
3 Elements

YOUR WEBSITE MUST HAVE



BY BRIAN BOZARTH

If you have a website...

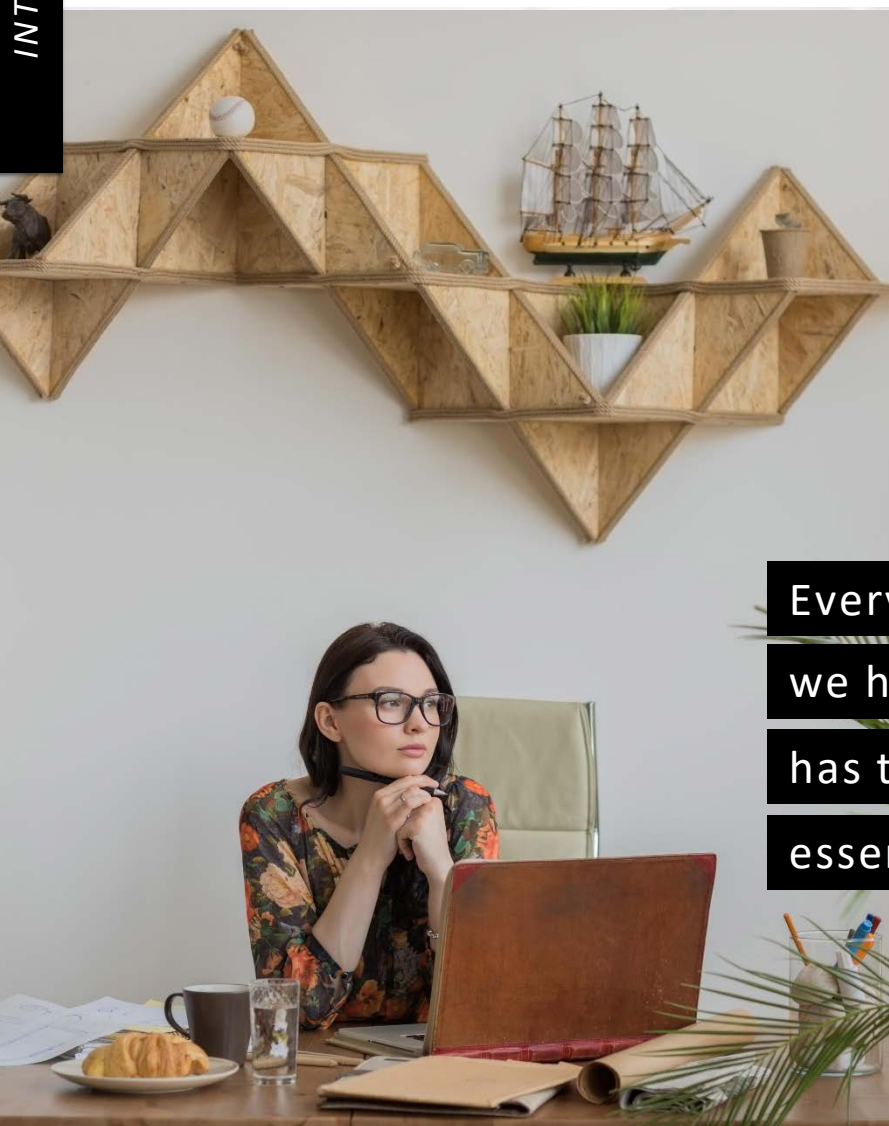


If you have a website, then it's a good idea for you to understand why you have a website! Internally, brands build website for specific tasks such as drawing visitors, filling out forms, or earning sales. For your prospects, they visit your website primarily not to perform tasks but to learn about your product or brand. Welcome to the topic of dissonance!

Your website is the virtual front door into your brand. The 'omnishopper' is a product of consumers increasingly researching brands online before interacting on any other channel. Your online presence is the first impression that most consumers have with your brand. Meaning for most consumers, your website is your brand, your product, and your quality.

Researchers tell us that this first impression of your brand dictates purchase behavior and can happen within just a 20th of a second of viewing your website. You will never have another chance to make a first impression. So, make your first impression count!

3 Essential Elements



Every successful website
we have developed and seen
has the same 3
essential elements

TODAY'S TOP BRANDS

Today's top brands that understand their website is likely the first impression a potential customer will have with their brand. The secret to converting browsers into buyers, is to make sure their first impression and lasting experience with your brand is favorable.

Lucky for you, it's not that difficult to implement or optimize a subpar website. Let's address three vital elements that will make a huge difference in your conversions, user experience, and brand quality.



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black fedora and a grey dress, stands by a large window in a modern, industrial-style office. She is looking out the window and holding a smartphone. The office has exposed pipes, a black office chair, a wooden desk with a laptop, and various plants. The background shows a brick wall and a hanging plant.

