

The Ultimate Guide to Homepage Design

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Picture this: you are walking down a busy street. You glance at a storefront window. In exactly fifty milliseconds, your brain makes a decision. You either walk in, or you keep walking.

Your website homepage is that storefront window. It is the most visited page on your site. It has the most diverse traffic sources. It is the page where you know the least about your visitor. Yet it carries the heaviest burden. It must answer three questions immediately: What do you do? What can I do here? Why should I choose you over the competition?

If your homepage fails to answer those questions, the visitor leaves.

This guide synthesizes the world's best research on homepage design. It draws from the Nielsen Norman Group, the Baymard Institute, Unbounce, Orbit Media, CXL, HubSpot, Semrush, VWO, and dozens of conversion rate optimization experts. It will show you exactly how to build a homepage that captures attention, builds trust, and drives action.

Part 1: What a Homepage Actually Is (And What It Is Not)

Before you design a single pixel, you need to understand what a homepage is supposed to do.

A homepage is not a landing page. A landing page is designed for a single, specific campaign with one conversion goal. A homepage serves a much broader and more complex purpose. It is the central hub of your entire web presence. It must serve first-time visitors who know nothing about you, returning customers who are looking for something specific, and journalists or partners who are doing due diligence.

The Nielsen Norman Group defines the homepage's core job as communicating who you are, what you do, and what users can do on your site. This sounds simple. It is not. The challenge is that every visitor arrives with a different intent, a different level of awareness, and a different emotional state.

The Three Audiences of Every Homepage

Every homepage must serve three distinct audiences simultaneously.

The first audience is the **unaware visitor**. This person found you through a search engine or a social media post. They do not know your brand. They are asking, "Is this the right place for me?" Your job is to answer that question within the first three seconds.

The second audience is the **aware but unconvinced visitor**. This person has heard of you. They are evaluating you against competitors. They are asking, "Why should I choose you?" Your job is to build trust and demonstrate value.

The third audience is the **returning customer or user**. This person already knows you. They are looking for something specific: a login link, a support page, or a new product. Your job is to get out of their way and let them find it quickly.

Great homepage design serves all three audiences without confusing any of them.

Part 2: The Science of the First Impression

The 50-Millisecond Judgment

In 2006, researchers at Carleton University published a landmark study in the journal Behaviour and Information Technology. They found that users form a visual impression of a website in just fifty milliseconds. This judgment is made before a single word is read. It is based entirely on visual design: layout, color, spacing, and perceived complexity.

The implication is profound. Your homepage's visual design is not decoration. It is the first argument you make to every visitor. A cluttered, visually complex homepage signals low credibility. A clean, well-organized homepage signals professionalism and trustworthiness.

The 5-Second Test

The five-second test is a standard tool in conversion rate optimization. Show a user your homepage for five seconds, then hide it. Ask them: What is this website about? What can you do here? Who is it for?

If users cannot answer these questions, your homepage has failed. The five-second test is ruthless and honest. It reveals whether your value proposition is clear or buried.

The Squint Test

The squint test is a designer's trick for evaluating visual hierarchy. Step back from your screen. Squint your eyes until the text becomes blurry. What stands out?

You should see three things clearly: your logo, your primary headline, and your call to action button. If everything blends into a gray mass, your visual hierarchy is failing. Users will not know where to look first.

Part 3: The Hero Section

The hero section is the most important real estate on your homepage. It is the full-width area at the top of the page, visible without scrolling. Research from Orbit Media shows that content above the fold receives eighty-four percent more attention than content below it.

You have one job with your hero section: make the visitor want to stay.

The Four Essential Components

1. The Headline

Your headline is your H1 tag. It is the most important piece of copy on your entire website. It should be six to ten words. It must clearly state what you do or what the visitor will gain.

Clear beats clever. Every time. If you met someone at a party and used your headline to describe your business, they should understand it instantly. If they would need a follow-up question, your headline has failed.

Here is the test: can a stranger read your headline and explain your business to someone else? If yes, you have a good headline. If no, rewrite it.

2. The Subheadline

The subheadline expands on the value proposition. It adds context that the headline cannot contain. It should answer the "how" or the "who." It should be one to three sentences. It should use plain language.

