6 Important Reasons Why Web Design Matters for Audience Experience
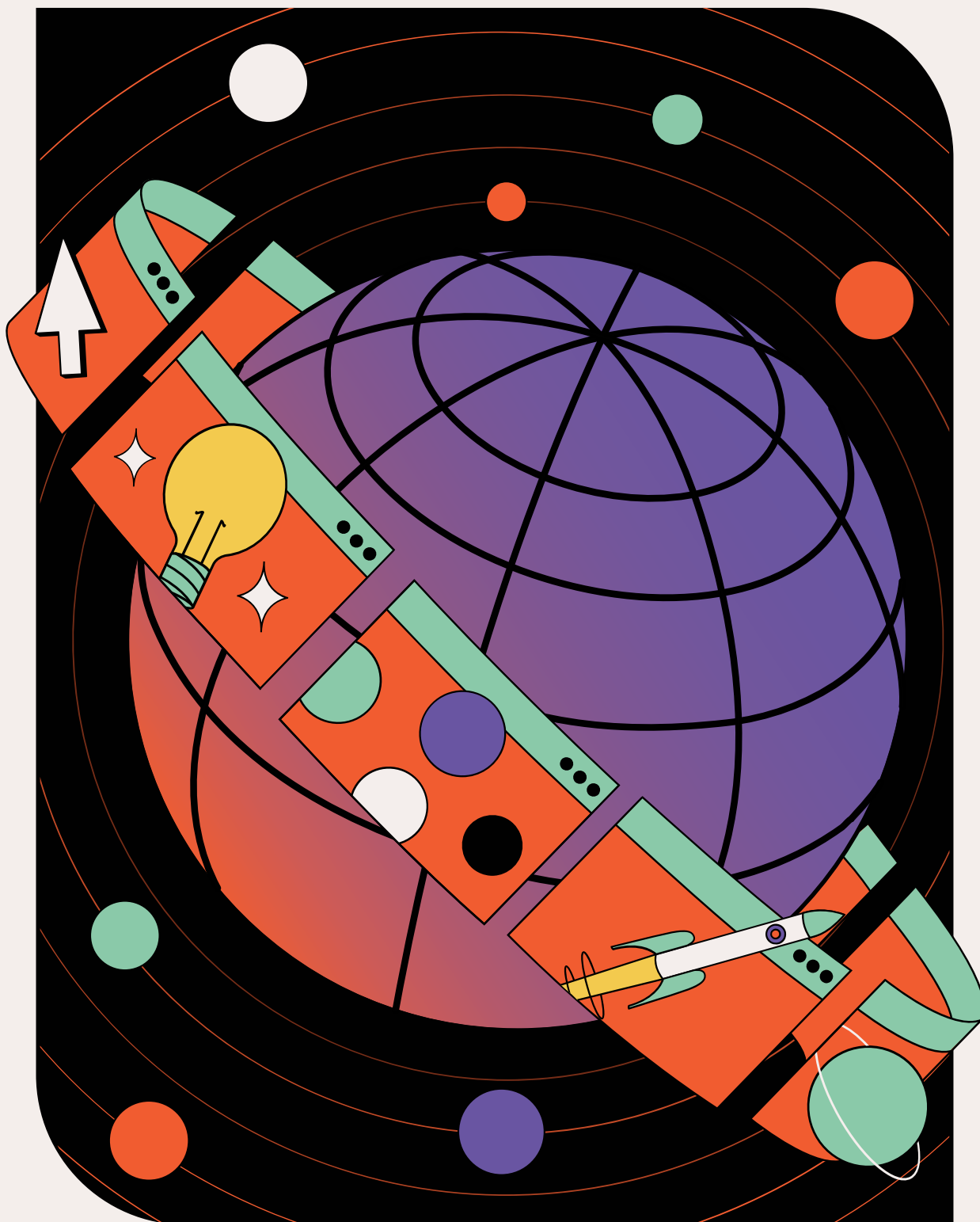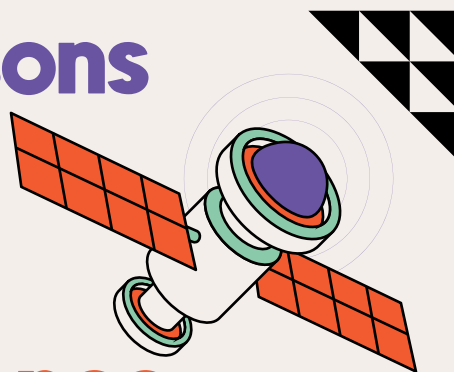
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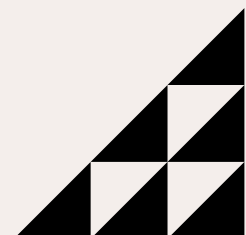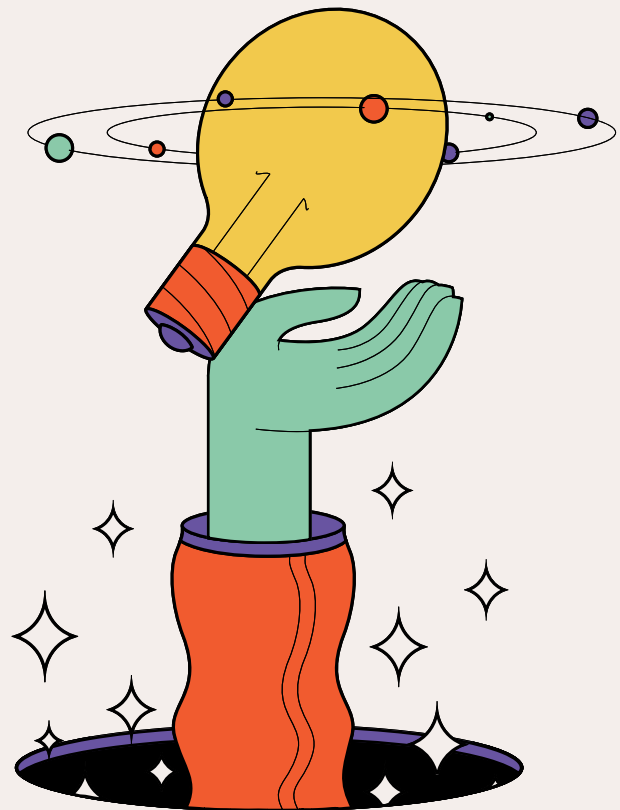
Why Web Design Matters

