Designing Websites with a Purpose

Web design is necessary so all users can *add your site purpose here* **with minimum effort.**

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Usability

"DON'T MAKE ME THINK"

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Usability

Common patterns

Navigation, forms, modals and shopping carts look the same almost everywhere. Because users don't really want to learn new things. Making things look and feel familiar makes the user feel comfortable and safe.

Consistency

The overall look and feel is same everywhere in your site. Keeps the user focus on the content. Same goes with any functionality or interaction - the user gets expected results.

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Usability

Avoiding user errors

Users make mistakes. It's your responsibility to make your site foolproof. Especially when you have any interaction, like forms or shopping cart in your site.

Dark patterns

When you misuse common patterns to fool users to do something they didn't intent to do. Can be unintentional and is a common design mistake.

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Usability

Accessibility

Make your content available to everybody. People use the internet in many ways. Some use screen readers, some use just keyboard to navigate, some have other limited capabilities.

As of 23.9.2019 it's *illegal* to publish non-accessible sites in EU if you are in the public sector. And really bad PR for the rest.

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Responsiveness

Responsiveness

Responsive design means taking care that site works well in different devices. Not just different screen sizes but controls and user input methods.

Mobile vs. Desktop

There are some variation depending on the target audience, but the common trend is that mobile usage is growing.

User Experience, not just pixels

Responsiveness is not just making everything fit on a 320px wide screen. When you change from a mouse to finger and look at the screen from totally different distance, that means you have to optimize the font sizes and controls size to match the situation.

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Speed

Speed

The design choices affect on the speed only a little bit. Pay attention to it especially when selecting the platform, tools and hosting provider.

Slowness frustrates users

If your site takes too long to load, users will bail. Users might not have a fast and cheap internet connection like you do.

It affects to your SEO ranking significantly

Slower site means less hits from Google

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Content

"A WEBSITE WITHOUT GOOD CONTENT IS LIKE A BROKEN PENCIL - POINTLESS"

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Content

Empty pages syndrome

If you have pages with 1-2 paragraphs of text, your site looks like abandoned and unfinished to the user. Combine pages or extend the content.

Jargon infection

Create content for humans. I know you love your work or your company and would like to just write about that. But you have products and the customer is interested only on those. If you really need to have boring content, try to tell it like a story or write from an more interesting angle. That way someone might even read it.

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Content

Facefobia

Content is not just text. Use videos and pictures to illustrate your site. If you really want the user to engage, be proud and show your face. And your staff. Users want to interact with real humans, not stock images.

Carousel Obsession

I know. There is only place above the fold. And you need to have at least three huge things there. I got bad news for your two huge things: Most users don't wait and look what is in the next slide. Scrolling is the new normal.

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The Process

Purpose & goals for your website

Purpose & goals for your website

Which user problem does your site solve? What do you wish to accomplish?

Examples:

- Get leads
- Sell more stuff
- Close deals
- Strengthen your brand
- Service customers better
- Share your thoughts

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User stories

User stories

Stories are concrete paths that leads the user to your goals.

Examples:

- User can contact us easily in multiple ways from any page
- User gets information about our newest products on every visit
- User can find more information and user reviews about the product they are interested by
  - product name
  - product category

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Site map

Site map

- What goes where?
- A base for the navigation
- Create/gather the base content
- It is not necessary to have a separate page for everything, if you don't have enough content

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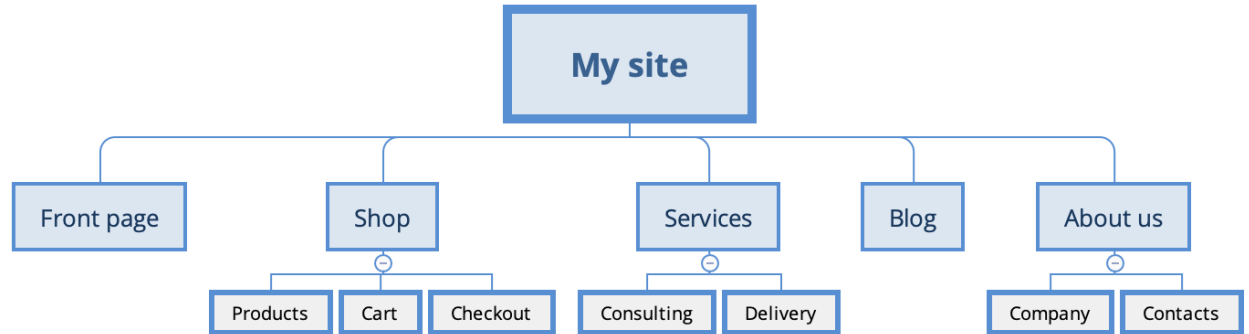
Wireframes

