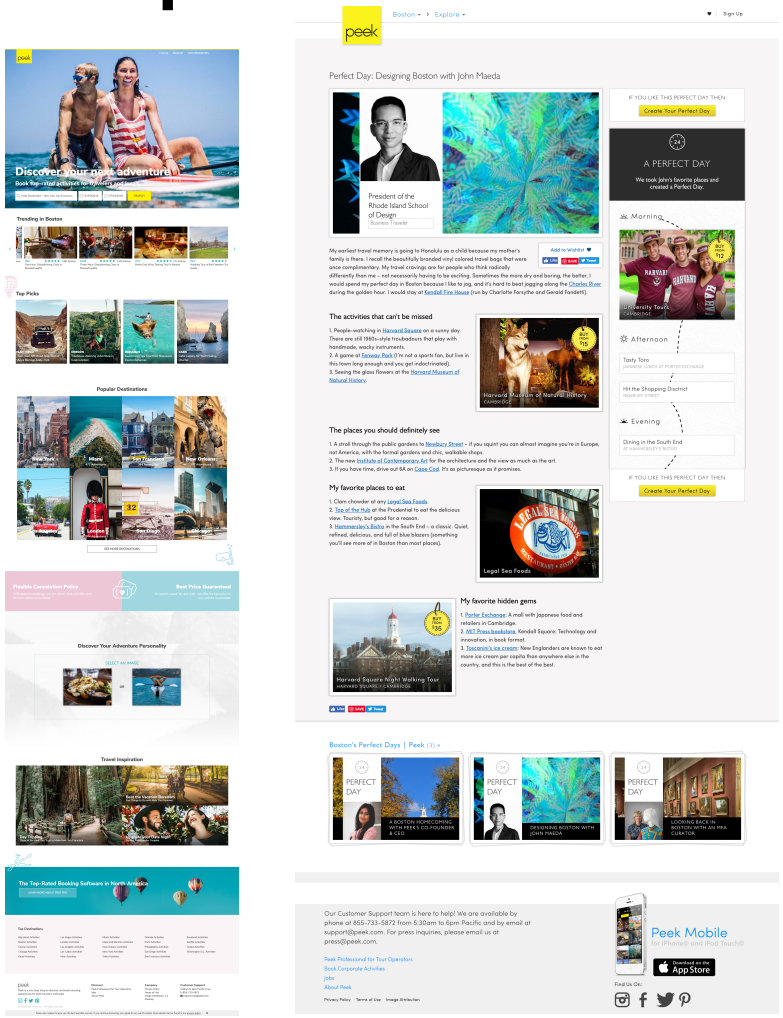
Website UX / Creative
eCommerce Strategy Inspiration

Ideas & Inspiration Analyses by Janet Si-Ming Lee, UX
July 3, 2019

Inspiration – Peek



Peek —Travel Community with Personalized Travel Stories:
www.peek.com

Sample Perfect Day by RISD President / MIT Media Lab Director John Maeda
www.peek.com/perfect_day-i6811683-designing_boston_with_john_maeda_in_boston/

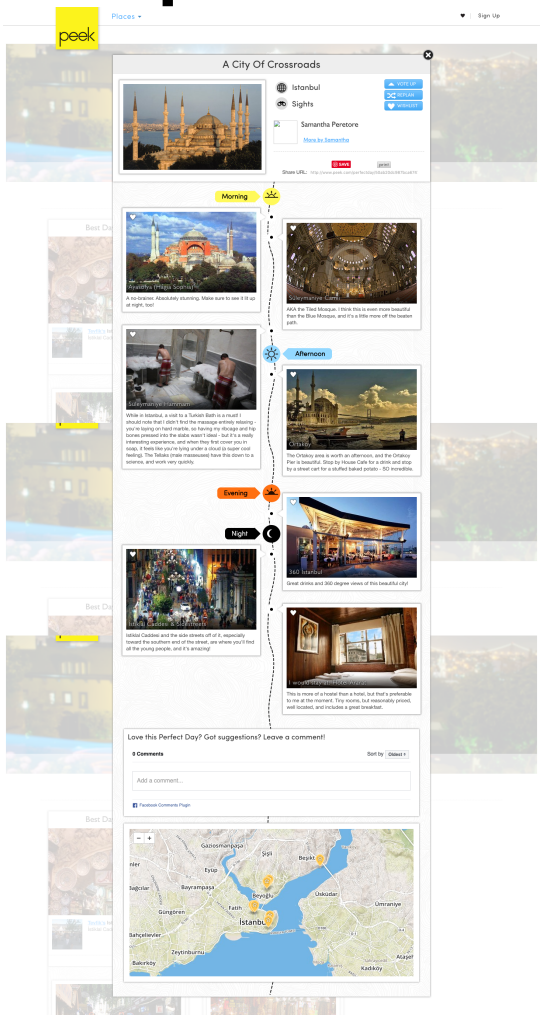
Site Notables: Communities of people who share their personal itineraries like travel stories to find travel inspiration and recommendations from likeminded travelers.

- Clear Information hierarchy with Must-Sees and Must-dos.
- People can follow the perfect day ideas based on people who have similar interests and travel styles.
- “Hidden Gem” terms gives a sense of access to rare perspectives and counsel

BNED Relevance: I propose BNED leverage its strength as a product-service ecosystem that has physical cafés and bookstores with close ties to schools. Focus on building community for students especially virtual continuing ed students and alums with cafes and stores as community hub to meet over events. Feature different alum stories who have different professions to follow career advice and top books/product selections. Perhaps, career paths advice from famous alums.

BNED

Inspiration – Peek continued…



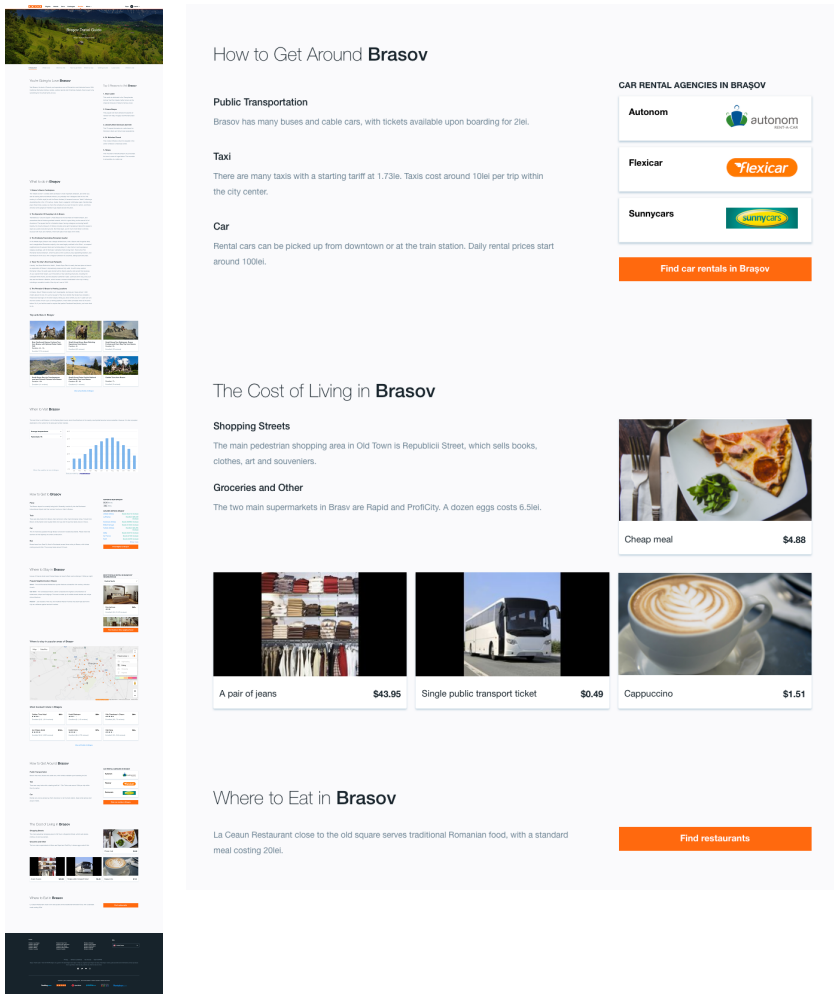
Travel Itinerary Timeline:
www.peek.com/perfectday/50ab20dc987bca6747000407/istanbul-a-city-of-crossroads

Feature Notables:

- Visualization of travel journeys
- Ability to get more likeminded advice on travel ideas and customize as they wish

BNED Relevance: I propose BNED students / alums have ability to craft timelines and share educational journey sharing their educational and career paths maybe. Perhaps, they can list their adventures traveling to different BNED cafe destinations for topics to explore. Each time BNED members visit a café, they can get their personalized passport stamped. Cafes would be cool enough to be a snapshot of the city's history for students living from home to discover and also for their parents and just general tourists. The store theme can be changed up like New Orleans of the Maybe feature stories of famous alums on the walls and opportunity for current students to offer perspectives to be included in bookstores' snapshots of an era.

Inspiration – Kayak



Kayak —Travel Guide with Standard of Living and Lifestyle Snapshots:
www.kayak.com/Bra%C5%9Fov.17704.guide

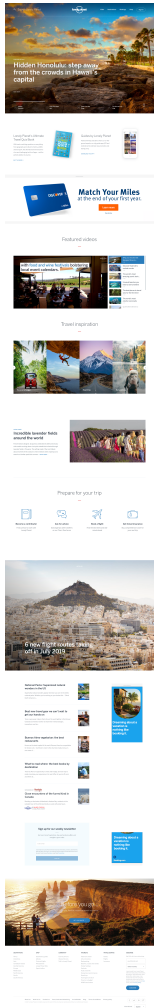
Site Notables: Communities of people who share their personal itineraries like travel stories to find travel inspiration and recommendations from likeminded travelers.

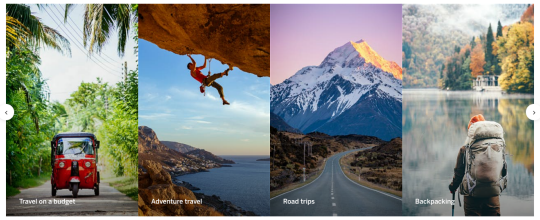
- Concise overview of life in a city and things to do that includes standard of living costs snapshots, the temperature over the year, and other factoids
- Enumerated info. easy to read.

BNED Relevance: Maybe we can use this as a model to provide students with an overview of their new college's campus life highlights and ideas for things to do in their local destination and a snapshot of standard of living costs to take into consideration.

BNED

Inspiration – Lonely Planet





Lonely Planet —Travel Guide (Homepage and a Close-Up of It):
www.lonelyplanet.com

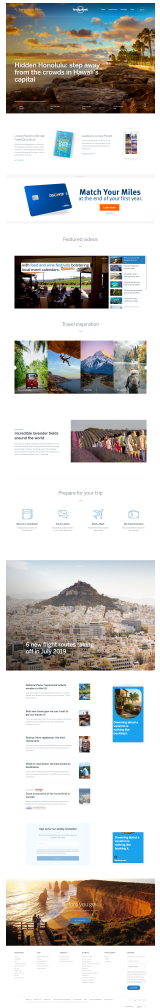
Site Notables:

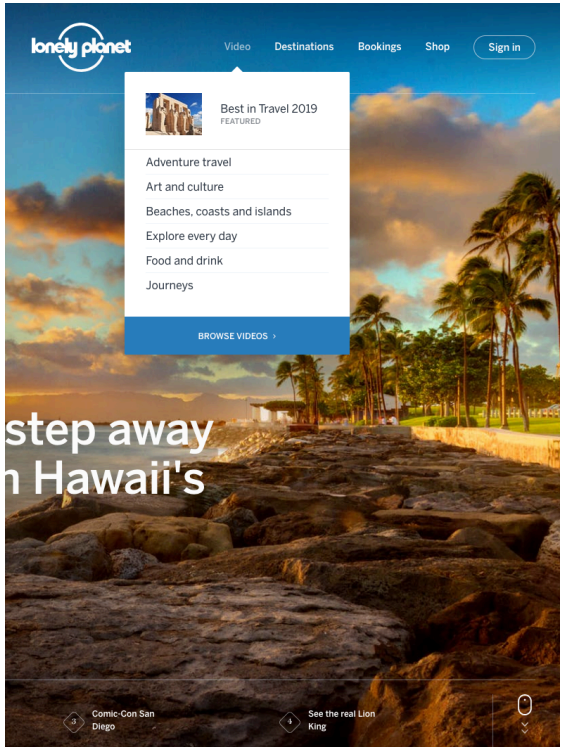
- Beautiful, polished site design that inspires dreams of travel
- Immersive large-scale photos. Presents different ways to experience a place with large-scale splash photos and guided storytelling but also different videos showcase styles to present info differently. Videos always indicate duration of videos so people can decide whether to invest time to watch it now or later.
- Thematic travel styles and personas reflected in the different types of trips people can take — budget conscious, adventure, road trips, backpacking for people to find ideas best suited to their interest and travel styles.

BNED Relevance: We can present different personas—students, faculty, alums, parents, tourists in the local bookstores—in the BNED community and help them find the type of experiences they wish to have. Consider this site for different video presentations from vision board aspirational to educational videos.

