THE USES AND FEATURES OF WEBSITES
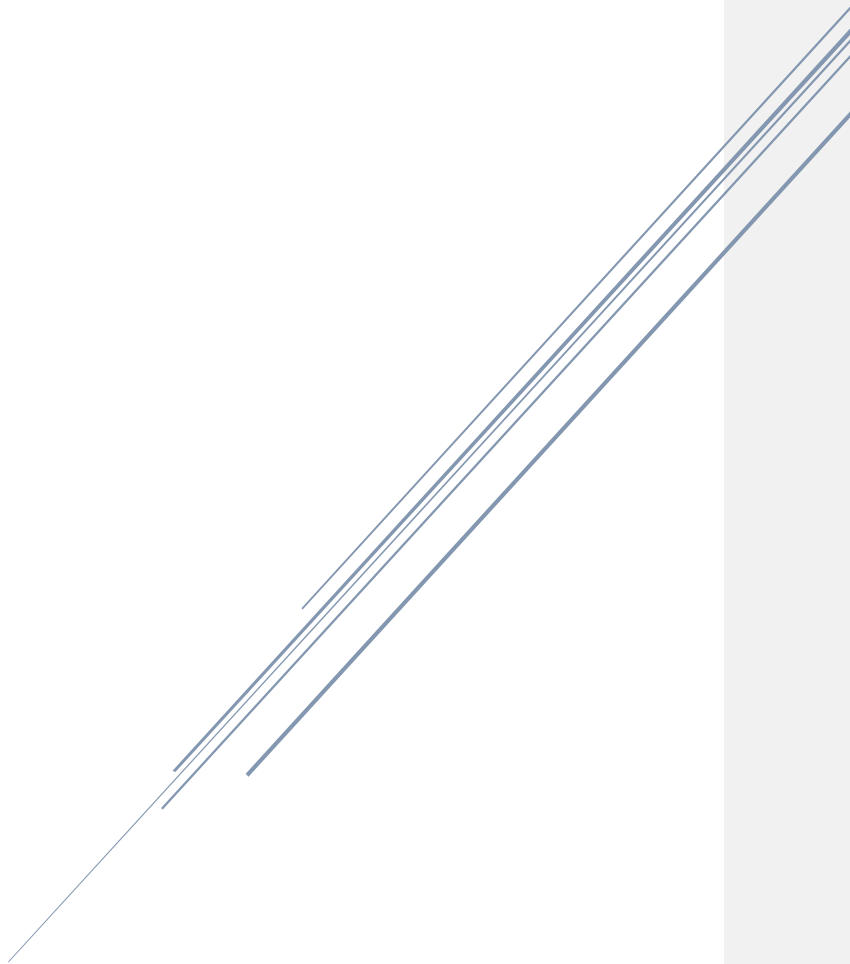
UNIT 13 – WEB DEVELOPMENT

ABRAHAM DIEUDONNE NDINGA
1280102

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Introduction

There are many uses for websites, and with those does different uses comes different features or functions than follow it. However, all websites do also share similar features that makes the website "a website".
In this presentation I will be investigating and two different websites to find out their uses, features, strengths, and weaknesses, and I will also review how the websites could improve in my opinion.

Website 1: ASOS.com

Uses

What is the Website about (+Target Audience)?

Asos is an E-commerce website where you can shop for clothes, accessories and more…
The products sold in Asos is mostly old school and modern hip pop fashion lines. This off the bat tells you that Asos aims at young adults.