Messaging

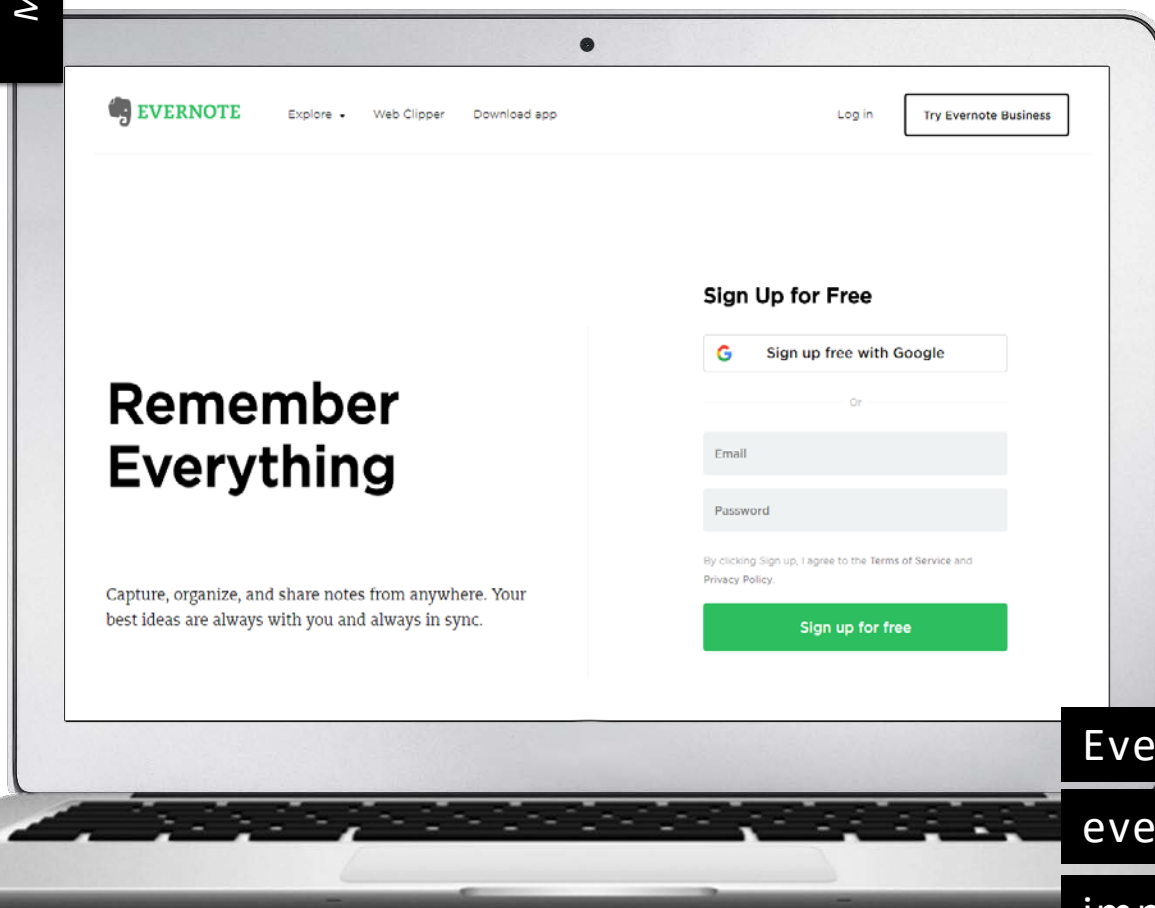
mes·sag·ing

/'mesɪjɪŋ/

noun

element ONE

1 // MESSAGING



The most important role of your website is clarity. Your customers need to understand your central message at a glance. This foundational element of your brand should permeate every marketing campaign you develop. On your website specifically, there are a few key areas that you can enhance and clarify your messaging.

Evernote appeals to
everyone with the most
important message,
Remember Everything
- EverNote.com

1.1 // PROBLEM - AWARE & SOLUTION - AWARE

Most brands have a difficult time clarifying their messaging both internally and externally. The key factor must be outlining, defining and matching your target audience's problems with your solutions. The best brands know exactly what pain point their prospects experience and how their product provides the perfect solution.

Every page on your website should be a combination of making your visitors problem-aware and solution-aware. For instance, your product page should spell out enough of your prospect's problems that would necessitate a solution. That would be your solution of course. If you want a good example of this, then check out the Apple iWatch page. All their solutions are cased in potential problems.

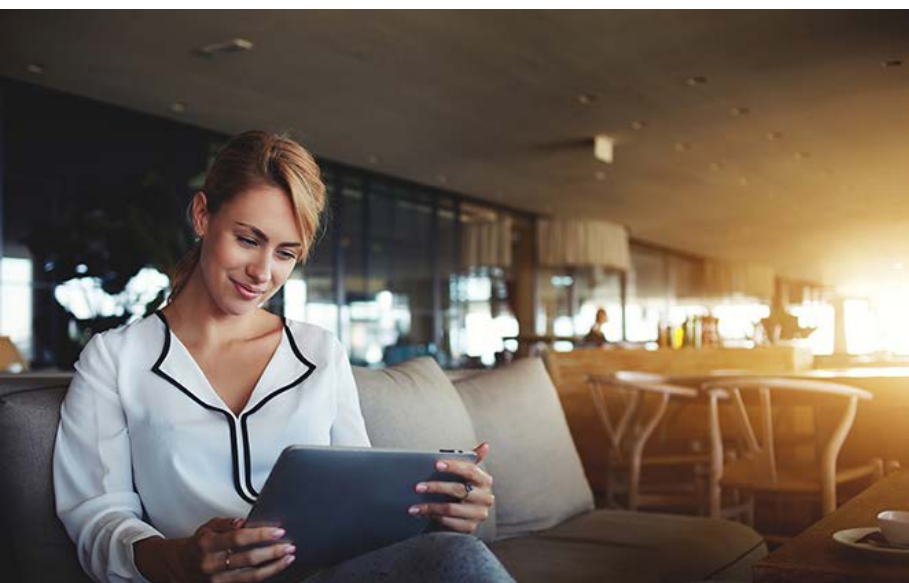


1 // MESSAGING

if you do not identify what problems your product or service solves, then you have not created a need for your product in the minds of your target audience. Remember though, there must be a balance. You do not create problems, you identify actual problems. You also don't make up solutions. You tie real solutions that your product offers to actual problems. Your goal in messaging is to define what success would look like if your target audience chose your solution to solve their problem.

1.2 IMAGERY

Everybody who visits your website will want to become a better version of themselves in some way or another. In your messaging, you are hopefully telling people that their life will be better if they choose to purchase your product. In your images, you have an opportunity to show them a better version of themselves.



STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY

You may remember that a picture is worth a thousand words. If you truly believe you are making lives better, then the images you use on your website should also reflect the value and attractive benefits you have to offer.

Stay far away from simple stock photography of tacky business people smiling and giving the thumbs up. Pay the few extra bucks for a high-quality image that accurately represents the better version of your customer.

1 // MESSAGING

1.3 CONCISION

Modern internet users do not read, they scan. Even then, scanning may be too generous. The modern internet user is increasing impatient as shown by the human's attention decreasing to only 7 seconds, one second less than a goldfish. Meaning, don't say in 10 words what can be said in 5.

Here's an example. "We make the ABC solution to satisfy XYZ problem for the savvy consumer" can be shortened to "ABC solution for XYZ problem" If you choose to make your text long, wordy, and irrelevant, then your prospects will become disengaged and bounce. Here is a good rule to follow: If you want people to read, then use fewer words.

Make your website better. Instantly.

Over **220,000 websites** use **Crazy Egg** to improve what's working, fix what isn't, and test new ideas.

Show Me My Heatmap

Get started for free!

Learn how TechCrunch increased their traffic by 30% in 60 days. [Click here.](#)

QUICKSPROUT

The Definitive

A few of the companies that trust Crazy Egg:

CrazyEgg draws you in with just 5 words.