First impressions are everything these days, especially when it comes to web design. In fact, **38% of people** will stop engaging with a website if the content or layout is unappealing.

With more and more audiences wanting a memorable web design experience, understanding why web design matters when converting casual viewers into loyal customers is critical. Especially over the last two years, people's experience on your website has become the customers' number one priority and expectation when window shopping on the web.

COVID-19 has changed the way people expect to be treated by the brands and businesses they buy from. No one wants to be treated like another customer anymore; they want to feel a real connection to those they support.
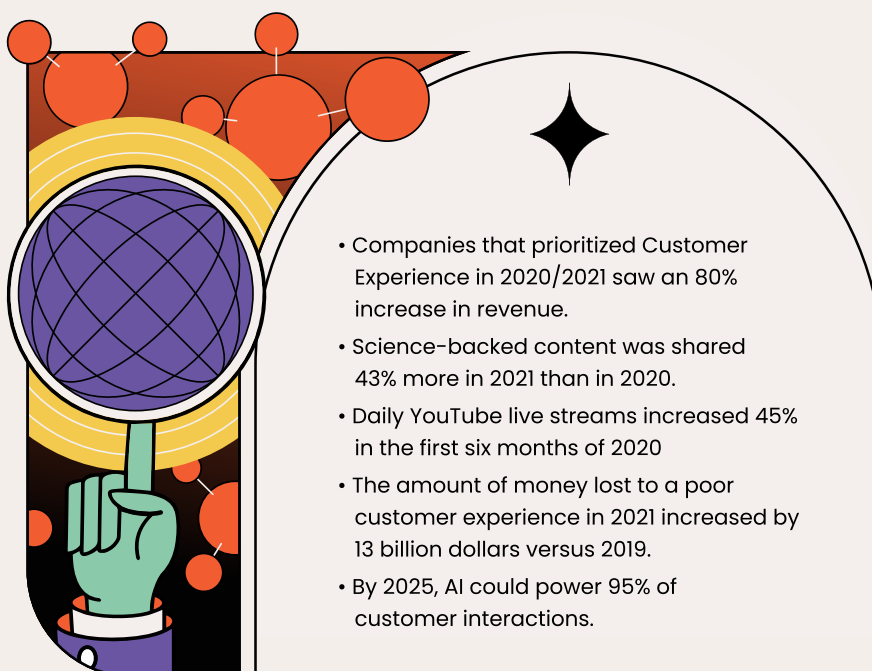
Web design is no exception to this new rule.

How Has COVID-19 Changed Online Expectations?

