

Web Information Management

Usability analysis of a website

Author: *Brugnolaro Filippo*

Student ID: 2087666

Date: *27th March 2023*

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Name and Domain	2
3	Home Page	2
3.1	Structure	2
3.2	Informative axes	4
3.2.1	WHERE did the user arrive?	5
3.2.2	WHO is behind the website?	5
3.2.3	WHY should the user stay?	6
3.2.4	WHAT choices does the user have?	6
3.2.5	WHEN (latest news)	7
3.2.6	HOW to arrive where the user wants?	8
3.3	Navigation	8
3.4	Asking for Personal Data	8
3.5	Scrolling	8
3.5.1	Vertical	8
3.5.2	Horizontal	8
3.6	Bloated Design	9
3.7	3D Interfaces	9
3.8	Menu	9
3.9	Visual Metaphores	10
3.10	Text	10
3.11	Attention Map	11
3.11.1	F-shape Map	11
3.11.2	Images	11
3.12	Searching	11
4	Internal Pages	12
4.1	Informative axes	12
4.2	Advanced Search	12
4.3	Search Results	13
4.4	Product	14
4.4.1	Visual Description	14
4.4.2	Textual Description	14
4.4.3	Price	14
4.5	Checkout	14

1 Introduction

This document contains the usability analysis of a company situated in Cittadella, a small city near Padua.

Brugnolaro Calzature is a shop which mainly sells shoes both online and in the physical store. It varies its collection taking articles from traditional brands to the ones of the vegan shoes' market. It has been one of the first shops coming in the web when it was not known so much.

The type of the website is an e-commerce and in this document I will show which are the good and bad aspects, analyzing it in an accurate way. It will be picked the home page and all the pages that guide to a particular product.

2 Name and Domain

The website URL is <https://www.brugnolaro.com/it/>.

The domain's name is *brugnolaro* and it sounds good: it has been shortened because the full name should be *Brugnolaro Calzature Store*. Length it is neither long nor short, so it could be easy to memorize. If the full name had been used as domain's name, people would probably need more effort in order to remember it. Maybe in this case it should be good to add some references to what actually the shop is selling (shoes), but anyway it is good to maintain a decent length.

The *.com* domain is used and this is a good point because people are used with it.

3 Home Page

The home page is how the website appears to users, so it has to give a clear idea about the content of internal pages. Moreover, it has to provide all the necessary information to the user in a fast and clear way.

Before analyzing it, we define how the home page's structure is composed.

3.1 Structure

This subsection has the aim of presenting the home page structure.

After entering in the website (figure 1), we can recognize some elements such as:

- internal advertising banner;
- banner for contacts, social and sign in button;
- logo;
- navbar with links for other sections of the website;
- search bar;
- favourites, product comparison and bucket buttons;
- big image (more information in section §3.6);



Figure 1: Home page (first presentation)

Going down using the scroll, there are some suggestions for the e-commerce sections (figure 2).

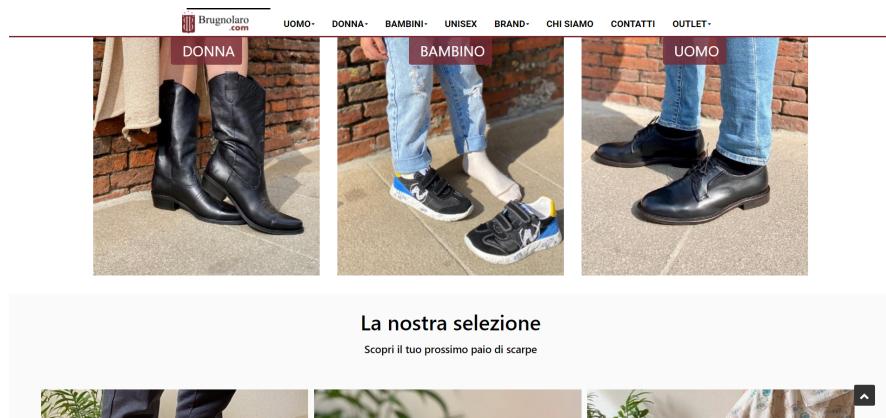


Figure 2: Home page (e-commerce selection)

Then there are some informations about customer experiences and brands the company sells (figure 3).

