

anchor & alpine

FEATURING

The Power of Tiny Gains

To AI or Not to AI

**The Ultimate Guide to
WordPress UX Optimization**

Fall / Winter 2023





- 3 MarketDial's Ethos of Testing Reaches Their New Website
- 5 Sprinting into a Rebrand with CyberQP
- 7 Using Design to Empower Others: Simone K. Lelchuk
- 8 A Fusion of Culture & Community for Millcreek Common
- 9 The Power of Tiny Gains at Work
- 11 Exploring UX in MarketDial's Product UI
- 13 To AI or Not to AI
- 15 Connected Data Unlocks Audience
- 17 The Ultimate Guide to WordPress UX Optimization
- 27 About Us

Anchor & Alpine is a UX and web agency located in Salt Lake City, Utah. We're a small-by-choice team of creatives dedicated to improving product UIs, websites, and other projects.

Founded in 2006, and renamed to Anchor & Alpine in 2019, we've created more than a hundred websites and nearly two dozen product UIs. Along the way we've garnered patents, awards, and loyal clients.

We are a nimble, passionate group of creatives that love what we do and are excited to work with good companies that are improving the lives of their users.

www.anchoralpine.com

Captain's Log

Ahoy there,

Welcome to our third magazine printing. The magazine is a good time for me to reflect on what's happened in the last year of our business. Our crew continues to grow and be successful, welcoming our first Anchor & Alpine baby, Wesley Dean Griffin, earlier this year. We also saw kids leave for college, a first house purchased, a new homestead acquired, and an engagement. **Clients that choose to partner with us foster a thriving small business, making a meaningful impact on the lives of our crew.**



As we enter the next phase of our agency, **we're focusing more on user experience (UX) than ever before.** Our services and crew remain the same, creating delightful experiences for websites, product UIs, and other design projects. One of our longest crew members is transitioning from front-end development to the UX team, bringing with her a Bachelor of Fine Arts, a BS in psychology, and years of front-end development experience. We have such an incredible mix of talent that we can't wait to help our next set of clients improve their websites and products.



In the last magazine, I mentioned we were running a UX experiment with the close of our downtown office. Our employees voted to end the lease, and instead of paying for a space, we issued everyone credit cards and urged them to get together in person more often. This year we all went to Lagoon as a team, and we've had a few summits to get together. Our team is as close as ever, and we genuinely love to hang out together.

Thank you for reading and following along with our journey!

Amber



SMALL BY CHOICE

For years we've said we are "small by choice." There are reasons we are small. There are assumptions about why we are small. Then there are the choices we've made to stay this size.

This article was originally published in 2015 and has been updated for 2023.

The Reasons We Choose Small

There are so many things to love about the Anchor & Alpine team. One of those things is that it's a small team. We're currently at ten people with an outside cap of 13. A lot of us have worked on bigger or smaller teams, but this is the right-sized team for the kind of UX and web work we do for clients.

For us, the size of our agency boils down to three reasons:

1. **This core team is amazing.** There are just a few of us. We trust and respect each other. We perfectly round out each other's skill sets. We've built dozens of amazing things together, and we continue to be excited to do it all again.
2. **We deliver on promises.** We deliver because we made the promises. The promises are work quality, process enjoyment, timelines, budgets, and outcomes. In larger firms, you will meet with a salesperson, a principal, an account manager, and your designers and developers will be in the background. Those are a lot of layers, and that doesn't work for us. We know because we've worked in those firms and know how communication can break down.
3. **We love what we do.** The partners in the business created a UX and web firm because we love UX and design/development it's what we want to do. With a larger team, the partners would spend all of their time managing the team and the business. We still like to get in, roll up our sleeves, and do the wrench work for certain clients.

Small Scale, Big Deliveries

Being agile and focused allows us to deliver high-quality projects that match the scale of larger firms. We consistently find ourselves in the same sphere as these major players, recognizing their unique offerings and specialties. When it comes to WordPress websites and UI/UX design, we're confident in our ability to deliver exceptional results, making us an excellent choice for your next project.

Never & Always

Our annual revenue will never be in the multi-millions. Our company parties will never need a banquet hall. We won't ever look back and say that it wasn't worth it.

We will always love what we do. We will always approach each project with passion and excitement. We will have the freedom to make sure we don't get burned out.

If that sounds like a good fit for your next project we'd love to talk to you.

www.anchoralpine.com



MarketDial

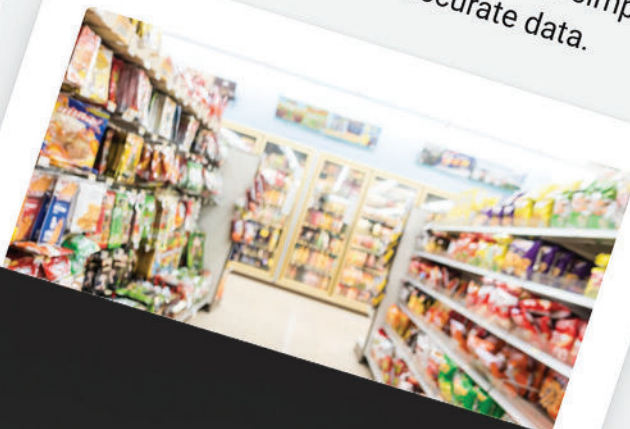
PRODUCT OVERVIEW

In-store testing for brick-and-mortar *made easy*

What data are you using to make
decisions?

When you test your ideas and get definitive
results, the best course of action is clear cut.

Grow faster, save resources, and simplify
processes with accurate data.



INDUSTRIES

Test to illuminate optimal retail solutions



Retail Grocery CPG Convenience Stores Restaurants

Ensure your offerings remain relevant

Your customers are shopping in-store for the experiences they can't have online. Why not give it to them? Test to gain foresight into consumer preferences, pricing, promotions, loyalty, customer experience, merchandising, labor spend, operations solutions, competitor impact, employee satisfaction, incentive programs, new technologies, cannibalization risk, and demographic influences.

Need something else tested? No problem. You're fully covered.

[Learn More →](#)

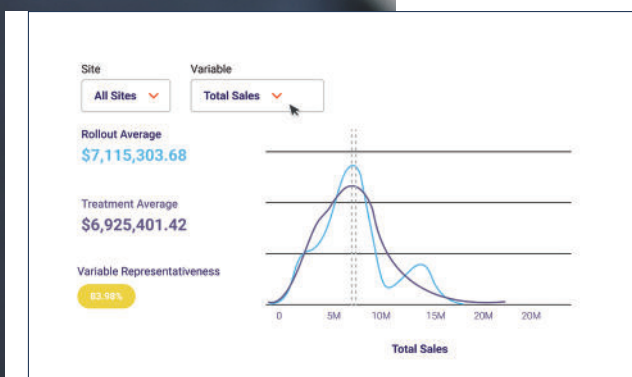



MEET OUR TEAM

Our data scientists are your data scientists

MarketDial is more than a testing solutions platform. It's a partnership. Our high-caliber data scientists become a trusted extension of your team, providing you with dependable, ongoing support whenever you need it. No weekend, nonstop hours. No hidden costs.

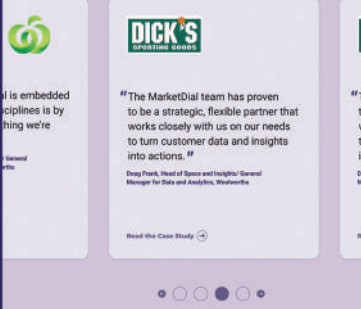
[Meet the Team →](#)



CUSTOMER STORES

Test to stay ahead of the curve

When you know an outcome will succeed or fail before you invest in it, you have a clear advantage over those who never and discover the outcome in hindsight.



is embedded pipeline is by thing we're

"The MarketDial team has proven to be a strategic, flexible partner that works closely with us on our needs to turn customer data and insights into actions."

