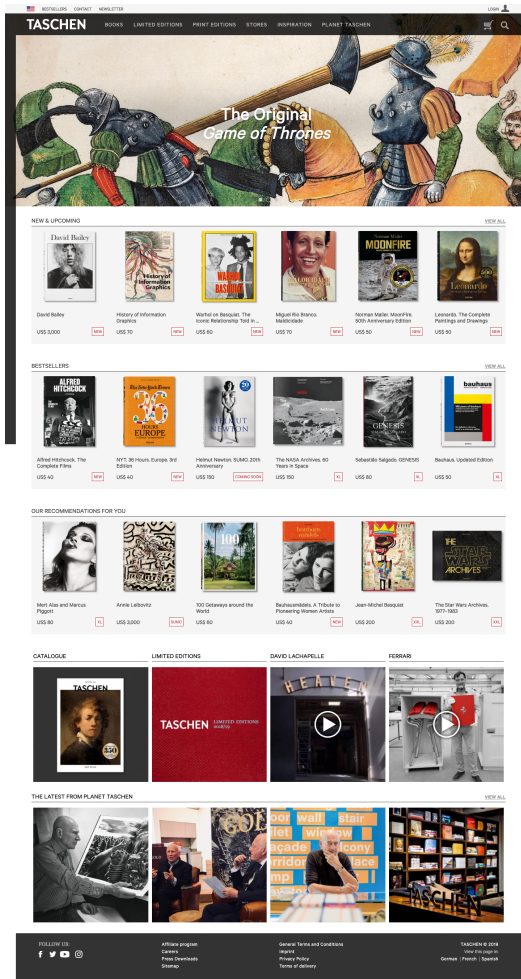# BNED

Website UX / Creative
Books / eZines Publishers Inspiration

Ideas & Inspiration Analyses by Janet Si-Ming Lee, UX
July 19, 2019

Inspiration – Taschen ...

Taschen — Book Publisher Specialized in Curated Artistic / Cultural Books, Beautiful or Notable Enough to be Coffee Table Items or Gifts
**Default Homepage State:** www.taschen.com

Site Notables:
- Beautiful web design that reflects brand well with its tasteful curated selections of books that I've noticed are for the more sophisticated cultural urbanite who loves arts, culture, sociological and philosophical inquiries, travel, foodie experiences.
- Use of high contrast – blacks/deep greys and lot of white space and limited color palette to showcase books and to present a strong framework to house work.
- Well organized sections like books lined up on a shelf metaphorically — "New & upcoming", "Bestsellers", "Our Recommendations for You", "Catalogue", "Limited Editions" with limited use of reds to ensure tags "new", "coming soon", "XL" pop.

BNED Relevance: Similar to Taschen's strategy, Barnes & Nobles might want to consider themselves in the curated marketspace, a cultural ambassador for college lifestyles. How might we want to both project what I call a classic cool yet contemporary persona that is distinct but leaves room to showcase the college in their own style? When I think of B&N, I think of green ivy — both classic references to the ivies as oldest schools that become historical landmarks but also green as a reference to educational growth and sustainability, a contemporary hot issue. We can play off that dynamic to reflect both the evergreen and the contemporary always relevant.