Digging deeper, when actually looking at the features of the website you discover more about Asos's targeted audience. Let's review this.
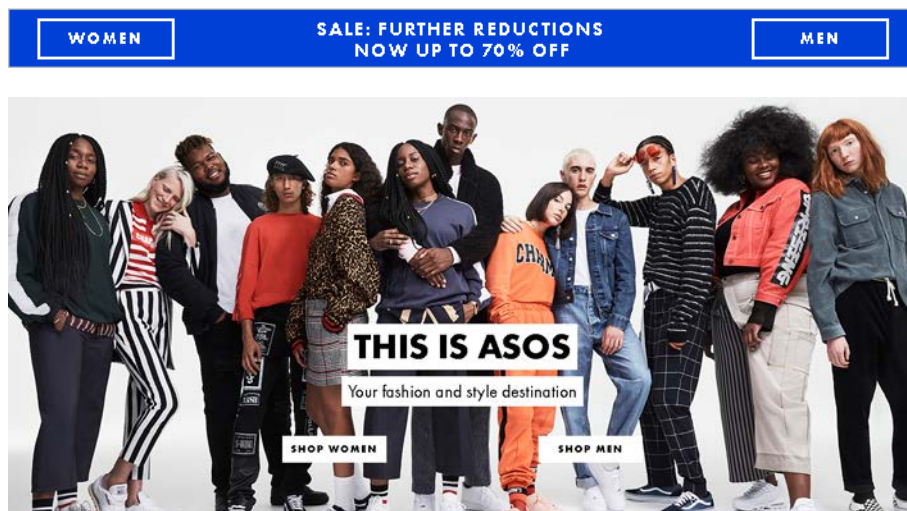
In these images [above] you notice that Asos likes to use bright colours. This proves that my assumption of Asos's target audience was indeed correct as it's known that websites aimed at the young audience would use bright colours most often.
Though, however this could have been used to continuously attract the users eye (/attention) as in the bright blue border the text is an advertisement of something quite

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significant.
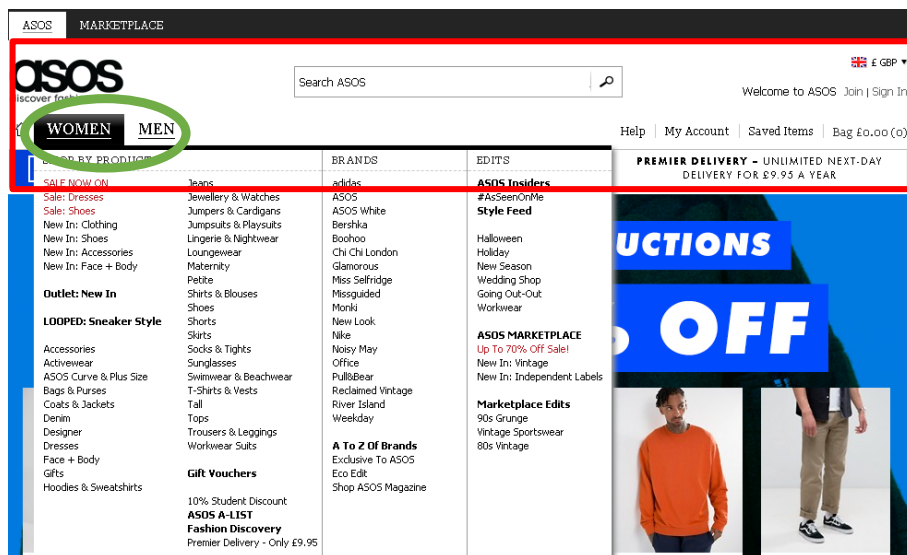
The site also targets both Men and Women. You know this because on the header of all the pages there are two Hotspot +/ Action buttons in the top navigation bar titled "Women" and "Men".

Why are they going to use it?

As to why users should use this website to shop, is not only because of the quality products they sell from theirs and other well-known global brands but also because the structure and presentation of the site is convincing enough to trust them.

- They provide you with a cart option to keep track of your chosen items, and as a bonus the price is automatically calculated for you.
- Not only that but if you like an item but do not have the money to buy it at the current time then you could simply place that item in your "Saved Items" storage place to purchase it another day
- However to save the items you will need to register, but this is fair because then unlike when you would save the items and have it stay after you leave the page using cookies on your browser, accessing it through an account allows you to access your saved items on any other devices.


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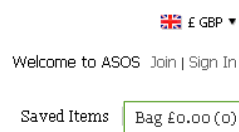
- If you were living in a different country, where the money currency would be different you could simply change it with this option [Image on the right]. The option is always located in the header right on top of the cart (/bag) and the 'Welcome' message so it is easily spotted.
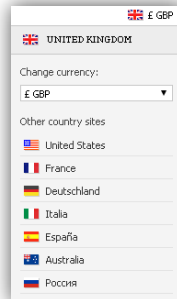
Plus, the navigation is easily located and navigational, it is also found in the header at the top of the page.

