Designing for visibility.

How to boost your WordPress website's SEO using design

This presentation delves into the relationship between design and SEO.

How to harness design effectively to improve your website's search engine rankings and conversions.

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About me.

- Designer - graphic design - 30+ years
- Web design - 20+ years
- SEO - 15+ years
- WordPress since 2010
- Run a design agency - 15+ years
- Deliver WordPress training
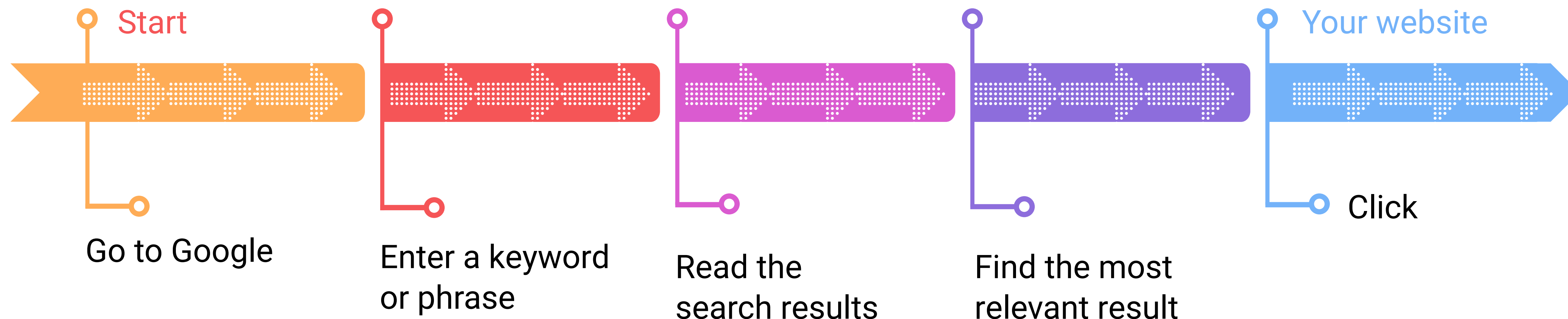- Working with Blue-chip brands
- Life sciences and healthcare

What is design in the context of the web?

The design of a website plays a pivotal role in shaping the visitor's experience.

It impacts how users interact with the content and ultimately influences their satisfaction and engagement levels.

Search journey

Start

Your website

Click

Go to Google

Enter a keyword
or phrase

Read the
search results

Find the most
relevant result

On your website

You have **a few seconds** to grab their attention:

- Does it visually look like the site they were expecting?

- Does it match the description they clicked on?

- Does the design match the business brand?

- Can they immediately understand what you do?

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Mismatch

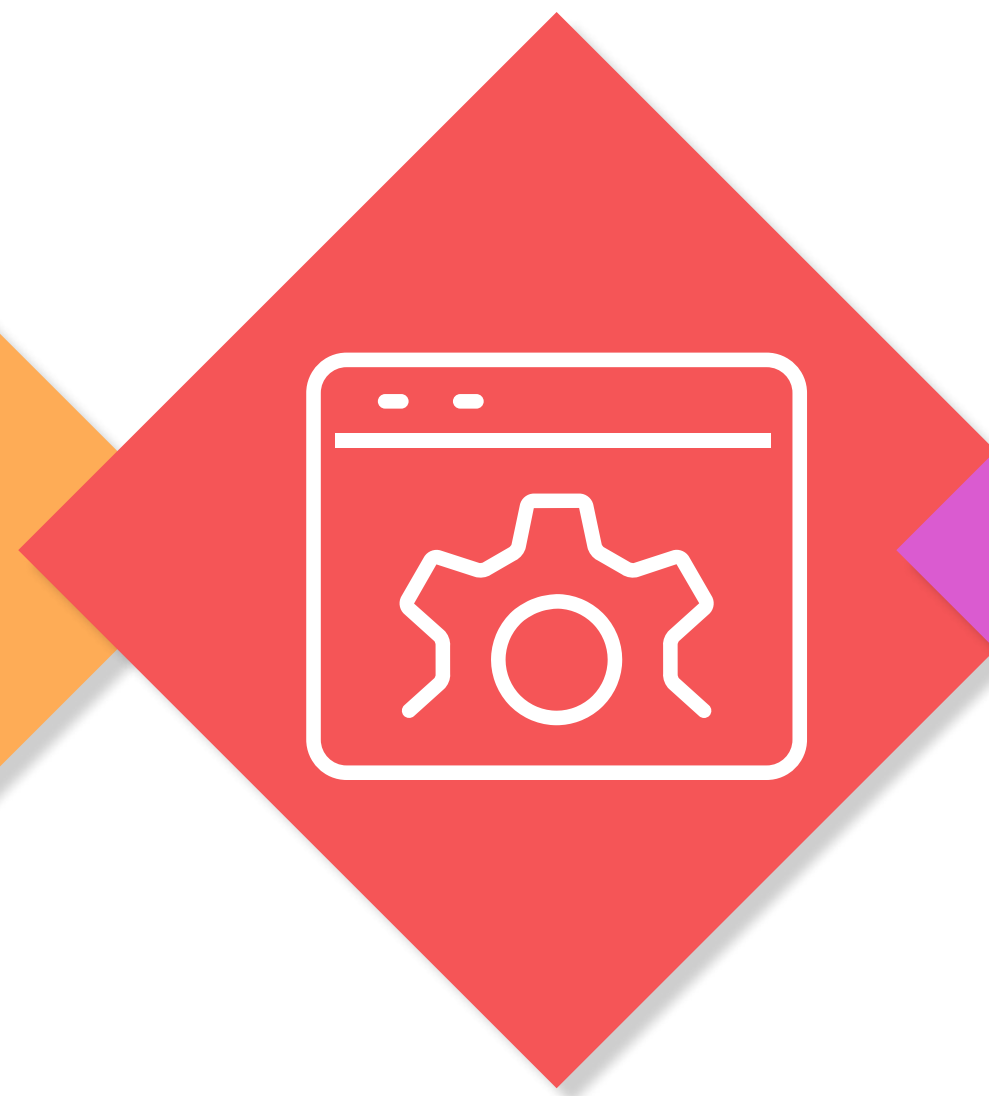The visitor goes back to google to search again.

SEO problems:

- High bounce rate ⬆
- Low engagement ⬇
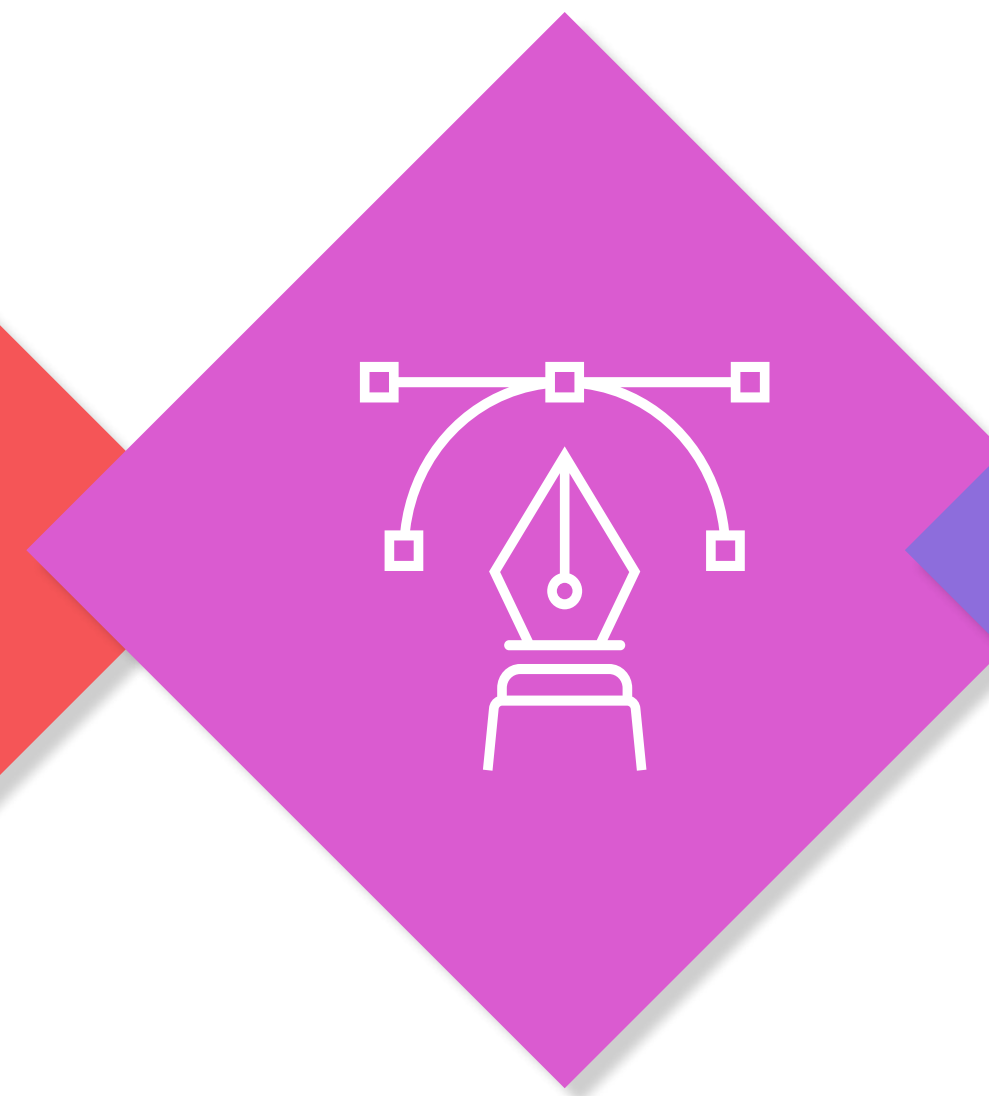- Low 'user stickiness' ⬇
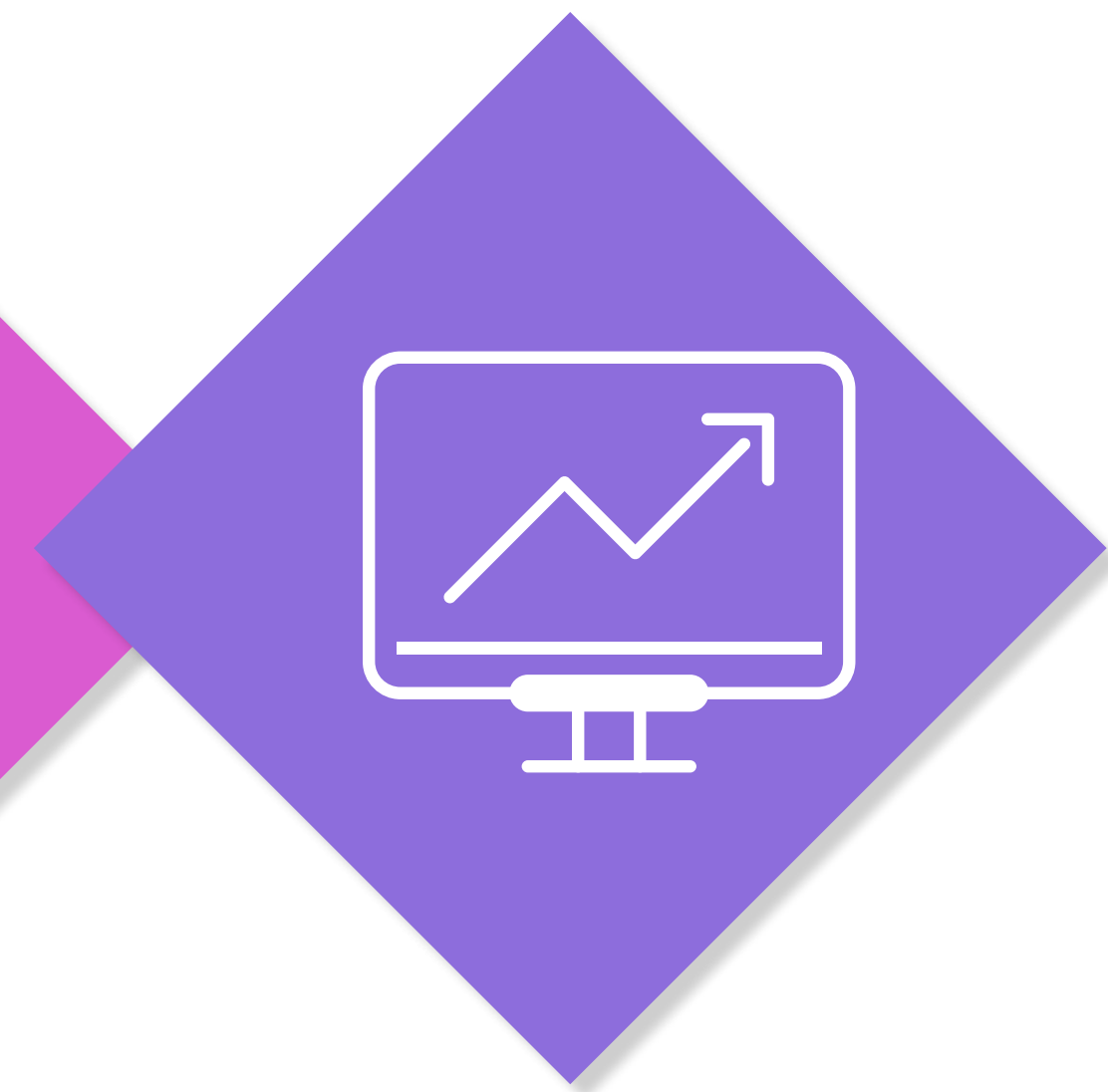- Missed conversions ⬇
- Reduced retention ⬇

