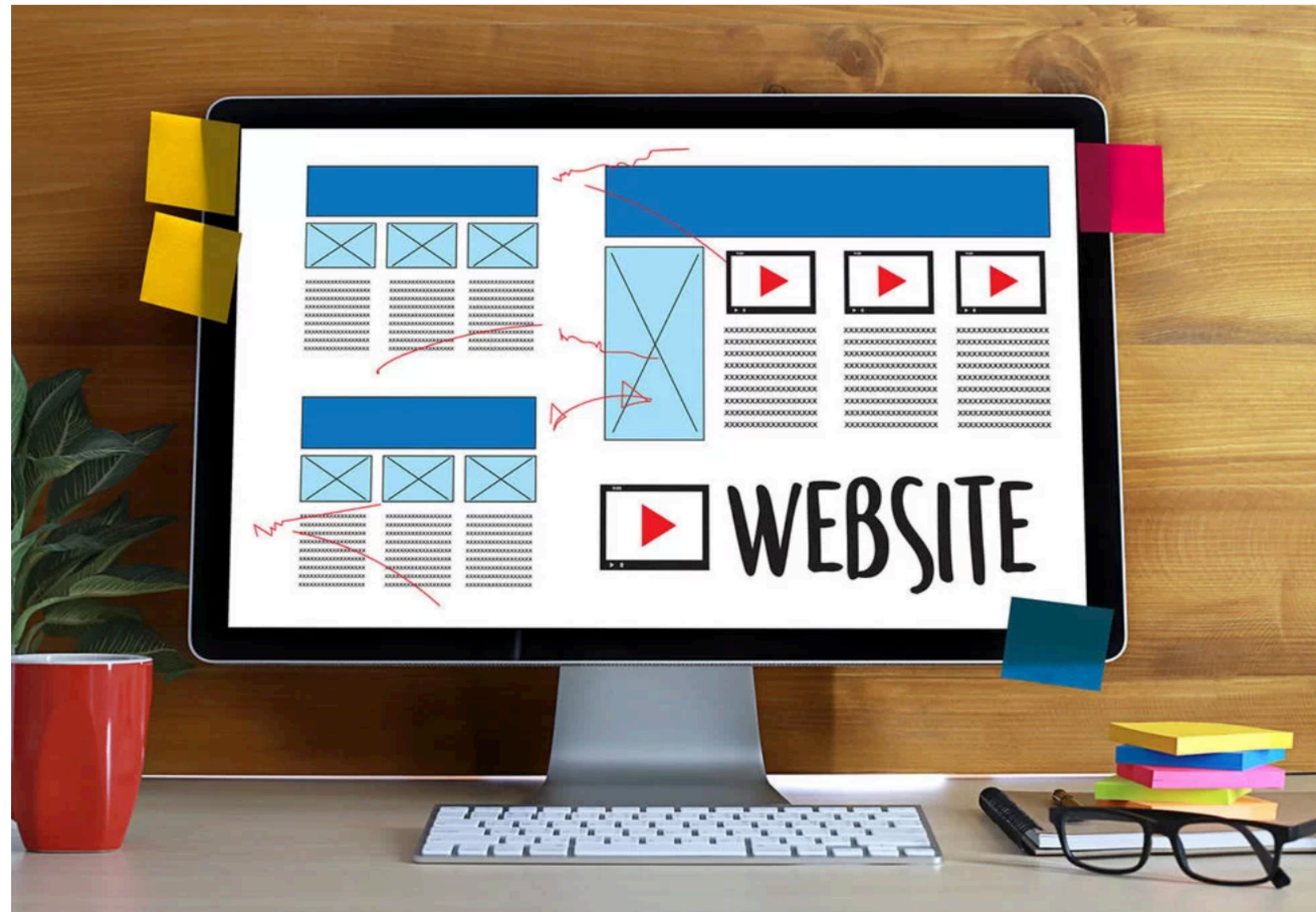


Website Structure & Writing Review

Week 10: the way the world communicates



Websites: Structure and Writing



In Week 10 we'll be covering:

- **Review of websites vs. other mediums and platforms**
- **Review of website structure & architecture**
- **Discussion on landing pages: style, types, and best practices**

Websites in Quick Review

Websites & Apps





What is a website?

- Simply put, a site is a collection of static web pages put together to inform the users.
- Businesses use websites to represent themselves or showcase their service online.





Qualities of an Exceptional Website

Your website represents your business, at least on the digital front. And hence, it should be professional and well-designed. Here are a few qualities that great websites share.

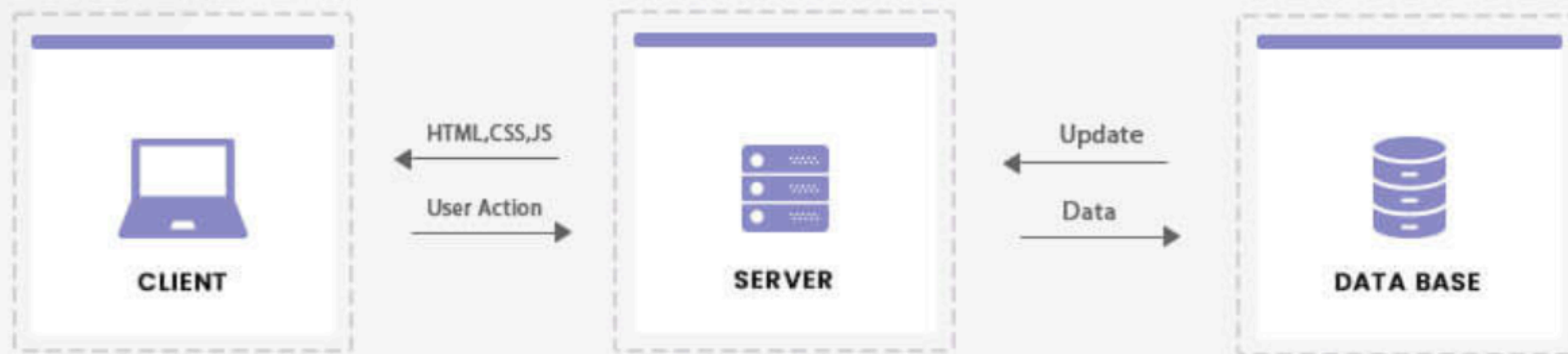
- Highly functional and well-designed
- Easy to use
- Optimized for mobile
- SEO-friendly
- Clear CTAs



Websites: Reviewing Basics

What is a web app?

- Web app is an application that runs on a web sever. It can be easily accessed via an internet connection.
- Web apps are built to interact with the end-users.





Characteristics of An Exceptional Web App

Web applications are built to be interactive. Here are a few web app elements shared by exceptional applications:

- Fast and snappy
- Interactive UI
- Stable & Secure
- Cloud-hosted
- API factored



Components of site structure

Knowing [how to plan a website architecture](#) requires knowing the key parts of one; even if you're starting from a [website structure template](#).

Next, we'll go through each of the following components and their purpose:

- Main page
- Menus and navigation
- Categories and subcategories
- Contextual linking
- Breadcrumb navigation
- Cornerstone content
- XML and HTML sitemap



What is the difference between UI and UX?



