

# 10 essentials to improve the effectiveness of your website

Want your website to work harder for you?  
Here's how to get better results.

**Avenue**



# 10 essentials to improve the effectiveness of your website

1. Follow a 'content first' philosophy
2. Map out your site structure
3. Determine content hierarchy for key pages
4. Make sure your content has a purpose
5. Use a copywriter
6. Consider the impact of SEO campaigns
7. Effective Web Content Presentation
8. Avoid header carousels
9. Importance of Page Speed
10. Continual Improvement philosophy

**Not everyone has the luxury of developing a new website and starting afresh.**

**So this is focused this on aspects you can apply to your current site just as much as developing something new.**

Accordingly, these points ignore obvious aspects such as UX and UI design.

They are a given.

These are points you can implement without a total redesign to get immediate results.

ESSENTIAL.01

**Follow a 'content first'  
philosophy.**

**Avenue**

## Content needs to be the first thing you do.

It doesn't matter how good your website design is, if your content is poor, your site will struggle to be effective.

### **Design should follow content** (not the other way around)

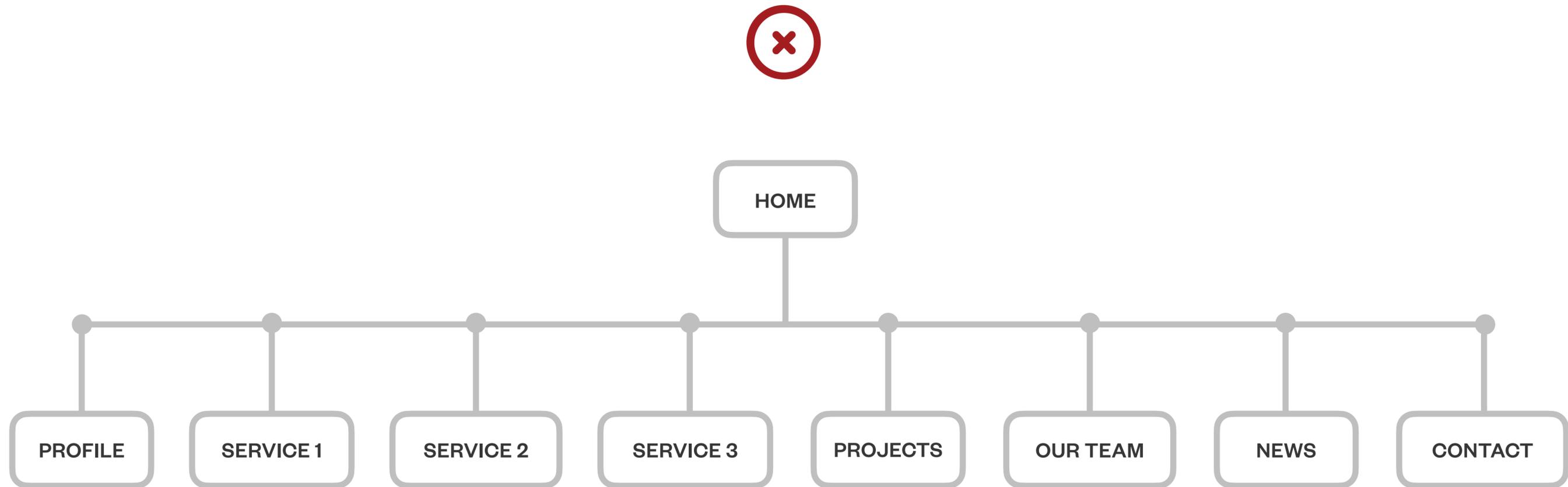
- ! This approach then allows the design of the site to have a clear focus on powerfully communicating your unique, defined message.
- ! Your design will always sing louder if it knows what it needs to say.