To navigate is easy, if you're a male, simple. Hover/click on the tab titled "Men" whereas if you hover a dropdown menu will show below with a catalogues of all the men items - & if you click on the "MEN" tab then you will be directed to the Men's catalogue page.
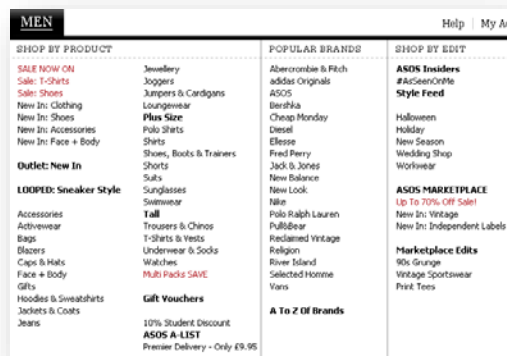
To add the site also accepts all types of payment options, from credit cards to gift cards, to PayPal so you could pay how you want, and the site is "Comodo secured", meaning you can shop without worries of viruses and theft.

To top it all off, the site offers delivery services so you never need to leave your home.


These are all the reasons why users would use this site.

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Features

Now that we have reviewed the uses of the site, lets now move on to the features on the site; reviewing what features are used, what they are used for & why they are used.

Website features that are used in this website include:

- **Action buttons** – This is a clickable shape that can perform actions. In this example of one of the action buttons on Asos's page, the action performed by it is a redirection to another page when clicked.
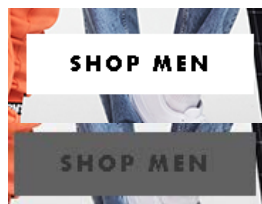
  It does this by adding a hyperlink to the button, this way you are forwarded to a different page.

  In this example Asos managed to place this action on top of an image using the css tag <float>.

  +The button has a flat 2d style as it suits the aesthetics of the site.

- **Hot spots** – these can be invisible hyperlinks that can activate an action when hovering over it.

  In this sample Asos uses it the features to display a hidden two action buttons on top of an image when you hovering on the image.

[Without Hovering]   [Hovering]
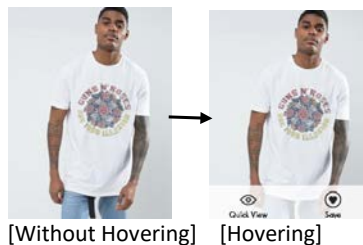
- **Email Links** – Is a link that is linked to an email provider, like '@gmail'.

  In this example Asos lets the user provide them with their personal Email link in order send them news from their site via email.

  Doing is very convenient as it allows there to be a more personal connection between client and server.
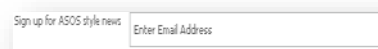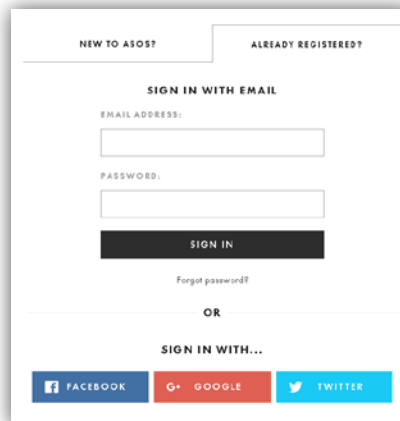
- **Registration and logins** – are online forms that allows you to sign up your information on to the database.

  Being an E-commerce site, of course you would expect Asos to have it. The link to the registration and login on Asos.com is located at the top right of the header, so it's easy for the client to locate it.

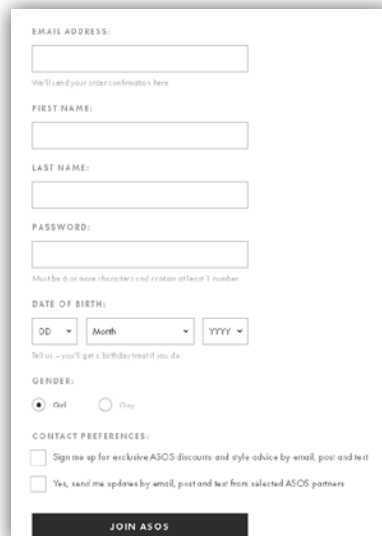 Asos.com also provides you with more than one way of login/registration, as it lets you register & login by linking your other social media accounts like Facebook/ Twitter.

- **Forms (User Input & feedback)** – are user input fields that register information.