Drew Frank, Head of Science and Insights / General Manager for Data and Analytics, Walgreens

[Read the Case Study →](#)

CLIENTS WE LOVE

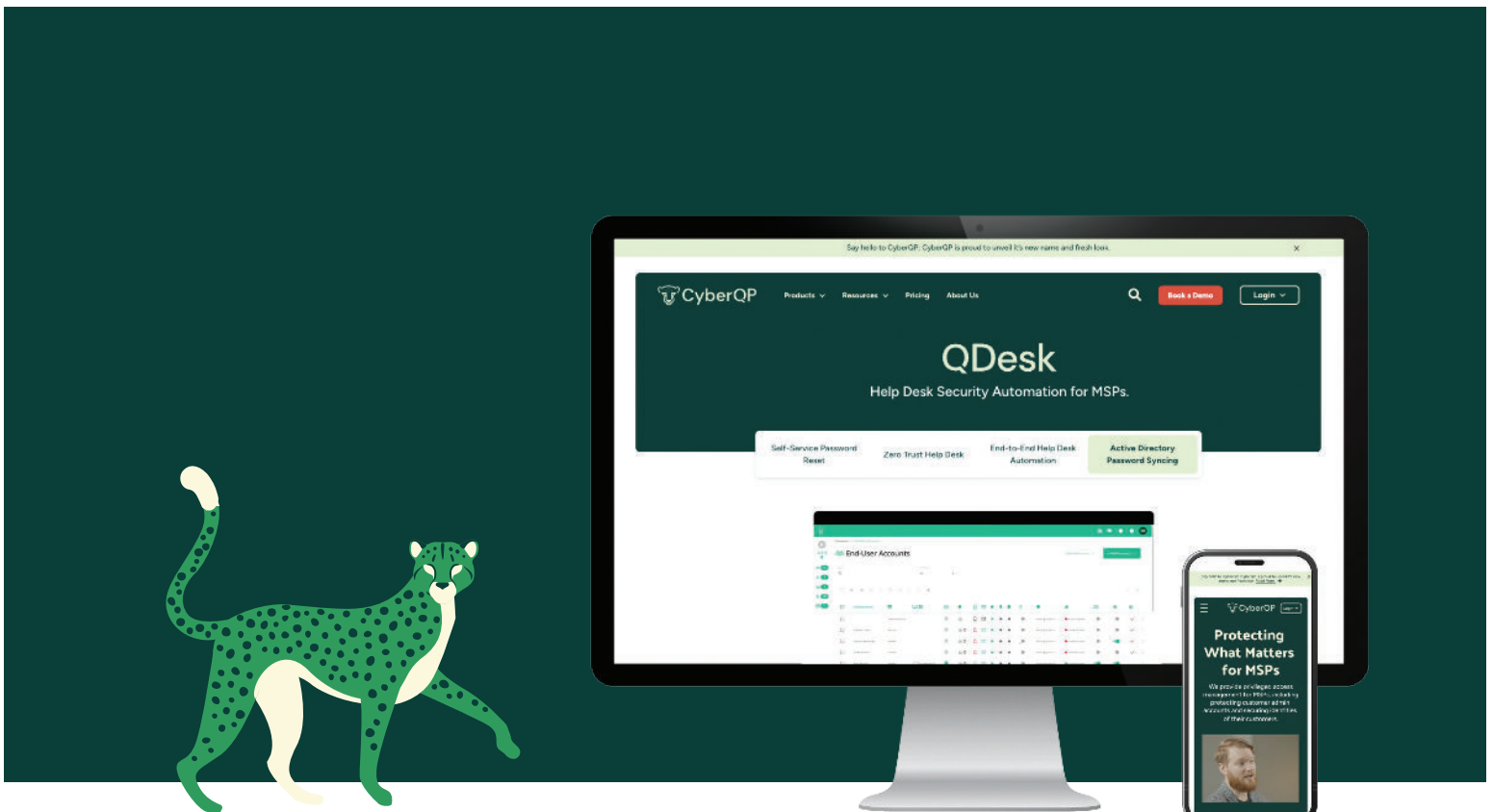
MarketDial's Ethos of Testing Reaches Their New Website

Anchor & Alpine has had a long and productive relationship with MarketDial. We've helped them with everything from the UX of their product, to the launch of their new website, and even data-science based Magic 8 Ball for their customers.

Their business is retail testing, and their cultural philosophy is "always be testing." They wanted to bring this same outlook to their website, so we conducted in-depth user interviews with their top clients before we started design. Our UX researcher, Hannah Brewster, prepared the questions and processed the interviews so our team could focus on the real needs of their clients.

Once we got into design and development, we launched three competing homepages to do A/B testing on, and MarketDial was able to continue to refine their design and messaging post-launch.

MarketDial has been incredibly successful moving forward with their new website, creating ABM landing pages for a cohort of clients (and landing a sizable percentage of them!). They said about working with our team, **"I truly value partnering with Anchor & Alpine due to their diverse design and technical skills and cost-effective approach. They designed and implemented a user-friendly website for MarketDial, empowering our team and exceeding expectations. Communication was excellent, and they delivered the project on time and under budget."**



CLIENTS WE LOVE

Sprinting into a Rebrand with CyberQP

A whole new name, required a whole new face for an established cybersecurity group. Turns out, a fresh brand presence and website can activate limitless possibilities for innovative branding.

CyberQP approached Anchor & Alpine to undertake a full rebrand, including a new name and brand identity, as well as a web design and development overhaul, moving from Webflow to WordPress.

As part of the rebrand, we developed a comprehensive brand guide that included a key to differentiating cheetahs, leopards, and jaguars. One of the unique features of the new website was the cheeky cheetah that appeared at different zoom levels. From an animated cheetah on the site footer, to the resource center visuals, we peppered our feline-friend across the site.

When we hand off a completed brand to a client, there's a moment akin to handing over a pet you've been fostering to its new owner. *Will it be taken care of? Will what makes it special be appreciated and utilized? Will they mistakingly use that one color combo in their palette I told them isn't accessible on the web?*

It's a moment of letting the project we put our blood, sweat and tears into for months, soar.

Thankfully we handed off our fresh cheetah-fueled brand to CyberQP and they—ahem—ran with it.

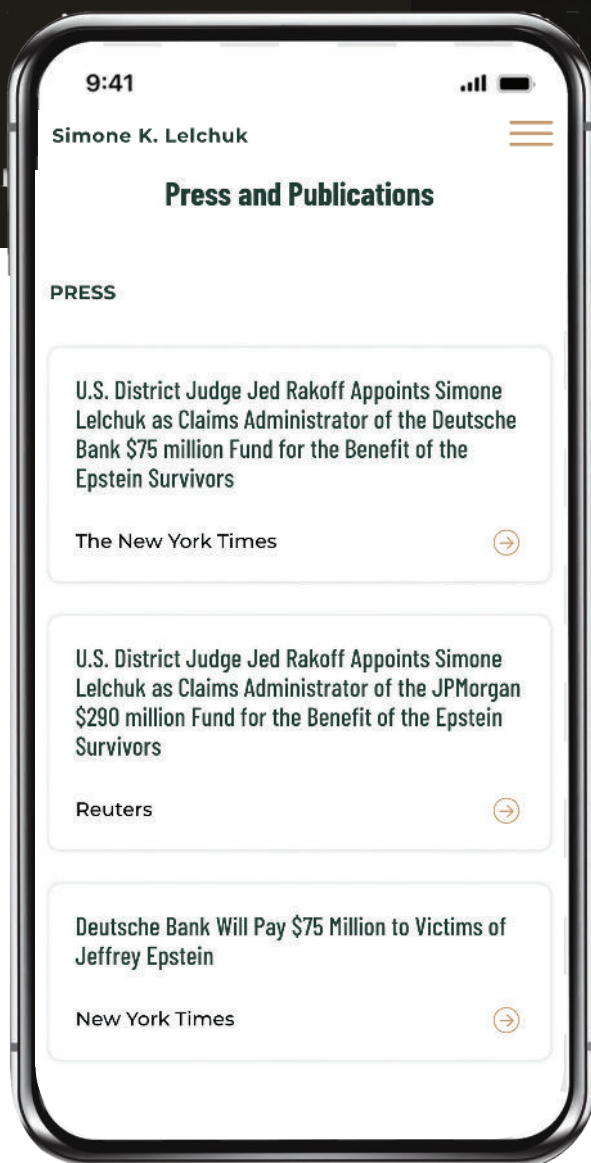
When they came back to us to design the visuals for their trade-show, their request was very clear; don't hold back.

Cheetah-silhouettes, cheetah spots, safari sunrises were all featured; all memorable and distinct branding tools CyberQP wanted to fully utilize to set themselves apart from their competitors.

While they are cybersecurity group with the expertise to excel in a deeply serious industry, CyberQP wasn't afraid to use their brand imbue their presence with a sense of approachability and fun in a trade-show setting. We are so impressed with the way our client carried the brand forward—including branded green cowboy hats and plush cheetahs donning their swag. However, that's the joy of handing off a new brand; there's an endless amount of ways in can show the world who you are.



A Practical Yet Empathetic Approach to Resolving Claims



CLIENTS WE LOVE

Using Design to Empower Others: Simone K. Lechuk

We were proud to create a website for **Simone K. Lechuk**, an attorney who specializes in mediation and mass tort litigation, having represented victims of high-profile cases against perpetrators such as Jeffrey Epstein and Harvey Weinstein. Our goal was to strike a balance between the impeccably professional work done by Lechuk, as well as the empathic approach she takes to such sensitive work.

Through carefully selecting the site's color palette and having a hand in aspects of copywriting, we were able to both showcase Lechuk's work, while providing a reassuring experience for site visitors. Lechuk opted to have Anchor & Alpine host her site; instead of maintaining security and plugin updates, she could stay focused on advocating on behalf of her clients with pragmatic precision.



CLIENTS WE LOVE

A Fusion of Culture & Community for Millcreek Common

At Anchor & Alpine, we're always excited about projects that resonate with our philosophy of creating vibrant communities and shaping positive experiences. Our collaboration with Millcreek Common has been one such project. From the first brush strokes of Millcreek's General Plan in 2017 to our branding project in 2020 to its realization today, the vision was clear: crafting a heart for the city—a pulsating center of culture, art, and community engagement.

Here's to more winters filled with icy spins, warm food, and the joy of community at Millcreek Common. Cheers to a city center that's truly at the heart of its people.

