

THE ANATOMY OF AN EFFECTIVE HOMEPAGE



As a general rule, your homepage is the first encounter someone will have with your business. Great care should be taken to design and structure your homepage so that readers will digest and act on your business message. Below we've identified certain qualities that compose an effective homepage. Special thanks to @keanrichmond and @onextrapixel.

1. THE BASICS

It doesn't matter what kind of website you visit, you'll notice that nearly all well-designed homepages contain the following elements.

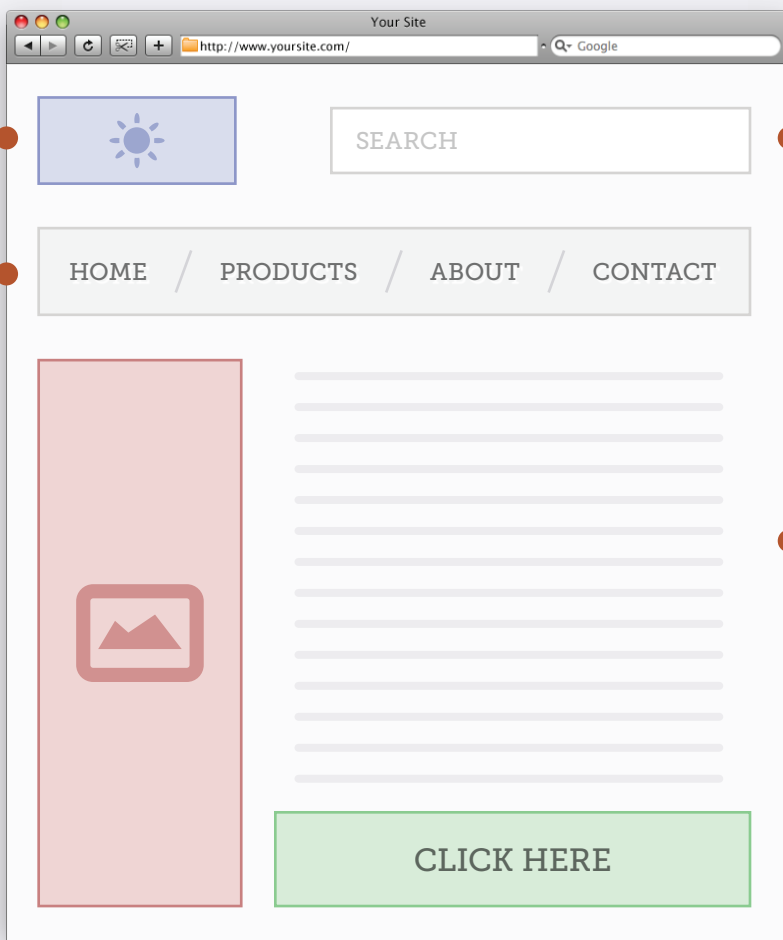
1 2 3

LOGO

Tasteful sizing and placement of a logo is essential for any good homepage. Logos should be able to quickly communicate your company's ethos and personality to users both new and old.

NAVIGATION

A homepage should function (in part) as a rendezvous point for users who've lost their bearings and can't find what they need. The homepage shouldn't be a sitemap. Rather, it should simply guide the user to the most important sections of your website.



SEARCH CAPABILITIES

Adding search functionality to your site helps to reduce the number of links (and declutter the layout in general). For certain kinds of websites (ecommerce, etc.) the search element may be the most important aspect of your site.

CONTENT & COPY

While copy shouldn't be the primary focus of your homepage, it can be important for SEO and accessibility reasons. Take this into account when designing your homepage. Try to keep things clean and clutter-free. Consult a SEO professional if necessary.

BRANDING CONSIDERATIONS

Brand recognition is less important for returning visitors. Some websites (such as Facebook) believe that their members are aware of who they are and so they don't push their branding as powerfully for users who have logged in.



With A/B testing and other kinds of analysis, KISSmetrics helps you pinpoint which changes are making the biggest impact on your site.