  One of the most common types of forms are registration forms, which Asos uses to let the client register an account on their site (/database). They do this by having you fill in your personal details, email and having you of course agree to their terms and conditions.

- **Accessibility** – This is usually when a site would develop their site to be useable by people with disabilities.

  The accessibility on 'Asos.com' is actually quite friendly towards low sight & colour blind disabilities, as they use clear big, bold fonts to make text easy to read, and they stick to one colour scheme throughout most of the pages of their site; White & Black.
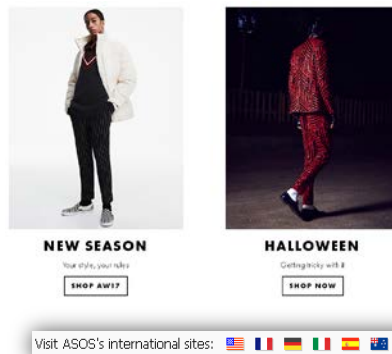
- Asos is also an International site, meaning the website can be translated in different languages like: English, French, German, Spanish, and more…

  + As I stated earlier the website provides you with options to change pounds to dollars, and provides you with a variety of ways to pay; from Credit Cards to Vouchers to Paypal.

- Instead of spending a lot of time trying to find the item you need, Asos added a search engine to save you the time, because with it you could simply write in the name of the product that you were searching for and easily in the search results.
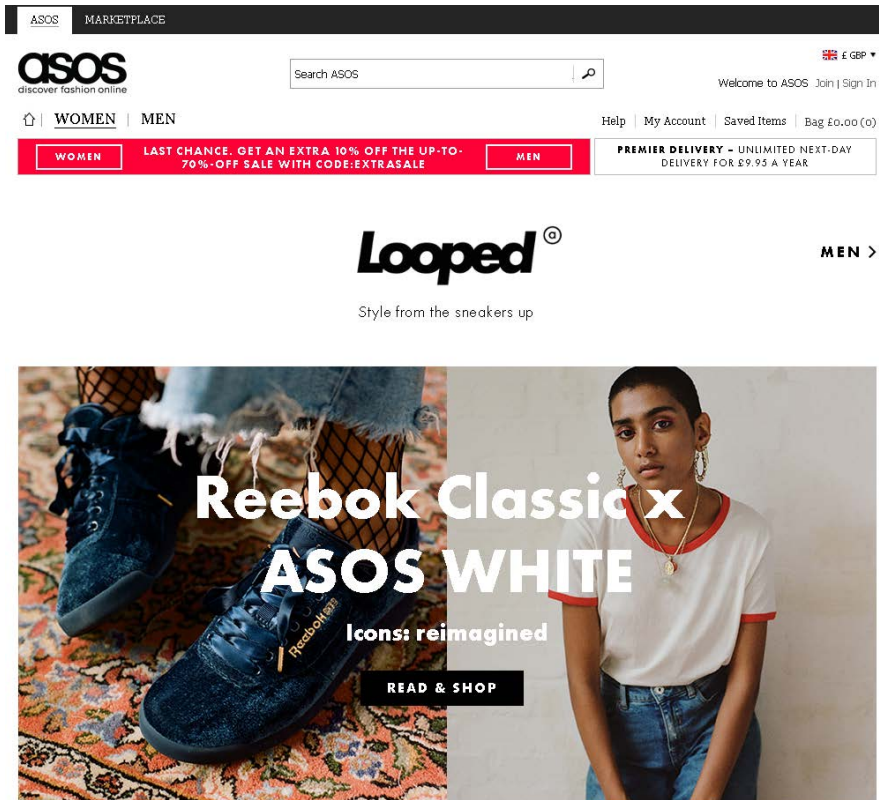
  {This is possible thanks to the magic of keywords}