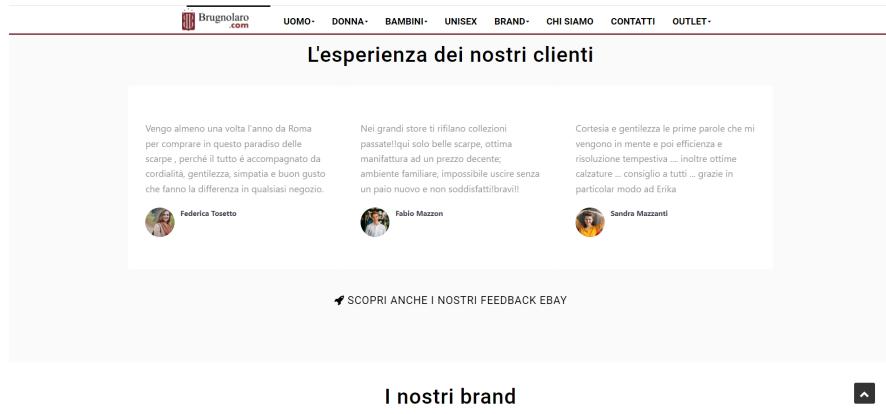


Figure 3: Home page (customers experience and brands)

Finally, there is a footer at the bottom of the page which contains the possibility of subscription to the newsletter website and many other informations (figure 4).

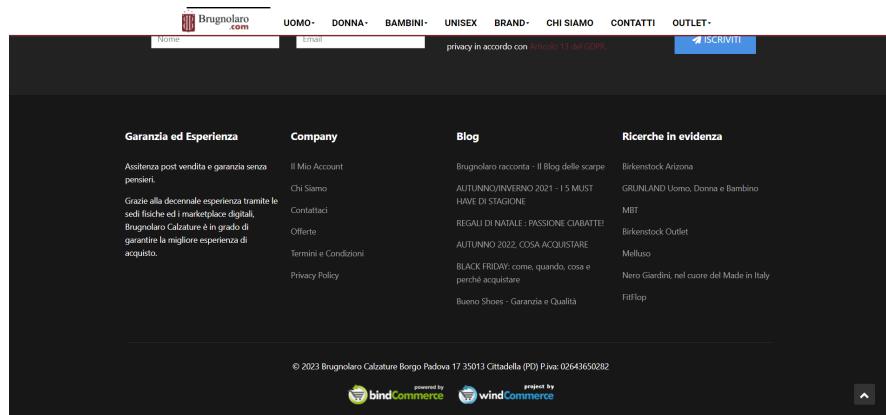


Figure 4: Home page (footer)

3.2 Informative axes

During the design of a webpage, it is important to answer first to what in journalism is called the 6 W which are:

- Where?
- Who?
- Why?
- What?
- When?

- How?

This can enable the possibility for people to collect the main informations which are essential for their permanence in the website.

3.2.1 WHERE did the user arrive?

A webpage should allow to the users to know about their relative position in the website. If the "where" axis is not there, the user may feel lost, which is a sensation that may make the user angry.

When the user enters directly in the home page for the first time (fig. 1), he will see a complete menu, which contains all the destinations available. That is really good. In fact the user can find easily his way for what he is searching for.

There is no breadcrumbs in the home page. It should always appear in order to make the users able to understand where they are placed in the website, but in this particular case it could be acceptable.

3.2.2 WHO is behind the website?

A webpage should give the information about the website's owner, so "who" is behind the website.

There is the Brugnolaro's logo on the top-left corner, which is really good to immediately get the identity of the website's owner. Maybe a little critic could be about that the logo's position is a little decentered from the top-left's magic spot, but still it doesn't care. It is clear also that the logo would work only if the user already knows the company and what they do.