Wireframes

Components

Define components that are used in multiple places in the site

- Header / navbar
- Footer
- Card
- Modal
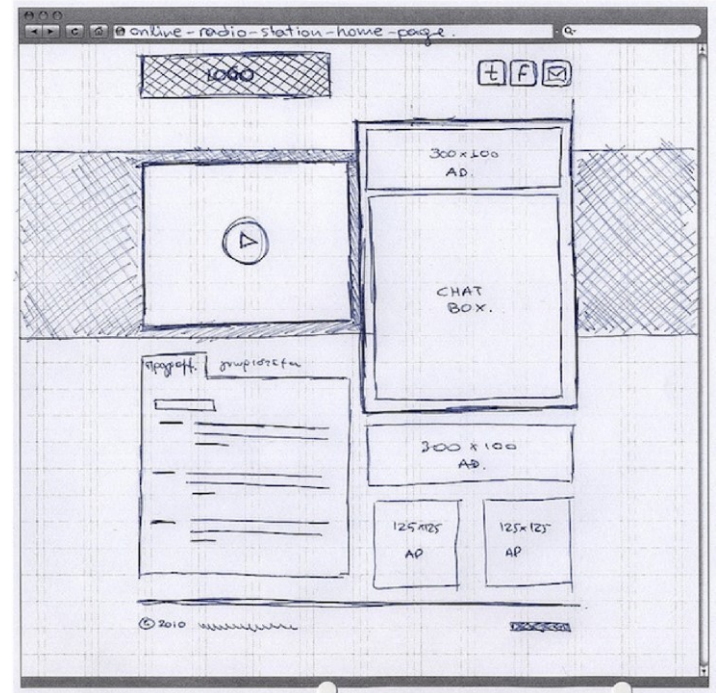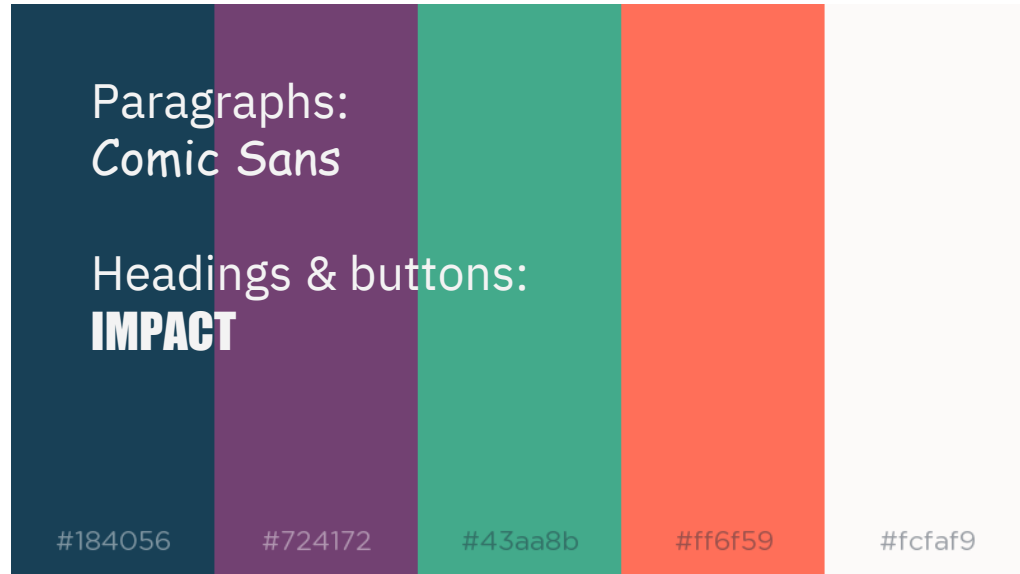

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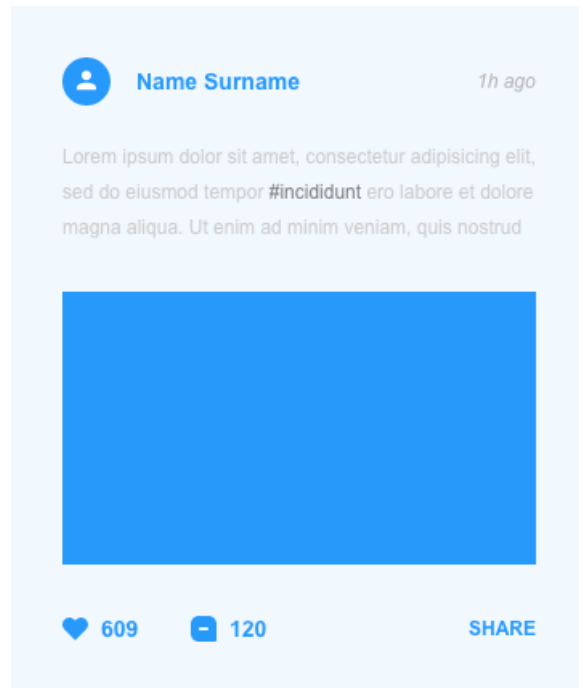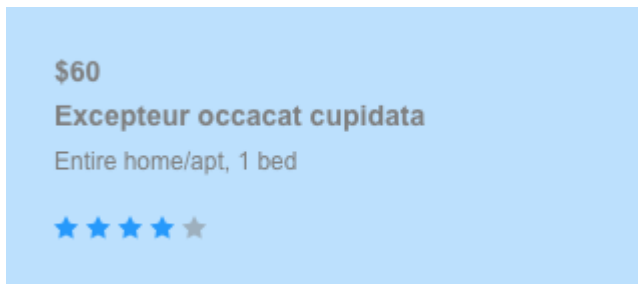
Wireframes