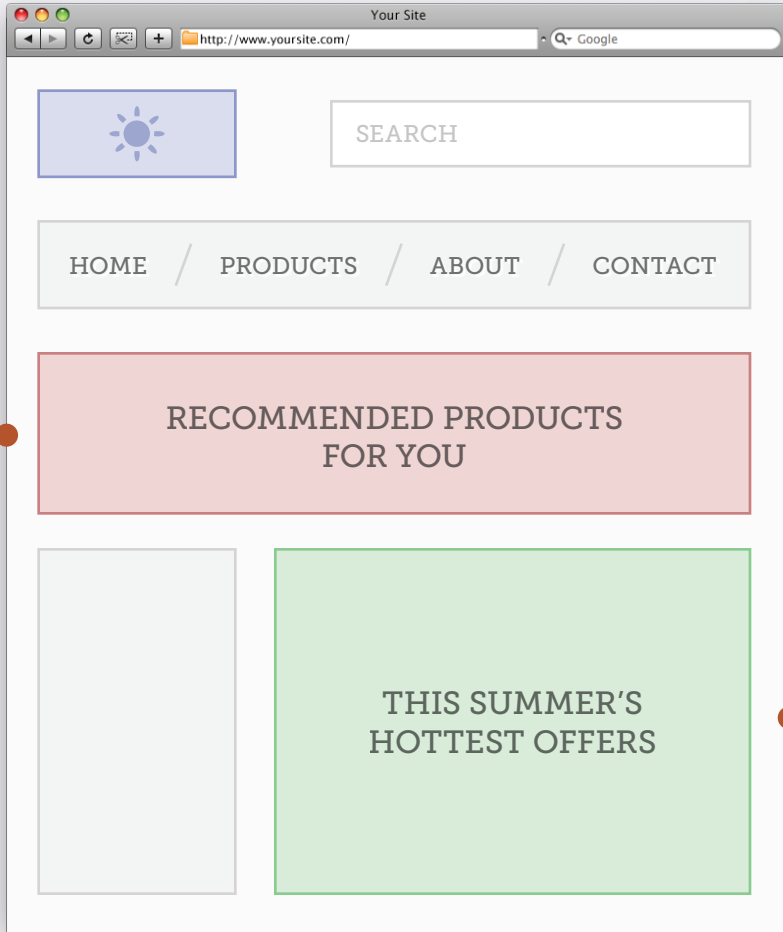
2. THE OBJECTIVES

What do you want visitors to do when they visit your site? Have you made this clear to them? Take this into consideration when designing your site.



USER OBJECTIVES

The elements that go into a homepage (and a website in general) are there primarily to cultivate a good user experience and guide the user to the objectives that *they* have. Provide a clear and easy route to products that certain users will be more inclined to buy.



BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

In addition to catering to *user objectives*, it's duly important to promote your objectives—your *business objectives*. Most business objectives aim to promote the items which will make the most profit.



Need help creating a custom-tailored experience for your visitors? KISSmetrics makes it easy for you to target users with marketing (and remarketing) campaigns.

A NOTE ABOUT OBJECTIVES

When designing your homepage (and your website in general), it's important that both user and business objectives be considered (the two objectives can also overlap). If an element on your website doesn't serve one of these objectives, consider removing it.

3. THE PURPOSE

When people visit your site, do they immediately know who you are and what you do? A good business homepage is able to quickly and effectively communicate the purpose of the business.