The four pillars of SEO

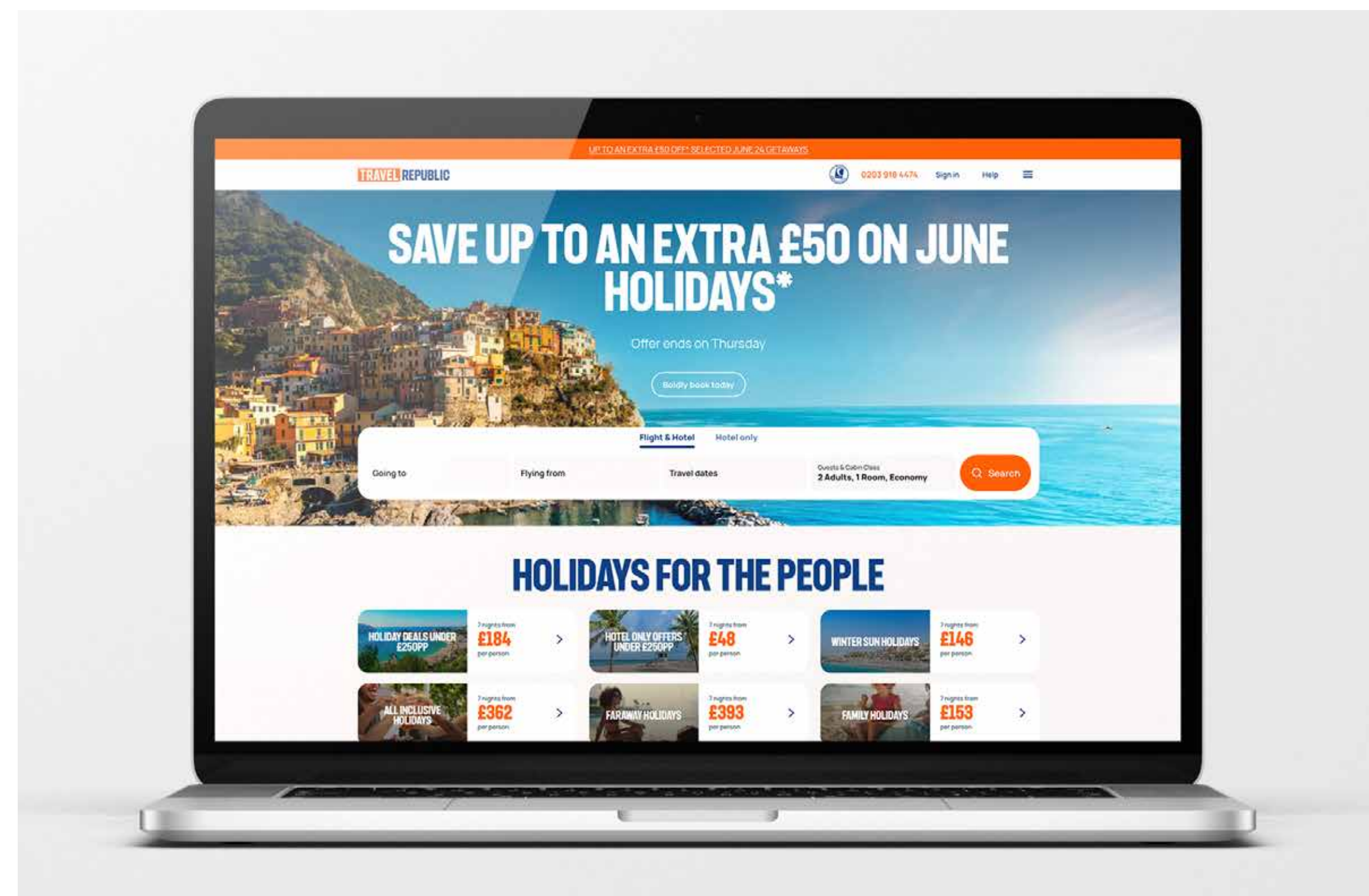#1 On-site   #2 Technical   #3 Content   #4 Off-site

#1 On-site

#1 On-site

Colour

Colour to guide the visitor

Appropriate use of colour to improve readability,
user experience, and guide visitor attention on the page.

Promotional banner

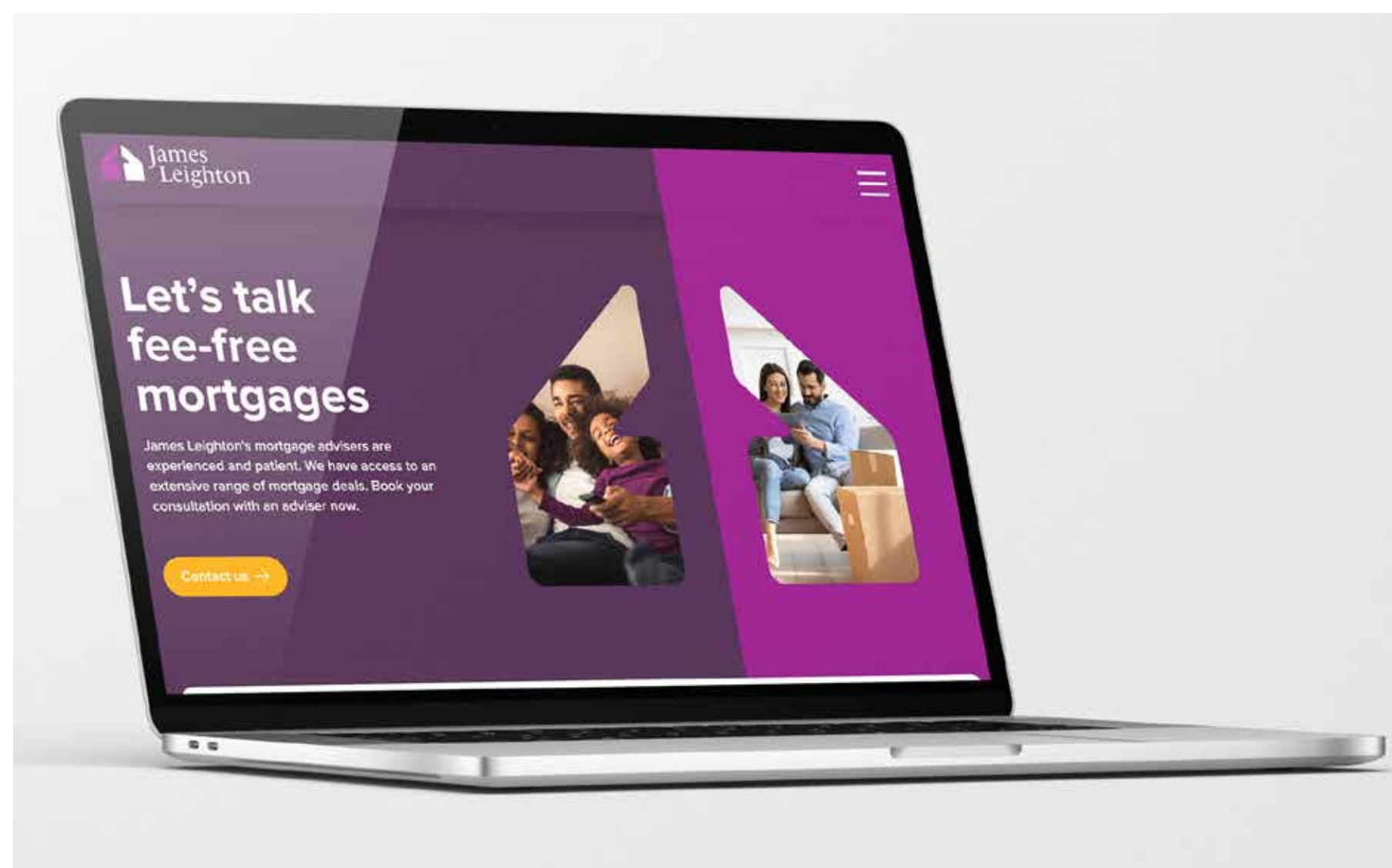Complementary colours

Contrast buttons

Price highlight

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#1 On-site

Colour

Colour for mood

The use of colour can **significantly affect the user experience**.
It can elicit feelings, set the site's **tone and mood**, and have an impact on how visitors perceive your business.

