

Hidden Friction: The 6 silent killers of conversion

ABSTRACT

In this Web clinic transcript, Dr. Flint McGlaughlin and fellow presenters from the MECLABS team discuss the more difficult and often undetected elements of friction and how you can avoid them.



MarketingExperiments.com



Hidden Friction

The 6 silent killers of conversion

[Note: This document is a transcript of a live Web clinic, “Hidden Friction: The 6 silent killers of conversion,” that originally aired on March 14, 2012. A [full video replay](#) is also available.]

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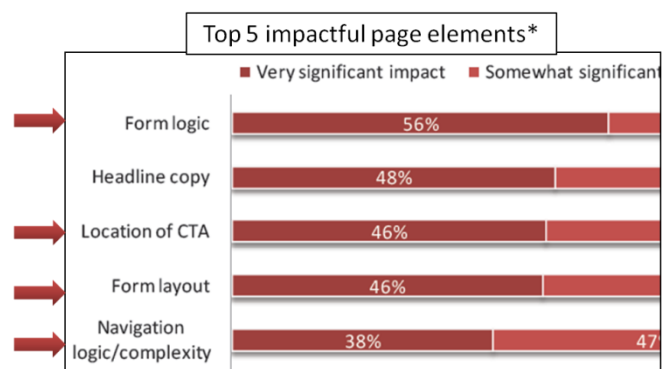
Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: I want to welcome you to the MECLABS web clinic, and indeed, we are studying today “Hidden Friction”, in particular, six errors, six particular errors that our headline expert, which is probably Paul Cheney, has called “The Silent Killers of Conversion.” It is a frightening clinic. You may want to call your wife, your children. This could be important to your future.

The six silent killers are going to... I will tell you this. So, these errors are those you probably wouldn't detect and friction is probably something far more complex than you yet understand. And from running 10,000 plus experiments in the laboratory, we have been learning something quite fascinating we are going to share that with you today. But let me, kind of, remind you where we are at as all of this unfolds.

In the clinic we did previously, we spoke about optimizing to get the highest possible yield and that there were two inches at the beginning of a page and two inches at the end of a page that have a significant impact on your conversion rate. We ignored everything else.

Marketers can easily identify Friction

Friction is the most common element that marketers optimize on their landing pages



*From the MarketingSherpa 2011 Landing Page Optimization Benchmark Report:

• MECLABS.com/LPOExcerpt

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: We talked about errors, common errors we commit in those first two inches and in those last two inches and if you will notice the chart from MarketingSherpa, one of our research companies, people in a study that we did identified that headline copy was a major element with high impact on eventual conversion rates.

I mentioned it to you because I would like you to understand that as important as they are, there is something vital that unfolds in the middle of the page. Since we spoke about the last two inches and the first two inches, we are going to address that middle area and in particular, one of the easiest ways for you to get a substantial gain.

Identifying Friction



Can you identify the Friction on this page?

Audience-submitted page

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Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, bear with us. Look at a page. Before I start to teach, I need your expert advice. Look at this page submitted by the way from someone here in the audience. We are going to help them before the day is over, but I am asking you to consider yourself a marketing consultant hired on the spot for your brilliance.

Use the Q&A feature that you see and tell me what you would do to improve the performance of this page just as it relates to friction. How would you reduce friction, and I am going to see. Sally says, "Too many fields at the top of the page" "Reduce the length of the form" "Too many fields", "Too many fields", "Less fields", "Reduce fields", "Too many fields", "Too busy", "Reduce fields", "Remove photo". "Too many fields", "Simplify", "Simplify", "Eliminate fields".

You will notice that friction and fields are closely associated in the mind of our audience and indeed, in the mind of most marketers. Now we have been doing this for a long time. After 10,000 plus experiments for the last 15 plus years, we have had to think deeply about friction. We are perhaps and I don't know this for certain because I haven't studied the etymology, but I think the word as it relates to optimization, in particular, was coined in this research laboratory and it spread all over the world and everyone uses it now. But as so often the case, we use it with a, sort of, one-dimensional understanding.

Marketer, please, please pay attention with me for this the balance of these next few moments because as we move out of this page and we think about how to improve friction, I want to talk about the friction on the page that has nothing whatsoever to do with the number of fields or the length of the fields. And I am glad that you can spot that.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: I remember I was having a meeting with someone I can't tell you what company, one of the most famous brands in the world. And ten years ago, they asked us to help with the performance of a particular page. Now, this isn't in my notes. It is not in the normal clinic presentation, but I will just share with you anyway.

We smiled together because I said, "Do you remember how long your original download process was?" because we'd optimize it. We have been optimizing their processes for the last eight years. They are vigorous research partners with a worldwide known brand, and they have seen more than a 1000% improvement over these years in conversion rates. And I was talking with the key leader we couldn't help but laugh as we remembered the first process they brought to us. It was 18 pages long. It took 18 pages to get to the download. Guess what? The download also took three-and-a-half hours.

The world is changed. Every marketer knows that. Back then when we said, "Have you thought about shortening the process?" I remember the response. It was like a blank stare. They were trying to be thorough. The process was developed by database programmers and by programmers who were concerned more about getting the data in the right place once it had been inputted and no one had thought about the psychological resistance associated with the download process.

Today that is sort of laughable. All of you recognize that shorter is better in those cases, but not necessarily with copy, but certainly with forms. I want to go past that. I would like to go deeper, and I would like to take you to an understanding of friction that would help you look at this page and identify elements that you might not even think were associated with friction.

Identifying Friction

Audience-submitted page

1

2

3

Can you identify the Friction in this process?

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, let's move on. Here is another page submitted by the audience. Take a look. We may come back to these pages, and I have got some experts here. Taylor is with me and Chris is with me. They are analysts in our laboratory, and they will be coming up at various points to help. But guys, you are probably spotting friction, and keep that in your mind.

While you are looking at that friction though, I am asking the audience, "Tell me, where do you see the friction on these three?" So, let me come up here and see. "That's too much", says Ives. "No eye path to follow," says Brian. "The text is too dense", says Raj and Dustin says, "I got on a bit late." "Can you re-define friction please?" Dustin, these are coming in like by the hundreds. Somehow you caught me. I will define friction.

For those of you that might be new to the concept if you would take a certification program from us you would be tested on this definition. Friction is psychological resistance to some element in the process, not to be confused with anxiety, which is psychological concern. Friction and anxiety must be treated in different ways.

This page has both, but we are drilling down on friction, and it was submitted by Grant, and Grant is in the audience today, and Grant, we want to help you, and if can help you on the call, we shall. If we don't get to it on the call, we will be happy to talk with you and help you identify more. It is on the

page. So, we are going to look at it, but actually, before we tear down, we are going to actually do some learning together.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, keep this process in mind. I see the audience's point. "Multiple things to click", says Richard. "Too many images that work", says Maynard. They are still coming in. "No headline", said someone. "Too busy and the layout is wrong", says Michael. "Too much red", says Matt. Matt, you are right about the red. Red actually is a contributor for friction. We are going to learn about that in just a little bit.

Experiment: Background and design



Experiment ID: *(protected)*

Location: MarketingExperiments Research Library

Test Protocol Number: TP1546

Research Notes:

Background: A luxury home builder seeking to sell homes to families with a higher-than-average income level.

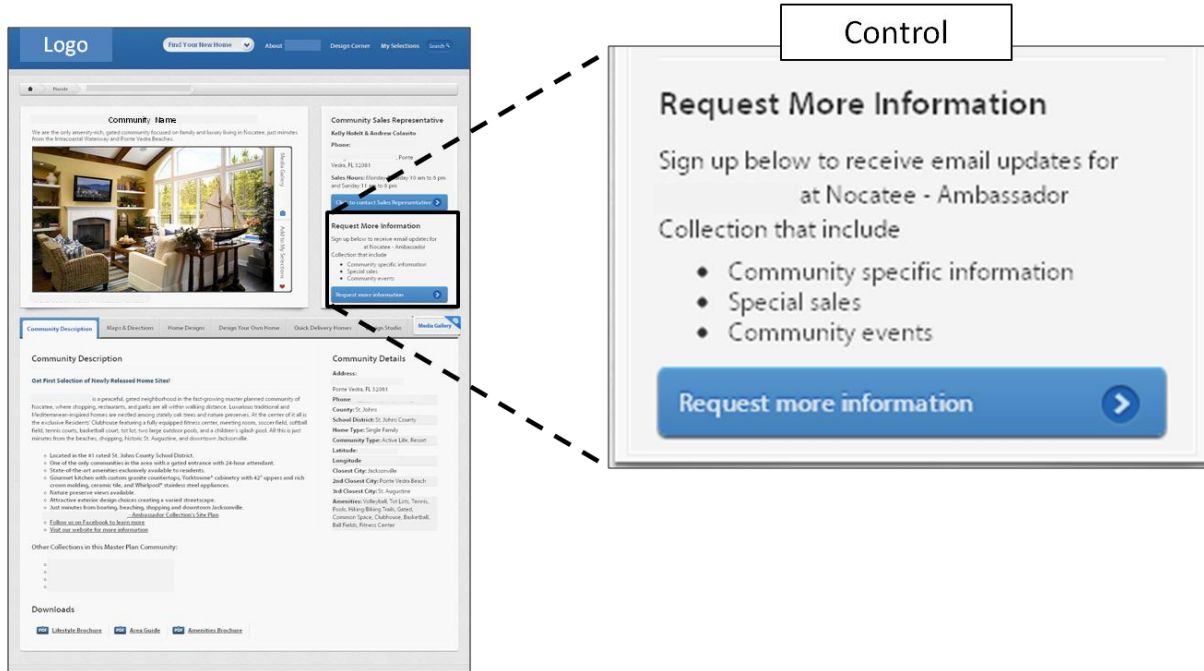
Goal: To increase the number of leads

Primary Research Question: Which treatment will generate the highest lead rate?