The Power of Tiny Gains at Work

We start our weeks around here with a sync meeting. We meet up and talk about work, but we also share lessons on UX and Creative Careers. This one comes to us from James Clear, the author of “Atomic Habits”.

The Power of Tiny Gains

The power of tiny gains is a mathematical representation of being just 1% better every day. If you do this, you will be 38% better at the end of the year.

There are many places to optimize in the margins, finding just that little 1% you can improve. Some of the ways we've improved are:

WE FOCUS A LOT ON COMPETENCY

Being really good and fast at our processes and knowing our computer programs. Taking a minute to learn a software program and the key commands makes you much better and faster as you ideate.

WE “LEAVE A DANGLING ROPE”

Make it better for the next person behind you. Our process documents were some micro improvements that led to overall change because we do retrospectives and update our documents regularly, making them 1% better each time.

A DEDICATED TIME TO BE 1% BETTER!

We meet weekly on Mondays as a team, sync on work, and share information and lessons. Most weeks, there is a lesson on creative careers or client relations or how to do things well in design and development.

1% Better Websites

We've launched a lot of websites over the course of our business. In mid-2023, the total launch count was 117 sites, each of them bespoke design and developed on WordPress. Each time we launch a site, we get a little better by improving our processes and our documentation. Some of our recent 1% gains that you can do on your own website are:

- Updating the **WordPress Gutenberg** built-in color picker to match colors for the website we are creating.
- **Testing all forms** end-to-end and double-checking that the thank you messages are updated from the defaults and relate directly to the demand-gen form they are output from.
- Combing through and updating featured images and meta descriptions to **tidy up your presentation in search results**.

1% Better Brands

We've created several brands at Anchor & Alpine, more recently for CyberQP and Millcreek Common. We also often assume new brands from other agencies, and then we take them for their first spin in the real world with our websites, ebooks, and tradeshow graphics. From creating our own brands to working with third-party brands we've identified a few things that make a brand a little better every day:

- **Web accessible colors.** Brand colors should work hard for you, and that means they are accessible. When you use your brand color for text, it should have a 3-to-1 contrast ratio for large type (over 16px) and a 4.5-to-1 ratio for anything smaller.
- **Grammar and mechanicals.** We have a set template we provide to clients to help them with numbering (e.g., you write out any number that is less than three digits) and punctuation (e.g. an em dash {—} is used between words to offset a thought while an en dash {-} is used between dates. Neither of those is a hyphen {-}, which goes between words that break onto a new line.)
- Always use an **SVG for the logo** throughout the website.

By focusing on continuous improvement and taking small steps each day, we help clients gradually build a stronger and more successful brand. Consistency and persistence are key to making significant long-term gains.

1% Better User Experience (UX) Work

Our UX work falls into three main categories: build a product from scratch, take over a product and make massive improvements, or take over a product and make those little 1% improvements that add up to an overall quality of life improvement for users. Some recent UX patterns and processes that we deployed to gain 1% traction to get us to an overall well-used and loved product:

1. **Clean up those Figma files.** When UX work is ongoing, there are many people, designers, and developers in the Figma file. Having good file hygiene means we add large section titles, link to work tickets directly from the artboards, and draw a line/recoloring rejected ideas or concepts.
2. **Handle Delete Functionality like its own beast.** When working on a product UI, the create/read/update/delete (CRUD) actions are usually lumped in together, but delete is its own special case. We recently created a hierarchy of delete options depending on how loud it needed to be per function. All delete actions have a confirmation modal.

3. **Graceful failure messages.** No one wants to do something wrong, so when a user or the platform does something that errors, take a few minutes to craft that message so that people know it wasn't their fault and what they can do next.

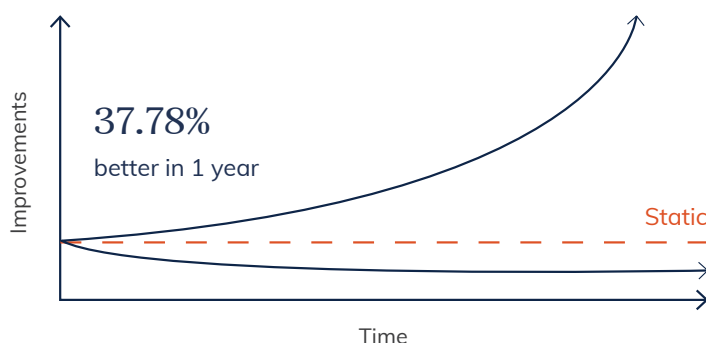
Other Places 1% Makes a Difference

Besides what we focus on at work, there are lots of places this idea can serve you in your overall life. Keeping the 1% better everyday mentality will help you eek out just a little more at the gym. Don't be scared of those tiny weights at the gym. Adding another 3 pounds to your lifts really racks up over time.

Another 1% you can do is to create a landing spot for your keys and stuff when you come home, then training yourself always to drop your stuff in the spot starts small, builds a good habit, and allows you more time to improve other habits. If you spend five minutes looking for your keys, that's a lot of time over the course of a year.

1% better every day $1.01365 = 37.78\%$

1% better every day $0.99^{365} = 0.03\%$



Last Thoughts

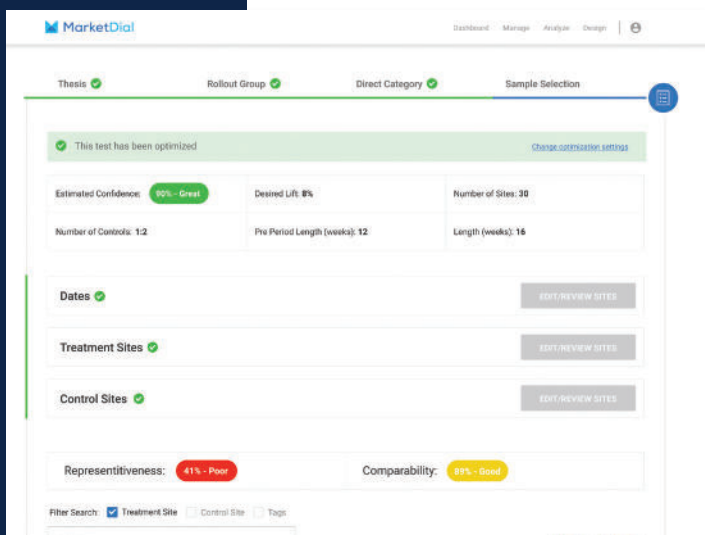
The power of tiny gains, as exemplified by the 1% better everyday concept, is a transformative force that can lead to remarkable improvements in various aspects of work and life. Embracing this philosophy has positively impacted our processes, website launches, brand creations, and user experience work.

The essence of the 1% better mentality extends beyond the workplace, offering opportunities for personal growth, productivity, and positive habits. Embracing the philosophy of continuous improvement and adopting the mindset of seeking small but meaningful gains can lead to significant and lasting results over time.

Exploring UX in MarketDial's Product UI

Our long-time client, MarketDial, started as a UX client before becoming a web client. MarketDial creates retail testing software for companies like Maverik, The Container Store, Calvin Klein, and Five Below. These retail customers run tests to determine full-scale impact and then roll out the tests that look promising to physical stores nationwide.

Like many of our current Product UI/UX projects, we worked closely with data scientists and engineers to translate the power of what they can do to a UI that harnesses that power for a variety of business users.



Space to Breathe

With densely packed screens and sophisticated software capabilities, one of the most challenging aspects of projects like this is getting the spacing correct.

The app works in a nested way with several steps you need to take. While most of those steps will be in order, there are times that changing something in a later stage will cause you to need to make a change to an earlier step. Our charter was to help the user focus on the task at hand and allow them to move seamlessly between tasks without getting lost.

Definitive List of Product UI Colors

Like most products, the MarketDial Product UI matches their original brand and color palette. In addition, they have indicator colors and a selection of grays. For their product and every other product we work on the user interface for, we recommend the following palettes that work well together:

BRAND COLORS

Your primary brand colors and shades of those colors.

INDICATOR COLORS

You will need the standard indicator colors of green, yellow, orange, and red. If your brand colors have any of these colors, having a separate indicator color is often a good idea. So if your brand uses a dark forest green, your indicator for 'success' would be a bright kelly green.

RAINBOW COLORS

This is where brands and user interfaces diverge. In brand color palettes, you want to limit the number of colors to help keep the brand consistent and to help your customers recognize you without a glance. Where would Tiffany's be without their blue, T-mobile without magenta, or Starbucks without green? Those confined palettes are a MUST for brand design, but you also need the entire rainbow for user interface design. You don't use the rainbow throughout your product, you still stick to your main brand and indicator colors, but most products will hit a point where you need a chart, graph, or report. Those elements need additional colors to have them make sense. The rainbow palette should be in the same overall value as the rest of your palette. MarketDial's product color palette is bright, almost neon, colors.

Optimizing User Journeys

Understanding the entire platform and how users get from one point to another is vital to this project. We sat down with the product manager and mapped out the entire flow and all of the dependencies in the product. We did it the old fashioned way, with markers on paper, and it took us 2 feet by 7 feet to map it out. From there, we could determine what could be streamlined and at what point we should offer the choice of different paths.