Inspiration – Taschen continued…
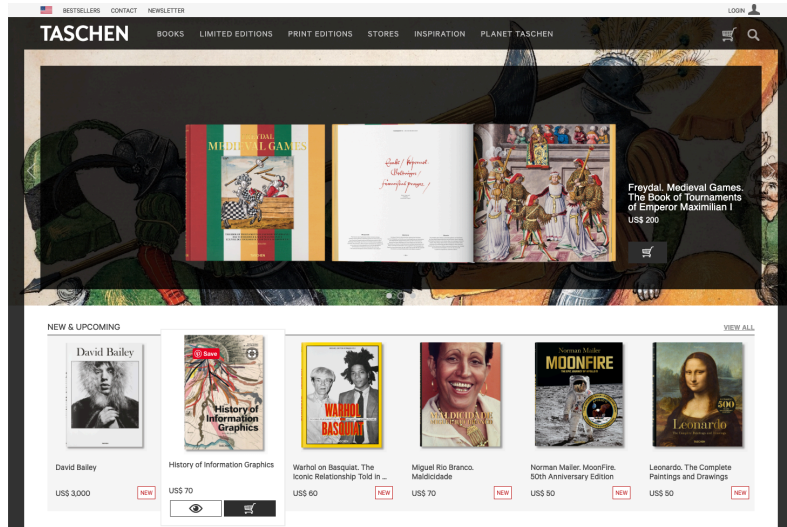

Notable Hover effects on Taschen Homepage:
www.taschen.com

Site Notables:
- Primary splash banner features different types of call-to-actions. I like how the one on "The Original Game of Thrones" features a hover to look into the actual book to get a sense of how the book looks inside and quality of content. The story on Sebastião Salgado directs users to an entire page dedicated to his work while other call-to-actions just point to the specific product detail page of a specific book.
- Each of the books on a book shelf (e.g. "New & Upcoming") features a prominent hover state with photo of book enlarged and the opportunity to view a product snapshot hover panel or add the item to the cart immediately.
- Big area dedicated to colorful hover detail for the featured sections "catalogue", "Limited Editions", "The Latest from Planet Taschen" so users can see more detail before deciding to tap into that section for more detail. Each featured box may point to pages with different functions i.e. see videos, learn more about a book signing, or read transcript of an interview with a famous speaker

BNED Relevance: Consider different types of hovers and how they might be effective in highlighting key call-to-actions in a more effective away or invite browsing and spontaneous discovery with interesting relevant headlines pointing to modern issues e.g. "The Original Game of Thrones" to give flavor of contemporary and classic brand.

BNED

Inspiration – Taschen continued…
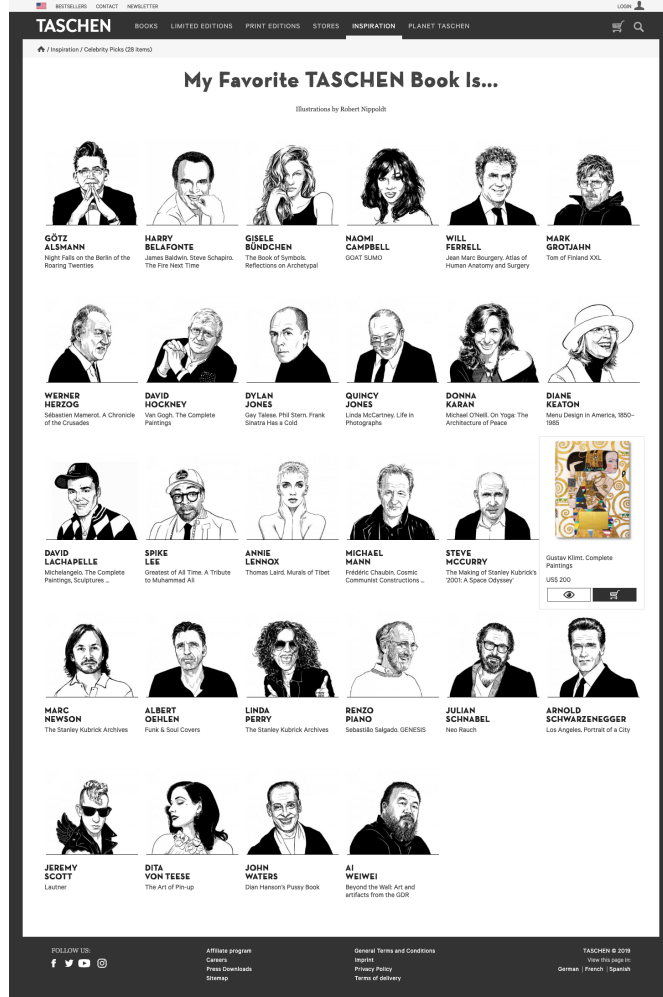
**Celebrity Picks for Favorite Taschen Books:**
www.taschen.com/pages/en/perfect_gifts/celebrity_favorites/index.my_favorite_taschen_book_is.htm?crt_page=1

Site Notables:
- Clever idea to feature famous celebrities in various creative and cultural industries such as Spike Lee, Ai Weiwei, David Hockney, Diane Keaton, Annie Lennox, Arnold Schwartznegger, Gisele Bundchen, Naomi Campbell, Donna Karan, etc and their favorite Taschen book that are really quite fascinating and varied selection that reflects the type of Taschen customer base who aspire to be like these cultural icons. Reminds me of Apple's "Think Different" brand positioning as a luxury item.
- Use of illustrations for famous celebrities give the page a more artistic and personalized feel like a newspaper cartoon illustration.
- Hover effect on celebrity's book gives a product snapshot of the book cover and ability to learn more about a product such as Bundchen's pick "Book of Symbols: reflections on Archetypal" or add the item immediately to the cart.