Another place where the user can find information about the owner is on the footer (scrolling so much!). Here he can see more details such as "*Chi siamo*", "*Contattaci*" or the copyright notification with the sponsor which has been used to construct the website. (figure 5)

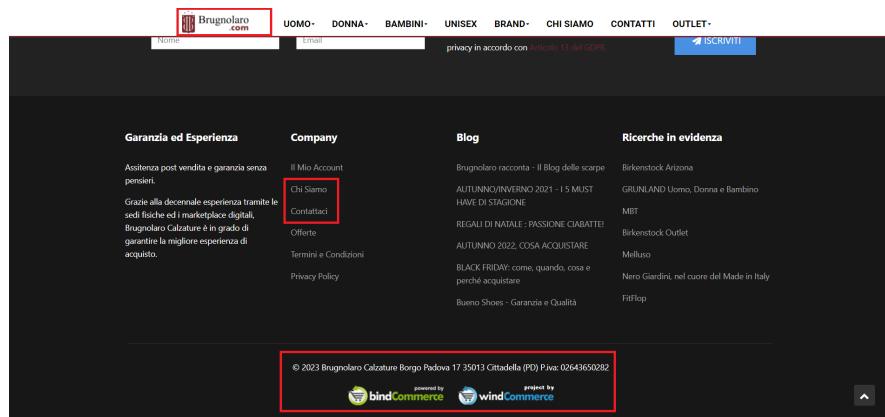


Figure 5: Home page (footer who)

3.2.3 WHY should the user stay?

A webpage page should provide motivations to users to persuade them to stay and navigate within the website.

Watching the homepage with no scroll, there is no indication about any reason to stay, but, if we scroll a little bit, there is a section dedicated to customers' reviews. This could be very useful because the owner expose himself to the judgment of customers without any fear (giving also the possibility to the user to see eBay's reviews) (figure 3).

There are also the brief description of some advantages given by the company to the customers and could play an important role too (figure 6).

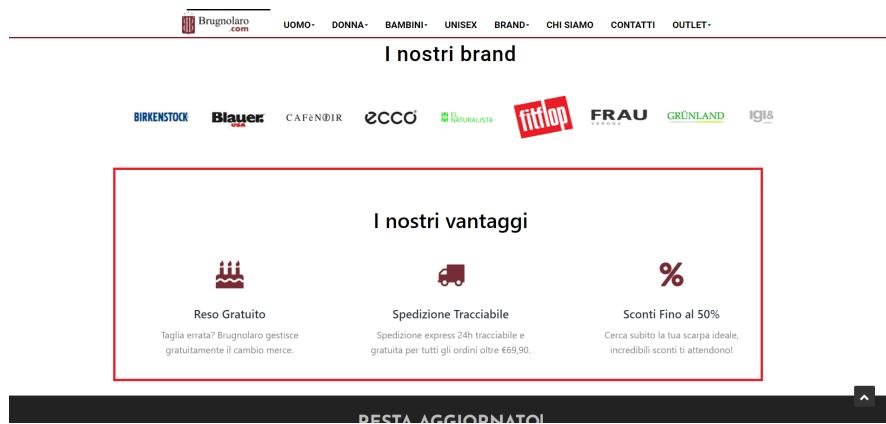


Figure 6: Home page (why)

I think that this content which has the goal to convince users to stay in the website should be moved up in order not to force the user to make so much scroll which creates a lot of computational effort.

3.2.4 WHAT choices does the user have?

A webpage should give the users access to all the possible destinations of the website.

There is the menu (more information in section §3.8) which basically provides all macro searches for a particular kind of articles. This speeds up the search of the user to a specific product and it is considered a good thing. There is also the expansion of the menu in which the user can choose a more specific category and this provides a very good pace in terms of navigation (figure 7).

