

UX - Preventing Errors

Common mistakes & how to fix them

The importance of excellent UX design:

Strong UX design is the best way to produce a customer-centric product or website that brings in new users, retains existing ones, and creates customer delight.

If customers have a positive, frictionless, and enjoyable product experience (PX), they'll reach their desired outcomes, continue to use your product, and recommend you far and wide.

On the other hand, when users have a frustrating, confusing, or downright negative experience, they may cancel their subscriptions and stop using your product, or share negative reviews with their community.

In a nutshell, designing a great UX:

- Builds trust and credibility
- Saves time and money
- Converts new users
- Drives adoption
- Boosts customer retention and loyalty
- Reduces churn
- Improves SEO rankings

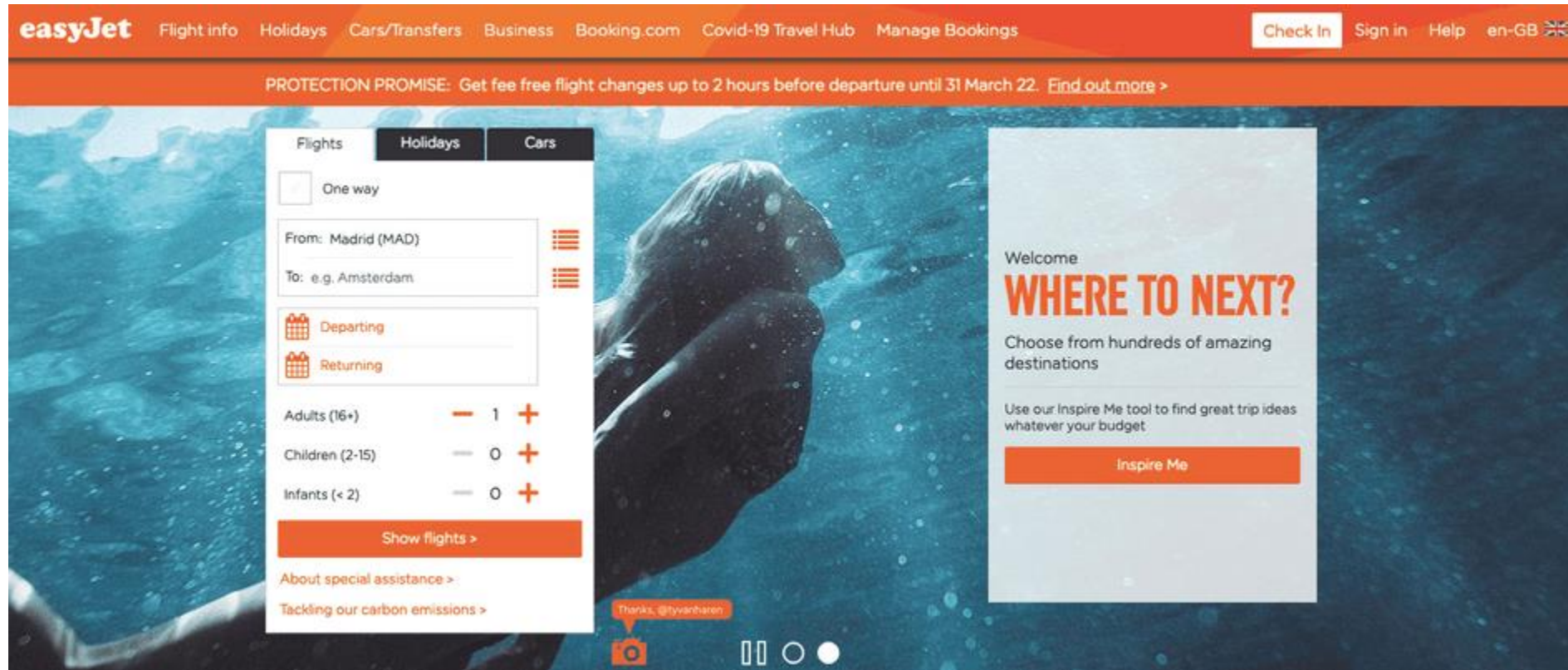
Striking the wrong balance between aesthetics and functionality

To offer excellent UX, your product should both look great and work well—not one or the other.