HEADER

BODY AREA

FOOTER
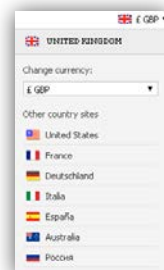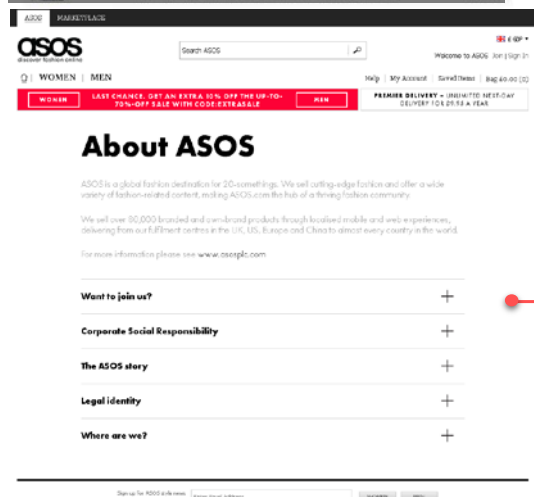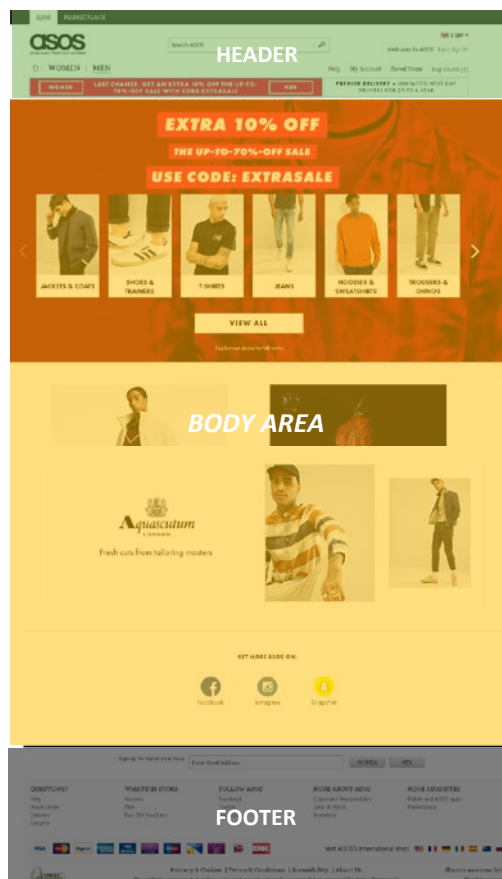
This what the site would look like without all the colourful pictures

Main colour scheme: White & Black

- **Aesthetics**:
  Asos keeps its aesthetics plain, simple and recognisable.
  The main layout in Asos is: a header on top of the page containing the logo on the top left, navigation floating below the logo with stuff like registration and login, and in the right. Followed by grids of content in the 'body area' and the footer at the bottom of the page containing the sitemap, other advertisements. The reason why the layout is layered out like this is to make the website look as iconic as possible to make it as newbie friendly as possible.

  As for colour, although the site sources itself don't use much colour, the use of image makes the site look filled with colour even though the only colours actually used are very minimal. This is the sites way of saying "our website is plain and simple but our products go beyond that". This method is smart because it brings a balance between 'too colourful' and 'too plain'.

Review

Overall the website is quite decent, with a fair amount of pros and cons.
The website presents itself in a familiar way, which is good because then the user could look at the format and not feel intimidated as they instinctively know how to navigate through its interface due to its iconic resembles. However, even though the website's format and layout is simple and similar to others, Asos still manages to make it their own with their use of colour, font and images. They do this by adding very minimal colour in the css and a lot of colour in their images, for example they would put a picture within a white box, positioned within a bigger red box and have bold black font, and they use this technique so much throughout their site that it becomes an iconic symbol for Asos.

The lists of items on Asos are immense, as you can find yourself scrolling down rows and rows of items. A mayor disadvantage that Asos has in this aspect is the fact that it doesn't include a 'Back to top' button which scrolls you to the top instantly with a click of the button, but they do try make this less annoying by splitting the content into different pages.
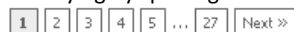
Alternatively, the website gives you an option to register, login, and save items, which is great for accessibility because then you could access your personal basket (or saved list) in from other devices and browsers… and to top it off, the website is multi-language, so you could choose your preferred language.