For this project, we started with large tiles so the user could decide how much help they wanted. Once they have chosen their adventure, the streamlined pathways present users with well-designed choices at pivotal points.

Final Thoughts

Our collaboration with long-time client MarketDial has been a rewarding Product UI/UX journey for both of our teams. MarketDial's retail testing software serves an array of prominent companies, and our challenge was to harness the power of data science and engineering into an intuitive and seamless user interface. Among the many intricacies we encountered, spacing proved vital, as we sought to provide users with a clutter-free environment while enabling effortless navigation between tasks.

Colors



MD Cyan
#00B9F0
rgba(0,185,240,1)



MD Blue
#3676BB
rgba(54,118,187,1)



Bright Cyan
#37CDFD
rgba(195, 78, 99, 1)



Dark Blue - Click
#194F89
rgba(25, 79, 137, 1)



Dark Blue - Hover
#2360A1
rgba(35, 96, 161,1)



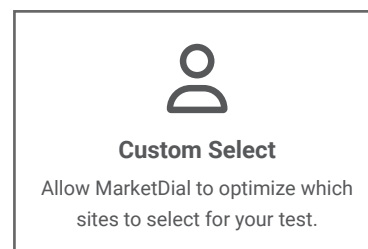
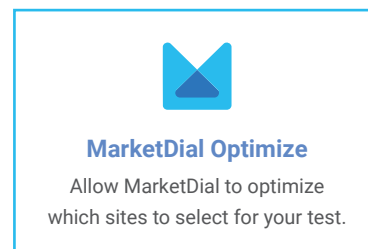
MD Blue 30% Disabled
#C2D5EA
rgba(211,17,92,1)



Green - Best
#03D22B
rgba(3,210,43,1)



Red - Poor/Warning
#FF2500
rgba(255, 37, 0, 1)






To AI or Not to AI


From providing you with ebook topic ideas to writing email first drafts, leveraging AI in content marketing certainly has a lot of time-saving advantages that are hard to ignore. However, AI content generators have limitations, and you need to know how to guide these tools based on your desired results.

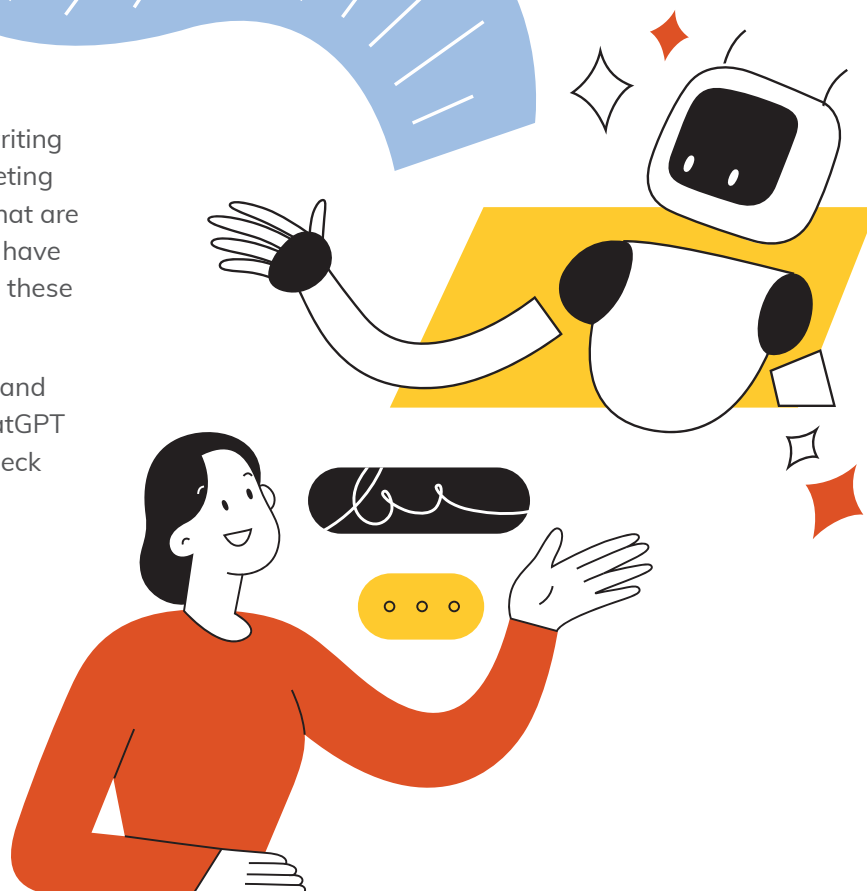
Our friends at Compose.ly rounded up the pros and cons of generative AI as well as how to put ChatGPT into action for your content marketing tasks. Check out our pocket guide below!

BENEFITS OF AI CONTENT CREATION TOOLS

-  They're great first-draft generators.
-  They help repurpose your content.
-  They provide you with content inspiration.

DISADVANTAGES OF GENERATE AI

-  Generative AI is not a research replacement
-  Generate AI content models have few data privacy protections.
-  AI copywriting tools are not as creative as humans
-  These are ethical concerns and biases when using AI



How to Write Effective ChatGPT Prompts

As told by Nicole Leffer, Tech Marketing Leader & CMO AI Advisor:

- Start your prompt with “You are...” and describe the persona you want ChatGPT to emulate. Make sure to be specific
- Include details on the voice you want ChatGPT to write in within your prompt, such as information from your style guide and brand voice
- Share your own thought leadership within your prompts so the AI tool can create content from your insights. Don't solely rely on ChatGPT to come up with ideas.

6 Ways To Leverage ChatGPT for Content Creation

1. CONTENT IDEATION

Ask ChatGPT to provide you with a list of current trends in your industry to help inform your content topics and shape your editorial calendars. If you've already got a topic, it can provide an outline to help guide your content. Summarize recent customer feedback and leverage the tool to help you brainstorm upcoming content ideas based on that feedback.

2. SEO

ChatGPT can generate keyword suggestions based on your site and the topics you're attempting to rank for and provide SEO-optimized titles and meta descriptions. This tool can also identify and group or categorize the search intent for any keywords you'd like to include in your piece.

3. PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

Tell ChatGPT about your brand voice, target audience, and any specific product benefits or features you'd like to highlight in order to generate first drafts of your product descriptions. It can also help create strong calls to action for you to experiment with and test based on your products.

4. EMAIL OPTIMIZATIONS

Once you solidify your next email campaign's objective, provide clear prompts to ChatGPT to help you draft subject line options, preview text, and calls to action that drive clicks. Ask the tool to punch up the body of your email, or try prompts that condense your main talking points into a few short sentences you can use above the fold.

5. A/B TESTING

ChatGPT can provide A/B testing variations for any short copy you'd like to experiment with on a landing page, on the design of a new ad campaign, or even on your emails. It's a good rule of thumb to test one variable at a time, so remember to provide clear prompts and parameters for the A/B copy you'd like generated.

6. SOCIAL MEDIA COPY

This AI copywriting tool has gotten pretty good at generating copy based on your social channel of choice. ChatGPT can craft messaging for all major platforms. For example, try submitting a prompt for a LinkedIn post written in your brand voice that promotes your newest blog. Provide the direct link to the content piece within your prompt as well.

Compose.ly Is the Content Partner Your Brand Deserves

We deliver high-quality, SEO-friendly content that engages your audience while elevating your brand. Whether your marketing goals involve AI assisted content or messaging with a human touch, we've got a suite of cost-effective solutions to exceed your business needs.

Our network of pre-vetted writers, editors, and subject matter experts act as your in-house team, match your tone and style, and ensure your content is authoritative and trustworthy. Speak with us today!

Follow us on LinkedIn @compose.ly and visit us at www.compose.ly



Anchor & Alpine recommends working with Compose.ly when you need high-quality, SEO-friendly content for blog posts, ebooks, ghostwriting, and press releases.

Want to see what Anchor & Alpine and Compose.ly can do for your project? Let's chat.

www.anchoralpine.com



Connected Data Unlocks Audience

by Jeremy Wold

As a marketer, my job is to connect audiences with what they are looking for. If I do my job well, I connect what audiences are looking for with a company that will fulfill that. There are certainly challenges with finding that audience. And sometimes challenges with companies to realize that they have a specific audience and how best to reach them.

I believe that better data and more attention to customer progression will unlock audiences for any company. This is especially true within B2B where there are perennial challenges in finding new customers as well as progressing deals for prospects.



With a 20+ year in marketing, product, and design/dev, Jeremy has helped lead the connection between concept and end product. His passion is for users and how to connect them to their passions.

What is “data”, in this case?

Way back when I started my career in marketing the term “data” was synonymous with tracking and reporting. How many web visits? How many clicked on the latest ad campaign? It was a fuzzy science to fully connect trackable activities of a user with revenue...and perhaps that is one reason that marketing has had trust issues within companies.

Example

Back in the day we even used things like “view-throughs” as a KPI. If someone saw an ad and converted at a later point without clicking or anything, we would take credit. Not exactly wrong but definitely not right...more of a brand play and should have been reported as a brand metric and not a demand/revenue metric.

