

GEETANJALI SINGH

Case Study & Designing : AMAZON

User Research

User research play crucial role in gathering the data required to understand the users needs and their goals. In order to explore more about the user User interviews are conducted and the outcome should be considered as primary data which can be further used for future research.

Overview

“Amazing website” but like everything in this world it has its own pros and cons. Amazon is also one such ecommerce platform which provides the customer with enormous goods and services. Also, company customer centric approach helps them to retain and convert them as their loyal customers. It gives a lot of customization for the users and keeps the user engaged in seeing some or other products as it shows variety of new and different things which ends up the customer buying the product. As compared to other ecommerce sites amazon is still far behind in India as of UX. Its site has improved a lot over years but still lacks few design essentials.

Approach

The idea is to get all the information from the market which is related to amazon and prioritize it accordingly so it can be used for case study.

- User Flow : My approach here was to understand the user flow for which I ran a test case in Amazon global website. I also visited all 14 countries website to understand the UX flow, it was a necessary part of my research as every language will have their local flavour induced.
- Digital presence : I also went through various forum, blog, website, survey, user study and creation of personas. The motive behind this user research is to get an idea of what the end user thinks about or how comfortable a customer is with Amazon.
- Persona : Apart from this research I also met with few end users to comprehend more about the user outlook towards design.

Research

As per few online research, survey and blog Amazon's interface in terms of UX design still lack essentials, on which I share the same consensus, as their objective isn't to make their interface appealing and easy to use for me, but to sell more and more stuffs.

Currently, Amazon has a problematic situation where the option has grown very enormous which needs to be presented with different view to every customer. The search result should also comply with SEO .A small part of Amazon's clutter is also caused by a search feature for the entire Web.

This leads to some serious problems:

- Search over discovery : If you know exactly what you are looking for, great, you will probably walk away feeling satisfied. If not, the site is not engaging for you. You're unlikely to discover new products you love on Amazon. A small part of Amazon's clutter is also caused by a search feature for the entire Web.
- Browse taxonomy is poor : Ever search for one thing and have seemingly random items included in your results? Have you ever found yourself clicking six sub menus deep in the refinements in the left hand side?
- Real Estate : A site like Amazon does have plenty of real estate in current setup which makes it way too messy and disorganized which result in loss of customer. Example, the products exist in space instead of being cards or full-image links. With today's trends, products should be more enticing to click.
- 3rd party product images are inconsistent: Some are on par with images supplied by big companies or taken by Amazon, but many do not follow the standards or are of a poor resolution.
- Single file search results: Searching results in a single file "line item" results list (not a grid or more efficient design), which means scrolling for a long time if your result is not at the top of the page. Search results could be a mess, many a times the latest model is not obtainable. The actual advanced search only has limited options for narrowing lower searches.

- Stacked Content (Mobile UX): With more than 50% of traffic on sites now coming from mobile, product managers and user experience designers should always be aware and design for that experience in addition to standard desktop experiences. If you look at 'Amazon.com', the experience is much better on mobile than desktop but it is a completely different site and it doesn't have to be. Identifying experiences based on entry point is essential. It isn't just about platform, you should always consider what a user wants to see in addition to the device they are on.
- Cluttered pages: The product pages are littered with extraneous features. As it gives a lot of customization making the site crowded and Cluttered. The Item page is little messy, customer might be confused was he/she is looking for.
- Sorting of products- You should choose a particular category to sort the listed products according to your requirements. Amazon's category pages make it basically impossible to identify the best offerings.
- No branding control : On amazon you are one of many sellers & unless you are manufacturing a unique item only known to you as a merchant on your own. It will be hard for you to brand yourself.The brand that is on amazon is simply amazon.

Analysis

Analysing Amazon is one big thing to do by itself as its made doing so much of research on users and there s a room for improvement in terms of user experience and designing which will take it way more ahead.

- It is also important to use high value real estate on the page to lead the eye through the page.
- In cross platform experience, While shopping on amazon on tab is similar to the desktop web experiance, trying to buy books on a paper white isn't such a great experience unless you already know what u want.
- Pages are very long & folded with too much content. In such case the user scroll down to read the content and if he/she is convinced to buy the product then he/ she must scroll all the way up to add product to cart, there is no icon/button provided to scroll directly up on the page. Floating icon can be more user friendly.
- It's the fact that product attributes are very often placed within the product names. Things like colors and specific tech specs are stretching the names of the products over several lines making the page feel very cluttered and hard to compare a bunch of products in a grid. If this is cleared, the site will have a good breathing space, which will make it look much better and pleasing to eyes as well.