Avoid jargon. Avoid buzzwords. Avoid phrases like "best-in-class," "synergistic," or "holistic solutions." These words mean nothing to the reader. They signal that you are more interested in sounding impressive than in communicating clearly.

3. The Primary Call to Action

The primary CTA is the one thing you want the visitor to do. It should be a single, prominent button. It should use a contrasting color that stands out from the rest of the page. It should use a strong, specific verb.

"Get Started" is weak. "Start Your Free Trial" is better. "Start Building for Free" is even better. The more specific the CTA copy, the higher the conversion rate. Specificity reduces anxiety. It tells the user exactly what will happen when they click.

Research from Prismic shows that having multiple competing CTAs in the hero section can decrease conversion rates by up to two hundred and sixty-six percent. Make one choice. Commit to it.

4. The Hero Visual

The hero visual is the image, video, or illustration that accompanies your headline. It should reinforce your message, not distract from it.

The best hero visuals for product companies show the product in use. For SaaS companies, this means a screenshot or animated UI. For physical product companies, this means a lifestyle image of a real person using the product. For service companies, this means an image that evokes the outcome or the emotion of working with you.

Avoid generic stock photos of people shaking hands in glass-walled conference rooms. Users have developed a strong immunity to these images. They register as wallpaper.

If you use a photo of a person, their eyes should look toward your headline or CTA. Eye-tracking studies show that users follow the gaze of faces in images. A person looking at your CTA button will draw the user's eye to the CTA.

The Carousel Problem

Do not use rotating sliders or carousels in your hero section. The research is definitive and has been for over a decade. The Baymard Institute, the Nielsen Norman Group, and dozens of CRO practitioners all agree: carousels hurt conversion rates.

Here is why. The first slide gets all the attention. The second slide gets almost none. Users either ignore the carousel entirely or click away before the second slide appears. Content on the second and third slides is effectively invisible.

Carousels are often used because multiple stakeholders want their message featured on the homepage. This is an internal political problem being solved with a design feature. The user pays the price.

Make one strong choice for your hero. If multiple messages need to be communicated, communicate them in separate sections further down the page.

Part 4: Navigation Design

Navigation is how users find their way around your site. Poor navigation is one of the most common and most costly homepage mistakes.

The Primary Navigation Bar

The navigation bar belongs at the top of the screen. This is where users expect to find it. Jakob's Law states that users spend most of their time on other websites. They form their expectations based on what is common across the web. Violating those expectations creates friction and confusion.

The navigation bar should contain your logo on the left, your primary navigation links in the center or right, and your primary CTA on the far right. This is the standard pattern. It works because users have seen it thousands of times.

Navigation Labels

Use clear, descriptive labels. "Services" is acceptable. "What We Do" is acceptable. "Solutions" is vague and should be avoided unless your audience uses that language. "Stuff" is not acceptable.

The Nielsen Norman Group recommends using the most common, recognizable terms for navigation labels. Avoid creative or branded navigation labels that require users to think. "The Hub" is not a navigation label. "Resources" is.

Number of Menu Items

Cognitive load research suggests that users can comfortably process five to seven navigation items. Beyond seven, users begin to experience decision fatigue. Prioritize ruthlessly. If you have more than seven top-level navigation items, consider consolidating categories.

The Hamburger Menu on Desktop

Do not hide your desktop navigation behind a hamburger menu icon. This pattern is appropriate for mobile devices where screen space is constrained. On desktop, it hides your site's context cues. Users who cannot see the navigation cannot understand the scope of your site. Visibility drives exploration.

Mega Menus vs. Dropdown Menus

For large sites with many pages, mega menus outperform traditional cascading dropdown menus. Cascading dropdowns require precise mouse movements. If the user's cursor drifts slightly off the menu, it disappears. This is frustrating.

Mega menus display all options simultaneously in a large panel. Users can see everything at once and navigate directly to their destination. They also allow for visual grouping, which helps users understand the information architecture of your site.

The Sticky Navigation

A sticky navigation bar stays fixed at the top of the screen as the user scrolls. Research consistently shows that sticky navigation improves usability. It means the user never has to scroll back to the top to navigate. It keeps your logo and primary CTA visible at all times.

