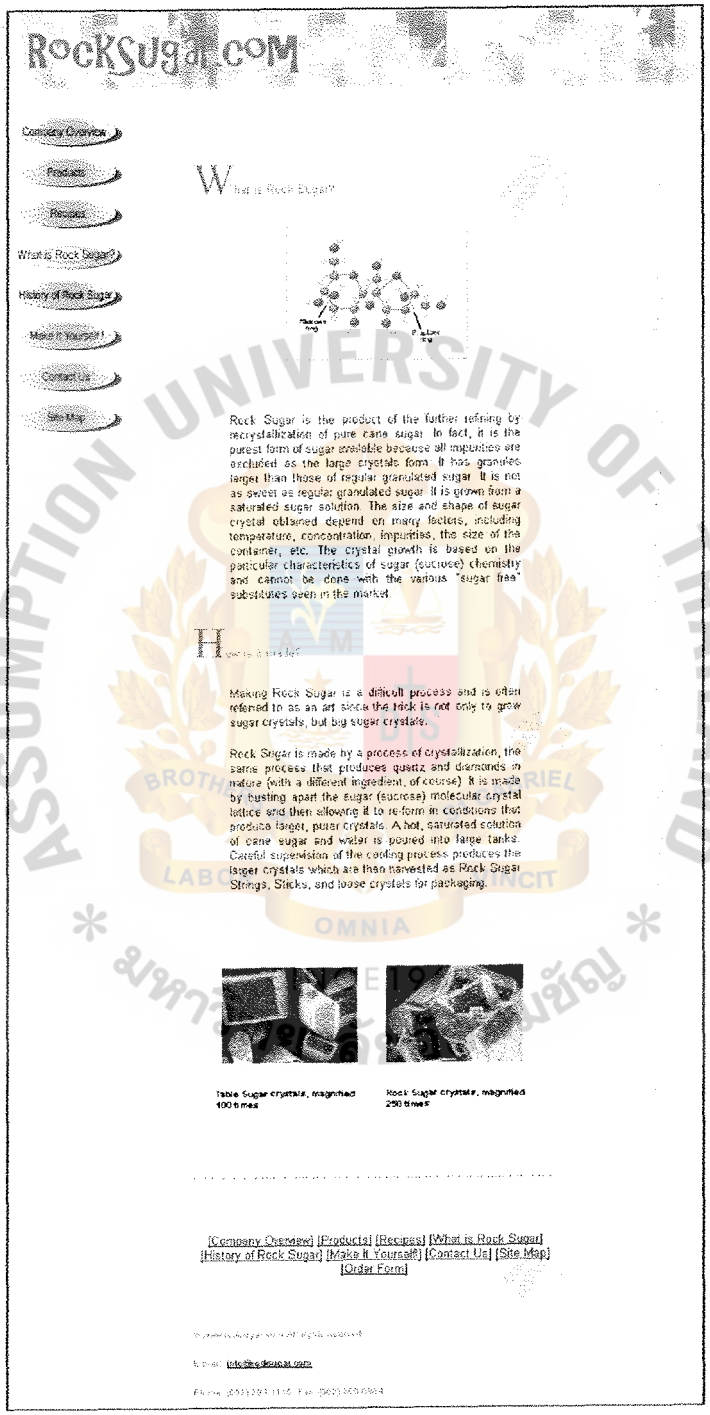


Figure 6.14. "What Is Rock Sugar?" Page.

(10) When the audience goes to the "History of Rock Sugar" page, they will see the page as shown below.

