

# Affordances and Signifiers

Affordances are the relationship between an object and the possible actions that can be taken with it, describing the relationship between the object and the person using it, while signifiers tell the user where that action should take place. An example of an affordance would be a chair, which affords sitting and support. An example of a signifier is a sign on a door that says "Push" (Norman, 2013).

## Issue 1



The navigation bar on the Toronto Cupcakes website is not visible when you are using the site. There are no options to move to other pages unless you click the hamburger menu in the corner of the site, making it confusing to users as to what their possible actions are because they are not visible.

# Redesign 1

TORONTO CUPCAKE

Home About Occasions Cupcakes Community FAQs Resources Contact Cart

## TORONTO CUPCAKE

USA TARIFFS



This redesign is better than the original because all of the pages of the website are clearly outlined and the user is aware of all of their options within the site immediately. It also eliminates some of the unnecessary tabs that were in the original menu bar, like the corporate events and the delivery page, as that information can be found within other tabs. These changes make navigating the website easier and quicker, and eliminate redundant links.

# Issue 2



The issue here is the bar on the top of the screen is misleading. It has a message “Check out our new Corporate event logo cupcakes” and the cursor changes to a pointer which would make the user assume that the message is clickable, but it is not. It also has a shadow effect which makes it look like a large button, making it seem like there are more actions than there really are. The bar signifies actions that are not possible.

# Redesign 2

TORONTO CUPCAKE

Home About Occasions Cupcakes Community FAQs Resources Contact Cart

## TORONTO CUPCAKE

Check out our NEW Corporate Events page!

Read our statement on the USA Tariffs!

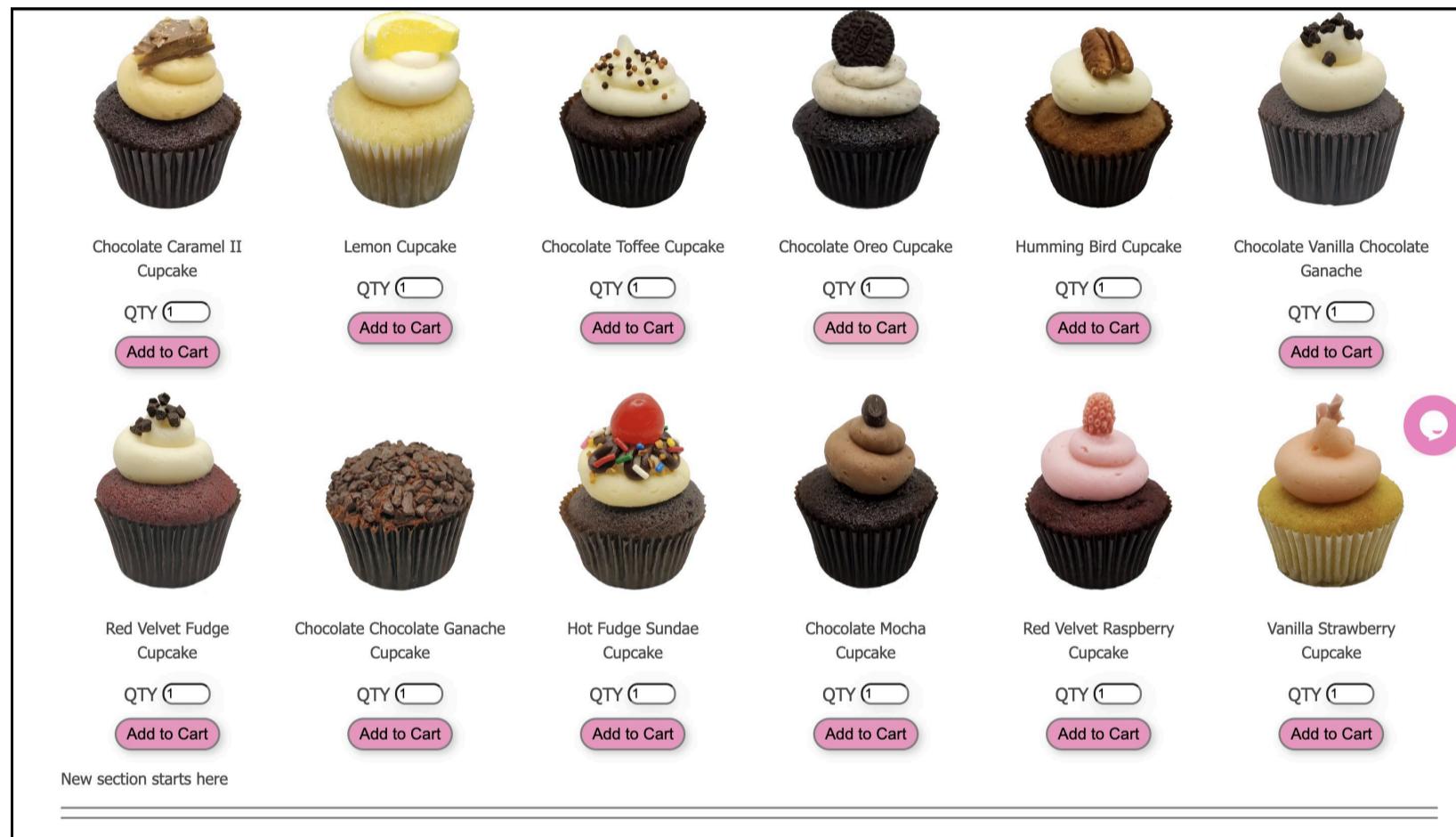


This redesign is better than the original because it gives the user a link to see the promotion of the Corporate Events section of the website without them having to click around to find it themselves. I also included the same styled button link to see the shop's statement regarding the US Tariffs on the home page. I used effects on the buttons to make them appear clickable, as they would be on the site.

