



perpendicular angel design

organizing and simplifying, one illumination at a time

AN EVENT APART DC 2018: BEYOND ENGAGEMENT: THE CONTENT PERFORMANCE QUOTIENT BY JEFFREY ZELDMAN

Jeffrey Zeldman is not only one of the founders of An Event Apart, he's also an accomplished Designer and entrepreneur. Today he describes a tool he calls the Content Performance Quotient, which will help us all determine what's working and what isn't on our websites based on how people expect to be able to use them.

(pdf backup)



Anne Gibson

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First up [@zeldman](#) with Engagement: The #1 stakeholder request. "We need more engagement" is the biggest request that we receive. "I put 10 hours a day into this website, and people aren't using it enough."

9:02 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Maybe engagement isn't the best metric for how websites are doing. #aeadc

Places where it's the right metric

Instagram

If you're publishing long-form articles, like travel articles or A List Apart

If you're teaching reading

9:07 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Places where engagement isn't the right metric:

Service design - if you're returning something or getting something fixed, you want the experience to be short.

That's what most of us do.

It might be a good thing if they get out in 3 seconds! #AEADC

9:09 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Blue Cross Blue Shield's website: My kid needs an operation and i want it to be covered: I want that to be short. Is my allergy medicine covered? I need a new doctor. 3 screens and 2 clicks. Nobody wakes up in the morning and looks for thought leadership whitepapers #AEADC

9:10 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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If a customer spends 30 minutes on our website, was she engaged or was she frustrated? #AEADC

Measure if someone can do tasks and how long it takes

Speed of usefulness!

9:11 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Can the site anticipate customer needs, help them find their way, and let them leave? @zeldman uses the Design Content Performance Quotient #AEADC

Business people really like acronyms and business words so this term works really well.

Check @designcpq for a stream of info

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A measurement:

how quickly can you get the right content to your customer? It's Content usability. #AEADC

How quickly can you solve the customer's problem?

The shortest distance between problem and solution.

This is your value to the customer

9:16 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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A new goal to iterate against
A new way to deliver value

From the customer's perspective, this is the time it takes to get the information they came from.

Org's POV - the time it takes for a specific customer to find, receive, and absorb, your most important content. #AEADC

9:17 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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There's always some kind of selling proposition involved from the org's point of view. Unique Selling Proposition: what's unique about us? May be conveyed through more than words. #AEADC

9:19 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Basically 2 things being done:
Customer is trying to solve a problem
Organization is trying to put forward a unique selling proposition

Anything else is pretty garbage - content that nobody needs. If nobody reads it, uses it, wants it, it's garbage#AEADC

9:20 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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**Anne Gibson**

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Most of us make pretty garbage most of the time. Garbage in a delightfully responsive grid is still garbage. #AEADC

9:20 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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**Neha Gupta Goyal (Nay-hah)**

@nehagupt

Word @zeldman #aeadc #nehaaeenotes

9:20 AM - Jul 30, 2018

59

23 people are talking about this

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How do we cut content and get permission to cut content? Let's look at cigarettes. #AEADC

9:22 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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They had 60 second advertisements, preferably in black and white, narrated by a man. They were wall to wall copy. Then Leo Bernette came along and showed cowboys with guitar music and no narration to advertise cigarettes. #AEADC

9:26 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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This was before you could just put imagery on a screen, it was neither rational nor normal. At the end "Come to where the flavor is. Come to Marlboro Country." Appealed to the manliness of men. #AEADC

9:27 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Eventually they cut the copy all the way down to one word and an image [#AEADC](#)

9:28 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Slash your architecture. Shrink your content. Ask “Why do we need this?” Compare to your goals. It’s either advancing the content the org needs to tell, or it’s solving the user’s problem. If it’s not doing either of those, we don’t need it. [#AEADC](#)

9:29 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Every design is intentional or it's not design. Re @jmspool - "design is the rendering of intent". If it's not doing something to solve a user's problem or a business problem, it's pretty garbage.

#AEADC

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Even dropshadows and things can be intentional (tell a button from a non-button, provide aesthetic appeal) #AEADC

9:30 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Mobile First with @lukew was where @zeldman first started thinking about intentionality of design because “everything’s special” doesn’t work on mobile. Cut out the nonessential stuff and deliver what the customer needs - on mobile and desktop #AEADC abookapart.com/products/mobil...

9:32 AM - Jul 30, 2018

Mobile First by Luke Wroblewski

Data-driven strategies and battle tested techniques to help make you a master of mobile—and improve your non-mobile design, too!

abookapart.com

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Mobile first = Content first = Users First.

Pare down to the things the user needs #AEADC

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How did we get here?