Strengths

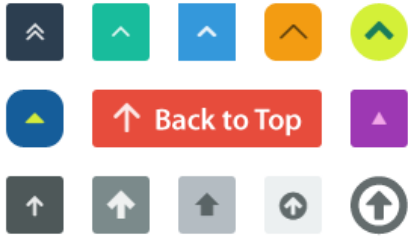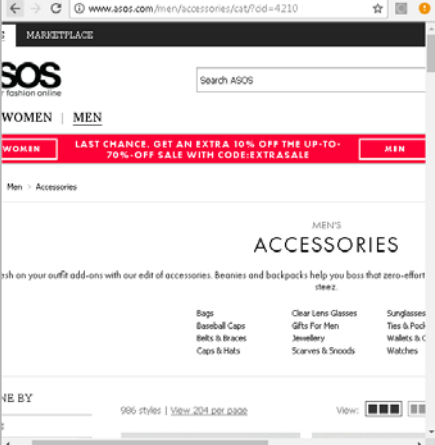| Strengths	
• **The website has registration and logins. This is a big advantage because then it allows the user to access his personal profile from anywhere (so long as there is internet access).**	

• **There is a (item) search engine on the site, so you don't have to spend time searching for a specific item, as you could instead type in the name and the computer will search the item for you, this saves a lot more time.**	
• **A variety of paying method. Having more than one option is always a benefit, this is because it welcomes different audiences and in this case it could expand your sales numbers and customer satisfactions as it welcomes a lot of different payments method from vouchers to credit cards, to PayPal.**	
• **Multilanguage – The site is available in many different countries, and depending in which country you're in, the site is translated to that language, and even if you aren't currently in that country you could still change it the countries primary language like, English, French, German/ Spanish.** ***This is a benefit to the brand and the consumer***	

WOMEN | MEN
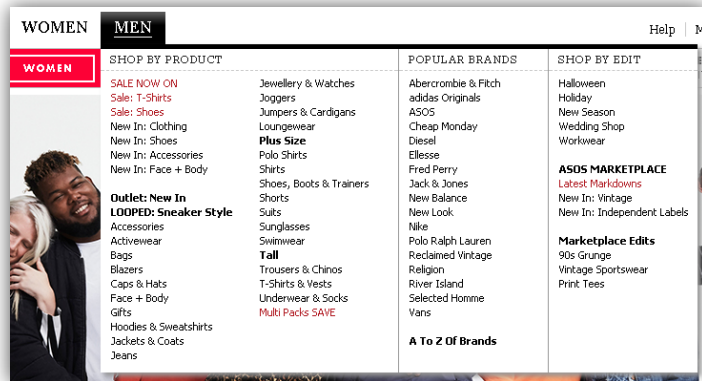
The navigation in the header uses a dropdown menu – This is beneficial because it doesn't just save a lot of space and look knitter, but it also allows you to put it a lot more information, because when using a dropdown menu, you could really make the menu as big as you want since its super easy to exit the menu.
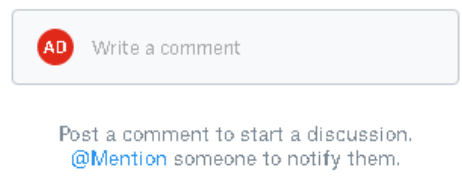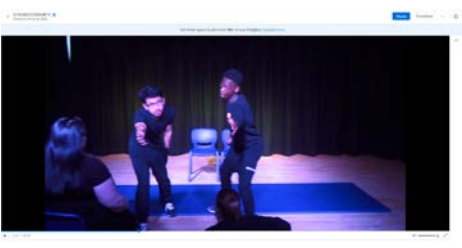
Disadvantages