ESSENTIAL.02

**Carefully map out your  
site structure.**

**Avenue**

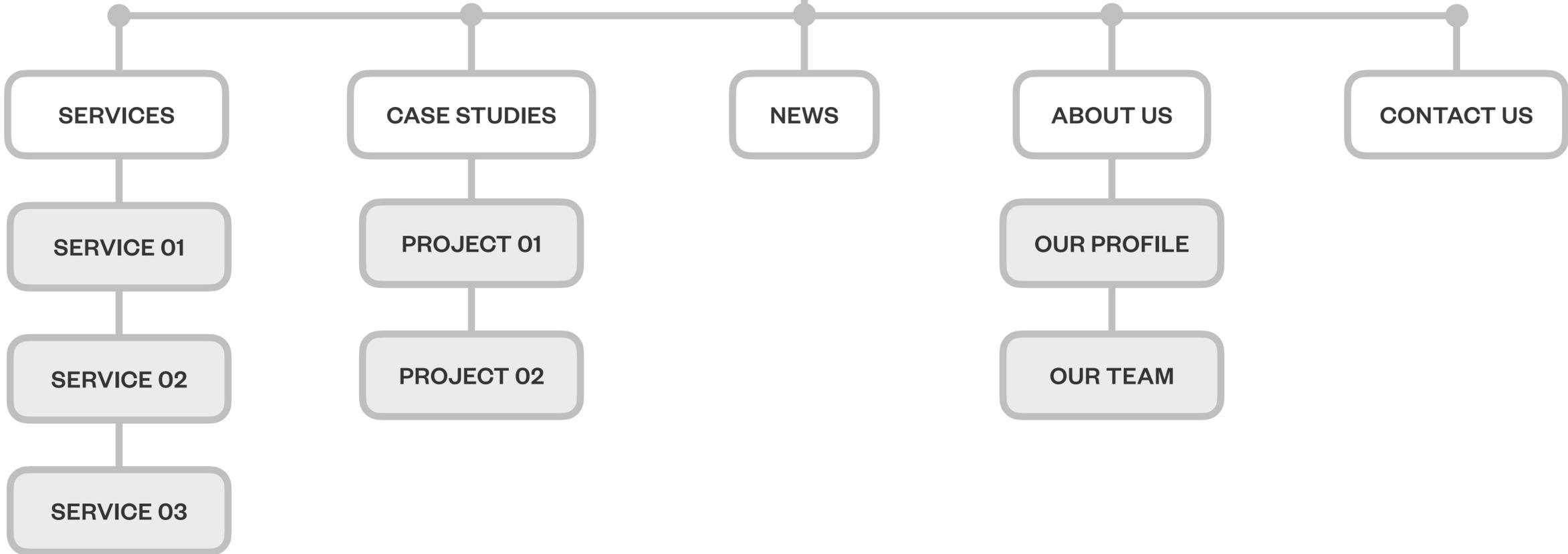
- 1. List of all the pages you need.**
  - 2. Then group them into sections and sub-sections.**
-  Make the number of top level sections as few as possible, and then expand out through sub-sections.



Too many top level navigation items can become disorientating and confusing for users.