- Companies that prioritized Customer Experience in 2020/2021 saw an 80% increase in revenue.
- Science-backed content was shared 43% more in 2021 than in 2020.
- Daily YouTube live streams increased 45% in the first six months of 2020
- The amount of money lost to a poor customer experience in 2021 increased by 13 billion dollars versus 2019.
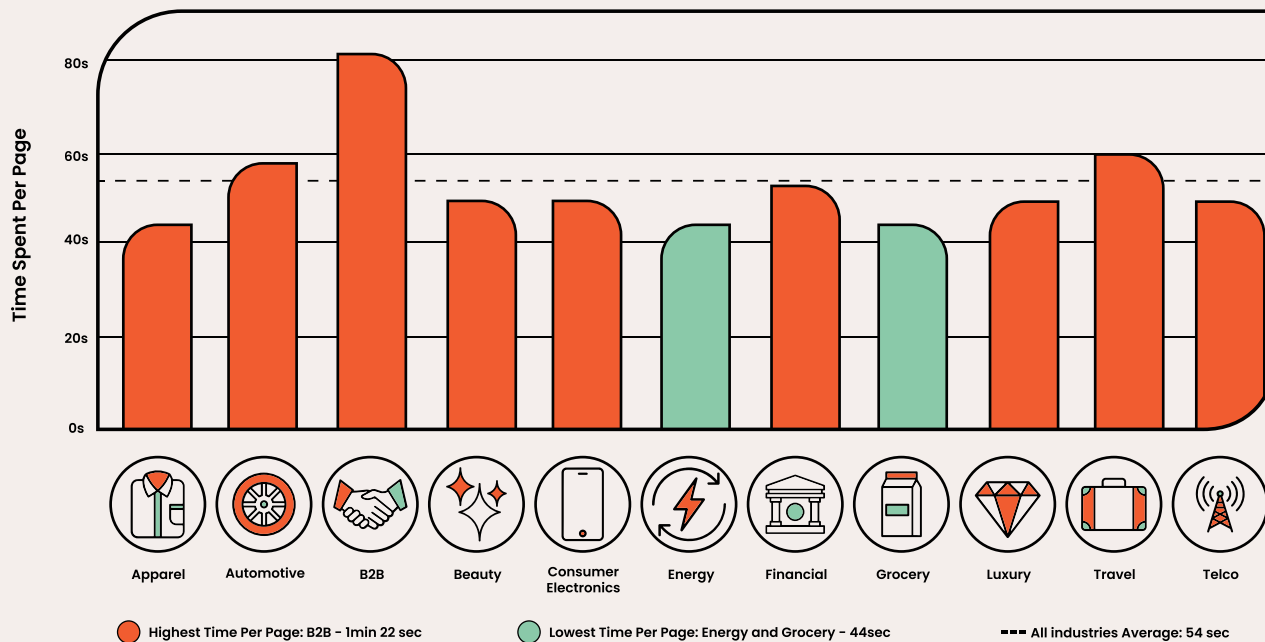- By 2025, AI could power 95% of customer interactions.

With more and more people expecting experiences with brands, a custom web design and development plan is essential to keep your audience engaged and converting and keep them happy.

Luckily, many small businesses have access to DIY website builders, such as Wix, to help ensure the experience they're giving their audience online is everything they expect it to be. These platforms offer audience-tested templates, layouts, and add-ons that are easy to use, customize, and navigate.

1. First Impressions are Key

Research has shown that first impressions of a website are 94% design-related. Content and copy are important as well, but even the best wording is rendered worthless when it's surrounded by poor design.

Average Time Spent Per Page Per Industry

Highest Time Per Page: B2B - 1min 22 sec   Lowest Time Per Page: Energy and Grocery - 44sec   - - - All industries Average: 54 sec

Studies of consumer behavior have found that custom web design and development have the most significant influence on audience experience and their overall first impressions of your brand.

Positive first impressions lead to higher conversion and click-through rates. The initial impression that someone gets from your site can affect how they perceive future interactions with your business. Research has shown that negative first impressions significantly decrease user satisfaction.

Not only that, but **Science Daily** discovered that even remarkable second impressions can never make up for a wrong first impression – bringing a more than literal meaning to the saying that 'you never get a second chance to make a first impression.'