If you tip the scale too far in either direction, you risk customers getting frustrated with poor functionality or giving your brand a bad reputation due to a low-quality visual experience.

Usually, functionality should be slightly prioritized over aesthetics. A great-looking product is important, but if it doesn't work well, the UX will suffer.

Let's see with an example. Take discount airline EasyJet's website homepage: the overall design is eye-catching, but the functionality leaves a lot to be desired.



The majority of EasyJet visitors land there because they want to book a flight. But Easyjet's flight booking form and 'Inspire Me' tools take up almost the same amount of space on their homepage, so users aren't sure what they're being asked to do. The site also has a busy top menu bar and excessive pop-ups and dynamic visual elements—there's too much going on here.

Visitors are likely to get distracted or confused before they successfully book a flight. Even though the user interface (UI) looks coo

Ignoring user needs and feedback

Your user should be at the centre of everything you do. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that you know better than your user or even worse, that you are your user.

It's vital to take their feedback seriously to close the gap in understanding user needs.

Keep your product user-centered by prioritizing customers at every stage of the product design and optimization process. Ask yourself how you can optimize your product so it presents a seamless solution to user pain points.

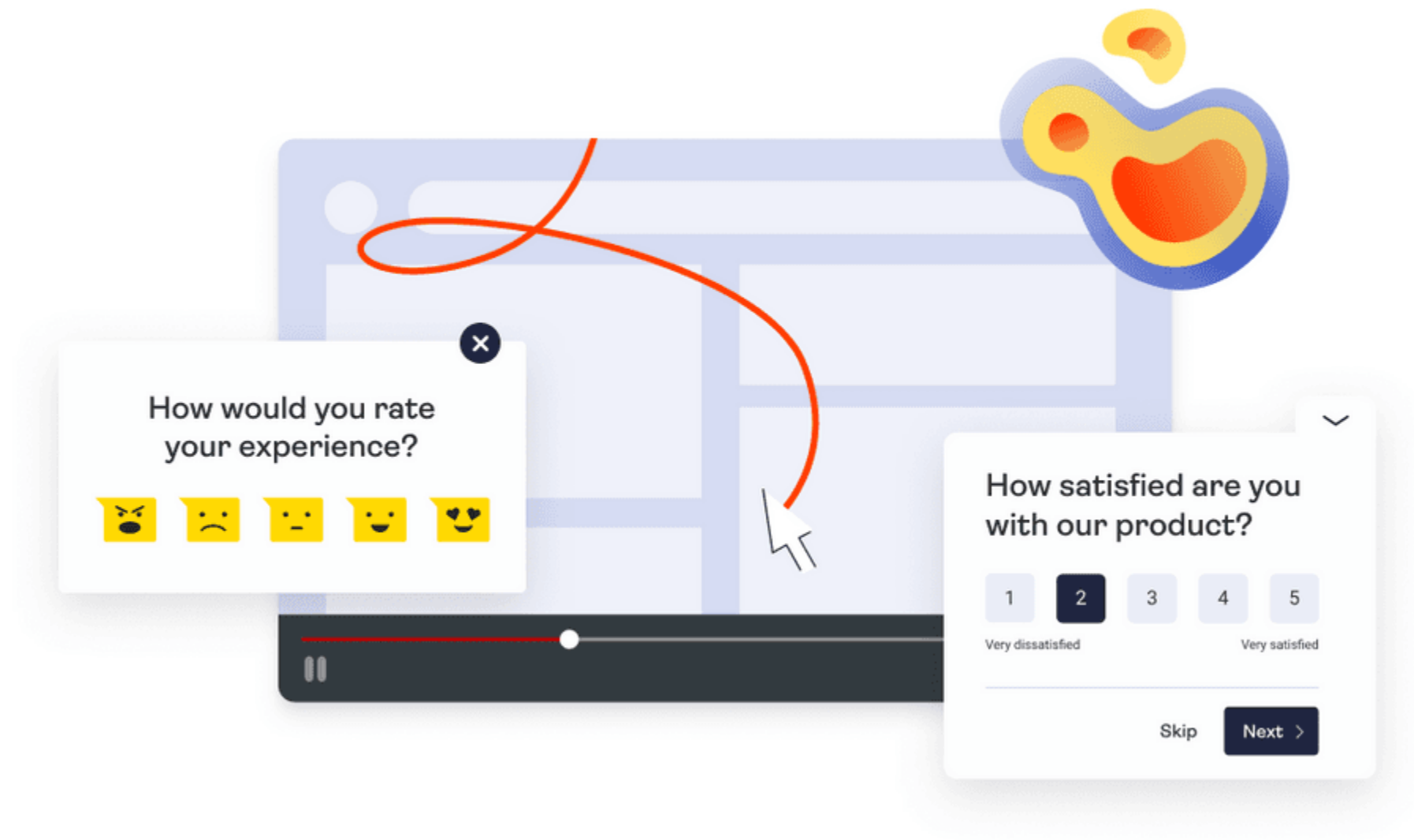
Throughout your product's lifecycle, be proactive about collecting user feedback with UX surveys so you can create a consistent cycle of listening to your users and optimizing your product accordingly.