Amazon lacks touch & feel of merchandise in online shopping. Return can be done but are not easy. Several providers of the same product can result a price battle. If few of these points are taken into serious action, Amazon will be able to retain a lot of one-time customer.

Mental Model:

Mental models are an artefact of belief. They are the beliefs that a user holds about any given system or interaction. In most instances, the belief will – to a certain extent – resemble the real life model. This is important because users will plan and predict future actions within a system based on their mental models.

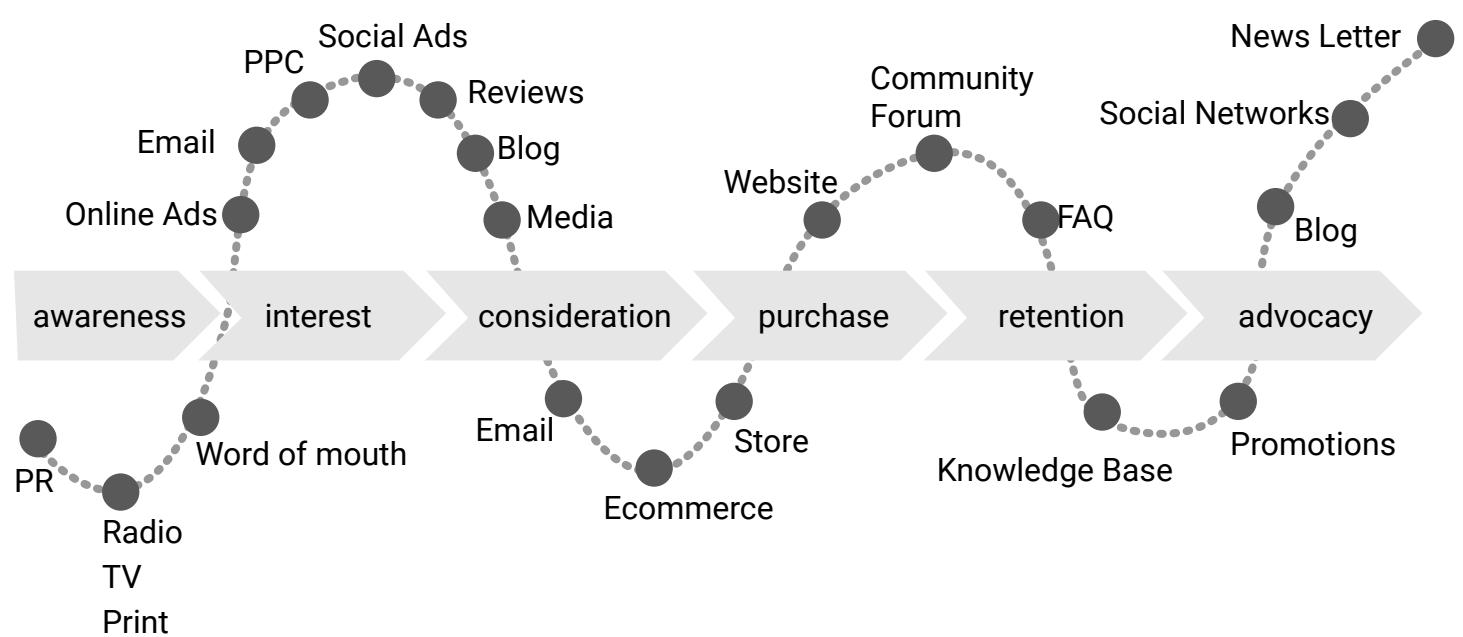
In online shopping user's mental model is analysed and all the beliefs that the user holds about the process is captured. This also takes note of the goals, pain points, motivations etc.



The above image replicates the mental model of a customer. These are some of the parameters which a user would have in his mind during/ post a purchase. These are his pain points , motivations , goals etc

Stages

There are various invisible stages a customer goes through in order to purchase a product. In each of these stages there are various factors which involve in each of stages, for example in the stage of awareness the various factors involved could be the source through which customer gets to know about the product these could be the mediums involved in it etc. These stages denotes how a customer comes into the system and purchases the product. The various stages involved in online shopping are:



Customer Journey Map:

A customer journey map is a visualization of the process that a person goes through in order to accomplish a goal. It's used for understanding and addressing customer needs and pain points.