BNED

Inspiration – Lonely Planet continued…





Lonely Planet —Travel Guide (Global Drop-Down Menus):
www.lonelyplanet.com

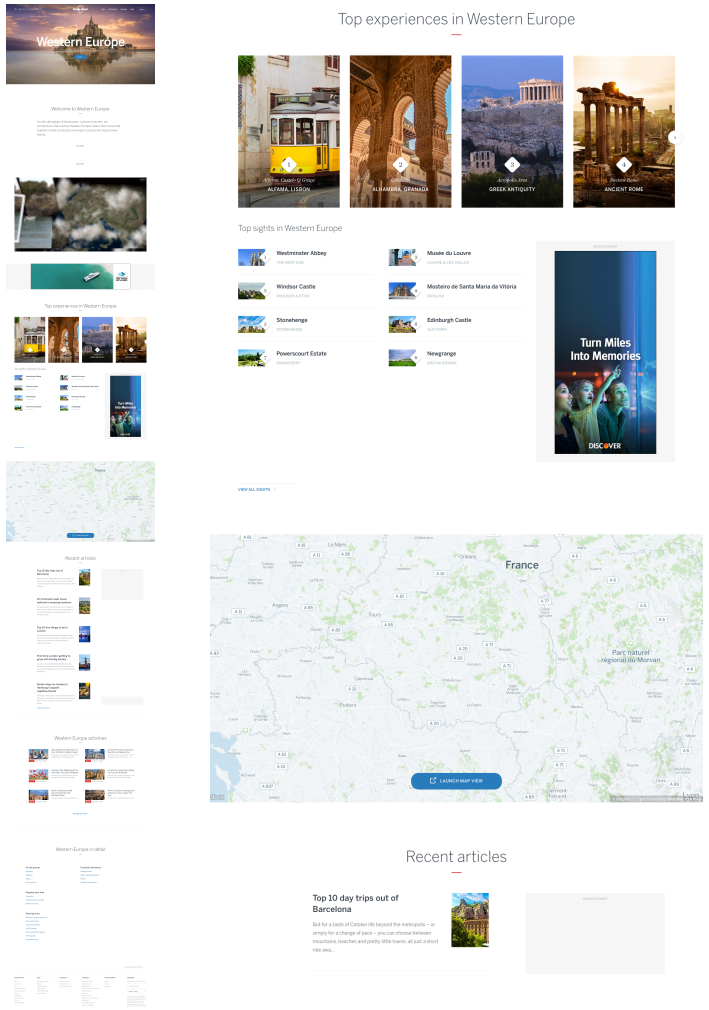
Site Notables:

- Menu drop-downs have visual graphic identifier, links to key content sections but also a primary call-to-action button (e.g. Browse Videos) so we can interesting

BNED Relevance: We can look into creating hover menus that have primary and secondary call-to-actions with more visual appeal to make them easier to scan for key actions and genres.

BNED

Inspiration – Lonely Planet continued…



Lonely Planet —Travel Guide (Product Detail Page and a Close-Up of It):
www.lonelyplanet.com/western-europe

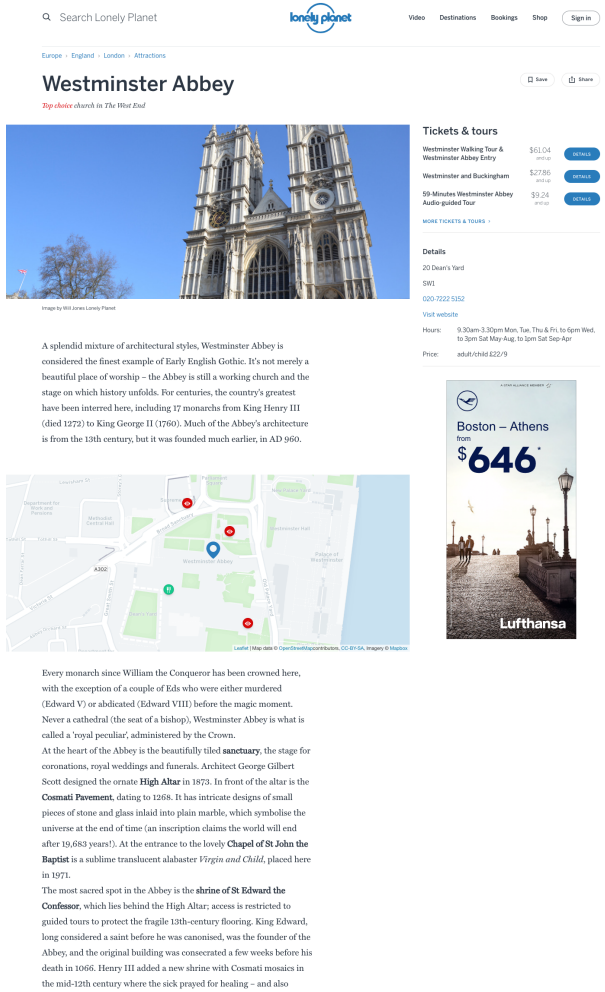
Site Notables:

- Light, airy design with varied contrast in scale and tonal weight (lighter text colors for supporting text such as regions for a siteseeing landmark) for images for a more clear info hierarchy.
- Use of enumerated top sights for users to more quickly scan information with no more than 10 items in a list.
- Use of simple drop-down on the splash photo area to click to expand to see list of top places in a destination to visit (e.g. France, England, Portugal in Western Europe given greater prominence w/ secondary less popular options from 4-10 to keep info hierarchy easy to recall)
- Prices pop in the red rectangles since minimalistic color palette
- Ideally, the descriptions of activities would be bulleted info instead of just 2 lines of text that doesn't provide much details to be that useful.

BNED Relevance: Look to this page design for inspiration on how to organize content in such a way to more easily scan content with clear information hierarchy.

BNED

Inspiration – Lonely Planet continued…



Lonely Planet —Travel Guide (Point of Interest Landmark for Siteseeing):
www.lonelyplanet.com/england/london/attractions/westminster-abbey/a/poi-sig/370357/1326049

www.lonelyplanet.com/england/london/activities/westminster-walking-tour-westminster-abbey-entry/a/pa-act/v-75760P78/358914

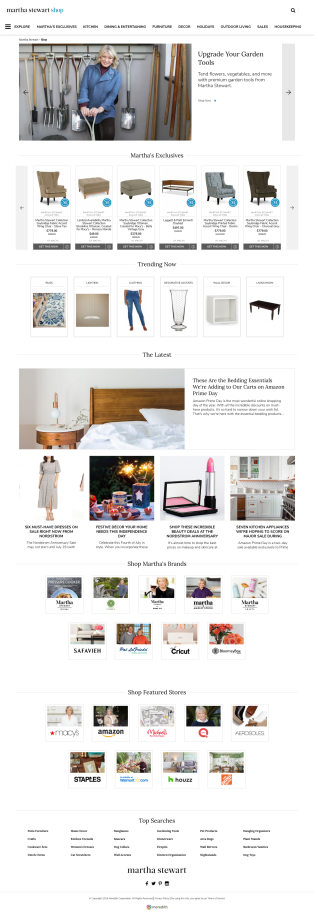
Site Notables:

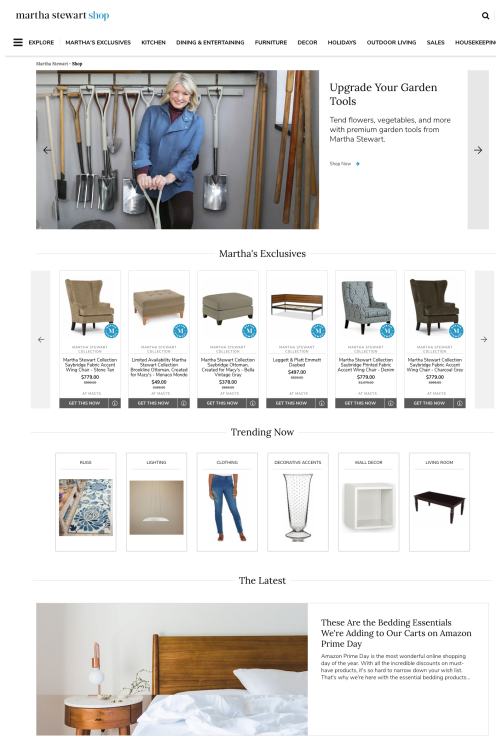
- Clear call-to-action and information to help make a decision on next steps consolidated in one section / module in the same location so consistent experience

BNED Relevance: Make call-to-actions in the same place for similar actions so predictable user-experience.

BNED

Inspiration – Martha Stewart Lifestyle





Martha Stewart — A Lifestyle Brand: Shop Portal
www.marthastewart.com/shop/

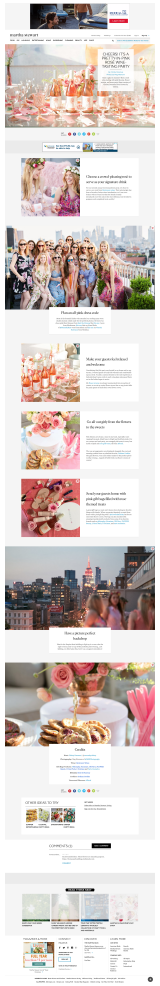
Site Notables:

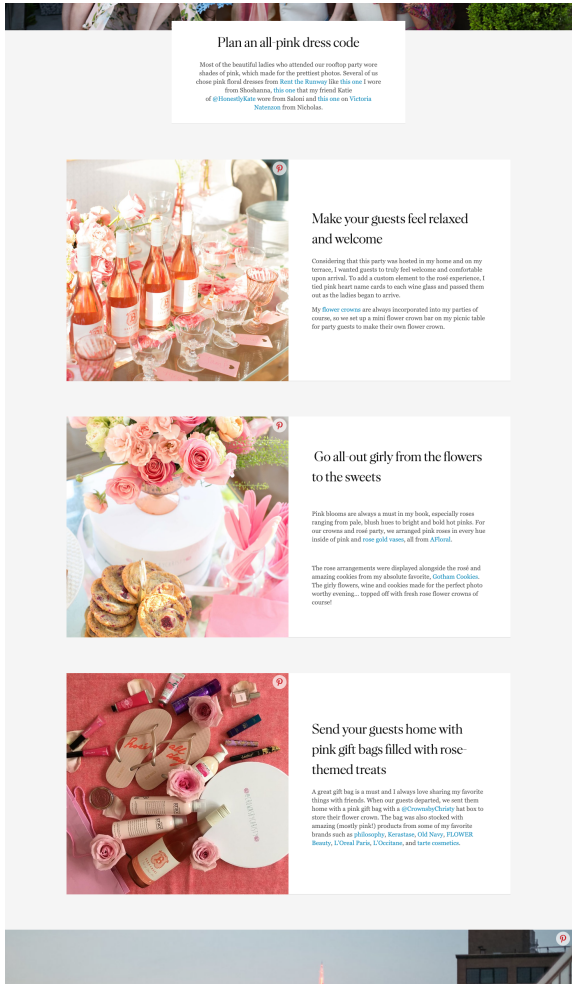
- Curated content to promote a particular brand personality — Martha Stewart — classic American perhaps with a bit of French undertones, elegant. May appeal most to upper-middle and middle-income housewives, foodies, entertainers and crafts-makers, gardeners, etc. Uses the “M” circular tag on product items to signify her exclusive premier signature collection.
- Present both a “Get This Now” to view product detail page and “i” for a product snapshot at hover as call-to-actions from the first page to save a step.
- “Exclusives”, “Trending”, ”The Latest”, (Subsidiary) “Brands”, “Stores”, and “Search” — I like use of search terms to reflect popular searches people make on her site to also give site visitors a sense of how others view her top product lines.

BNED Relevance: Most likely BNED cannot compete with Amazon in terms of quantity of items but can come to represent an exclusive brand. Amazon has its own Amazon top recommendations but BNED may want to define what it wishes to be its own BNED signature picks so that people with a certain preference will choose BNED. Our signature line may have its own unique tag tag. It may mean selecting instructors to represent the exclusive BNED faculty advisory board or to create its own virtual distance learning programs with bundled products for different disciplines.

BNED

Inspiration – Martha Stewart Lifestyle continued…





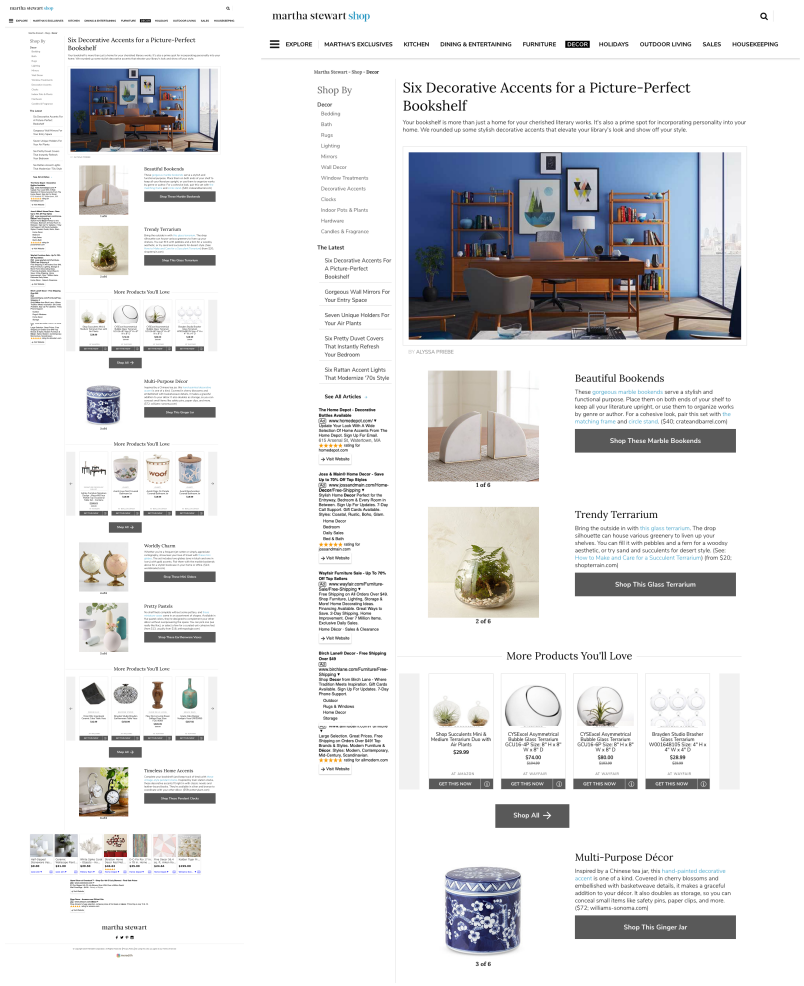
Martha Stewart — A Lifestyle Brand: Thematic Entertainment Recreation
www.marthastewart.com/1518000/host-pretty-pink-rose-wine-tasting-party

Site Notables:

- Cool idea to highlight a thematic concept for an event with use of large, atmospheric imagery and warm color palettes to invite site visitors into wanting to experience this event. Article designed to be inspirational.
- Content embeds links to Martha Stewart brand décor items, her wines and other foods to recreate an experience. The links in her document are more subtle to reduce the appearance this is an ecommerce page but more informative and inspirational first to reinforce Martha Stewart's brand as a tastemaker of elegant, special events foremost.

BNED Relevance: If propose that if BNED hosts thematic events at their cafes perhaps book-themed décor and foods like Great Gatsby 1920s themed event with book discussion and event recreation, we could create event pages with Barnes & Nobles various product line items to recreate the event in their house after we have hosted a ticketed event at our café. Book event can include other books from 1920s for more thematic focus on that time period or featuring more works by F. Scott Fitzgerald to put that book into perspective.