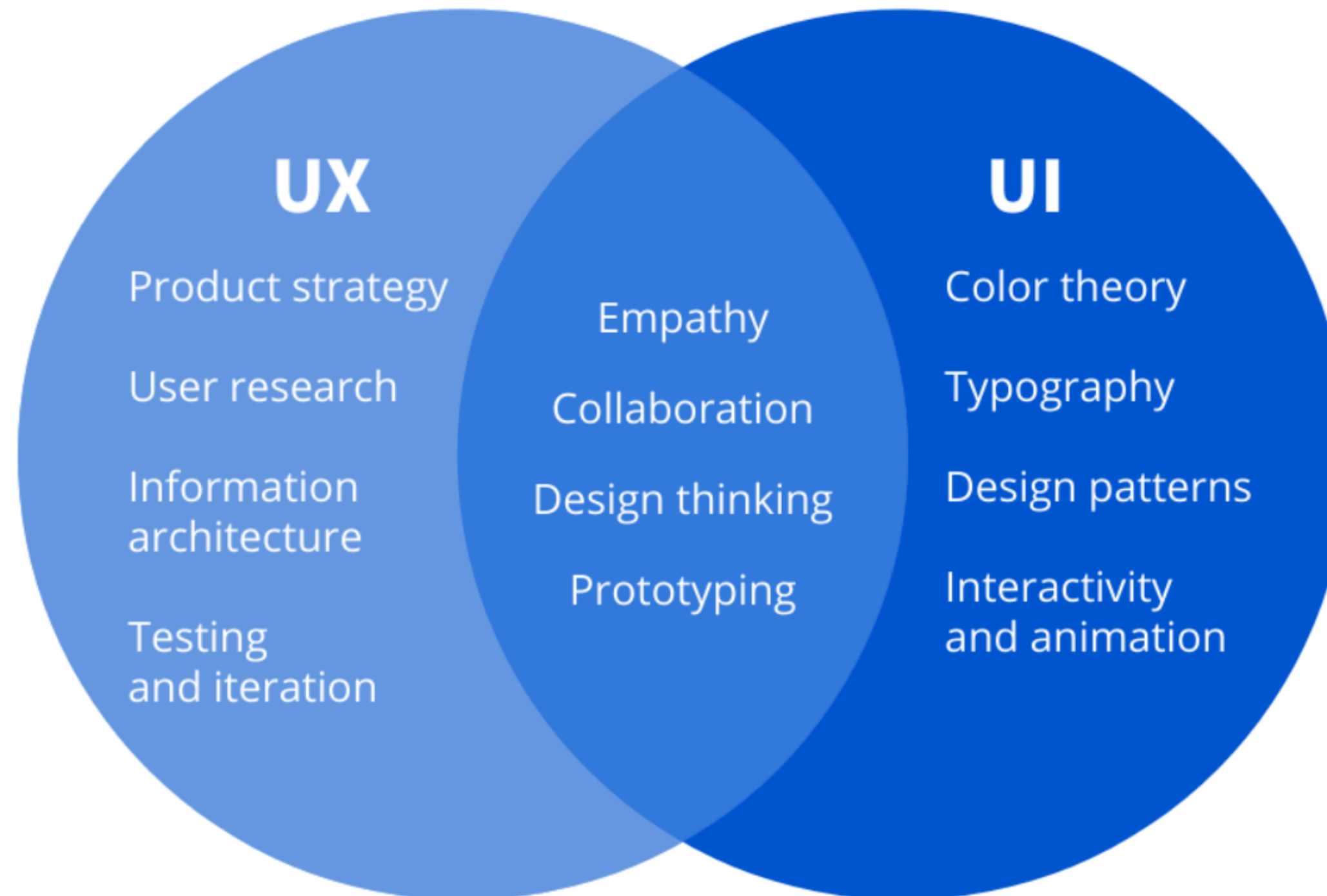
Websites: User Experience and User Interface

UX vs. UI in a nutshell:

- **UX design** (or user experience design) focuses on how intuitive, easy, and enjoyable it is to use a product (like a website or an app). It involves conducting research to understand user needs, and mapping out a logical structure and flow for the product.
- **UI design** (or user interface design) focuses on the visual, interactive elements of the product. It designs all the screens and components that the user interacts with. It's about creating digital products that are both aesthetically pleasing and flawlessly functional.








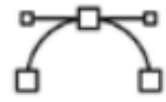


Websites: User Experience and User Interface





UX vs. UI designers

UX designer	UI designer
 Interaction designer	 Visual designer
 Charts the user pathway	 Chooses color and typography
 Plans information architecture	 Plans visual aesthetic
 Expert in wireframes, prototypes, and research	 Expert in mockups, graphics, and layouts

Websites: Structure & Function

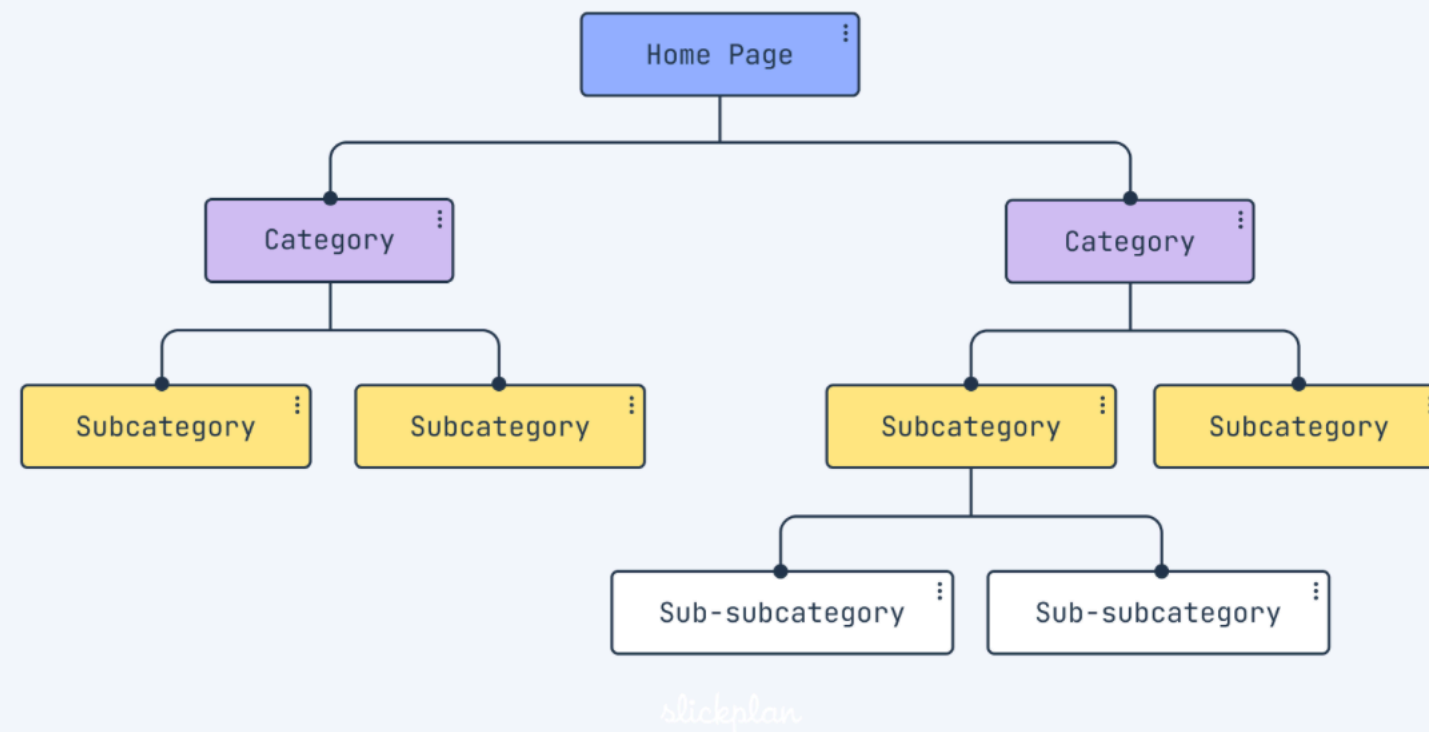




Websites: Structure and Function

What is website structure?

Website structure



Website structure is the way the pages on your site are organized and connected to create intuitive navigation that enhances user experience and improves SEO performance.

Working in tandem with information architecture which defines how your content is organized *within* the site structure as a whole; nailing both is vital for creating a friction-free experience for visitors.