Formal

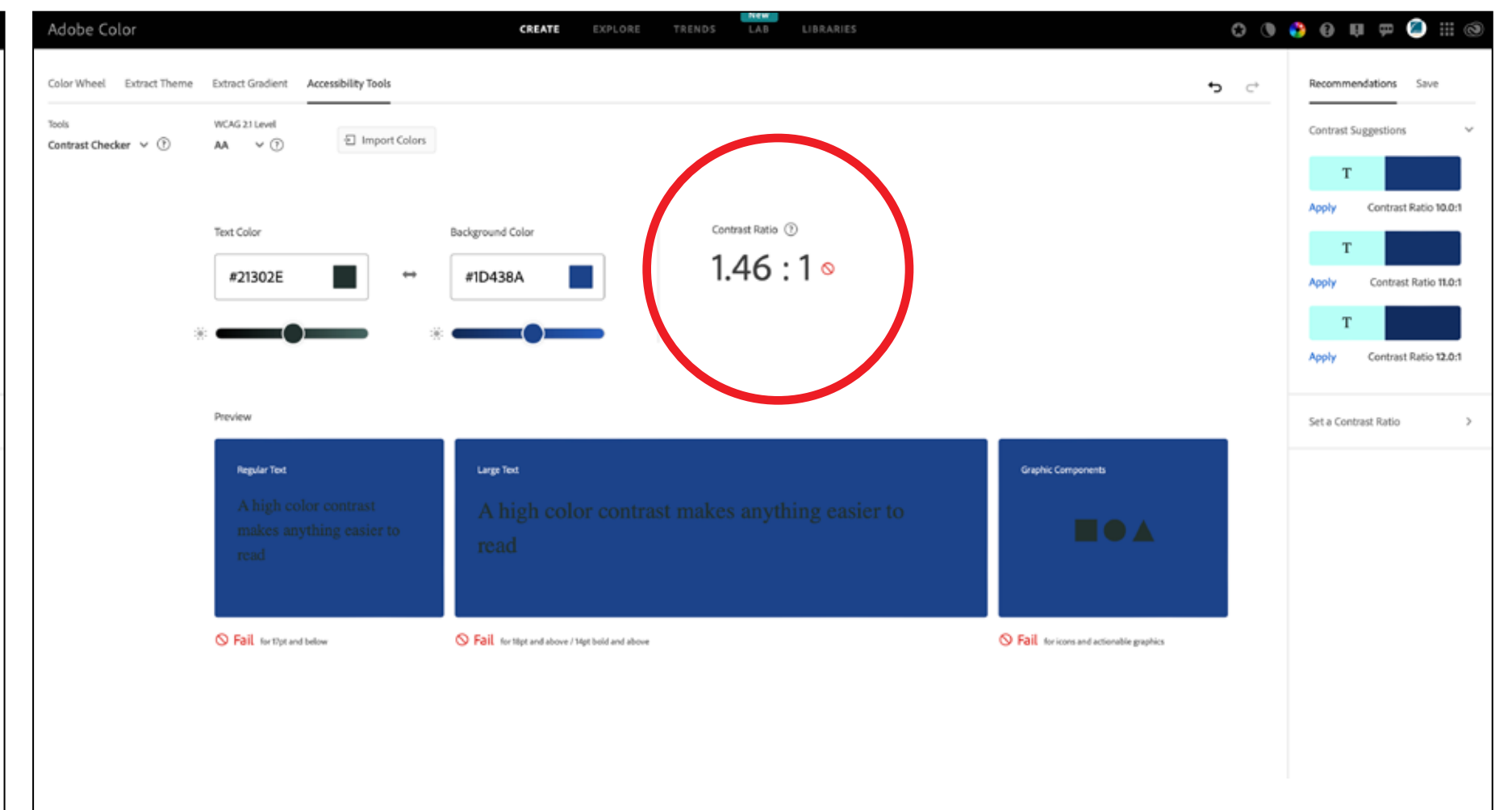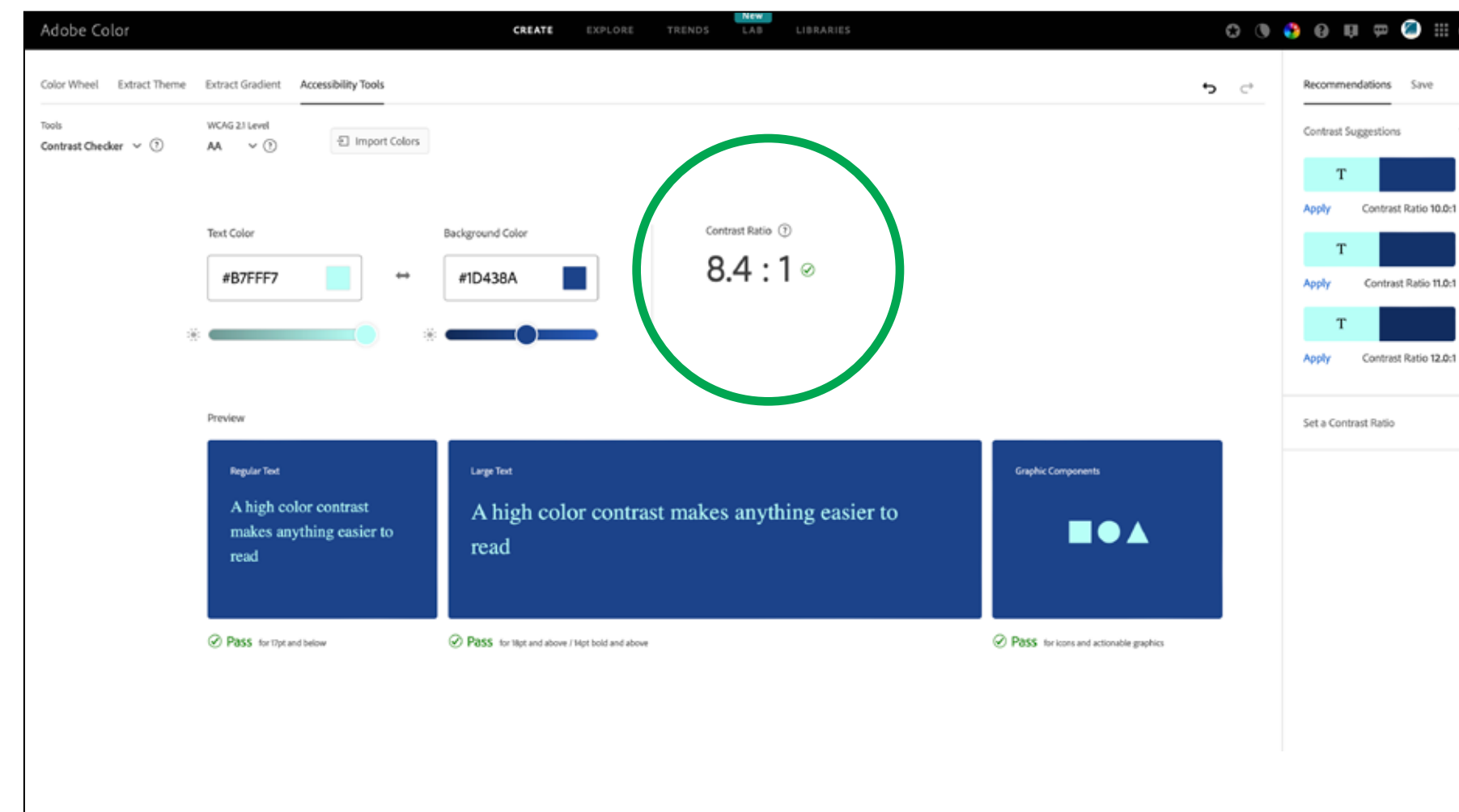Sophisticated

Accessibility

Colour combinations that have enough **contrast** to make layered elements (such as text or icons on a background) clearly distinguishable

#1 On-site

Colour

https://color.adobe.com/create/color-contrast-analyzer

#1 On-site

Typography

Font size

The larger your font size, the easier your content is to read

Size

- Depends on the font choice

- Depends on the device/screen size

- Desktop - 16-20 pt (1.3333 em - 1.6667 em)

- Tablet - 15-19 pt (1.25 em - 1.625 em)
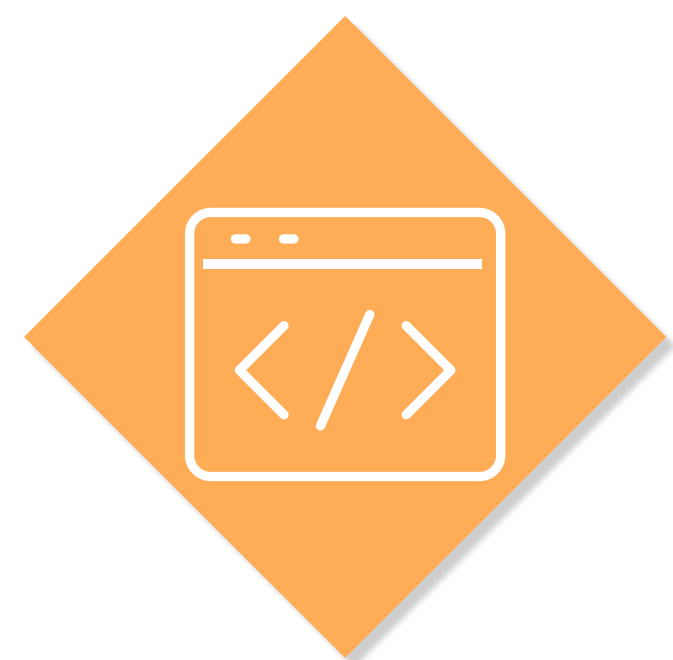
- Mobile - 12-16 pt (1em - 1.3333em)

Font choice

Serif vs. Sans Serif?