Inspiration – Martha Stewart Lifestyle continued…



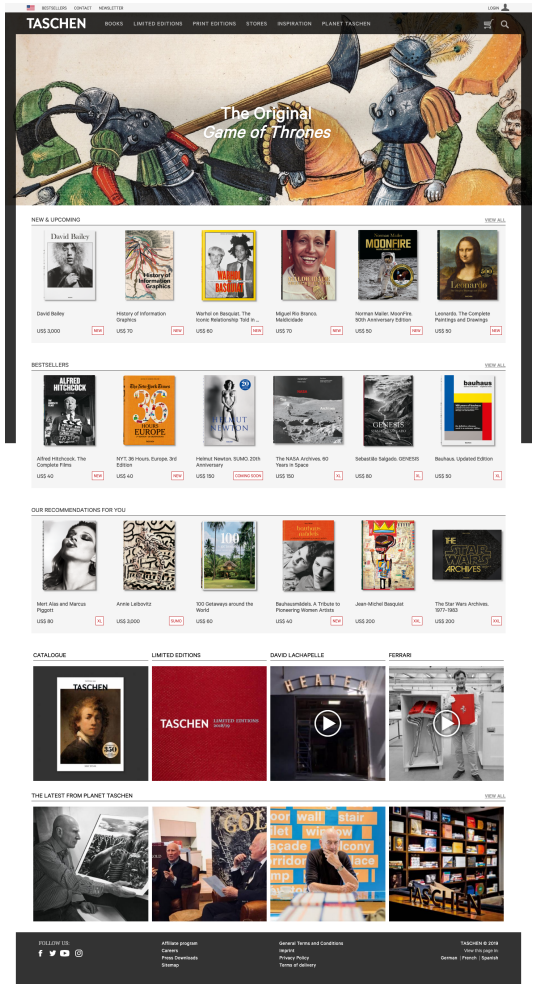
Martha Stewart — A Lifestyle Brand: Marketing Accessories
www.marthastewart.com/shop/decor/shelf-decor-sc281474979923926.html

Site Notables:

- Interesting that unlike some sites, instead of marketing the items that comprise the featured showroom, this type of page is designed to inspire site visitors to imagine getting accessories in their home office room such as bookends and green plants.
- Recommendations are given different focal weights on her page with the site always showing no more than 3 top picks for the room followed by a carousel of other related products that are similar to one of featured items such as the various glassware to house plants and a ceramic vase.

BNED Relevance: If we have decorative accessories we want to promote, we might want to create featured rooms that show how it could appear in a standard but inspired showroom or scenario. We probably want to consider highlighting products with different weights in presentation so that we show our best picks and not overwhelm with too many options in paradox of choice consumer burden. Carousel of items probably shouldn't present more than 5 carousels progressions and also offer a "shop all" option to view the entire genre of products.

Inspiration – Taschen …



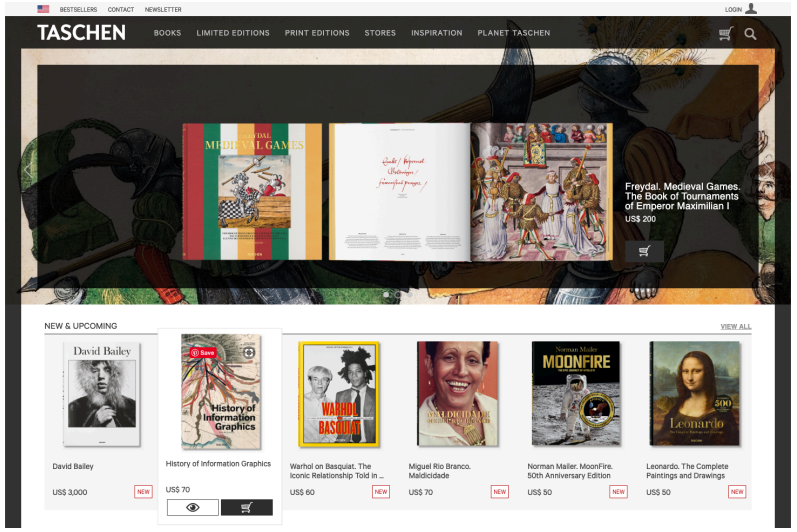
Taschen — Book Publisher Specialized in Curated Artistic / Cultural Books, Beautiful or Notable Enough to be Coffee Table Items or Gifts
Default Homepage State: www.taschen.com

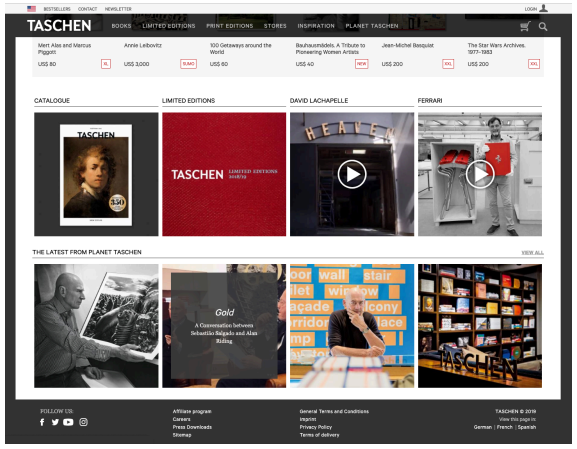
Site Notables:

- 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.

Inspiration – Taschen continued…

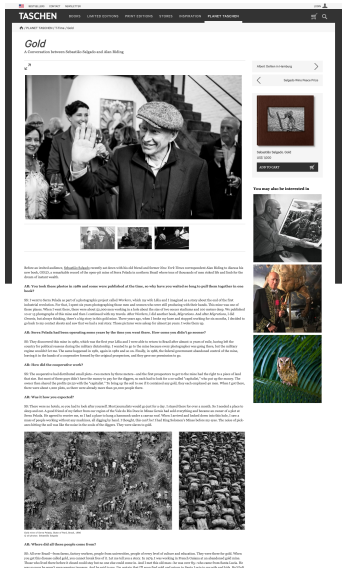
Celebrity Picks for Favorite Taschen Books:
www.taschen.com/pages/en/perfect_gifts/celebrity_favorites/index.my_favorite_taschen_book_is.htm?crt_page=1

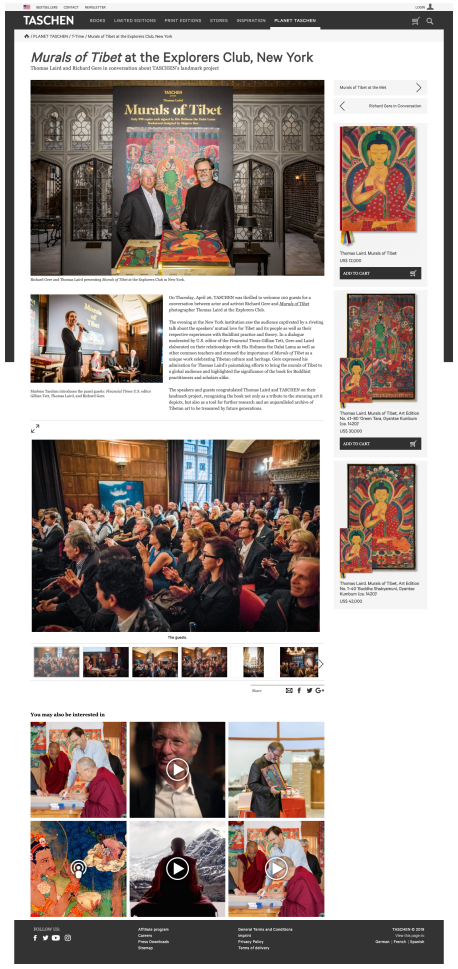
Site Notables:

- 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

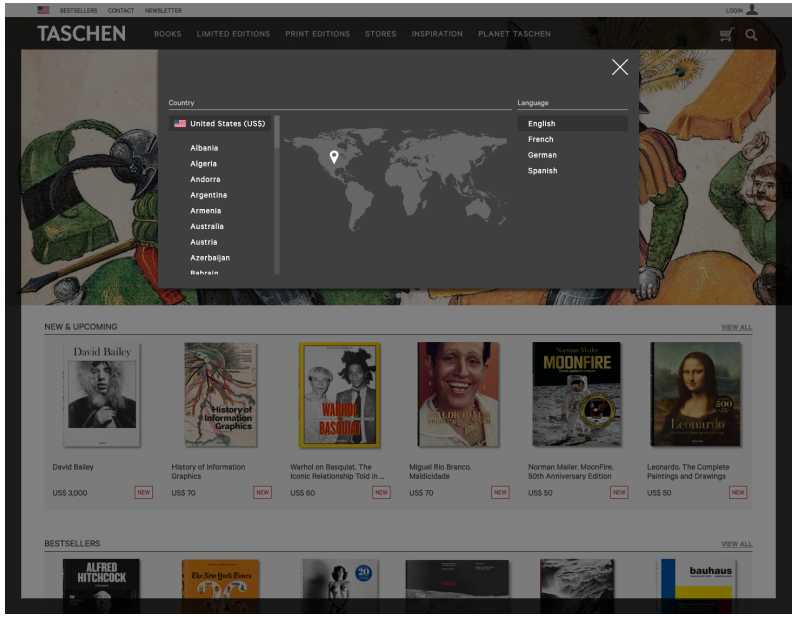
Site Notables:

- 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.

BNED

Inspiration – Taschen continued…



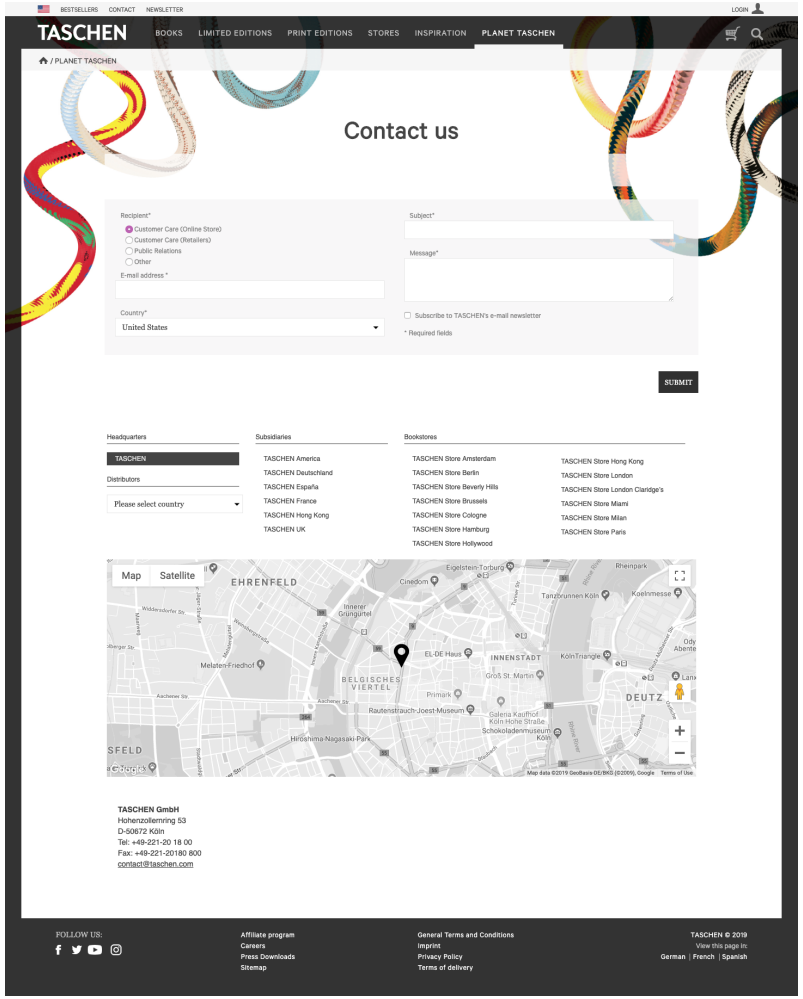
Taschen Global Country and Language Selector:
www.taschen.com/pages/en/company/blog/1397.gold.htm

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…



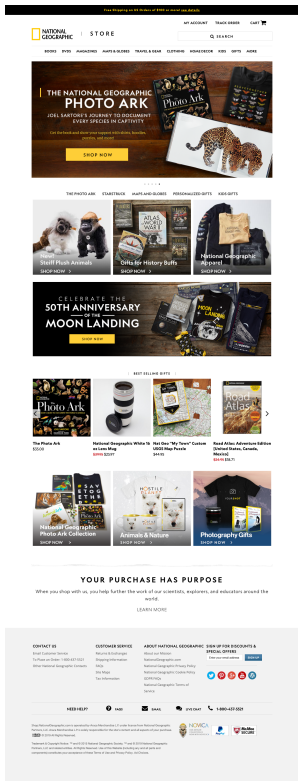
Taschen Contact Us form page:
www.taschen.com/pages/en/company/blog/1397.gold.htm

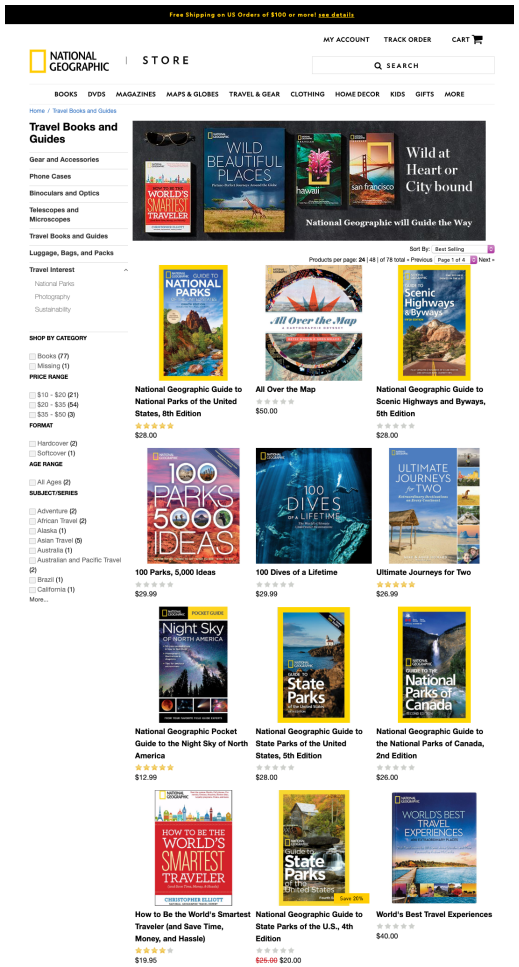
Site Notables:

- 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

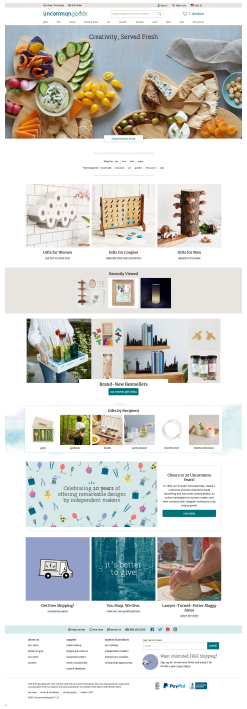
Site Notables:

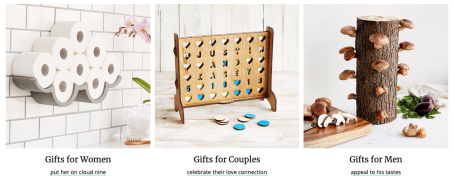
- Niche magazine world-renown for quality, culturally astute and thought-provoking Personality of brand looks bold with bright yellow and modern w/crisp sans-serifs.
- Strong use of high-contrast color palette with black bars at top and bottom footer to frame content for easier read and contrast in scale 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)

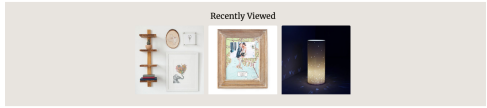
BNED Relevance: I propose we look at establishing a personality for BNED that reflects a curated angle on our content and National Geographic does an excellent job of bringing the world to their pages to cultivate a sense of anthropological and scientific curiosity. It comes across neutral. Perhaps, 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.