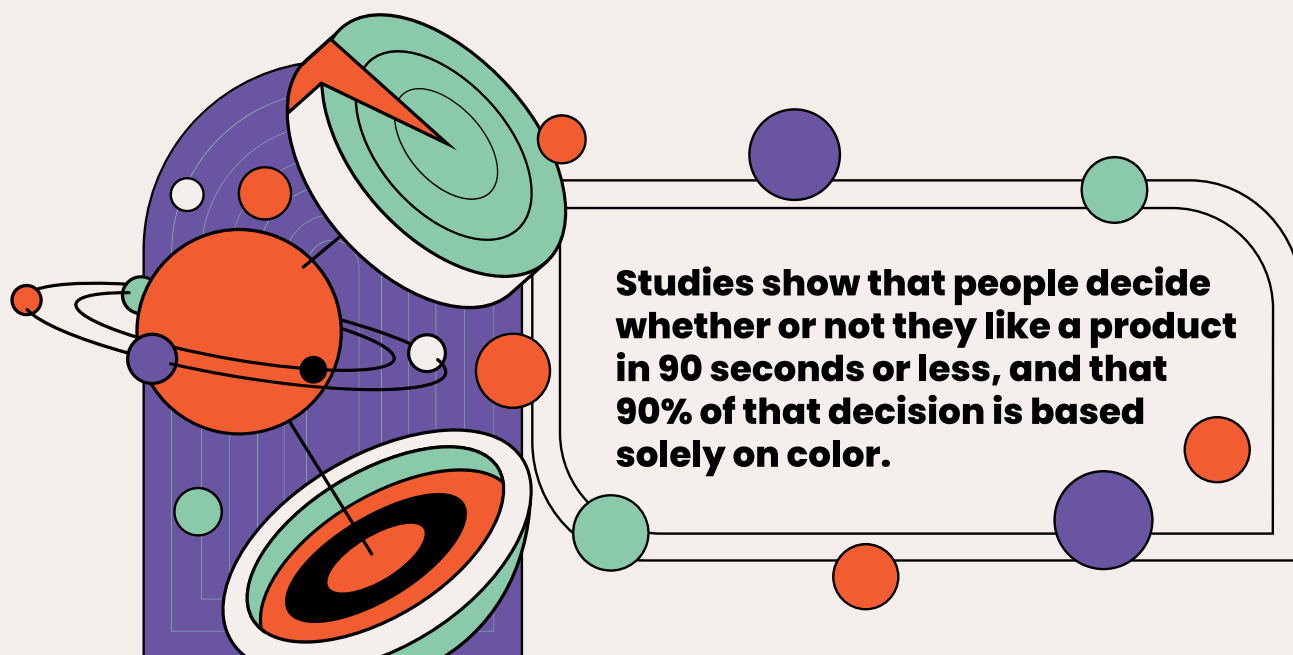## 2. Bad Design Can Mean Bad Conversions

Many small business owners assume that a great product or service can essentially sell itself, regardless of design. And while they aren't entirely wrong, you need to remember your audience experiences your brand differently than you.

If your company is new or has little to no brand awareness, you need a marketing strategy to help get your product or service out there, as well as a high-quality website to capture leads and make sales.

A good **template** is an excellent start to designing your custom website, but you'll still have to ensure the elements, colors, and fonts you use are in line with what your customers expect.

Imagine spending hundreds or thousands of dollars on ads and campaigns to bring in customers, only for them to turn and run at the first view of your website. No matter how great or unique your product or service is, your audience isn't going to know that if your website makes them want to leave.

Even the colors you choose can affect how your audience experiences your website.

Studies show that people decide whether or not they like a product in 90 seconds or less, and that 90% of that decision is based solely on color.

The colors you use can help strengthen your brand, encourage sales, and even lead visitors toward specific pages or actions. For example, call to action buttons that are red or orange often have higher conversion rates than those that are green. And that while blue isn't recommended for food-related brands, it is great for boosting sales indirectly.

According to **Joe Hallock**, 26% of people associate the orange color with cheap products, more than one in five correlate yellow with affordability, and according to 13% of consumers, brown is the color that best fits cheap products.