HOME



ESSENTIAL.03

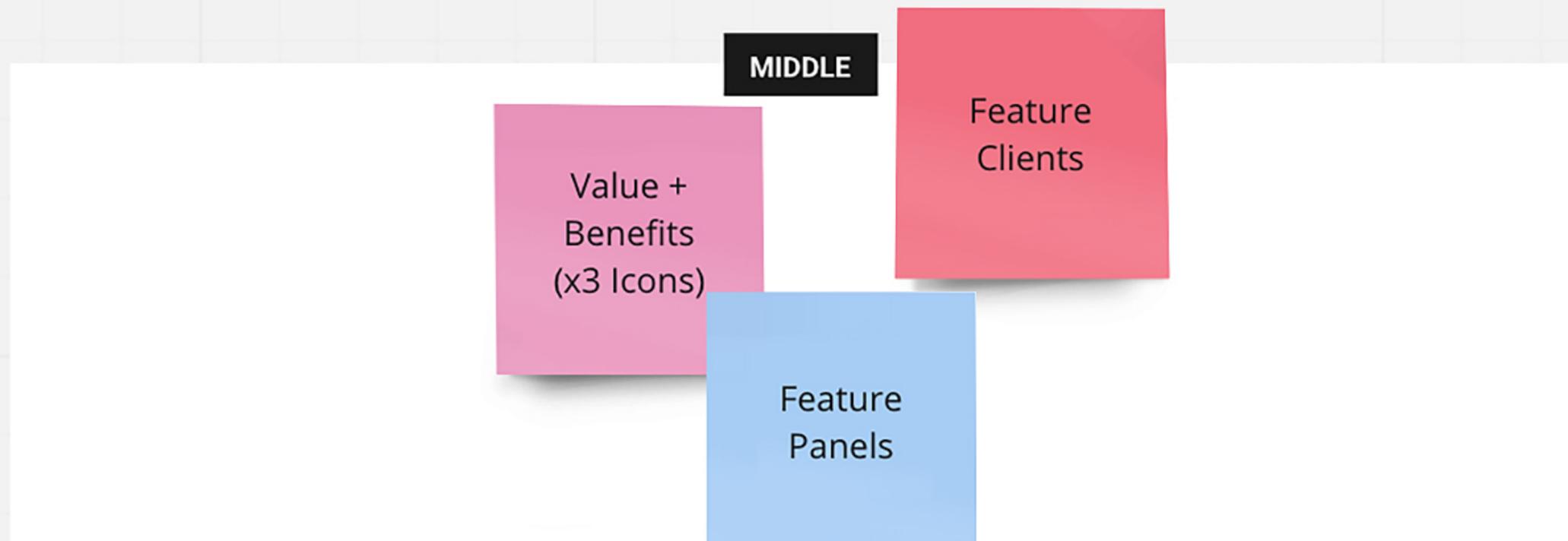
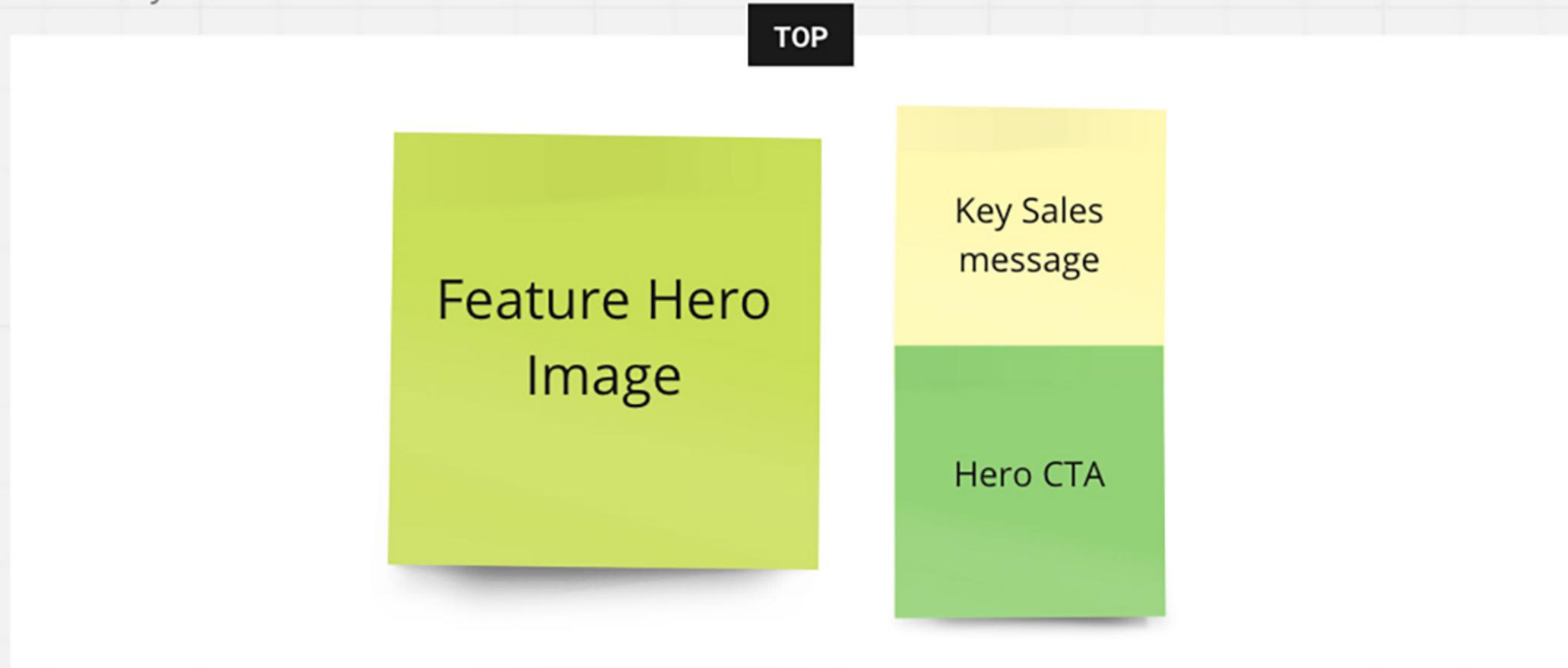
# Determine content hierarchy for key pages