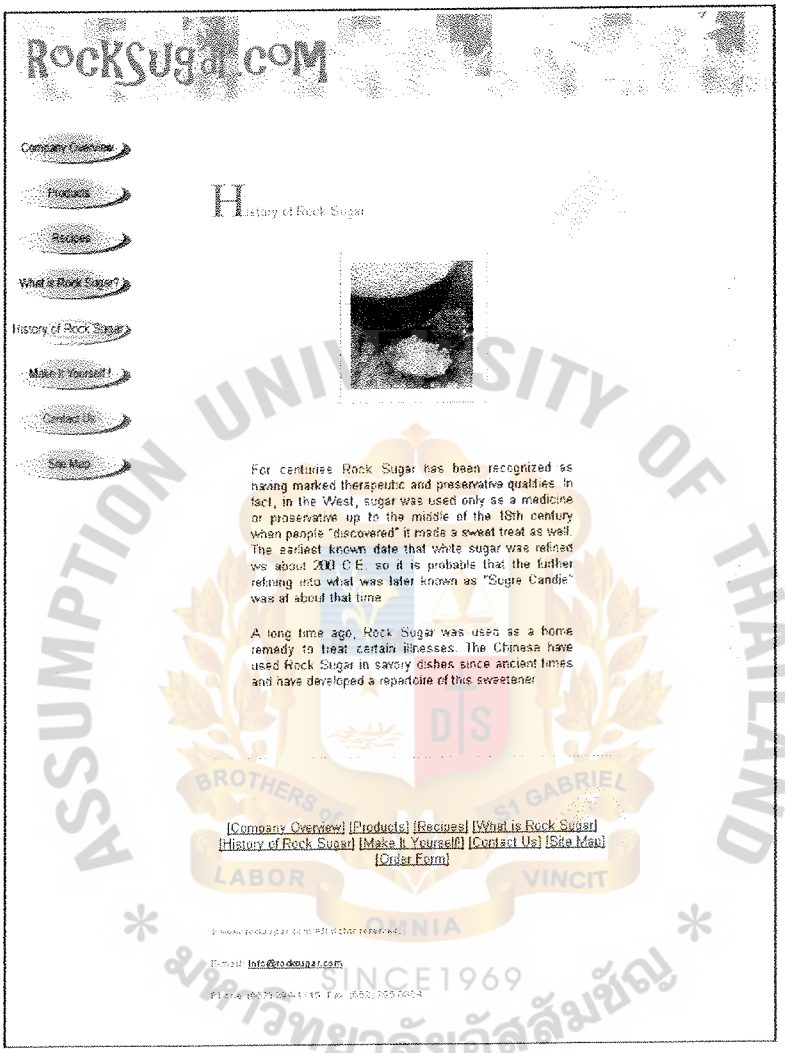


Figure 6.15. "History of Rock Sugar" Page.

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(5) When the audience goes to the "Make It Yourself!" page, they will see the page as shown below.

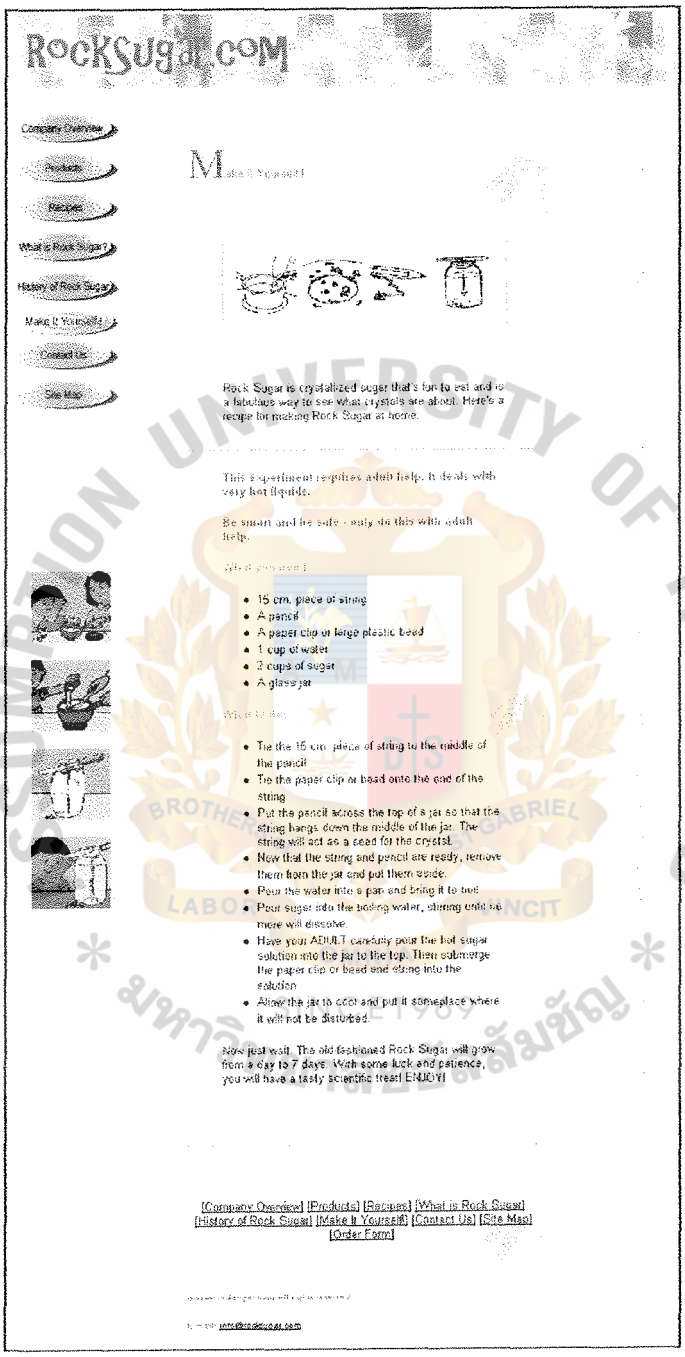


Figure 6.16. "Make It Yourself!" Page.