Views

Compose views using components

- Front page
- Blog
- Shop
- Checkout
- Cart

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Colors, fonts and overall feel

Colors, fonts and overall feel

- Select colors that have good contrast ratio
- No more than 2 different fonts
- Overall feel: Modern, conservative, warm, fuzzy, cute, spontaneus etc.

Paragraphs:
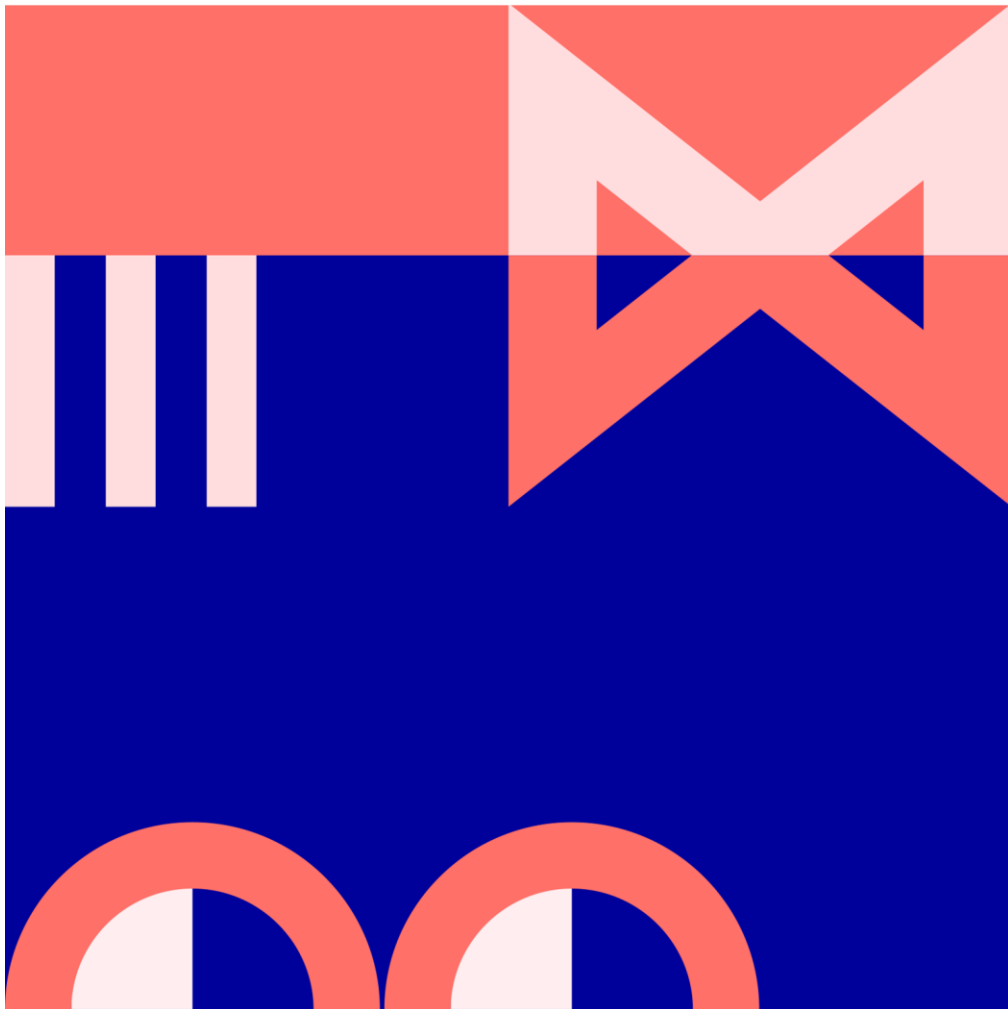Comic Sans

Headings & buttons:
IMPACT

| #184056 | #724172 | #43aa8b | #ff6f59 | #fcfaf9 |

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Visuals

Visuals

- Don't reinvent the wheel
- Avoid clutter, use empty space to guide user focus
- Use relative measures on font sizes, margins and gutters for consistency
- Design components "mobile-first"
- Illustrate and embellish your wireframes

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