**Content hierarchy is the strategic ordering of information on a web page, where the most important information receives the most emphasis.**

It's imperative that this is considered to ensure you are presenting the most important information that your audience is looking for.

# 1. Homepage

*Hierarchy*



ESSENTIAL. 04

**Make sure your content  
has a purpose.**

**Avenue**

The reality is...

**Very few people are going to read every page on your website.**

**A potential customer may only view one, single page.**

**So you need to make every page count.**

**Always ask yourself...**

## **Why does this page exist?**

- What's its purpose?
  - Is the page necessary?
-  Effective websites need engaging, useful content; not necessarily a lot of pages.

**Always ask yourself...**

## **What value is this page providing my target audience?**

- Is the content focused on outlining how we make the life of our audience better?
- What makes this content excellent in achieving our website's goals?

Remember...

**It's NOT about you!**

**Your content needs to be about what you  
can do to help your target audience.**

**Always ask yourself...**

**What do we want the end result to be after someone's viewed a page?**

 Consider the action/s you want the user to take.

ESSENTIAL.04

**Don't be smart.**  
**Be clear.**

aka “Just tell me what you do!”.

**Avenue**

# **Make sure your Homepage key statement communicates immediately and simply.**

**You now get less than 3 seconds to convince a visitor to stay on your website once they arrive.**

**Too often, this feature copy is confusing, generic and communicates absolutely no value.**

 Remember, this is the first thing a potential customer sees!

**The moment a user has to stop and think about what something means, you risk them leaving the site.**

Our favourite type of bad key statements are ones such as...

# "Delivering your expectations"

Let's break this type of statement down...

1. **It doesn't tell me anything about what product or service is provided.**

2. **As a value statement it's useless.**

Of course I expect you to deliver on what I purchased!

3. **It has no differentiation or context.**

I expect this exact same mission from my local pizza shop.



Your audience is trying to understand how you can solve their needs.

**So tell them:**

1. **What you actually do.**

Do this as simply as possible.

2. **The value or benefit this provides.**

How will this improve their life?

Pitch

▶ **Stunning presentations.**  
 **Made together.** ▶ 

Pitch combines the best parts of productivity, design, and presentation software to help fast-moving teams create beautifully designed decks in minutes.