Finally the presence of relevant searches in the footer can also be a good idea for speeding up main researches (figure 4)

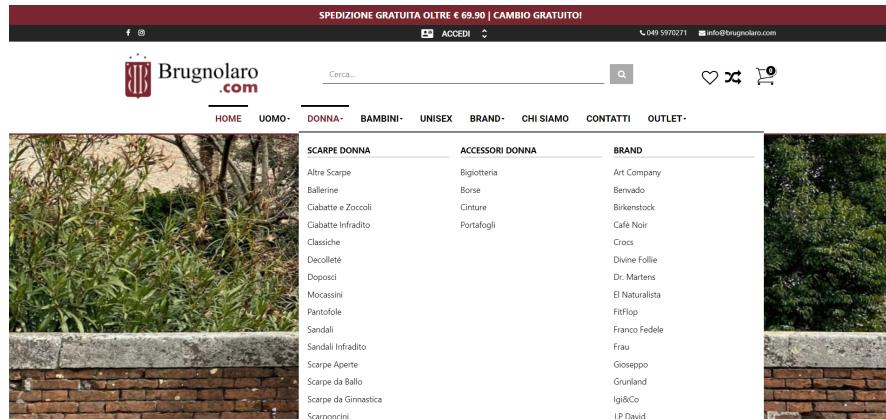


Figure 7: Home page (what)

3.2.5 WHEN (latest news)

A webpage should provide to the users all the latest news regarding the products and the company.

There are two things that suggest something similar, even if it is not intuitive and the user could not be able to find it in an easy way. The first one is the blog section in the footer which contains links for blog articles about what is going on in the company and which are the latest discount and product arrivals. The last one is about the newsletter with 5% of discount if user subscribe with his mail.

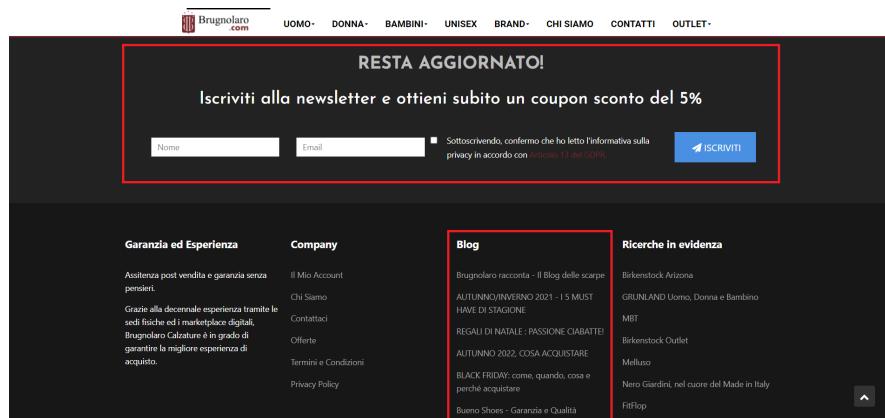


Figure 8: Home page (when)

The blog is good because it allows to save some space in the page (and scrolling too!) and it connects directly to the links for the latest news. The newsletter could be useful for keeping the user aware about news about the company which are basically what it is written in the blog and it attracts users for the discount, but it has as drawback the fact that users have to give some data for subscription (which is not desirable).

3.2.6 HOW to arrive where the user wants?

A website should offer the possibility to the users to access and collect information in a fast and smart way.

There is a search bar which very appreciated by the users.

Again the menu contains all macro searches and then more precise ones. (see section §3.2.4)

3.3 Navigation

The website is not handling the "lost in navigation problem" in an excellent way. It is true that the menu is shown in both home and internal pages which makes the user feel more comfortable, but the breadcrumbs are not available.

Regarding the way the user can understand visited or not visited links, the website is not doing a good job. In fact there is not any difference between the colors of visited and not visited links. That is a bad choice because the user has to be able to remember already visited places. thus the navigation will be heavier because users can forget pages that they have already visited. Moreover if they visit a page in which they did not find any informations, the users are getting angry.

Anyway it is good the fact that no link is opening the target page on a new tab or window. In fact it avoids the users to feel uncomfortable.

The navigation is pretty easy, thanks to the main menu.

Talking about the back button, it looks like there is the need to press it every time because of the breadcrumbs' lack.

3.4 Asking for Personal Data

Avoiding the newsletter and the sign in possibility for which the user is free to use them or not, there is no blocking pop-up asking for user data. So the website is not trying to collect users' data creating what is called "*club effect*".