Sans serif typefaces can be easier to read

Help visitor spend more time focusing on your message than deciphering the typeface.

If you need serifs -
Use sans serifs for your body of the copy
and serifs for your title and subtitles

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Font readability

Clear, legible typography that enhances readability and user engagement.

#1 On-site

Typography

Line height

- The space between individual lines of text

- Sufficient line height makes the text more scannable

- Line height that is too short will cause users to squint

- If it is too large, the text will seem like separate bodies instead of grouped together as one.

Letter spacing

- The space between individual lines of text

- Letter spacing is a factor in legibility

- If letter spacing is excessive it can reduce readability

- If letter spacing is tight it can reduce readability

Line length

- The number of words per line

- 45 to 80 characters (per line) is the ideal line length for text on websites

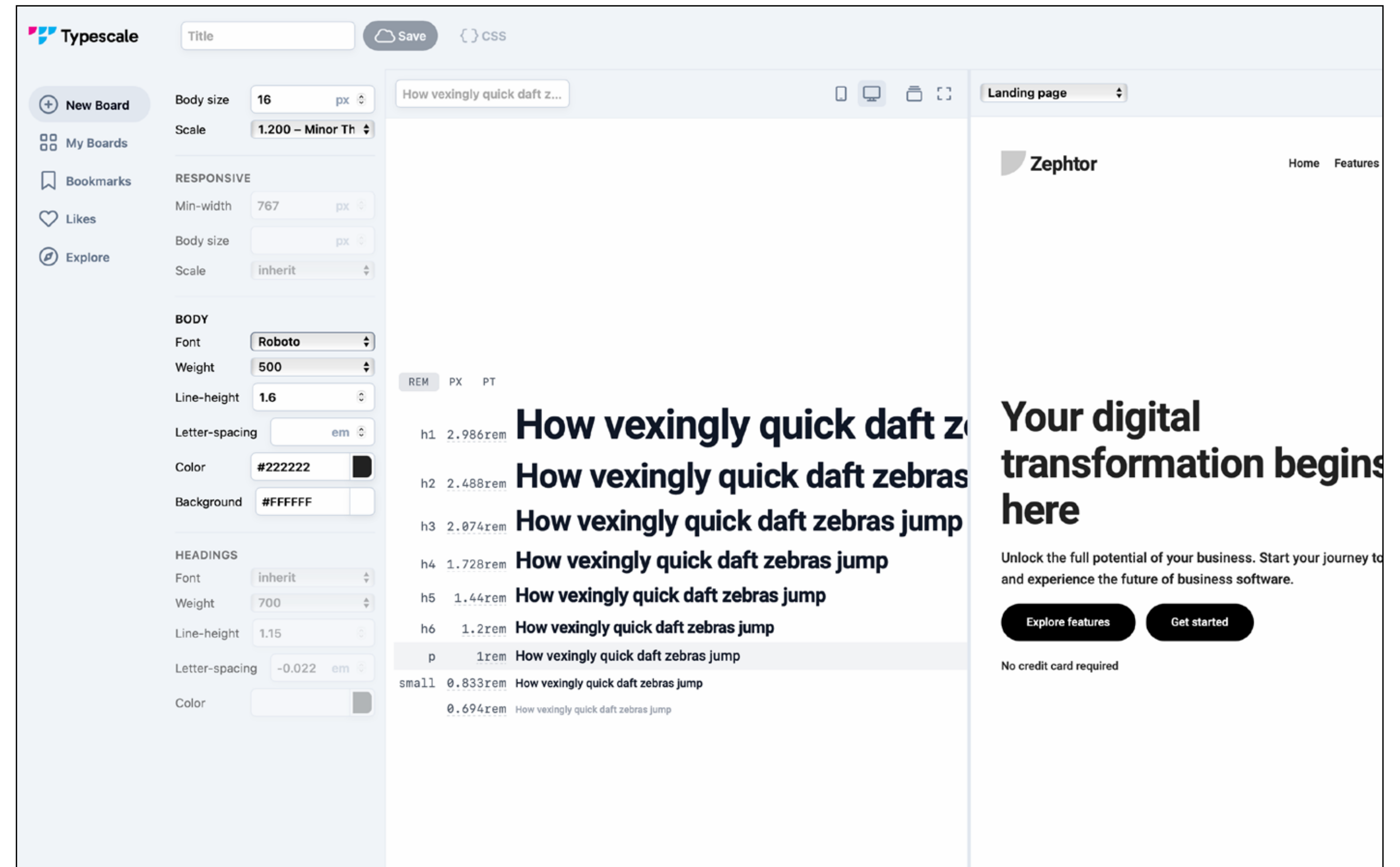- Visitors faced with overly long lines of text are more likely to avoid reading the text.

Type scale

#1 On-site

Typography

A type scale is a selection of pre-picked font sizes used to represent different text elements to establish balance and harmony.

https://typescale.com

#1 On-site

Consistency

Design consistency

A uniform and cohesive visual language throughout your website

Consistency is fundamental for the best UX (User Experience)

It creates an experience that users can rely upon and understand every time they interact with your brand or product.

Builds trust (an SEO factor) -
   visitors are more likely to perceive it as professional/trustworthy.

#2 Technical

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#2 Technical

Responsive

Responsive design

- The design adapts to different screen sizes layouts

- The design remains consistent

- Using flexible grids and layouts, responsive images, CSS media queries

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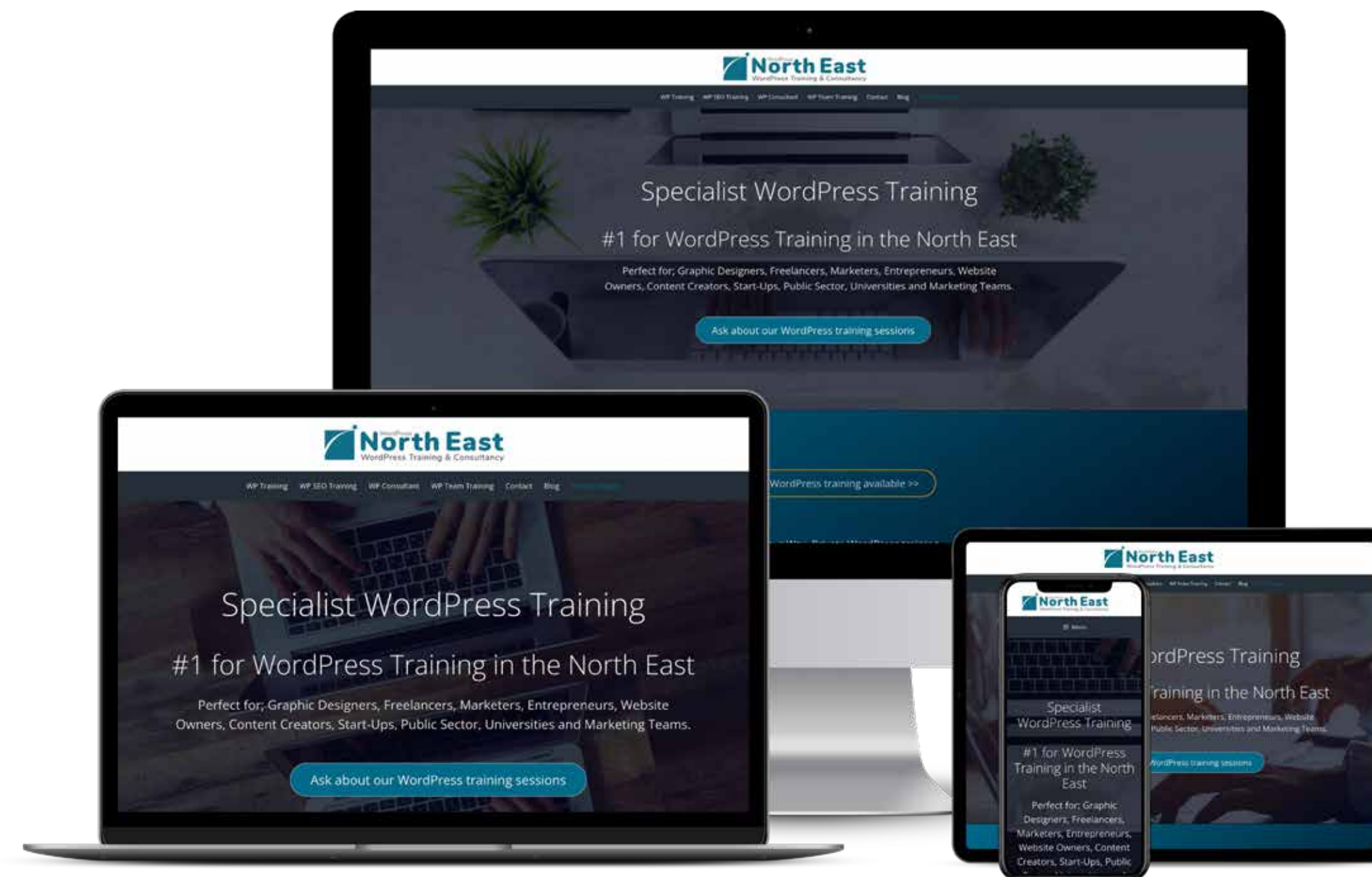
#2 Technical

Structure

Semantic markup

Semantic HTML tags help the search engines and other user devices to determine the importance and context of web page content.

Heading 1 (H1)	**Primary Headline**
	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Lorem dolor sed viverra ipsum nunc. Nec tincidunt praesent semper feugiat nibh sed pulvinar proin.
Body Copy	
	Nulla facilisi morbi tempus iaculis urna id. Dictum at tempor commodo ullamcorper a lacus vestibulum. Mauris cursus mattis molestie a iaculis at erat pellentesque.
Heading 2 (H2)	**Secondary Headline**
Body Copy	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Lorem dolor sed viverra ipsum nunc. Nec tincidunt praesent semper feugiat nibh sed pulvinar proin.
Body Copy Bold	**List of items**
Bulleted List	• First Item
	• Second item
	• Third Item

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#2 Technical

Images

Optimise images

A picture is worth a thousand words

- Pictures need to support the content and the design

- Images need to be correctly sized and **compressed** for fast loading

- Images must include 'alt text' for accessibility and SEO

- Mobile-Friendly
  - you may need a different crop or orientation for smaller screens

https://tinypng.com

https://shortpixel.com

https://imagify.io

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#2 Technical

Accessibility

Accessibility

Perceivable

Visitors can perceive or understand and be aware of the content you present on your website.