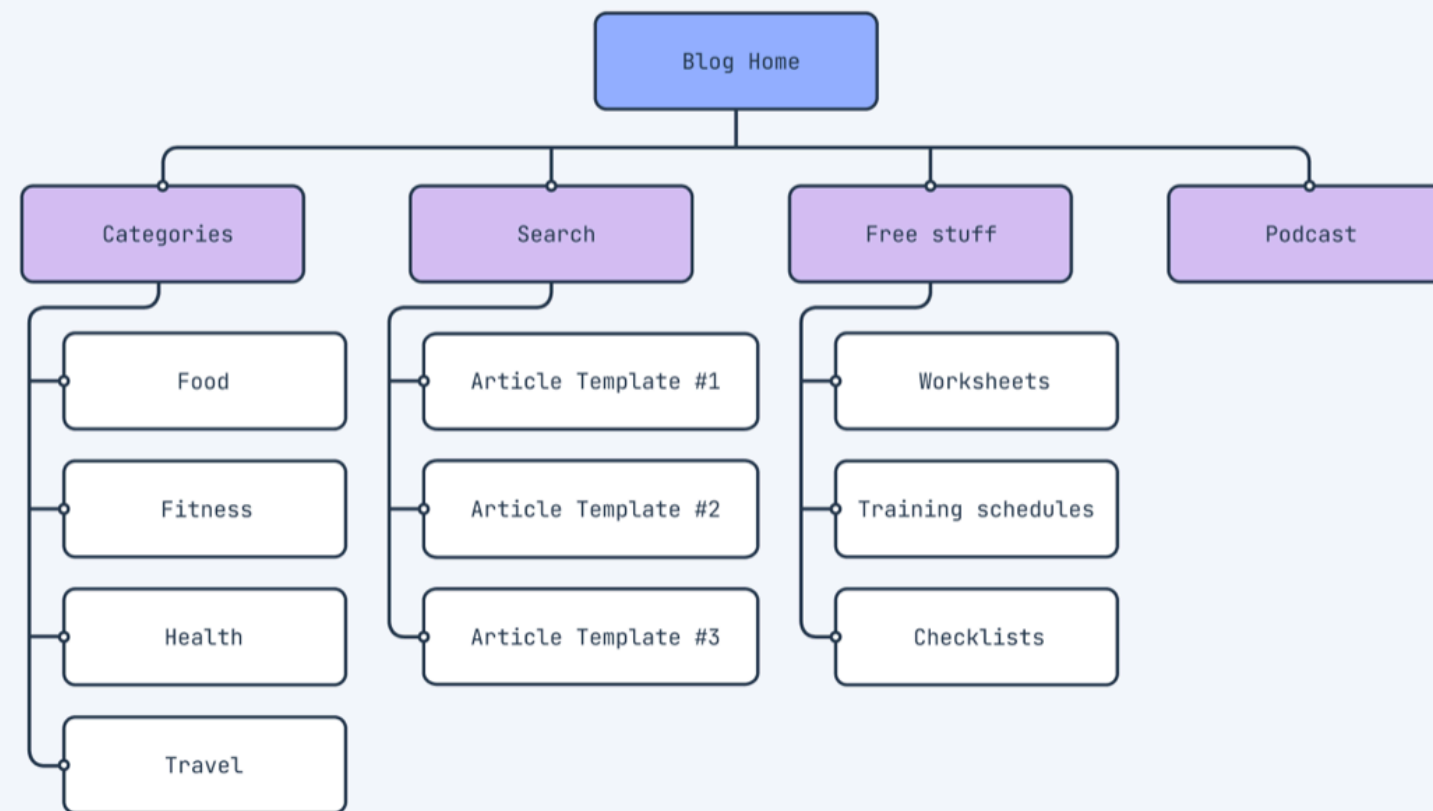
The process of building structure and then populating it with content is one with a lot of moving parts and people — [planning tools](#) are highly recommended.



Websites: Structure and Function

What is website structure?

Website structure



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Types of website structure with examples

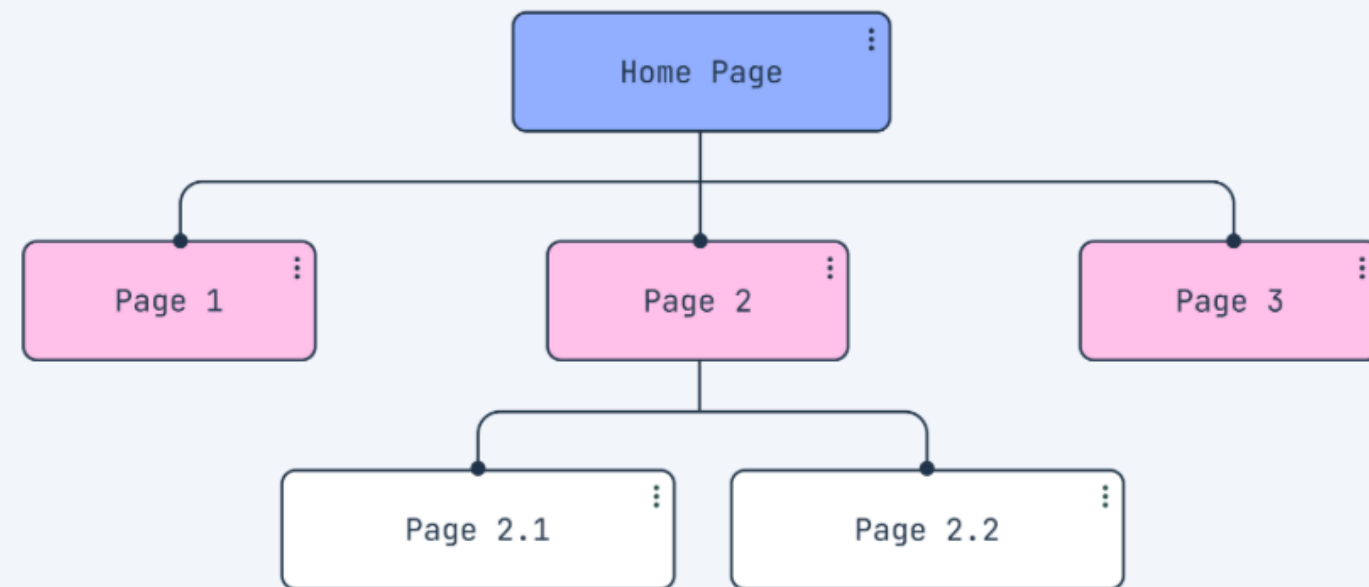
Let's dive into the architecture of the digital world. The four different types of website structures — Hierarchical, Sequential, Matrix and Database — each have their unique attributes and applications. Just like buildings, websites need to be designed with a specific structure in mind that best suits the purpose of the site and its audience.

Let's take a closer look at them individually along with some website structure examples so you can get a better understanding of how they look in the wild and which to choose for your [website design plan](#).



Websites: Structure and Function

Hierarchical structure



The hierarchical model is the most common site structure you'll come across.

Also known as the tree model or website tree structure, the general layout of this basic website structure is a home page, top-level category pages and then the subpages or child pages layering beneath with internal linking contextually connecting all the pages.

A very simple top-down approach starting from the main page, the hierarchical website structure is one you'll typically find in use on everything from e-commerce websites to portfolios to companies with diverse business units like Disney.



Shop your favorite Merz Apothecary products online at [Smallflower.com](https://www.smallflower.com)→

Hierarchical website
example:

Merz Apothecary



4716 N Lincoln Ave. Chicago, IL 60625 ✓
Mon. - Sat. - 10am - 6pm | *Closed Sundays*
773.989.0900

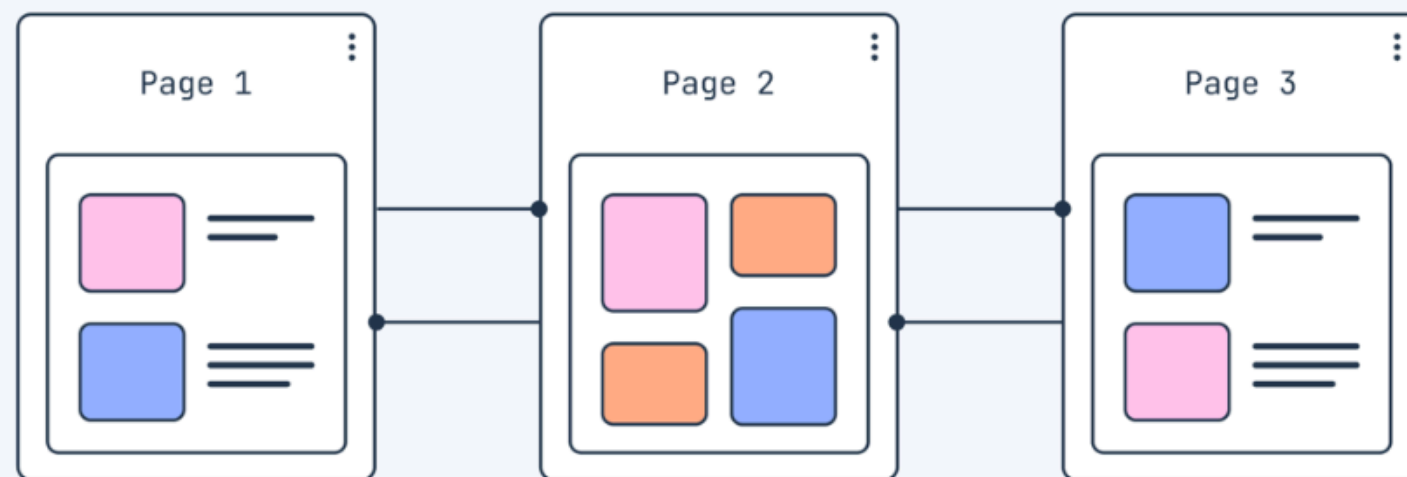
[HOME](#) / [CONTACT & LOCATIONS](#) / [OUR STORY](#) / [BRANDS](#) / [TESTIMONIALS](#) / [EVENTS](#)





Websites: Structure and Function

Sequential structure



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A sequential website structure takes users through a site step-by-step, like a guided tour.