3.5 Scrolling

Scrolling requires computational effort and so for this reason it is better having not so much scroll. Typically users are used to scroll up to 1.3 "screens" of a website page and horizontal scrolling is considered a bad solution.

3.5.1 Vertical

In that case the user has to scroll more than 1.3 "screens" for seeing the entire home page. In fact it contains a lot of images and big font size which increase the vertical space.

3.5.2 Horizontal

In that case there is no evidence about horizontal scrolling and this is good because the user doesn't have to make more computational effort due to bidimensional axis.

3.6 Bloated Design

Introducing some "*Wow effect things*" on a website may give the opposite results. Users may not be able to understand and learn how to use a new component. In fact this would require too much computational effort. So it is better to insert something which is easy to understand and doesn't affect the user in searching for information. A bad choice which can be considered in this website can be the big image with the girl. This occupy a lot of space in the webpage, but it doesn't transmit any information and it doesn't help the user to find the desired information.

3.7 3D Interfaces

3D interfaces cause a leverage of computational effort done by the user, so they should be avoided. The home page (and the website in general) doesn't have any sample of that kind and this is good.

3.8 Menu

The menu is always displayed even if the user scrolls and that is a good choice because it makes visitors comfortable. It is characterised by links which refers to the macro categories like:

- Man
- Woman
- Brands

but also some utilities like:

- Contacts
- Who we are

It is a good choice the fact that after a mouse hover on a category there is first level menu containing a lot of subcategories which can improve the precision of the search. but there are also some bad choices or bugs.

Firstly the user has to scroll down in order to see other subcategories and that is quite stressful.

Then there are too many links in the first level menu. This can lead to a lot of confusion to the user because it is overloaded with too many links (figure 9).

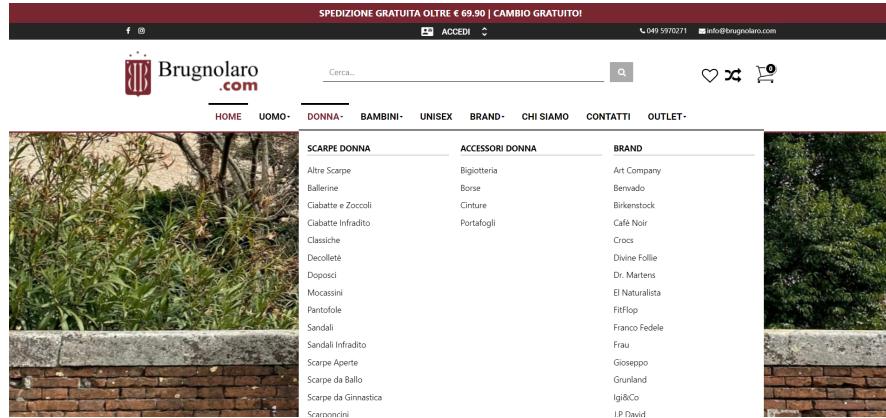


Figure 9: Home page (menu)

3.9 Visual Metaphores

There are some visual metaphores and in particular we take the heart, the crossed arrows and the cart (figure 10a, 10b, 11).



(a) Home page (heart)



(b) Home page (arrows)



Figure 11: Home page (cart)

They are all good designed because they are intuitive. The addition of explanation when mouse hover occurs is great and so the user can't be confused.

3.10 Text

In the home page the text is good in terms of quantity, maybe also too low. There is no resizing option and more than 2 fonts which may lead some disadvantages in terms of readability. On the other side color often respect contrasts and the dimension always seems to be more than 10 pt (minimum). About the case, there is a mixture of uppercase and lowercase and this may implies

more computational effort for the user (especially for the uppercase). Some example can be found in figure 1, 2, 3, 8.

3.11 Attention Map

The content organization is important to let the user capture the most important components of the webpage instantly.

3.11.1 F-shape Map

In the home page it is not always respected. The menu always remains at the top (but not the search bar!), however the use of the bloated design in the home page lead not to occupy the left part of the F-shape.