Bombarding users with pop-ups

Nothing turns users off like getting hit with a range of different pop-ups as soon as they land on your homepage. Rather than obtaining the information they want, they have to deal with closing or navigating away from a bunch of pop-up windows before they've even started their product or web journey.

Not all pop-ups are bad, but be mindful of poorly placed and poorly designed pop-ups, as well as those that can't be closed easily.

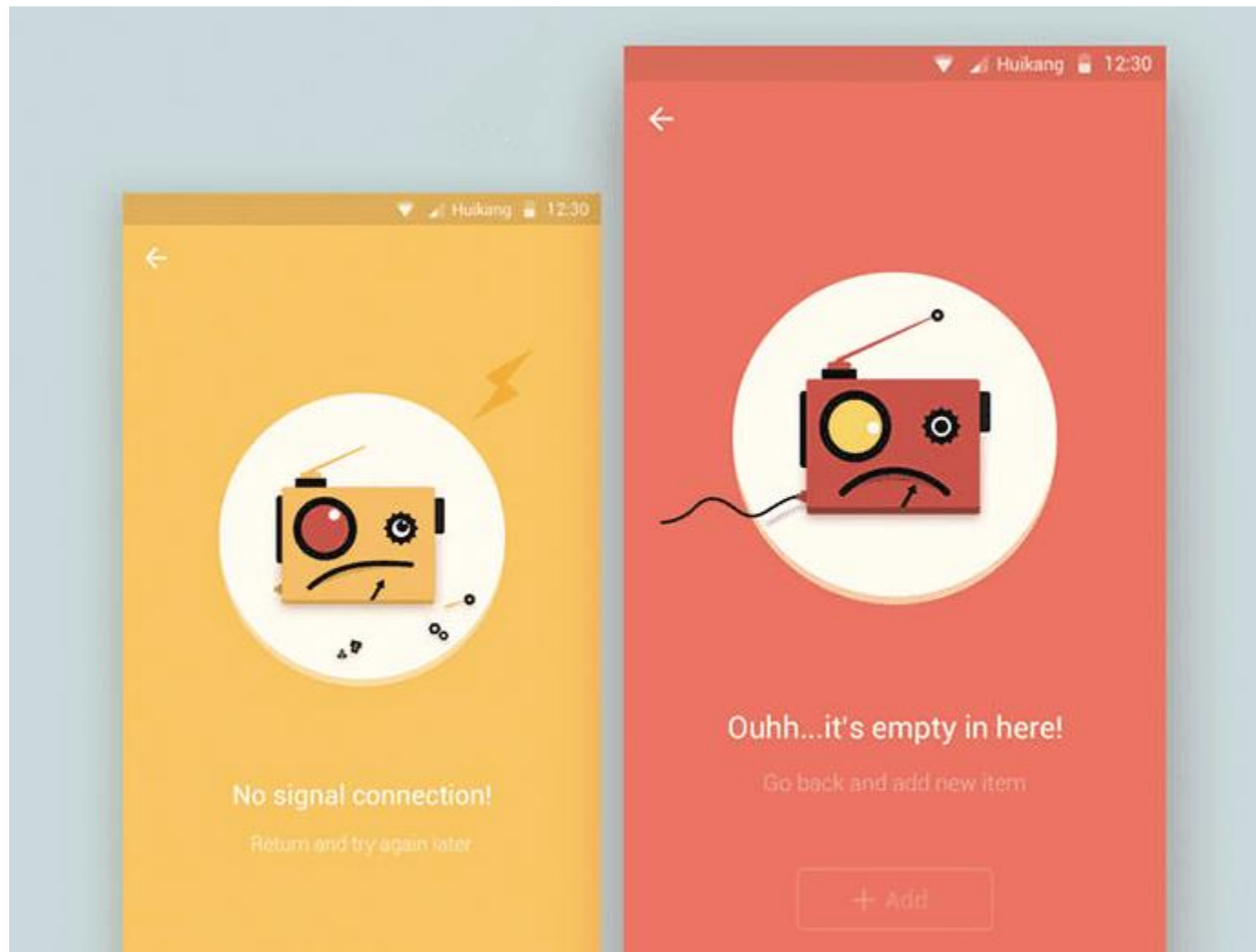
“Effective pop-ups know the right problems to focus on and the right reasons to bother users.”