- CrazyEgg.com

1 // MESSAGING

1.4 MASS APPEAL

You may have 3, 5, or even 10 identified personas across a diverse set of industries. However, you only have one homepage. Your goal is to find the message that appeals to the widest range of visitors and make it relevant, simple, and concise. If they are interested, then you can give them the option of diving deeper on a category page.

When crafting your messaging, just make sure you ask yourself two questions:

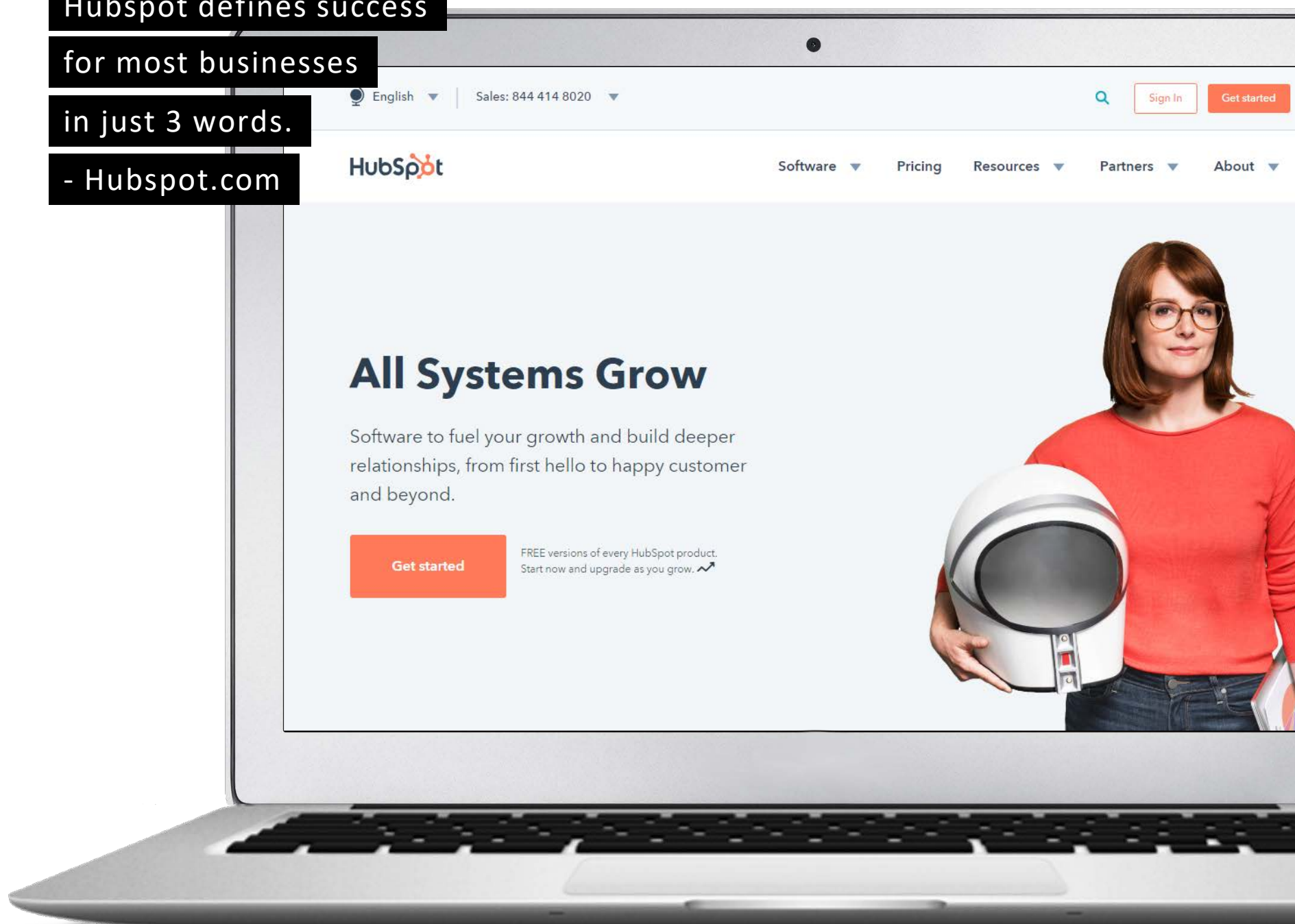
- 1) How many will relate to this message?
- 2) How many will **not** relate to this message?

Hubspot defines success

for most businesses

in just 3 words.

- Hubspot.com



A person's hands are shown working on a laptop. The left hand is on the keyboard, and the right hand is on the trackpad. The laptop screen displays architectural blueprints. A smartphone is lying on the desk next to the laptop. The person is wearing a black watch with a gold-colored case. The background is a light gray surface with some papers and a red pen.