Approach: A/B multifactor split test

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, I want to help you understand that, but as always, I want to move from these examples directly to a case study. So, let's look at this particular study Test Protocol 1546, a luxury home builder. They want to sell homes. They need to increase the number of leads. In this economy, selling homes is pretty tough or at least it has been. So, they had to get this right. This is a fairly recent test and these were excellent partners, and I am very impressed with their marketing team, and they were aggressive about making some very brave changes in their side. So, that is the background.

Experiment: Control



Dr. Flint McLaughlin: Let's look at the page. Now, we have obscured the brand. That is why you see the blue box on top up there, but I would like you to see the "Request for More Information". So, this is very classic. What you are looking at would be like any real estate site you saw where you are either looking at homes or even a rental. So often, you will see an image on the left, you got tabs below with more information, some sort of response mechanism on the right. This is something common. And as you look at this, I want you to ask yourself, where is the friction? This was the control.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Now, we had to improve that process, and so, let's look at it for just a moment. There is one. There is two and here is the treatment. The treatment says, "Request More Information", and the sentence looks longer, doesn't it? Because you recall all they had to do in the control was click a button.

Experiment: Side-by-side

Control	Treatment
<p>Request More Information</p> <p>Sign up below to receive email updates for Community at Nocatee - Ambassador Collection that include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community specific information • Special sales • Community events <p>Request more information ➔</p>	<p>Request More Information</p> <p>Get more information about all the great features Community at Nocatee - Ambassador Collection has to offer</p> <p>Name <input type="text"/> First <input type="text"/> Last</p> <p>Email <input type="text"/></p> <p>Get more information ➔</p>

Common Instances of Friction Reduced:

1. A step in the conversion process
2. A form field (comments or questions)

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: But in this, in fact, looking at them side by side, now we are asking for more information - first name, last name, and e-mail, but it is actually shorter. And it is shorter because we reduced it from a two-step process to a one-step process with a lot less form fields.

Now, everybody in the audience can predict the outcome, I think. Just remember something. Testing is the only way, you know, for sure, and all we can offer here is the benefit of experience with some generalized principles. The rest is about testing properly. You have heard me say over and over again, and I will stress it again for anyone that is new on this call.


There are no expert marketers. There are only experienced marketers and expert testers. I don't like the word "tester". It is an ugly word. My team is all laughing. I mean, it is an ugly word, but I don't know of a better word, and English is so limited. You can't go to Greek for the word tester. Where are you going to get this word? So, we will stick with that ugly portable.

By the way, we call quotes "portable." So, a good quote is something with a handle that can be picked up and carried around in social media. Internally here, when we are thinking about what we are

teaching with we want to make certain that you have some portables that you can pick up, so to speak, with your mind, remember them and carry them with you.

Experiment: Results



	CR	Relative Difference	Statistical Confidence
Control	0.9%	-	-
Treatment	2.3%	166.5%	 99.4%

✓ **What You Need to Understand:** By minimizing **Friction** through reducing the number of steps and fields, the treatment outperformed the control by 166%.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: and so, with that in mind, let's go forward, and let's see. Here is the control. Here is the treatment, and from there, let's look at the results. You can see them, a 166% increase in leads.

Now, I think when you see that, there are a couple of points that should come to mind immediately. The first is, wow, just that and you see 166% lift. If you are thinking that way, it should occur to you that, you know, if I can learn about these six hidden forms of friction, I can see a dramatic increase with a, sort of, mind or change.

I mean, we didn't have to do lot of customer research. We didn't have to pause a critical, complicated multi-variable test. We simply minimized friction. But on the other hand, if you are looking at that, you may miss something because the friction we just dealt with there is, sort of, the obvious kind of friction. We want to move from the obvious kind of friction to that hidden friction that we talk about in the title of this clinic.

What we need to know about Friction

Key Principles

1. Friction does not occur on a page, it occurs in the mind of the prospect.
2. Friction is more complex than simple issues of page length, form amount, or number of steps.
3. Most Friction goes undetected by marketers

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: And to do that, I want to touch two, three principles and show you yet another case study. Friction does not occur on a page. It occurs in the mind of the prospect. I am not even teaching it. These aren't my six errors. You just got to understand this before I can go forward. We almost have to clear the ground here because a lot of us are confused. We think we are fixing friction on the page. That doesn't matter.

Friction is a matter of perception. I have seen two form fields. Identical in the number. You might think of two pages, two forms, the identical number of fields and one gets way more response than the other. Does it have any less friction on the page? No, but it has a lot less friction in the mind because the layout makes it feel easier for you to assimilate and seems simple.

So, keeping all of that in mind, let's go to the next. Friction is more complex than simple issues of page length, form amount or the number of steps. I have talked about that on (Inaudible) more. Finally, most friction goes undetected, hence the need for this particular clinic.

Experiment #2: Background and design



Experiment ID: *(protected)*

Location: MarketingExperiments Research Library

Test Protocol Number: TP1297

Research Notes:

Background: A survey company seeking consumer opinions in exchange for a chance to win a trip to an exotic location.

Goal: To increase the number of applications

Primary Research Question: Which destination page will result in higher conversions to panelist sign-up?

Approach: A/B multifactor split test

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Thinking about that, let's go to another case study. So here we are. This is test protocol 1297 - a survey company seeking consumer opinions in exchange for a chance to win a trip on exotic or to an exotic location. The goal is to increase the number of applications. That is a simple clean KPI we can measure against.


So, the research question, which always should begin with a W-H-I-C-H, sort of, which, that is, when you are doing a single factorial or a multi-factorial, and I know what you are thinking Paul, and that is why I had to spell 'which' for you. If you don't know, I am in the studio, and it is really this fancy green room. It is ugly. Green is ugly. So, I am surrounded by green, and if I look away from the green, I have to look at Paul Cheney, and as you know, he recently clobbered me in a headline test. I don't like to look in his direction because he still appears smug.

Experiment #2: Control

Control

Logo

WIN a trip to your favourite city!



Apply with Company **and get a chance to win a city trip!**
Join (TODAY and be in with a chance to **win a city trip to your favourite destination worth £1,100,00**. Ready for a shopping trip or a cultural getaway? Do you need a change of scene? Grab this chance and be inspired!
APPLY FOR FREE NOW!

WIN NOW...
Enter your details to receive the application e-mail.
Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
First Name:
Surname:
Your e-mail address:
Apply NOW

Take part in surveys!

1 Have your say
in online surveys >>

2 Invite your friends
and win another £240! >>

3 Donate for free
to your favourite charity after every survey >>

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: But let's go on to the test. So, this is the background, and you will see the control. There was the logo. This is the page. The "Apply Now" button. It is very simple.

Experiment #2: Treatment

Logo

Treatment

WIN a Trip to Your Favourite Destination!

Join Company **for FREE and Be Entered at a Chance to**
Win £1,100.00 for a Trip of Your Choice!

WIN NOW...
 Enter your details to receive the application e-mail.

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

First Name:

Surname:

Your e-mail address:

Apply NOW

Need a vacation? Join **TODAY** and you'll have a chance to win a trip to your favourite destination (worth over £1,100.00)! Become part of the survey and just by sharing your thoughts and opinions on loads of topics you can win prizes everyday!

