Poppin Joe's™ Website Analysis

Introduction:

After closely examining your website, I have determined a variety of adjustments that will increase engagement and, in turn, kettle corn sales. The website already has strong bones, but the following tweaks will help customers put more trust into the company and increase awareness of the product.

Purpose:

Since 2005, Poppin Joe's has made and sold Gourmet Kettle Korn for the general public. The purpose of this website is threefold:

- Selling kettle corn (e-commerce)
- Sharing Joe's story
- Raising awareness for various causes

Keeping the purpose of the website in mind will help us make effective changes.

Rhetorical Appeals:

By properly utilizing the concepts of ethos, pathos, and logos, we can persuade website visitors to financially support our company and causes. These concepts appeal to the emotions and smarts of our audience.

Ethos: The concept of ethos encapsulates credibility. Sharing the history of the company and how long it has been in operation shows experience. Including customer reviews demonstrates satisfaction with the products. Listing notable achievements shows dedication to making substantial change. Each of these aspects of your website increases the credibility of your company.

Pathos: The concept of pathos encapsulates emotional appeal. By sharing the history of the company, from conception to today, the customer feels connected to the people behind the product, not just the product itself. This connection is further solidified through the telling of Joe's story, specifically. Overall, the tone of your copy is lighthearted and pleasant; it reads as if someone were speaking the copy directly to the website user, which feels personable. This tone also further solidifies the connection the customer feels.

Logos: The concept of logos applies to logic. You include information about the products and their prices, as well as how Poppin Joe's supports larger causes, like giving food to the troops in Iraq. This information emphasizes the logical reasons why a customer should support your company. Furthermore, all of your copy is clear, concise, and topical. There is nothing false or unrelated to the company included. Each heading applies to each body of text and vice-versa.

Quality of Writing:

If your writing is free of grammatical and spelling errors, consistent in tone, and comes from a sensical point of view, credibility for your company will increase.

Your writing is high quality and lacks grammatical and spelling errors. The tone of your writing is warm, personable, and community-focused. This warmth connects users with the company; it is effective in establishing a rapport of sorts to increase engagement and sales.

This website is not written from Joe's point of view, it is consistently written from the point of view of someone who has been close to/involved with the company since its inception.

Navigation:

Easy, sensical, and clear navigation is an essential component of any successful website. Your website has a good starting point, but there are areas for improvement.

Your site menu contains every subsection a customer might want or need from your website, but 7 items in the menu is overwhelming. Consider grouping certain related sections, like "About Us" and "Fundraising."

There are two types of website users: shoppers and hunters (Carroll, 2020). To appeal to the hunters, who immediately search for the information they wish to find, consider adding in a search bar, so users can easily and quickly locate specific information.

Layout:

Below we will examine the layouts of each page in your website. Effective, consistent, and aesthetically pleasing layouts, especially "above the fold" increase usability and user engagement. Attracting and retaining an audience requires including the most important and eye-catching elements and information before a user has to scroll (Brebion, 2022).

Home/Welcome Page:

The first image you see above is the 2019 layout of the Poppin Joe's welcome page, and below that image, the current layout. The changes made to the welcome page layout simplify the design while retaining the same Poppin Joe's character.

A welcome page can be simple. Everything we see "above the fold" in the current layout is all we need to see on a welcome page. Because we have the name of the company and site menu front and center, the user will know what website they are on and follow the menu to find the information for which they search. A search feature in the site menu would make the website more accessible and easier to use, as previously mentioned.

Consider reorganizing the current site menu to make more sense hierarchically; place "Welcome" before "Shop" and "Products" before "Joe's Story." This way, the first page a user sees when they open the website is the first option in the site menu, and like sections are placed next to each other.

The home page does not benefit from the amount of pictures, especially so large, as the user scrolls. That much scrolling deters a user, and since there is already a photo site page, the homepage pictures are redundant.