Operable

All visitors can use the website without disruption.

All visitors can use each part of the website's functionality.

ACCESSIBLE DESIGN

Understandable

Content must be understandable.

Site structure- your pages must be intuitively organised, and your navigation readily available.

Robust

Robust enough to be easily interpreted by visitors with various assistive technologies, such as screen readers.

#3 Content

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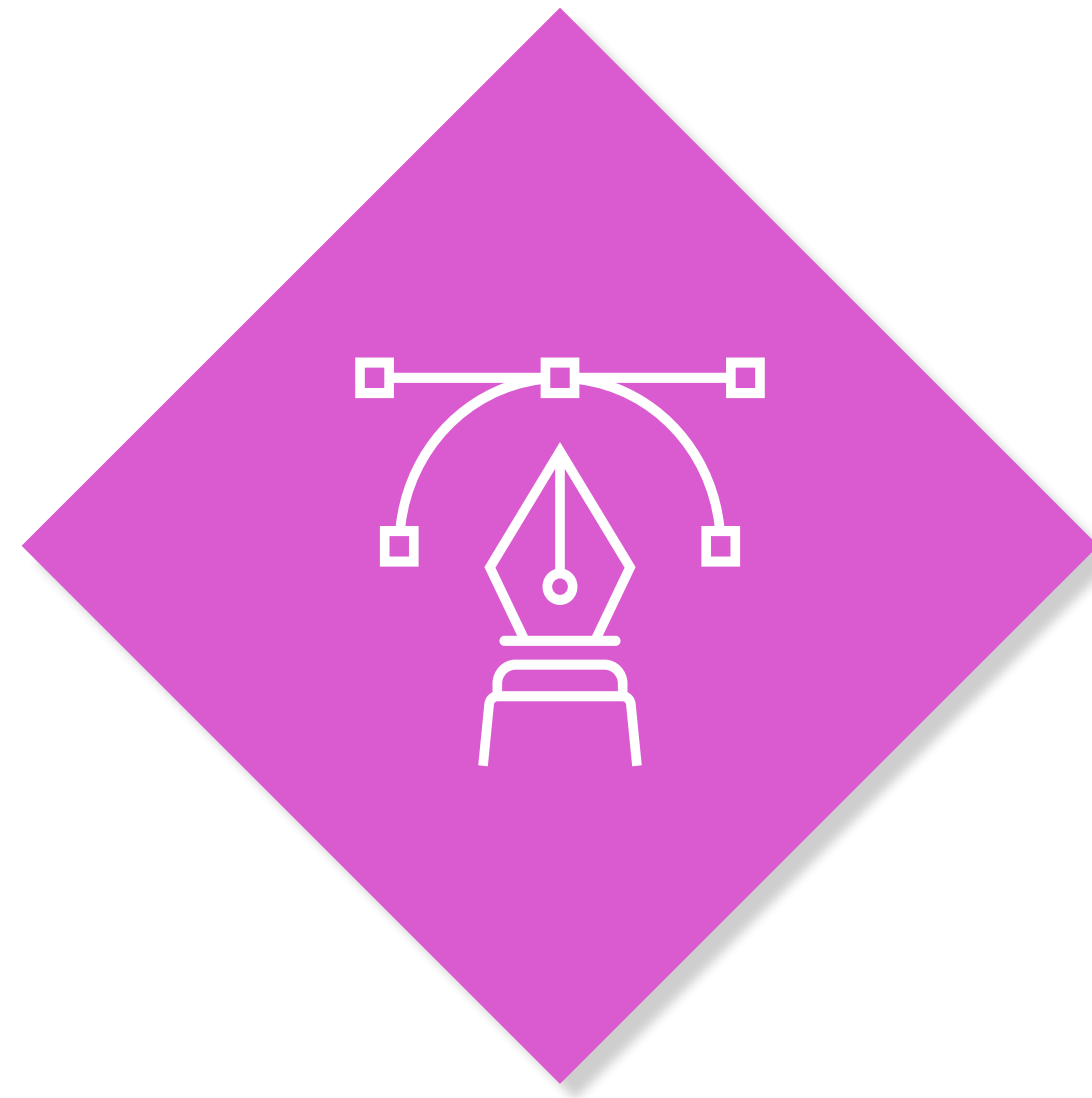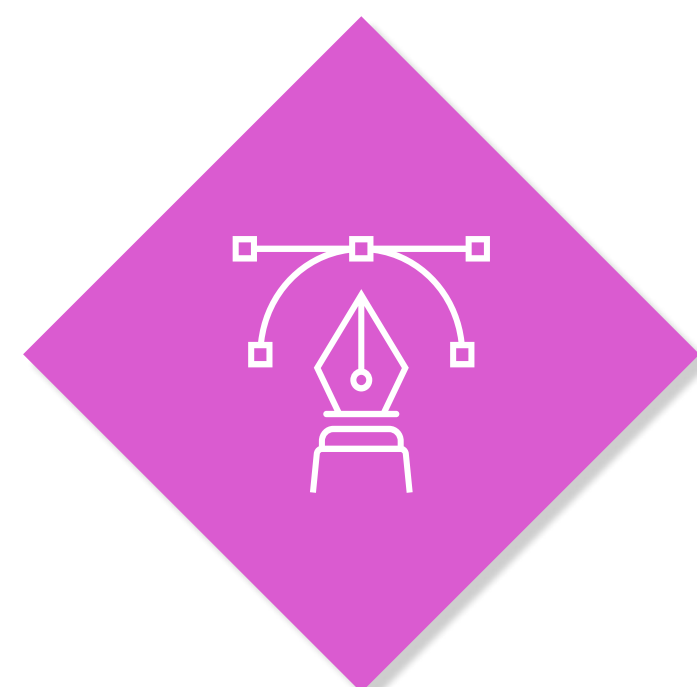
Audience profiles

#3 Content

Audience

- Who are you appealing to?

- Can they see themselves represented on your website?

- What 'words' do they use?

#3 Content

Visual style

Visual tone/style

• Does it visually match the visitors expectations?

• Does it stand out against competitors?
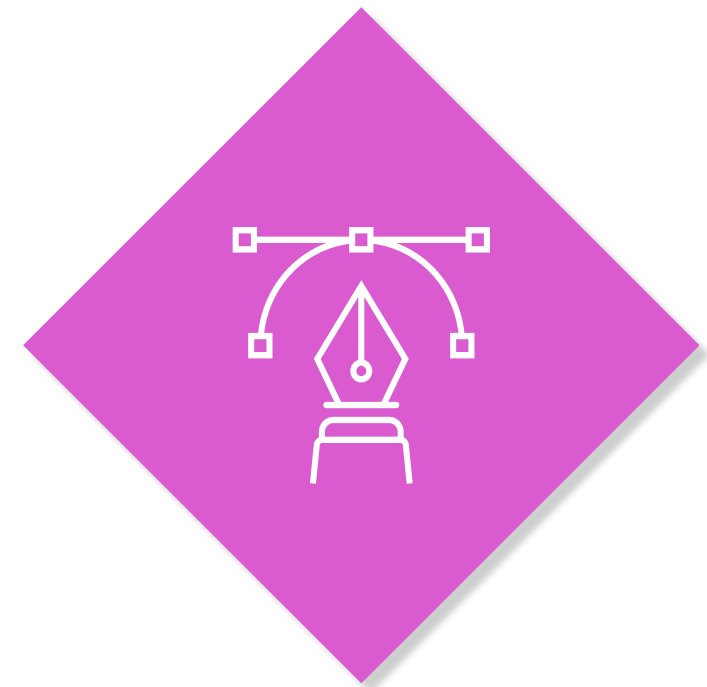
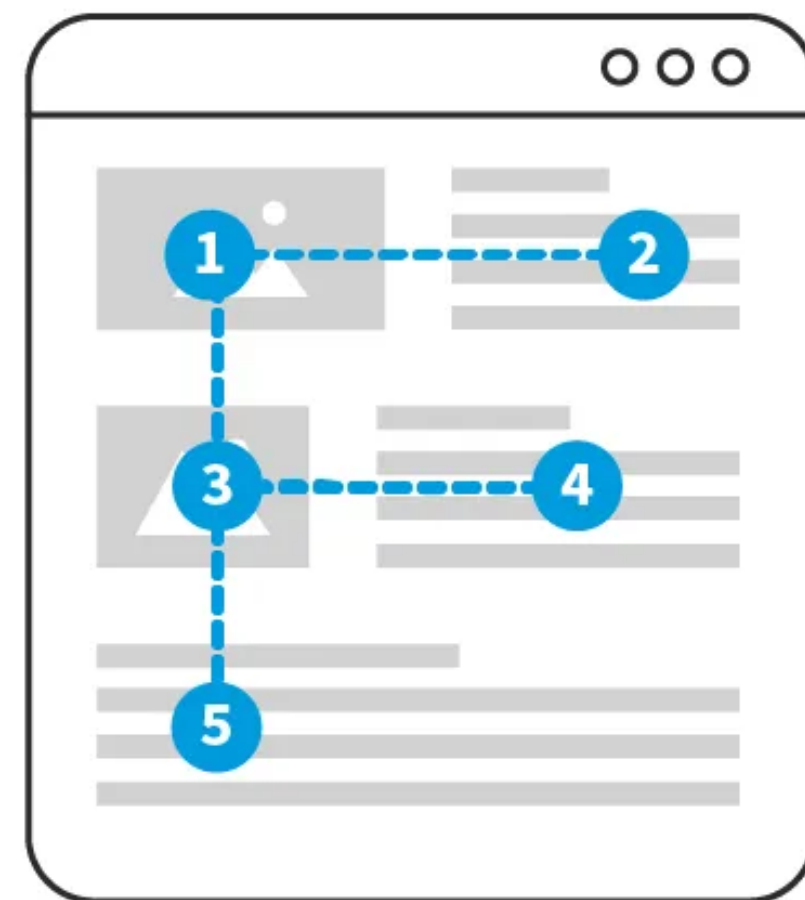• Does it look easy to use?
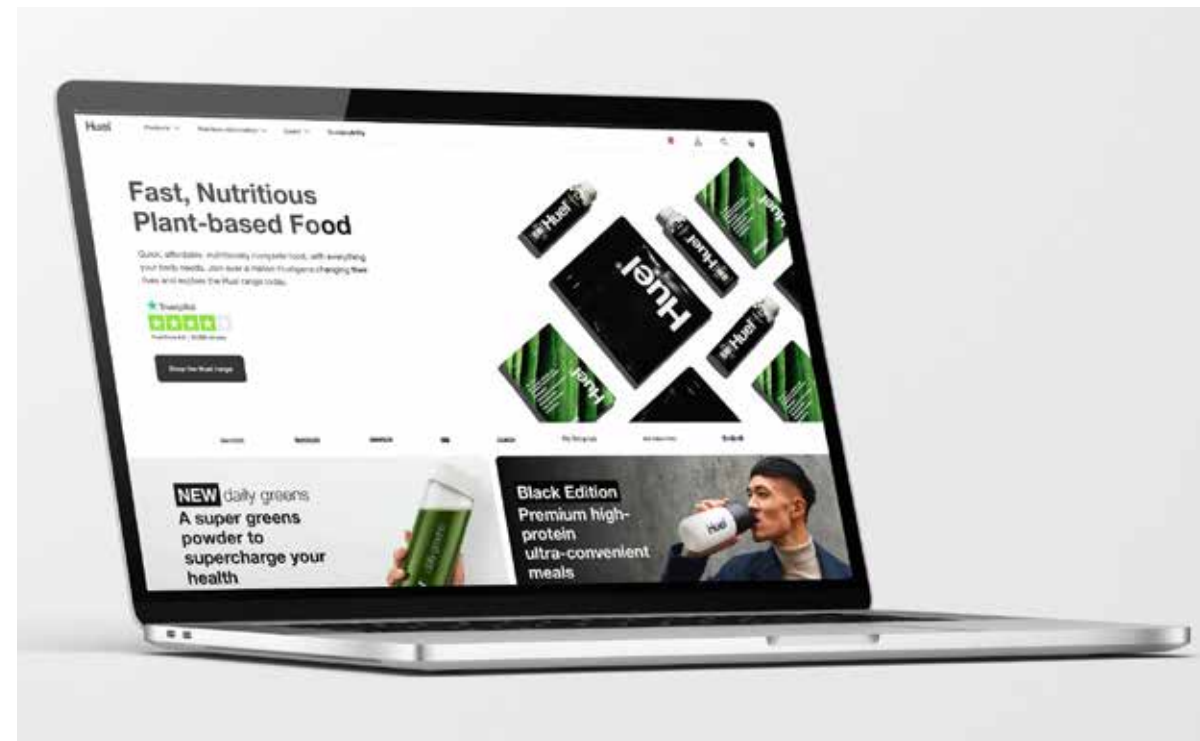
Informative