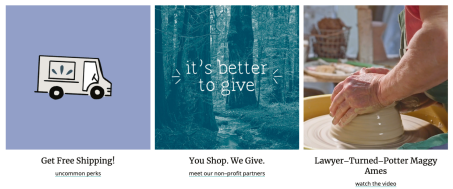
BNED

Inspiration – Uncommon Goods









UncommonGoods — homepage
Founded in 1999 as marketplace for artisans and shoppers with unique goods. Similar to Etsy but doesn't promote individual shops but rather has a cohesive marketplace like Ten Thousand Villages marketplace and also donates to a nonprofit of the consumers' choosing:
www.uncommongoods.com

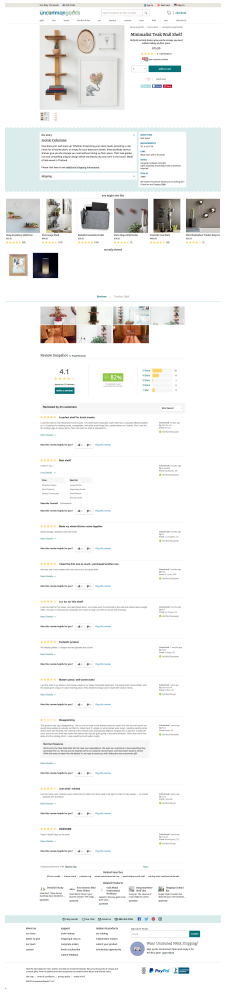
Site Notables:

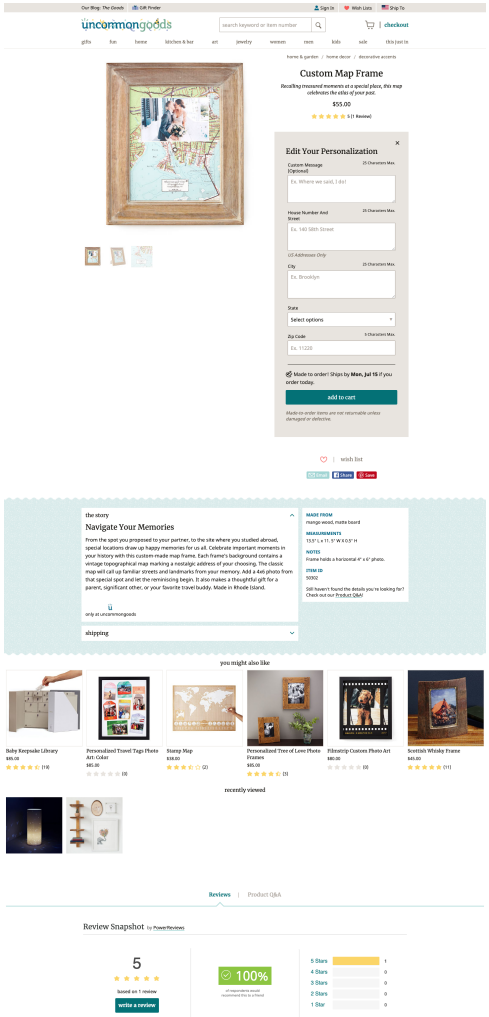
- Large splash image with headline "creativity, served fresh" indicates their take on market — fresh ideas for gifts and unique items not seen in big markets.
- Products grouped by persona-segmentation — Gifts for women, couple, and men. Implication being that gifts should be as unique as your recipients.
- Products also organized by the interests of the recipient i.e. geek, gardener, foodie, party planner, jewelry lover, interior decorator.
- Livechat for help — tap to fill out form and activate chat.
- Fall and spring college scholarship offered for art students who send in a winning submission of their work (www.uncommongoods.com/scholarships)

BNED Relevance: Similar to UncommonGoods, we may be trying to hit the niche seemingly personalized market unlike Amazon's big mall corporate experience. We can present gifts by types of target audiences (students, alums, parents, faculty, tourists) and also by interests (nostalgic items for reunions and parents; functional supplies for school-related tasks or clothes for college, etc) and invite students to submit school spirit works to increase student engagement with award perks.

BNED

Inspiration – Uncommon Goods continued…





UncommonGoods — Customizable Products Detail Page
www.uncommongoods.com/product/custom-map-frame

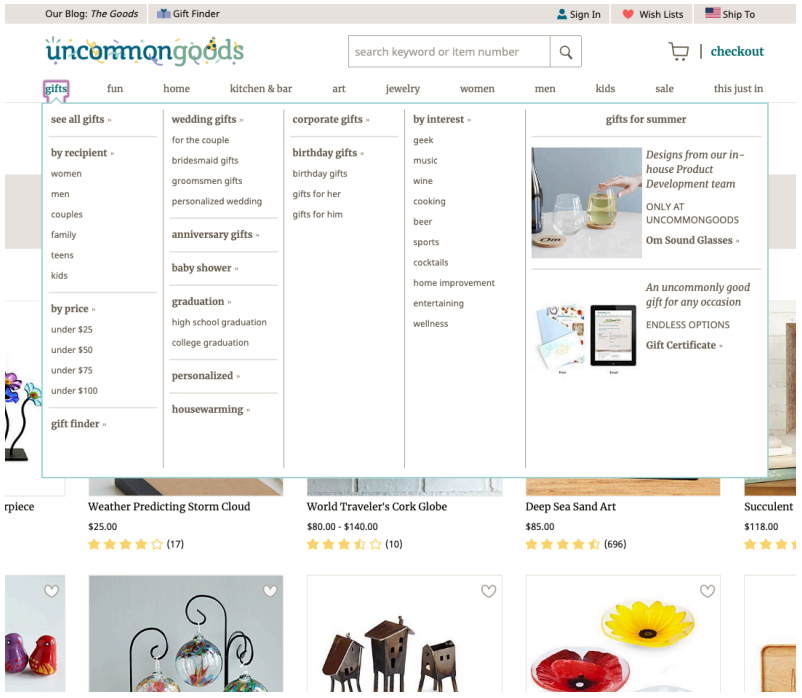
Site Notables:

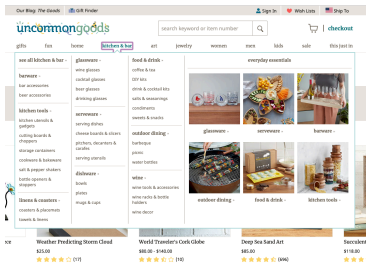
- For products that can be customized, users can tap ”personalize” button to activate form fields to write a custom message and enter shipping address before submitting to cart.
- Well organized PDP with overview (”the story”) on the product and specs in a call-out (e.g. “made from”, “Measurements”, “care”, “notes”, item ID”)
- Nice use of folder tabs for “Product Q&A” and “Reviews” to save on page space.
- Reviews include “pros” that are standardized and “best for” text and a Self-description of the type of persona customer reviewers are (e.g. homeowner)
- “Add to Wishlist” is a good feature to always offer if we can since users may not want to buy something yet or have multiple recipients so unless we have a “save for later” like amazon does, we would need ability to create multiple wishlists.
- Pastel and lighter color palette and rounder typefaces for more personalized, handwritten, anti-corporate fee.

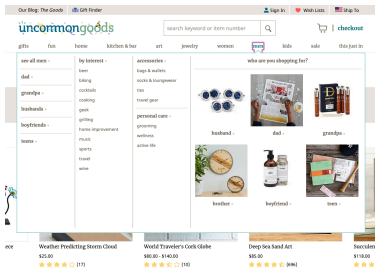
BNED Relevance: These are ideas for our product detail page that includes ability to customize or personalize a product and make the PDP more user-friendly.

BNED

Inspiration – Uncommon Goods continued…







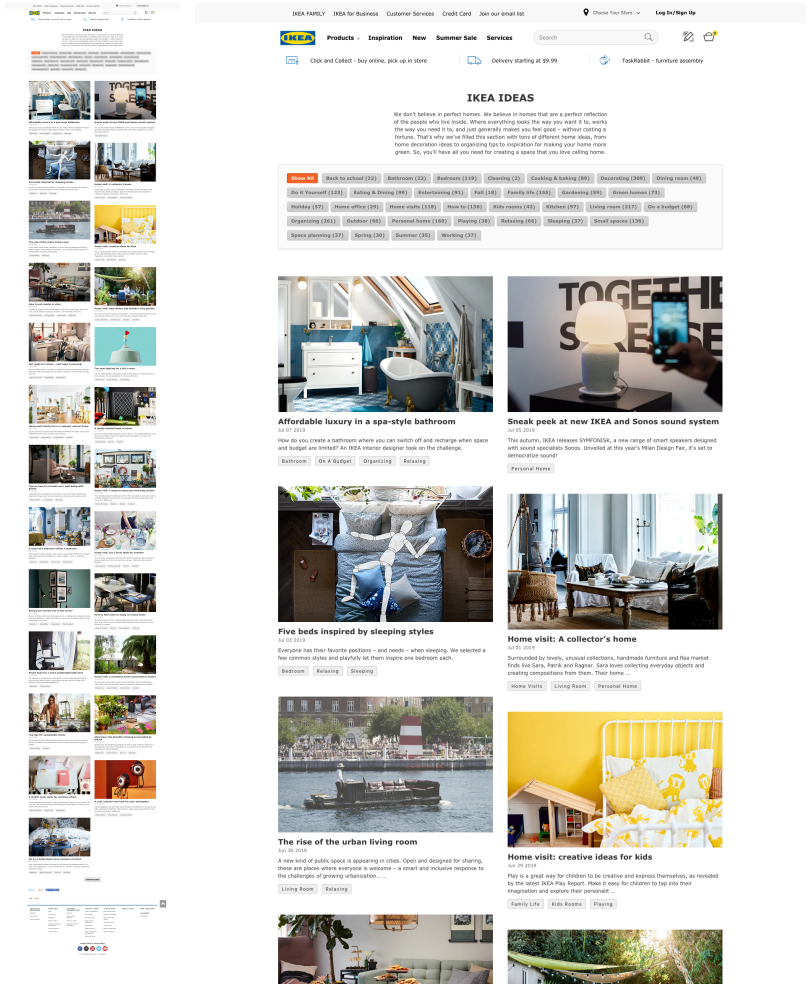
UncommonGoods — Product Results Page with Different MegaMenus
https://www.uncommongoods.com/home-garden/home-decor/decorative-accents

Site Notables:

- Site features different megamenu categorizations depending on a link selected from the global menu so categorizations may be based on gender and with a selection for gifts for men (see bottom-right), the male types varies from grandpas, dads, husbands, bfs, to teen boys. For home décor, the megamenu lists more granular product genres.
- Use of call-outs to highlight different things such as most popular sub-groups to artist spotlights featuring the quotes on their work.
- Interesting animated call-to-action on the search results inviting users to “try something thoughtful | creative | surprising | clever | unique”
- Users can filter down options on results pages and sort them to reorganize the order of the display and to set a price range.

BNED Relevance: These are ideas for our megamenus navigaton and for the product / search results pages.

Inspiration – IKEA



IKEA — Swedish Home & Office Decor Retail Products & Services
Room Décor Ideas section: www.ikea.com/us/en/ideas/

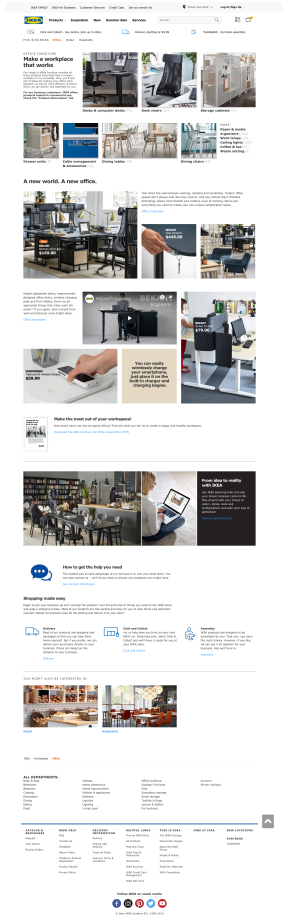
Site Notables:

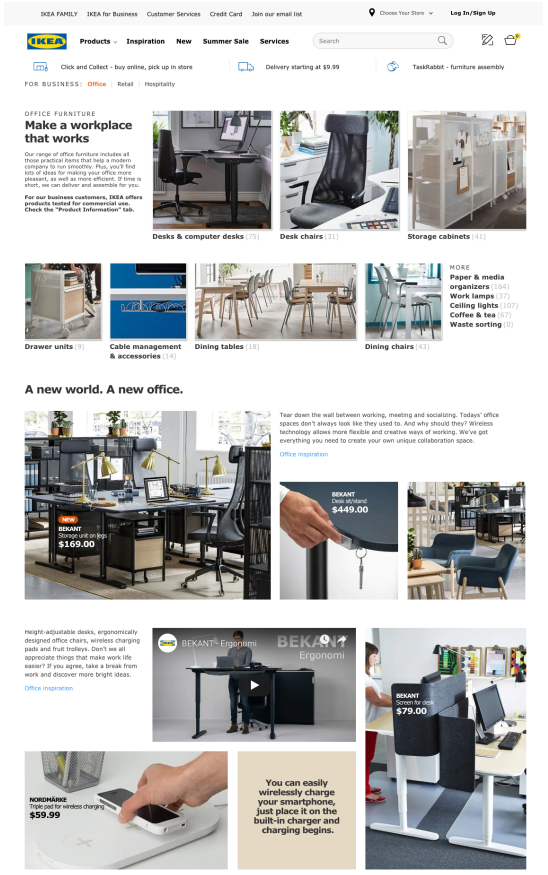
- They offer products and services — partnered with TaskRabbit for furniture assembly. They seem to be moving into more sustainable design with furniture assembly and reupholstering, etc.
- They designed their physical store experience with rooms for decor inspirations with product info to buy the same items that will recreate a room. I've noticed they even offer info on wall paint colors for people to design the same room. These dream board concepts enable users who don't know which specific items they want to get ideas based on décor styles presented to them.
- Product tags to help users to narrow searches based on key attributes

BNED Relevance: I propose sample syllabi from our BNED 's most notable or prestigious faculty members as starting points for various subjects. New professors starting out can get ideas from the open syllabi and like these rooms, we can present different "flavors" / "personalities" for methods of teaching a subject. It could also be syllabi to help students figure out which courses are best suited to bundle together for certain types of careers they seek. If we find that certain attributes become popular especially if we enable users to customize some labels, then we can make a new searchable term.