Part 5: The Value Proposition

Your value proposition is the single most important piece of copy on your homepage. It is a clear statement of the primary value you deliver to your customers. It is not a slogan. It is not a mission statement. It is a direct answer to the question: "Why should I choose you?"

The What-Who-How Framework

A strong value proposition answers three questions:

What do you do? State the category you are in. "We build project management software." "We are a B2B content marketing agency."

Who do you do it for? Name your target customer. "For remote engineering teams." "For Series A and Series B SaaS companies."

How do you do it differently? State your primary differentiator. "Without the complexity of enterprise tools." "Using a data-driven editorial strategy."

Combined: "We build project management software for remote engineering teams, without the complexity of enterprise tools."

This is not a beautiful sentence. But it is clear. And clarity converts.

Voice-of-Customer Research

The secret weapon of great homepage copywriters is voice-of-customer research. This means using the exact words your customers use to describe their problems and your solutions.

Do not write your value proposition in a boardroom. Write it from customer interviews, support tickets, sales call transcripts, and review sites. When a customer says your product "finally makes expense reports painless," that phrase is worth more than anything a copywriter could invent.

Specificity Builds Trust

Vague claims destroy credibility. Specific claims build it. Compare these two statements:

"We provide excellent customer service." This is a claim every company makes. It means nothing.

"Our average response time is fourteen minutes, twenty-four hours a day." This is specific, verifiable, and memorable.

Wherever possible, replace adjectives with data. Replace "fast" with a number. Replace "many clients" with a specific count. Replace "significant results" with a percentage improvement.

Part 6: Social Proof and Trust Signals

People do not buy from businesses they do not trust. Your homepage must actively build credibility. Social proof is the most powerful tool you have.

The Six Types of Social Proof

1. Client Logos

A row of recognizable client logos is one of the most efficient trust signals on the web. It communicates, in a single glance, that other companies have trusted you with their business. Place this section immediately below the hero section. The closer it is to the top of the page, the more powerful it is.

Use logos of companies your target customers will recognize. If you serve mid-market companies, show mid-market logos. If you serve enterprise companies, show enterprise logos. Mismatched social proof can actually hurt conversion rates by signaling that you serve a different type of customer.

2. Testimonials

Testimonials are the most persuasive form of social proof because they are personal and specific. A great testimonial describes a specific problem, explains how you solved it, and quantifies the result.

"Meridian helped us increase our conversion rate by forty-two percent in ninety days. We had tried three other agencies before and none of them delivered. These guys are different." This is a great testimonial.

"Great service, highly recommend!" This is a useless testimonial. It is vague, unspecific, and indistinguishable from any other five-star review.

Place testimonials near your CTAs and near the sections of your page where users are most likely to hesitate.

3. Case Studies

Case studies are long-form testimonials. They tell the full story of a client's transformation. They are particularly powerful for high-ticket products and services where the buying decision is complex and the stakes are high.

On your homepage, feature a short summary of your best case study with a link to the full version. Include the client's name, their industry, the specific problem you solved, and the quantified result.

4. Data and Metrics

Numbers are credible. "Over ten thousand companies trust our platform" is more convincing than "many companies trust our platform." A statistics bar featuring key metrics is a powerful trust signal. Common

metrics include number of customers, years in business, total revenue generated for clients, or a specific performance benchmark.

5. Media Mentions and Awards

If you have been featured in recognizable publications or won industry awards, display these on your homepage. "As seen in" sections with media logos are a form of third-party endorsement. They borrow credibility from institutions your visitors already trust.

6. Trust Badges and Security Seals

For ecommerce sites and any site that collects sensitive information, security seals are essential. The Baymard Institute found that seventeen percent of consumers abandon their cart due to a lack of trust. Recognized security badges from providers like Norton, McAfee, and SSL certificate authorities directly address this anxiety.

Strategic Placement of Social Proof

Type of Social Proof	Optimal Placement
Client logos	Immediately below the hero section
Testimonials	Near CTAs and friction points
Case study summaries	In the middle of the page, after benefits
Statistics bar	Below the hero or as a standalone section
Media mentions	Near the hero or in the footer
Security seals	Near conversion forms and in the footer

Part 7: The Homepage Copywriting Framework

Great homepage copy is not written. It is assembled from the words your customers already use. But it must be structured in a way that guides the visitor from awareness to action.