Quick tangent of B2B vs B2C

Within B2C, the user is the audience with the buying power. They can look at ads, do marketing activities, then convert. These actions could be tracked and attributed directly to the sale.

Within B2B, the user may not have the buying power since the company is the customer.. This process could take months to years and there could be multiple users/ people interacting on behalf of a company. Attribution is trickier and so is understanding that you are speaking to individuals with roles within a company who is the customer.

Expansion of data for B2B

Thankfully, there has been a lot of growth in this area in the last 10+ years for B2B data. I look within three categories of how to frame data and activities:

Proactive

Going after and enriching customers

Reactive

When a customer interacts with your company

Profiles

Behaviors and empirical data connected into action

PROACTIVE

This is where things get interesting. Part of the “unlocking” of audiences is to discover audiences but also how to reach and connect with them in the best way during the sales process. I would classify both activities as being Proactive.

- **Intent data:** What users from an account do that is trackable outside of your ecosystem that indicates they may be warming up to your solutions.
- **Account data:** Connecting a user to an account (more challenging than it may seem).
- **Data enrichment:** For sales and marketing, adding from a small input (i.e. email, or account name), to get more info to help the sales process.
- **Account-Based Marketing (ABM):** Taking the above into consideration as you shift your marketing and CRM to focus on account progression rather than leads and lead progression.

REACTIVE

Let’s start with Reactive since that may seem more familiar with traditionally tracked things. Users are coming into your earned (social), owned (web), or paid media ecosystems. Trackable things like views, clicks, form-fills, etc. **Tool examples:** Google Analytics, Adobe Analytics

PROFILES

This one is often discounted/ignored. You can know about users/accounts all day long but cannot do much coordinated action unless you centralize your profiles in a way that can then deliver action. **Tool examples:** 6Sense, Zoominfo, Bombora, Clearbit

- **Empirical data:** The who, what, of account and user data
- **Behavioral data:** Data discovered through action
- **Segments:** Who you are going after and/or how to bucket
- **Delivery:** What channels/systems are you delivering these profiles/segments to in order to show a distinct experience.

Tool Examples: Adobe Audience Manager, BlueKai, Loteme Spherical Platform

B2C	B2B
AUDIENCE Individual	AUDIENCE Individuals (more than one) within a company
BUYING AUTHORITY Individual	BUYING AUTHORITY Buying committee (few to 20+)
TIMING Immediate to soon	TIMING Months to years
ANALYTICS Easily trackable to the sale	ANALYTICS Challenging to connect every user/activity to the sale

Summary

Unlocking your audience is ironically all about them. It starts as customers research, attend events, click on things...then it leads to a solution. That solution could be what you offer. Final questions you should consider:

- Who is your audience(s) and what are they looking to solve exactly?
- How are you tracking all marketing/sales activities?
- What do you know about those that have not filled out a form?
- How are marketing and sales combining efforts in such things to collectively progress?

The Ultimate Guide to WordPress UX Optimization

Nothing makes your heart stop and skip a beat quite like when your WordPress website misbehaves for your users. Whether it's high bounce rates, problems with the WordPress admin area, or general confusion using your site, spending time optimizing your website for the best user experience (UX) pays off in spades.

Anchor & Alpine has built over 100 WordPress websites in our 17 years in business. And they last a long time. We've learned a lot about UX design optimization for WordPress because our sites and clients stick around for a long time. We don't churn and burn our clients, so we hear about things that could be better and we have the opportunity to fix them. Below are some of our favorite UX optimizations for WordPress websites.



UI/UX in Website Design

Having a strong user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) focus in your web design will ensure your website is targeted, correct, and delightful. These terms are often combined to be UIUX.

START BY UNDERSTANDING YOUR WEBSITE VISITORS

With most UI/UX projects, we start with Personas. Personas are cards that help you understand your ideal customer profile (ICP). It's important to remember that these are not demographic they are psychographic—meaning they consider the motivations, intent, and technical acumen of each of your persona buckets.


Personas are a mix of research and intuitive knowledge. They are often based on a customer profile you know well, and would like to attract more of. . There is an art to creating the perfect mix and quantity of personas for your company. Creating too many will take you right back to trying to satisfy everyone instead of targeting your ideal customer. We suggest limiting it to 3–5, but it depends on the project.

We prefer to keep our personas high-level and glanceable—with just the photo, motivation, and quick comparison information.



PRINCE CHARLES



- Male
- Born in 1948
- Raised in the UK
- Married twice
- Lives in a castle
- Wealthy & famous



OZZY OSBOURNE


- Male
- Born in 1948
- Raised in the UK
- Married twice
- Lives in a castle
- Wealthy & famous

Personas shouldn't be about demographics. Personas should be about the problems & challenges people face.





MARKETDIAL CUSTOMER


Ashley // Occasional User



Decision Maker
No.



Schedule Tests
Yes.

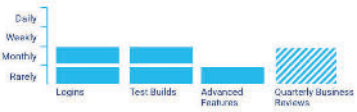


Change Pricing
No.

Goals / Needs

I need to build and analyze a test quickly and accurately for my boss. I need an **intuitive** design so I can make tests easily.


Primary Activities / Usage Metrics




Features Used

- Lift explorer
- Driver analyzer
- Impact analyzer
- Test Builder

Other Applications / Sites Frequented



Industry



An example of a Persona Card we made for our client, MarketDial.

UNDERSTANDING AND CREATING WEBSITE USER FLOWS

Once you understand your personas, it's time to evaluate how they use your site. There are a lot of ways to see what is happening currently—looking at Google Analytics Behaviour Flow, install Hotjar, install Full Story. Some of these options are free, some are paid, all of them will help you understand how people are using your site.

Now that you've had a chance to analyze the behavior of your visitors, you can start to think about how to better guide them through your site. This is where website user flows from a UX perspective come in. You may want people to go from the homepage to the resource center to download an ebook. Understanding your desired flows and how easy it is for users to follow them is a big step in improving the user experience of your website.

For a while, we had a homepage that we thought was cool and usable. When we watched the weekly Hotjar recordings, we figured out that people were flummoxed. We scrape the homepage for the one we have currently. We always knew it was an experimental homepage, so we built the site so we could swap it with another whenever we wanted.

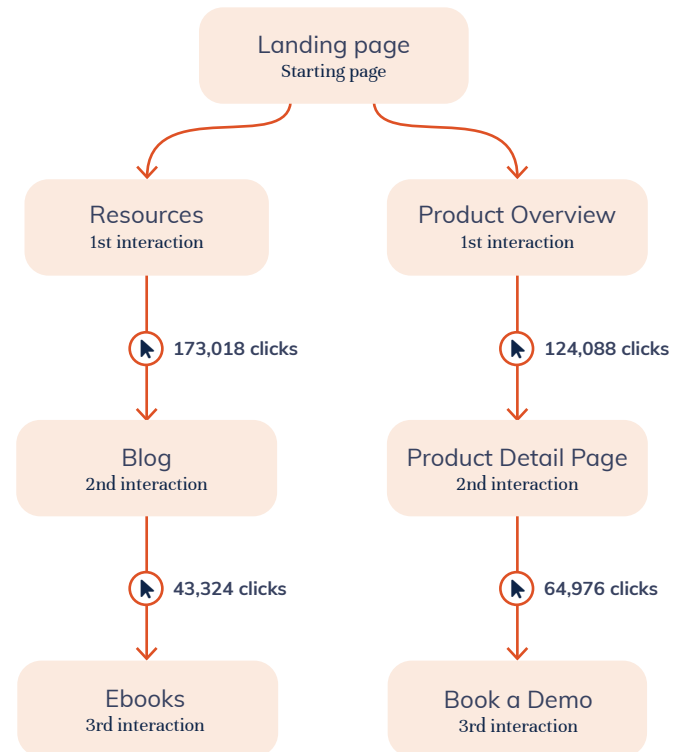
CONSIDERING ACCESSIBILITY: GOOD ACCESSIBILITY IS GOOD SEO

15% of the global population—over 1 billion people—have a disability. Considering how we design and develop websites for all users with an eye towards accessibility improves the user experience for everyone—and you get better SEO along the way!

Accessibility, like SEO, relies on good, semantic HTML. One (and only one) H1 tag, followed by H2s, H3s, and so on. When you structure a page correctly for screen readers, it's structured correctly for SEO best practices.

Providing alt-tags, labeling buttons correctly, and making sure your videos don't autoplay with sound are all ways you improve the UX of your website while meeting accessibility standards.

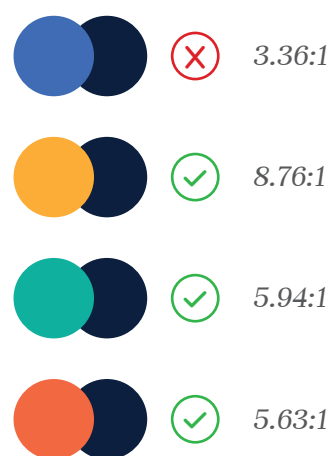
Website User Flow



Laying out a website user flow is a great way of improving the user experience of your website.

Accessibility Color Check

MUST BE $\geq 4.5:1$



Color accessibility checks are a necessity to ensure we are creating an accessible website for our clients.