BNED

Inspiration – IKEA continued…





IKEA — Swedish Home & Office Decor Retail Products & Services
Office Furniture Product Lines: www.ikea.com/us/en/catalog/categories/business/office/

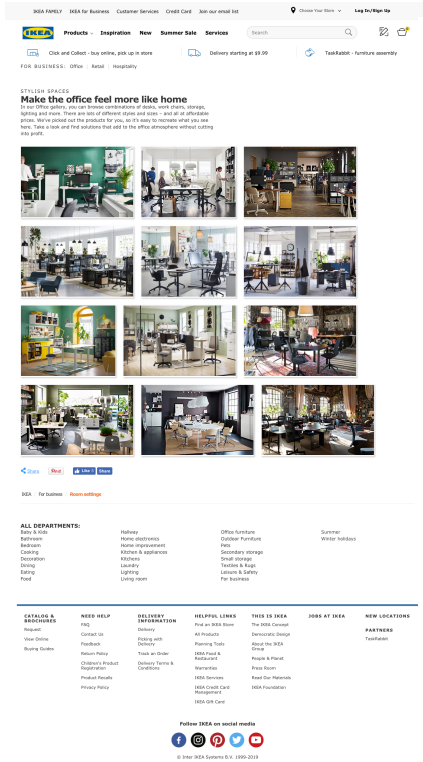
Site Notables:

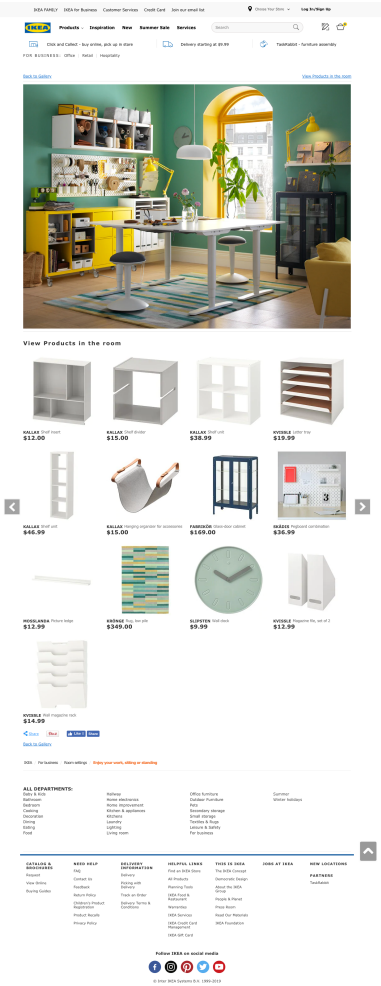
- For those who know exactly the type of products they are seeking for the office or for the home, IKEA enables users to browse items by furniture / product genre.
- Each product genre has a photo of an example of that product type to reduce confusion about what that label might mean. Also, it may feature their most popular or most attractive item in that genre to attract attention for perceived sense of high quality items collectively. Each product genre also lists total number of items so users can get a sense of how much time to allocate toward considering options with a genre.
- Popular products are also listed to give users a snapshot of prices of bestsellers.

BNED Relevance: Offer a variety of entry points into products to appeal to different types of shoppers and state in buying cycle. Product genres for those who know what category of items to search for but want to see all options available. Individual product snapshots for those who want ideas on how to begin a décor based on a signature item. In our case, we can focus on a specific product item and show different ways that item can be bundled for various usages.

BNED

Inspiration – IKEA continued…





IKEA — Swedish Home & Office Decor Retail Products & Services
A Specific Office Décor Inspiration and Products Recreation:
www.ikea.com/us/en/catalog/categories/business/tools/cobo/roomset/20181_cobo01a/

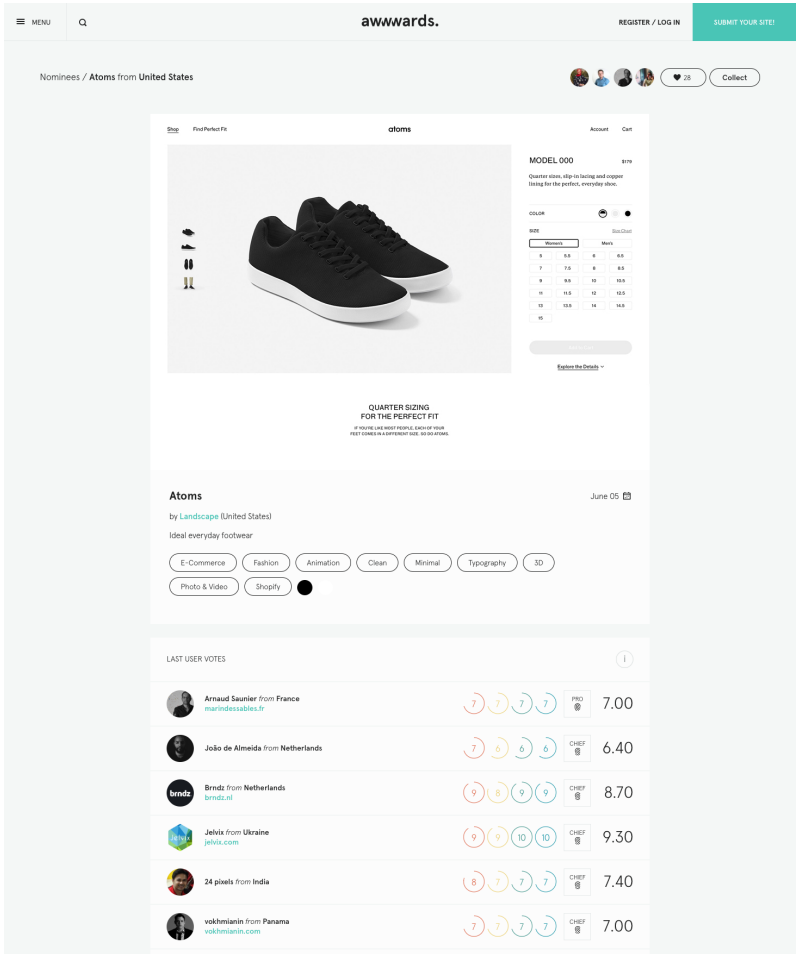
Site Notables:

- For site visitors who don't know what type of items to buy and are seeking inspiration, IKEA offers office inspiration vision board featuring different décor styles as a starting point. (See screen on the left.)
- Once users have selected a room style, the prospective customers can see all the items that they can buy to recreate the room (View screen on the right.)

BNED Relevance: We can offer careers exploration inspiration boards. When students select a potential new career or a concentration idea, they can see books for that field to see if it resonates with their interests. This model could also be used by parents putting together their own homeschooling plan or maybe for continuing ed / virtual university prospective students to explore options for independent majors. Likewise, faculty could use this model to develop a thematic course. I also propose that BNED bundle items to create new programs with a specific thematic angle by bundling book and video discussions held in our cafes or for parents to use for summer reading / documentary video watching for their kids to learn new topics.

BNED

Inspiration – Atoms Shoes



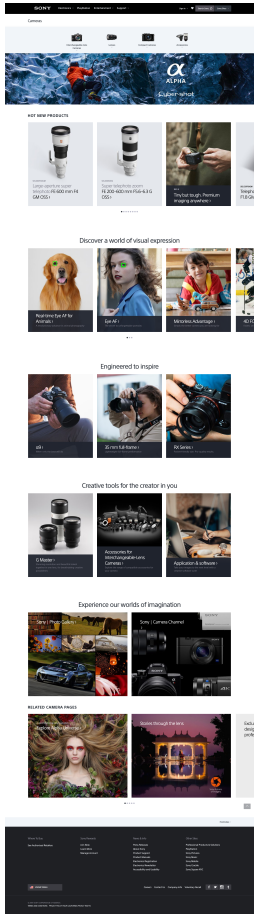
Atoms Shoes — an AWWWards-award-winning shoe ecommerce store:

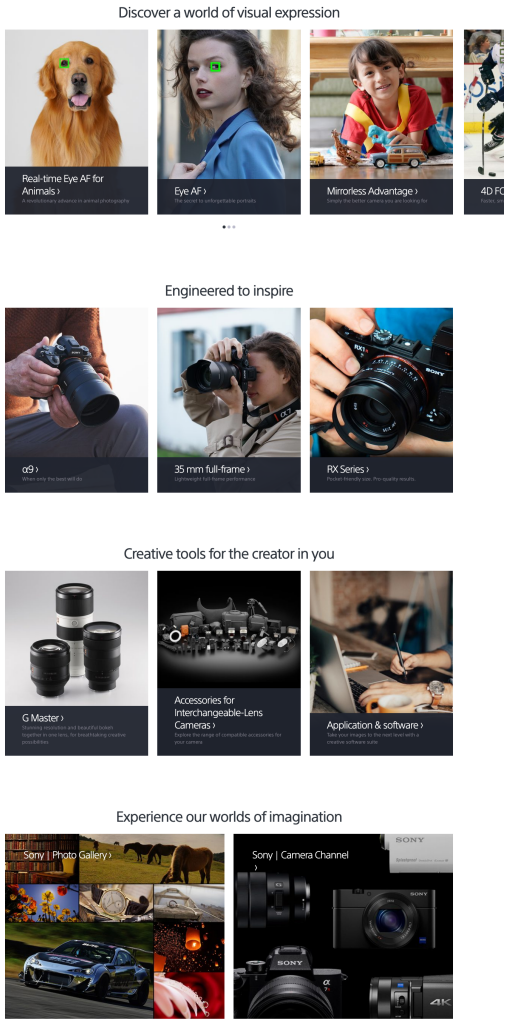
Site Notables:

- Product detail page presents a crisp, polished, light look to the page design that is easy on the eyes to read content with high contrast for key text for legibility.
- Intuitively designed attributes selectors for size, color, and ability to see shoes from different angles. Ideally if the feature selections are long, they can be collapsed into accordion tabs. These are primary attributes related to the step in adding content into cart so can be gathered into righthand sidebar for easy addition to cart.
- Cool survey to get a sense of how people actually use products such as what shoes size do you wear but do you lean one or two sizes up or down and do you primarily walk, stand all day, bike, etc. (https://atoms.com/pages/survey)

BNED Relevance: If some of our products feature sizes, color of the product and we have photos featuring different angles of a product or some photos of how the item looks and then when someone is wearing it for sense of scale to the average person, we might consider presenting content like this site. I think the site content is a bit large so I would recommend scaling it all down for quick scannability though. NYTimes (www.nytimes.com) is one of the best sites in my view in balancing scannability in homepage to view headlines in boldface and supporting text much smaller or lighter. Content on article pages themselves is bigger when people intend to read.

Inspiration – Sony





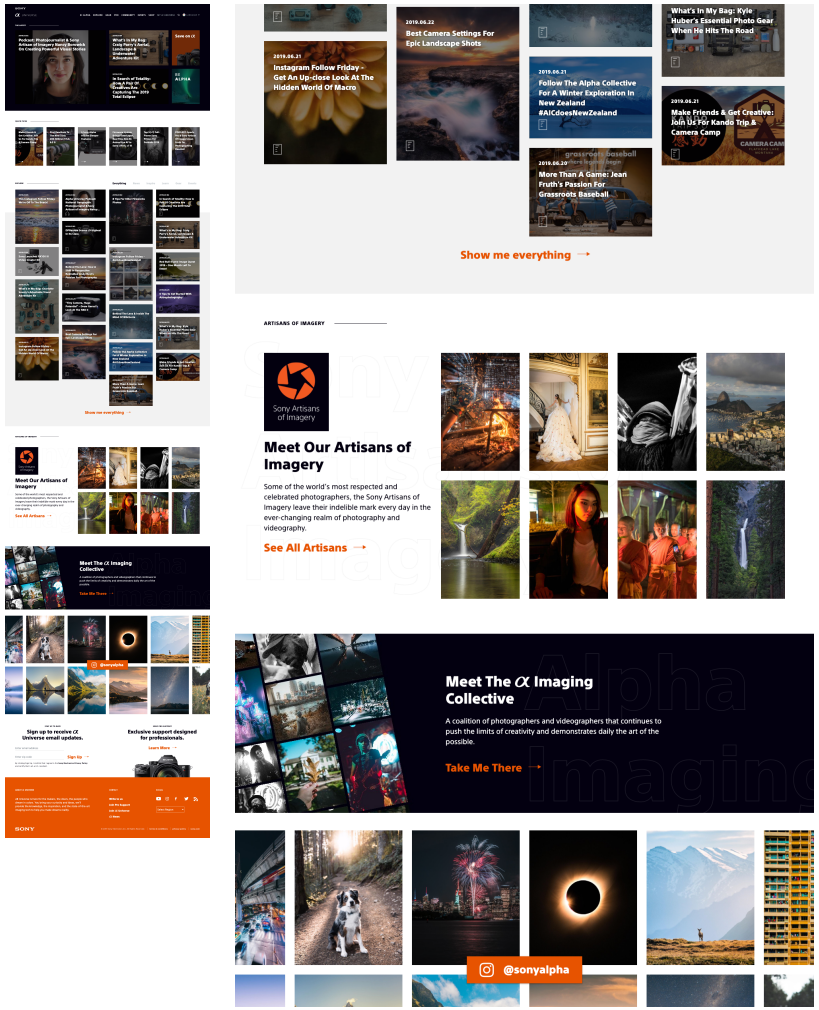
Sony — Camera Portal:
https://www.sony.com/electronics/cameras

Site Notables:

- Multiple entry points for content engagement with varied interest angles such as via ”Sony Photo Gallery” and “Explore Alpha Universe” section inspires prospective customers to imagine what they could do artistically with their cameras for their portfolios or for social media. In the section “Discover a world of visual expression”, users can see the type of new features the cameras can do specifically with a photo example so that users can decide which features they want in their choice of a Sony Camera.
- Camera types and their components are presented as icon thumbnails at top of the page for those potentially new to the camera technology and recognize what they might be seeking with more clear visuals.
- For more technical gadgets-junkies or advanced photographers, they can review the “new products” if they frequent the site often or only want to see the most cutting-edge items. If they’re more artistic, they explore the “creative tools” section.