Consistency

con·sist·en·cy

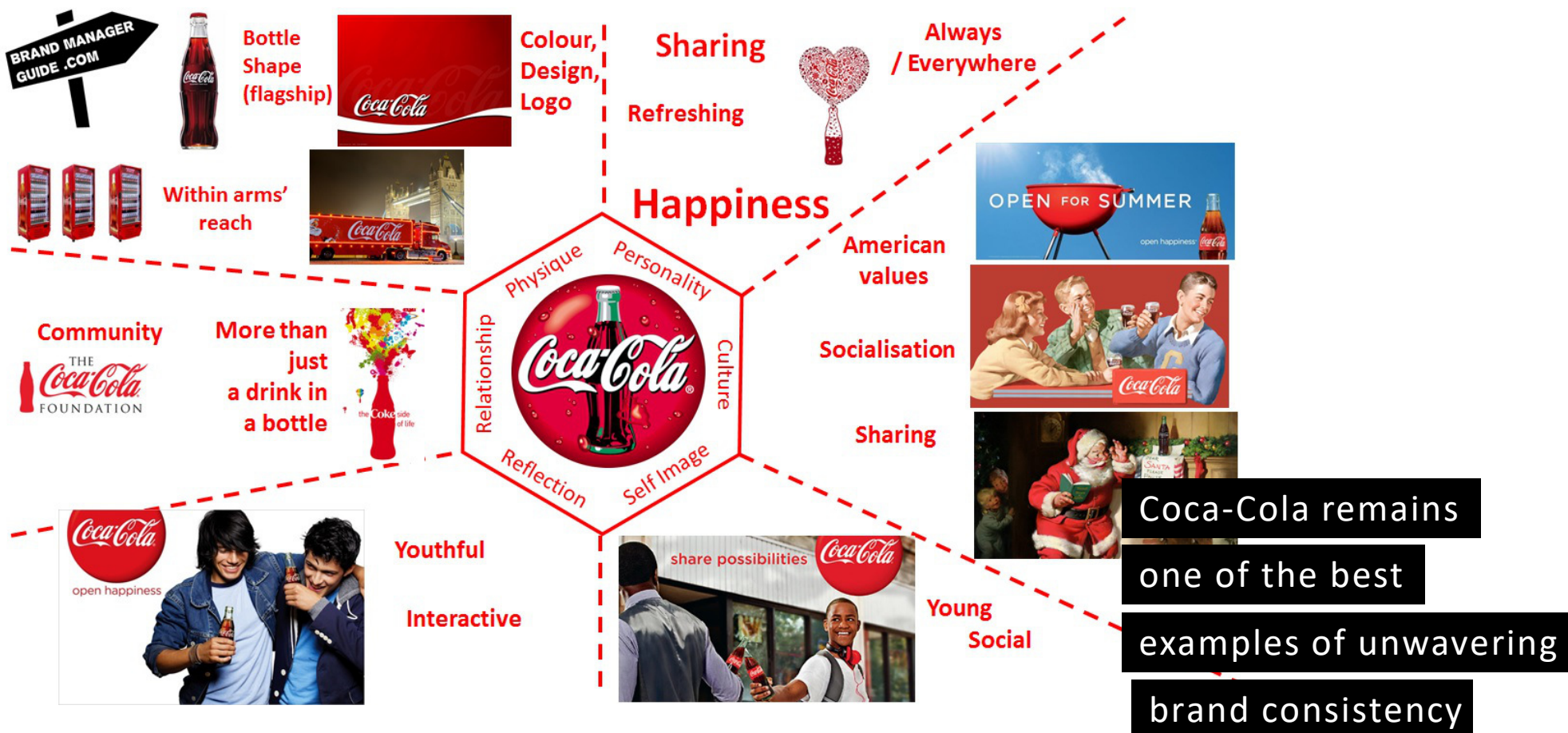
/kən'sistənsē/

noun

element TWO

2 // CONSISTENCY

The greatest brands of our age are known for their consistency. Coca-Cola, Nike, and Apple are among many other brands that have such an incredibly refined consistency that you would recognize the brand just by a saying, a color, or even a feeling. None of which is by chance.



In the current digital age, it's fairly easy to create blog posts, eBooks, social posts, and other marketing collateral. In fact, an idea can go from concept to being published so rapidly that it rarely gets properly vetted for brand consistency. This is the danger every brand faces. The desire to be immediate can result in immediately confusing and distracting from the brand you've worked so hard to establish. Let's look at a few safeguards that will help ensure you maintain a consistent brand experience.



2 // CONSISTENCY

2.1 // PROBLEM - AWARE & SOLUTION - AWARE

If you have been around websites at all, you will have likely come across Frankenstein designs. This usually results from multiple people giving design input over a period of several years – often caused by frequent changes in the design and marketing teams. The end product is nothing short of hard on the eyes. Some pages have circle images while other pages have images with rounded corners. Some primary CTAs are red, others are blue, and still, others are green – all on the same page!

Qapital’s Style Guide
outlines the most
basic elements ensuring
brand consistency.
- Qapital.com



COLOR PALETTE

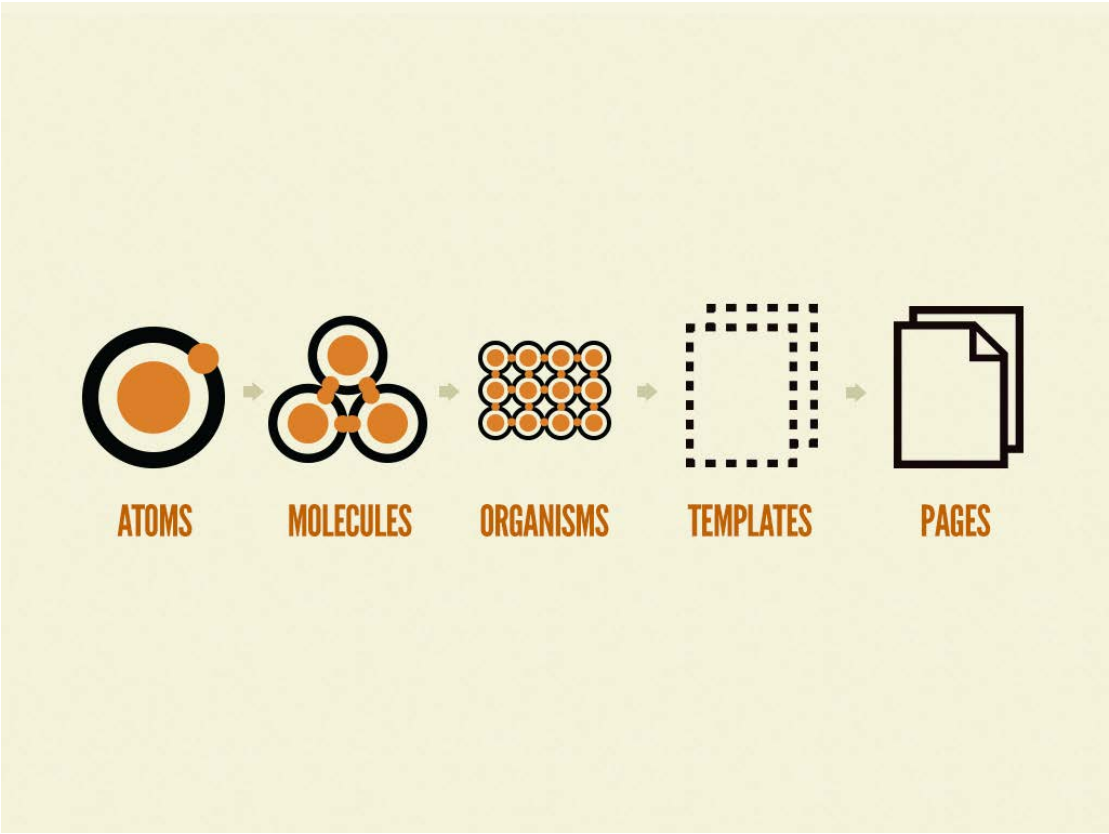
	CANDY APPLE	#e82535
	CRIMSON	#c92830
	COOL BLUE	#074167
	DEEP LAKE	#143548
	GRAVEL	#565656
	WET CEMENT	#77848e

True story, on one client’s website homepage, I counted over 20 different styles of font! This is where a style guide comes in. A style guide is a very basic outline that defines what to do with elements like the logo, font sizes, colors, images, layout, and even messaging tone and voice. A good rule of thumb to use when creating a style guide: start small and carefully add to it over time. Your first style guide may only define colors and logo styles. That’s fine. You will already be leaps ahead of most of your competition.