You only have to do 2 things

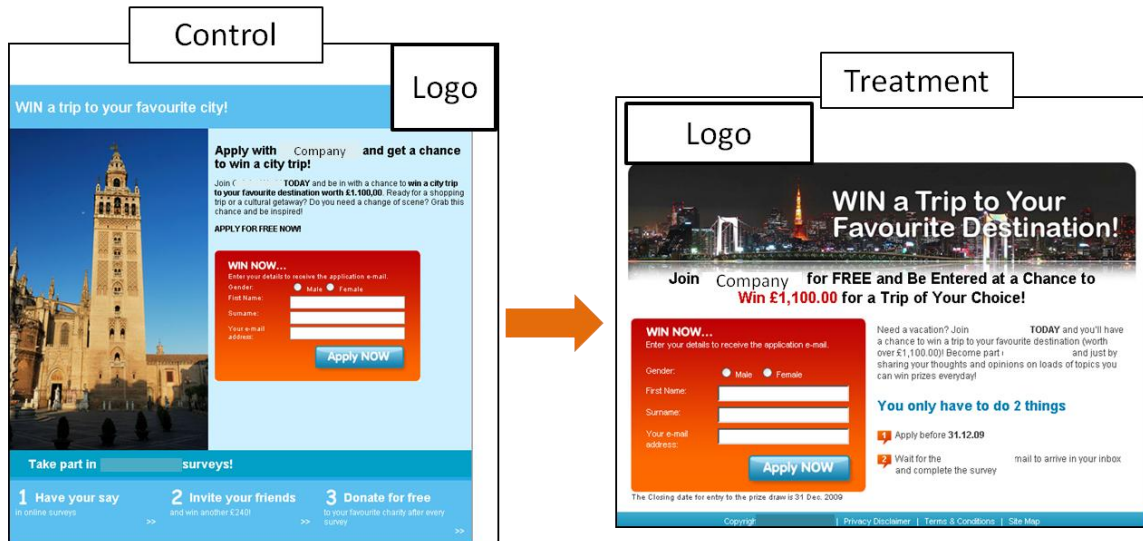
- 1 Apply before **31.12.09**
- 2 Wait for the survey email to arrive in your inbox and complete the survey

The Closing date for entry to the prize draw is 31 Dec. 2009

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Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Let's continue. This is again a treatment designed to beat the control.

Experiment #2: Side-by-side




Though we did not reduce the number of form fields or steps in the process or length of the page, the treatment significantly reduces Friction.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Now, let's put them side by side. You will see control and treatment. I want you to notice some important point. We didn't reduce the number of form fields. They are the same. We didn't reduce the number of steps. They are the same.

Experiment #2: Results



	CR	Relative Difference	Statistical Confidence
Control	26.54%	-	-
Treatment	31.76%	19.67%	 95%

- ✓ **What You Need to Understand:** By minimizing hidden difficulty Friction on the page, the treatment out-performed the control by 19.67%.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Form fields and steps are the same, but we did reduce friction and they saw a 19.6% increase. So, the question becomes, what did you do? Where was the hidden friction? What did you see on that page that you changed? Yes, I understand changing a headline might get a result or I understand that in straightening the value proposition, I might get a result, but what did you do on that page to reduce friction? And that leads us to the whole point of this clinic. We need to learn these six forms of hidden friction.

Were you able to identify the hidden Friction?

- Tone (city vs. destination)
- Discordant colors
- Distorted eye-path
- Multimedia (mediocre image)

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: To do that, I want to take you to a simple heuristic, and so, by the way, there is a cool slide coming up. I really don't want to teach yet, but you are going to see some important pieces here. Look at that discordant colors and distorted eye path. That is going to come up again and be more important.

The key heuristic for Friction

Key Principles

$$F_{SC} = L_T + D_T^{\circ}$$

Wherein:

"F_{SC}" = Friction of sales conversion

"L_T" = Length

"D_T" = Difficulty

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: For now, look at this heuristic friction as a matter of length and difficulty. This is a heuristic from our laboratory. You don't need to memorize it. You won't be tested on it at the end of the day, but it does lead to some interesting conclusions that in the difficulty component, there are a number of forms of hidden friction.

The key heuristic for Friction

Key Principles

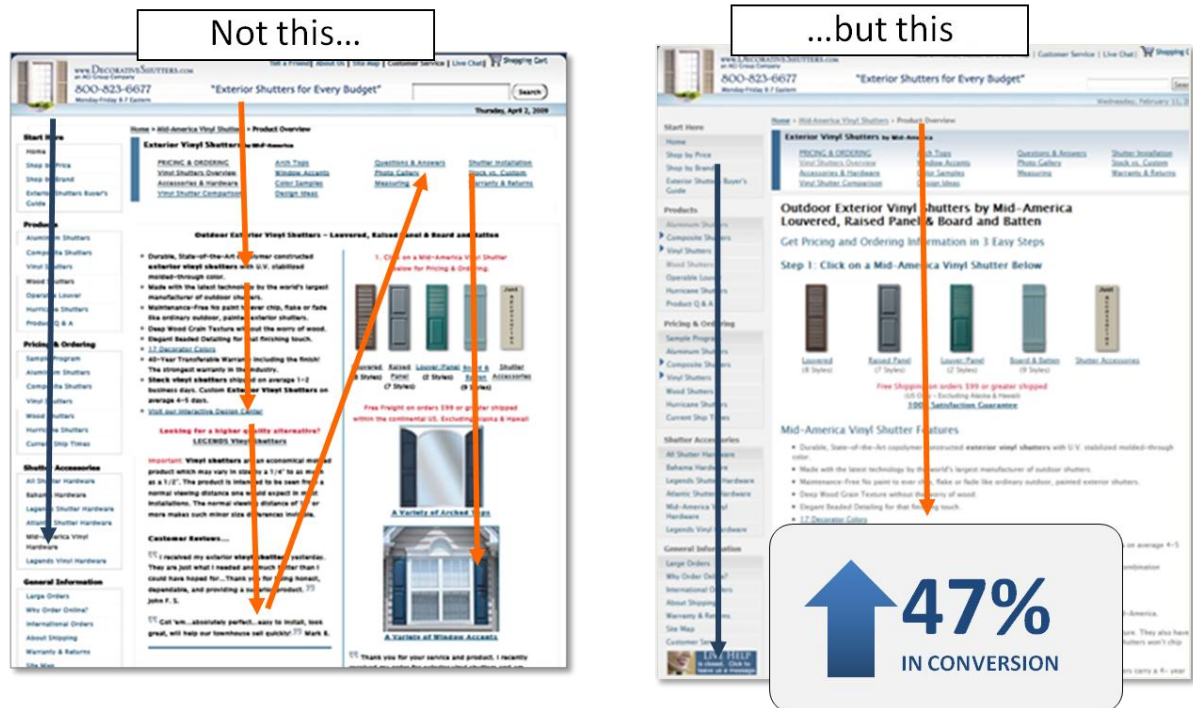
$$F_{SC} = L_T + D_T^{\circ}$$

Today, we are going to walk through the six most pervasive forms of difficulty-oriented Friction (Hidden Friction).

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, these six types of hidden friction are locked into that DT that you see on the screen, that variable, that element, and let's start to learn them. Here is the first, a distorted eye path.

Hidden Friction #1: Distorted Eye-Path

HIDDEN FRICTION #1

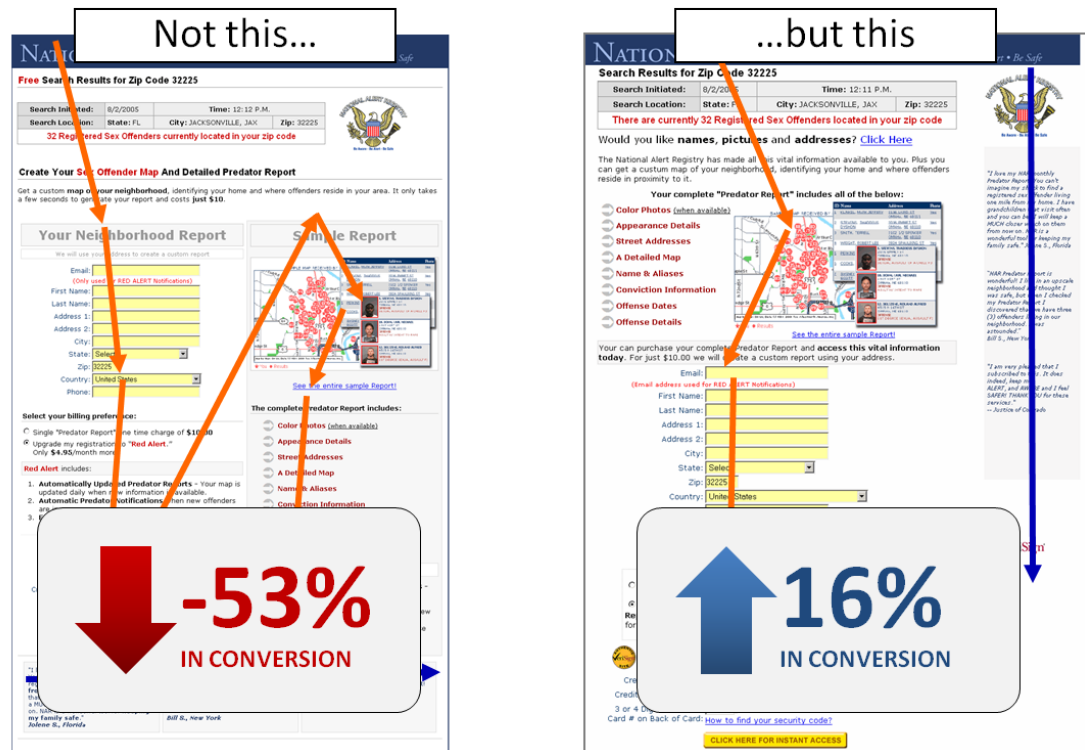
Distorted eye-path example

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, if you look up at the screen, you will see an example of "Not this..." An example of a page executed poorly. This has two evenly weighted columns, which almost always hurts conversion. It is a friction piece. It causes psychological resistance because it is difficult for the person to absorb the page, and so, they have a reticence, a hesitancy to invest themselves, in trying to make meaning out of the page, and so, Not this..., But this.