Talking to the users it was easier to know their goals and pain points involved in purchasing . Customer journey maps also involve the emotional aspect involved as in what a user would feel in the entire process what are the feelings, motivations, before the purpose. Journey Maps also involve the phase of post purchase ie the thoughts of the user after purchasing the product

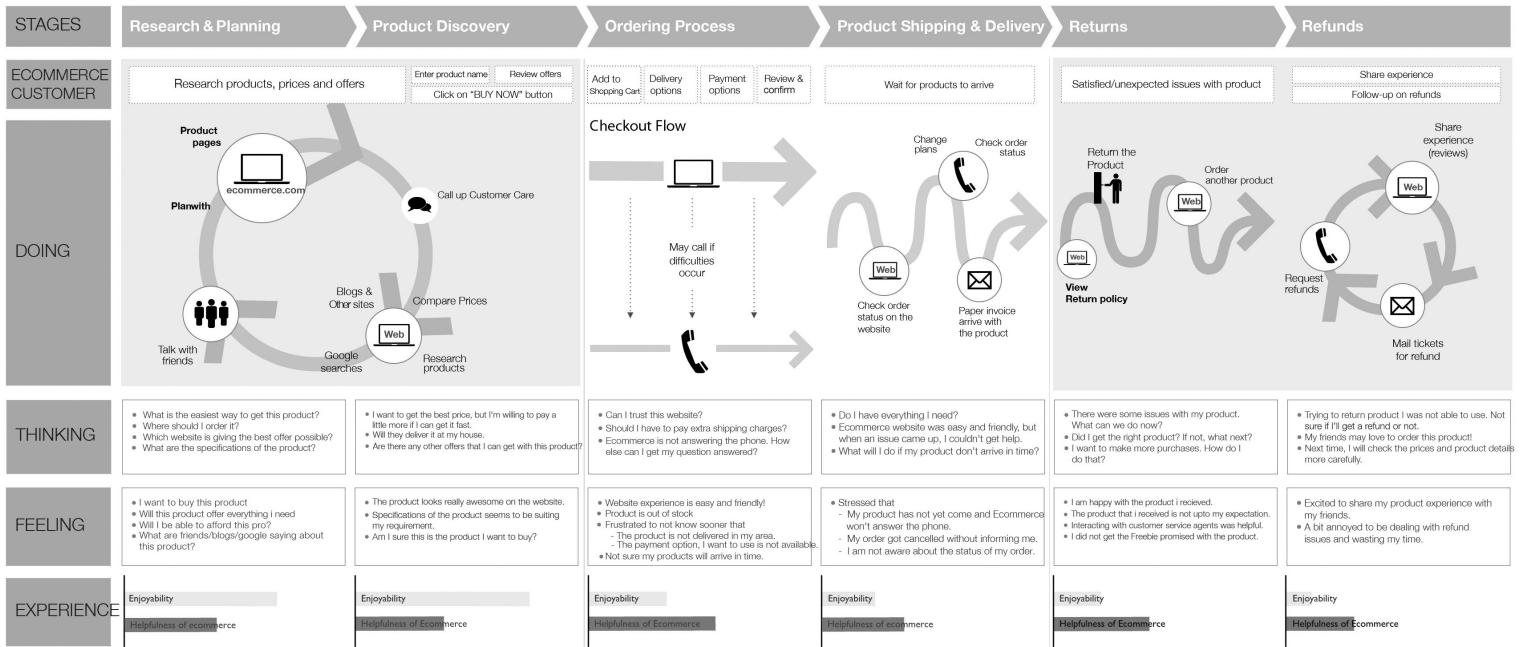
Customer journey maps cover the entire end to end process from the beginning stages of thinking about buying a random product to the feelings of the user after the purchase and hence helps the observer to know what can be done to improve the overall experience of the product as well as some specific phase.