Sometimes referred to as a linear structure, a sequential structure moves you along a logical path of actions where each step leads naturally to the next.

If you've taken an online course or survey, you've encountered the linear website structure, same goes for the checkout pages to buy a product.

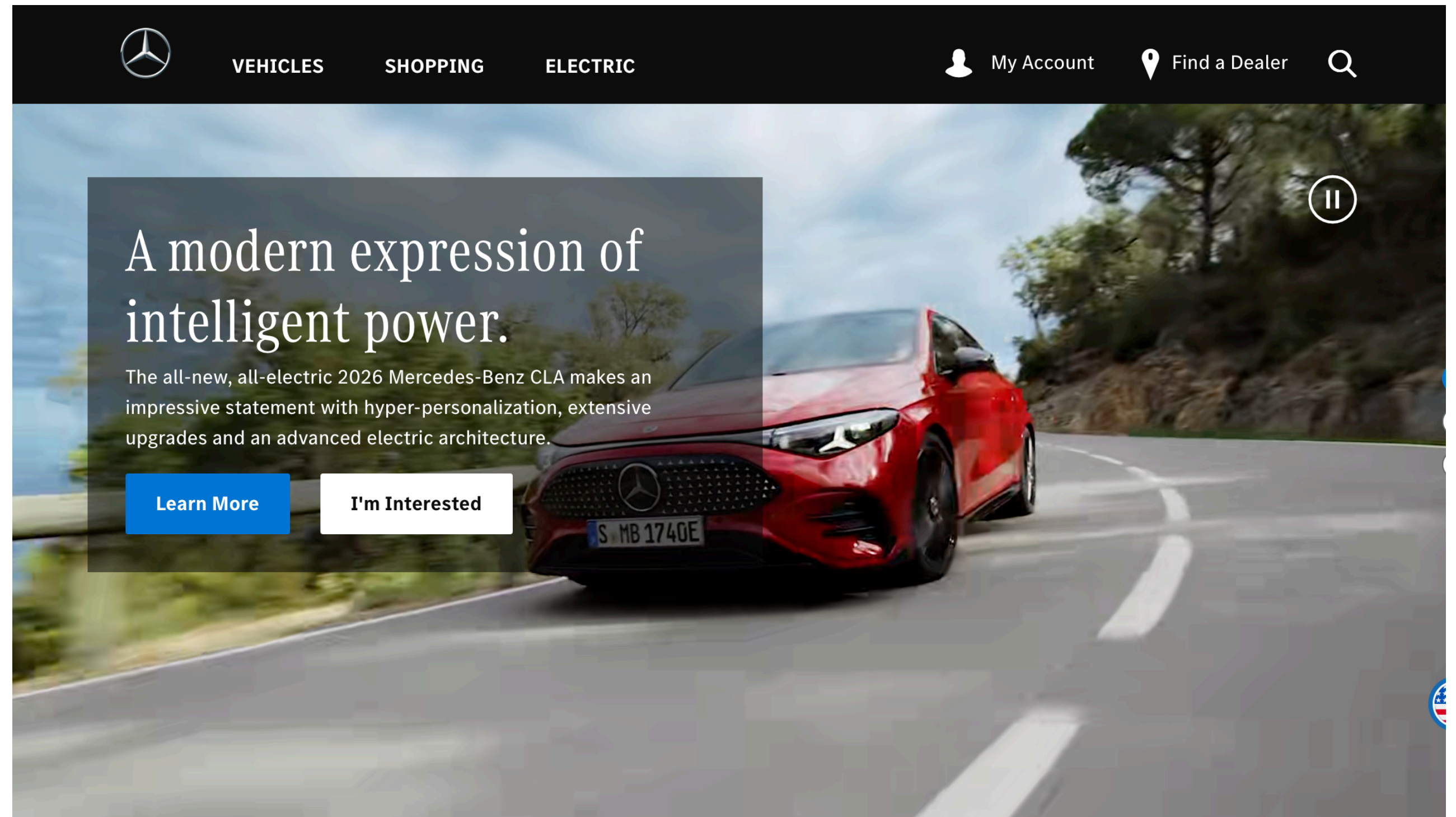
Small businesses with limited content frequently use this layout too because it simplifies decision-making and streamlines the customer journey to a booking or purchase, making it ideal for simpler sites with a clear goal.



Websites: Structure and Function

Sequential website
example:

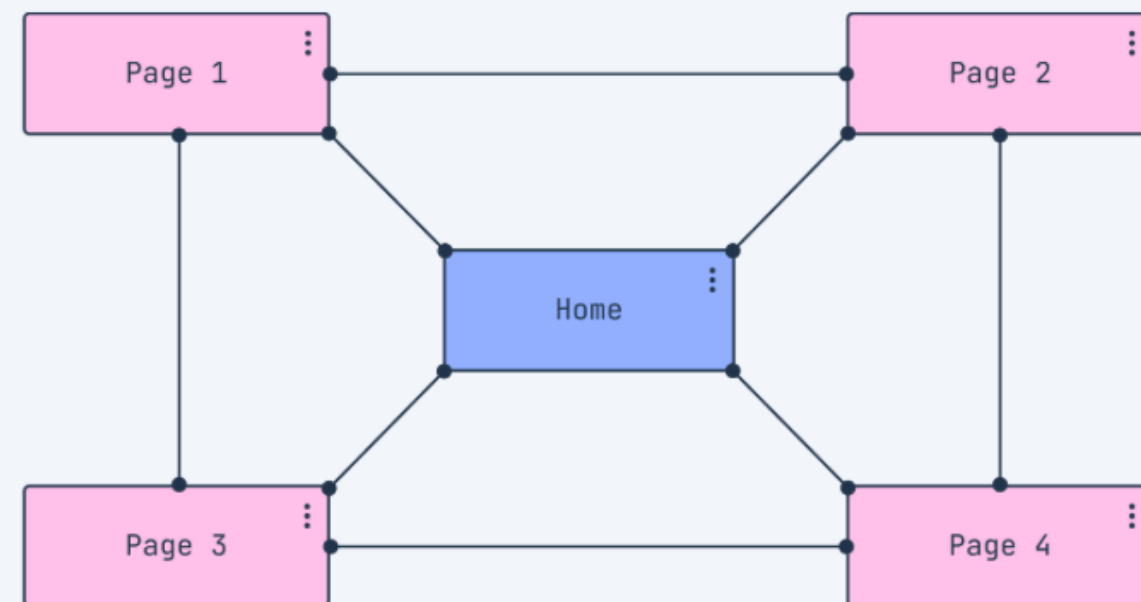
Mercedes-Benz





Websites: Structure and Function

Matrix structure

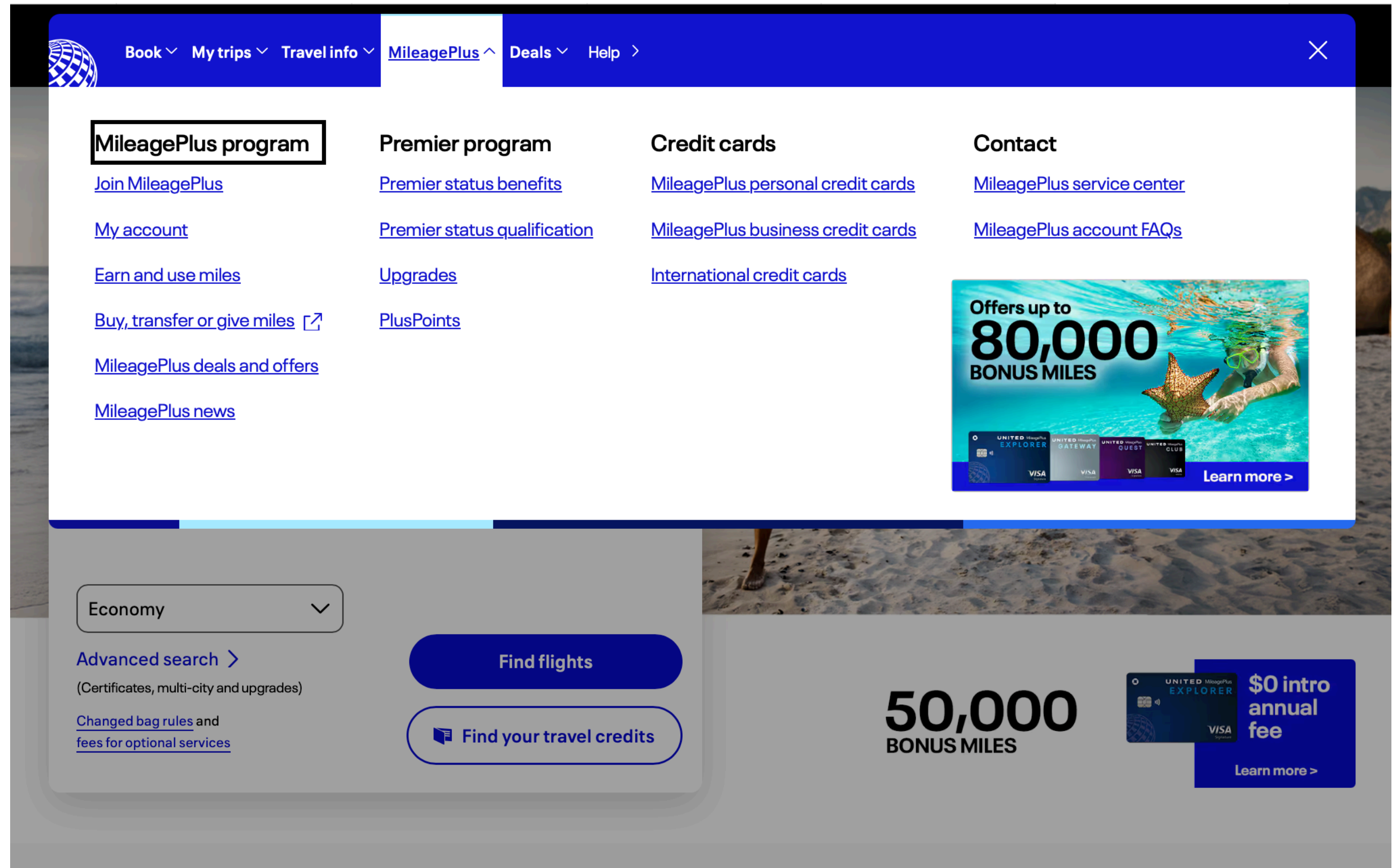


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Far from a basic site structure, the matrix structure takes the form of a vast network of pages without a predefined journey for users to follow. For that reason, it's also known as a webbed website structure.

It's almost (but not quite) a lack of structure, and that's the point; it makes it easy for users to have the exact experience that suits their needs, total freedom to browse. It's often used in large sites with interconnected content, allowing users to navigate freely between related pages; think e-commerce sites like Amazon or news websites.

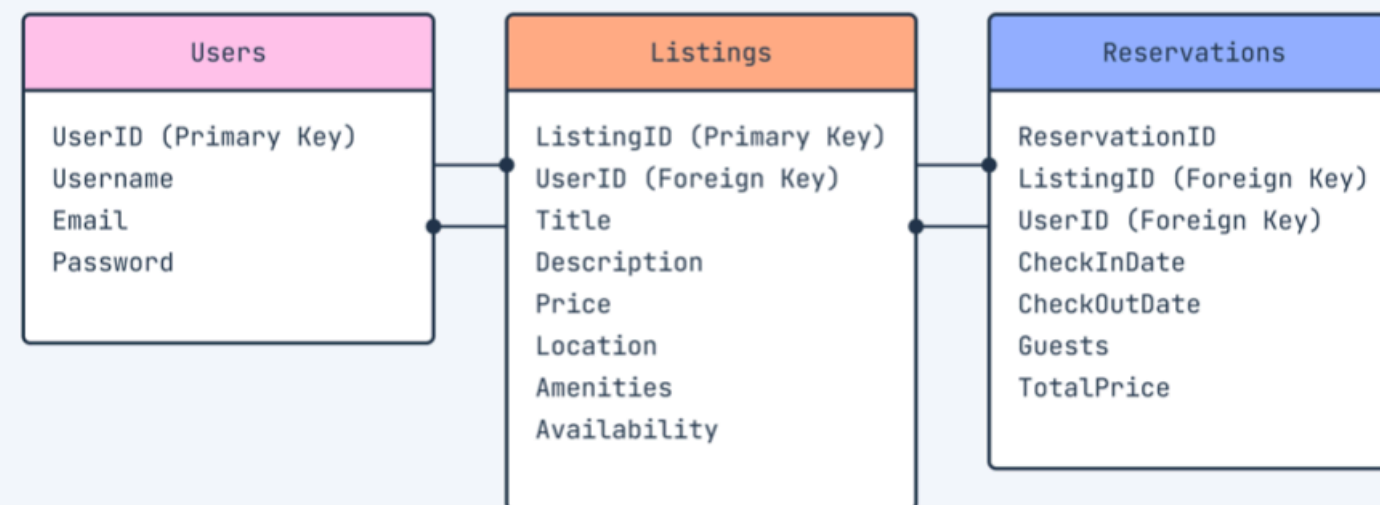
United Airlines





Websites: Structure and Function

Database Structure



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Sometimes called a dynamic website structure, this structure is a highly customizable form of website organization. The database model relies far more on search functionality and user-defined paths for navigation than a set hierarchy or a pre-defined sequence.

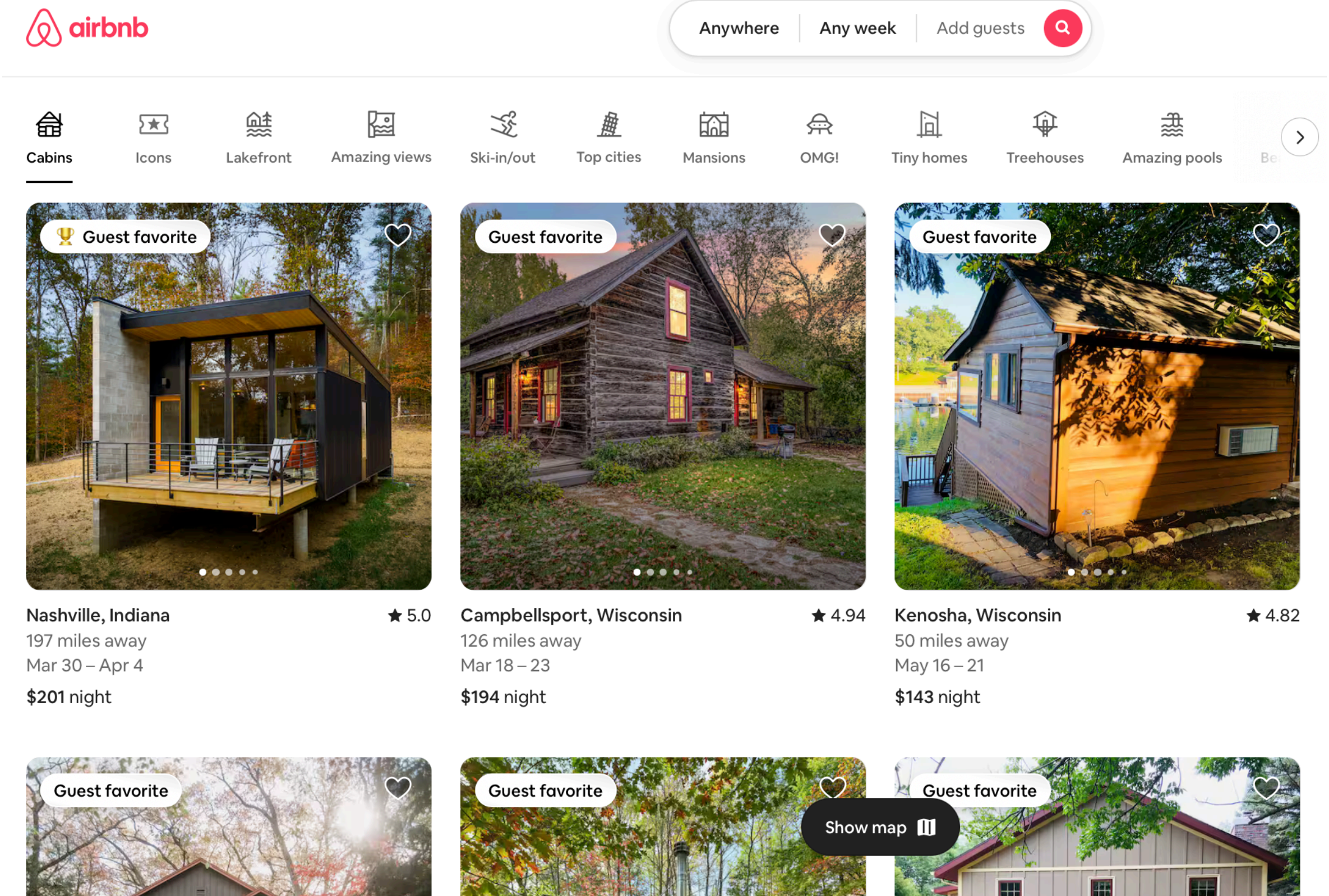
It's particularly useful for websites that house an extensive amount of content or data where any type of fixed structure could be limiting for users.