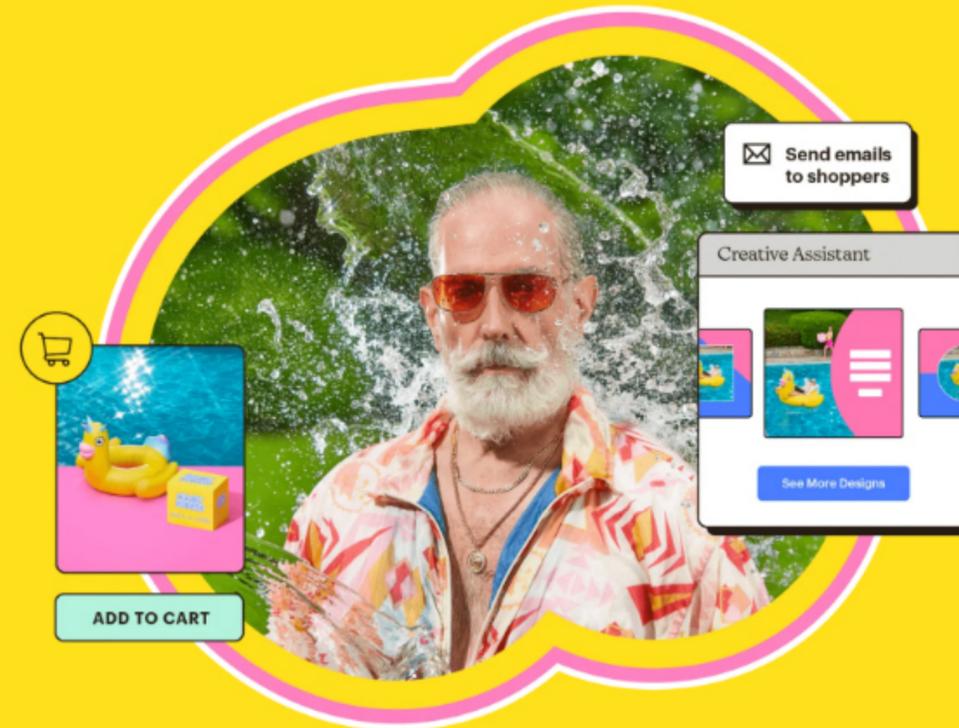


# Turn emails into revenue

Over 13 million businesses rely on Mailchimp to create and send engaging emails that reach the right people, build better relationships, and help drive revenue and growth. You can too.

[Sign Up](#)

[Compare Plans](#)



 Trello

## Trello helps teams move work forward.

Collaborate, manage projects, and reach new productivity peaks. From high rises to the home office, the way your team works is unique—accomplish it all with Trello.

Email

[Sign up—it's free!](#)



ESSENTIAL.05

**Use a copywriter.**

**Writing for the web is a specialist area.**

 Make sure the copywriter has web experience!

ESSENTIAL.06

**Consider the impact  
SEO campaigns  
will have on your copy.**

# **SEO campaigns and your website.**

**Get the SEO firm involved in your content and design process from the beginning.**

**Leaving SEO until late in the process can cause issues around re-work and additional costs.**

# SEO campaigns and your website.

## Things to be aware of:

 Marketing copy is not SEO copy.

They can be world's apart.

The words you use to brand your company may be very different to the word/s a customer puts into Google to try and find you.

 SEO campaigns often need a larger volume of web page content to rank.

This can impact design.

ESSENTIAL.07

# Effective Web Content Presentation

Avenue

**Having great content is not enough.**

**Web content needs to be presented so it's engaging.**

The screen is not a book.

People won't read large blocks of plain text.

Most people only skim read websites.



**Do**

use heading styles  
and bullet points



**Don't**

use long paragraphs

*Avenue*



**Do**

use block quotes



**Don't**

use too many  
font styles

*Avenue*



## **Do**

**break up text  
content with  
photos and videos**



## **Don't**

**use cheap, crappy  
royalty free photos  
and clipart**



## **Do**

size images at 2x  
to appear sharp  
on retina displays



## **Don't**

forget to optimise  
images to reduce file  
size and page load

ESSENTIAL.08

# Avoid header carousels

 aka. Can the carousel

Homepage carousel sliders. One of the worst things you can have on your site.

**On average, only  
1% of people click  
on a slider screen.**

**No one's paying any  
attention to them!**



Avenue

## What makes them so bad?

# 1. No one's looking or interacting with them!

Notre Dame University research on of 5 Million users:

- **On average, only 1% of people actually click on a slider screen.**
- **89% of those 1% of interactions are on the first slide.**

**Conversion rate is non-existent.**

**What makes them so bad?**

## **2. Users are prone to 'Banner Blindness'**

Studies have shown that:

- **The majority of users view banners as spammy ads.**
- **Competing messages can overwhelm site visitors.**

Accordingly:

- **Users either 'tune out' to paying attention, or**
- **Are left confused and unfocused on their next steps.**