Content Pages:

The rest of the pages in the website follow this basic layout:
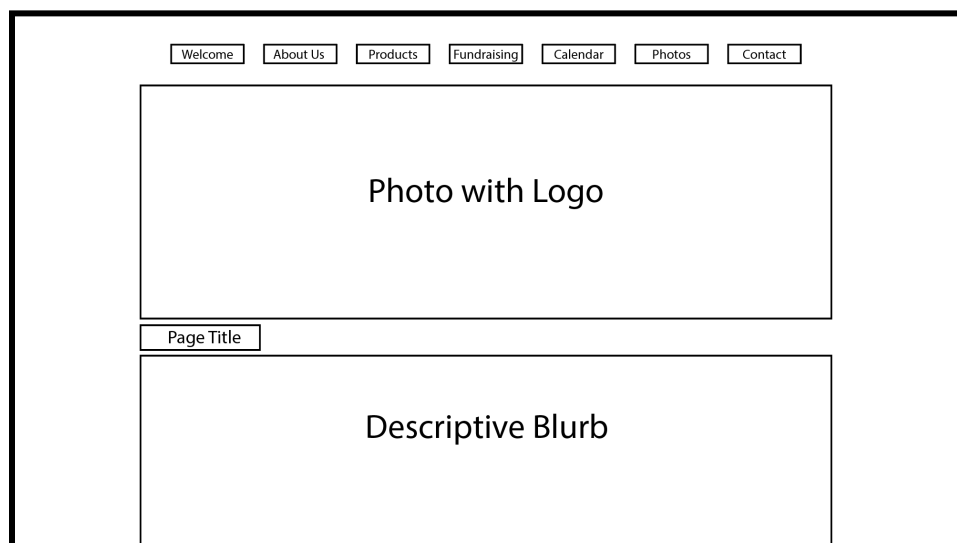
This layout is consistent across all pages, but the photos with the logo at the top of each page are too large and take up too much "above the fold" space. This depresses the important information, which means users have to scroll and work harder to find the information they seek.

With the page title uncentered, the pages feel lopsided. This lack of balance is not visually appealing. Furthermore, consider placing the site menu below the photo with the logo. This places the page title close to where the user would access other pages in the site, which makes more sense hierarchically.

Despite these small changes, the general layout works well for the content of the pages. With a smaller photo at the top to include more information above the fold and a centered page title, this layout would be successful. An example of a more successful layout is below, with the revised site menu proposed in the Welcome Page section.
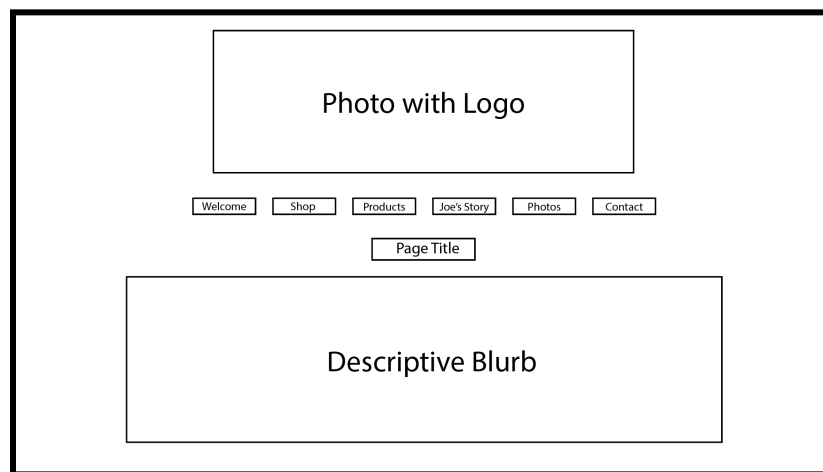
Visual Appeal:

Graphics: Graphics act as visual aids that reinforce content in websites. When properly used, they can unify the website design and strengthen the personality of the brand.

The only graphic used by Poppin Joe's is their kettle corn logo, which they use at least once on each page on the website.

The use of this graphic encourages use of the website, but it could be further encouraged by including other graphics, as well. These graphics could be elements of this logo, like individual kettle corns.

Images: Images can enhance a webpage by making it more visually appealing. The best images included in a page would be visually interesting and high quality. Generally, an image should follow the rule of thirds, which means that it should be divided into 9 equal parts, with 2 equally spaced horizontal lines and 2 equally spaced vertical lines (Laja, 2023).

The vast majority of the images used in the Poppin Joe's website are low quality and do not take the rule of thirds into account. This failure to adhere to image guidelines detracts from the brand image and makes the website look much less visually appealing overall.