Disadvantages

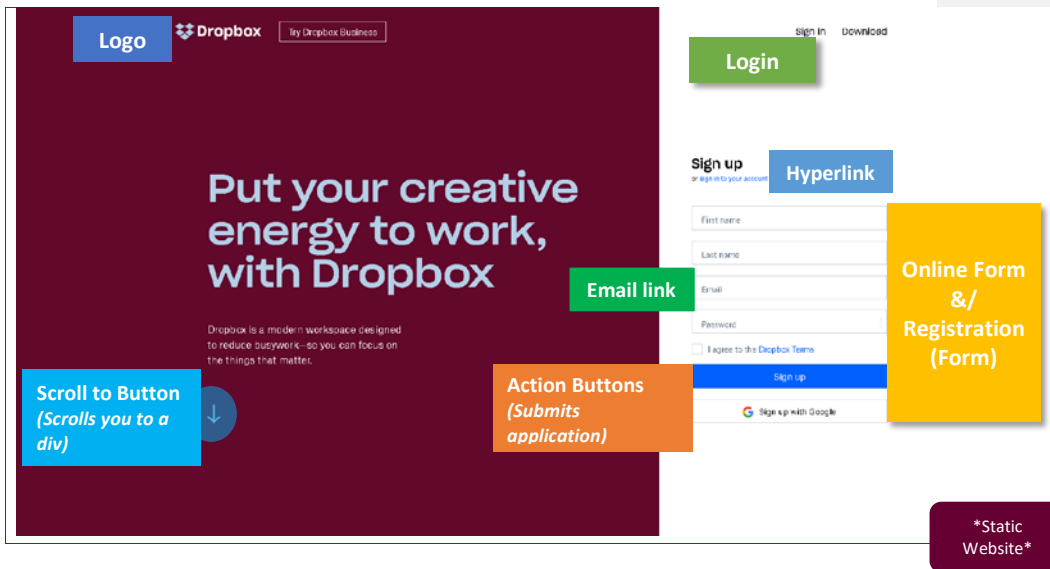|	
• **In some important areas of the site small font is used – This could be a disadvantage as it could cause people with low site to feel uncomfortable as they would need to do extra work just to read a simple word or two.**	
• **The site does not have a "back-to-top" button so you must always up if you need to get back to the top. This effects the consumers as scrolling could get boring/tiring/annoying.**	
• **The "Asos.com" website is unresponsive, meaning that the website content do not automatically shift and change size to fit its content into different display sizes, this is a disadvantage because then users who have/prefer a small display size wouldn't be able to properly enjoy their experience with the site.**	

Dropbox.com
Uses

dropbox.com is a content management system(CMS) type of website used for downloading and uploading content. It is also used for cloud computing since you can share and edit your work online with others.

There are many more uses that 'dropbox.com' provides you with. Here are the examples:

• Document viewer – allows you to view, print and copy word documents, which is very useful because then you could view what you uploaded/ what you're about to download.	
• Comments – you could socialise, giving your thoughts on someone's work via comment section.	
• Video player – being able to play videos on this site means you could possibly use the site as a streaming site.	

Features

Logo

Login

Hyperlink

Email link

Online Form &/ Registration (Form)

Scroll to Button
(Scrolls you to a div)

Action Buttons
(Submits application)

Static Website

Other Features	
Feature	**Visual**
• Gif/ Animated Image (/Video) This an animated video you cannot skip or pause, it is pasted on the page like an image. This was used to show users (old/new) a quick demo of the sites usability.	

Commented [ADN1]: This is a gif.
-Animated Image
{https://rebrand.dropboxstatic.com/videos/homepage_coredb_ui.mp4}
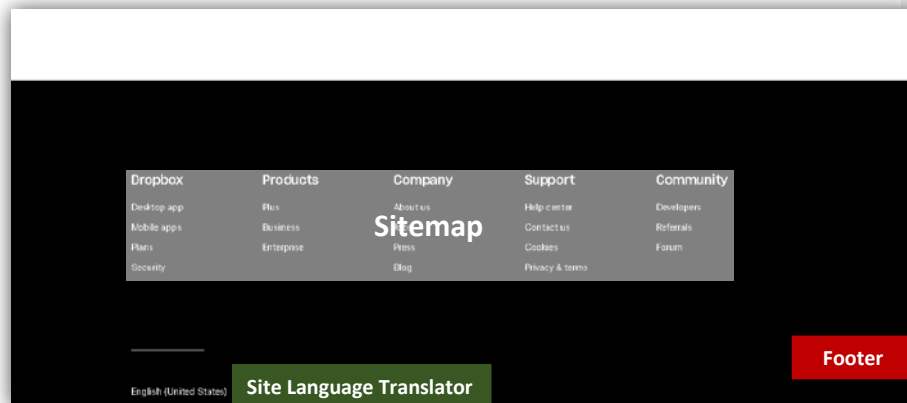
- Image – This image on the site's page is actually two images in different div's positioned to inline with each other, making look like a split screen image/ one image.

  This technique was used as an artistic portrait & a slitent message to media developers/ artists, telling them that the site welcomes them.

- **Translator** – The website can be translated to all of these different languages.

  The site uses to welcome their international audience.

Aesthetics

Format&/ Graphics: 2d & Flat
-By this I mean the images, borders (basically the visuals) are all 2d and use flat ui (user interface) colours.