2 // CONSISTENCY

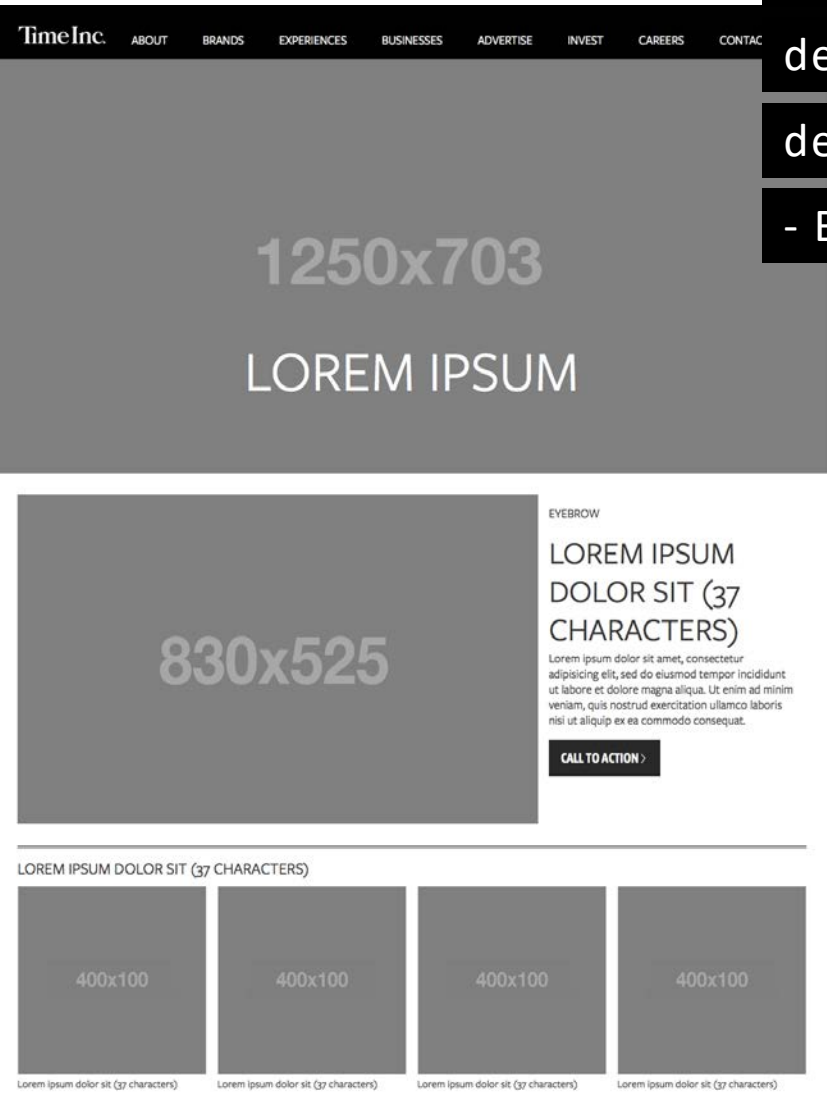
2.2 ATOMIC DESIGN

On a more technical user experience front, a style guide can also outline the consistency in website elements. This means your headers, images, icon layouts, fonts, spacing, and padding are consistent throughout the site. This is the idea of Atomic Design defined and popularized by UX expert, Brad Frost.



Atomic Design is a method to create design systems in a more deliberate and hierarchical manner.

- Brad Frost



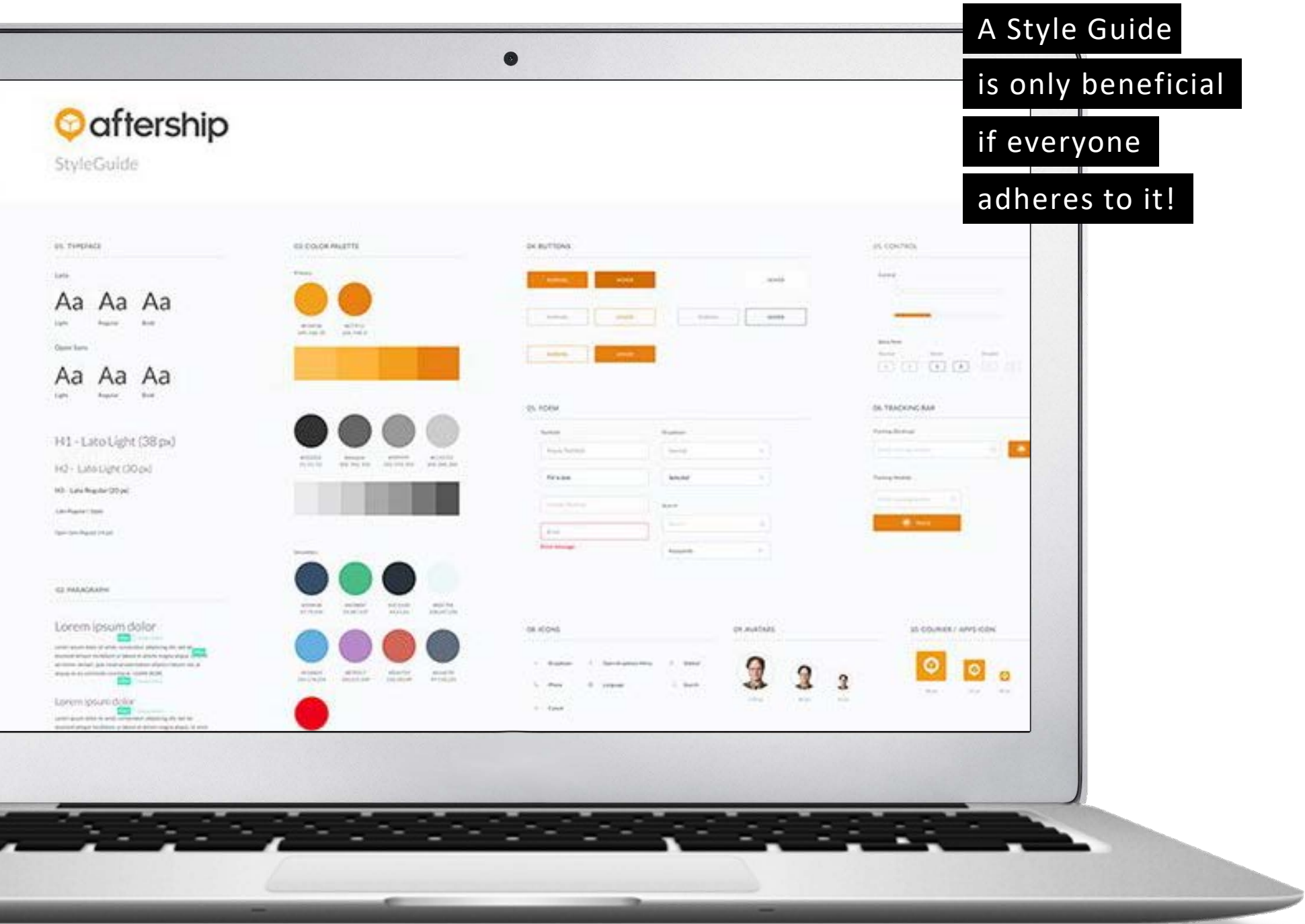
The idea is to have elemental designs that repeat themselves on the site. Rather than creating new designs on every page, you can pull together previously used layouts, designs, and elements to create a holistic and consistent experience. This is so that your images will only be portrayed in one of your predefined ways. Or, you can outline a total of 7 different font styles to use on your site, each with a explicit purpose (H1 is for the page title, H2 is for primary category sections...).

