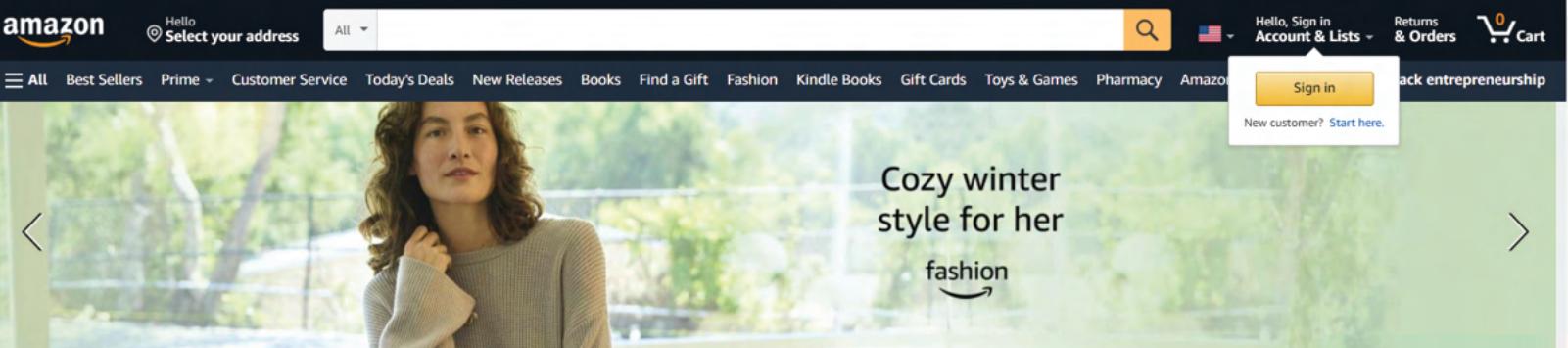


Signifiers and Mapping

Assignment 2

Sedi Aidam



An analysis of the symbols, Icons, and Indices and the affordances they provide present in the Amazon.com masthead

Icons



Cart

Physical recreation of a shopping cart to represent the basket of items you have chosen to potentially purchase much like shopping in store



Search

Magnifying glass representing the action of searching



Flag

Menu items in dropdown include changing language, and setting country/region. The flag is represents the country

Symbols



next to "Select your address"

This symbol has been socially accepted to mean that you are to indicate your location. It is not representative of a common tool or process that exists.



dropdown symbol that appears multiple times in the masthead next to key indices

Representation of the fact the user has to click to reveal a list of related menu items.



Hamburger Menu Symbol

Similar to dropdown Click to reveal more, except the menu items represent different sections of the site

Search Bar

Socially accepted that the user is to input terms into the blank white bar and click the search button or enter after to gain access to the results of their search

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Indices

The different categories to browse through are indicated with Indices such as "Best Sellers", "Prime", "Customer Service" and so on along that bar

Certain elements have also been reinforced with the addition of an index in the case that a user might not have complete understanding of what a icon or symbol would reveal.

- The shopping cart icon and "Cart" added next to it, with a number in the cart representing the number of items
- The hamburger menu and "All"
- The waypoint and "Select Your Address"

In comparison the "Search" icon and "Flag" do not have Indices showing that these are more universal icons that do not need extra reinforcement in order to communicate to the customer what they mean



Logo

The logo mainly consists of the Index of the company's name plus an added visual element that also helps to represent the brand. The curved arrow acts as an icon representing a smile which is also highlighted by the slight curve of the bottom of the Z. Just looking at the logo alone has a corporate but friendly look. I personally also think the arrow doubles as a reference to the shipping aspect of the company as arrows are linked to directionality and represent something moving from one place to another.

Analysis

In terms of target demographic it is clear that amazon is trying to appeal to a very wide range of consumers with their site. The amount of indices on the top bar communicates the scope of the company and how they have their fingers in multiple industries. Not only that but the fact that they are confident to display all these ventures on the homepage of their site shows the consumer that they will receive amazon quality service no matter the category (even if it is not necessarily true- I don't know how much I would trust amazon's "Pharmacy" option.) At the same time these indices are organized from left to right, the direction one reads in western languages, from greatest emphasis, such as "Best sellers" and "Prime" membership, to least relevant, such as "Amazon Home" and "Sell".

Adding on, I noticed at the far right every time I refreshed the index would change. At one point it was "Shop black-owned businesses", I refreshed and it was "Celebrate Lunar New Year", again it was "Kick Off Game Day", and I am sure there are many more targeted phrases that can be embedded in the site. This is amazon trying to make a small nod to cultural inclusivity and seasonal events. The fact that it is the furthest right option and does not remain consistent when refreshing communicates that it is not as important as the user's actual shopping experience.