Overlooking the 'in-between' states

In the design world, just like in life, things rarely turn out exactly as planned. **Great UX design anticipates unexpected circumstances as much as ideal scenarios.**

Consider your users' *entire* experience with your product throughout the design process. This should encompass the beginning, the end, and the in-between stage.



Your product's empty and in-between states also contribute to overall UX. Don't forget about them!

Imagine your user is signing up for a free trial on your website. If everything goes perfectly, the main two states your user will experience are the initial sign-up page and the success page.

But bumps in the road happen and more often than not you'll need to spend time considering the 'in-between' states, such as:

- What do users see while entering their information?
- What do users see when they submit their information but forget a field?
- What do users see when they submit their information but have already used up their free trial?
- What do users see when there's a system or connection error?

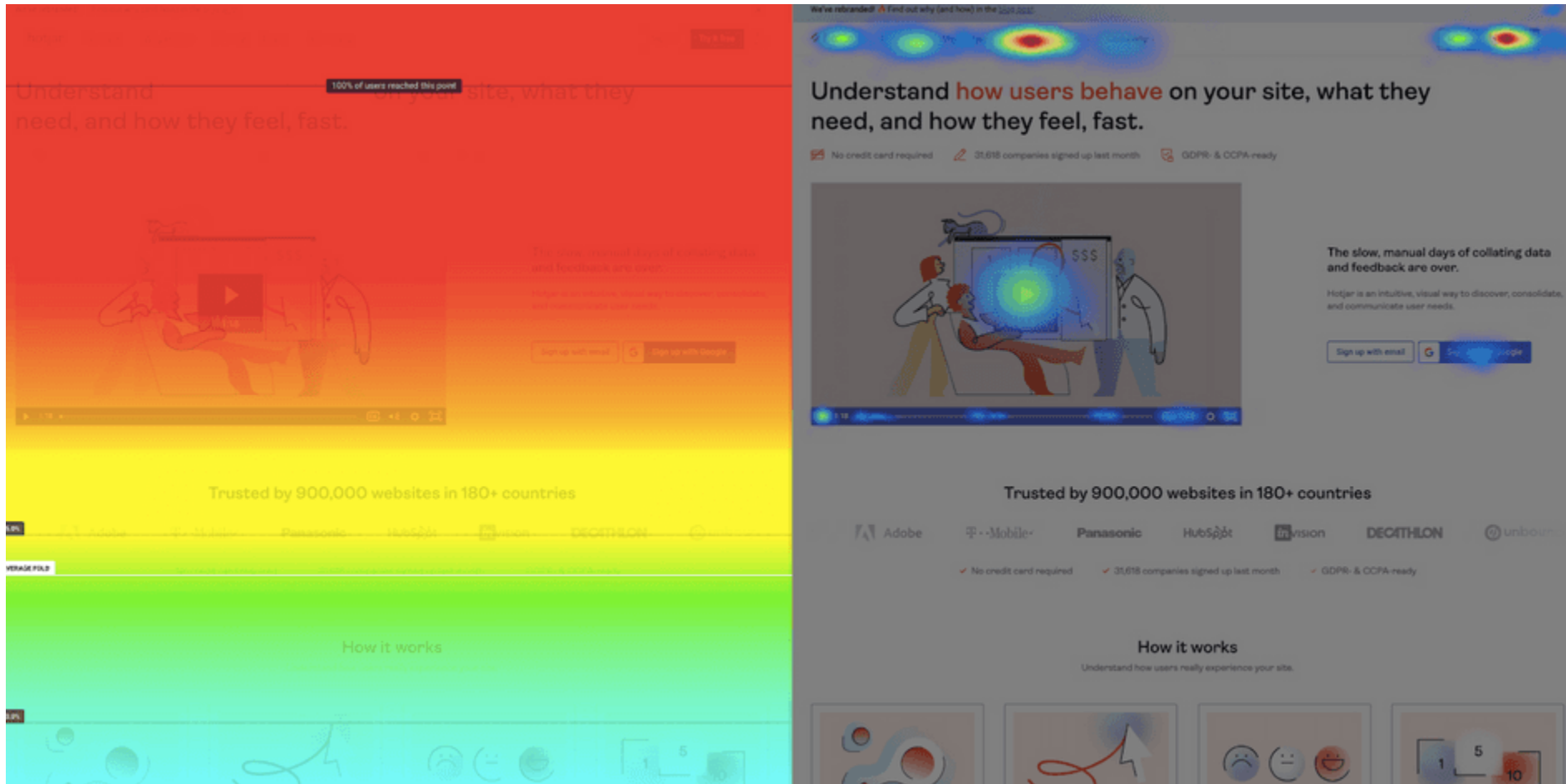
Always consider the full user experience. Account for the design of the in-between just as much as the main states and best-case scenarios, and build in a high fault tolerance so you're still delivering great UX even when mistakes happen.