Ecommerce Customer Experience Map

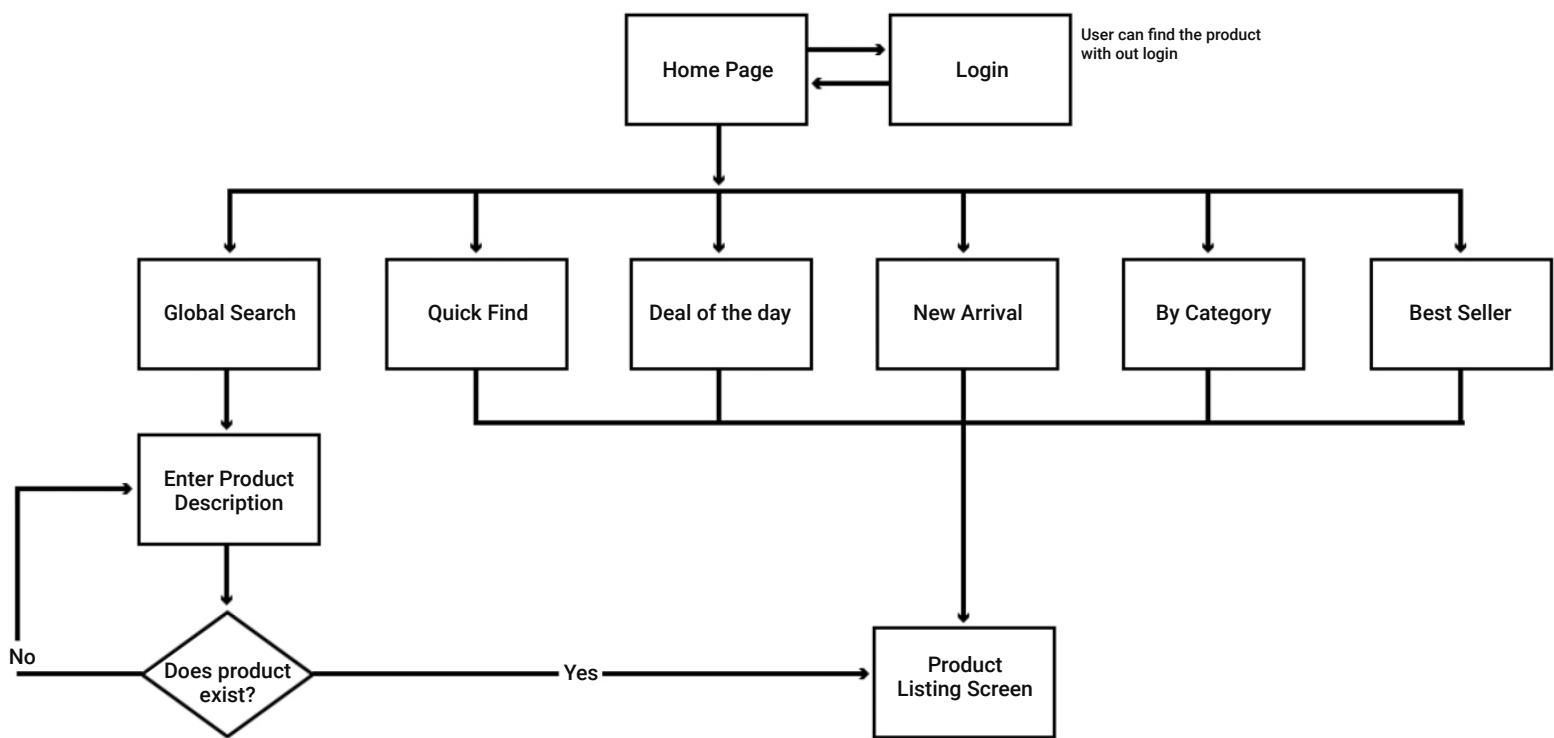
Guiding Principles

People choose online shopping because it is convenient, easy and comfortable	www.ecommerce.com is only one touch point of an online ecommerce customer experience	Customers are most apprehensive during this process	People appreciate an experience that is prompt, friendly & timely and then talk about it
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Customer Journey



Task Flow



Persona:

A persona is a representation of a type of customer. Personas answer the question, "Who are we designing for?" and they help to align strategy and goals to specific user groups.

Online shopping involves various persona which influence the decisions made by the retail organisations. Identifying these different types of persona understanding their goals and their frustrations brings the ideal solution to the return on investment to the company. Various persona in this domain are:

Discount Chaser:

Jacqueline



Age: 28 years
Gender: Female
Job: Receptionist
Location: Delhi
Marital Status: Single

Channels:
Both Online and instore

Devices:
Mobile and Tablet

Place for advice:
Nothing in particular

BIO

Very rarely buy products on full price.
Has no brand loyalty.
Mostly searches products based on best price or discounts.