BNED Relevance: I propose we highlight favorite BNED or B&N books by alums of a given school for each school's bookstore we host when students log in so that it personalizes their experience. The books should ideally be in different industries or from the university's most famous alums. When users haven't logged into the site, we showcase top book picks from famous customers who exemplify B&N or BNED brand.

Inspiration – Taschen continued…
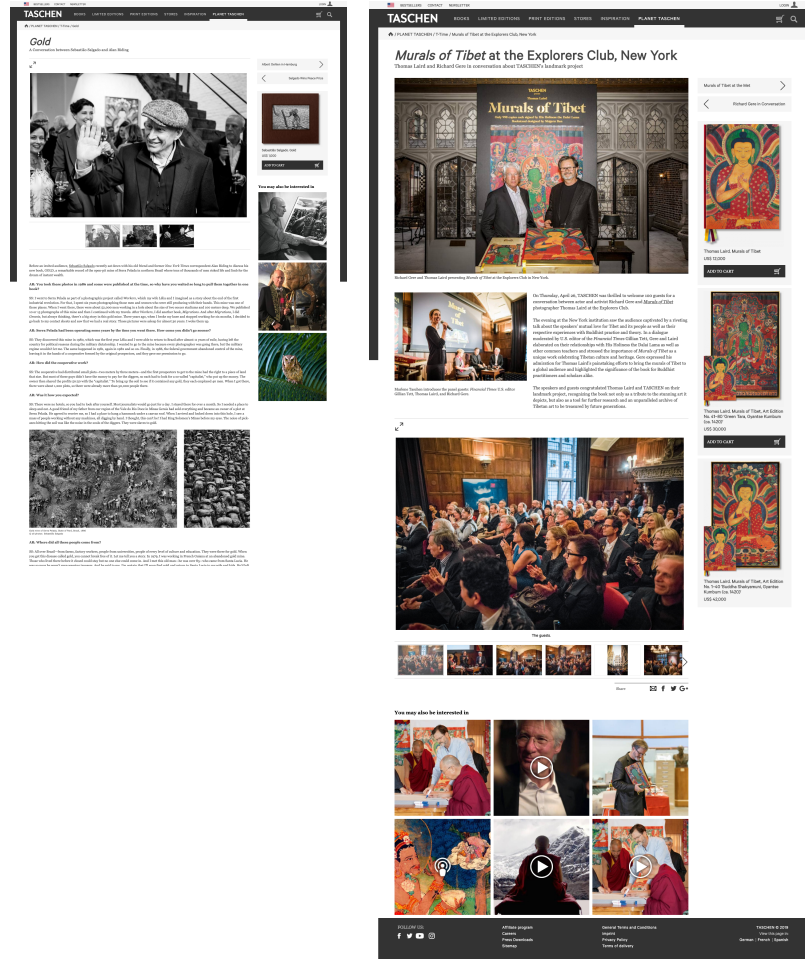
Events such as a Conversation between Sebastião Salgado and Alan Riding:
www.taschen.com/pages/en/company/blog/1397.gold.htm
and "Murals of Tibet at the Explorers Club, New York":
www.taschen.com/pages/en/company/blog/1246.murals_of_tibet_at_the_explorers_club_new_york.htm

Site Notables:
- Taschen makes their site a place that cultivates a sense of exclusivity and intimacy, hosting conversations between the Taschen and its authors with transcripts of conversations available to read and videoclips of famous celebrity Richard Gere exemplifying the cultured Taschen artistic / cultural leadership brand personality
- Provides related content on the author's work or their activities to give more context to the featured author on the left sidebar and within article.