The Inverted Pyramid

The inverted pyramid is a writing structure borrowed from journalism. The most important information comes first. The supporting details come after. The background and context come last.

On a homepage, this means your value proposition is at the top. Your benefits are in the middle. Your features and technical details are at the bottom.

Most companies do the opposite. They lead with features and bury the benefits. They write for themselves instead of for their customers.

Writing for Scanners

Eye-tracking studies show that users do not read web pages. They scan them. They look for headlines, bold text, and visual anchors that tell them whether it is worth slowing down to read more.

Write your homepage for scanners first. Every headline should be able to stand alone and communicate a complete idea. If a user reads only your headlines, they should understand your entire value proposition.

Use short paragraphs. Two to three sentences is ideal. Long blocks of text are intimidating. They signal effort. Users will skip them.

Use bold text to highlight the most important phrases in each paragraph. Do not bold randomly. Bold the specific words you want the scanner to catch.

The Power of "You"

The most important word in homepage copywriting is "you." Not "we." Not "our team." Not "our platform."

Count the number of times your homepage says "we" versus "you." If "we" wins, rewrite it. Users do not care about your company. They care about their problems. Every sentence that starts with "we" should be rewritten to start with "you."

"We have helped over five hundred companies grow their revenue" becomes "You will join over five hundred companies that have grown their revenue."

Part 8: Visual Hierarchy and Design Principles

Visual hierarchy is the arrangement of design elements in a way that guides the user's eye in a specific order. It is the invisible architecture of your homepage.

The Three Tools of Visual Hierarchy

Size: Larger elements attract more attention. Your headline should be the largest text on the page. Your body copy should be the smallest. Your CTA button should be large enough to be noticed but not so large that it overwhelms the surrounding content.

Contrast: High contrast attracts the eye. A bright CTA button on a neutral background will be noticed immediately. A gray CTA button on a gray background will be ignored. Use contrast deliberately to direct attention.

Placement: Elements at the top of the page receive more attention than elements at the bottom. Elements on the left side of the page receive more attention than elements on the right, due to the natural left-to-right reading pattern in Western cultures.

The Z-Pattern and the F-Pattern

Eye-tracking research has identified two primary scanning patterns on web pages.

The **Z-Pattern** is used on pages with minimal text and strong visual elements. The eye starts at the top left, moves to the top right, then diagonally to the bottom left, and finally to the bottom right. Place your logo at the top left, your navigation at the top right, your value proposition in the middle, and your CTA at the bottom right.

The **F-Pattern** is used on text-heavy pages. The eye reads across the top, then scans down the left side, reading less and less across as it goes. This is why the first sentence of every paragraph is the most important. It is the only sentence many users will read.

White Space

White space is not wasted space. It is a design tool. White space reduces cognitive load. It makes content easier to process. It signals quality and sophistication.

Research from Unbounce shows that increasing white space around text and titles increases user attention by twenty percent. Cluttered pages feel cheap and untrustworthy. Spacious pages feel premium and credible.

There are two types of white space. Micro white space is the space between letters, lines, and paragraphs. Macro white space is the space between major sections of the page. Both are important. Both are often sacrificed in the name of fitting more content above the fold.

Typography

Typography is one of the most underestimated tools in web design. The wrong typeface can make a professional company look amateurish. The right typeface can make a startup look like an established brand.

Use a maximum of two typefaces on your homepage. One for headlines and one for body copy. More than two creates visual noise.

For body copy, use a minimum font size of sixteen pixels. Smaller text is difficult to read, especially on mobile devices. The Nielsen Norman Group recommends sixteen to eighteen pixels as the optimal body copy size for

most websites.

Line height should be one point four to one point six times the font size. This is the spacing between lines of text. Too tight and the text feels claustrophobic. Too loose and the text feels disconnected.

Part 9: The Scroll Journey

The hero section earns the first look. The rest of the page earns the conversion. The scroll journey is the sequence of sections below the hero that builds the case for your product or service.

Avoiding the False Floor

A false floor occurs when a section of a webpage looks complete and self-contained. The user thinks they have reached the bottom of the page. They stop scrolling. They miss everything below.