BNED Relevance: BNED Offer more forms of engagement with the content on a section from inspirational to the technical specs and product details.

Inspiration – Sony continued…



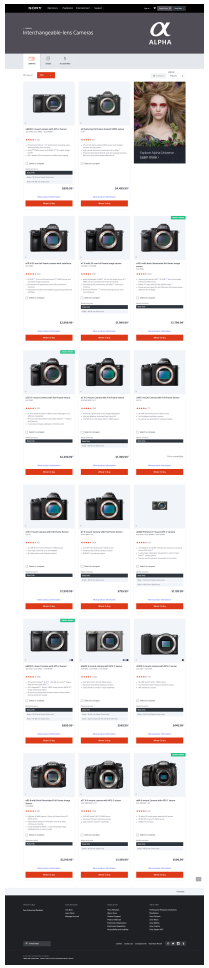
Sony — “Explore Alpha Universe” (a Social Media Space / Case Studies): www.sony.com/electronics/interchangeable-lens-camera-products/t/interchangeable-lens-cameras?view=compare

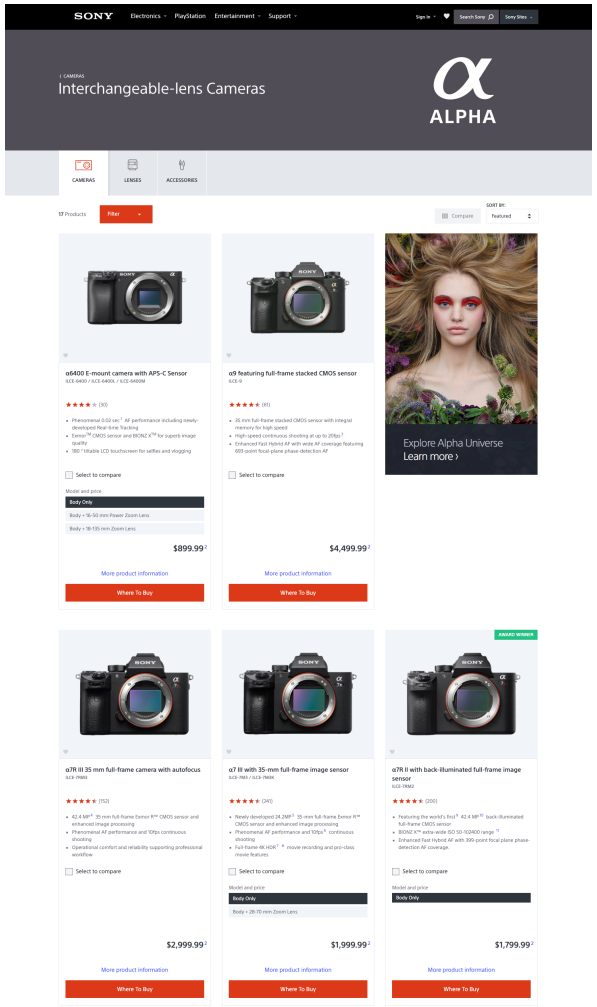
Site Notables:

- Microsite created for Sony Alpha camera users to showcase their photos on various social media and describe their personal stories that give other Sony users or prospective customers ideas on what is possible. Acts as a vision board and user testimonial section. I imagine featuring users makes site more popular and shared among other photo enthusiasts who will share link of site.
- Photos featured in “Meet Our Artisans of Imagery” gives a taste for how varied photo techniques and styles can be to showcase the versatility of camera. Classic case of show-don’t-tell having more weight on how camera’s potential to photograph notable moments per users’ perspectives, styles, etc for memorable storytelling.

BNED Relevance: We can potentially showcase how our products are being used and members of the BNED student, alumni, faculty, parents, etc. network are using our products and their work so to inspire more people sharing our site and feeling connected to the brand as they personalize the experience it.

Inspiration – Sony continued…





Sony — Interchangeable-Lens Cameras (a Product Results Listing Page):
www.sony.com/electronics/interchangeable-lens-camera-products/t/interchangeable-lens-cameras

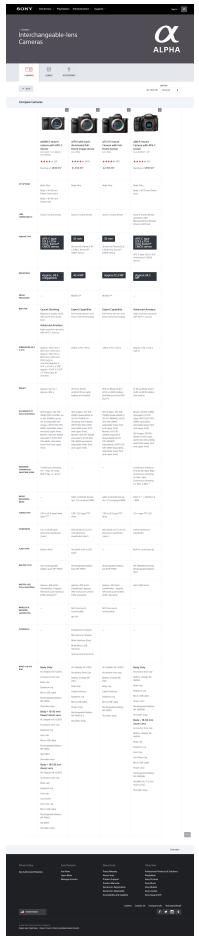
Site Notables:

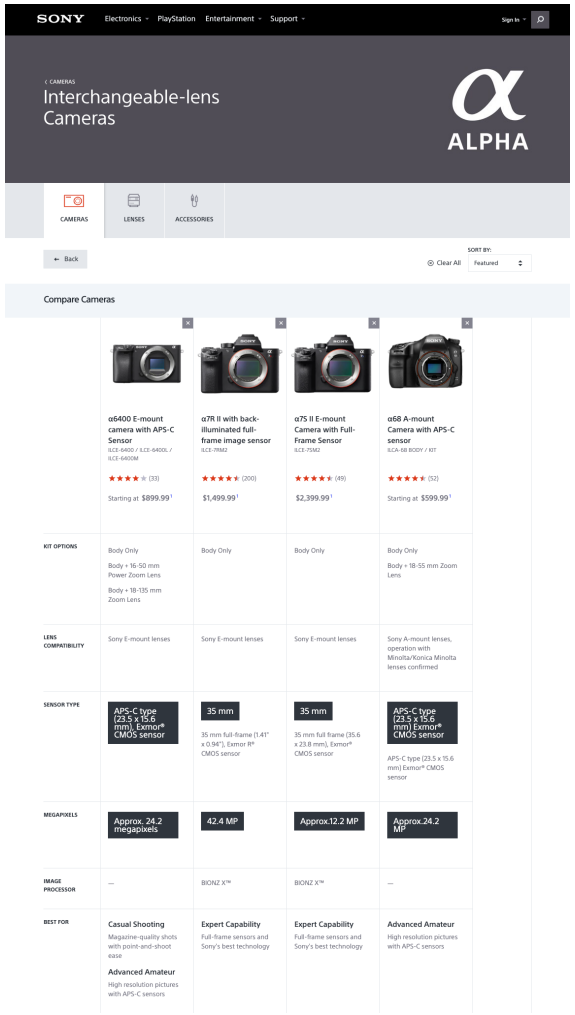
- Use of icons at page top in 3 folder tabs to identify items quickly and navigate to product results for cameras and related lens and accessories.
- Light and airy page design with minimal colors except for the orange to ensure the “where to buy” button pops. That button offers info on vendors and locations to buy.
- Color / material options for a camera presented below camera to assess quickly.
- “Add to favorites” heart icons for products to easily save items to a wishlist.
- Consistent display of all content in the camera options modules with product title, star rating (and qty of ratings which help determine the statistical relevance of the ratings), bulleted info, price, etc to ensure that it’s easier to compare similar products more efficiently side-by-side.
- “Select to compare” checkbox that directs users to a clear features matrix organizing options by feature types so easier to see difference between options.
- The base item (camera body) and bundled options (e.g. body + zoom lens) are presented as separate components to be tapped to view price adjust accordingly.

BNED Relevance: These site features above are good product results listing strategies for displaying products for more effective and efficient product comparisons of similar items to select for detailed comparisons later or to purchase right away.

BNED

Inspiration – Sony continued…





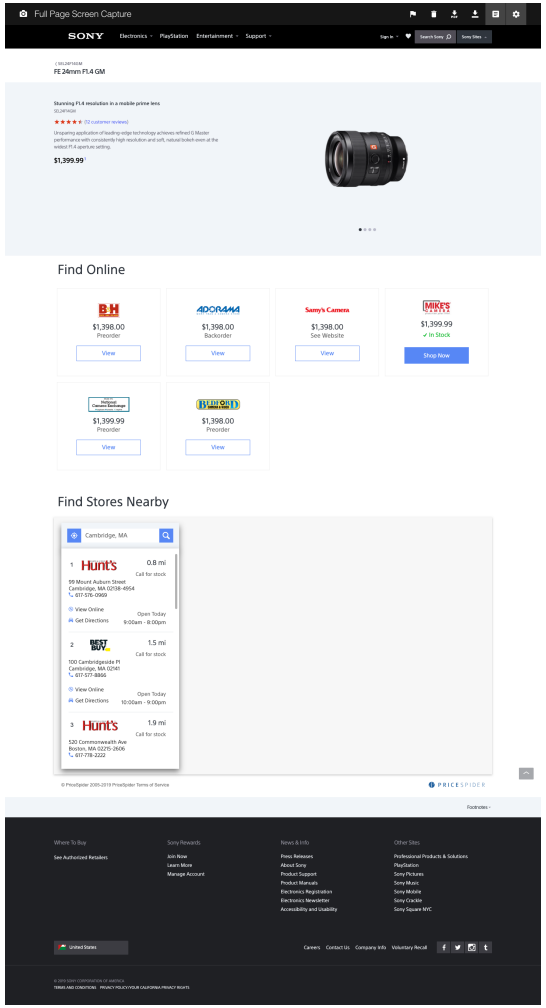
Sony — Cameras Features Matrix (a Product Comparison Page):
www.sony.com/electronics/interchangeable-lens-camera-products/t/interchangeable-lens-cameras?view=compare

Site Notables:

- Large photos of the products being considered presented at top of the page for visual reminder of items being considered with other secs originally on the product results listing page i.e. product title; star ratings and corresponding qty of ratings; starting price. This first row collapses into a sticky header at the top of the page and made more concise so users have that visual reference even as they scroll down to compare features side-by-side.
- Features matrix on the vertical first row is nicely detailed and focused on key attributes that users find most relevant e.g. kit options, lens compatibility, sensor type, megapixels, best for, etc. The attributes may be listed in order of most significant considerations to the least. The most popular considerations are highlighted in black box for maximum contrast or boldfaced larger text. I like their attribute “best for” e.g. casual shooting (magazine quality) vs Expert Capability with their best technology for professional quality for application consideration.

BNED Relevance: These site features above are good product comparison strategies for displaying products for more effective and efficient detailed product comparisons of similar items.

Inspiration – Sony continued…



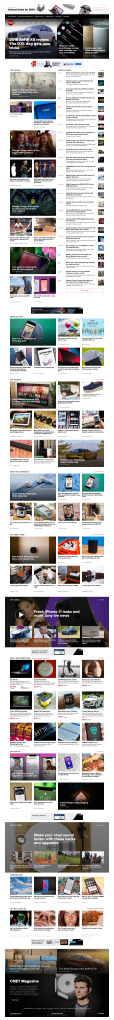
Sony — Camera Product Detail Page:
www.sony.com/electronics/camera-lenses/sel24f14gm/buy

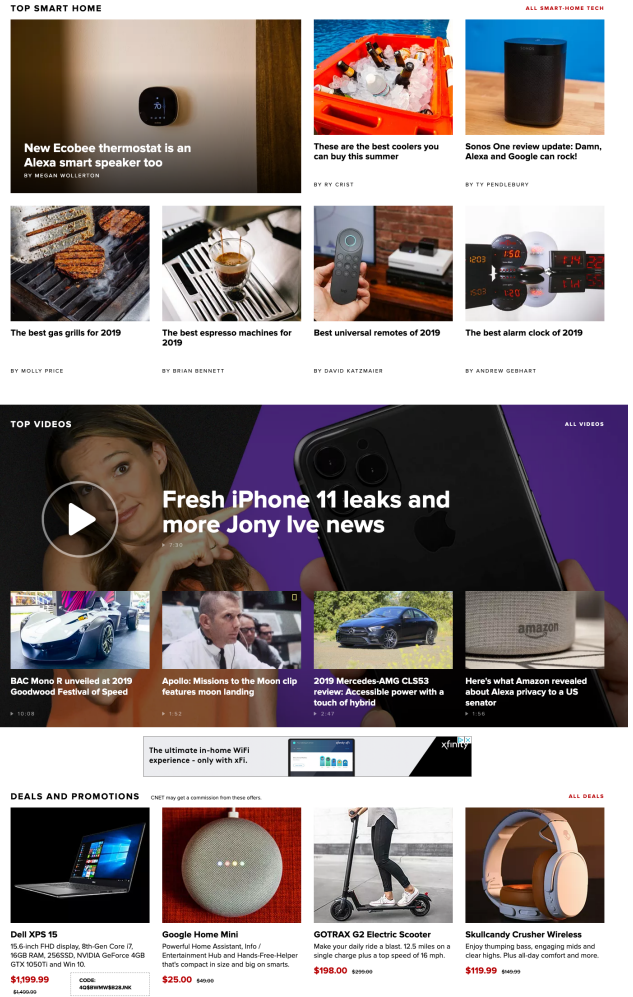
Site Notables:

- 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

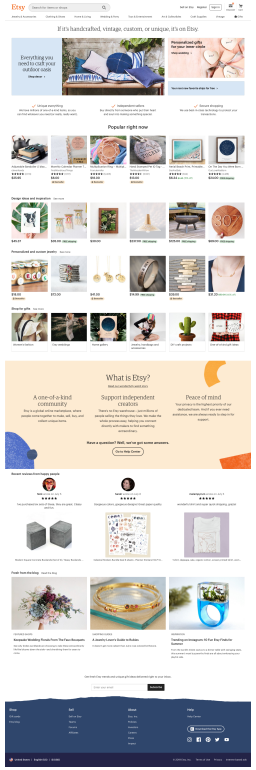
Site Notables:

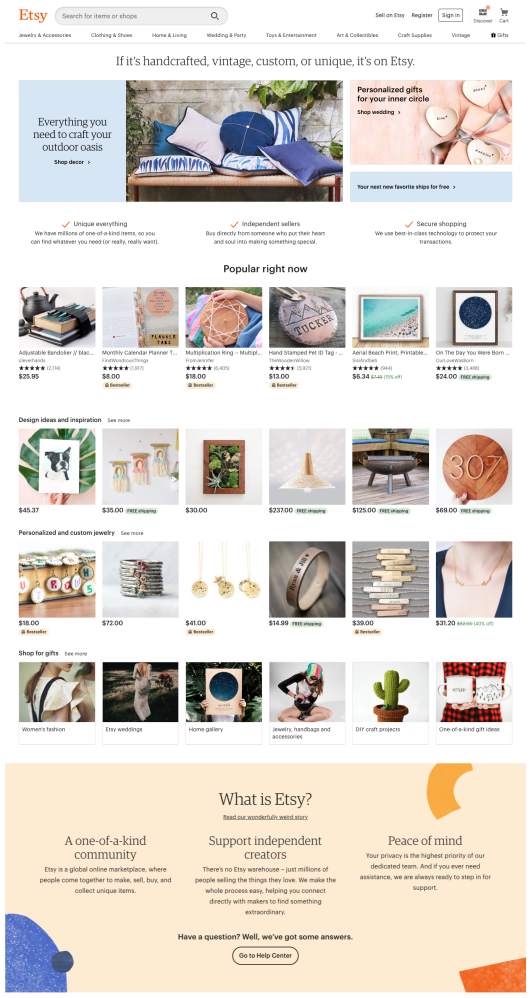
- CNET product recommendations have to be perceived to be mostly objective for users to then trust the site's promotion of products.
- "Latest stories" and "top stories" to highlight different perspectives on stories. We could tie in stories to new featured products or product bundles if they advance 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.