The first example image below subscribes to the rule of thirds, while the second image does not. Both of these pictures are on the website:

There are too many images included on the welcome page, as stated in its dedicated section. Since there is already an entire page on the website dedicated to photos, it would be in the designer's best interest to limit the amount of images on each page.

Furthermore, the images take up too much space. Many cannot be fully seen on the screen without scrolling. Not only can these large photos not be fully appreciated, but they detract from the visual appeal of the website as a whole.

Color Scheme: Color schemes unify the content of the website with the design and layout. It is in the designer's best interest to limit the amount of colors used in a website, as too many colors can make a page feel cluttered (Osborn, 2017). Below is the Poppin Joe's color scheme:

#730220	#F2B33D	#FEDE7E	#D90707	#5A5A58
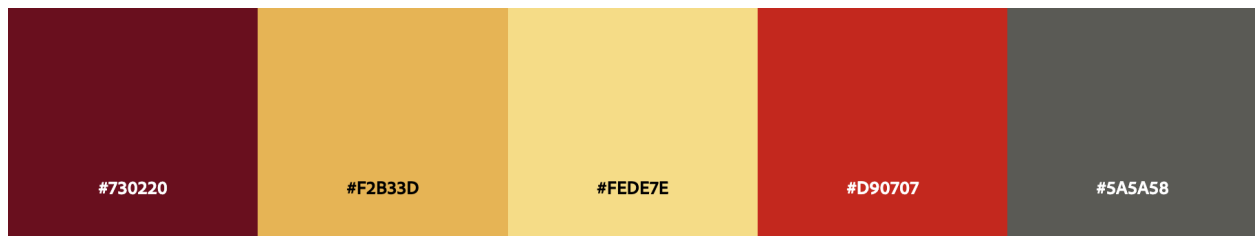
Poppin Joe's uses a color scheme that adheres to the content of their website, but it does not consistently have enough color contrast to be easily read (Babich, 2017). The yellow background makes color contrast more difficult than if the website were to employ a white background:

Autism Inspired: Poppin Joe's

Poppin Joe's Gourmet Kettle Korn was established to show that Joe Steffy, a young man with autism and down syndrome, is able to work. He is the CEO of this popular business that gives him an opportunity to do a variety of tasks he can chose between while at work each day. The business sells fresh popped kettle korn at

While the body text contrasts enough from the yellow background to be read relatively easily, the subheading is too close in color to the background. It almost completely blends in.

I would simplify the color scheme as follows to make it more consistently readable and feel more unified overall:

#730220	#F5A430	#FFDF8D	#FFFFFF	#000000

Font: Font selection plays an important role in setting the tone of the website. Fonts can be serious, playful, futuristic, goofy, etc.

It is important to limit the number of fonts used in one website to avoid the cluttered feeling (Osborn, 2017). However, it is also important to use contrasting fonts to properly differentiate between headings, subheadings, and body text.

The font used in the Poppin Joe's Kettle Korn logo displayed at the top of every page on the site is Gill Sans Nova. The extra bold version of this font is used for "Poppin Joe's," and the semibold version of this font is used for "Kettle Korn."

For the rest of the text on the website, Lucida Sans is used. The bold and normal versions of this font are used, but there does not appear to be much differentiation between headings and subheadings. The welcome blurb on the home page is Lucida Sans Bold, but further down on the home page, subheadings and body text are both the normal version of the font.

For headings and subheadings, it would be effective to use a sans-serif font, and for body text, it would be effective to use a serif font. Mixing a serif font and a sans-serif font properly differentiates between headings and body text, and the mix looks professional. In this report, I am using **Figtree Bold** for the headings and Merriweather Light for the body text.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Poppin Joe's website has a solid foundation. Its strengths are:

- Its well-crafted writing
- A personable tone
- An effective use of the rhetorical appeals ethos, pathos, and logos

The website's content is clear and free from grammatical errors, and its navigation structure is a good starting point. However, the website also has places for improvement:

- Menu organization
- Page layout
- Image quality
- Color and font contrast

These changes would enhance usability and visual appeal, ultimately helping to increase website engagement and kettle corn sales.

References:

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