Now, I want you to know something. This is a long page. The page we went to doesn't look like an optimized page, but it is a page for contractors to make decisions about that particular product. It needs to have all that content, and it certainly helped them get a result. In fact, if you look at the result, the second page outperformed the first page by 47%, and so, the difference wasn't reducing the content. The difference wasn't even about length at all. The difference was in the eye path and addressing the distortion.

HIDDEN FRICTION #1

Distorted eye-path example



Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, I have that in front of me, and I will show you another example, Not this. Great page, critical elements, helpful when you think about it, but still not linear, unfolding with the thought sequence. If you have been in any of my previous lectures I have said to you before, we control the chronology of the mind with the geography of the page. So, when you look at this particular version, you will see that we are using a linear geography, so that we can achieve a, sort of, linear chronology. That means, we control what you think about in first, second, and third order, and we organize the eye path to support the objectives to help you get to where you need to go. So, Not this, but this.

That brings me to the result. Look at this page on the left. This was actually the treatment designed to make some changes and validate our theory, and the treatment produces a negative 53% in conversion. By the way, I like representing it as a negative 53 instead of flipping it, showing you that one has a control and a positive 54.

Do you know why? Because many, many times, a negative lift can result in a positive learning. The goal of the test is to get a learning and not a lift, and that learning helped us take this site and grow it exponentially. In fact, it grew from about 5000 a month in revenue at its launch to by the third month and I am guessing, please, it is a long time ago, and I don't know exactly, but around 150, 160,000 a month and that little sight had an offer for eight to ten million dollars by the end of the year based on its

dramatic growth and all that you need to know when you look at it is that that negative lift was meaningful. That is not a failure. That is success and it is intentional. Don't get caught in this mindset that every test must produce a lift or you are never going to learn enough about your customer to get the maximum lift.

HIDDEN FRICTION #1

Distorted eye-path live optimization

Target Audience:
Consumers interested in
checking accounts

Page Objective:
Clickthrough to a page
with more info

www.susquehanna.net/compare

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Someone in the audience has submitted a page for us. You can see the page, and this came from Lauren. Audience, while thinking about distorted eye path please show me the friction. Let's help Lauren.

Taylor, in just a moment, is going to step up and help me, one of our analysts, but while Taylor is preparing to do that, I am looking at what you are submitting.

So, "I have four equal columns", says Dave. Dave, you got a gold star on your chart. Yes, you are correct, and somebody else says, "Woot". I don't know what Woot means. It is W-O-O-T, but I will assume that was profound. No gold star, but we will give you the benefit of the doubt. Karen says, "Don't know where to travel". She is right and someone says, "No color differentiation", and someone says, "After the headline, I have no idea where to look". She is right.

Gregory sends a contemplative comment in the form of "Hmm". It is an H with lots of M's. I don't know if that is an attempt to be more intelligent or if it is a pronouncement of confusion, but it does make you go hmm. What do I do here? And I think that is your point. I am left as the site visitor to try and make

meaning. Make it easier for me to do so. With that, I am going to ask Taylor to come up. Taylor has worked in lot of serious projects working on this. He is standing right next to me. He is 11 years old, a sort of, child prodigy. I am sorry to do that to you, Taylor.

Taylor Kennedy: Thank you. Thank you, Dr. McGlaughlin. My name is Taylor Kennedy, and I am a research manager here at MECLABS, and I participated on the previous case study that we were talking about.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Yes.

Taylor Kennedy: So, now looking at this page right off the bat, everyone seems to be able to pick up some of the things here. We are seeing a discordant eye path with multiple columns here that are being equally weighted. In addition, we are also seeing calls to action that don't necessarily contribute to the page's overall goal. Also looking here, they try to use coloration to distinguish the eye path a little more, but once again, after the headline, it all becomes a little more difficult to do.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: I will have the points, Taylor. Anything else?

Taylor Kennedy: No, that's it.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Okay, thank you, man.

Taylor Kennedy: Thank you.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: All right. Short, sweet, and right to the point. Listen, well, Taylor is pointing out something that I think all of you might want to learn from. It's a key transferable principle. You have evenly weighted columns. Now you do have a light blue on the free checking, but that actually doesn't weight it. That lightens it and the button itself is the same button.

You need to intensify one of these options and make it easier for them to choose, and if at all possible, I would segment the audience and try not to make them choose from four options. If you could isolate them in the channel, drive into it to a landing page that already was designed with specificity in mind. Specificity converts. If it is the right page, to the right person, you are going to get a higher conversion rate.

So, if you had to do these four columns, a) I would make them feel more like a chart. I don't mean like a table, like a chart. So, it is less text to process and easier for you to pick out the differences, and then, I would try reduce from four to three, and if I could from three to two, and if I had to do that, I would at least make one of them the dominant option.

I showed a case study, not long ago, might have been in the last clinic or the one before with a chart just like this and we weighted that chart. Is it coming up, Paul? Paul says we have got one coming up. So, we will show you an example of what I am talking about and how we did that with someone else.

Hidden Friction #2: Divergent Objectives

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, keep it in mind, and let's move to the second piece of hidden friction. Let me look at my time. Time is running out. I have got to pack every minute with information, and we are going to look at more of your pages live just like we have done, and we are also going to learn five more. Here is the second one, "Divergent Objectives." This is one that actually I have a little bit of passion about because I see this problem everywhere I go.

HIDDEN FRICTION #2

Divergent objectives example



Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So many of our pages are designed by a committee. They were compromised. There is no science dynamic driving the change. It is a social dynamic. The most influential person at the table typically has a disproportionate influence on the design of the page and you end up with a distorted or a divergent set of objectives.

Some of our home pages are like turf wars with people vying for real estate. Someone said, "A camel is a horse put together by a committee." A lot of our web pages are camels. Now, let's look at this page and I certainly hope the man in the black box isn't looking because I do not get that at all, and I certainly don't want him on this web clinic as I certainly wouldn't want to hurt his feelings. I am hoping it is a piece of meaningless clip art because what is this about?

Can your CRM tell you all this? And it shows a shiny bald head. Now, I happened to have empathy for men with shiny bald heads, but I don't think I want to stick mine. In fact, it is like half a head there, like all the emphasis is on that and it is, sort of, a humorous image. I think it actually does cause friction. It is an image that is almost painful to look at, which is a form of friction, not the one I am supposed to

teach, and Chris is over there about to throw something at me, but underneath that you will see something else.

Compare this page with the next page and as you do, there is one capital difference. Audience, tell me right now what the difference is? I am watching to see who gets it first. “Johnny is looking the wrong way.” That is right. So, Ives just put it in and so did Derrick - 3:1. There is one call to action on the second version as opposed to three calls to action.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, we have gotten tighter in our objectives. Does that make a difference? Well, sure, it does. We ran a test. Here is what we discovered. A 78% increase in conversion. Just look at the difference.

Now, if we were to tighten up here, you would see where it says “Free Trial” and you would see where it says “Schedule Demo” and it says “Contact Me”. I would imagine that all three of those are designed eventually to lead to a sale, but we see a 78% increase, which all connects with the sale, all of those in a free trial when we simplify the objectives.


I want to move on, but I want to tell you how pages like this get built. They get built because the page has a history where they develop, for instance, a Flash presentation, and they have a free trial offer, and they have a critical explanation of some key components or a legacy where they used a ‘Contact Now’ or some person in sales that says we have to do x or y, and so, the page has company logic, but not customer logic.

So, beware, beware of thinking through company logic, of seeing through the company’s eyes and doing what makes sense to the company, but what does not make sense to the customer. Customer logic trumps company logic every single day and you have got to think differently if you are going to optimize.

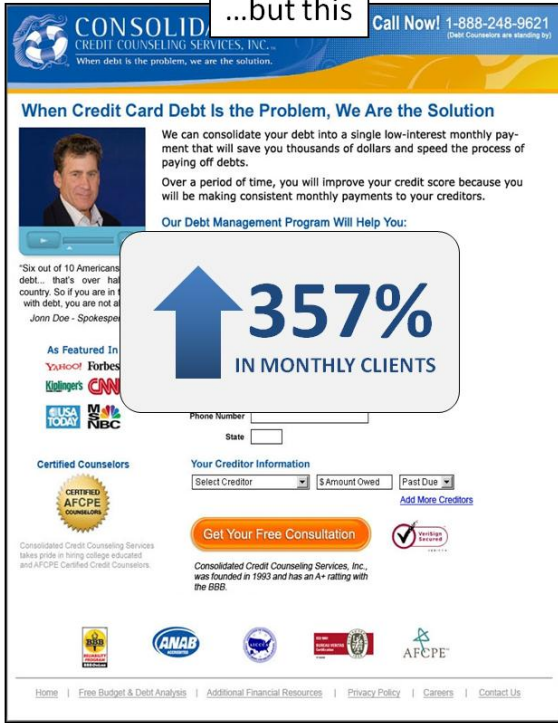
HIDDEN FRICTION #2

Divergent objectives example

Not this...