Goals

Great discount offers and coupons.
Cheap deals.
Best value products.

Motivation

Early access to deals and discounts.
Timely reminders and alerts for deals and sale season.
Discounts and deal selling

Frustrations

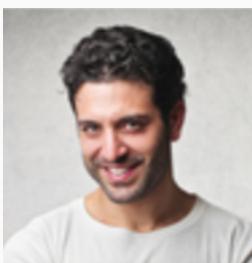
Alot of time wasted on search the desired product
Weird empty space
High delivery charges and taxes unnecessarily.

Key Strategies

Create some loyalty programs for her, so that she sees profit in buying from your store.
Highlight the discount figures on product pages.
Use past data to find her general purchase budget and show them

Researcher:

Dennis



Age: 30 years

Gender: Male

Job: Engineer

Location: Mumbai

Marital Status: Married

Channels:

Both Online and instore

Devices:

Mobile and Laptop

Place for advice:

product reviews, Social media, Q&A

BIO

He does prior research about product aspects, usage, and reviews.

Seeks advice from friends and family.

Performs thorough comparison of in-store and online store offering.

Goals

Full product description and product features mentioned on product page.
Q&A sections on product pages.

Verified customer reviews and ratings on the website.

High-quality product images and videos on the website.

Motivation

User-generated content on the website in form of images and videos.

Descriptive review article or video of the product by a professional blogger.

Product reviews from influencers.websites.

Frustrations

So many double texts is over flooded

Low quality and less descriptive images on the website.

Image shown in the website or app doesn't match with the delivered one.

Key Strategies

Embed product videos and UGC on your website.

Encourage such users to write reviews as they have done much research about the product before buying.

Write high-quality content describing products and their use cases.

Power Shopper:

Neha



Age: 33 years
Gender: Female
Job: Housewife
Location: Goa
Marital Status: Married

Channels:
Mostly Online

Devices:
Mobile

Place for advice:
product reviews,
Social ,influencers
,Q&A

BIO

Buys heavily online.
Expert level shopper.
Great spending power.
Buys for her family daily needs as well.
Frequently buys gifts for friends and family.

Goals

Frequent product inspirations.
Great recommendations.
New, popular and trending things.
Event-based reminders about products.

Motivation

High personalization.
Quick shopping features and fast transactions.
Good gifting product suggestions.
Great savings on product bundles..