(6) When the audience goes to the "Contact Us" page, they will see the page as shown below.

Figure 6.17. "Contact Us" Page.

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(7) When the audience goes to the "Site Map" page, they will see the page as shown below.

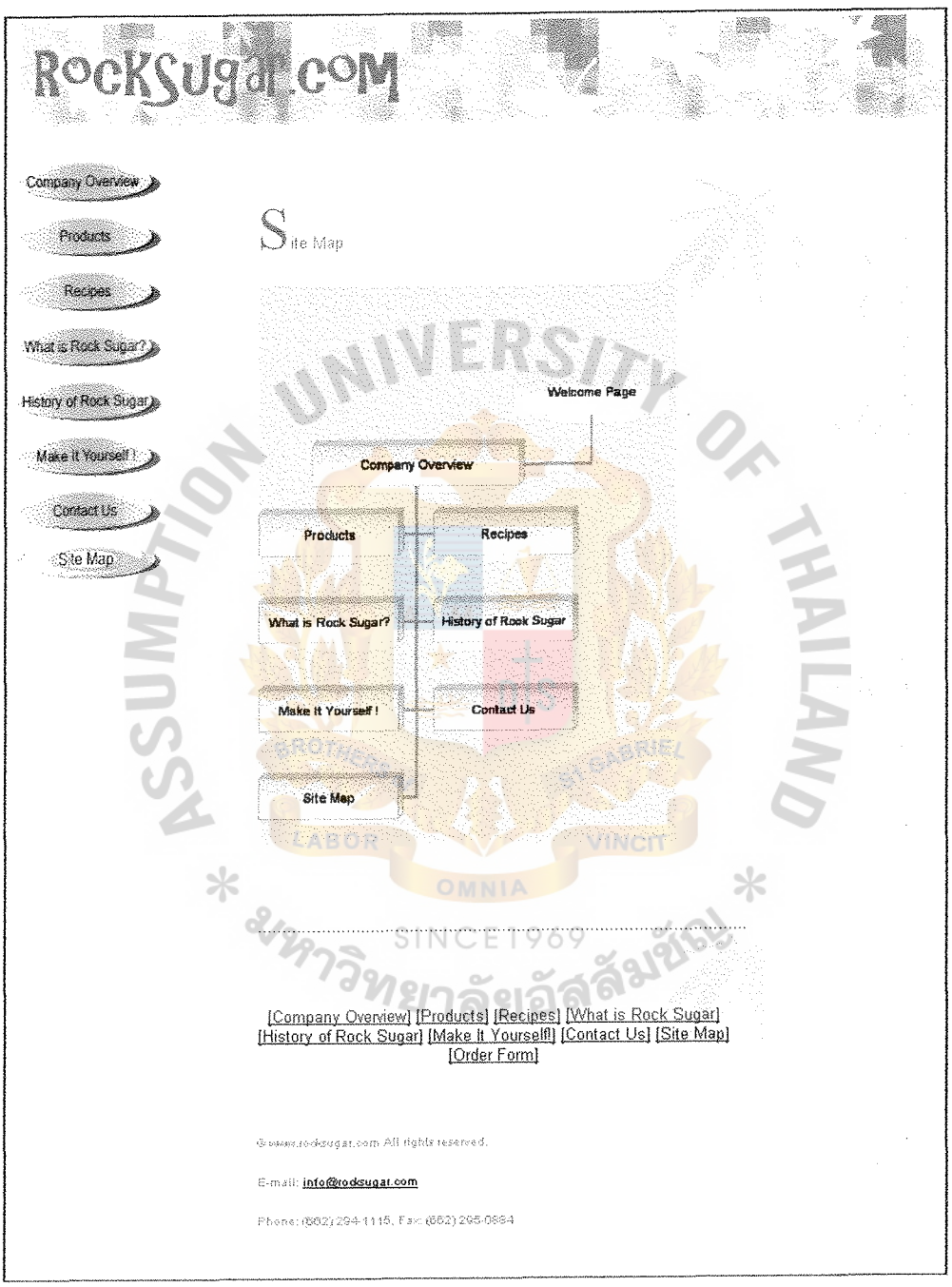


Figure 6.18. "Site Map" Page.