# Mapping

Mapping is the attribute of an object that lets the user know what the result will be from an interaction. An example of this is a stove with the burner knobs being placed in the same pattern as the burners (Norman, 2013). The same pattern formation makes it easy for the user to know which burner they are powering on.

## Issue 1



The issue here is that the action of clicking "Add to Cart" from the cupcake page takes you directly to the cart and interrupts the shopping experience. This can be annoying if trying to order multiple different flavors and being directed back and forth between the cart and the cupcake order page. This action resulting from the button is unexpected and does not reflect the button label.

A screenshot of a shopping cart page. At the top, there's a table showing three items: Vanilla Vanilla (Cupcakes), Humming Bird (Cupcakes), and Lemon (Cupcakes), each with a quantity of 1. Below this is an 'Update Cart' button. The main area shows a summary table with columns for QTY, PRICE, and AMOUNT. The total is \$11.25. Buttons for 'Place Order', 'Continue Shopping', and 'Clear Cart' are at the bottom. The footer includes links for Home, About, Contact, Corporate Events, Cupcakes, Occasions, Privacy Policy, Careers, and a 'Toggle High Contrast' link. A copyright notice at the bottom states: "© 2024 Toronto Cupcake. All rights reserved."

| DELETE | QTY | Flavour/Item    | Type     |
|--------|-----|-----------------|----------|
|        | 1   | Vanilla Vanilla | Cupcakes |
|        | 1   | Humming Bird    | Cupcakes |
|        | 1   | Lemon           | Cupcakes |

| QTY            | PRICE | AMOUNT   |
|----------------|-------|----------|
| Total Cupcakes | 3     |          |
| Singles        | 3     | 3.75     |
| Subtotal:      |       | \$ 11.25 |

# Redesign 1

The image shows a grid of twelve cupcake options, each with a small image, name, quantity selector, and an 'Add to Cart' button. A pink callout box in the top right corner indicates an item has been added to the cart.

| Image | Name                                | Quantity                             | Add to Cart                                |
|-------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
|       | Chocolate Caramel II Cupcake        | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Lemon Cupcake                       | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Chocolate Toffee Cupcake            | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Chocolate Oreo Cupcake              | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Humming Bird Cupcake                | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Chocolate Vanilla Chocolate Ganache | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Red Velvet Fudge Cupcake            | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Chocolate Chocolate Ganache Cupcake | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Hot Fudge Sundae Cupcake            | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Chocolate Mocha Cupcake             | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Red Velvet Raspberry Cupcake        | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |
|       | Vanilla Strawberry Cupcake          | <input type="button" value="QTY 1"/> | <input type="button" value="Add to Cart"/> |

New section starts here

This redesign is better than the original because it clearly states that the item has been added to the cart and gives the option to view the cart without automatically redirecting the user to it. The resulting action from the button matches the user's expectation of adding the item to their cart and does not force them to take any other unwanted action as the original does.

# Issue 2

The screenshot shows the homepage of [torontocupcake.com/cupcakes.html#](https://www.torontocupcake.com/cupcakes.html#). The top navigation bar features a repeating logo of a cupcake with the text "TORONTO CUPCAKE". A pink banner at the top right announces "Sunday, October 5, 2025 - Toronto" and "Check out our new Corporate event logo cupcakes". The left sidebar has a pink background with white text, listing categories: HOME, ABOUT, CORPORATE EVENTS, OCCASIONS, and CUPCAKES. Below these are sections for ALWAYS AVAILABLE, HOLIDAYS, SPECIAL EVENTS, CUSTOM, COMMUNITY, FAQS, RESOURCES, and CONTACT. The main content area has a white background. It features a "USA TARIFFS" button in a pink bar. Below it, under the "Cupcakes" heading, is a section titled "Always Available" with a "One Dozen One Click" link. To the right is a circular icon with a speech bubble. In the center is a red box labeled "TORONTO CUPCAKE" with a zipper pull, surrounded by twelve cupcakes of various flavors and decorations. The caption "Assorted Dozen" and price "\$41.50/doz" are displayed below the image.

The issue here is that there is no clear page for ordering. To order cupcakes, the user must click on a section under “Cupcakes” and then click their desired flavors from there. It is not immediately clear how to order from the site before clicking around. The “Cupcakes” label doesn’t reflect the action of ordering from the site, and the tab itself is not even clickable. This can cause confusion or frustration from the user not being able to click the link despite it having the same clickable attributes as the rest of the menu.

# Redesign 2

TORONTO CUPCAKE

Home About Occasions Cupcakes **Order Now** Community FAQs Resources Contact Cart

**Order Now**

Always Available      Holiday      Special Events

Cupcake Name  
QTY   
**Add to Cart**

Cupcake Name

Cupcake Name

Cupcake Name

Cupcake Name

Cupcake Name



This redesign is better than the original because it is a clearly laid out ordering page that is available from the main menu. I added the same navigation bar I created for the other redesigns and added an “Order Now” page to it that has options on the page for looking at the different cupcake options offered. Adding this page to the navigation makes it clear to the user where to go to order from the site. I also made the page bold at the top to highlight the current page being shown, as well as the underline under the cupcake section to show the current section being shown.

## References

Norman, D. A. (2013). *The design of everyday things*. The MIT Press.