2 // CONSISTENCY

2.3 ADHERENCE

Once you have built a style guide, it's only beneficial if you require adherence from all levels of the organization. Meaning, everyone in your organization will need to adhere strictly to this style guide for it to be useful. A challenge that most companies face is the HiPPO.

Set it in stone now and don't let HiPPO (highest paid person's opinion) trump the style guide. However, if the style guide needs to change, then do so by consensus. Otherwise, you might end up with a rainbow-colored jumble for a website.



A Style Guide
is only beneficial
if everyone
adheres to it!

Call To Action

call to ac·tion

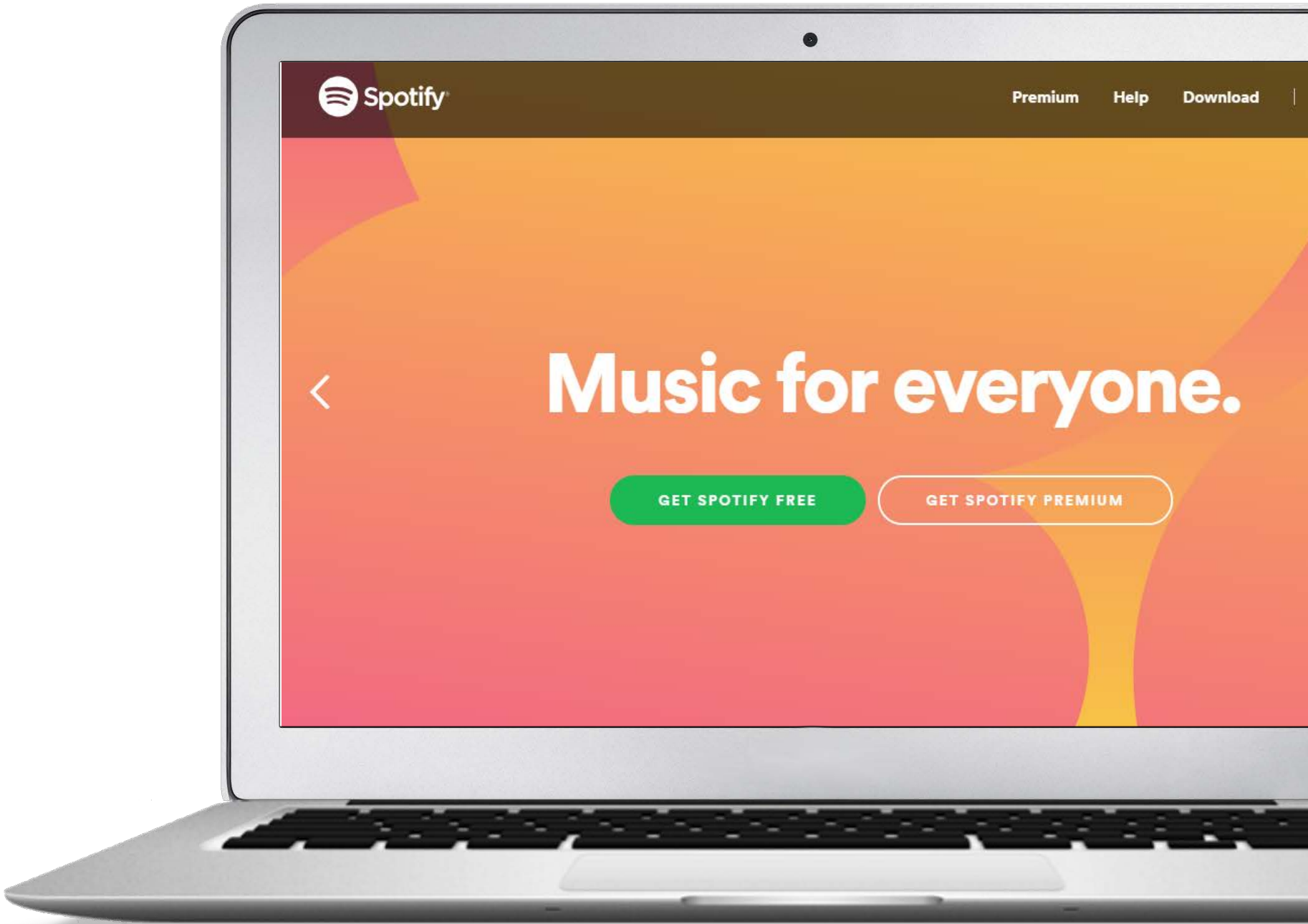
/kôl/ /tōo,tə/ /'akSH(ə)n/

noun

element THREE

3 // CALL TO ACTION

Call to Actions, also known as CTAs, guides your users toward a specific solution for their defined problem. CTAs have a very specific goal: to get your visitors to click and complete a conversion that is helpful to both your visitor and your brand. The most successful CTAs will have a couple primary qualities: 1) Deliver on a Promise 2) Obvious



COMMON CTAS

- Get Started
- Sign Up Free
- Create Account
- Schedule Demo
- Contact Sales
- Learn More
- Join Free
- Shop Now
- Explore
- Discover
- Get X% Off
- Add to Cart/Bag
- Buy Now
- New Product
- Enter Now
- Try for Free
- Join Today
- Schedule a Visit

3 // CALL TO ACTION



3.1 // DELIVER ON A PROMISE

You may have heard of the buyer's journey. It's the idea that users are on a journey to solve a problem; that problem drives them to seek a solution. Your product may be the solution that solves the buyer's problem, and that's the promise that you make to prospects.