**“The best place to hide a dead body is the 2nd slide of a website carousel”**

**What makes them so bad?**

### **3. Dramatically worsen page load speed**

**Carousel slides add massive bloat to page size.**

- Additional JavaScript
- Commonly consist of large images

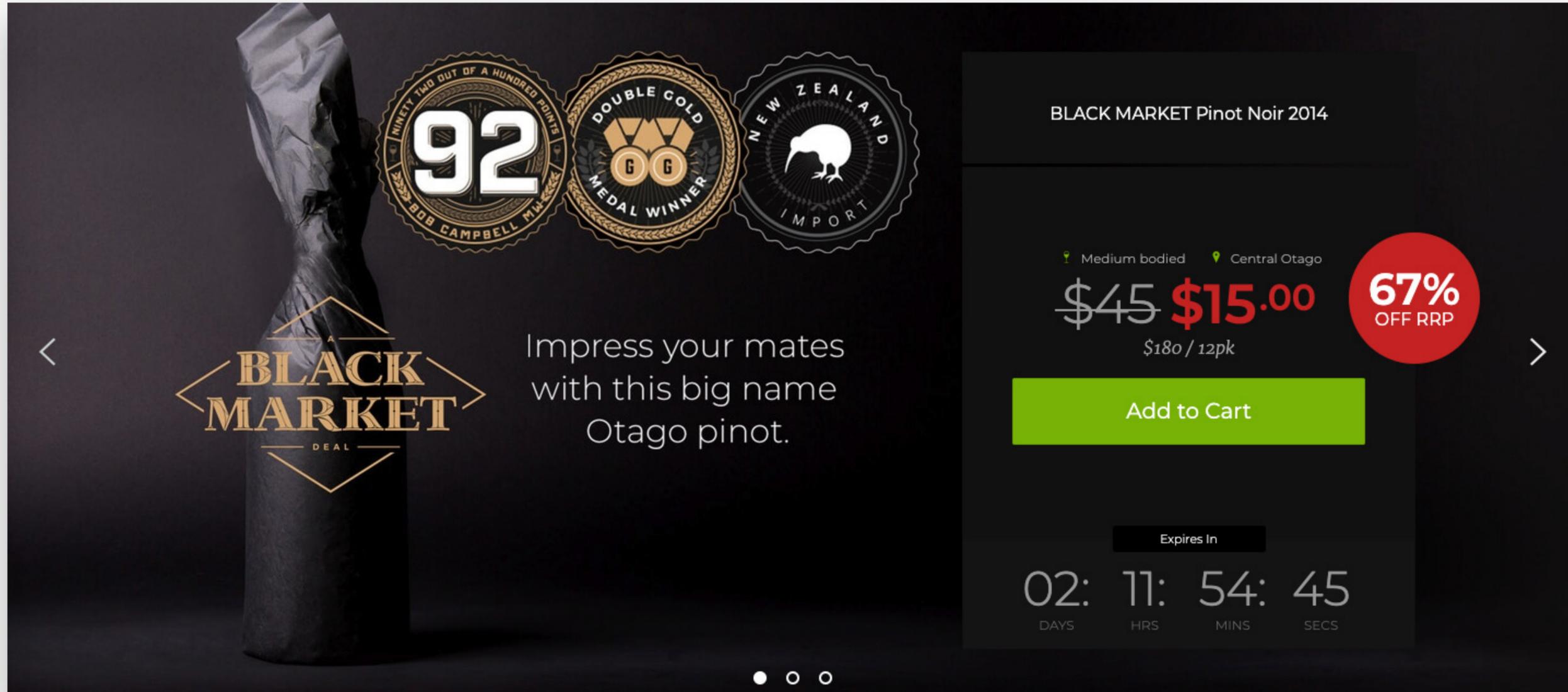
**Slow websites = lost customers.**

# How can we solve the carousel problem?

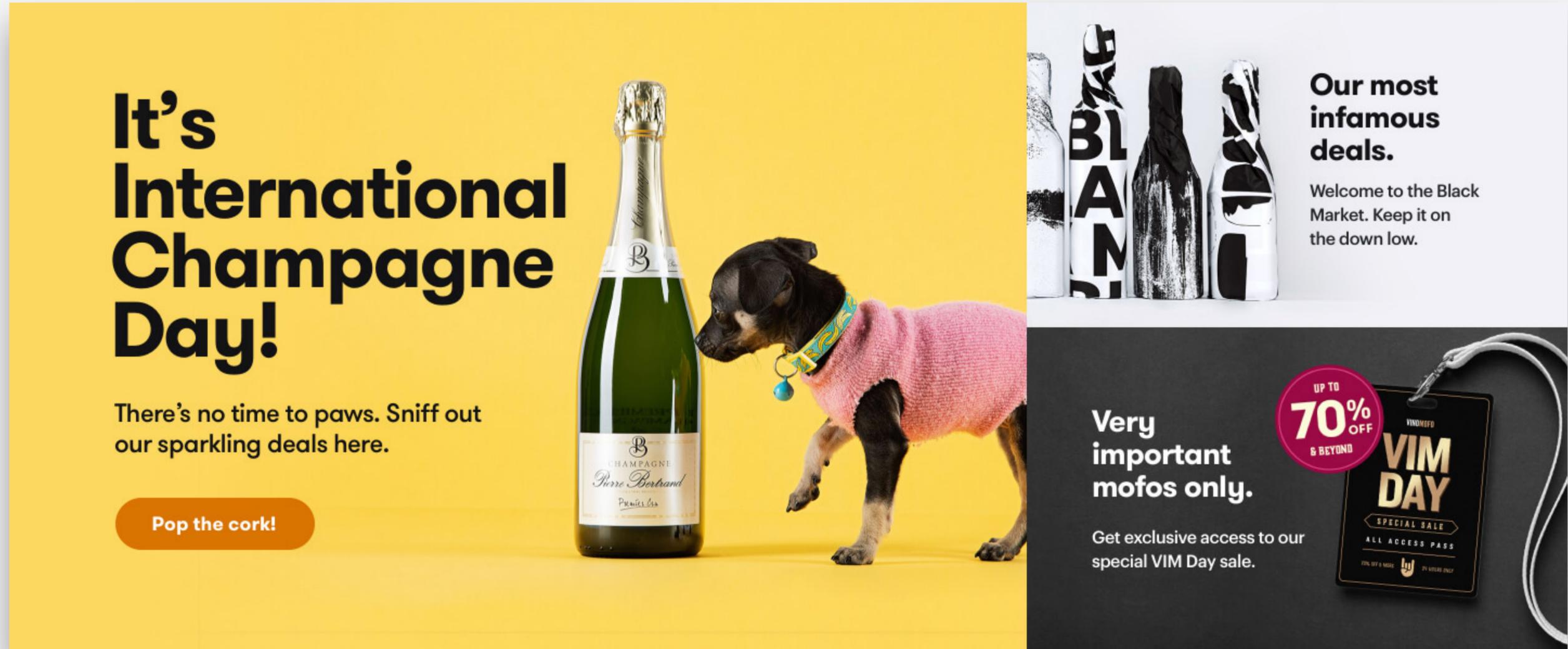
- ! If the information is important, it needs to be seen!  
Don't hide it.

Solving the homepage carousel slider problem case study: Vinomofu

BEFORE



AFTER



**Nothing is hidden** - ensures all key promotions are seen at all times

**Improves page load speed** - better user experience

ESSENTIAL.09

**Page load speed is now the  
#1 website consideration.**

**Avenue**

The research is clear...

**Slow = less engagement**  
**= less conversions**  
**= less customers**

 Google is about to start penalising slow ranking sites in its search results

## Page load speed quick wins

# 1. Images

### Size images properly:

- Don't upload massive files without sizing to proper dimensions.

### Optimise images:

- Use the free site [TinyPNG.com](https://tinypng.com) to dramatically reduce image file size without impacting image quality.

**ORIGINAL IMAGE**

800 pixels x 600 pixels

72 dpi

100% JPG quality

407kb size



**TINY PNG IMAGE**

800 pixels x 600 pixels

72 dpi

Optimised JPG quality

136kb size

Size reduction of 66%



## Page load speed quick wins

### 2. Plugins

- **Avoid and/or uninstall them**
  - get rid of everything that's not essential.
  - ask yourself what do I REALLY need and use?
- **They bloat websites, dramatically impacting page speed**
  - doesn't matter if it's WordPress or Shopify, etc.

ESSENTIAL.10

# Continual improvement philosophy.

*Avenue*

**“Your website is never finished”**

It needs to be in a state of constant evolution and refinement.

**Avenue**

**Install Google Analytics and  
understand what the data means.**

# Google Analytics.

**Review your website data regularly.**

**Take the time to analyse and understand what the data means.**



What pages are people viewing?

How long are they spending on these pages and the site as a whole?

What pages are users landing on?