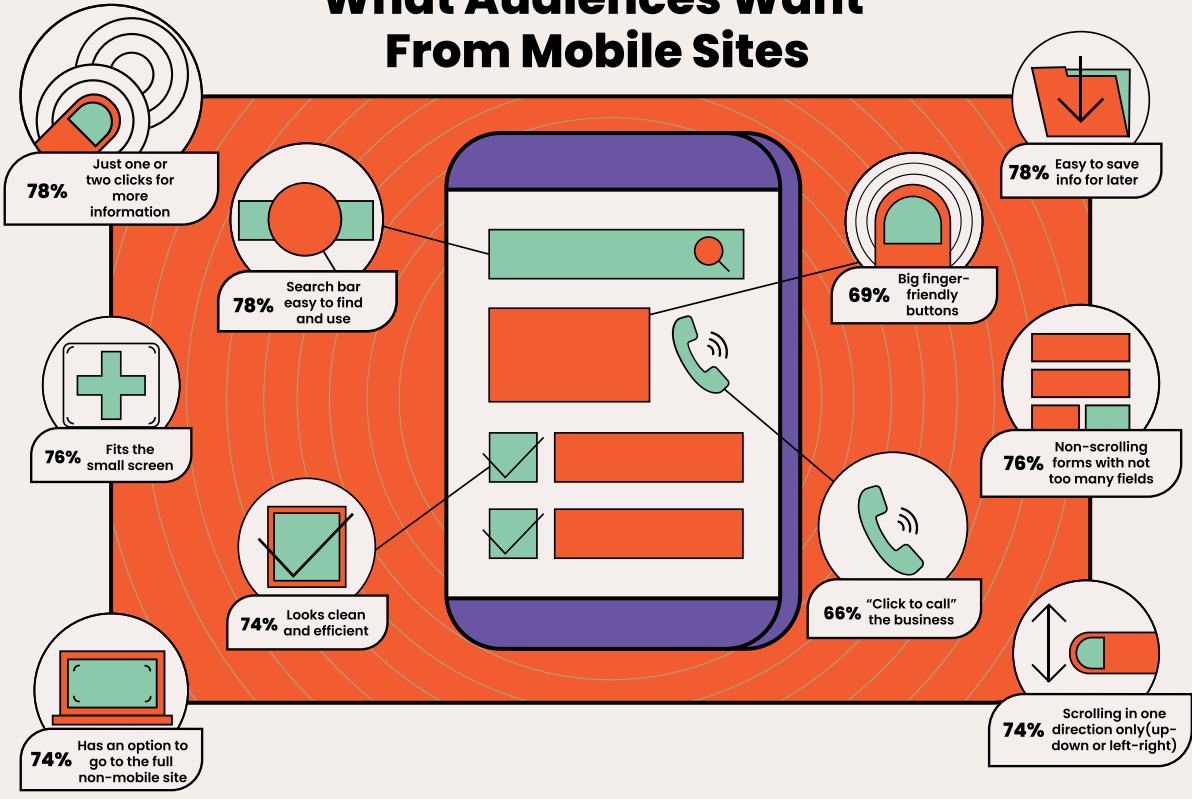Using the right color for the right audience is key when designing your website.

3. It Affects Customer Usability and Navigation

In 2020, the number of unique mobile internet users stood at 4.28 billion, indicating that over 90% of the international internet population uses mobile devices to go online. If you want visitors to remain on your page, you must implement navigation that is easy for your audience to use.

If your audience isn't able to quickly and easily navigate your website, find what they need to find, and checkout without issue, they aren't going to stick around.

What Audiences Want From Mobile Sites

78% Just one or two clicks for more information

78% Search bar easy to find and use

76% Fits the small screen

74% Looks clean and efficient

74% Has an option to go to the full non-mobile site

78% Easy to save info for later

69% Big finger-friendly buttons

76% Non-scrolling forms with not too many fields

66% "Click to call" the business

74% Scrolling in one direction only (up-down or left-right)

Ensuring you have what is called "responsive design" is key in providing all consumers with a useable and easily navigated website. Regardless of if someone comes to your site from a smartphone or a desktop computer, they'll get a great experience and find the information they want.

One way to figure out how usable and easy your website is to navigate is to research your heatmaps.