This implies a poor usage of the left shape in the home page and a potential loss of information by the user.

3.11.2 Images

Images are too big in the home page, but there are some of them which can attract the user to click in them. There is the combination with the text which is very good, but maybe it may be added something like blurb text. In fact sometimes it could not be possible to understand what it could happen if the user clicks on the image. So a little description could help to avoid gambling clicks (figure 12).

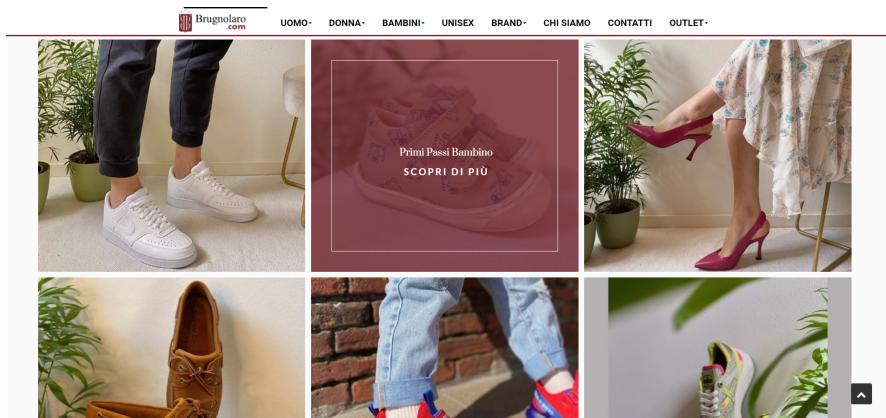


Figure 12: Home page (images)

3.12 Searching

The website is an e-commerce and so typically users would like to find in a rapid way products. So in all pages the search bar refers to the search about products (figure 13). It has the combination text input, placeholder and icon which is perfect and it can contain about 60 characters. In this way the user feels comfortable when he digits something. The only bad thing is that the search bar disappears when the user scrolls down. So it should always remain fixed and visible.



Figure 13: Home page (search bar)

4 Internal Pages

In this section we are analizing a macro category (the same works for subcategories)

4.1 Informative axes

The informative axes' observations are similar to what is written in section 3.2, but the page has changed a little bit. In fact there are no element for asnwering to "when" or "why" questions. Still these informations can be omitted because they are not as important as the other ones.

4.2 Advanced Search

The website make available some advanced features for searching in a more accurate way.

There are different types of parameters and the filter action is dynamic, so every chosen constraint triggers an new search update. Actually this method can be useful for incremental searches, but not for focused ones.

One bad aspect is that the filtering buttons are displayed vertically and not horizontally. This implies to steal some horizontal space that could be used to better organize products disposition. Moreover filter's buttons are more visible for the F-shape map and that is not the goal. In fact the focus of the user should be more about products than filter's buttons (figure 14).

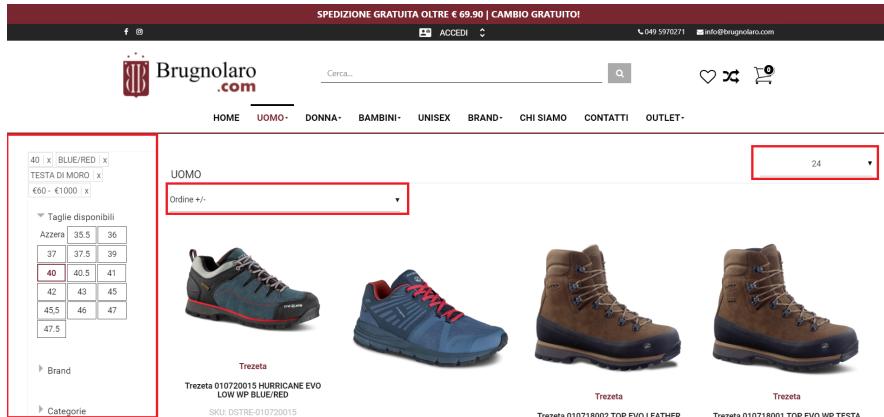


Figure 14: Internal page (advanced search)

4.3 Search Results

Results is actually the output which is displayed to the user satisfying his preferences.

