

Heuristic Review Report

Summary:

Zara is one of the biggest international fashion companies, and it belongs to Inditex, one of the world's largest distribution groups. Zara includes design, production, distribution, and sales, through our extensive retail network. The users will be able to buy products which are categorized based on the gender, age and the type of the product. It offers all the services of an ecommerce like place an order, tracking and cancellation of the order.

Link: <https://www.zara.com/us/>

Final Score: 65

General findings and shortcomings

The Zara website effectively fulfils its purpose by successfully engaging users and facilitating order placement, But the main issue most users find is the overall experience of the user while using the website. The text over the images is not placed properly and is not aligned well. Most of issues with the buttons that are in the website are when the image of the product comes in the frame. There are some performance issues as well which makes the site to slow down suddenly and takes a while to load a page and some of the views when modified at the search are took time to load. Design issues on an e-commerce website can lead to frustrated users, ultimately impacting the company's online sales, as customers expect a smooth and hassle-free user experience. Despite several shortcomings, the website is functional and provides the fundamental features and functionalities expected of it.

Problem Areas

- **Homepage and Text-Over-Image Alignment Issue**
Regarding the homepage, the overlapping of text on images lacks dynamic contrast. When both the text and the upcoming photo/slider share a white background, it poses a challenge for users in identifying the text. The side navigation buttons are useless as the user can select the categories at the top in the navigation bar.
- **Font and Font Size Usage Issues**
The font size and the font used can be a bit bigger and brighter. It made the users hard to find the letters and the text that it is showing since such a small font made the letters overlap each other. Another issue with the text is that all the text is in capital letters which contradicts Jakob's law.

- Performance Challenges

The home page took certain time to load due to the animations that were considered. This is the same with the pages when selected a certain category is selected. Each template took time to load due to the fact that it needs to load 6 products for each scroll that the user does. Also, the view change in the search bar took a considerable amount of time to change the view of the page from a template view to a tiles view.

- Layout Configuration Issues

After a user selects a product type for shopping, there is inconsistency in the product presentation. In one template, a single product is displayed, but as the user scrolls down, there is an abrupt transition to displaying four products at once, causing a lack of uniformity in the user experience.

- Streamlined and User-Friendly Form and Process Design

There are several issues in the shopping cart and checkout process. It doesn't clearly indicate whether fields are mandatory or optional, lacks error warnings for incorrect data, and doesn't provide a progress indicator. Address editing redirects users to previous steps, and there's no card detail validation, allowing payment attempts with invalid information. These issues can impact user experience and need attention.

Improvements

- Homepage Text Alignment Challenge

Resolving the homepage's text-over-image alignment issue entails increasing the contrast between text and image backgrounds and potentially adding a semi-transparent overlay to improve readability. Additionally, addressing the redundancy of side navigation buttons in the presence of top navigation categories is crucial. We can improve the interface by either eliminating the unnecessary elements or repurposing them to provide access to unique sections or features not covered by the top navigation. The logo of ZARA should also be fixed since it overlaps everywhere and interferes with the user's view.

- Typography and Text Styling Concerns

Increasing the font size to ensure readability, particularly on various device screens, is crucial. A larger, more prominent font will prevent text from overlapping and make content easier to find and read. Another essential adjustment is to avoid using all capital letters for text, as this contradicts Jakob's law and can be challenging to read. Employing a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters will enhance readability and overall user satisfaction.

- Performance Challenges

Firstly, consider optimizing and possibly reducing the complexity of animations to reduce their impact on load times. For product templates, implement lazy loading techniques to load only the products currently in view which in turn reduces initial loading times. Additionally, optimizing image sizes for quicker rendering helps. Lastly, we have to improve the efficiency of the view change feature in the search bar, possibly by implementing client-side rendering or preloading the tile view to minimize transition delays.

- **Layout Configuration Issues**

Define a consistent number of products to display per row, such as four, and apply the layout uniformly across the website. As the user scrolls, maintaining a seamless and uniform user experience is a must in improving the user experience. This responsive design approach ensures that users encounter the product display without sudden transitions, improving overall usability and user satisfaction.

- **Simplified and Intuitive Form and Process Design**

To quickly improve the shopping cart and checkout process, consider these fixes: Clearly mark mandatory fields, use real-time error validation, add a progress indicator, allow for address editing without redirection, and implement card detail validation before payment. These adjustments will enhance user experience by providing clarity, reducing errors, and streamlining the overall checkout journey.

Metrics useful for redesigning the website

- **User engagement metric**

These include time taken by the user to find the desired product, time spent on pages, and scroll depth, which help gauge user interaction and engagement with the website. Improvements in font size, text styling, and layout consistency should ideally result in increased user engagement. It will help the users to find the desired product much faster.

- **Navigation and Interaction Efficiency**

Metrics related to navigation, including user interactions with navigation buttons and the time required to switch between views in the search bar, serve as valuable indicators for assessing the website's efficiency and user-friendliness. Improvements in navigation and interaction elements should result in smoother and more user experience.

- **Key Functionalities Accessibility and Readiness**

Accessibility and readiness important in improving user satisfaction, particularly when it concerns a webpage's essential functionalities. It is of utmost importance to guarantee that these critical features are not only accessible but also readily available to users. This proactive approach is profitable in creating a user-centric experience that enables ease of use.

- **User satisfaction and Feedback**

Gathering user feedback through surveys, feedback forms, and usability testing provides qualitative insights into overall user satisfaction of the user. This feedback helps the designer to get an analysis of the implemented fixes and works to be on line with user's liking.