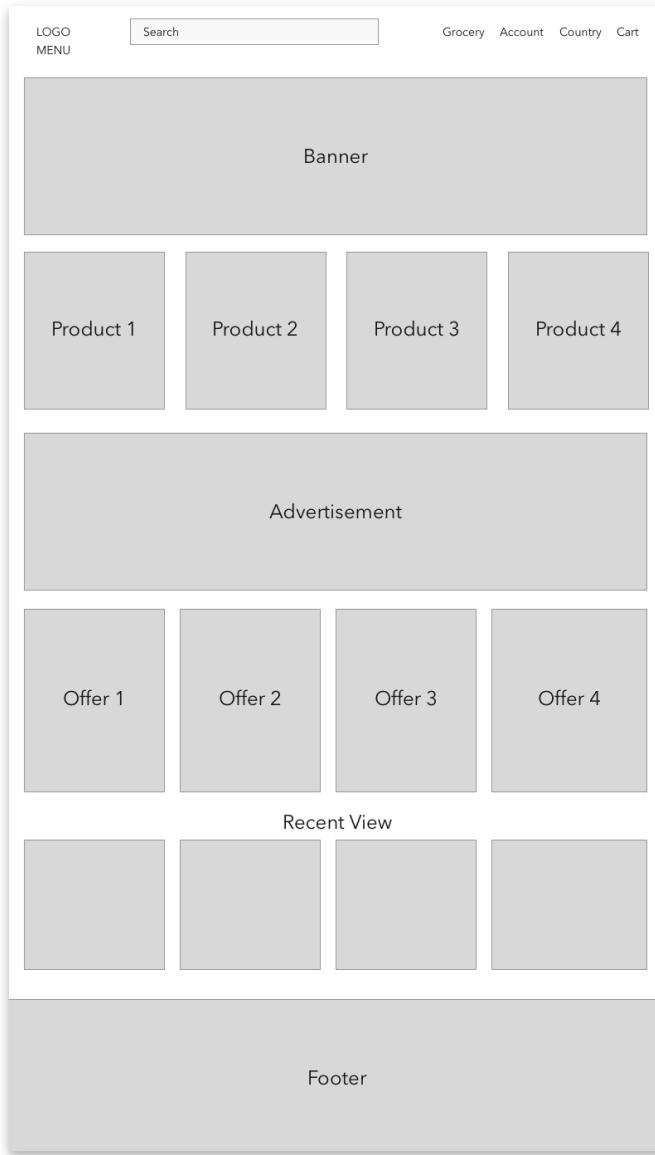
Frustrations

No inspirations for buying and trying out new things.
High delivery charges and taxes.
Site is too crowded and messy

Key Strategies

Create a loyalty program for such frequent buyers.
Analyze her purchase history and other data points to recommend products for her next purchase.
Encourage her to try out new products showing high value in new products.

Wireframe - Home Page



First, adjusting the hero to become the focal point of the page. You could create a separation of the feature areas. Over time, you could train the page to know what is most important to the user or use the right area there to promote items the user doesn't tend to look at.

The side navigation would become cleaner and broken into different categories. You could still use the arrows to open more sub categories in the right to expand out to more specific items. Might also be interesting to give the user the ability to control some of this. If you had statistics around the page views, you could analyze the highly traffic pages and adjust over time.

To the right of that, is a tabbed area that has products in four categories that uses horizontal infinite scroll. You can also add more categories to personalize the experience.

The central area could have a 3 column ad/product campaign space that could be used for items that are frequency capped, items that only show to a specific user for a given amount of time. The items here are important enough to give high prominence so if these are compelling, they will be high traffic items.

It breaks up the space and helps to lead the eye through the page. To the right of that, is a tabbed area that has offers in four categories that uses horizontal infinite scroll. You can also add more categories to personalize the experience..Below to the offter, you can see the recent views.

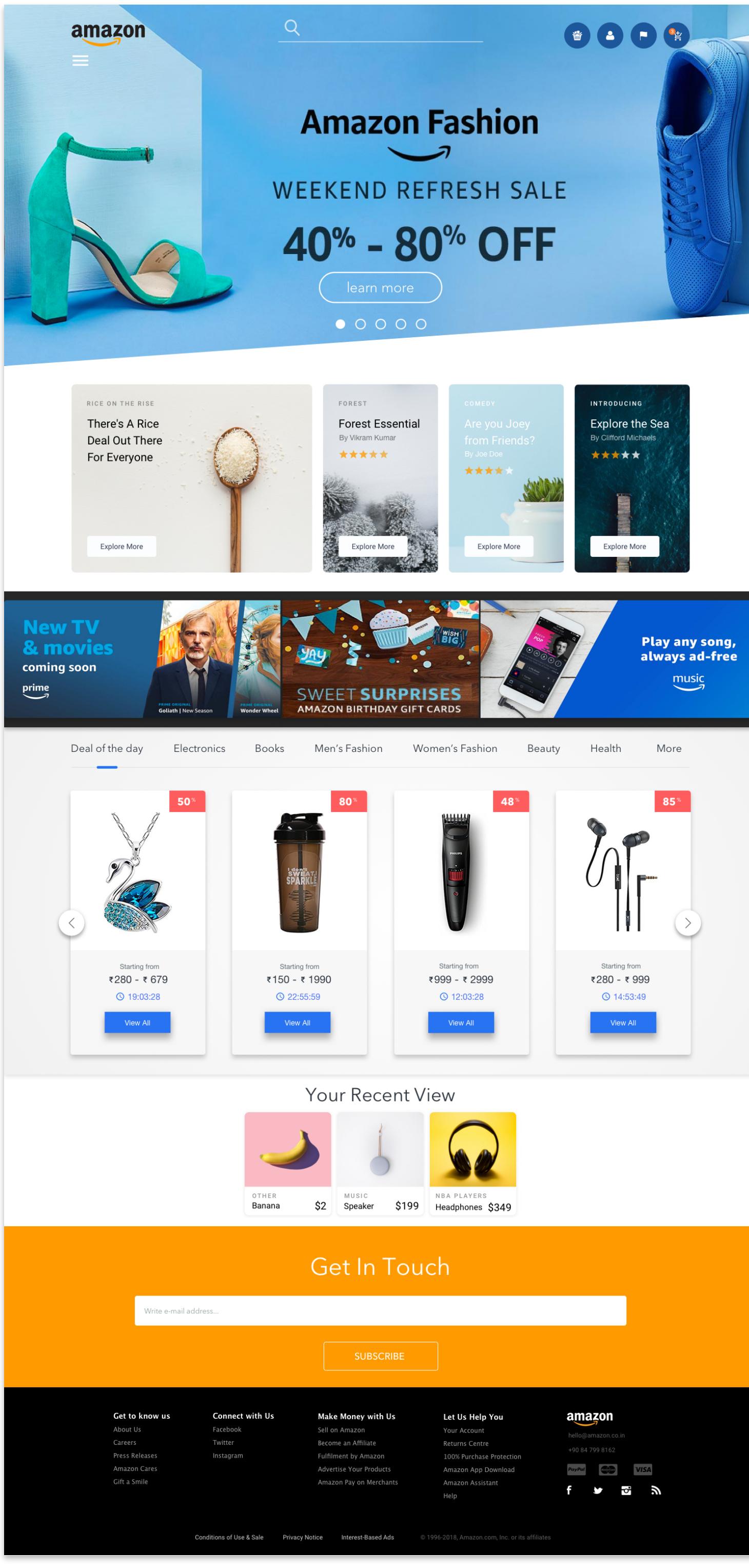
In the footer, As an added feature, this country/language selection should also be one of the dropdowns at the top right of the page, next to the profile icon. As you move from left to right, you can use the next 3 columns to add reviews for previous products you have viewed but not purchased. The last column would be a live chat feature with social media links below that for engagement with Amazon products, services or support.