...but this



Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, let's move on. Not this - what is happening on this page, but this. Could you see the difference in the page? Simplification, clear objectives - what does it produce? A 357% increase. I want you to notice the words underneath. They are small, but they are big in monthly clients. How many during the call right now would like to see a 357% increase in monthly clients? Why? What is happening? What is going on here? Well, let's back up for a moment.

We are making it so much easier for you to make a decision. We are not leaving it for you to determine what your eyes are going to see first, second, and third. We don't have multiple boxes or multiple voices speaking all at the same time. Listen marketers, you have one voice not many voices.

The marketer might speak many languages. You say, what do you mean? Well, I mean, you might take your message and contextualize it into the language of one prospect type, and then change the language a bit to speak to another prospect type, and then change language again to speak to yet another prospect type, but you can only do it with one voice.

When your voice changes, when you have more than one voice, you lose credibility and not only that but just the clarity evaporates. So, you may speak many languages but you may use only one voice, and that is what happens on this page and the outcome is pretty staggering. 357%.

HIDDEN FRICTION #2

Divergent objectives Live Optimization

Channel:

Organic search, ads with URL and banner ads

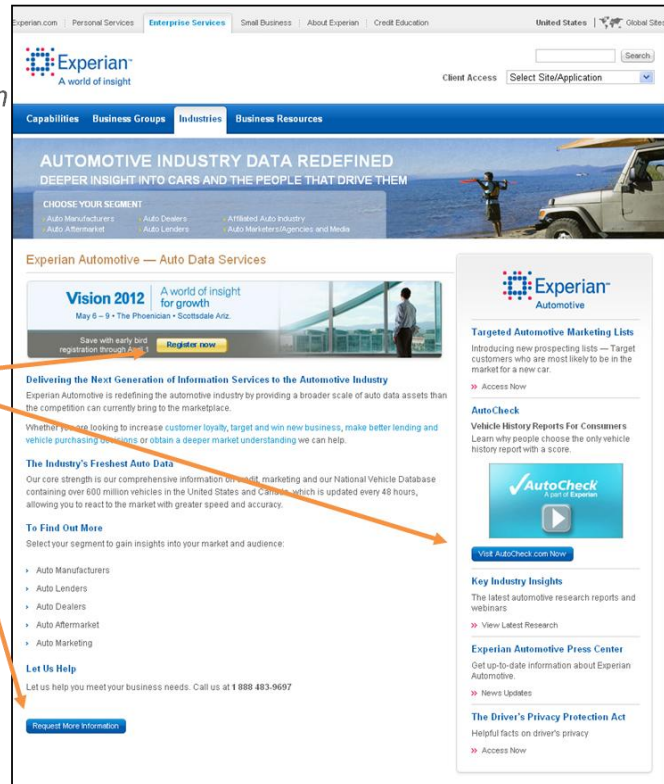
Target Audience:

Automotive industry - OEM, dealers, auto lenders, interested in data and information

Page Objective:

Clickthrough to a page with more info

CTAs



Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Let's keep going. Before I go any further, I want to pause. I am trying to move. I have got three more of these to teach. I am gauging my time. I am gauging my pace. Speak to me. Is this helping you? Are you learning? Is this the right speed? I am watching the Q&A to get your feedback. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, keep going, keep going. I am watching to look for negatives. Okay, people seem to be pleased.

We are really our paying attention so we can adjust in real time. If we were all in the same room and I was lecturing to you and I could see your faces, I would know what to do, but your feedback like this is invaluable. Let's keep going.

So, here is hidden friction. I think this is submitted by Marley, and she says, "The page I am reading is in the process of re-design", and she wants to hear comments about this one. She says. God bless you Marley, "I will not take any of that personally since I did not write them or lay them out". Congratulation, she said this just right. Gives us the freedom to be really honest.

Audience, help her. We are looking for friction. You can see the background information on the side of the page, and let me see your input. "Too many calls to action", says Faris. "Not sure what offer is important", and you are absolutely right. "No focus", says Taylor. Not the same Taylor. You are not like over here entering Q&A.

Taylor Kennedy: No.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: He is trying to confuse his friend who is getting ready to get up, Chris, who is an analyst also. “Three buttons”, “Can’t find the call to action”, “The form is on different pages”, “Too many headlines”. I am seeing a lot of critical pieces.

With that in mind, I am going to pull up Chris. Chris is an analyst with our group, and he is going to give us some insight as to what he might do to make that page work better.

Chris Rochester: All right. Well, thank you, Dr. McGlaughlin. Immediately when I look at the page, I can see a number of divergent objectives like we were talking about in previous example. So, immediately, my eye path is drawn to this large banner up here. So, there is a call to action in that banner as well as a call to action over here in the side right-hand column, and then another call to action down here at the bottom.

So, I am confused as to where should I go on the page. My eye path is going numerous places on the page. Really, the main thing that I would do here is just consolidate objectives into a single objective, which would ideally be the click through to the next page.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Excellent, excellent. So, we are looking at friction, but the friction is not being generated by a length issue. It is being generated by these competing options.

Chris Rochester: Absolutely.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Excellent. Thank you, man. All right, let’s keep going, and so audience, we are talking about too many objectives on the page. By the way, you might wonder, “Well, can I ever have more than one?” Yes, but they shouldn’t be equal. You might have a 70-30 split in terms of impacting attention in eye path, but the minute you start moving about 30%, you are really hurting the conversion rate on the main piece. The more objectives you try to achieve on the same page, the lower you are going to see for conversion all the way around.

Hidden Friction #3: Dissonant Tone

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: All right, let’s keep going. I see error number three – ‘A Dissonant Tone’. Yes, this is another form of friction, and it is a deadly form of friction. So, let’s look at it quickly.

HIDDEN FRICTION #3

Dissonant tone example

Not this...



It's An Exact Digital Replica Of The Printed Paper

It's not a web site, but a digital reproduction of *The New York Times* – The only newspaper in America to win over **90** Pulitzer Prizes.

Every article, color photograph and advertisement is automatically delivered to your computer. Past issues can be **stored** and you can **search** and **navigate** through the paper with ease.

To help you evaluate this new version of *The Times*, we are offering a **7-DAY RISK FREE TRIAL** – And if you decide to continue receiving the *Electronic Edition*, we will reward you with a **savings of up to 50% off the print edition**.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Here you will see an example from our work with the New York Times.

HIDDEN FRICTION #3

Dissonant tone example

...but this



Dear Reader,

The *Electronic Edition* is an **exact digital replica** of the printed paper. It's not a website, but a digital reproduction of the New York Times – The only newspaper in America to win over **90** Pulitzer Prizes.

Every article, color photograph and advertisement is automatically delivered to your computer. And once it's on your computer you can read it offline, anytime, anywhere.

Past issues can be **stored** and you can **search** through the paper with the same ease. And The *Electronic Edition* can dramatically improve your productivity.

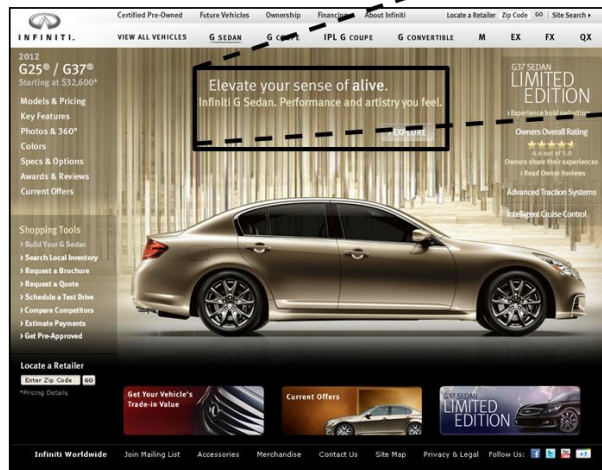


88%
IN CONVERSION

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Notice the difference in tone between the two slides. It is different in the sense that it is a letter. It is excised of some of the more sales sounding language and it produces an 88% increase in results. That is substantial. And let's go back. Look how similar the pages are, but it makes a huge difference.

HIDDEN FRICTION #3

Dissonant tone Live Optimization



Elevate your sense of alive.
Infiniti G Sedan. Performance and artistry you feel.

> EXPLORE

Channel:

AdWords >> Homepage >>
G Sedan landing page

Target Audience:

Luxury car buyers

Page Objective:

Clickthrough to a page with more
info

<http://bit.ly/GSedan>

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: All right, so let's look at an example submitted to us by Ty. So, this is the page. Sid, I am glad that we are looking at this page. It is quite different than all the others. Very graphic intensive. Audience, what would you do with this page?

We have Ty, like a focus group with some of the world's most experienced marketers. Now, there are hundreds and hundreds on the phone. I don't know how many. We can only do a thousand at a time. Typically, we registered far more than that, and then whatever that number is, it is able to get on or 10 is our eventual number. So, there are a lot on, and they are telling me right now what they would do.