Website Heatmap
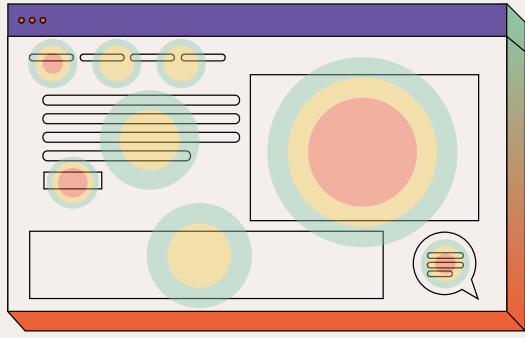
A website heatmap is a graphical representation of where your audience clicks and hovers using a system of color-coding to represent different values. Heatmaps are used in various forms of analytics but are most commonly used to show user behavior on specific web pages.
Heatmaps can show you how people interact with your website, so you can use those insights to improve the audience experience.
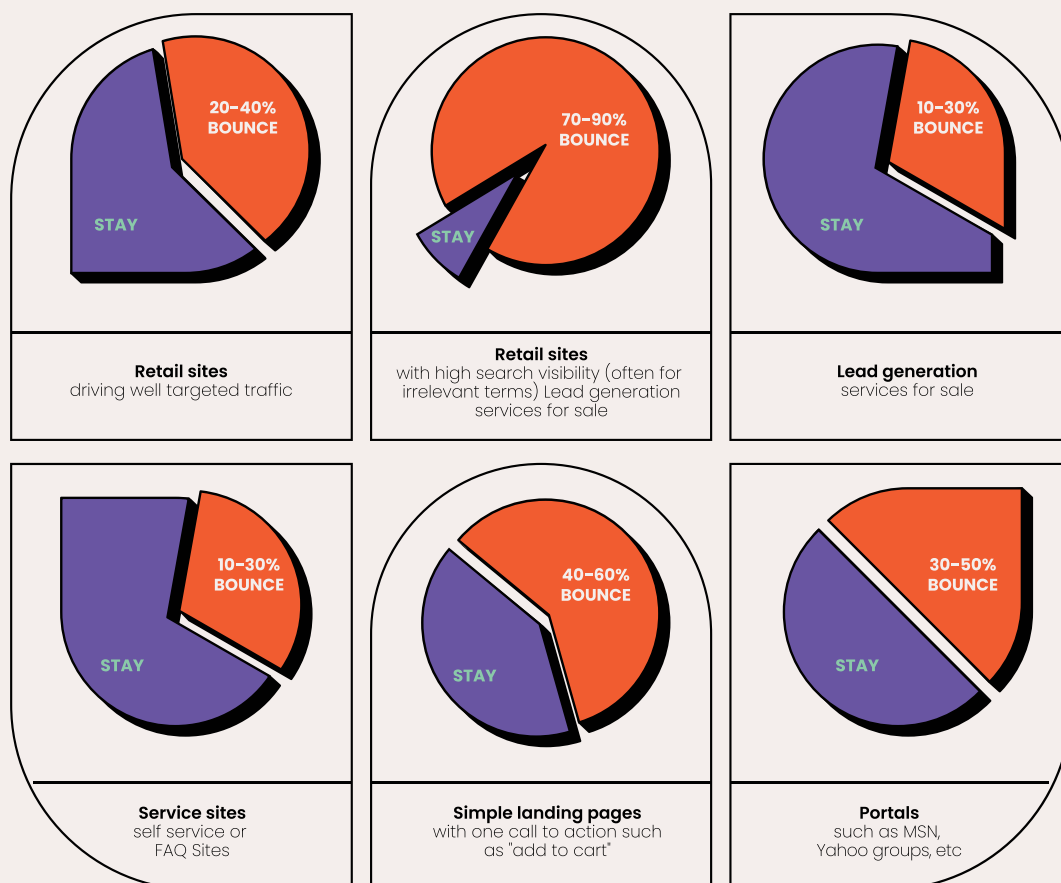
Here are fives ways heatmaps can help your overall audience experience:

1. **Showcases your best-performing designs:** If you are A/B testing your web design or landing page designs, a heatmap can show you which format is best for your audience. These analytics can help you create the best design for your specific audience and help increase your click-through rate.

2. **CTA analytics:** Call-to-actions are the biggest conversion spots for websites. Heatmaps can show you which CTAs your audience is clicking on, or avoiding, and why.

3. **Measures how far your audience is scrolling:** This information is excellent for two reasons. The first reason is it shows you how compelling your copy is to your audience. If they don't scroll far before abandoning, your copy might need some work. The second reason is for pop-ups. If you implemented a scroll-triggered pop-up on your website, knowing exactly where to place it can increase conversions and decrease your bounce rate.

4. **Spots areas your audience is expecting something to happen:** Do you have a CTA with a low click-through rate? Maybe it's not in the right place. A heatmap can show you where your audience might believe something is going to happen. Placing CTAs or other links in these areas where your audience hovers is key to providing them with a better navigation experience.

5. **Helps optimize your site for mobile:** In 2021, 79% of smartphone users made a purchase online using their mobile devices. Regardless of what your business does, ensuring your web pages are mobile-friendly and thumb-friendly is not only mandatory, but it's expected.

4. It Increases Your Professionalism and Trust

According to the **Stanford Web Credibility Project**, judgments on a company's credibility are 75% based on the company's website design alone. Your business could be selling the world's best product or service, but if your web design looks unprofessional or outdated, audiences may not even stay on your site long enough to find out.

If your audience leaves your website because it's outdated or unprofessional, without visiting a second page, this is called "bouncing." A high bounce rate signals to search engines that you aren't a trusted source of information, and can lead to them actually taking your website off of their results pages.

|		
20-40% BOUNCE / STAY	**70-90% BOUNCE** / STAY	**10-30% BOUNCE** / STAY
Retail sites driving well targeted traffic	**Retail sites** with high search visibility (often for irrelevant terms) Lead generation services for sale	**Lead generation** services for sale
10-30% BOUNCE / STAY	**40-60% BOUNCE** / STAY	**30-50% BOUNCE** / STAY
Service sites self service or FAQ Sites	**Simple landing pages** with one call to action such as "add to cart"	**Portals** such as MSN, Yahoo groups, etc

If your website isn't aesthetically pleasing or easy to navigate according to your target audience, your bounce rate and search rankings can be hurt.

If search engines don't trust your websites, neither will your audience.