This is just a basic idea of some changes that could help increase traffic control to the more profitable and user-specific areas of the site. But UX should not be done without analyzing the site statistics and understanding the business objectives. My wireframe is based on some best practices that amazon.com doesn't currently follow. It is overwhelming and could be simplified in order to provide the key component necessary for continued success, personalization. Without keeping the user in mind, the site really loses it's ability to drive sales at the individual level. Without it, it is just the site that people who know what they want come to purchase. Sites should focus on ease of use, user personalization and content prioritization.

Wireframe - Payment Page

Your Order Details		Payments		
Tandem Jump - 4200 Meters		Pay with credit card		
Have a Voucher? <input type="button" value="▼"/>		<input type="text" value="Credit card Number"/>		
Subtotal	1299	<input type="text" value="Expiration"/>	<input type="text" value="Year"/>	
Tax	50	<input type="text" value="CVV"/>		
Shipping				
Total	1349	<input type="button" value="PAY"/>		
or select other payment method				
Cancel your Payment				

Visuals - Home Page (Web)



The screenshot displays the Amazon Home Page with a blue header featuring the Amazon logo and a search bar. The main banner is titled "Amazon Fashion" with a sub-section "WEEKEND REFRESH SALE" and a discount offer of "40% - 80% OFF". Below the banner are four promotional cards: "RICE ON THE RISE" (There's A Rice Deal Out There For Everyone), "FOREST" (Forest Essential by Vikram Kumar), "COMEDY" (Are you Joey from Friends? By Joe Doe), and "INTRODUCING" (Explore the Sea by Clifford Michaels). The middle section features a "New TV & movies coming soon" section with "PRIME ORIGINAL Goliath | New Season" and "PRIME ORIGINAL Wonder Wheel" thumbnail images, along with a "SWEET SURPRISES AMAZON BIRTHDAY GIFT CARDS" offer. The bottom section shows a "Deal of the day" banner with four items: a swan necklace (50% off), a shaker bottle (80% off), a Philips trimmer (48% off), and a pair of earphones (85% off). The page also includes sections for "Your Recent View" showing a banana, a speaker, and headphones, and a "Get In Touch" section with a newsletter sign-up form and social media links.