Modern
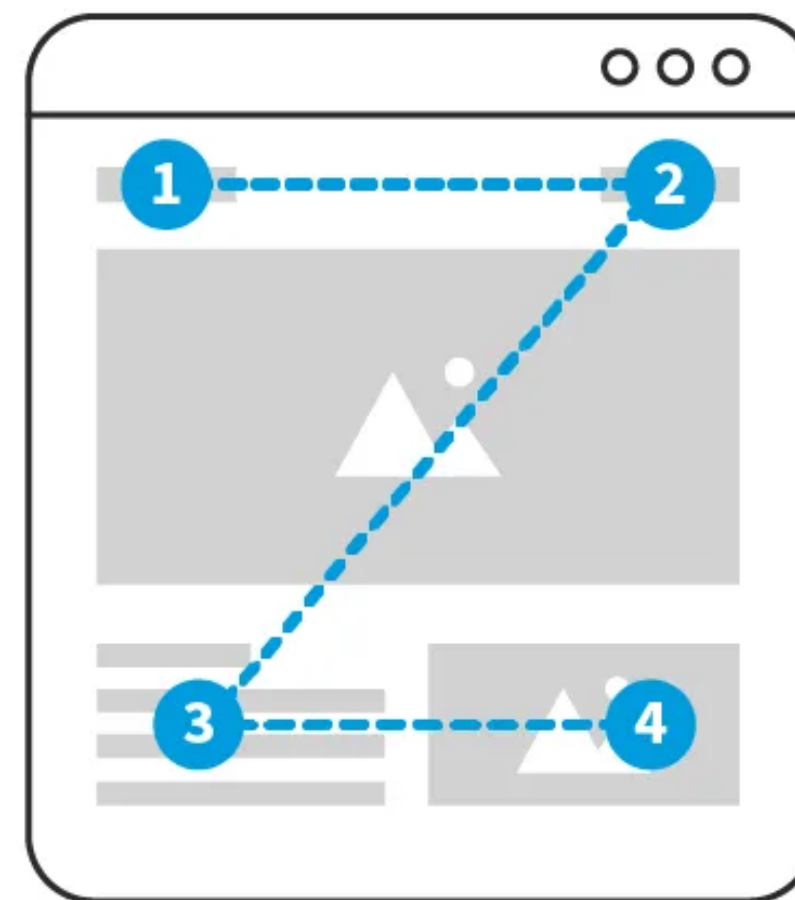

Fun

Visual hierarchy

#3 Content

Hierarchy

F-Pattern

Z-Pattern

YOU
WILL READ
THIS FIRST.

At some point you may come back to read this line or maybe not.

And then you will read this line next.

