



# USABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

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## **Usability AND Accessibility**

A user-centric website enables users to execute their tasks more quickly and with less hassle. This is often achieved by extensively studying the user and considering or sometimes even incorporating them at every stage of design.

Usability, according to the International Standards Organization, is “the extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a specified context of use.”

"Accessibility is generally used to refer to the usability of a tool or object by the broadest possible range of users including those with physical, cognitive, or technological disabilities. Web accessibility is the ease with which people with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate, interact with, and contribute to the web. Web accessibility also benefits others, including older people with changing abilities due to aging”.

According to The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) “web accessibility is a way of ensuring people with disabilities are still able to understand, perceive, navigate, and interact with or contribute to the web. Essentially, web accessibility refers to the ability of people with any sort of disability, including auditory, visual, speech, cognitive, and neurological disabilities, to be able to access the web. Web accessibility is also vital for those who don’t have disabilities.”

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines are a series of suggestions for making all sorts of web content more accessible, particularly for persons with impairments of any kind. Although the guidelines are geared at persons with disabilities, they are useful to all users. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines are internationally recognised and generally acknowledged guidelines that should be taken into account when creating any web content.

## **Website - AJIO**

The website I have chosen for this assignment is AJIO which is an Indian E-Commerce website launched by Mukesh Ambani (Owner of Reliance) globally at the Lakme Fashion Week on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. AJIO's headquarters is located in Bangalore, Karnataka, India, and is among the Reliance Industry's initial steps into e-commerce. This company is a fashion and lifestyle brand and specializes in a wide variety of products from clothing, footwear, and accessories to home and kitchen products.

### **Who are the target users?**

According to a survey the target audience of AJIO has a strong youth user base, aged between 16 and 40 who are most active in shopping. 40 – 55 aged users are the next active group. 55 – 77 years aged users are rarely buyers from the AJIO.

### **First-time users and regular users**

At first, the website looks a little overwhelming, the first thing you will notice when you open the website is so many slideshows showing a wide range of deals and offers. For a regular user, it may feel normal but for a first-timer, it may feel a little overwhelming to see the screens sliding on loop without any static information. But as mentioned above for regular users, depending on their preference this website may be quite user-friendly and once they get used to all the navigation bars and filters it is easy to navigate through the website. Some may not be bothered by the numerous sales posts sliding through the screen but some may get extremely irritated by it and as a user, this is something I would not prefer.

### **Is this website easy to remember? – Demand it places on short term memory**

In terms of short-term memory, it depends on what part of the website you are using. AJIO's navigation bar is pretty like any other navigation bar, it has 5 sections Women, Men, Kids, Indie, and Home & Kitchen when you click on one of these options it will further display a dropdown list of items related to the option clicked, this part is pretty standard and one can easily remember where are all the items displayed and if not they can search for it in the search bar next to the navigation but when it comes to the offers/sales there is no fixed record of it as it is all over the place, even when you will click on women it will direct you to a page consisting of various sales and not to the exact items page. This may cause the user to get lost and not be

able to look for a particular sale and it would be best to have a separate section for sales in the navigation bar.

When shopping in a traditional manner, that means going to a shopping mall and buying clothes or anything nobody would want to see the entire mall and would directly go to the shop they want to right? This is exactly the opposite of what AJIO offers the users. It sometimes feels like AJIO is all about sales and nothing else.

## **Interaction styles, widgets and functionality PROS and CONS**

AJIO website allows users to search, view products, add products to a cart and complete a transaction like other online shopping websites. In terms of interaction styles, this website has a few. It uses both a navigation selection option and a search bar fill-in option. Besides that, the users can log in or sign up to see their Wishlist represented by a heart icon but the question is why is there a need to log in or sign up to be able to add or view an item that we may want to purchase, nobody has time for that.

Another thing to notice about interaction is that once you click on an item you can't go back to the previous page by clicking on the back button but you have to close the page which can be frustrating at times as AJIO always opens items to a new tab and it is not possible to go back and forth conveniently. Apart from this AJIO item list goes on forever it does not have a limit. For example, you choose dresses from the women's section in the navigation bar, the site will direct you to the page showing a full range of dresses with a filter option on the left side by which you can refine your search by certain parameters like price, colors, size, occasion, etc. which is pretty convenient and easy to use but when you scroll down the page to view the dresses you will notice that there is no pagination on the website which is a process of separating a digital content into individual pages and because of that you will have to scroll down all over to the end and scrolling back to the top would be the next task. Also, when you scroll down the page, the sidebar showing the filters remain at the top, the position is not fixed hence making it inconvenient to access it through scrolling.