BNED Relevance: If BNED and B&N hosts conversations with authors at their cafes or bookstores, it would be great if transcripts could be made available and I can imagine that conversations can continue in the B&N cafes afterwards related to a theme to make BNED / B&N a place where conversations continue online and offline to make the physical and digital communities closer especially for virtual university and continuing ed students. If students / alums log into the BNED school site, then ideally we would feature transcripts of book interviews by an author who is an alum from that school to make closer appeal to student or maybe featuring an author in the same field as the student's major or minor study to personalize the site.

Inspiration – Taschen continued…
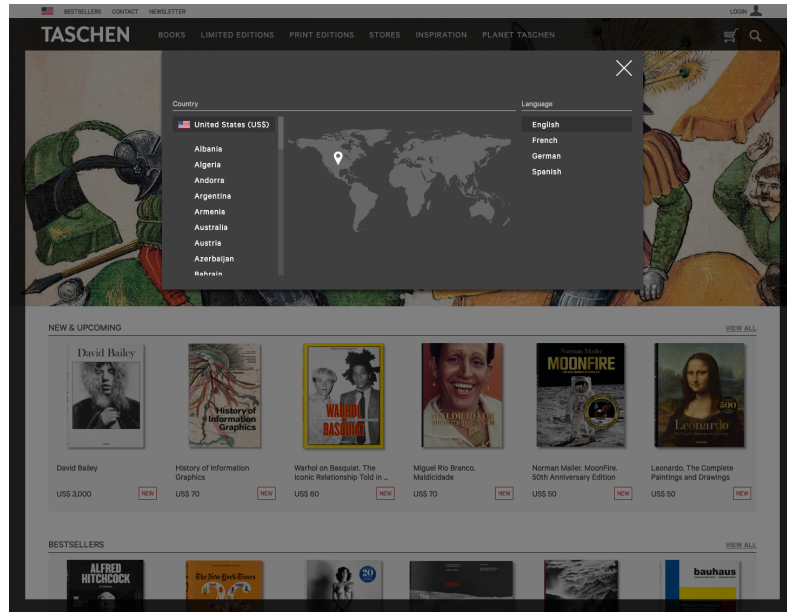
Taschen Global Country and Language Selector:
www.taschen.com/pages/en/company/blog/1397.gold.htm

Site Notables:
* Elegant presentation of the pop-up window to select a country and to view the spoken languages in that country. If there is only one language available for translated version of the site, the page automatically loads up with that language selected. The site picks up the IP address to default our country to the one we're in currently so presumably prices of books reflect that country's currency and price points.
* Map highlights location the selected country.

BNED Relevance: If BNED and B&N include college networks in different countries or includes students and alums from different nations and preferred languages, we might want to have a language selector.

Inspiration – Taschen continued…

Taschen Contact Us form page:
www.taschen.com/pages/en/company/blog/1397.gold.htm

Site Notables:
- Polished looking contact us form page with use of subtle grey background behind form fields to help the fields pop up more.
- Good use of standardization of email recipient type so that the email can be forwarded to the correct representative for more efficient response time and to help qualify content.
- Country selector is a drop-down that reflects the default IP address presumably or domain name of the country the website visitor currently resides for email contact.
- Taschen locations with corresponding map and office is an attractive display of content.

BNED Relevance: Our Contact Us Form page should enable users to see form fields more easily so ideally have a light background for the form field or the background of the fields to increase subtle contrast. To streamline inquiries and reduce users having to define their problem in our lingo, standardize content form field options. Users should be able to select category of problem in the "subject" as a drop-down menu with "other" as an option so that users can enter a different topic from the ones listed if they don't see an option in a pop-down text field.