You will go back to read this body copy if you want to know more. It takes the most effort to read because it has a lot of text in a small font in a light weight with tight line spacing. Many people will skip paragraphs like this unless if they aren't engaged right away. This is why it's important to draw attention to your message using visual hierarchy.
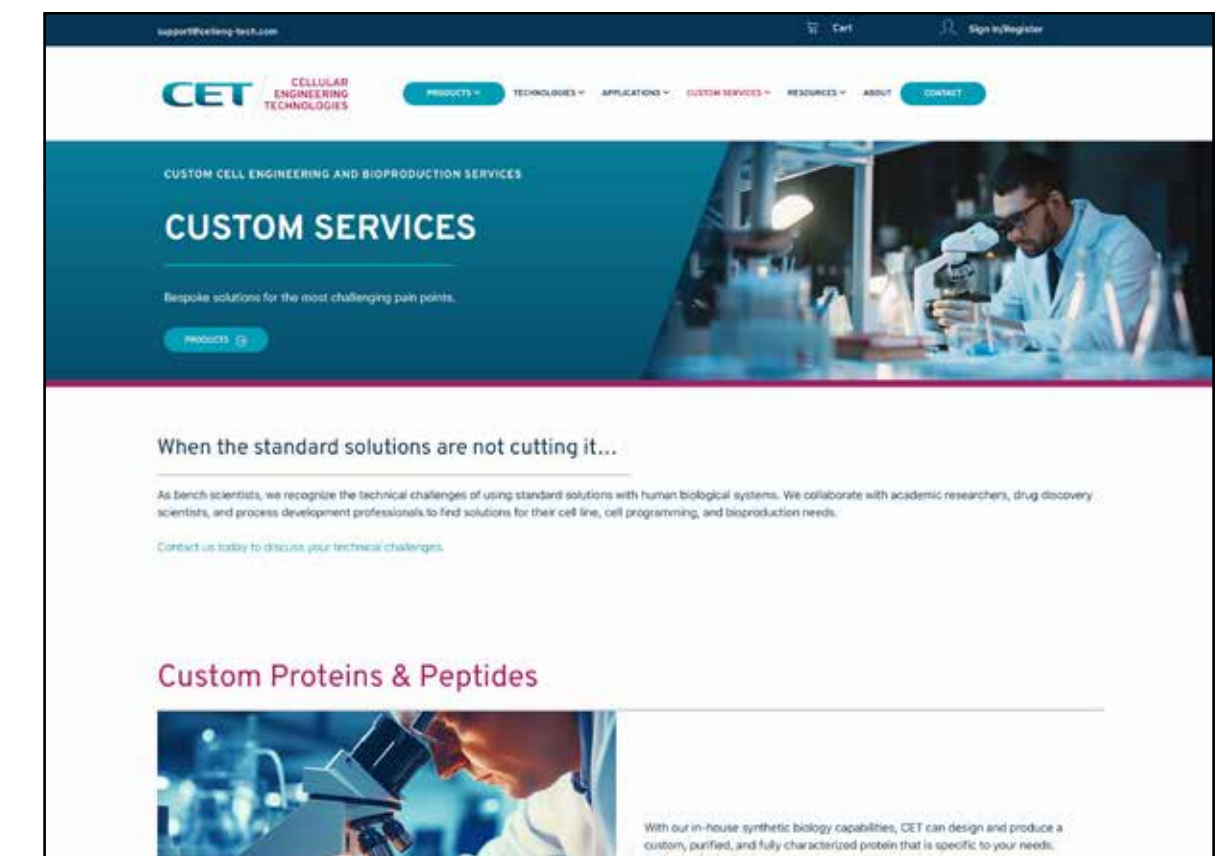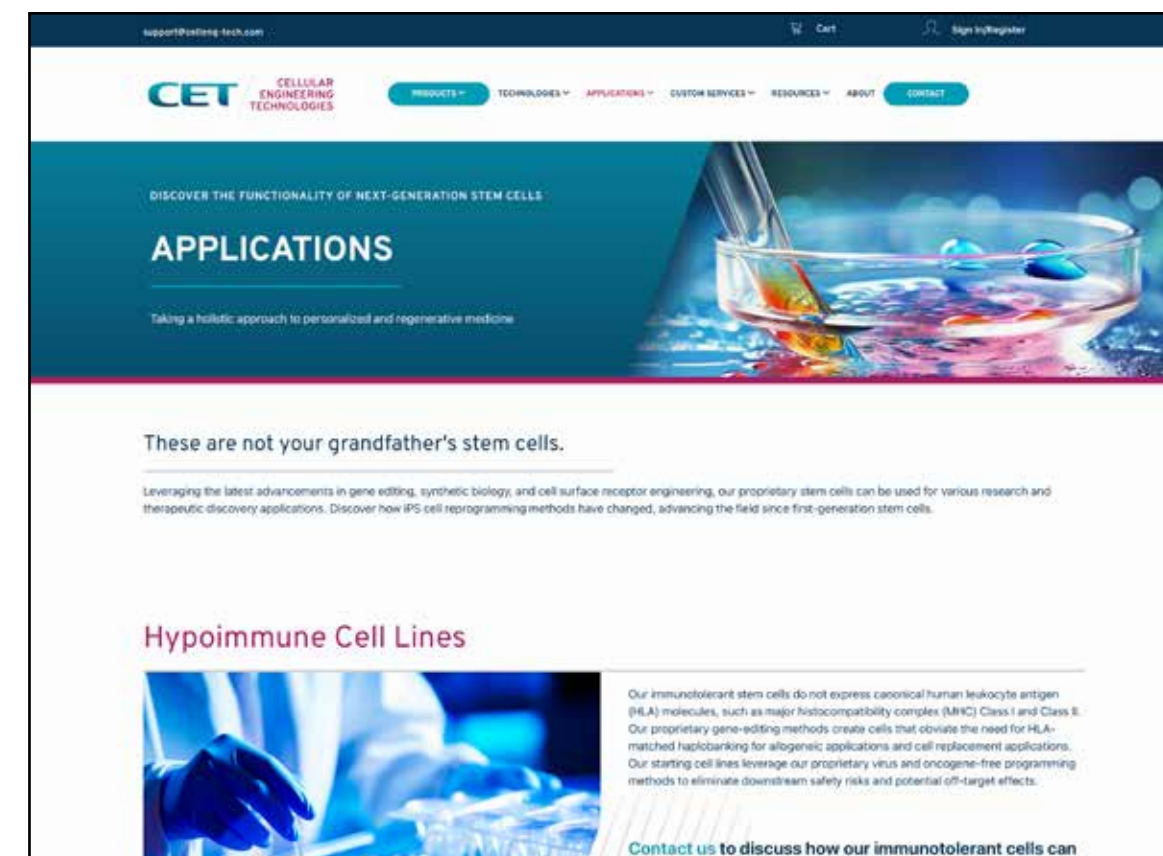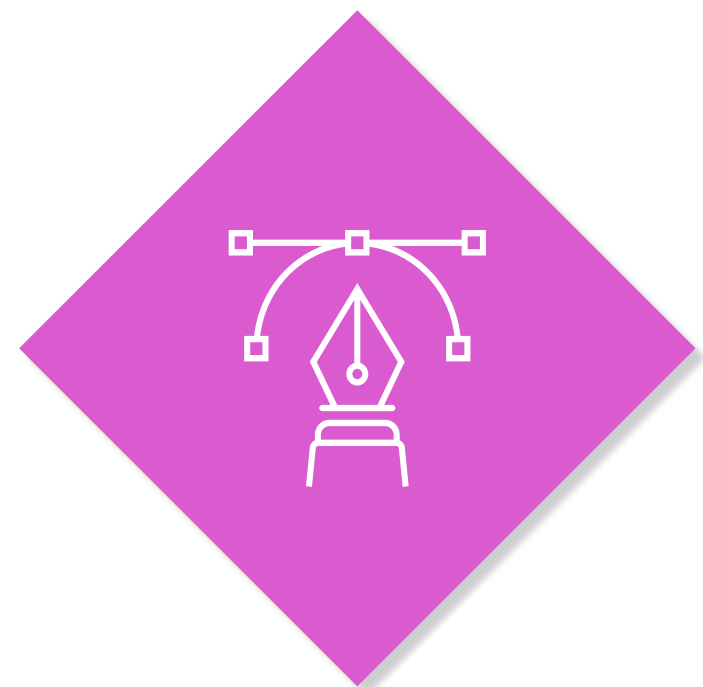
You'll probably read this before the paragraph.
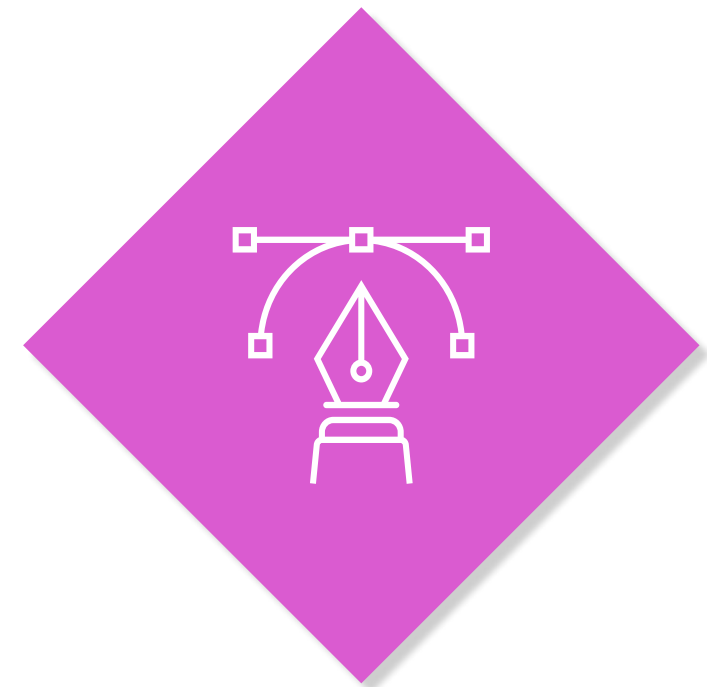
Consistent layouts

Cohesive and structured layouts that keep content organised and accessible, making it easier for users to navigate.

#3 Content

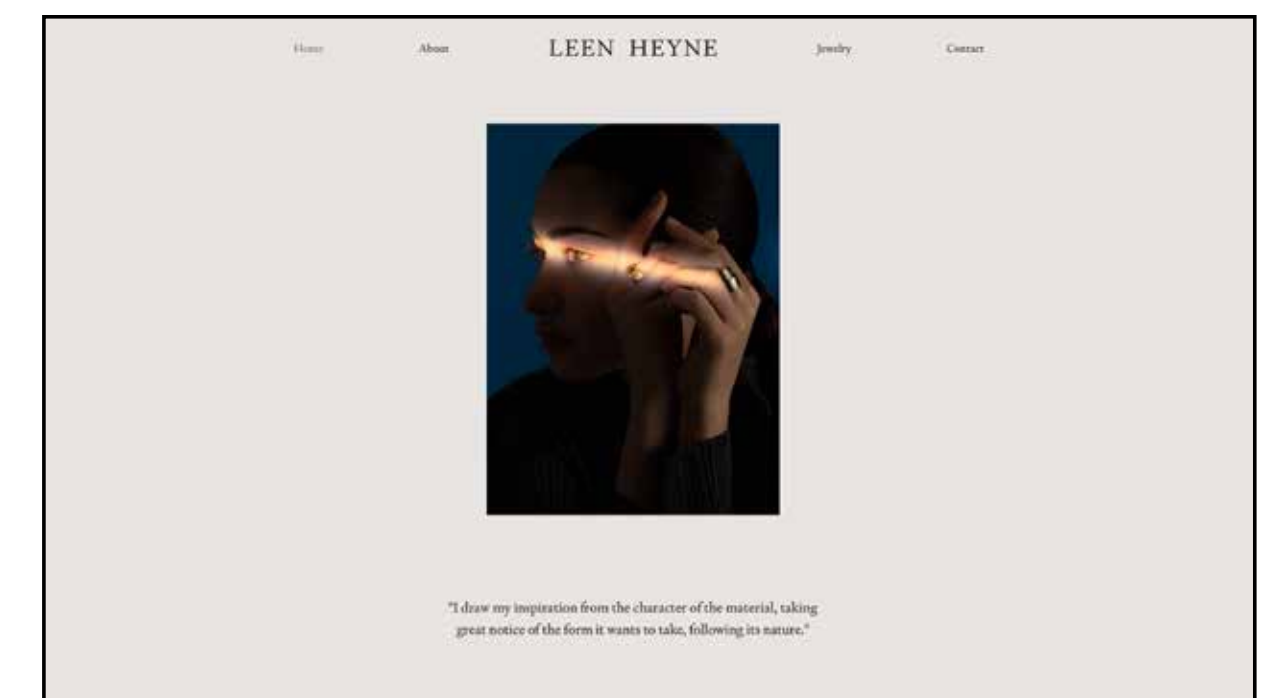Hierarchy

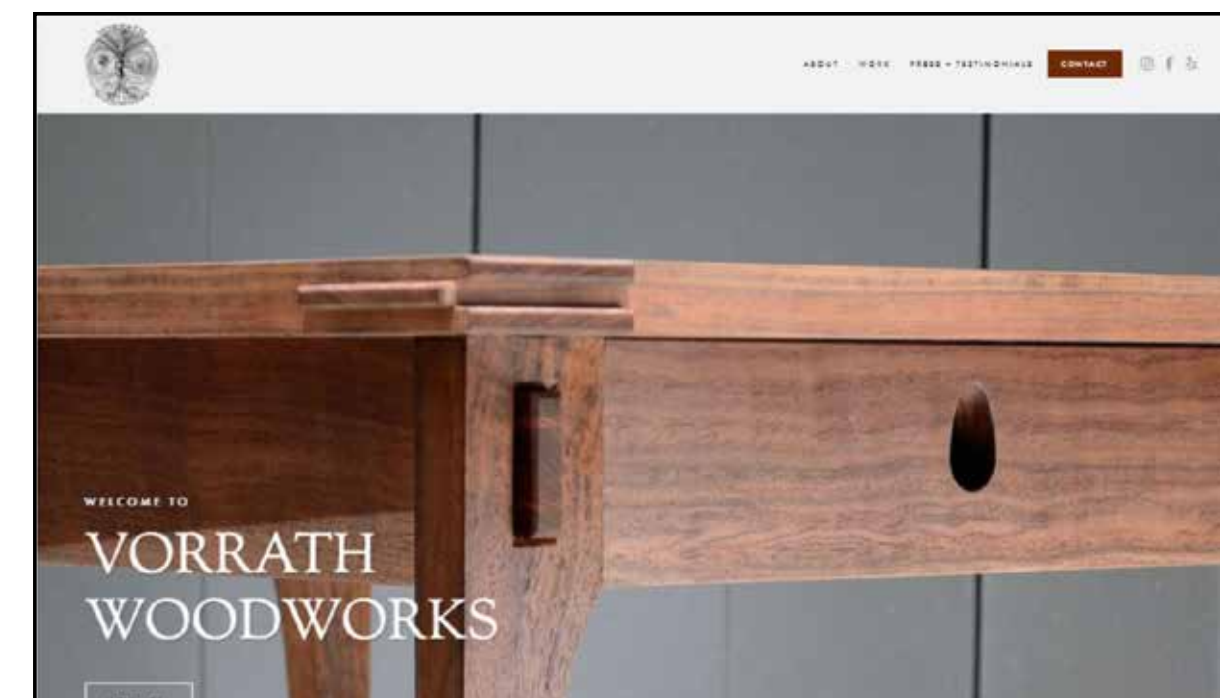wp-northeast.co.uk

Minimal design

Less can be more.
Clean and uncluttered designs that focus on essential content, minimising distractions.