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## 6.9 Visual Metaphor

We use visual metaphor in our website to make the site more attractive. We try to use the relevant one so that the customers can easily understand the meaning of each metaphor.

6.9.1 Company Overview: The black and white Rock Sugar image represents our company that deals with Rock Sugar product since ancient time.

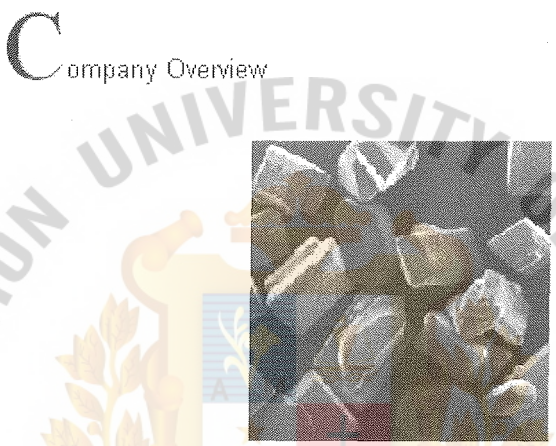


Figure 6.19. Visual Metaphor of "Company Overview".

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6.9.2 Products: the product image is represented by the image of each kind of product.

The audience can see the image and understand what the product is.

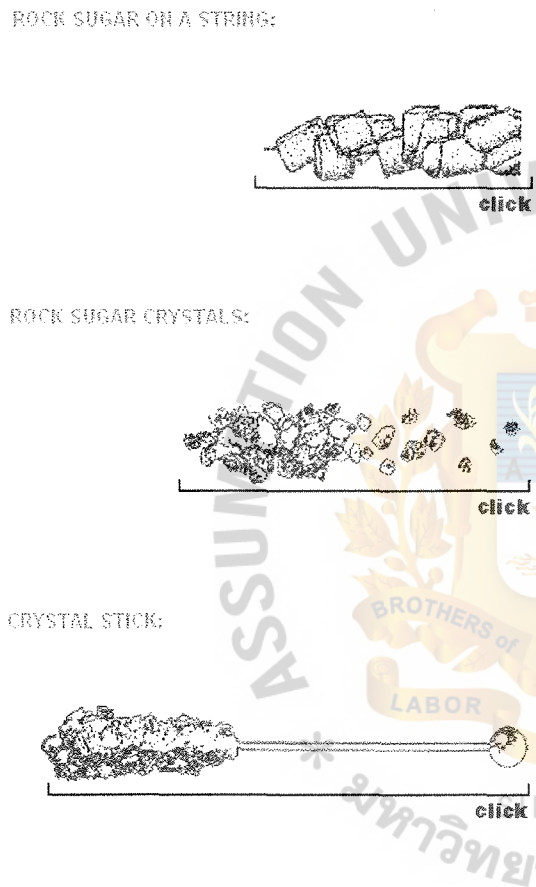


Figure 6.20. Visual Metaphor of "Products".

6.9.3 Recipe: Food image is used to represent that this page is about cooking recipes.

Recipes

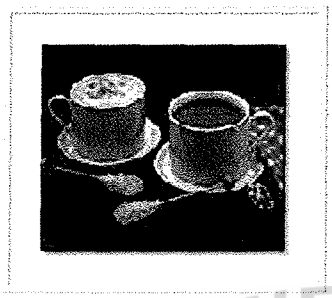

Figure 6.21. Visual Metaphor of "Recipe".

6.9.4 What Is Rock Sugar?: The molecule structure of sugar image is used to represent that this page is about Rock Sugar.

What is Rock Sugar?

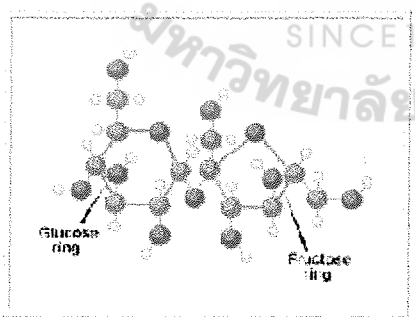


Figure 6.22. Visual Metaphor of "What Is Rock Sugar?".