Online forums, news sites, social media platforms and other sites with a lot of user-generated content or massive e-commerce platforms with a vast array of products and categories are prime users of the database website structure.

Look at Airbnb, for example, where visitors can navigate through the site using multiple search parameters and filters.

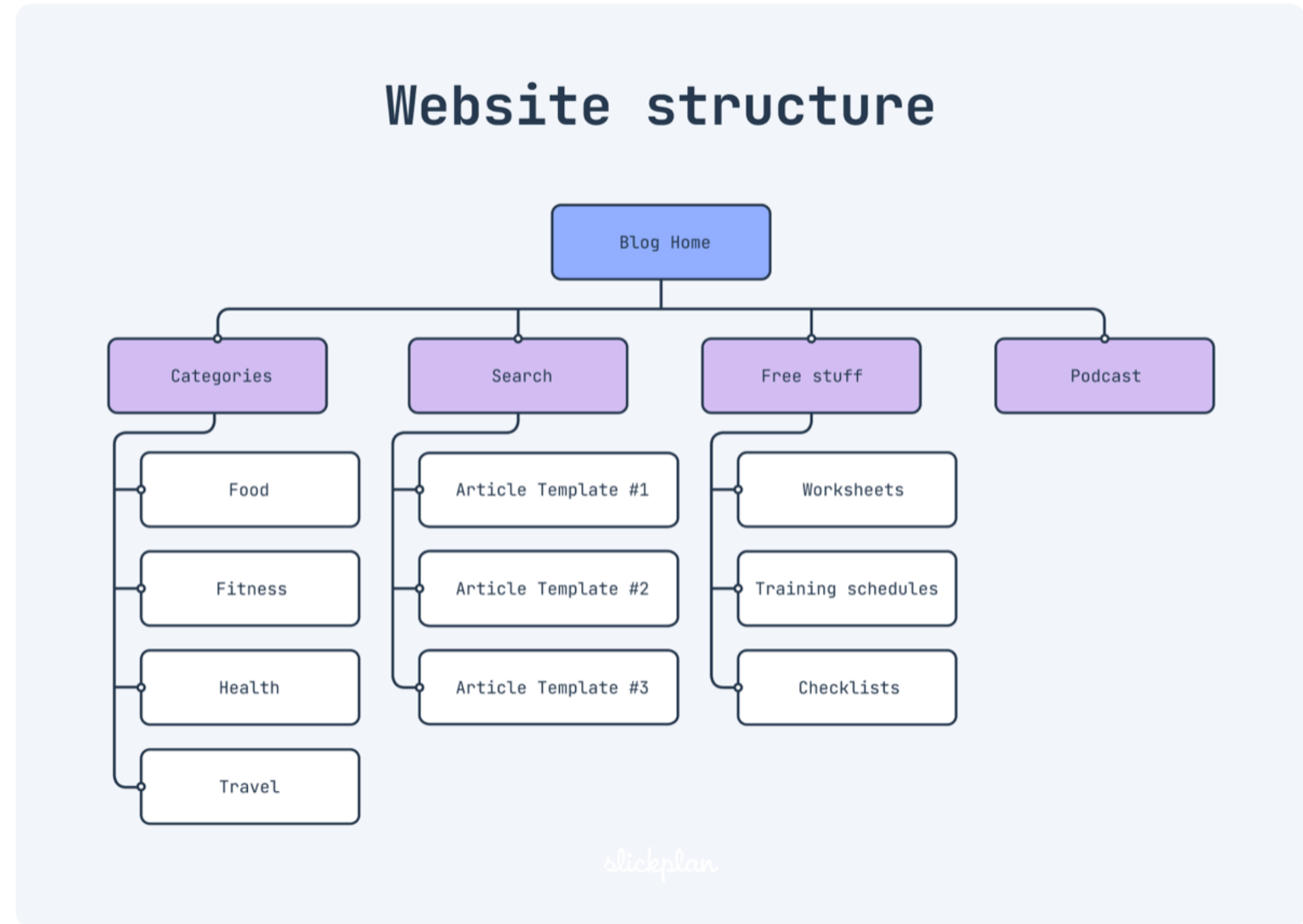
Database website example:

Airbnb



The ideal website?

- **Hierarchical** logic
- **Sequential** images/video
- **Some Matrix** flexibility
- **Database** scalability



The ideal website should:

Enhance user experience and navigation

The quicker your site visitors can find relevant content, the more satisfied they'll be and the longer they'll stick with you.

Boost SEO performance

An optimized website structure serves as a detailed map for search engine crawlers to make sense of your site, helping them understand your site's structure for better indexing and, ultimately, better page ranking.

The ideal website should:

Improve user journey

This goes hand in hand with navigation and UX but is worth addressing separately; solid site structure is a reflection of a well-planned user journey.

Simplify site updates

Just as a well-organized closet makes it easy to add or remove items without causing a mess, a solid website structure enables the easy addition or removal of content without disrupting the overall design or functionality.

Website Structure & Form

Simple Components





Main page

Your homepage is generally the initial entry point for visitors and therefore your website's hub.