It says, "I would buy a G37". I don't know, Dave, what that means. "Call to action is all but hidden", says Derrick. "What do they want me to do?", says John. "Button is too transparent", says Ben. "I actually like it", says Ives. Good. It is all right to like one of these pages. It is an attractive page. We will look more at the friction in just a moment. "The eye goes to car picture", says Mark. "Can't see the call-to-action", says Max. Interesting. "What's the point of the page?", says Mary. Good point. "I messed the button or I missed the button completely." I think you have typo over there Moraine.

All right, so I have got Taylor coming up. Taylor, help me look at this page. Tell me where you see hidden friction on this page.

Taylor Kennedy: All right, great. So, looking at this page, where we are going to start is the headline and more specifically, the tone of the headline and what it doesn't actually say about the car. So, looking at the headline what we are really seeing is a headline that attempts to be catching and provocative without actually giving you any sort of information about the car itself. Also a very good point about the CTA being very difficult to detect.

So really, in my opinion, what you would want to test here? Something that says something about the actual car, maybe something about outstanding amenities, outstanding performance features, things like that, that would actually give you, you know, a sense about what the car is actually about versus trying to create an experience out of just a headline.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Excellent, excellent. May I say this to those of you with an agency background who are used to needing to build sites like this that have a lot of imagery and a, sort of, glitz.

Plato said that there were three factors that impact this kind of decision or persuasion process and he likened it to a chariot with two horses. The white horse was this, a part of you that has strong it is your spirit and it is full of, it is emotional and it connects, and the dark horse, he likened to the emotional center, the desire center, actually more desire than emotion. He would put emotion with the white horse and desire with the dark horse, but he said the charioteer is the other, and that is the Logisticon if you were to take it directly from the Greek, and that is the part of you that chooses. That is the rational part.

Logisticon come from the Greek word, logos, which has to do with reason, and he would say to you that the dominant piece occurs when you appeal to reason supported by those other two horses and very careful how we use them and very careful, in his case, to keep the dark horse that is raw desire, from overcoming everything else.

Why am talking about Plato? Feel free to hang up on me now and make room for other marketers that are trying to get on here. I am saying it to you because marketers, we need to think deeply. We need to reflect.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: The marketer in the organization is the person who should be asking the most profound "Why" questions. We need to ground the action of sales in the contemplation of marketing and candidly, it cashes in a very direct way in situations like this. It is all right to appeal to emotion and desire, but if you don't do that through the reason faculty, it becomes very difficult for you to predict outcome or measure it.

So, the problem with the page like this is, it has that look and feel and there may be something that it evokes, but it does very little to demonstrate the value proposition of the automobile. So, I am left to make meaning on my own. And that is not good for the marketer and that is not good for the organization.

So, marketing is both art and science. Despite my background in philosophy and our work in science, I am not suggesting that the science replace the art. It takes both. But I am suggesting that you need to

discipline the art to the extent that you must appeal to the emotion and the desires through the reason and a properly articulated value proposition will take an ad like this and make it worth far more.

We did an experiment with Car and Driver. It is not on my notes. We want more people to engage with ads just like this in Car and Driver because it was about ad revenue. A simple shift in the wording produced a 74% increase. So, think about how to appeal to those other components, and those of you who are philosophers, please forgive me for over-simplifying a highly complex series of Greek concepts. I feel like my friends from Cambridge will send me three e-mails because I know that it is a little bit more complex than my quick explanation, but we shall move on.

Hidden Friction #4: Distracting Multimedia

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: All right, so that brings me to the fourth point – ‘Distracting Multimedia’. Distracting multimedia, so take a look at this fourth component because it is everywhere. It is like a plague on the net.

HIDDEN FRICTION #4

Distracting multimedia example

Not this...

...but this

Make Real Snow Right in Your Front Yard With a Home Snow Maker!

Watch this short 60 second video to learn how fun and easy snowmaking really is!



Click the link below to get all the details on our simple, easy-to-use home snowmakers!

[Check 'em Out!](#)

With A Home Snow Maker You Can Affordably Enjoy the Snowy Fun of Winter No Matter What the Weather!

- ✓ **Real Snowmaking Right at Home...**
...using the same snow maker technology found at the worlds largest ski resorts just scaled down for home use!
- ✓ **Wintertime Fun for You and Your Family...**
...all winter long even if Mother Nature fails! Sledding, snowball fights white Christmas mornings...the sky is the limit with a snow maker!
- ✓ **Simple Designs Using Inexpensive Parts...**
...help us keep costs down so your family can afford them! Save at least \$400 over comparable home snowmakers!





Price \$1 Del



93%

IN CONVERSION

Whats New!
Nov 28, 2007
Snowmaking Continued!
Cold temps are here...see some before and after images from our recent session!
pictures and video

Customer Quotes



"We live in Rome, Ga. where we seldom get snow, but during the end of December and January we made an area about 100 feet in length, 20 feet wide and over 2 FEET DEEP!"
Duncan Blankenship
Rome, GA



Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Here is an example, Not this, and but this. Look at the difference. The first ad is relying on video to communicate a primary message, particularly the value proposition. In a sense, the offer is being articulated through that interesting video. Yes, it is an interesting video, small company, but it actually shows the product in action, making snow. For those of you that are tired of spring break, you can buy this product and make snow, but the difference between that and this, and by the way, I

don't like the one on the right, and by the way, you might be saying but aren't those three evenly weighted calls to action?

Well, it is an e-commerce site showing three different versions of a product, and you are just selecting the same product. Could you make its page better? Yes. We didn't design this page. This was designed by a student who attended an event, went back and took his page and corrected it to this page, and what happened? A 93% increase in conversion. Yet again, the big factor here is a sort of hidden kind of friction. It is the psychological resistance that was associated with having to watch that video. Some people were in a hurry. Some people couldn't play in their cubicle at work. Some work didn't see its significance and missed it and they are looking for more reason, so they move on.

In cases where people experience psychological resistance, there is one essential way they make it stop. Have you ever heard of the annoying sound? You just want to turn off as fast as you can. We turn off the annoying sounds of marketing with the green arrow at the top of the page, one click. I am holding. Some of you can't see me.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: I think at some point, we are going to be broadcasting these clinics live. Let us know if you find that interesting, but either way, you can watch the video afterwards, and you will see me, and when you do, you will notice I am tall, maybe 6'6", thick, thick hair. That is my body double. Chris, however, we might use Chris for body double. He looks like an all-American football player.

Anyway, I have in my hand the bane of marketing, and if you can't see it, I will tell you what it is. It is the clicker. I am using it to control this presentation. With one click, I can change that slide and with one click, somebody else. Your prospect can terminate your existence and their life forever. You can't afford psychological resistance. You can't afford confusion. They are not patient. They will not work very hard to make meaning unless they are highly motivated. Some of us, that is the only ones we are getting because it is too hard, and you need to be careful.

HIDDEN FRICTION #4

Distracting multimedia Live Optimization

Flash Banner

Channel:

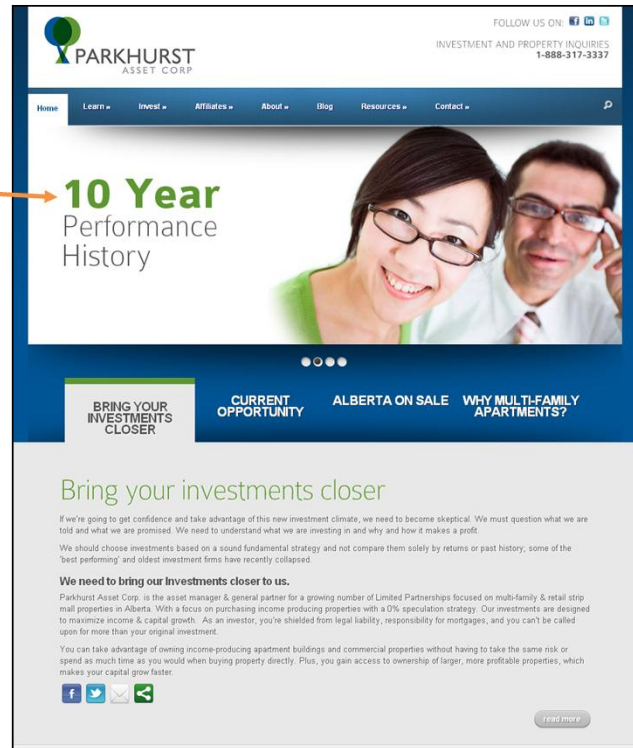
Search marketing in Google

Target Audience:

Accredited real estate investors in Canada

Page Objective:

Download a piece of content



<http://www.ptrust.ca/>

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Let's keep going. So, here is something submitted. I may move rapidly through this. Let me see my time. I think we are going to be all right. So, marketers of the world, take a look at this. Parkhurst Asset Corp, submitted by John, and Chris, standby, I am going to pull you up, but not yet. I want to hear your thinking about this particular piece.