Treating UX writing as an afterthought

Although UX content isn't necessarily part of product design, it's an essential part of the user experience. All too often, UX content is added to products as the last step or even as an afterthought. This can result in a disconnect between what users read and what the overall design is telling them to do.

To make matters worse, writers sometimes have to produce UX content without seeing the product's design or where their copy will ultimately be placed.

To address this problem, design with the ideal placement of UX content in mind and communicate this throughout the product development process. Delivering screenshots and wireframes to UX writers can help them understand how their copy will fit into the finished design.



Heatmaps show that the highest-visibility areas are at the top of the screen. Users are also frequently clicking on the images and menu bar tabs

Overwhelming users with too much information

If you're part of a product development team, you're an expert on your product and passionate about it. So, it can be tempting to overwhelm your users with too much product information right off the bat.

This kind of data overload can quickly confuse users if they don't have time to wrap their heads around the info you're giving them and digest it.

The first webpage or app frame your users see shouldn't be too overwhelming. If it's busy or contains too many different elements, users won't know where to begin and may drop off your page before learning anything.

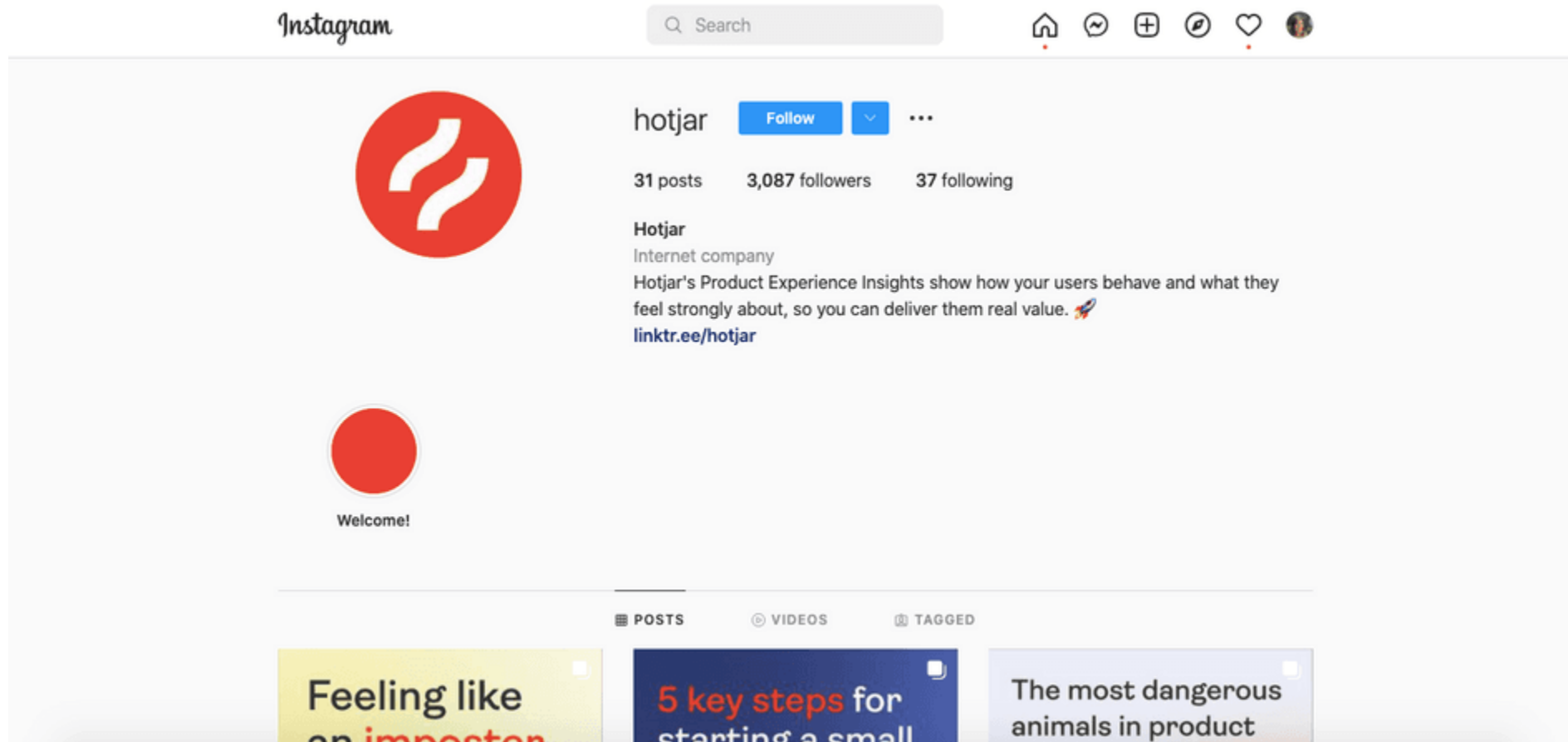
To sidestep this design mistake, start with the essential need-to-knows and be mindful about how much content you're sharing at once. Great UX is when users can get started with a new product intuitively, without too much learning at the outset.

Including unresponsive design elements

One of the most frequently discussed responsive design mistakes is designing with desktop computers in mind and overlooking mobile. But these days, the majority of UX designers understand the importance of mobile-friendly design.

