



Why C Navigation

Imagine being a customer at a large departmental store. Unless there is a map right at the entry to help you locate the items that you are looking for, it is very likely that you may actually leave the store without purchasing anything. An e-commerce web site is no different than this. The landing page, also referred to as the home page of a commercial site, must provide a navigational map to the visitors so as to facilitate them in locating the items that they desire. One such map is referred to as C navigation.

To understand why C navigation, one needs to understand-

What are the disadvantages of a site offering poor navigation?

Strategies of C navigation

Why C navigation is crucial to the success of a website.

Disadvantages of a poorly designed website

Statistics show that over 93% of all websites have enough traffic coming in; the problem lies in the low rate of conversion. More often than not, it is the home page of a website that plays a decisive role in whether the visitor is going to stay on for longer, or leave without having a look at what the site has to offer. It is therefore no wonder that several sites that investigate their low conversion rates find that the problem lies in the design of the home page. While several manufacturers invest heavily in the product creation, advertising, feedback, customer service, etc, all this can be futile if the prospect is unable to locate it with ease on the web site. In fact there are several serious issues that can arise due to poor navigation on a website. Understanding these issues is a best method of moving towards eradicating them.

- Confused prospect – A website landing page that is not well designed is bound to bewilder the visitor. A visitor, who is investing energy in finding out the whereabouts of the other link pages on the site, is unlikely to give the product its due attention. So obviously a bewildered prospect is not good for the conversion rate.
- Reputation of the product - A site that is confusing and complex, does not reflect well on the site owners and subsequently on the product. The website of a product is the first interaction that the prospect has with the product. As the old adage goes, 'first impressions are the last impressions' and therefore, it is very important that the site comes across as well organized. A site that lacks clear navigation will leave the prospect thinking that the product is also as complicated and complex as its website.
- Can't find, can't buy – A huge drawback of poor navigation on a website is the immediate loss of sales that the situation gives rise to. Unless the prospect is able to reach the product and learn about its benefits, it is unlikely that he/she will purchase it. Important tabs like the 'buy' button, the about us page and other such



information must always be available for the prospect, so as to be able to move towards closing the deal.

- Repel the prospect towards the competition- Unable to find what he/she is looking for, the prospect is going to leave the website and move on to another provider. So despite attracting the prospect by advertising techniques towards your site, a badly planned site will lose the prospect and therefore waste the revenue spent on the advertising process.

In short, a site that is not planned well will immediately translate into a diminished conversion rate. Despite investing in a sound and effective advertising strategy, the website owner will be unable to reach the desired sales target. A complicated website will ruin the chances of increasing the e-commerce activity of any business venture. It is therefore imperative that the design of a website is developed keeping in mind the basic rules of web navigation and planning. While websites can be developed at almost no cost these days by adopting any one of the several DIY web builders available on the net, it is the intricacies of web page planning that web designers charge large amounts for. Knowing where to place the various links and tabs on a home page and every other subsequent page of a website is the trick to developing an effective website.

Strategies of C navigation

One of the golden rules of web designing is the strategy referred to as C navigation. Simply put, C navigation is the technique of placing the index and menus of a website in a manner that they cover the top, the left and the bottom section of a web page. This placement results in the formation of a C, which is where the strategy derives its name from. C navigation is a perfect tool to fight off the disadvantages of a poorly piloted web page. Over the decades several sites have followed this pattern and achieved success. This is also the reason why today most web browsers come to expect links and menus placed in this design. Sites that have undergone home page renovations and adopted the C navigation pattern have experienced an immediate positive effect on the sales of the product.

It is also highly recommended that the C navigation approach be maintained on all the pages of a website. Viewers are not receptive to change and are looking to concentrate on the product rather than solve a jigsaw puzzle. So keeping the same trend and pattern right through the entire site provides the browser with an ease and comfort that provides the best setting for a conversion.

Why C navigation

The need for C navigation is therefore extremely high. A few points listed below elaborate on why a website should adopt the C navigation pattern –

- 1) Increase in sales - There are sites that have reported a 50% increase in sales after undergoing a home page renovation that involved not only the graphics and the content but also the navigation of the page. C navigation allows the website visitors the ease to look around the site and therefore conveniently make the



- purchase by concentrating on the product, rather than grouping around looking for links. It is therefore no wonder that more converts are possible from the same number of browsers that were visiting the site before the change in the navigational approach was adopted. So one of the most important reasons for adopting C navigation is the immediate increase in converts that the pattern demonstrates.
- 2) Common and expected – C navigation is a pattern that has established a reputation for itself. Web users, both old and new, have come to expect the web page tabs right on the top of a web page. Drop down menus and tabs are expected to cover the top, the left and the bottom section of a web page. Not finding these tabs are their pre decided places tends to confuse the browser. It is like expecting the steering wheel of a car and its other controls to be at a particular place. Not finding them there could baffle the driver and even cause an accident. In the case of a web site, this accident occurs in the form of a lost sales opportunity. So another important reason why C navigation should be adopted for a website is satisfying the browsers expectation of finding it there.
 - 3) Works for the novice too- C navigation is a system that has been developed keeping the computer novice in mind. In fact it is highly recommended that the navigation of any website always be tested on a new web browser who is not experienced in the field. Placing all important navigational tabs on the top, left and bottom section of a web page, ensures that the browser will find the tabs irrespective of his/ her experience on the internet.
 - 4) Allows the browser flexibility – C navigation allows the prospect visiting the site complete flexibility to move from one page to another without having to bother going through unwanted content. If a prospect is sold to the idea of buying the product then simply navigating to the ‘buy now’ section of the site is all that is required. There is no need to search through the entire web page to figure out how the product works, how one can ship it and other such unwanted information. The C navigation pattern does not force the web visitor to follow any one particular path, but lays out the entire plan of the website for the visitor’s convenience. Depending on personal choice and need, the browser can go to any section of the website that he/she desires.
 - 5) Caters to the visitor’s attention span – Most web browsers suffer from what can be appropriately termed as the 10 second attention span. If within ten seconds the browser is not catered to, chances of him/her leaving your site are extremely high. The C navigation pattern ensures that the browser finds what is being sought immediately, since it is placed on all the important sections of the site. So whether the browser looks on top, on the left or the bottom segment of the web page, he/ she will be able to move on, onto the desired path.

C navigation is the mapping formula that works the best in the web world and a site ignoring this pattern might as well redirect the prospects to the competitions site instead.