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6.9.5 History of Rock Sugar: The black and white Rock Sugar in a bowl image is used to represent the history of Rock Sugar.

History of Rock Sugar

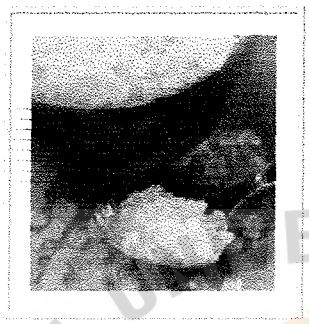

Figure 6.23. Visual Metaphor of "History of Rock Sugar".

6.9.6 Make It Yourself!: An easy drawing is used to represent the procedure of making Rock Sugar easily.

Make It Yourself !

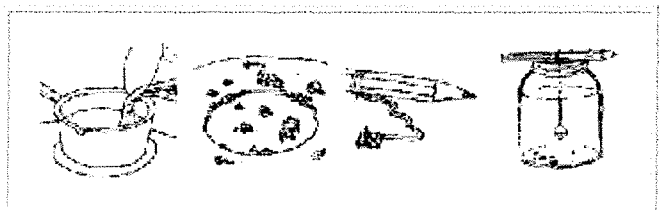

Figure 6.24. Visual Metaphor of "Make It Yourself !".

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## 6.10 Design Sketch

The design sketch of the webpage is shown below.

6.10.1 The Welcome Page

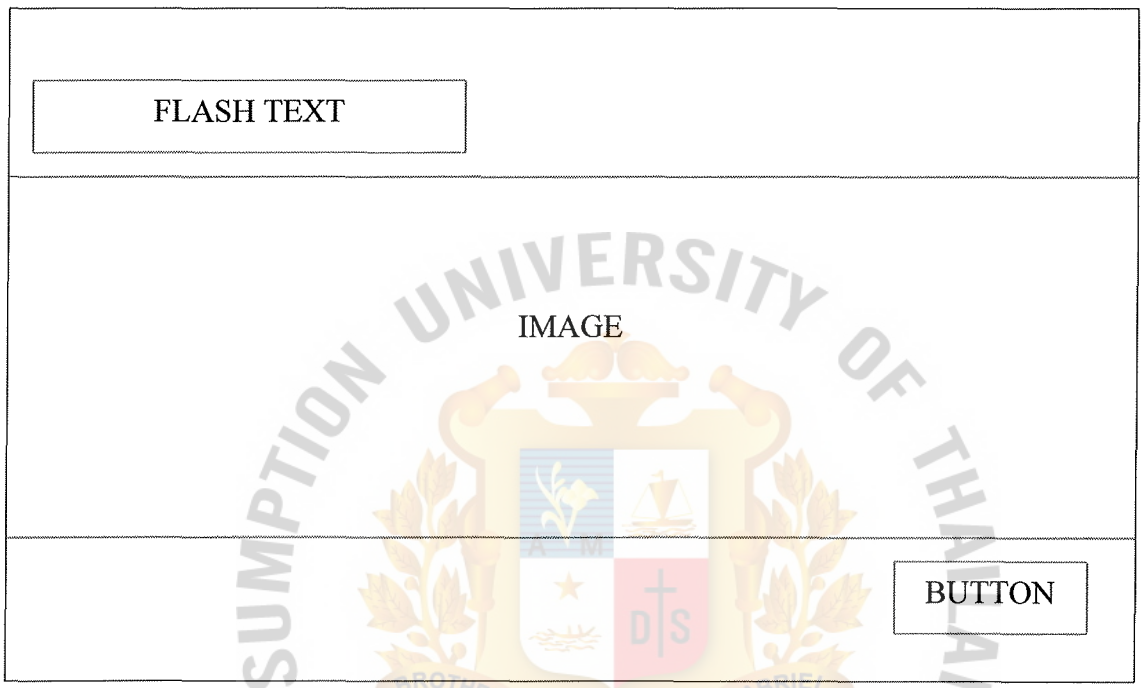


Figure 6.25. Design Sketch of Welcome Page.