BNED

Inspiration – Etsy





Etsy — Global bohemian marketplace for handmade, handcrafted, and custom pieces as well as vintage treasures; a platform connecting artisan vendors and independent retailers with customers.
Default Homepage State: www.etsy.com

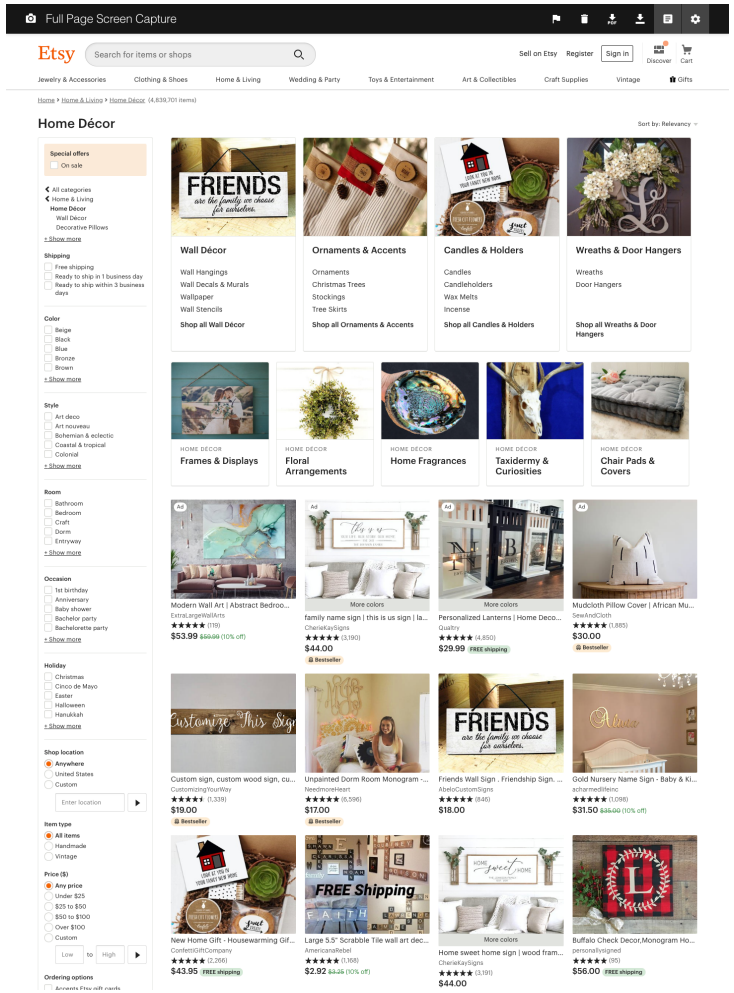
Site Notables:

- Modern, warm pastels, inviting, polished looking website with easy-to-read text for scanning that doesn't look too corporate. Features fun, eclectic products
- Multiple entry points into browse experience — via direct search for an item or a name of vendor shop; view popular items; browse by product genre; explore shopping guides for ideas and trending instagrams for "fun etsy finds for the summer"; read recent top product reviews; and discover featured shops.
- Looks like personalization is most popular for jewelry and weddings. A few modules dedicated to weddings — "shop wedding", "etsy weddings", "keepsake wedding florals from The Faux Bouquets" (a "featured shop")

BNED Relevance: Similarly to Etsy, BNED might want to consider itself in the boutique college bookstores and unique café experience spaces with each of these places being its own network. Similar marketplace to anti-corporate brands youth that might be seeking out-of-the-box extraordinary or custom experience. We might also want to offer multiple entry points into the site.

BNED

Inspiration – Etsy continued…



Etsy Home Décor Category's Product Results:
www.etsy.com/c/home-and-living/home-decor?ref=catnav-891

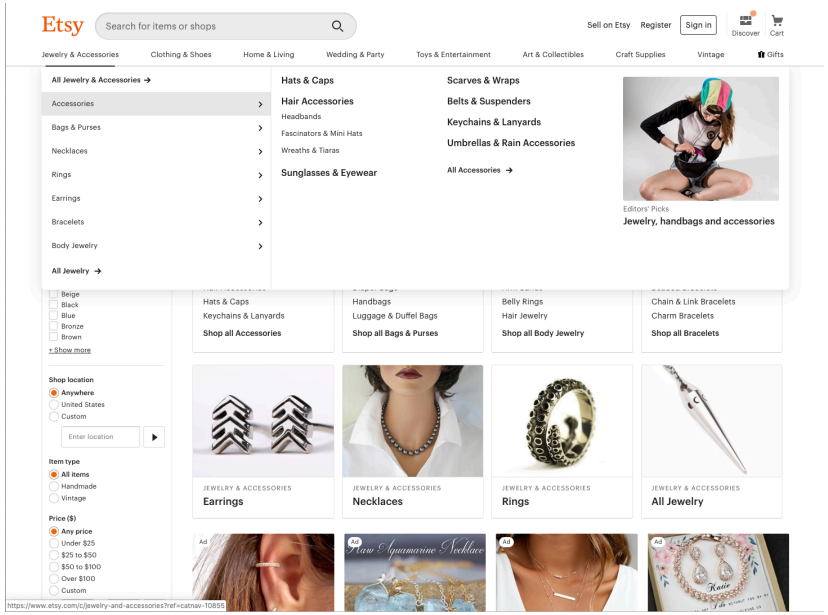
Site Notables:

- Nice product filtering options with clear information hierarchy limiting key attributes to 5 and then ability to expand to show more. Multi-selects of checkboxes enables users to select more options and hybrid features. Good options for product filters such as price ranges and shipping options — free, ready to shop in 1 business day, or within 3 days — and ordering options such as accepting gift cards, customizable, gift-wrappable, etc.
- "Special Offers" is highlighted at the top of the left filter sidebar so that it indicates that this site is a place to visit for good deals and suggests time-sensitive content.
- Enable users to back up to other product categories and sections of the site in the left sidebar as a site navigational tool similar to Amazon. When a sub-directory is selected, the multi-select filtering options updates again similar to Amazon.
- Product categories with accompanying images to suggest a genre at the top of the page and specific products below. I like that they are clear which items are sponsored ads with their "ad" tag so that it doesn't necessarily reflect Etsy's top picks or their customers' favorites.

BNED Relevance: Product results page ideas that we can follow as general best practice.

BNED

Inspiration – Etsy continued…



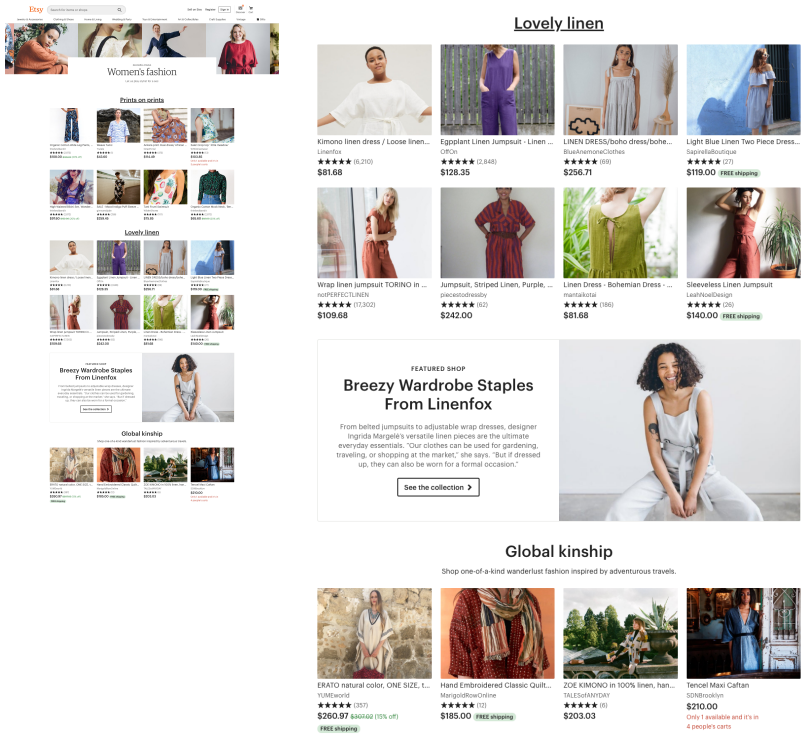
Etsy Global Mega-Menu:
https://www.etsy.com/c/jewelry-and-accessories?ref=catnav-10855

Site Notables:

- For a site so heavy in content categories, mega-menus are helpful way to offer one-click access to certain sections of the site and also get an overview on how the site content is organized.
- Links only enable linear navigation experiences and doesn't enable multi-selects
- Content organized left to right for western reading bias.
- "Editor Picks" highlights a particular favorite genre within each of the global navbar sections.

BNED Relevance: Editor Picks is an opportunity to highlight a particular popular category of some of Etsy's favorites or most popular content / product hubs. Links only enable linear navigation experiences and doesn't enable multi-selects in Etsy's version so if we use this approach, when we direct users to a certain section, that page may already be subsection of a page with a specific filter selected if that genre exist except as a specified attribute.

Inspiration – Etsy continued…



Etsy's Featured Vendor Shop Concept:
https://www.etsy.com/featured/womens-fashion?ref=catnav_promo

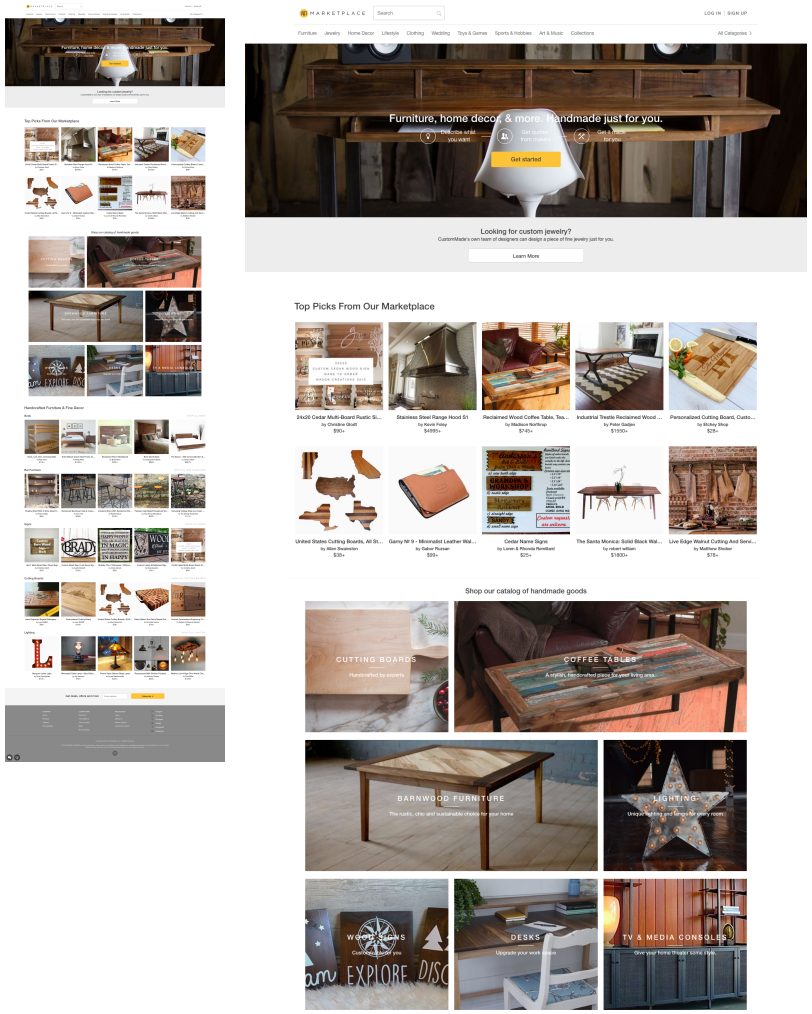
Site Notables:

- Within an "Editor Picks" genre, a vendor is showcased to help connect customers to the people behind the vendors for a smaller, more human feel for shops included in this large global network.
- In the midst of the product results, the featured vendor takes up prominence on the page with a vendor looking directly at the users for a more direct, approachable appeal.

BNED Relevance: BNED might want to have featured stories about famous alums and professors and remarkable students in schools that are part of our network and different people in the BNED network for a more human feel. The people we select would ideally give a sense of BNED's brand and the type of culture we want to foster in this exclusive, specially curated yet inviting network.