False floors are often created by full-bleed background images that perfectly fill the screen, or by sections with heavy bottom padding that creates a visual gap.

The fix is simple. Always ensure that a portion of the next section is visible at the bottom of the screen. This visual cue tells the user there is more to see. It invites them to scroll.

The Ideal Homepage Section Sequence

The most effective homepage structures follow a logical narrative arc. They take the user on a journey from problem to solution to proof to action.

Section	Purpose
Hero	State the value proposition and primary CTA
Social Proof Bar	Establish immediate credibility with logos or metrics
Problem Statement	Articulate the pain the user is experiencing
Solution Overview	Introduce your product or service as the answer
Features and Benefits	Explain how it works and what the user gains
Deep Social Proof	Testimonials, case studies, and detailed results
Secondary CTA	A second opportunity to convert mid-page

Section	Purpose
FAQ or Objection Handling	Address the most common reasons not to buy
Final CTA	A strong closing call to action
Footer	Navigation, legal links, and contact information

This is not a rigid formula. It is a framework. Your specific business, audience, and product will require adjustments. But the underlying logic is sound: build the case before you ask for the sale.

Part 10: The Call to Action

The call to action is the moment of conversion. Everything else on your homepage exists to bring the user to this point.

CTA Copy

The most common mistake in CTA copy is using generic verbs. "Submit," "Click Here," and "Learn More" are the weakest CTAs on the web. They tell the user nothing about what will happen next.

Strong CTA copy is specific, benefit-oriented, and low-risk. It tells the user exactly what they will get and reduces the perceived cost of clicking.

Compare these CTAs: - "Submit" (weak) - "Get Started" (better) - "Start Your Free 14-Day Trial" (strong) - "See How It Works" (strong for a demo) - "Get My Free Marketing Audit" (strong for a lead magnet)

The word "free" is one of the most powerful words in CTA copy. If your offer is genuinely free, use the word. If there is a cost, be transparent about it.

CTA Design

The CTA button should be a contrasting color. If your brand colors are blue and white, your CTA button should not be blue. It should be orange, green, or another high-contrast color that stands out from the surrounding design.

The button should be large enough to be noticed but not so large that it feels aggressive. A minimum height of forty-four pixels is recommended for mobile touch targets. On desktop, forty-eight to fifty-six pixels is standard.

Add micro-copy below the CTA button to address the most common objection. "No credit card required." "Cancel anytime." "Free for thirty days." These small phrases remove the last barrier to clicking.

Primary vs. Secondary CTAs

Your homepage should have one primary CTA and, optionally, one secondary CTA. The primary CTA is the action you most want users to take. The secondary CTA is for users who are not yet ready for the primary action.

For a SaaS company, the primary CTA might be "Start Free Trial" and the secondary CTA might be "Watch a Demo." The secondary CTA serves the user who wants more information before committing.

Make the primary CTA visually dominant. The secondary CTA should be less prominent, often as a text link or a ghost button rather than a solid button.

Part 11: Mobile-First Homepage Design

Mobile devices account for more than fifty-eight percent of global web traffic. Designing for desktop first and adapting for mobile is the wrong approach. Design for mobile first and enhance for desktop.

The Mobile-First Mindset

Mobile-first design is not about making your desktop site smaller. It is about starting with the constraints of the smallest screen and building up from there. This discipline forces you to prioritize ruthlessly. If a piece of content is not important enough to include on mobile, it is probably not important enough to include at all.

Touch Targets

On mobile, users interact with their fingers, not a mouse cursor. Touch targets must be large enough to tap accurately. The minimum recommended touch target size is forty-four by forty-four pixels. Buttons and links that are too small cause frustration and accidental clicks.

Ensure there is sufficient spacing between touch targets. If two buttons are placed too close together, users will frequently tap the wrong one.

Mobile Navigation

The hamburger menu is the standard pattern for mobile navigation. It is familiar and expected. However, it hides your navigation behind an extra tap. Consider using a bottom navigation bar for your most critical

navigation items on mobile. Bottom navigation is within thumb reach and does not require the user to tap a menu icon first.