So the presentation is a grid and each line contains 4 products. This disposition is working on 2 dimensions and so implies more computational effort.

It is not clear why there is no title about product's number filter (how do you know that? Gambling click). This may lead some confusion to the user.

Then the ordering results functionality is not done in a good way. In fact it is very difficult to understand how to go from ascendent to descendent ordering. Clicking on the select box for changing the ordering in the opposite way is not the easiest and intuitive way for the user.

About the items in the grid presentation, they are very good. Infact there is a 2D image with near its name, its price and also its available sizes. In particular the last information can be very useful in order to navigate without using size filter which could be annoying because of dynamic search.

If there are no results during the searching, "No results" string will be displayed which is fine (figure 15).

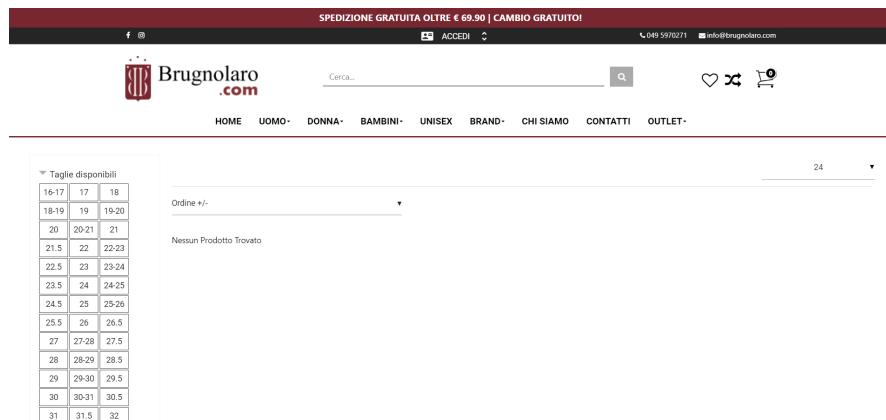


Figure 15: Internal page (no results)

4.4 Product

This subsection aims to analyze the way in which the product is presented. The best layout of a product webpage of an e-commerce should contain the following components:

- Product's visual description (images, videos): allows user to see the product;
- Product's textual description: provides description of the product's features;
- Price: useful for making product-price association;
- Cart: presence of the "Add to cart" button.

4.4.1 Visual Description

4.4.2 Textual Description

The textual description is very important because the user has to know about specific characteristics about the product. It is suggested to put it before the "Add to cart" button. This because most of the people think that after that button there is nothing important. If there is no description the user classify your shop like if you want to hide something which is bad about the product. In this case the position of the textual description is wrong because it is under the button (figure16)

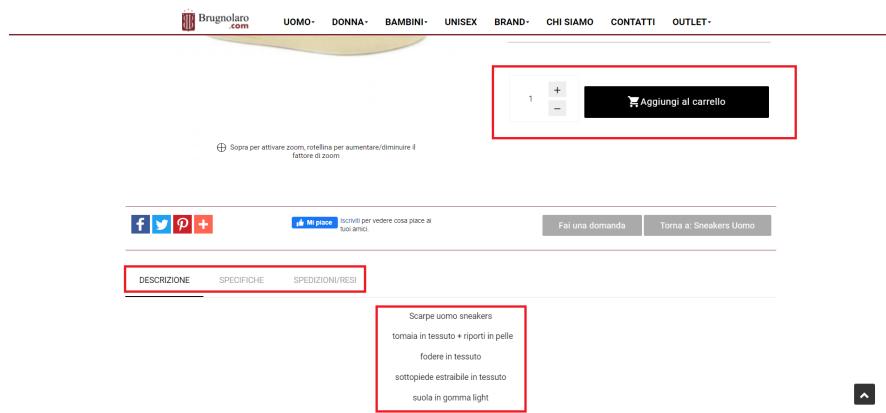


Figure 16: Internal page (product's specifics)

4.4.3 Price

4.5 Checkout