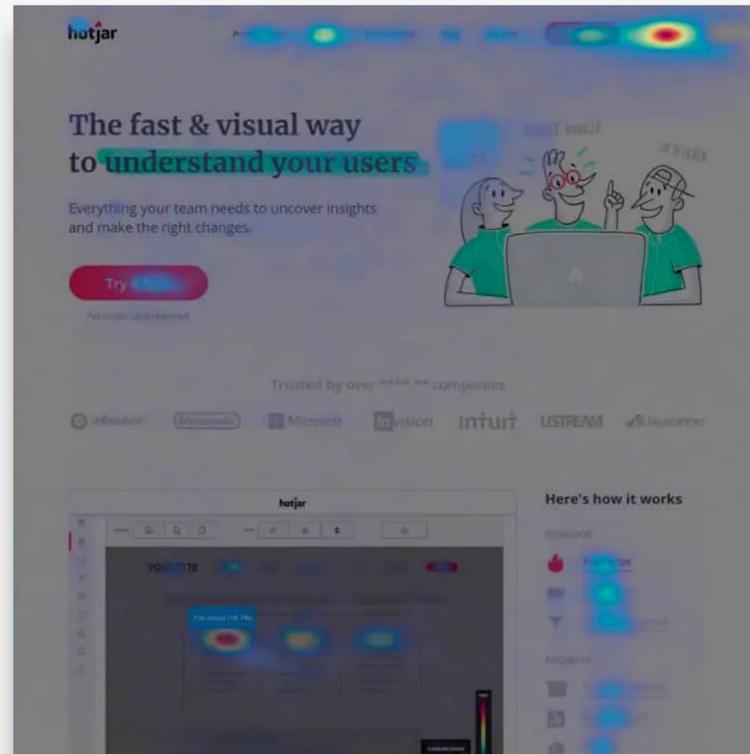
What pages are users exiting on?

What geographic locations are the people viewing from?

What are the demographics of the users?

What technology and devices are people using?

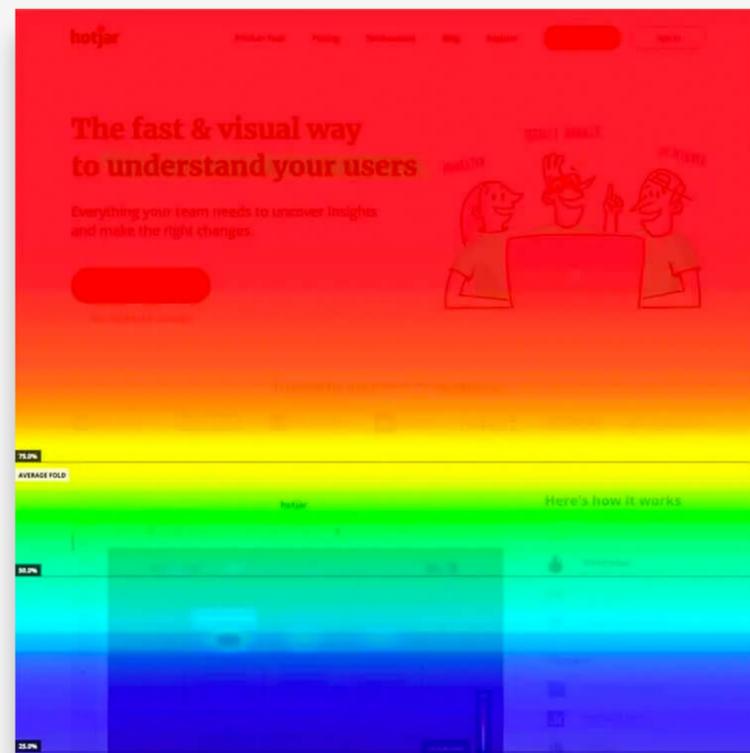
**React to the learnings and improve the effectiveness of your site.**



## Install heat map software.

Provides a deeper insight on the effectiveness of your website's design and content.

- ! Measure effectiveness of Navigation and CTA clicks.  
Measure how far users scroll.



**Review.**  
**Analyse.**  
**Refine.**  
**Repeat.**



**Brenton Cannizzaro**

Digital Business Director

**Avenue**

LIKE TO GET IN TOUCH?

brenton@avenue.design

+61 44 88 33 157

avenue.design

linkedin.com/in/brentoncannizzaro



avenue.design