Colour:
Primary & Secondary colours are used, however because of the flat 2d formating (/style) the secondary colours look as simple as primary colours

Review

All-in-all, I find this website amazing, it's performance is off the charts, as its loading speed are almost instant, this is because it uses css to link the pages for example when you'd switch between the sign in and sign up page, the transfer would happen instantly.
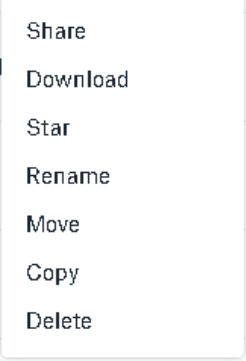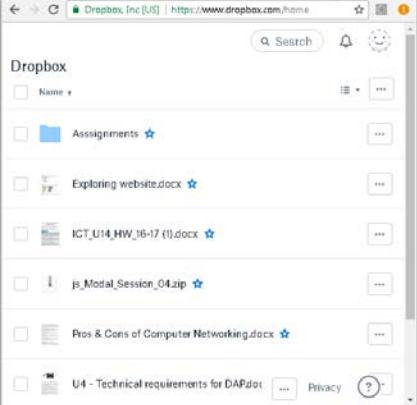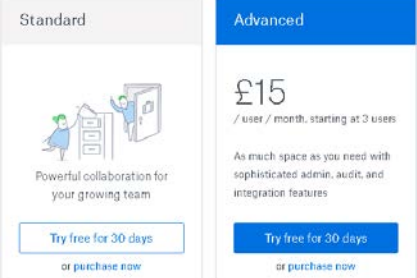
The presentation is super professional. Just like you'd expect from a CMS website, they have a user friendly interface to add, modify or remove contents, it's UI is so simple that even users with little to no technical knowledge can perform tasks easily. It even has stunning designs (images, icons etc.) that complement the colour scheme in a surprisingly satisfying way.

The site is also built to be easily accessible: it comes in many languages so you could use it using your countries (/preferred) language, it makes registration very easy having you fill in a very short form, and the login is even easier however it does make you complete a security task before logging in but the task is very simple and it prevents cheats so it's not really an issue.
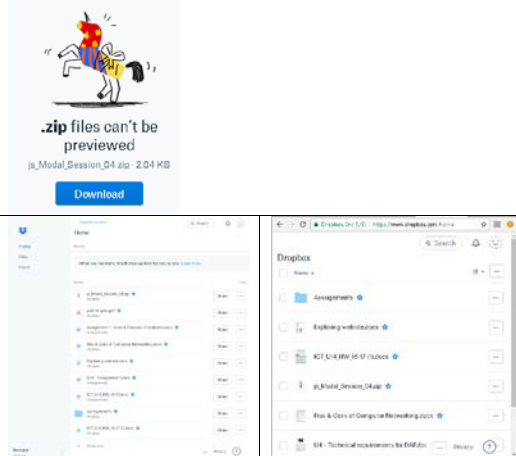
Advantage

Advantages	
• Users can upload & download files • Users can share files • Users can place comments on others shared files (content) • Users can view documents, images & videos before & after downloading/uploading it – this lets the user properly verify the file • The website is responsive, meaning it would be usable with different display sizes • Users can access their account via a multi-range of devices • HTTPS – The site is secure meaning you could trust downloads & uploads from there	
Disadvantages	
• Limitations – dropbox has a subscription plan meaning the more you pay the more you get, but as a free user you get very limited storage space • Zip files cannot be previewed – although most files can be	

Commented [ADN2]: The page minimized like this when I shrank to browser size.

previewed zip files cannot • No back-to-top button – if you have a lot of files saved on dropbox to the point you have a long scroll up then the absence of the feature could help out a lot. • On most pages, content is removed/hidden when display size is minimized	

Conclusion

What we got from this is that, Dropbox's website is a more professional, more developed website than Asos's. This is because dropbox.com has a more user friendly interface, and provides the users with more serviceability.

In conclusion CMS websites need a lot more development (i.e. features, uses & etc.) than ecommerce sites, but this is because ecommerce sites are straight forward whilst CMS websites need to be much more hybrid as they need to be adaptable to user customization.

Biography

Source of used images:

http://www.asos.com ©2017 asos.com Ltd
https://www.dropbox.com