The Ultimate UX Accessibility Checklist

COLORS & FONTS

- ❑ Colors pass accessibility tests — 4.5 to 1 contrast
- ❑ Fonts pass accessibility tests—at least 14px at the smallest, but we recommend 16-18px.
- ❑ Text is able to be resized 200% without the site losing cohesiveness.
- ❑ Text is generally left-aligned for English websites, don't use justified text.
- ❑ Color (or other sensory descriptors) is not the only way to convey information.
- ❑ Links are recognizable as links.

IMAGES

- ❑ Image descriptions—called alt tags—are in place. There is some great new AI software out there to help you write these tags.
- ❑ Text is not used in images, if possible. This is good for accessibility and also supports multi-language websites and apps.

AUDIO & VIDEO

- ❑ Audio and video have pause, stop, and mute.
- ❑ Audio and video have closed captioning for hearing-impaired people.
- ❑ Flashing elements should not flash more than 3x/second.
- ❑ Audio and video default without sound.

BUTTONS

- ❑ Buttons use the `<button>` element.
- ❑ Buttons are labeled clearly.
e.g., use terms like 'Download PDF' and not 'click here.'
- ❑ Icon-only buttons have a `<title>` set to explain the functionality.
e.g., a search icon would have the title 'Search' set for screen readers.
- ❑ Mobile tap areas are at least 44px—this is the size of a fingerprint.

FORMS

- ❑ Form fields are marked as either 'Optional' or 'Required'
Interesting note: When we worked with Optimizing Autism, they asked that we go with the 'Optional' note instead of the 'Required,' stating a research-backed opinion that these users prefer the flag for what is optional instead of what is required.
- ❑ Error messages are graceful and include help to complete the task.
- ❑ Focus states are clear so the user knows where they are.
- ❑ Items are not named with sensory characteristics.
e.g., 'click the red button' wouldn't work, but you can say 'click the cancel button.'
- ❑ The correct keyboard is selected on inputs.
e.g., the number keyboard on mobile for phone numbers.
The options are text input, number input, telephone number, search bar, email, and date.

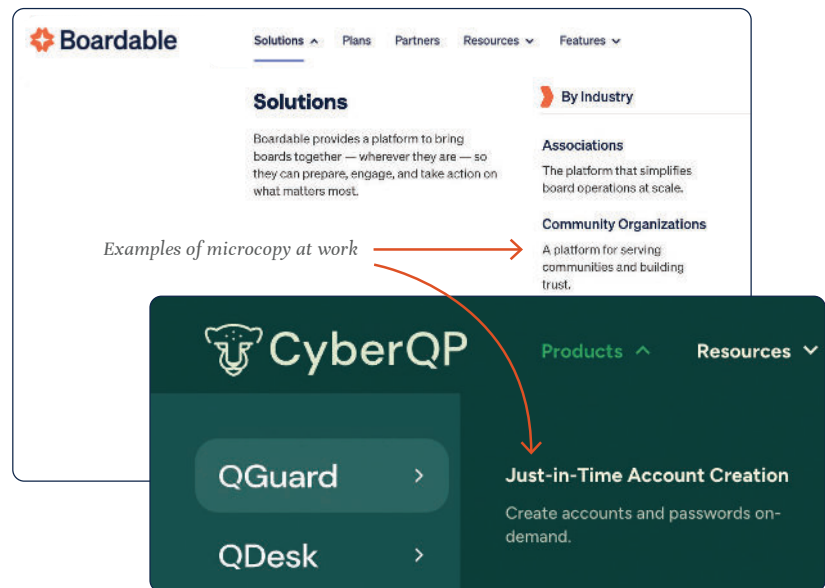
SEO & CODE

- ❑ Correct, semantic HTML is in place.
e.g., `<nav>`, `<table>`, `<h1>`, `<button>`, etc.
- ❑ Only one H1 is used per page.
- ❑ Subheadings are used correctly and in order. Headings should not be used for typographic elements that aren't headings, for example, a rubric should not be set in an H4 or H5 — anything that doesn't have enough content under it to read as a heading shouldn't use heading tags.
- ❑ Pages are well organized and still read and function correctly if the CSS is removed.
- ❑ Titles are less than 55-characters.
- ❑ Breadcrumbs are present on Resource Centers and other nested content.
- ❑ Tab order is correct and users can navigate a website using the keyboard only.
- ❑ The language attribute is set correctly in the HTML.
- ❑ ARIA roles and labels are set where appropriate.
- ❑ Don't disable anything that impairs assistive technology—this includes zoom levels, CSS overrides, and screen reader access.

WEBSITE HEADER UX

We have two main teams at Anchor & Alpine, our UX team and our web design and development team. We always bring in a UX designer for headers, footers, and forms while the rest of the team decides the overall design of the website pages.

Website headers are either strictly limited and focused, which invariably gets changed once the site is launched, or they are mega navigations with options for nesting and descriptions. We often include microcopy in these to help users wayfind quickly and easily.



WEBSITE FOOTER UX

The website footer is your last option to catch someone if they have made it to the bottom of a page scroll. What helpful information should be in there?

1. Site Writeup
Usually a one sentence synopsis of the brand's ethos.
2. Newsletter sign-up
3. Site Logo
4. Quick links
Things like a knowledge base, release notes, or help section.
5. Social Media and contact information
6. Website Navigation

DEMAND GEN UX

Many of our websites are designed and developed for demand gen (demand generation). It's a term CMOs and marketing departments use to describe a site that is intended to collect leads for a sales team.

One recent project was able to deliver these results:

- 89% reduction in bounce rate
- 92% increase in time on site
- New ABM capabilities for personalization supporting new leads with a 25% close rate
- Increased inbound leads

Demand Gen on a WordPress website consists of contact forms, download forms, and often a robust Resource Center with lots of content types and topics, all with the goal of ethically and helpfully acquiring contact information to move the conversion forward.

A UX designer comes in and designs friendly forms that people actively want to use. They test forms end to end and often create complex forms to segment and drive leads to the right place. Several people will go through and test forms in a variety of environments: desktop, mobile, PC, Mac, drunk, stoned...(most kidding on the last two).

UX Design Checklist for WordPress Websites

ALL STATES DEFINED FOR WEB STYLES

- Link: Normal/Default, hover, focus, visited.
- Text: Headings (H1–H6), body, hyperlinks, buttons, tooltips.
- Forms: Normal/default, active, filled/completed, error.
- Buttons: Default, hover, focus, disabled, secondary, tertiary.

IMAGERY

- Images are good quality, optimized, and correct format (jpg, gif, png, vs svg).
- Name your SVG assets in figma.
- Images are licensed for commercial usage.
- Images are appropriately attributed if that is part of the usage license.
- Images show a range of visible diversity of people.
- Images all have alt tags following the recipe object → action → context.
- PII has been redacted in images.

TYPOGRAPHY

- Specify Google Fonts or plan for a budget to purchase fonts.
- No type under 12px (we like big type).
- Font size is at least 14pt.
- Color contrast ratio is 3:1 for large text and 4.5:1 for small text.
- Color contrast is 3.5:1 (AA) or 4.5:1 (AAA) or higher (use Able in Figma to check).
- Page is set up according to semantic HTML standards, H1, H2, H3, etc.
- Buttons are labeled clearly (i.e., “Accept” not “Yes”).

UX NICETIES

- Time zones given on time listings.
- Review project text formatting, match titling, and punctuation.
- Buttons are labeled clearly (i.e., “Accept” not “Yes”).

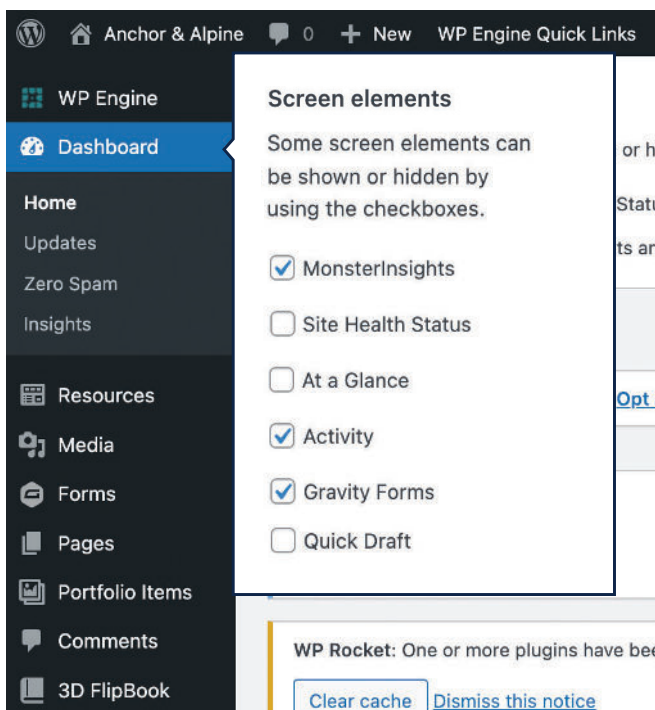
DON'T FORGET TO DESIGN

- Back to Top Button.
- Hide/Reveal Navigation.
- Favicon: the small image that appears at the top of browser tabs, in bookmarks, and on app home screens.
- Breadcrumbs: a user-beloved method of navigating through nested topics.
- Thank you state or page for forms.
- Helpful and informative 404 Page.
- Author Pages: a page linked to an author's name for resource pieces that provides a small biography and photo.
- Search Results: page design for results from search bar for both navigation search and resource center.
- Category Pages: the default page created when categories are assigned.