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6.10.2 The Main Page

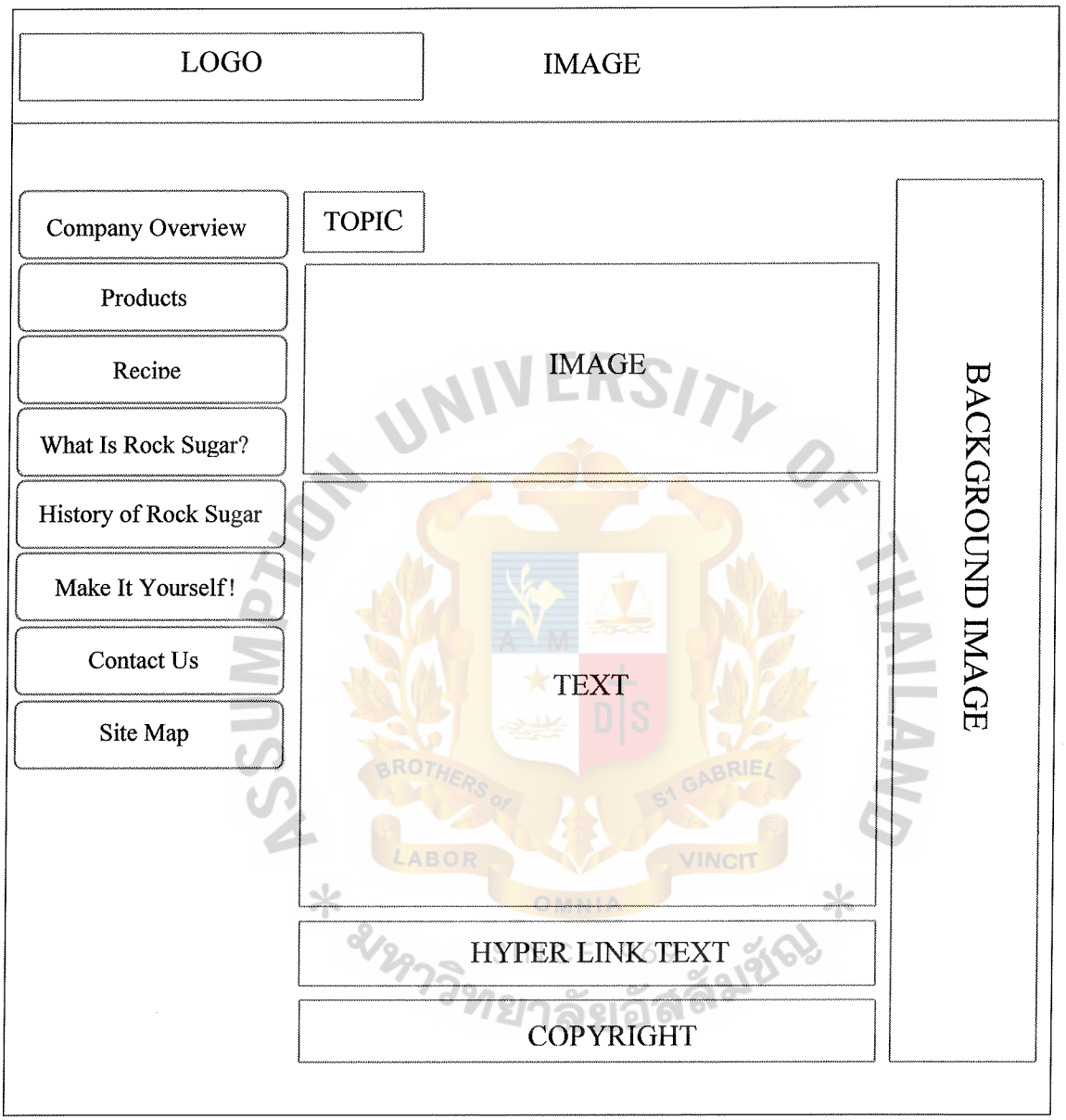


Figure 6.26. Design Sketch of the Main Page.

## 6.11 Layout Grid

6.11.1 The Welcome Page

Figure 6.27. Layout Grid of Welcome Page.