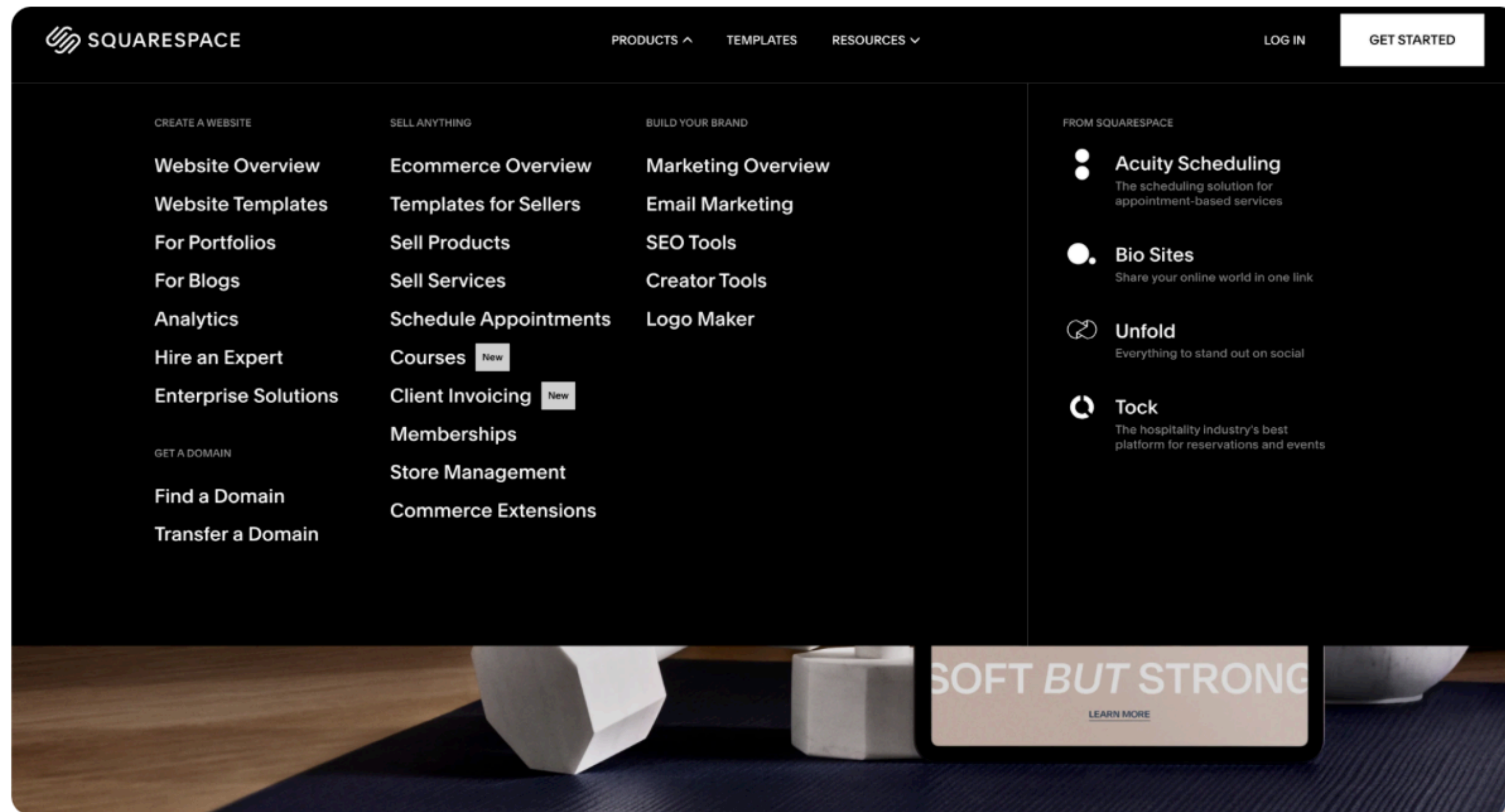
It typically provides an overview of the site's purpose, key features and clear navigation options.

A well-designed homepage should quickly convey your core message, then guide users to explore further with clear calls to action and easy access to essential information via links to important pages.



Website structure: Components

Menus and navigation





Categories and subcategories

Think of how a library is arranged, just having them in a building isn't enough, right? They need to be organized into sections, or categories, and then further arranged into subcategories so people can find what they're looking for without having to scour the entire building.

Websites are the same.

Category pages and subcategory pages are all about grouping related content and web pages together into a logical structure. Known as silo architecture, it allows users to delve into specific topics or sections without friction.

Amazon, for example, has a book category and then the genres of books are broken down into subcategory pages.



Website structure: Components

Categories and subcategories

Department

Books

Arts & Photography

Biographies & Memoirs

Business & Money

Calendars

Children's Books

Christian Books & Bibles

Comics & Graphic Novels

Computers & Technology

Cookbooks, Food & Wine

Crafts, Hobbies & Home

Education & Teaching

Engineering & Transportation

Health, Fitness & Dieting

History

Humor & Entertainment

Law

LGBTQ+ Books

Literature & Fiction

Medical Books

Mystery, Thriller & Suspense

Parenting & Relationships

Politics & Social Sciences

Reference

Religion & Spirituality

Romance

Science & Math

Science Fiction & Fantasy

Self-Help


Sports & Outdoors

Teen & Young Adult


Test Preparation

Travel


Top picks for you




Interaction of Color: 50th Anniversary Edition
★★★★☆ 2,026
\$17.96
18 pts




Oliver Byrne's Elements of Euclid: The First Six Books with...
★★★★☆ 149
\$40.68
41 pts




Thinking with Type, 2nd revised and expanded edition: A Critical...
★★★★☆ 2,370
\$15.30
16 pts




Daily Rituals: How Artists Work
★★★★☆ 1,536
\$2.09
6 pts




Herding Cats: A Sarah's Scribbles Collection
★★★★☆ 2,167
\$9.12
10 pts




Big Mushy Happy Lump: A Sarah's Scribbles Collection (Volume 2)
★★★★☆ 2,101
\$8.50
9 pts




Werner's Nomenclature of Colours: Adapted to Zoology...
★★★★☆ 330
\$18.99
19 pts




Success Is 90% Spite: (The Pigeon Gazette Webcomic Book, Funny...
★★★★☆ 582
\$3.14
9 pts




Cryptid Club
★★★★☆ 619
\$10.69
11 pts




Logo Modernism
★★★★☆ 1,080
\$62.99
63 pts




Grid systems in graphic design: A visual communication manual...
★★★★☆ 711
\$35.46
36 pts




The Pocket Complete Color Harmony: 1,500 Plus Color...
★★★★☆ 320
\$8.24
9 pts




Articulating Design Decisions: Communicate with Stakeholders, Keep Your Sanity, and Deliver...
★★★★☆ 435
\$18.50
19 pts




A Dictionary Of Color...
★★★★☆ 2,170
\$18.50
19 pts




The Designer's Dictionary of Color
★★★★☆ 670
\$10.49
30 pts



The Complete Color Harmony, Pantone Edition: Expert Color...
★★★★☆ 1,001
\$16.99




The Secret Lives of Color
★★★★☆ 4,104
\$12.59
13 pts



Werner's Nomenclature of Colours: Adapted to Zoology...
★★★★☆ 665
\$14.95



Contextual linking

While many teams have held steady through 2023, others are desperately looking to turn things around. The [Golden State Warriors](#) have been struggling to find their footing among two [Draymond Green](#) suspensions. And the [Phoenix Suns](#) have hit yet another roadblock with [Bradley Beal](#) out for two weeks. 

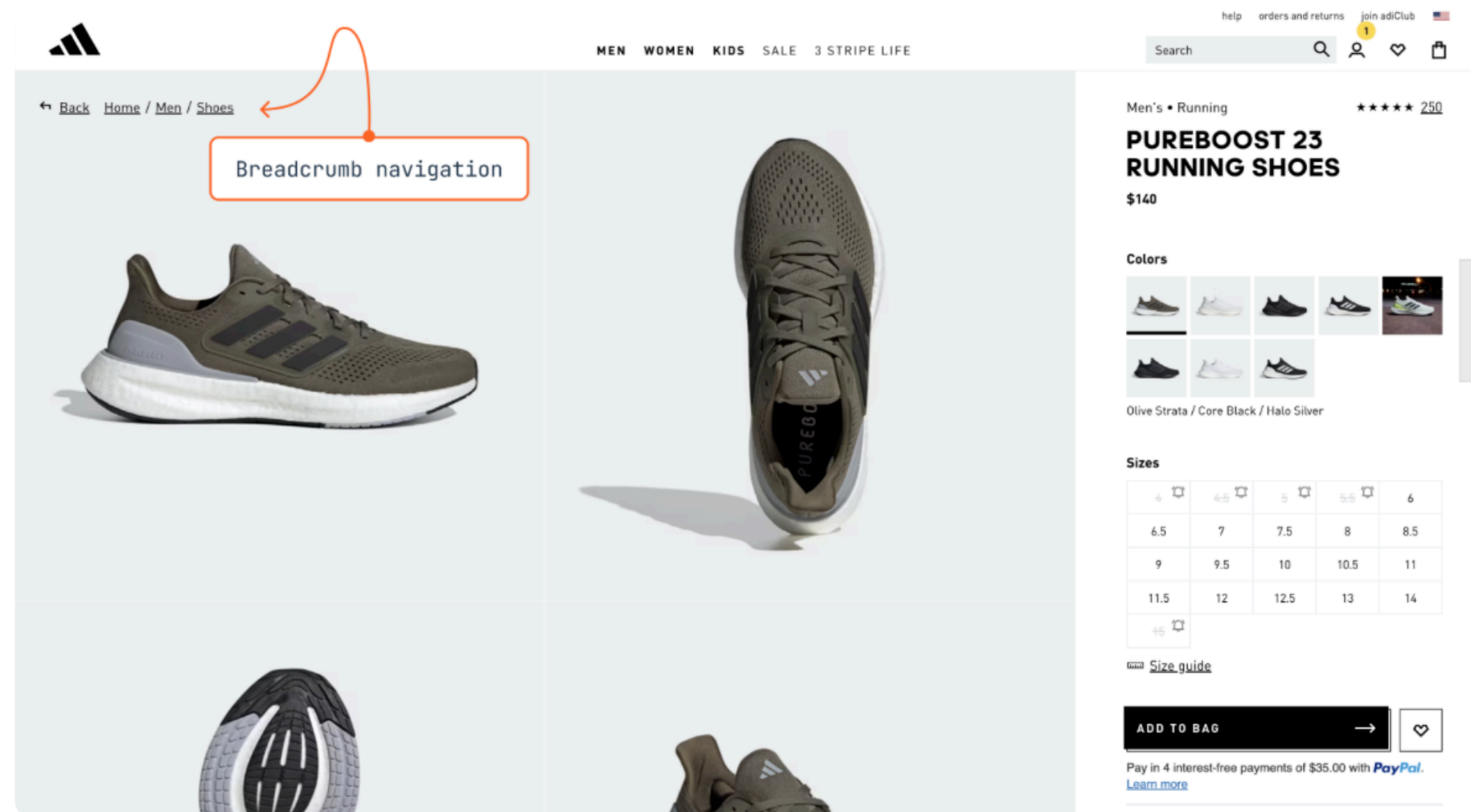
On the other hand, the [New York Knicks](#) have hit their stride -- led by [Jalen Brunson](#), who had a career-high 50 points and made NBA history by being the first player to go 8-for-8 on 3-pointers in a half last Friday.