Inspiration – National Geographic
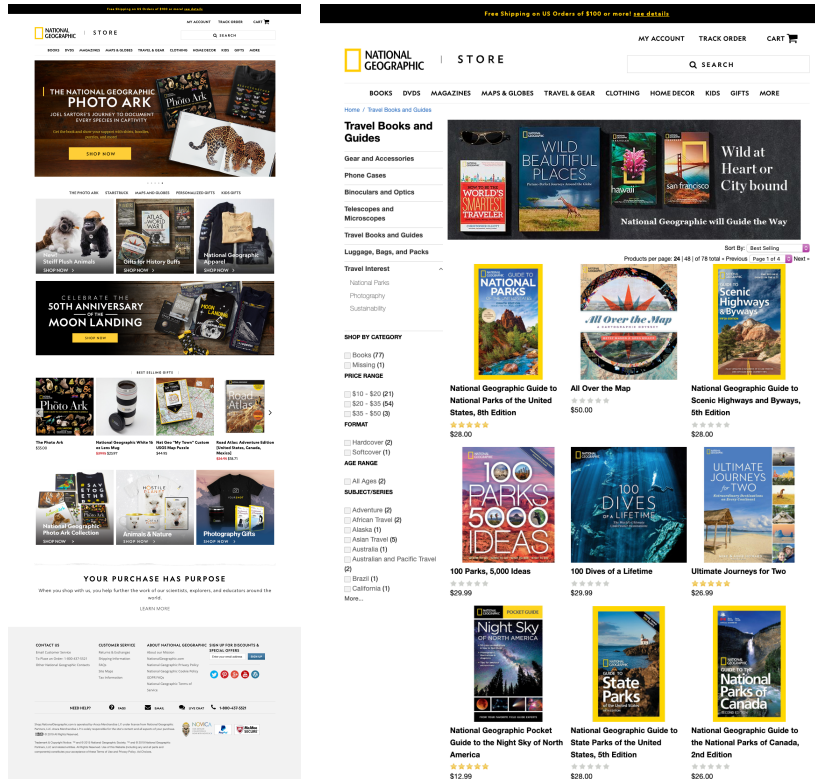
National Geographic — a world-class magazine at the intersection of anthropology, archaeology, sociology and other sciences known for their excellent photography and thought-provoking, scholarly journalism

Homepage: www.nationalgeographic.com

Product Results Listing: https://shop.nationalgeographic.com/collections/travel-books-and-guides

Site Notables:
- Niche magazine world-renown for quality, culturally astute and thought-provoking Personality of brand looks bold with bright yellow and modern w/crisp sans-serifs.
- Strong use of high-contrast color palette with black bars at top and bottom footer to frame content for easier read and contrast in scale of text to focus attention on key info such as filters that are much smaller and not as distracting.
- Good use of discount sale tags and "quickview" and filters are quite well organized.
- Some products can be customized with book dedications (https://shop.nationalgeographic.com/collections/personalized-gifts/products/national-geographic-little-kids-book-of-dinosaurs-personalized-hardcover-book)

BNED Relevance: I propose we look at establishing a personality for BNED that reflects a curated angle on our content and National Geographic does an excellent job of bringing the world to their pages to cultivate a sense of anthropological and scientific curiosity. It comes across neutral. Perhaps, for Barnes & Nobles specific textbook recommendations, we can develop a particular expert perspective as respected as National Geographic for its scholarly insights and objectivity yet accessible to youth.

BNED

Inspiration – Sony continued…
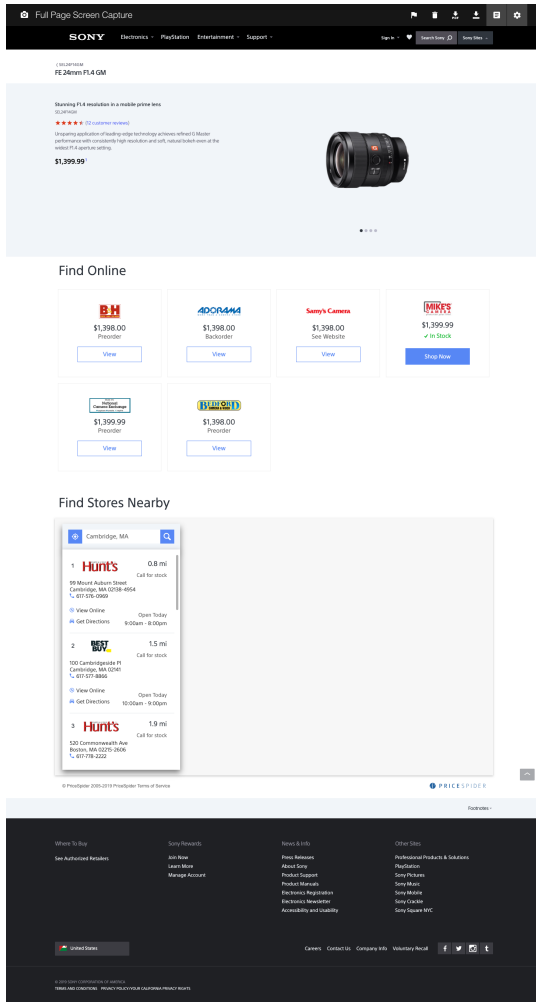

Sony — Camera Product Detail Page:
www.sony.com/electronics/camera-lenses/sel24f14gm/buy