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6.11.2 The Main Page

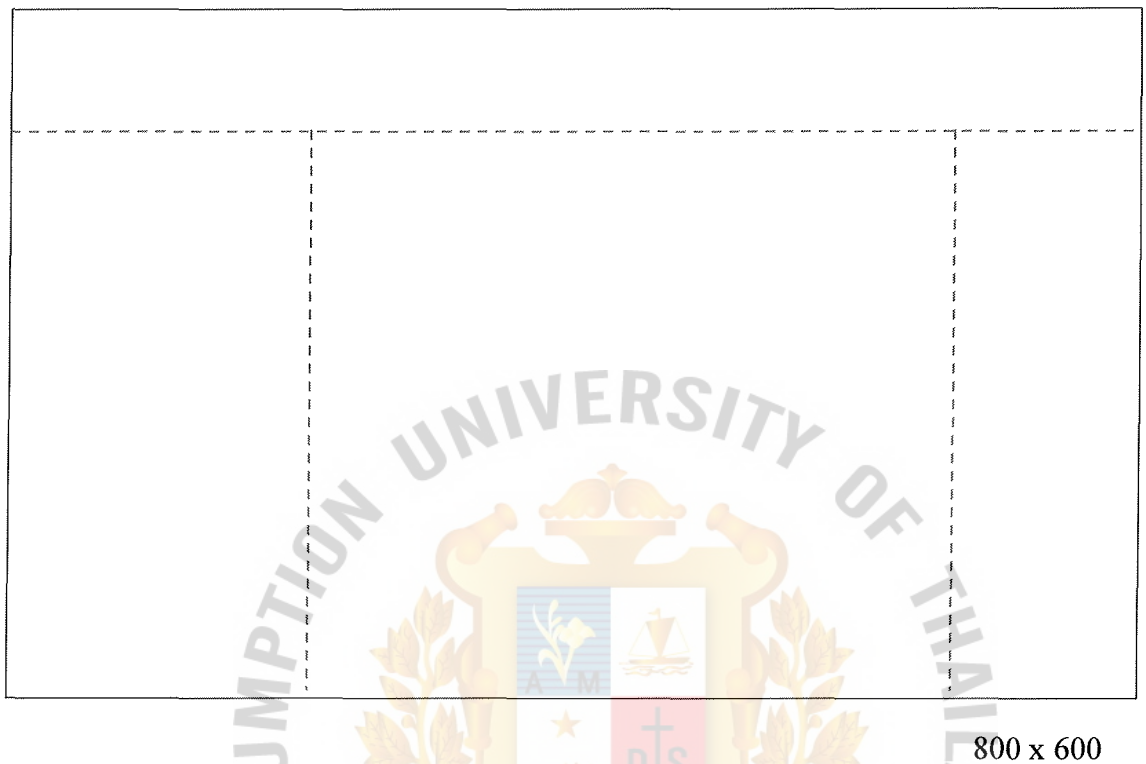


Figure 6.28. Layout Grid of the Main Page.

## 6.12 Properties

To create a good look and feel to the audience, we try to increase the readability of the site. We use the same properties throughout the site to create consistency of the website.

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6.12.1 Logo

The logo of the website will be shown on every main page at the top left of the page. In this position, the audience will see it immediately and can recognize it easily.

Figure 6.29. Picture of Logo.

6.12.2 Color

Main colors that are used in the website is blue, green and yellow. These colors create an attractive look of the website. Blue and green are cold colors that make the audience feel mentally calm and feel at ease. Yellow is used to create a fresh feeling. The use of these colors are also compatible with our product—Rock Sugar, which imparts a smooth and cordial sweetness.

6.12.3 Graphics

The graphics used in welcome page, at the top image of main page, and navigation bar is created to be compatible with the product—Rock Sugar crystal.

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Figure 6.30. Graphic in Website.

## 6.13 Competitive Analysis

Our main competitor is Mitrphol Co., Ltd. Its website (www.mitrphol.com) is shown below.

Figure 6.31. Example of www.mitrphol.com Website.