The Best User Experience (UX) for the WordPress Admin Area

Sometimes WordPress really sucks to use. Yeah, I said it, even though I love it, and we've built our business around designing and developing for WordPress. It's still a content management system (CMS), and we're still not quite there for a what you see is what you get (WYSIWYG) editor. There are a few tricks and development tasks we can do to improve the UX of working in the WordPress Admin area. *The WordPress Admin Area is Overwhelming*



THE WORDPRESS ADMIN AREA IS OVERWHELMING

The first and best thing you can do for your WordPress editors is to walk through a good setup with them. This is how a WordPress admin area and pages list looks out of the box:

1. From the Dashboard, go to Screen Options (it's a tab on the top right of the screen) and go to Screen Options (top right tab) and turn off everything you don't need.
2. Change the columns on the posts page to display the most important information you are working with on your bulk post view.

By spending a little time configuring your workspace, you will have a much better editing experience as a WordPress Admin. **A big part of UX is figuring out what to take away to preserve focus for the user, but then making sure they have what they need when they need it.**

TRAINING CLIENTS TO HAVE A GOOD USER EXPERIENCE

Like many things, learning to use WordPress efficiently and effectively takes a little time. It's about a 30-minute learning curve if you sit down with your web design agency for a quick lesson. We also create and host a set of videos to help our clients with different WordPress tasks. We always have a phone call or a Slack message away when our clients need help.

CUSTOMIZING THE WORDPRESS EDITING EXPERIENCE FOR BETTER UX

Choosing a web design agency that specializes in WordPress, like Anchor & Alpine, can help you get the very best out of the popular CMS. At the start of a project, we tell clients, "If you are doing something repetitive in WordPress, let us know, we can often make it easier or more functional."

A good example of this was our client Procure. They mentioned forgetting to include a call to action (CTA) on their blog posts and wanted to be consistent with them. They were originally using WordPress Reusable Blocks to put in the CTAs. That works great...unless you forget to add them!

Call to action ▾

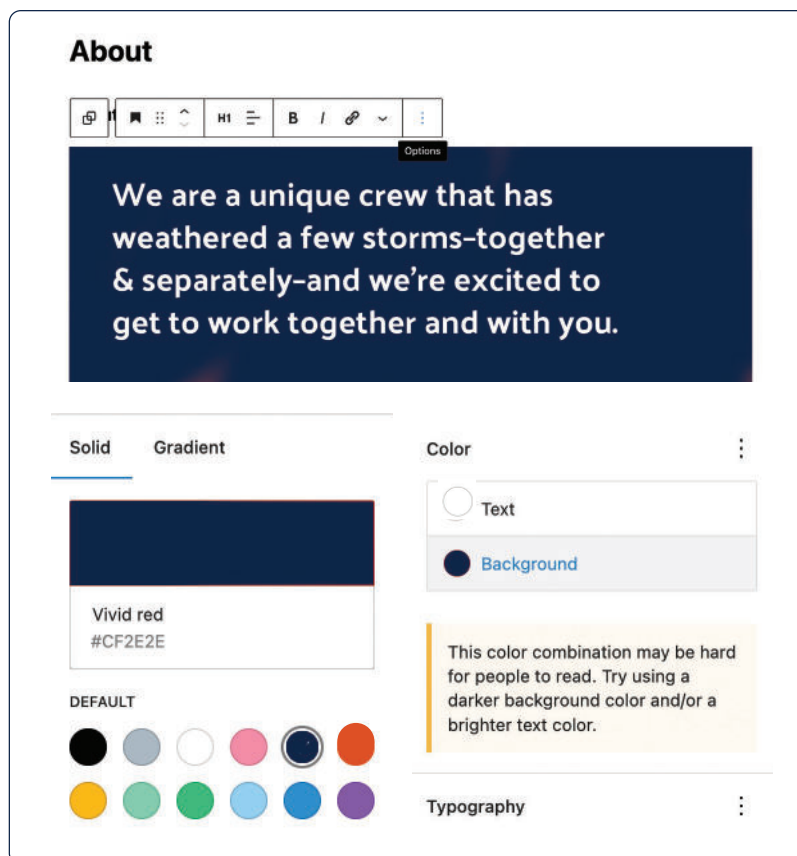
- Get Free Trial
- Get a Demo
- Download Report A
- Download Report B
- Join Mailing List
- Join Our Webinar
- Request a Quote
- Join Our Community
- + Add Resource Topic

We created a radio button group of choices for CTAs. There was a default set for each, so if you forgot to select it. Then each time we added a new CTA, we would add it to the radio group list, so Editors could stay consistent with their demand-gen CTAs across the website.

CUSTOMIZING WORDPRESS COMPONENTS

Another small thing with a big impact on the overall user experience of a website for editors is to spec out the right colors and buttons in the editor.

We update the built-in color picker per client to match their brand standards.



UX for WordPress Website Development

How your WordPress site is developed will have a huge impact on the UX for website visitors and WordPress editors. We've seen too many sites that look great but don't work quite right, costing companies hours of work trying to navigate how to make simple updates or changes. We've run into this on the front-end website and on the editing experience.

There are several things you can consider during development that will give you a better UX and lower the cost of website maintenance overall.

PIXEL-PERFECT MATCHES TO CLIENT-APPROVED DESIGNS.

Our front-end developers join our weekly design critique. That way, they know what we are thinking up, can offer input and advice, and are ready to hit the ground running when the designs are approved for development.

We keep all designers and developers in-house, we never offshore or subcontract our work, which means we're all building the best experience together. Our developers create websites that look exactly like the design—but they work! They work as designed and as expected.

USER ACCEPTANCE TESTING (UAT) IN MODERN BROWSERS

Pixel perfect designs and well-developed WordPress backend code come together for final inspection in our quality assurance (QA) pass, sometimes also called User Acceptance Testing (UAT).

We have an in-depth QA checklist we use on all sites to ensure that everything is as easy and intuitive as the UX designers designed. We call in different levels of technical people, as well as people who know everything and others who know nothing about the project. Our websites are reviewed by the developers and designers of the project and often someone that hasn't been as involved, like our General Manager or our UX Researcher. Oftentimes the testers that go in cold find the best stuff.

In our agency's early days, we employed my mom to do our UAT. It really can be all hands on deck when you run a small crew!

WORDPRESS MANAGED HOSTING

We recommend WordPress-specific managed hosting. The servers are faster, better secured, and often run a lot of processes to ensure that malware isn't installed via plugins.

We host everything at WPENGINE, but other reputable hosting companies are included here. There are a few popular hosts we strongly discourage for a variety of reasons. If you'd like to chat about these, reach out to discuss why.

Reputable Hosting Companies

- WPENGINE
- Flywheel
- WPVip
- Cloudways
- Kinsta
- SiteGround
- Pantheon

Post Website Launch WordPress UX

Once your site is live, there are a few things to keep an eye on to ensure long-term UX success.

WATCHING ANALYTICS

In the weeks and months post-launch, checking in on your analytics regularly is important. You'll want to know how the new site compares to your last site so you can share ROI throughout your organization.

Google Analytics and Google Search Console are often the places you'll first notice an anomaly or weird piece of data you want to dig in to ensure it isn't negatively impacting your website user experience and conversions.

MAKING WORDPRESS ADMIN ADJUSTMENTS

When we launch a site our clients usually stick around for a few months of post-launch work (and then most of them, 93% in fact - LINK THIS TO A seller's proof page, come back for additional projects). During this time, we make any adjustments to the WordPress admin area, such as adding a CTA picker ANCHOR LINK for our client.

We also smooth out anything that seemed like a good idea in design and development, but usage data tells us we need to change something here or there.

KEEP AN EYE ON WORDPRESS SECURITY

Nothing ruins your UX like your site being down, hacked, or generally messed with. WordPress security starts with the plugins we install and how we develop them.

Weak usernames and passwords are usually the first way a site is breached. Never use the username 'admin' and never EVER use the password 'password.' Once a quarter, go into WordPress and review your users list. Ensure everyone has the right access, and everyone that is listed should still have access.

We gained a client by answering a call about their website that had been hacked. They were locked out and their site was down. We were able to get back into the site, find the plugin that allowed the hack, remove it and get the site working again.

When we review WordPress plugins we look at three things: the last update to the plugin, the number of downloads, and the support channels for that plugin for anything unusual.

Improve your UX for your WordPress Site

Are you ready to improve your UX on your WordPress site? Anchor & Alpine offers UX audits and remediation for websites. We also build sites right from the beginning. Let's chat about your project and see if we are a good fit.