Site Notables:
- This page enables users to view where their selected product can be purchased online with the price and availability as considerations. If an item is not available, you can see the option to "preorder" or "backorder" and if the item can be purchased now online, you see the "Shop Now" button.
- If users rather buy the product in a brick and mortar store, there is a widget to view all retailers nearby to purchase it. The location defaults to users' location probably picking up IP address info. The widget provides key relevant info: 1) brand name of retailer; 2) address of venue; 3) online link; 4) directions; 5) hours open. Looks like

BNED Relevance: If our products can be purchased in person or via other partners, perhaps, we can provide the type of information seen above to get to a store.

Inspiration – CNET
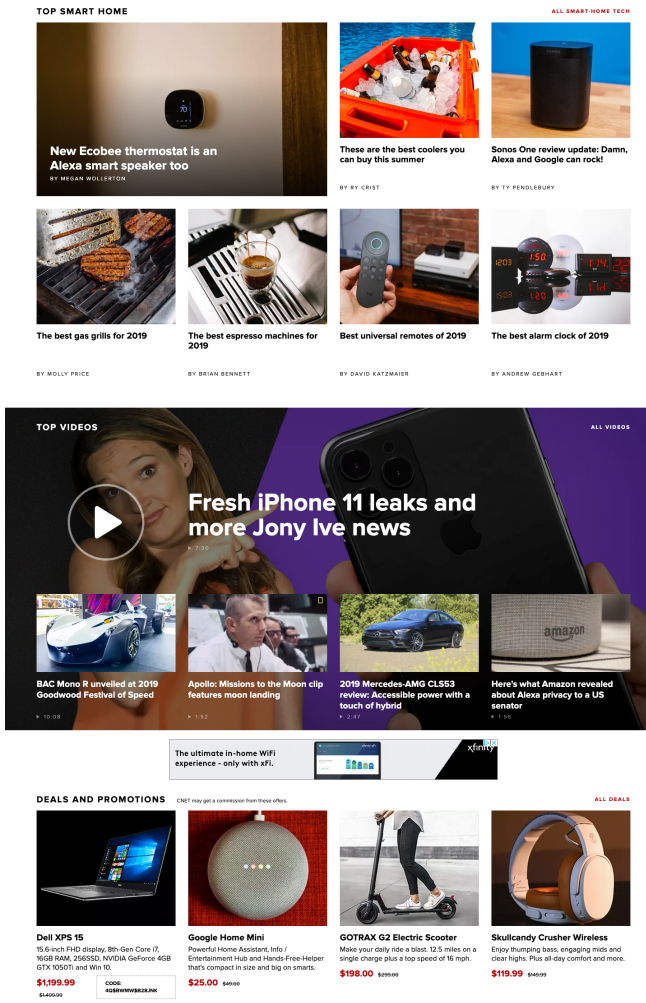
CNET — Hybrid content and ecommerce site. Provides industry trends updates and analyses on technology at the intersection of tech, culture, and sciences. They offer consumer product advice and features ecommerce capability.
Homepage: www.cnet.com

Site Notables:
- CNET product recommendations have to be perceived to be mostly objective for users to then trust the site's promotion of products.
- "Latest stories" and "top stories" to highlight different perspectives on stories. We could tie in stories to new featured products or product bundles if they advance reasons why to buy certain things.
- Flags on articles: 'Most Likes", "Most Tweets", "most Likes", "Most Comments" indicates social media saaviness.
- Use of top videos in a big splash image container and subsets of videos to watch with info length of time for video so people know how long they have to allocate to watching a video in that sitting.

BNED Relevance: CNET is an example of how sites first must provide unbiased product recommendations and industry trends in order for the items they promote to be respected as objectively useful to customers. When products are featured because of sponsorships, it's best to indicate that the product placement are sponsored ads to differentiate from products BNED promotes because they are indeed the best.