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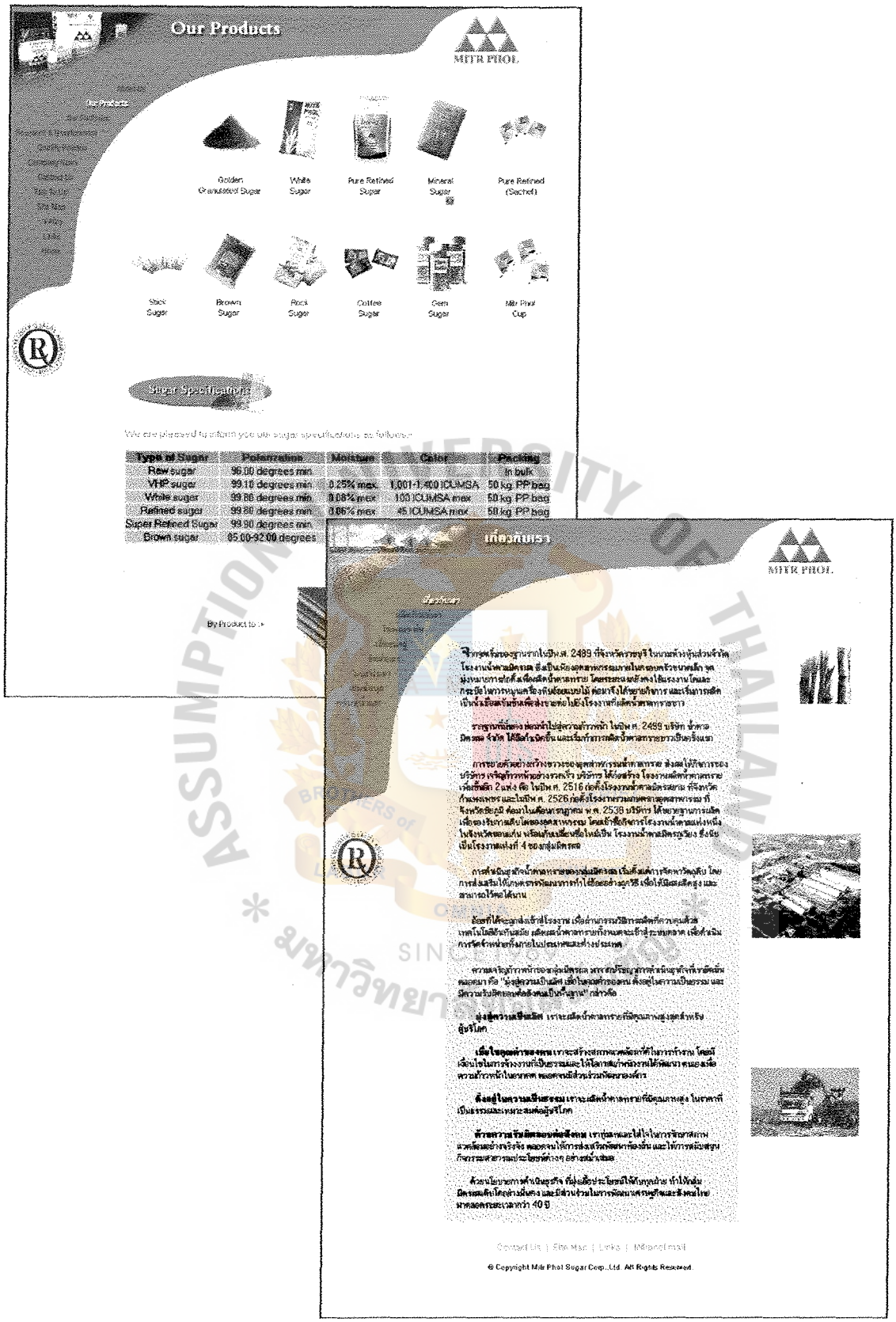


Figure 6.32. Example of www.mitrphol.com Website.

6.13.1 Strengths:

(1) Graphics and Flash Technology are used to make the website attractive.

(2) The website provides both Thai and English languages for the audience.

(3) Color used in the website is consistent with a blue tone.

(4) Web page designs look professional and attractive.

(5) Easy Navigation

(6) Visual Metaphor is used to make the site look more attractive instead of using content.

6.13.2 Weaknesses:

(1) There is difference in content and information in the website between Thai and English versions. If the audience accesses through the website by choosing Thai version, they will not receive the information as in English. For example, the "Research & Development" menu, "Quality Policies", "Site Map", and "Links" menu are not provided in Thai.

(2) Using the company name as the domain name, www.mitrphol.com is hard to remember and the audience may face wrong spelling problem.

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# VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the business world, online website is one medium that facilitates them to make more contacts with customers via online technology. E-commerce plays a main role for business partner. Introducing a website to present a product or an online service is very common.

LJH Co., Ltd., an offline company who is the manufacturer of Rock Sugar product, needs to expand its distribution channel to more customers, as well as to increase revenue. It is concluded that www.rocksugar.com should be established to meet the company's objective.

The company has set up the website using a marketing strategy and web design development to emphasize on ways to make people aware of the website and to generate income.

The website does not provide payment gateway in the site but provides product information and its image to the audience. The customers have to contact the company directly for purchasing. We do not provide payment gateway online since we are a wholesaler, but payment online is suitable for a retailer company. Furthermore, prospective buyers feel insecure over online payment, hence we don't use the online payment system.

In the website, the company uses marketing concepts. It is the key to achieving our goal that consists of determining the needs and wants of the customers and delivering the desired satisfaction more effectively and efficiently than competitors. The use of attractive formations via the website in the form of text, animation, graphic, and other materials may help customers to meet their needs and get the right product and finally, the company will gain more revenue.

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