However, not every small business is always equipped to design a website that takes advantage of graphic design in a way their audience expects. After all, you're an expert in your field - not necessarily web design. For situations like this, we recommend using DIY website building platforms such as Wix, which offer drag and drop options, prebuilt templates, and web designers available through their own website.
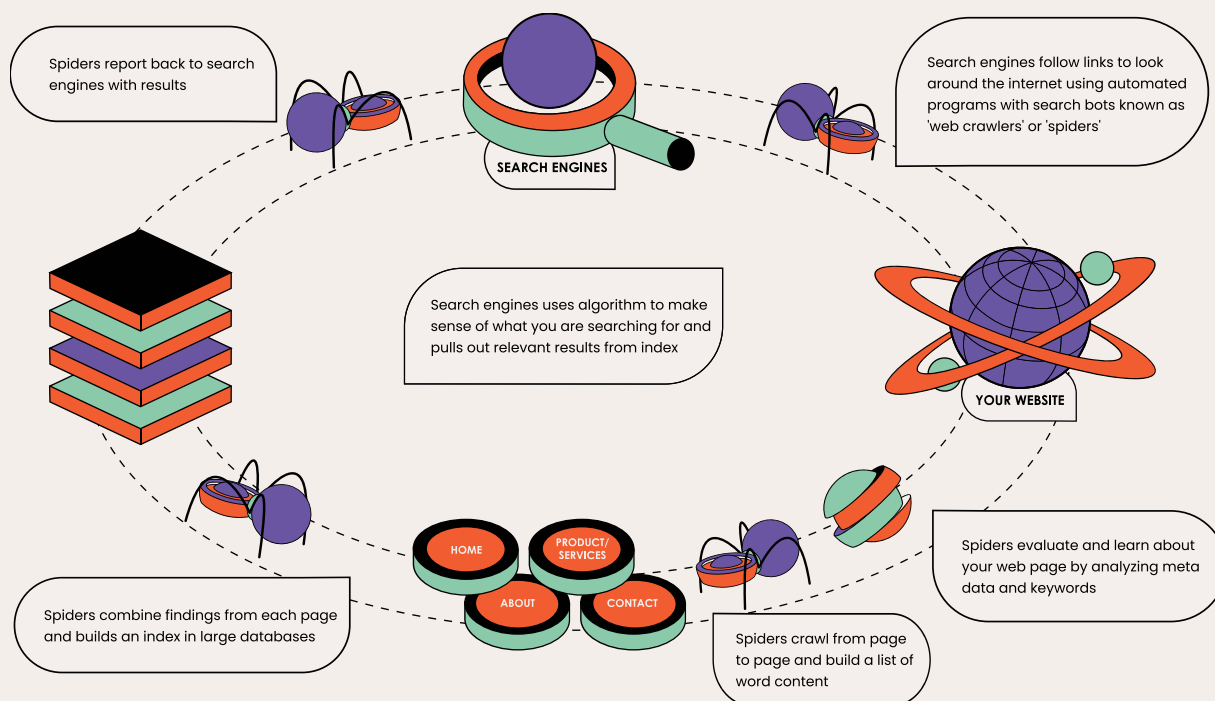
These templates or drag and drop elements are created with audiences in mind, ensuring that professionalism and trust are always built-in.

Website Templates
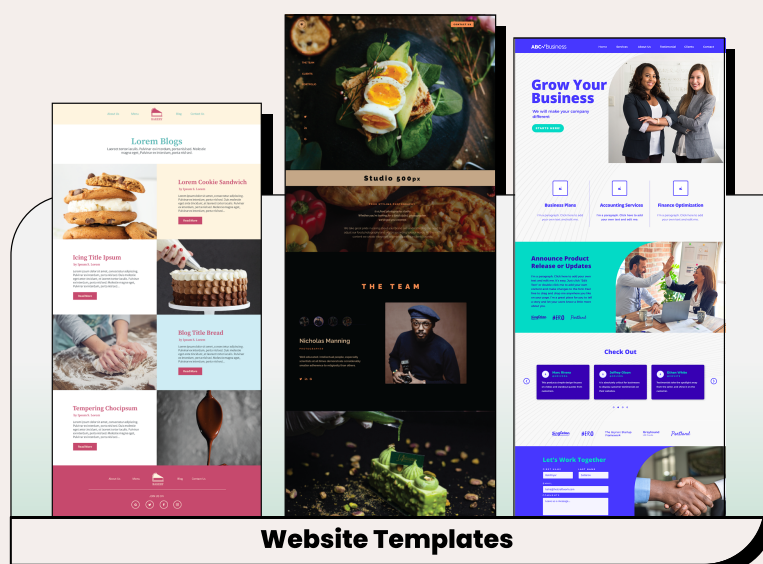
5. Web Design Directly Affects SEO

Continuing the conversation about search engines, it's clear web design and SEO go **hand-in-hand** these days. Without both SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and high-quality website design, your target audience might not be able to find you, engage with you, or use your product/services.