amazon

≡

Search

Amazon Fashion

WEEKEND REFRESH SALE

40% - 80% OFF

learn more

RICE ON THE RISE

There's A Rice Deal Out There For Everyone

Explore More

FOREST

Forest Essential
By Vikram Kumar

Explore More

COMEDY

Are you Joey from Friends?
By Joe Doe

Explore More

INTRODUCING

Explore the Sea
By Clifford Michaels

Explore More

New TV & movies coming soon

prime

PRIME ORIGINAL Goliath | New Season

PRIME ORIGINAL Wonder Wheel

SWEET SURPRISES AMAZON BIRTHDAY GIFT CARDS

Play any song, always ad-free

music

Deal of the day

Electronics

Books

Men's Fashion

Women's Fashion

Beauty

Health

More

50%

Starting from ₹280 - ₹679
🕒 19:03:28

View All

80%

Starting from ₹150 - ₹1990
🕒 22:55:59

View All

48%

Starting from ₹999 - ₹2999
🕒 12:03:28

View All

85%

Starting from ₹280 - ₹999
🕒 14:53:49

View All

Your Recent View

OTHER Banana \$2

MUSIC Speaker \$199

NBA PLAYERS Headphones \$349

Get In Touch

Write e-mail address...

SUBSCRIBE

Get to know us

About Us

Careers

Press Releases

Amazon Cares

Gift a Smile

Connect with Us

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

Make Money with Us

Sell on Amazon

Become an Affiliate

Fulfilment by Amazon

Advertise Your Products

Amazon Pay on Merchants

Let Us Help You

Your Account

Returns Centre

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Help

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f t i n

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Privacy Notice

Interest-Based Ads

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Visuals - Payment Page (Web)

Your Order

Tandem Jump - 4200 Meters

Have a Voucher?

Subtotal	₹ 1299
Tax	₹ 50
Shipping	Free

To pay

₹1,349

Payments

Pay with credit card 

Credit card number

Expiration

CVC/ CVW 3 or 4 digits code

or select other payment method

Visuals - Mobile Home

The image shows a mobile phone displaying the Amazon mobile home screen. At the top, there's a banner for "Amazon Fashion" with a "WEEKEND REFRESH SALE" and "40% - 80% OFF". Below this is a large central box with the headline "RICE ON THE RISE" and the subtext "There's A Rice Deal Out There For Everyone", accompanied by an image of a wooden spoon filled with rice. A "Explore More" button is at the bottom of this section. Below this are three smaller boxes: one for "Forest Essential" (Forest) by Vikram Kumar, one for "Are you Joey from Friends?" (Comedy) by Joe Doe, and one for "Explore the Sea" (Introducing) by Clifford Michaels. Each of these also has an "Explore More" button. Further down is a section for "New TV & movies coming soon" featuring "Goliath | New Season" and "Wonder Wheel" (Prime Original). At the bottom, there are two more sections: one for "SWEET SURPRISES AMAZON BIRTHDAY GIFT CARDS" with an image of a wooden table decorated with birthday items, and another showing a smartphone displaying the "FRESH POP" app interface.

Amazon Fashion

WEEKEND REFRESH SALE

40% - 80% OFF

RICE ON THE RISE

There's A Rice Deal Out There For Everyone

Explore More

FOREST

Forest Essential

By Vikram Kumar

★★★★★

Explore More

COMEDY

Are you Joey from Friends?

By Joe Doe

★★★★★

Explore More

INTRODUCING

Explore the Sea

By Clifford Michaels

★★★★★

Explore More

New TV & movies coming soon

prime

PRIME ORIGINAL

Goliath | New Season

PRIME ORIGINAL

Wonder Wheel

SWEET SURPRISES

AMAZON BIRTHDAY GIFT CARDS

FRESH POP

Visuals - Mobile Payment

Your Order

Tandem Jump - 4200 Meters

Have a Voucher? 

Subtotal ₹ 1299

Tax ₹ 50

Shipping Free

To pay

₹ 1,349

Payments

Pay with credit card 

Credit card number

Month Year

CVC/ CW

3 or 4 digits code

Pay Now

or select other payment method

Pay with *PayPal*

Conclusion

In my opinion researching 'Amazon.com' was one great learning as scale of operation is massive. Being ecommerce website, the areas of improvement will always exist, there are few best practices which they have used and there are few than can be fixed by us using UX & Visual design essentials.

The end goal of any ecommerce website is to provide the customer with ease of shopping or we can say proving beyond the obvious for what they came for. By enhancing the whole experience, we can add value to customer by pleasing them with rich content.