All right, wow, someone says, "I still can't find the call-to-action." That is a Flash banner at the top. Is that the click you needed? All right, and the "Button is too small" and "what am I supposed to do?", says David, and "What is that great button for on the bottom right?", and "Doesn't do it for me", says someone. "Do you need to click on all four tabs below the banner?", says Scott. "What is the headline about?" Somebody says, "The headline is unclear." That is Raj. "Could be an ad for glasses", says Joan. But that is a good observation, Joan. Isn't that what it looks like? It looks like an optometrist ad there for just a moment.

All right, so think for a moment, and I would like to teach you on headlines, and John, I can't right now, but if we were teaching headlines, we would be really concerned about that particular choice because we don't know what that performance history is about, and that means something to you in the financial space, but how many of the people visiting in your site will know precisely what that is referencing and in its own right, even if they know, it doesn't provide enough content to drive them into the core content beneath.

The goal of the headline is to get them into conversation, and as you heard me say over and over again, the headline is just a pickup line. It is the same thing you use to meet someone. It is vital. It opens the conversation. If it is wrong, you don't get the conversation, guys, and in marketing, same thing.

So, those are interesting points that you brought up, but I need Chris, and I hope I haven't said all your stuff, Chris.

Chris Rochester: Oh, that is okay. I think I can come up with something here on the fly.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Now you can't see, Chris, but Chris is much shorter than me, and he is bald, and I feel bad for him. All right, go ahead, Chris.

Chris Rochester: All right. Well, thank you, Dr. McGlaughlin. Just like you were saying here, this very large piece of multimedia banner here at the top here is just extremely...extremely distracting right when I get on to the page. Now I understand what they were trying to do here. They were trying to cause some tangible benefits right to the top there, right into the top of their headline there by stating some of their, you know, ten-year performance history, but it is very large on the page.

Immediately, some test ideas that jump into my mind are, you know, minimizing that, test, eliminating it entirely, you know, calling less emphasis to it, and driving more towards the call to action that I still haven't yet defined on this page.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Okay. So, in a sense, everything has a moot point because at the beginning of every page in the first two inches, really, the first four, we need to answer three questions. You know what they are, Chris?

Chris Rochester: Hmm...mm.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: What is the first one?

Chris Rochester: Where am I?

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Where am I?

Chris Rochester: What can I do here?

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: What can I do here?

Chris Rochester: Why should I do it?

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Why should I do it? Now, let's look. We are not sure where we are. The brand has got banner blindness because it is way up above those big images of faces which drive you, and by the way, I would test the faces, and I hope they are not employees. They don't look like employees. They look like Photoshop clip art that you can buy somewhere. I would really test those faces because we found changing a face can have a huge impact on conversion rate, and I think that I have psychological resistance to the look on the face. I mean, I am not talking about their physical attractiveness. It is like they look disturbed.

Chris Rochester: She is happy and he is confused.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: He is something like.

Chris Rochester: So.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: He feels like I feel when I am looking at the page.

Chris Rochester: Yeah.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: But where am I is not here. What can I do here is not clear at all. Now, let me tell you something as important as it is to talk about the value proposition, as important as the concept is, and though we hammer it, probably in every single web clinic, why does it matter before you know what?

If I don't know what to do, I don't give a flip about why I should do it. I don't connect with that second part. So, the "Why" would matter greatly if I knew the "What", but on this page, I don't know the "What", so I can't even get to the "Why."

Chris Rochester: Absolutely.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Well done, Chris. Thank you.

Chris Rochester: Thank you.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Now, I am going to ask you. You have heard Chris and you have heard Taylor, and I need to run an A/B split test right now. Just use your Q&A feature to vote for the most eloquent...no, you don't really need to do that. I will.

Chris Rochester: No, thank you.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: They are not dying over here, and meanwhile, I have got...I have got Paul Cheney holding up a little white sign telling me, what are you telling me, Paul? I didn't see you.

Paul Cheney: You have got ten more minutes.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Okay, Paul says I have another hour, just one more hour.

Paul Cheney: No.

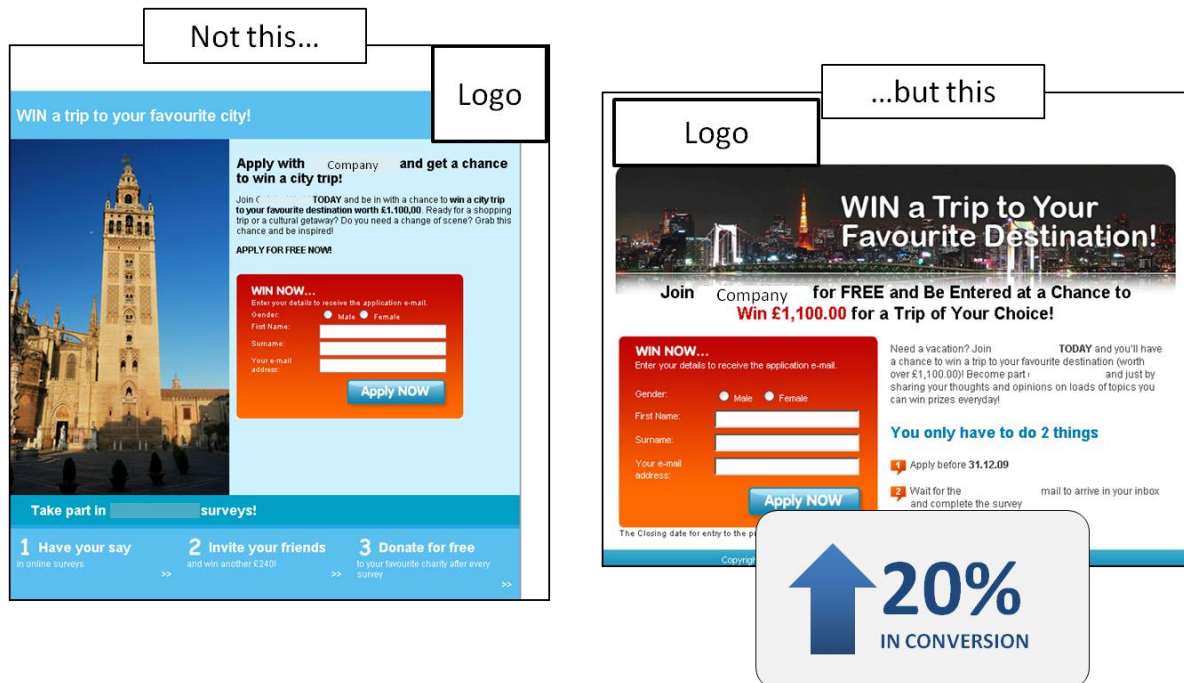
Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: No, I have got 10 minutes, and we have got more. So, let's move into the next one, all right.

Hidden Friction #5: Discordant Colors

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Here we go – 'Discordant Colors', hidden friction number five.

HIDDEN FRICTION #5

Discordant colors example



Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Look at this one. I see this problem all the times. Well, Not this, remember this opening case study, but this. What is one of the big differences here? A change in the discordant colors and it can impact you over and over again. And as we saw, it produced a 19.6% increase.

HIDDEN FRICTION #5

Discordant colors Live Optimization

Channel:

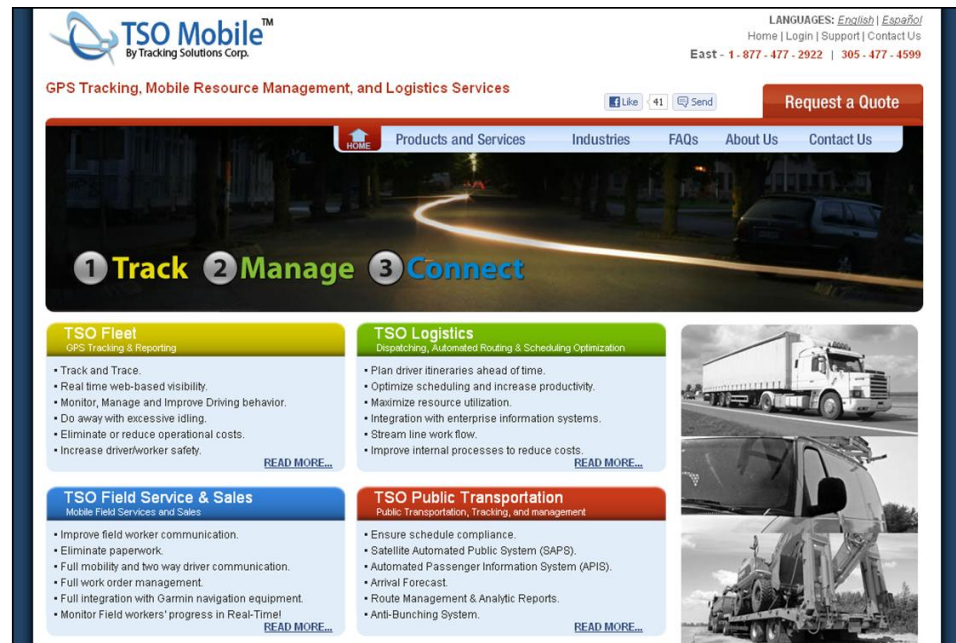
AdWords

Target Audience:

B2B

Page Objective:

Clickthrough to a page with more info



<http://www.tsomobile.com/>

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Let's look at this particular page that was submitted to us by TSO Mobile, and it is interesting when you think about discordant colors. It is interesting when you think about distorted eye path. What have we got here, guys? We got a problem with objectives.