- Prioritized meetings over meanings. Sometimes to advocate for the user you need to argue, and if you're afraid to do that, or not empowered, good meetings don't mean good products. #AEADC

9:33 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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How did we get here?

- Prioritized the content management system (CMS) over the content. Here's a platform that lets the business decide what to put on the web. Even lets them change the navigation — regardless of the research you've already done. "I need 5 buttons." #AEADC

9:35 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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It's easy to give everyone what they want. It's harder to do the right thing and say "no, you don't need 5 buttons".

If the user suffers, ultimately the business suffers. #AEADC

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Quote from [@gerrymcgovern](#) - we're whistleblowers and often get punished for bringing up usability issues

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Stop designing 2001 sites for a 2018 web. Example: if you have video content, put it on YouTube. That's where people look for it. Then embed it on your website. Also put it on Vimeo. Because when people look for stuff, those are the places they look [#AEADC](#)

9:40 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Get the content where the user is. If you have people who only use Facebook or Instagram, put the stuff there. that helps you streamline the site because you're putting it where the niche audience will look for it [#AEADC](#)

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Relevant articles:[alistapart.com/article/the-ki...](http://alistapart.com/article/the-king-vs-pawn-game-of-ui-design)

When you strip the game down to its core, everything you learn is a universal principal. At the moment the user needs something to happen, that's when we're focused on the interaction [#AEADC](#)

9:43 AM - Jul 30, 2018

The King vs. Pawn Game of UI Design

Can learning chess make you a better designer? Erik Kennedy believes it can. Find out how.

alistapart.com[See Anne Gibson's other Tweets](#)

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Atomic Design - focus relentlessly on the individual interaction atomicdesign.bradfrost.com

What should the customer do that will encourage them to do the thing they want to do? That might mean encouraging them to come into a store, or might be to buy online. [#AEADC](#)

9:46 AM - Jul 30, 2018

Atomic Design by Brad Frost

Learn how to create and maintain digital design systems, allowing your team to roll out higher quality, more consistent UIs faster than ever atomicdesign.bradfrost.com

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With our shopping carts we're always looking to remove friction. If we can do it from our shopping carts we can do it with our content [#AEADC](#)

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alistapart.com/article/no-mor...

FAQ problems:

Duplicate and contradictory information

Lack of discernible content order

repetitive grammatical structure

Increased cognitive load

Too much content

Simplifying the experience and removing FAQs is good for the business. #AEADC

9:48 AM - Jul 30, 2018

No More FAQs: Create Purposeful Information f...

The all-too-common FAQ is the antithesis of effective user experience, but it's easy to avoid (or improve) with a little guidance.

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“Users come to any type of content with a particular purposes in mind, ranging from highly specific (task completion) to general learning (increased knowledge)”

Nobody wakes up and says “I really want to see what your site’s doing these days” #AEADC

9:49 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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How to redo content:

- Waterfall - content inventory, massive work. Not necessarily recommended, ditching it is best
- Agile/Scrum - constantly iterate on content. Best bet if you're in-house. If you're already taking a scalpel to everything else, incorporate the content [#AEADC](#)

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Option 3: redesign

- throw away everything and redesign from scratch if you have the opportunity, especially if you're an outside organization [#AEADC](#)

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How can we take all the stuff that exists on this gigantic information architecture and put it on one or two or three pages? Consolidate the whole website down to a few pages. [#AEADC](#)

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What do you do if you have a big deep content site?

medium.com/@zeldman/we-ne...

We need design that is faster for people who are trying to get something done.

We need design that is slower for people who are trying to comprehend what's available. [#AEADC](#)

9:55 AM - Jul 30, 2018

We need design that is faster and design that is slower.

During a recent conversation with David Sleight, Design Director at ProPublica, I found myself realizing and saying “we need design that...”
medium.com

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Scanability is great for transactions and lousy for understanding. Use bigger type, better typographic hierarchy, and more white space to slow readers down. Make it look more like an e-book. If you're on a tablet, you sit back and relax. You can take in the content [#AEADC](#)

9:56 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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Bigger type causes people to sit back from their monitor and slow down. [@washingtonpost](#) is good at big readable type on articles. [@nytimes](#) uses different type rules for opinion pieces than journalism [#aeadc@ProPublica](#) and [@Slate](#) and [@smashingmag](#)

9:59 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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The Readability app was one major driver behind this. Apple's Reader in Safari makes things easier to read. Medium, and A List Apart [#AEADC](#)

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If the content is delivered for the good of the general public, that should be slow. If the content is designed for the business or the user to complete a task, it should be fast. #AEADC

10:00 AM - Jul 30, 2018

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