Get a Consultation

VISIT US
www.anchoralpine.com

CALL US
801.931.6554

WordPress Development Checklist for Good UX

ALL STATES DEFINED FOR WEB STYLES

- Link: normal/default, hover, focus, visited.
- Text: headings (H1–H6), body, hyperlinks, buttons, tooltips.
- Forms: normal/default, active, error, filled/completed.
- Buttons: default, hover, focus, disabled, secondary, tertiary.

TYPOGRAPHY

- No type under 12px (we like big type).
- Font size is at least 14pt.
- Color contrast ratio is 3:1 for large text and 4.5:1 for small text.
- Color contrast is 3.5:1 (AA) or 4.5:1 (AAA), or higher (use Able in Figma to check).
- Page is set up according to semantic HTML standards, H1, H2, H3, etc.
- Buttons are labeled clearly (i.e., “Accept,” not “Yes”).

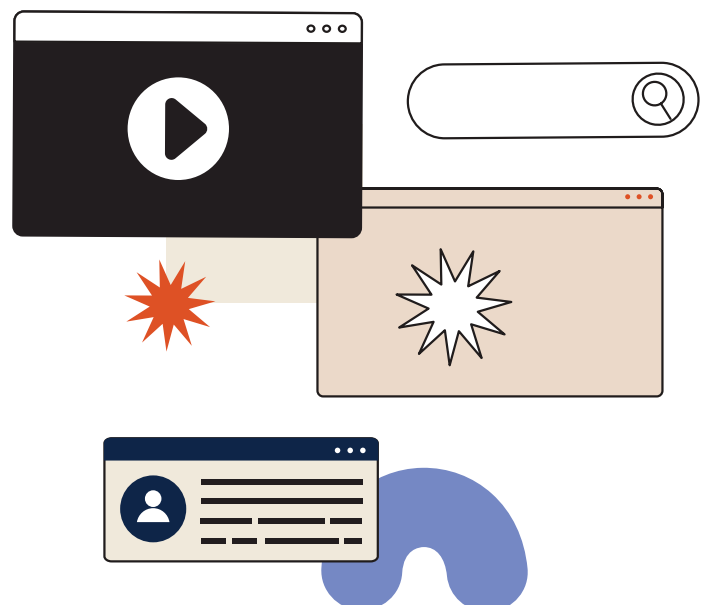
DON'T FORGET TO IMPLEMENT

- The ‘Back to Top’ button.
- Hide/Reveal navigation.
- Favicon: the small image that appears at the top of browser tabs, in bookmarks, and on app home screens.
- Breadcrumbs: a user-beloved method of navigating through nested topics.
- ‘Thank you’ state or page after submitting a form.
- Helpful and informative 404 Page.
- Author Pages: a page linked to an author’s name for resource pieces that provides a small biography and photo.

- Search Results: page design for results from search bar for both navigation search and resource center.
- Category Pages: the default page created when categories are assigned.
- Form Submission Notifications: choose if a notification will display to the user or if they go to a thank you page after they submit a form.

REMOVE UNNECESSARY FILES AND CODE

- Page templates
- Template parts
- JS
- Other packages that might be installed
- Comb through files and make sure website name is present in place of “sandbox text”
- Comb through SCSS files and remove unneeded CSS, set up new variable names and values (fonts, colors, margins, site widths)
- Install Plugins: Safe SVG, Anchor & Alpine Plugins (Resource Center, Simple FAQ, Simple Testimonial), Yoast Duplicate Post
- Finalize and Import Redirects



Anchor & Alpine, a UX and web agency

Anchor & Alpine is one of my most valued partners. They are fun, whip-smart, pivot-oriented, and consultative. I am so grateful for A&A's approach to relationship management and top notch strategic guidance.

Kurt Gilmore, Boardable

OUR EXPERTISE



User Experience
Design & Product
UI/UX



Website Design
& Development



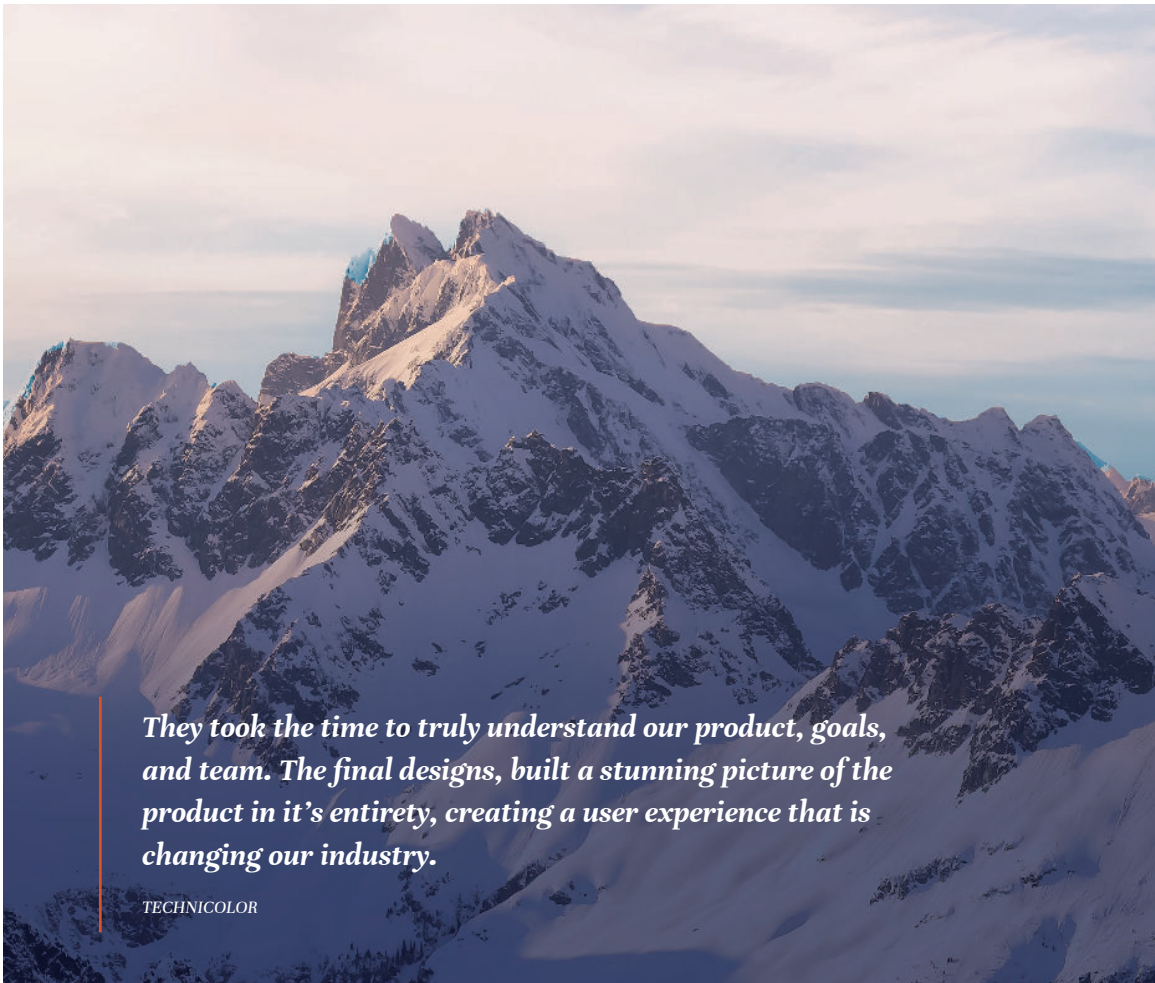
Branding & Product
Marketing Design

WHY ANCHOR & ALPINE

- We're a small-by-choice crew of designers and developers with experience creating memorable and award-winning projects. Our process is always collaborative between our team and yours, **creating ownership, trust, and smooth sailing at every stage.**
- In addition to the time we spend on a client's project, we spend time together reviewing best practices, reviewing alternative solutions, and **harnessing all of our brainpower in-house.** We know that the best solutions come from diverse perspectives.
- **We run a tight ship when it comes to our clients.** As a UX agency, client experience is as important to us as the end product. We have lightweight and nimble processes to keep everyone aligned **and moving forward. We want to have a good time working together.** makes them uncomfortable on a moral, ethical or political ground.

Product UI/UX, Websites, and Beyond

Our creative abilities and technical prowess are not limited to websites and products. We can tackle pretty much any creative project you can think up. From branding to product marketing design (abstracted screenshots, ebooks, tradeshow materials and booths, annual reports) and even an illustrated children's book about a snappy dressing penguin; From pixels to print, your creative vision is our mission.



They took the time to truly understand our product, goals, and team. The final designs, built a stunning picture of the product in it's entirety, creating a user experience that is changing our industry.

TECHNICOLOR



Satisfied clients with majority returning for additional projects

Hoist the Sails!

Curious to see how we can elevate your product or website and further your mission? Let's get started.

EMAIL US
ahoy@anchoralpine.com

VISIT US
www.anchoralpine.com

CALL US
801.931.6554

TRUSTED BY



117

Bespoke websites & counting

9

In-house creatives & developers

17

years in business



*Visit this link to share this magazine with people,
order a printed copy, or view all of our magazines.*

anchor & alpine

call us

(801) 931-6554

email us

ahoy@anchoralpine.com

visit us online

www.anchoralpine.com