BNED

Inspiration – CustomMade



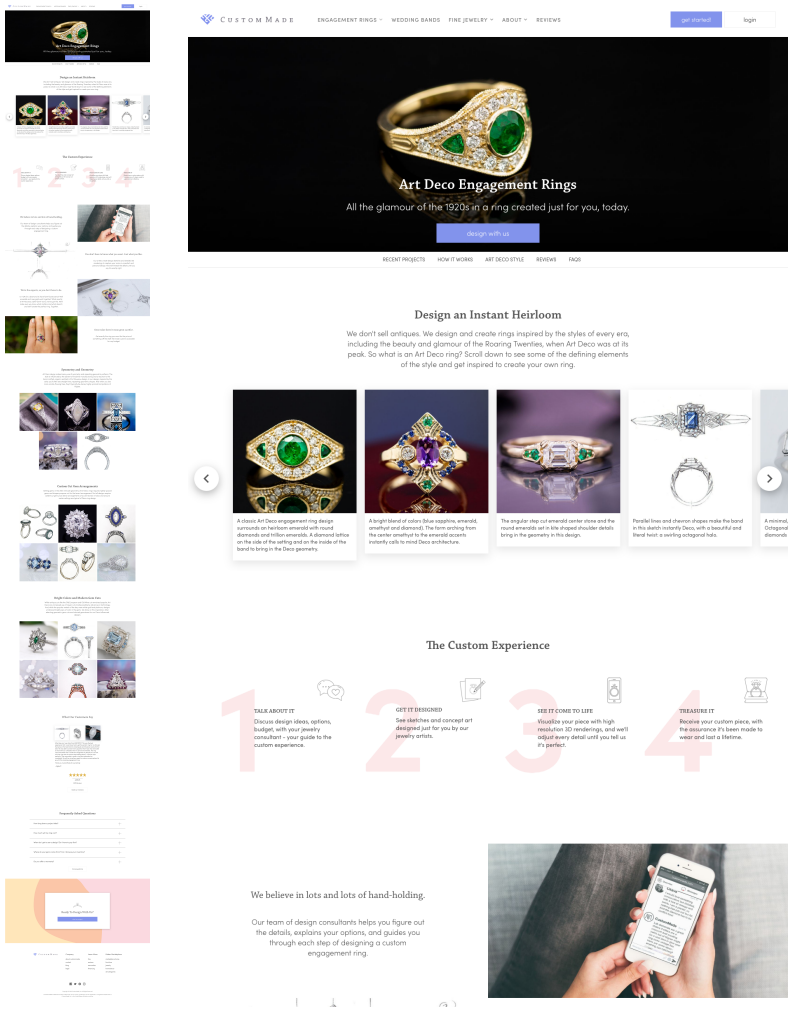
CustomMade Marketplace (Products to buy, customize, or create)
https://www.custommade.com/marketplace/
CustomMade initially started off focused on artisans creating all types of custom products so their marketplace reflects this However, it seems their custom engagement rings sector is the most popular and/or most profitable requests for custom designs so their site focuses on jewelry design.

Site Notables:

- Page segmented into 4+ ways of engaging users with different perspectives and/or objectives or phases of buying cycle. First part of the site and most prominent section provides overview on how to get a custom quote on an item the users have in mind already. They indicate that custom jewelry is the most likely one with that being the service singled out for custom work inquiry.
- Second part of site highlights most popular items and their starting price so users can get sense of their affordability to get something similar. Also, gives users clue what products CustomMade is most well known.
- Third part of the site features product genre for those who know what type of product they want to buy ready-to-go e.g. coffee table but want to see options.
- Fourth segment enables users to buy a popular product by a specific vendor

BNED Relevance: If BNED should want to offer more personalized products or customizable products for alum reunions and gifts, this is a site for some ideas on how an independent market of custom designers approached marketing this customization of services and how to sell both readymade items and how to customize them.

Inspiration – CustomMade continued…



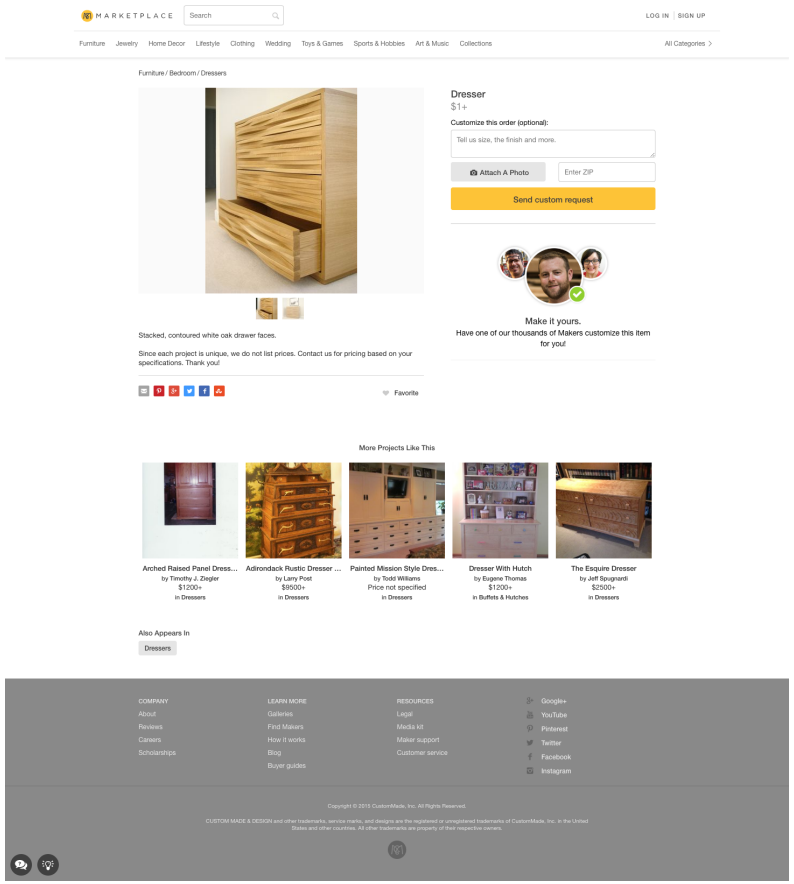
CustomMade — Engagement Rings Design (Custom Experience Detail)
https://www.custommade.com/art-deco-rings/ and www.custommade.com (homepage)

Site Notables:

- Page describes how customizable items can be marketed from first sharing rings image inspiration for certain style (e.g. art deco) to "design an instant heirloom" that appeals to those who want to feel they have uniquely personalized experiences that will be family heirloom-worthy. They provide simple explanation for how items can be customized with all the steps in that process from sketches to choosing the gem to seeing the ring.
- Users can submit a request for a custom quote
- FAQs w/accordion tabs to expand for more detailed info to reduce page clutter.
- People can share their custom designs on Instagram for inspiration and to promote the site virally since most people happy to share engagement pics especially if they co-designed their jewelry themselves.

BNED Relevance: If BNED should want to offer more personalized products or customizable products for alum reunions and gifts, this is a site for some ideas on how an independent market of custom designers approached marketing this customization of service. It describes process.

Inspiration – CustomMade continued…



CustomMade — Customizable Product (Custom Product Detail Page)
https://www.custommade.com/dresser/by/hefnerwoodworking/

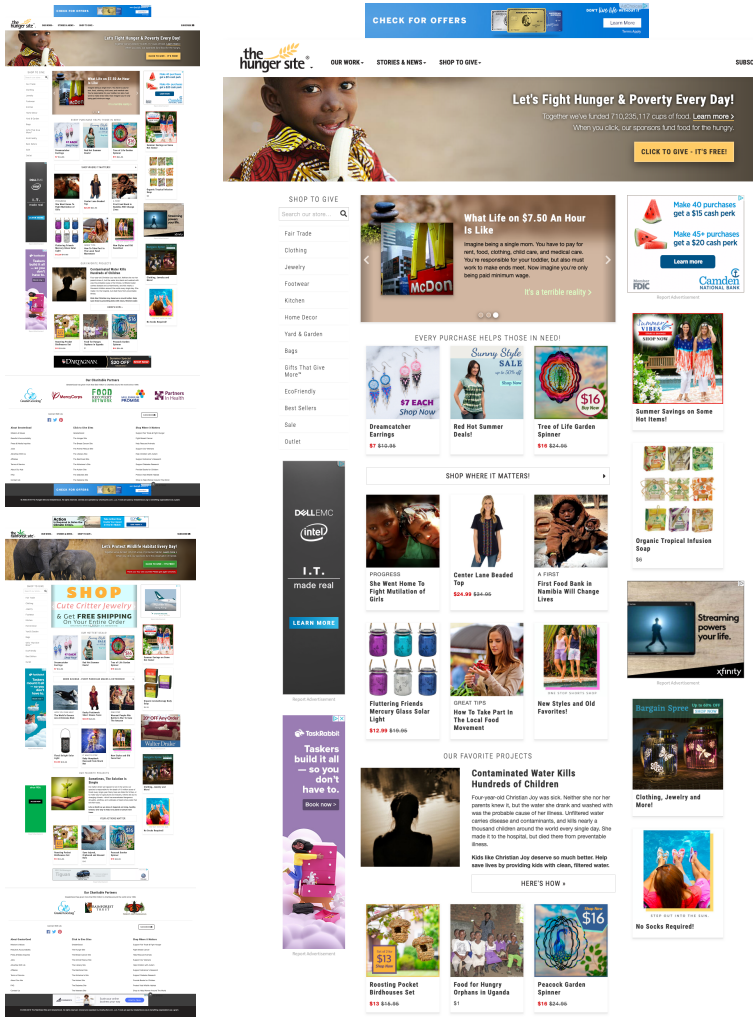
Site Notables:

- If users like a specific product, they can customize an item by submitting a request.
- Price begins with a starting price (in this case $X+) and users can describe what they would like to do and also attach a photo.

BNED Relevance: If BNED enables users to customize clothes and other products, this is just a page describing how we can help people submit items. Maybe we can enable alums and students in a community to promote their college spirit custom designs that others in their community can buy as a way to make BNED more of a community and to help students and alums make money and thus, want to promote BNED if invested in its growth.

BNED

Inspiration – The Greater Good



The Greater Good —
Nonprofit that serves as a marketplace for goods that support causes for rainforest preservation, poverty, literacy, veterans, and treatment for diabetes, Alzheimer's, breast cancer, autism. Each cause has a microsite dedicated to fundraising for that cause.
Rainforest: https://therainforestsite.greatergood.com; https://store.therainforestsite.greatergood.com
Hunger: https://thehungersite.greatergood.com

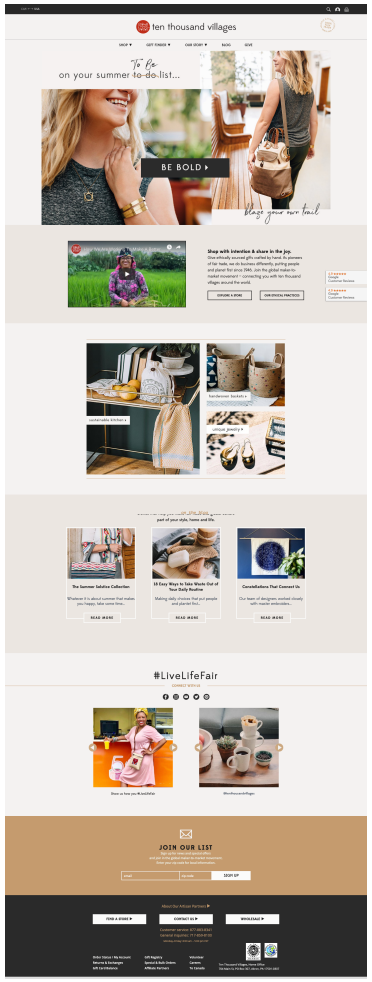
Site Notables:

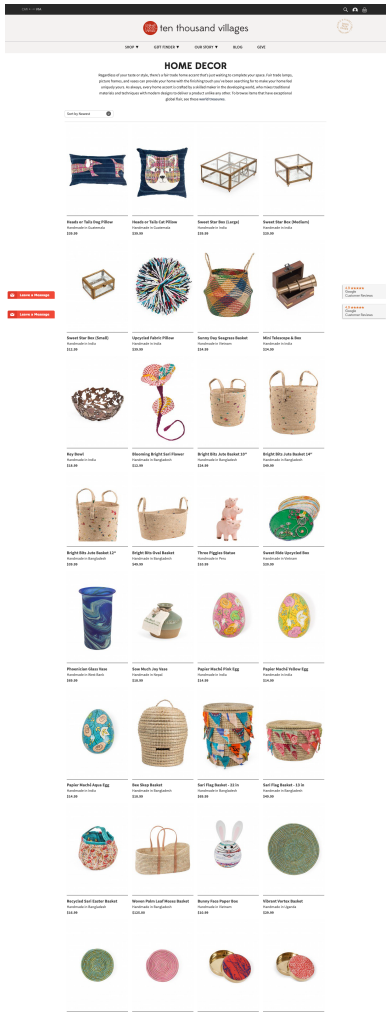
- Cool concept similar to Ten Thousand Villages and Oxfam Unwrapped in that they are a nonprofit where the products they sell benefit certain charities. It inspires people to feel good about their consumerism if giving toward a cause.
- Site's homepage splash graphic alerts people to the impact the work is doing such as funding the preservation of 146k acres of protected habitat. Featured product modules tell you immediately what the purchase would help do such as helping Waorani people save the Amazon or saving injured or orphaned bats, etc.
- Integrates educational content about the cause and ecommerce.
- Ability to donate as gift toward sending girls to school, clearing landmines, etc.

BNED Relevance: Ideas for how BNED might be able to integrate philanthropic efforts in social justice, literacy, sustainability or other causes with ecommerce to not only do good but also encourage viral promotion of BNED and build the brand as a positive change agent to compete w/Amazon's donations toward members' preferred causes.

BNED

Inspiration – Ten Thousand Villages





Ten Thousand Villages —
Nonprofit that
Homepage: www.tenthousandvillages.com/
Product Results Listing: www.tenthousandvillages.com/home-decor

Site Notables:

- Website uses earthy warm, light palettes to feel that products are handmade, natural, sustainable. Site blends ecommerce w/social justice storytelling.
- Product results listing features products that indicate where they were handmade to help users feel more connected to the global regions of the world they support.
- Hovering over product in results listing offers users ability to see how the product looks when being used for a sense of scale to the context used.
- Product detail pages offer a story of how an item supports a cause such as repurposing pre-consumer computer parts in India and supporting artisans by training them to make crafts and offers them livelihoods (www.tenthousandvillages.com/picture-frames/0c7035226906756b0f9fe31adb1c0381)

BNED Relevance: Ideas for how BNED might be able to integrate philanthropic efforts in social justice, literacy, sustainability or other causes with ecommerce to not only do good but also encourage viral promotion of BNED and build the brand as a positive change agent to compete w/Amazon's donations toward members' preferred causes. Use storytelling to help people connect to products and to purpose.