Search engine bots mimic the human user experience, so what's bad for human users is also bad for search engines.

Spiders report back to search engines with results

Search engines follow links to look around the internet using automated programs with search bots known as 'web crawlers' or 'spiders'

SEARCH ENGINES

Search engines uses algorithm to make sense of what you are searching for and pulls out relevant results from index

YOUR WEBSITE

HOME PRODUCT/SERVICES ABOUT CONTACT

Spiders combine findings from each page and builds an index in large databases

Spiders crawl from page to page and build a list of word content

Spiders evaluate and learn about your web page by analyzing meta data and keywords

Here are a few more examples of how web design can affect your SEO:

1. **Readability:** Searchers want information; after all, that's why they clicked on your website! Your site should be designed in a way to provide those answers in the easiest and most user-friendly way. Using fonts that are difficult to read, or color pairings that strain the eyes, will cause them to leave. An enjoyable reading experience may lead to higher on-site time, lower bounce rates, and an increased engagement rate.

2. **Images:** While relevant images can increase on-site time, using too many pictures or images that are too large can slow down your page load times. While 2 to 5 seconds is an ideal load time, each second beyond 2 seconds results in greater bounce rates. In fact, 40% of polled internet users report abandoning a site if it takes longer than 3 seconds to load.

3. **Navigation:** We briefly went over navigation earlier, but search engine crawlers also require easy navigation of your site. Users, and crawlers, shouldn't have to dig for the information they need to find; the more barriers and URLs they have to filter through to get to the good stuff, the lower your SEO score

If you use Wix as your website builder, your website will have SEO features built-in, as well as checklists available before launch. These ensure your SEO is as great and search-engine-friendly as possible before your website is published and indexed.

6. It Solidifies Your Branding

Your website is a reflection of your brand and the type of company you are. Your website design elements, like colors, fonts, images, etc., form your brand identity.

Your branding should stay consistent and familiar if your audience visits from another source, such as social media or email. Using the same fonts, colors, and images as the ones you use on other channels will increase your audience's familiarity with you.

Imagine following a company on social media and finally deciding to go to their website and try their product, only to be met by outdated and inconsistent branding. This doesn't seem like the company you've been following, does it?

Presenting a brand consistently across all platforms can increase revenue by up to 23%, and this includes your website.
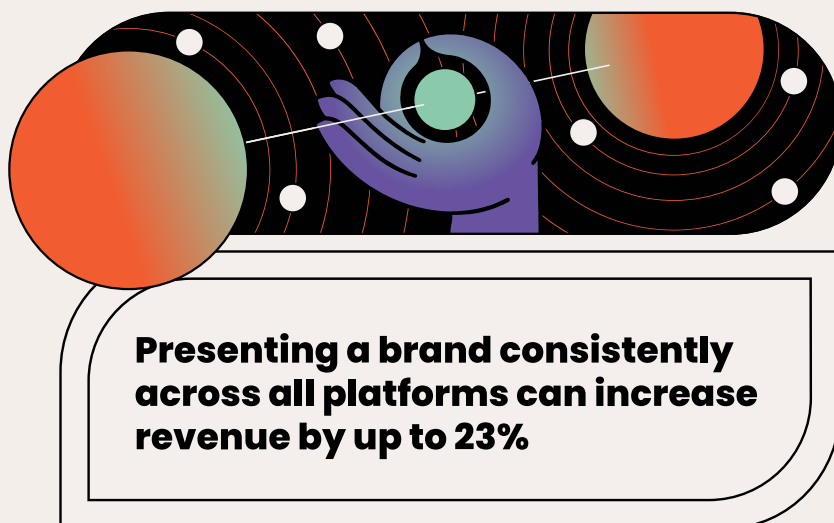
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Conclusion

Web Design is not only important for aesthetics and SEO, but your audience cares too. Having an outdated or unimpressive website will not only cause your viewers to bounce and leave, but it could affect future sales with their friends and family.

When learning why web design matters, you first have to understand your audience and what they are looking for. If you an own eCommerce store, maybe they would like a progress indicator bar to show them how far along in the checkout process they are.

If you're a photographer, maybe they want to see a breakdown of your photoshoots based on the location. While specific audiences may be looking for specific web design items, they all want to visit a website that's easy to read, easy to navigate, and feels familiar.

Using platforms, such as Wix, can help you create a user-friendly, high-quality website with little effort on your part. With consumers expecting a great customer experience before they even visit your site, using platforms that can help you create these customer-oriented elements is key to lowering your bounce rate and increasing your conversion rate.

If you require a stunning Wix website, **give us a call**. We've created over 120,000 websites for small business owners like yourself and know what it takes to create a high-converting landing page, simple site, or complicated platform for your brand.