LOGO

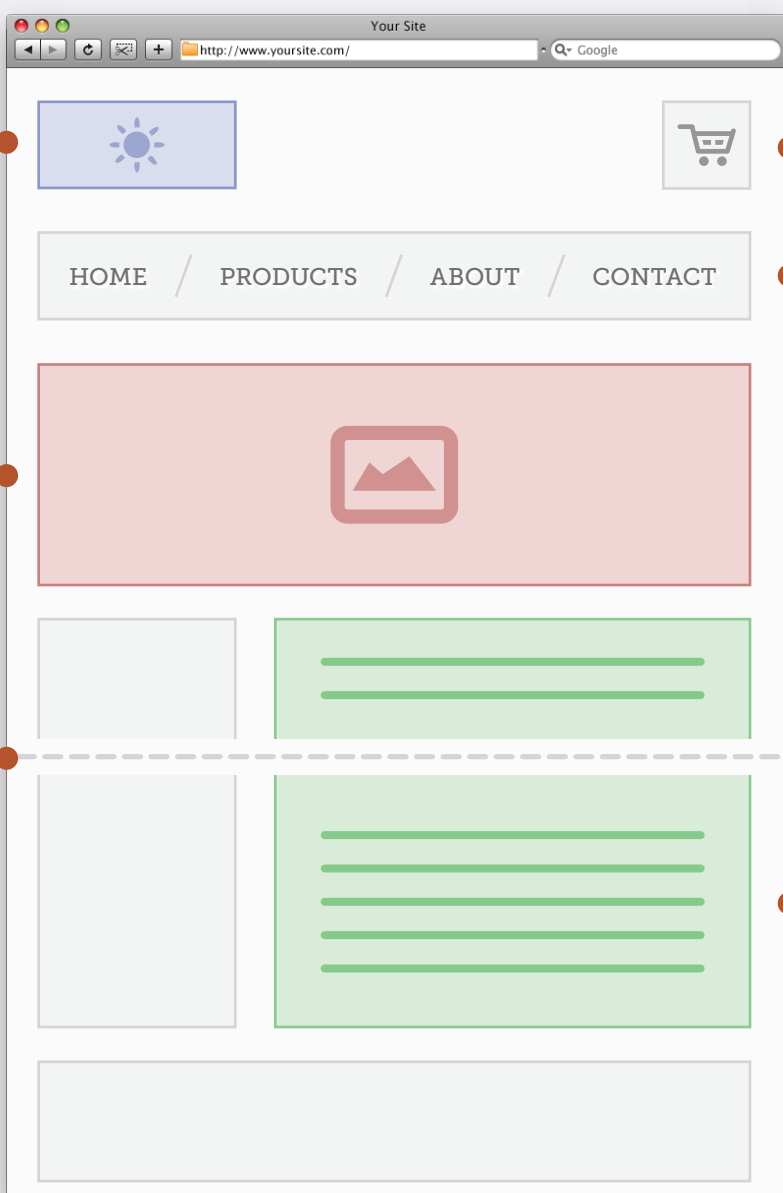
It's often the case that the logo itself does a good job in communicating exactly what the company does. Consider this when designing your logo.

IMAGERY

Do the images and stock photos used on your site effectively communicate what your business does? Your website should include images that align with the message of your business.

THE FOLD

Don't make it difficult for the user to find out information about your business. Be sure to communicate what your business does above the "fold"—the visible portion of a webpage that people see immediately upon visiting.



SHOPPING CART

A shopping cart in your site's header immediately communicates that you sell something. Remember, try to communicate what your site does as quickly as possible.

MICRO-COPY

Navigation labels and headings are examples of "microcopy"—the small bits of text that help tie a site together. Microcopy can play a big part in communicating what your site is about.

LANGUAGE

The main purpose of design and attention is to capture a user's attention so that they will *read the content* that is presented. Be sure to structure content and engage the user so that they read, digest and act on your message.

MORE ON MICROCOPY

Always be looking for ways to make it easier for the user to understand what your website is all about. For example, if you're a web designer, instead of a navigation link to your "Services," you could create a link to your "Web Design Services." Changes such as this one help to inform the user what your business does.

Need help to determine whether your homepage is effective or not? We can help!



Let's talk: +1 (888) 767-5477

PEOPLE PAY YOU. NOT PAGEVIEWS.

KISSmetrics is a powerful web analytics solution that helps you make smarter business decisions. Try KISSmetrics for FREE: kissmetrics.com/signup

Special thanks to @keanrichmond and @onextrapixel