UBER leaves no doubt
as to what they want you to do
and what will happen
when you click the CTA.
UBER.com

Your goal is to make sure that your promise is crystal clear. This is not the time to be wishy-washy. If your messaging is clear and concise in making the prospect problem aware and solution aware, then don't hesitate to deliver on your promise.

Make your call to action short, simple, direct, and to the point. Don't dance around the topic. Humans need direction and your CTA provides direction to the buyer during their journey. There is something comforting about direction and direct messaging.

If you believe your product will solve their problem, then tell them exactly how to complete their journey:

- ❖ **Buy Now**
- ❖ **Download Solution**
- ❖ **Schedule a Demo**

Your clarity in your call to action will show confidence in your solution, simplify the buyer's journey, and engender trust in the consumer.

3 // CALL TO ACTION

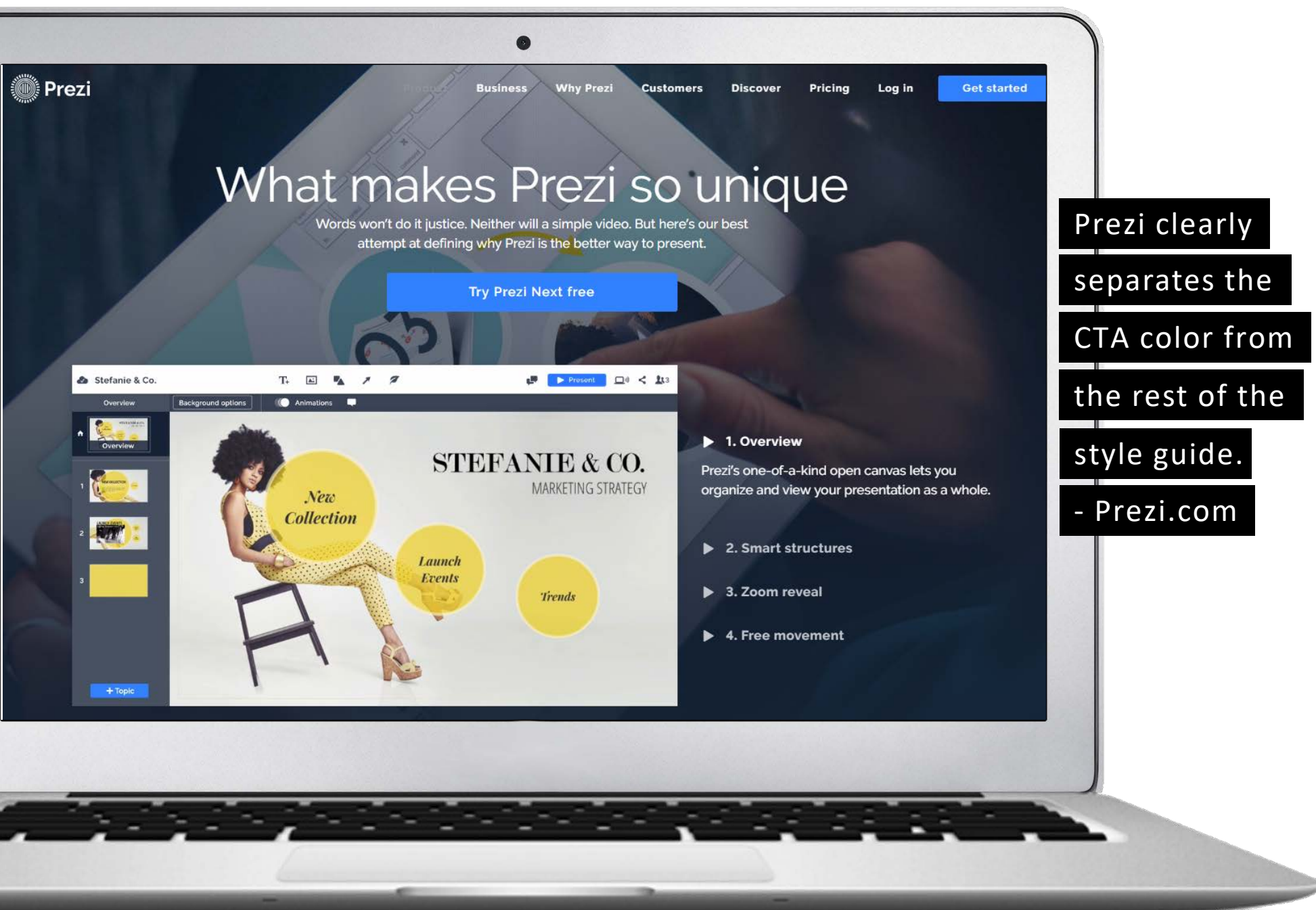
3.2 OBVIOUS

This should go without saying, but don't hide your CTA. To help your visitors during the buyer's journey, here are 3 helpful tips to make your CTA obvious:

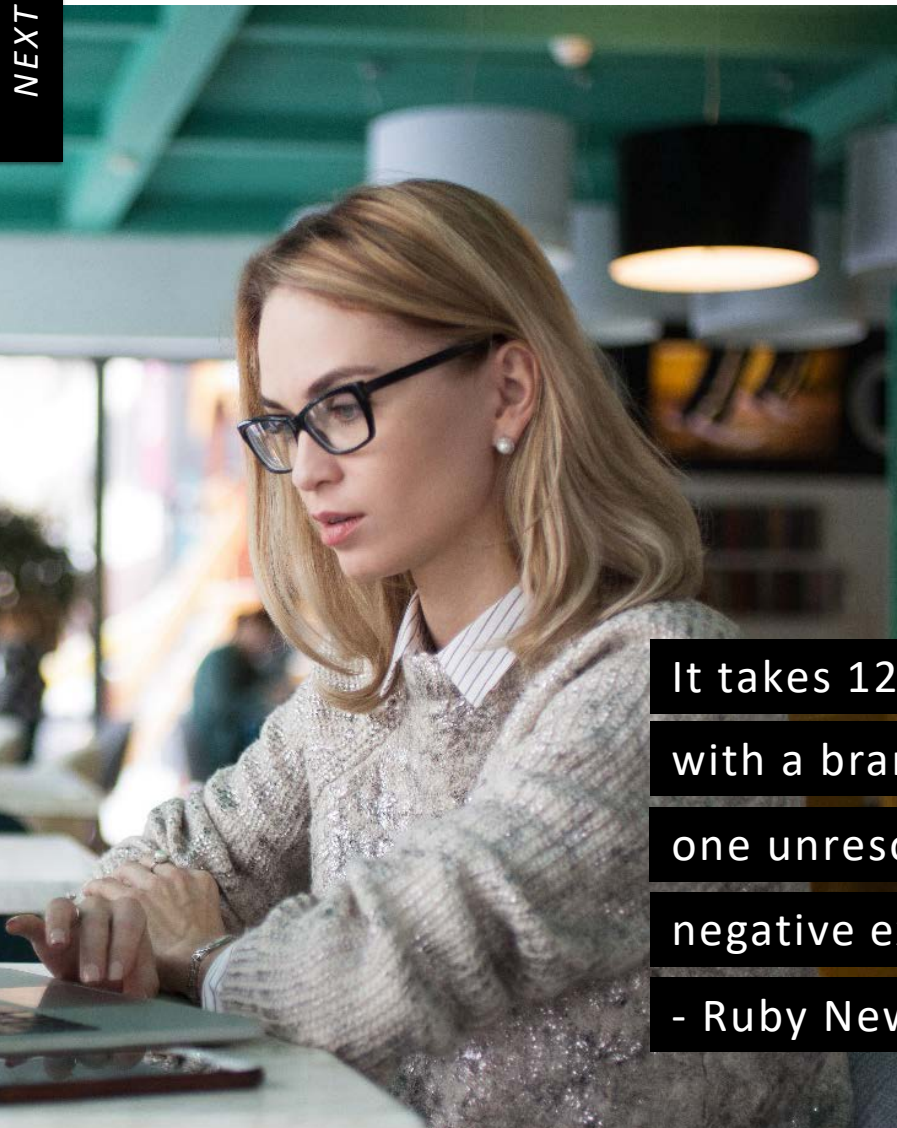
1. Have your primary CTA above the fold. Above the fold refers the initial real estate when you view the page. The CTA should be obvious when a person first views a page.

2. Since you will have many buttons on your website, the primary CTA should be a different colour. That way, no matter where it is displayed on your site, it will be obvious. This is a great element to define in your style guide.

3. Don't crowd your CTA with other buttons or messaging. The only text linked to the CTA should be the promise or a list of benefits and features explaining how their life will be better if they click the button.



// NEXT STEPS



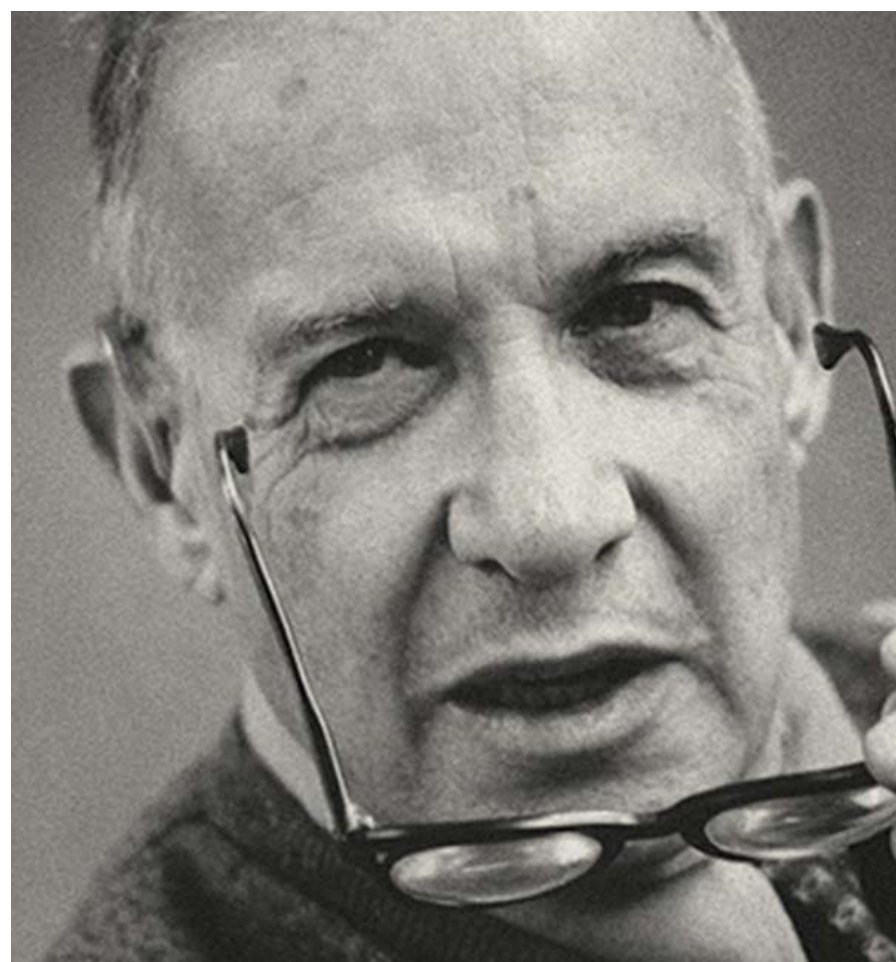
One thing should stand out about the 3 elements your website must have: the consumer is the central focus. If you constantly seeking to delight your visitor with a consistent, clear, helpful experience then you are well on your way to a great website. Remember, since your website is likely your most important resource, it should be your first and regular point of focus in your marketing efforts.

It takes 12 positive experiences
with a brand to make up for
one unresolved
negative experience.

- Ruby Newell-Legner

*"Because the purpose of business is to create a customer, the business enterprise has only two basic functions: **marketing and innovation**. Marketing and innovation produce results; all the rest are costs. Marketing is the distinguishing, unique function of the business."*

- Peter Drucker



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