Mobile Page Speed

Mobile users are often on slower connections than desktop users. Page speed is even more critical on mobile. Google's research shows that as page load time increases from one second to six seconds, the probability of the user bouncing increases by one hundred and six percent.

Optimize your images for mobile. Use next-generation formats like WebP. Lazy-load images that are below the fold. Minimize JavaScript. Every second you shave off your load time is a measurable improvement in conversion rate.

Part 12: Homepage SEO

A beautiful homepage is useless if no one finds it. Search engine optimization ensures that your homepage appears in search results for the terms your potential customers are searching for.

Branded vs. Non-Branded Keywords

Most homepages are optimized primarily for branded keywords, meaning searches that include your company name. This is appropriate. When someone searches for your brand, they should find your homepage immediately.

However, a well-optimized homepage can also rank for non-branded, high-volume keywords. Clockify, a time-tracking tool, ranks its homepage for over eight thousand keywords, including non-branded terms like "time tracker" and "timesheet software." This drives significant organic traffic from users who have never heard of the brand.

The Title Tag

The title tag is the most important SEO element on your homepage. It is the clickable headline that appears in search engine results. It should include your primary keyword and your brand name. Keep it under sixty characters to avoid truncation in search results.

The Meta Description

The meta description is the short summary that appears below the title tag in search results. It does not directly affect rankings, but it significantly affects click-through rate. Write it as an advertisement for your

homepage. Include your primary keyword and a clear value proposition. Keep it under one hundred and sixty characters.

The H1 Tag

Your H1 tag is your homepage headline. There should be only one H1 tag per page. It should include your primary keyword. It should match the intent of the user who is searching for that keyword.

Internal Linking

Your homepage should link to the most important pages on your site. These links pass authority to those pages and help search engines understand your site's structure. Ensure that your navigation links use descriptive anchor text, not generic labels like "click here."

Part 13: Homepage Design for Specific Business Types

Different business models require different homepage strategies. The same principles apply, but the emphasis and structure shift based on the audience, the product, and the sales process.

The SaaS Homepage

SaaS homepages must educate and convert. The product is intangible. Users cannot touch it or try it in a store. The homepage must make the product feel real and accessible.

Show the product in action. Use screenshots, animated UI cards, or short explainer videos. The goal is to reduce the perceived learning curve. If the product looks complex, users will not sign up.

The primary CTA is almost always a free trial or a demo request. The secondary CTA is often a product tour or an explainer video. Make it easy for the user to experience the product before committing.

Feature a strong FAQ section. SaaS products often have complex pricing, integration questions, and security concerns. Addressing these objections directly on the homepage reduces the friction of the buying decision.

The Ecommerce Homepage

Ecommerce homepages are digital storefronts. The navigation taxonomy is critical. Users must be able to find the product category they are looking for within two clicks.

Overcategorization is a major pitfall. If you have "Floral Dresses" as a separate category from "Dresses," users cannot view all dresses at once. Use filters for product attributes like color, size, and style. Use categories for broad product types.

Highlight your unique value proposition prominently. Free shipping, easy returns, and a satisfaction guarantee are powerful conversion drivers for ecommerce. Display these above the fold.

Feature your best-selling or most popular products on the homepage. Popular products have social proof built in. They are popular because they are good. Showing them on the homepage leverages that existing credibility.

The Professional Services Homepage

Consulting and professional services homepages must sell expertise and trust. The purchase decision is high-stakes and often involves multiple stakeholders. The homepage must establish the firm as a credible, knowledgeable partner.

Lead with outcomes, not services. Do not say "We offer strategic consulting." Say "We help mid-market manufacturers reduce operational costs by an average of twenty-three percent."

Feature case studies prominently. A professional services buyer wants to see evidence that you have solved their specific problem before. A well-written case study is the most powerful conversion tool on a professional services website.

Include thought leadership content. Blog posts, white papers, and research reports signal expertise. They demonstrate that you are not just selling a service but leading a field.

The Personal Brand Homepage

Personal brand homepages must communicate personality and expertise simultaneously. The visitor is evaluating you as a person, not just a service.

Lead with a strong, specific headline about what you do and who you help. Avoid vague labels like "speaker, author, and consultant." Be specific: "I help B2B SaaS companies build content programs that generate pipeline."