The interaction widgets are clearly labelled throughout the website and should not cause any kind of trouble with that. One good thing to notice is, that the item viewing page has a grid view option where the default setting is three items per column which you can change to five items per column.

The checking out and payment process are also pretty convenient and it also offers various methods of payment which is a good thing as it will not limit any age group buying from this website. In India, people still prefer to go by cash on delivery and that too is mostly old people whereas youth prefer online payment, therefore this website offers both making it accessible to every target user age group.

Overall, the website works well consistently. Links work and everything responds. Unfortunately, the website does not satisfy reliability specified in 'Responsive web design (RWD)', which means that it does not display correctly across a range of devices and displays or screen sizes. AJIO website does not respond to the size of the user's screen when they scale it down.

### **Is the site accessible to everyone?**

In terms of the accessibility of the website, there is no way in which a blind person would be able to use this site as it didn't seem to be taken into account during the designing process. There is no kind of automatic assistance feature available on this website. Even for people who can see but are visually handicapped, this website offers insufficient support. With too many sales slideshows frequently changing with distinct font sizes and colors, a not too well-organized navigation, a visually challenged user would have a tough time using this website. However, there are techniques to increase accessibility and usability.

Valid markup is essential for producing webpages that clients can easily grasp and effectively use. Screen readers and braille displays (Assistive technologies – like one ZARA offers), for example, can render pages and stylesheets with appropriate markup making sure the site is assessable to everyone irrespective of their disability. One can use the W3C's HTML and CSS validators for this purpose.

AJIO is a shopping website and it consists of tons of images and for the images using "Alt" text is one of the suggested ways for improving the accessibility of the images on the websites. With this the images will be also accessible to screen readers and other assistive features on the website. The Alt text of an image should be descriptive but precise enough to give the user key details about the product. Longer explanations about the product can be provided by using "longdesc" tag of HTML. These additions to HTML and CSS would definitely be very useful for blind users whereas for visually handicapped users providing a settings bar on the website

to manipulate the brightness, saturation, and other color features along with features to changes the font size and font weight would be the best solution.

## **Reviews by the users**

Some of the key comments directly from the users who have used this website –

“The Navigation is confusing, I keep hovering between Categories and Brands.”

“There’s too much-mixed content on the screen, very confusing to my eyes. The page setup is very random”

“Remove complicated UI, Make it simple and user friendly”

## **The reason why I chose AJIO and my prototype**

I am a person who loves online shopping and browse through a lot of shopping websites before making a final decision. I have used a wide range of online websites to buy various things ranging from clothes to even furniture hence It was easier to work on something I have experience with. Ajio as a shopping website is very good, their products are high class and the range is pretty huge but as a user, I never felt fully satisfied with the way things are arranged on this website. When I buy something online, I always look for some form of proper placement of things so that I get an immersive experience rather than getting distracted by a wide variety of things arranged without any sense of order.

The prototype I have decided for this website is simple, which is to add an extra button along with the ‘add to Wishlist’ and ‘cart button’ that is a ‘user profile button’ which basically will pop up a small modal screen with some input fields and an image holder. The basic idea is when a person uses this website for the first time, they can save their basic details such as name, gender, age-range, height, weight, their preferred colors and products and also can select few offer checkboxes for example 50% off, 90% off, buy one get two free etc. so that the entire home page of the website customizes according to the person’s preference and not show any unnecessary deals which causes cluttering as in the original website. Also, I have customized the whole front page of the website. Below the navigation bar I have attached a div to show the latest and the most trending offer. Below that will be a slideshow of images depicting the navbar sections that is image of women fashion then men fashion. Kids fashion, Indie followed by home & kitchen.

After this slideshow will be a sliding div section showing the latest collections, user can manually swipe this section and after this there will be a section showing some of the latest deals offered. The idea is to show minimal things on the very first page giving it a concise and cleaner look.