Nowadays, a bigger problem is designers who only keep mobile design in mind. Mobile traffic accounts for about 50% of web traffic, but that means another 50% still comes from other sources like desktops and tablets.

Often, mobile-focused design elements leave a lot to be desired when viewed on large screens. A quick peek at Instagram on your desktop computer is a great example. The large amounts of white space, poor balance, and tiny icons make it clear that this interface wasn't designed with a large screen in mind.



Instagram's UI looks great on mobile but falls short when viewed on a desktop computer

Great UX design is responsive no matter what kind of device it's viewed on

Forgetting to label icons

Some UX designers either forget to label icons or simply believe it isn't necessary, partly due to minimalist design trends.

Not labelling icons is a mistake for two main reasons:

1. Commonly used icons like hearts, checkmarks, or smiley faces mean different things on different websites, which can confuse users
2. Overly detailed, novel, or complicated icons can be unclear so users have to spend unnecessary time and energy figuring out what they mean.

It's also worth noting that unlabelled icons reduce your product inclusivity.

The solution to this error is simple: words and images together are a powerful force, so make sure your icons are labeled.

Striking the wrong balance between aesthetics and functionality

When a user clicks a button or a link on your website, **they're trusting that you'll provide them with the information you say you will.**

For instance, if a button on your website says, '*Click here to learn more about our pricing,*' it should lead to your pricing page and nowhere else. Not a registration page to sign up for a free trial, not a contact information form...*just information about your pricing.*

<https://medium.com/user-experience-design-1/planning-for-error-the-ux-of-broken-things-4afbd24e4dcb>

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