Use a professional, approachable photo. The photo should feel like you, not like a stock image. Users are making a personal connection. Help them make it.

Feature your best work prominently. Speaking reels, published articles, podcast appearances, and client results are all powerful social proof for a personal brand.

Part 14: The Most Common Homepage Design Mistakes

Knowing what to do is only half the battle. Knowing what to avoid is equally important.

Mistake 1: The Vague Value Proposition The most common homepage mistake is a headline that says nothing. "Empowering businesses to achieve their full potential" is not a value proposition. It is a placeholder. Be specific about what you do, who you do it for, and how you do it differently.

Mistake 2: Too Many CTAs Every additional CTA on your homepage dilutes the primary one. When users are given too many choices, they make no choice at all. This is the paradox of choice, documented by psychologist Barry Schwartz. Choose one primary action and design your page around it.

Mistake 3: The Generic Stock Photo A photo of a smiling person in a business suit shaking hands in a glass-walled office communicates nothing. It signals that you could not be bothered to create original imagery. Use real photos of your team, your product, or your customers.

Mistake 4: Ignoring Mobile More than half of your visitors are on mobile devices. If your homepage is not optimized for mobile, you are turning away more than half of your potential customers. Test your homepage on multiple devices and screen sizes before launching.

Mistake 5: Slow Page Speed A one-second delay in page load time reduces conversions by seven percent. A three-second delay increases bounce rate by thirty-two percent. Page speed is not a technical concern. It is a business concern.

Mistake 6: No Social Proof Asking users to trust you without providing evidence is a losing proposition. Every homepage needs some form of social proof. Even a new business can feature a testimonial from a beta user or a case study from a pilot client.

Mistake 7: Designing for Yourself The most dangerous person in a homepage design meeting is the CEO who says "I don't like that color" or "I want our mission statement at the top." The homepage is not for you. It is for your customers. Design decisions should be based on user research and data, not personal preference.

Mistake 8: The False Floor Full-bleed sections that perfectly fill the screen create the illusion that the page has ended. Always show a portion of the next section to invite the user to scroll.

Mistake 9: Unclear Navigation If users cannot find what they are looking for within two clicks, they will leave. Your navigation must be clear, descriptive, and logically organized.

Mistake 10: Forgetting Accessibility Over eighty percent of homepages have color contrast issues that make them difficult to read for users with visual impairments. Accessibility is not optional. It is a legal requirement in many jurisdictions and a moral imperative in all of them.

Part 15: The Homepage Pre-Launch Checklist

Before you publish your homepage, run through this checklist.

Clarity - Can a stranger read your headline and explain your business to someone else? - Does your subheadline add context without repeating the headline? - Is your primary CTA specific and benefit-oriented?

Trust - Do you have at least one form of social proof above the fold? - Are your testimonials specific and attributed to real people? - Do you have security seals if you collect sensitive information?

Design - Does the squint test reveal your logo, headline, and CTA clearly? - Is there sufficient white space between sections? - Is your primary CTA button a contrasting color?

Mobile - Does your homepage look and function correctly on a smartphone? - Are all touch targets at least forty-four by forty-four pixels? - Does your page load in under three seconds on a mobile connection?

SEO - Does your title tag include your primary keyword and brand name? - Is your H1 tag clear and keyword-optimized? - Does your meta description read like an advertisement?

Performance - Are all images compressed and optimized? - Is your page load time under two seconds on desktop? - Have you tested your Core Web Vitals scores?

Conclusion: The Homepage as a Living Document

Your homepage is not a project with a finish line. It is a living document that should be continuously tested, measured, and improved.

The best marketing teams in the world treat their homepage as an ongoing experiment. They use A/B testing to compare different headlines, hero images, and CTAs. They use heatmaps and session recordings to understand how users actually interact with the page. They use customer interviews to discover what questions are not being answered.

Every improvement is incremental. A better headline might lift conversion rate by five percent. A stronger CTA might add another three percent. Better social proof might add another seven percent. These gains compound over time.

Start with the fundamentals. Make your value proposition clear. Build trust with social proof. Design for mobile. Make it fast. Then test, measure, and improve.

Your homepage is your best salesperson. It works twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, for every visitor who lands on your site. Invest in it accordingly.

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