• Faster to load

• Aesthetically pleasing to most users

• Greater impact, as interactive elements and animations stand out better

• Easier to navigate and use

• More mobile-friendly - less content to remove or shuffle around

#3 Content

Minimal

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#4 Off-site

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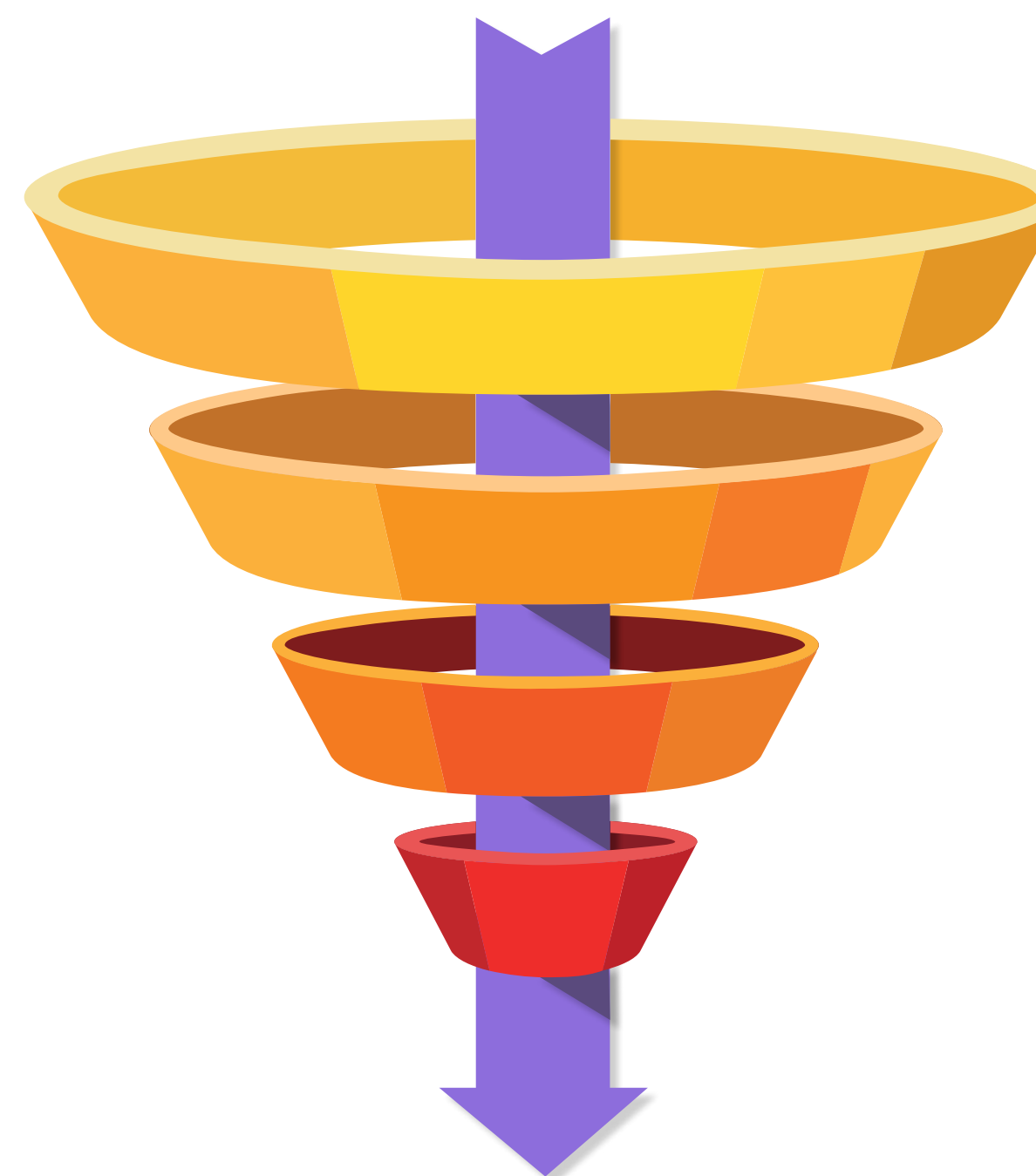wp-northeast.co.uk

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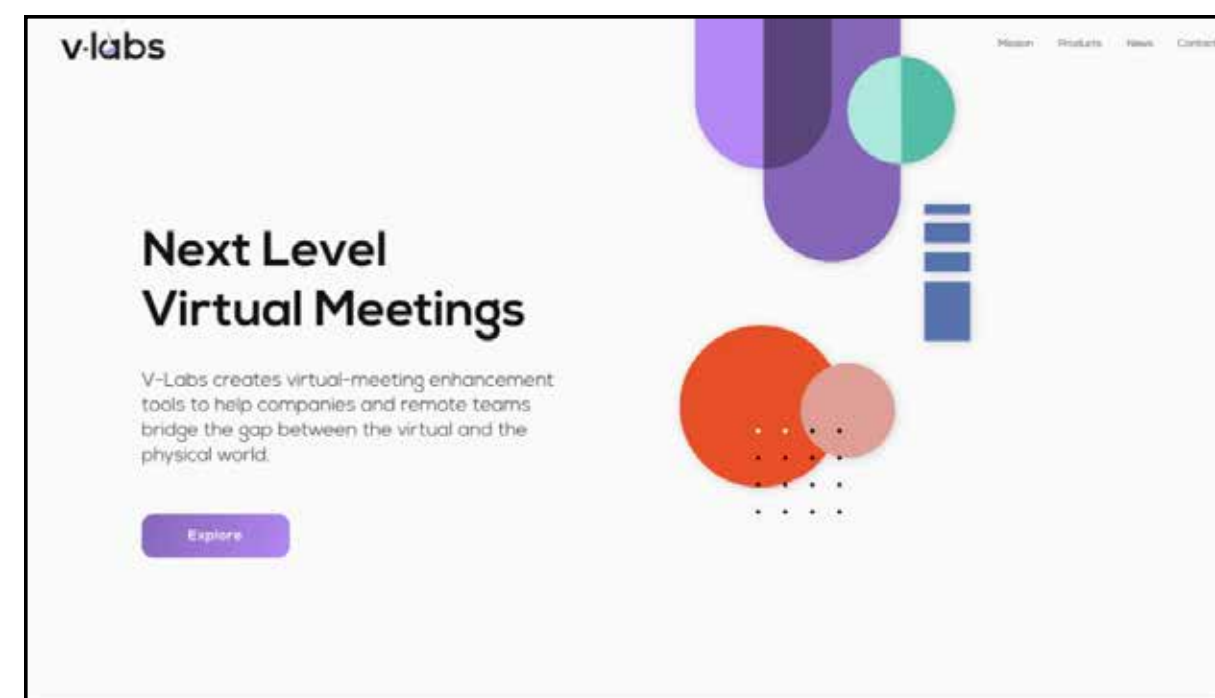
#4 Off-site

Journey

Search journey

Design consistency at every stage

- Social media
- Email marketing
- Slide decks
- Sales literature
- Website

Awareness

Consideration

Conversion

Retention

Search ranking

Design impact and improvements to your search ranking:
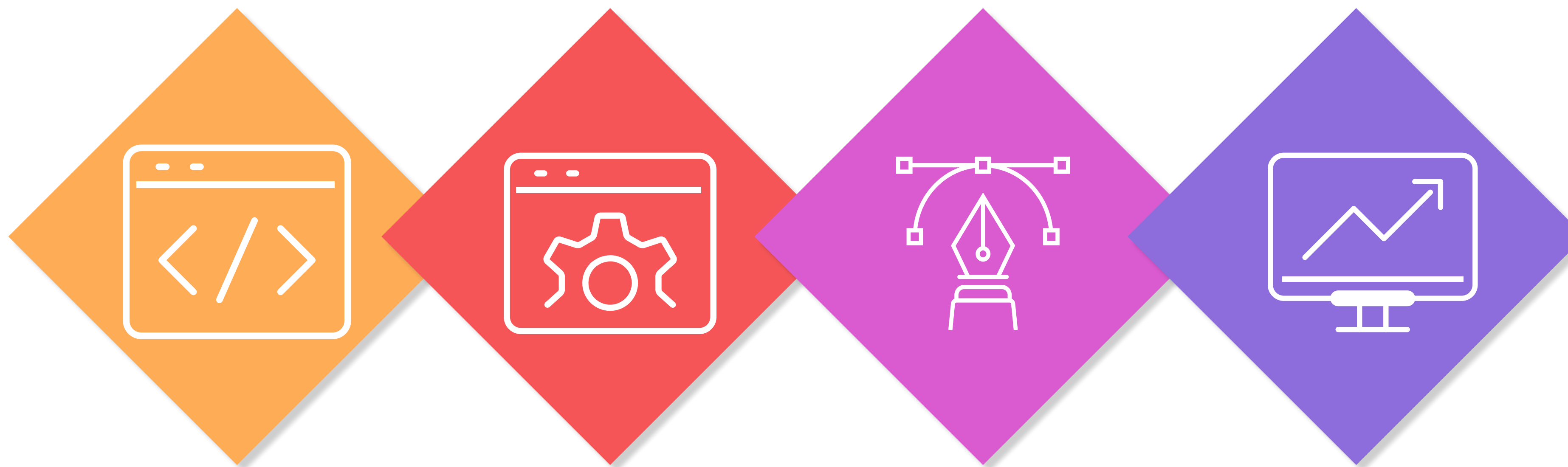
- Reduced bounce rate ⬇

- Longer time on site ⬆

- Greater engagement ⬆

- Increased conversions ⬆

#4 Off-site

Ranking

Design impacts all four pillars of SEO

#1 On-site   #2 Technical   #3 Content   #4 Off-site

Q and A.

Contact.

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hello@wordpressnortheast.co.uk

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