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Website structure: Components

Breadcrumb navigation



Typically appearing horizontally at the top of a page, breadcrumbs are a series of clickable links that show the pathway of the visited pages, making it easy for users to understand their current location and backtrack if needed.



Cornerstone content

Cornerstone content is pivotal both for structure and for showcasing your authority on a topic.

These are foundational articles that serve as an ultimate resource; they're comprehensive, insightful and packed with valuable information that serves as a one-stop-shop for a particular topic and keyword.

Given that, these individual pages are generally long, north of 2,000 words.

The 3,000+ word article you're reading now, for example, is cornerstone content built around the keyword "website structure" because our website planning software goes hand-in-hand with building a well-structured site.

Video & Break





Landing Pages **in Digital Marketing**





Landing pages: Purpose & structure



What is the purpose of a landing page?

A landing page offers a prospective customer a resource, such as an ebook or webinar signup, in exchange for their basic contact information. The goal of these pages is to generate leads while you pull prospects further into the customer funnel.



Landing pages: Purpose & structure



What is a good landing page conversion rate?

According to WordStream, the average landing page conversion rate is 2.35% across industries, with the top 25th percentile of landing pages hitting 5.31% or higher.



Landing pages aren't just about good design. They are about good written content, too.

A landing page is a standalone page written for the purpose of getting a consumer to go a step further by signing up for email notifications or taking advantage of a free offer.

If the landing page succeeds in getting them to do this, it opens the door to their contact information, so you can send them more information that may entice them to sign up for a service or purchase an item.



Landing pages aren't just about good design. They are about good written content, too.

Therefore, as a digital marketing content writer, your challenge is to create a landing page that stands out from the rest. Research has shown that on average, consumers give 52 seconds to any one page before moving to the next if it doesn't tell them how the product will benefit them.

If it appears that they have to wade through a lot of extraneous information to find out its benefits, odds are they'll decide in a split second that it's not worth their time.



Landing pages aren't just about good design. They are about good written content, too.

Details about the business and all its products and services belong on the website. A landing page should only feature a select amount of data that persuades the searcher to follow through on the intended action.

The benefits you should highlight will depend on the type of business and the sector it serves. But there are several high-converting landing page best practices that apply to all sectors.



8 landing page best practices

Whether you're trying to move visitors through the marketing funnel or gathering information to support sales, your landing page must convince them to take action. Unfortunately, this is easier said than done. A landing page must sell with quality content and design elements that entice users to take action. Here are a few landing page best practices to help your efforts become more successful.



8 landing page best practices

1. Have a great offer

All landing pages require you to give something to visitors in exchange for them completing the desired action. For example, you might offer a deal on your e-commerce website with a click-through landing page. However, with a lead generation landing page, you might offer a free e-guide or consultation in exchange for customer information, allowing them to enter the sales funnel while feeling like they're getting something out of it.

To determine the best offer that will increase conversions, consider your customers and their behaviors. For example, if your customers are shoppers, they will most likely convert into paying customers for a discount on their purchase. Meanwhile, leads may want access to important information that they find valuable, such as an educational guide, case studies, or tools.



8 landing page best practices

2. Focus your headline on benefits

Your landing page isn't the place to showcase why you're the best company. Instead, use it as an opportunity to highlight the benefits of your product or services, including the offer. The headline is your first opportunity to tell visitors what they can expect on the rest of the landing page. If the headline isn't immediately clear or relevant to them, they'll leave the landing page.

To write an engaging headline, consider your messaging. All the landing page copy should match visitor expectations to let them know they're in the right spot and give them a reason for performing the desired action, like filling out a form.



8 landing page best practices

3. Match it to your ad

Landing page copy shouldn't just align with your brand messaging and the offer; it must match the ad campaigns in some way. Of course, you don't have to use the same headline you used for your digital ad or email, but you must let visitors know they're in the right spot. Your landing page design elements should also be similar to provide a seamless user experience and meet visitor expectations.



8 landing page best practices

4. Add a clear call to action

A clear call to action (**CTA**) will let visitors know what you want from them, making it easy for them to figure out if they want to complete the action. Of course, not all visitors will convert, but if you have a CTA that stands out and can help customers understand what they need to do, they're more likely to do it.

A CTA button must be clear in both copy and landing page design. Of course, you can have a simple "submit" button, but you can make it even more engaging by adding a microcopy that's more casual or professional based on your target audience.

Simply changing the "submit" button to "let's talk" on your forms can help you attract more casual leads while making your brand seem more friendly and approachable. Additionally, you should consider the design of your button by using contrasting colors to make it stand out from other visual elements.



8 landing page best practices

5. Optimize for search engines

Many visitors will come to your landing page from ads, email blasts, social media, and other types of marketing. However, that doesn't mean you should forgo search engine optimization. Optimizing your landing page gives you more opportunities to convert because you'll be able to bring more people to it.

- **Use keywords – terms relevant to your brand or business**
- **Use subheadlines – for readability and as keywords**
- **Use backlinks – to other services, products, pages on your main site**



8 landing page best practices

6. Include social proof

Word-of-mouth is still one of the best ways to bring customers to your business. Social proof, including reviews and testimonials, can help build trust with potential customers who may have never heard of your business and don't yet know whether they can trust you.

No matter how great your offering is or how many benefits you list on your landing page, visitors are more likely to trust the word of a human rather than a company. Using testimonials from real customers can help you start building relationships with potential customers early in the process, allowing you to convert them faster.



8 landing page best practices

7. Remove navigation

Your website has navigation to allow customers to browse your products and service offerings while giving them the opportunity to learn more about you. Landing pages don't need navigation because it only has one focus– to convert visitors into paying customers or leads.

Any navigation that may distract potential customers or force them off the landing page with your offer can prevent you from achieving your goals.



8 landing page best practices

8. Test everything

Even if you use every landing page design best practice you've learned about, you may still get lackluster results because every business is different, and you must cater to the needs of your audience. Every aspect of your landing page, including every design element, headline, and word, can be A/B tested, allowing you to learn from your successes and failures. A/B testing can help you convert as many people as possible.

However, you should only test one element at a time and allow your landing page to get enough views to help you form an opinion. A/B testing allows you to make informed decisions based on real data, so we recommend testing everything until you've found the right mix of copy and landing page design elements to improve conversion rates.