Audience, help us. Tell us what you do to make this better. "Too many colors". "Is it a home page or landing page?" "Too many colors". Karen McRay says, "Graciously, blow it up." "Too many options", says Sally. "Start over", says Jacob. "Equal section", says someone else. "Why black and white?" says Ann. "Make the eye path linear". You are right, Nicole. "Give more weight to the option", says Stephanie. "Kid colors". That is an interesting concept. They are primary colors. Well, they are, sort of, primary colors. It looks like three of them are primary. "Need a message hierarchy". Yes, they do.

All right, we are getting lots of good insights. I am going to stop for just a moment. I am going to ask Taylor to come up. Taylor, talk to us about this page and tell me what you would do to make it better?

Taylor Kennedy: Well, hey, everyone. Once again, this is the last time you will have to hear from me today. So, hopefully, that is a good thing. So, looking at this page here, it almost looks like they are using colors just for the sake of using colors to describe these different business groups that are a part of TSO Mobile here.

So, really, what you need to remember on the page is that you want to use color sparingly. You need to use color to draw attention to specific components of the page. For example, if you are looking to

generate leads, maybe using coloration for a form field component might aid conversion, also using coloration for calls to action, and other items like that.

So, once again, you want to use colors sparingly, you just don't want to throw colors all over the page, especially when it is just denoting different service groups and especially, when they are all equally weighted as is the case here.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Excellent, excellent point. Thank you, Taylor.

Taylor Kennedy: Thank you.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Audience, this isn't in my plan. I have got a sixth point. I want to warn you in fact, I want to promise you that we are going to take the next nine to ten minutes, we are going to pack them with the sixth point and as much information as I can to help you, but can we just stop? This isn't in the plan. Let's take one minute and think about all the forms of friction we see on this page. Let's use this as a learning example. You will say well, that doesn't look like my page, but the principles are transferable.

So, let's identify them. First of all, let's just, kind of, re-design the page. We have got friction run at the top because we have a giant graphic that we can't tell what it means. Is that a Coralite? Is that the trail of a comet? Is that a cut-out? I don't know what it is. I am even seeing.

So, my mind is confused, and there is no headline. Track, manage, and connect means nothing to me if I don't know what it connects to. There is no context. So, if friction is a form of psychological resistance, I have got resistance right now because I can't tell what the page is saying or wants me to do. There is no grid. There is no set up. There is no thought track being laid for what comes next.

I need a headline. I need a sub-header. I need to lose the dark image with no meaning. Then, from there, we need to flow with an eye path using again geography to control chronology, and so now I have two evenly weighted columns.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: In addition to that, I have four calls to action. So now, we have got a different issue, and then, on top of that, I don't know if there is an order here. Does this flow because that yellow is track and then, I see a yellow and then, I see green manage, and then, I see three connect, but I don't see four, which is red? So, I don't know if there is a connection between the colors on these little tabs and the colors on the top. I can't get vertical flow. I can't get meaning.

There are all kinds of friction on this page. We could keep going, but I would like you to think that if you were trying to fix this page, the first question I would ask. I would sit down with my team and while I don't mean to be hard, I want to help you. I have nothing but empathy for marketers who are trapped in these environments where they are being hammered with deadlines, under-appreciated, having to fight sales many times. Sometimes, when budgets are cut, in fact our studies show when budgets are cut, some of the first places to go, it is at the marketing level. It is their budgets. It is even their personnel.

So, I am on the side of the marketers that submit these pages, and I have great empathy for you, but one, I would sit down and say, what is the objective of this page? Absolutely, what do I want to achieve? What is my KPI? And then I would line everything up vertically behind that.

I would shorten the messaging on the homepage, simplify the way to get to that objective, and get as many people. It might be to get them the right section. If so, I talk to them. There is no conversation here. If I were to walk up to anyone of your marketers and speak to you in bullet points, just firing bullets at you. Would I connect? Have a conversation? Have context? Have understanding? Absolutely not. Who buys a novel? Who reads report that straight bullets? No one. I need conversation. So, you need a paragraph that says “Welcome to TS Mobile.” You can, you know, let’s suppose your objective was to get into the right place.

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: There are four different areas on our site that can serve you. If you are looking for x, click here. If you are trying to achieve y, click here, and with that kind of language in a simple paragraph and blue underline text links near the top complimented by a headline and a sub-headline, I could get people to the place they need to go.

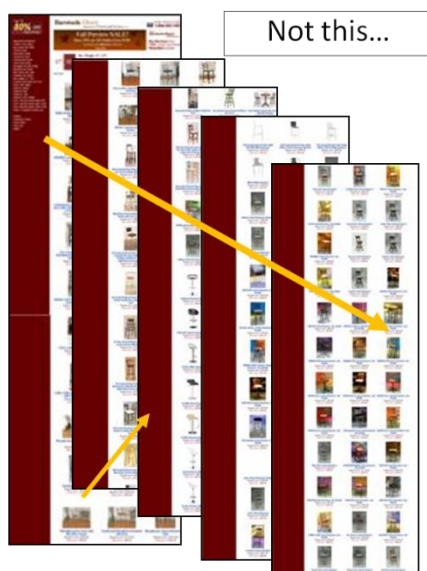
If the goal is deeper like to win a lead, why then, wow, I would get that form right on this page, and I would line everything up behind it. Think about all that. We can talk more later, and one, if you re-design this page, send it to us and we will comment on it just to do our best to help you.

Hidden Friction #6: Disorganized Content

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Okay, five minutes, audience. Let’s go to the sixth. Let’s take the five minutes and invest them with the sixth piece – ‘Disorganized Content’.

HIDDEN FRICTION #6

Disorganized content example



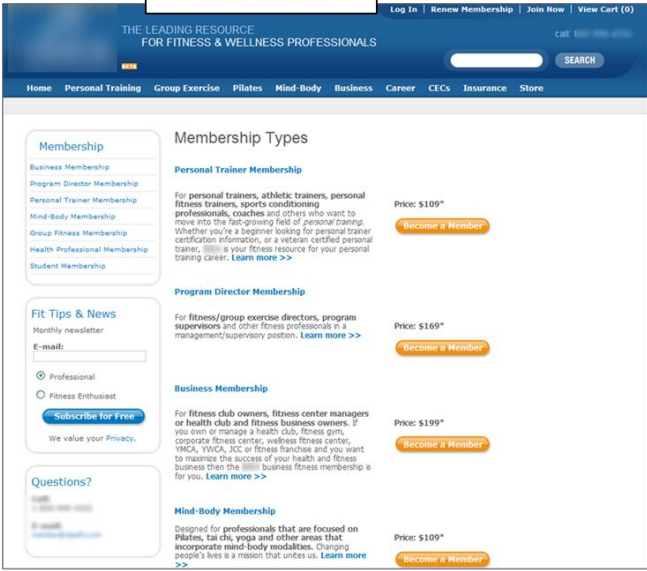
Classified and organized into different types of barstools. (e.g., metal, wood, upholstered, etc.)

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Now that last page could learn from this point as well, but let's go straight to an example. Not this, keep watching because that is one page. Yep, Not this, but this, and you will see the difference, and Not this, oh, this is interesting.

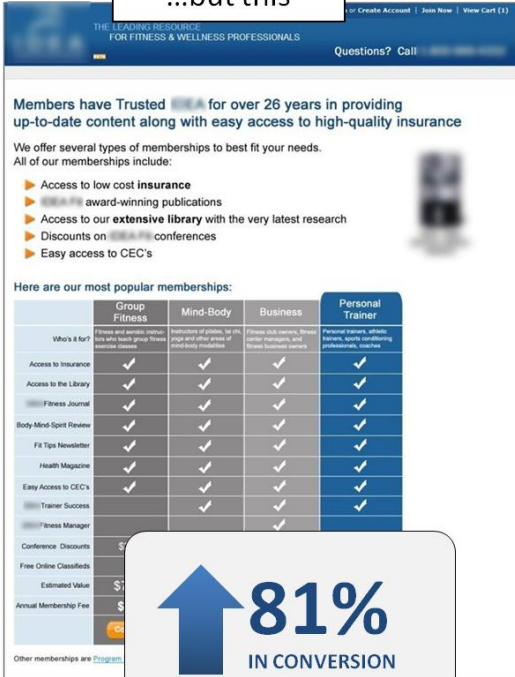
HIDDEN FRICTION #6

Disorganized content example

Not this...



...but this



What's it for?	Group Fitness	Mind-Body	Business	Personal Trainer
Access to Insurance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to the Library	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fitness Journal	✓	✓	✓	✓
Body Mind-Sport Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit Tips Newsletter	✓	✓	✓	✓
Health Magazine	✓	✓	✓	✓
Easy Access to CEC's	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trainer Success	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fitness Manager	✓	✓	✓	✓
Conference Discounts	✓	✓	✓	✓
Free Online Classifieds	✓	✓	✓	✓
Estimated Value	\$109	\$169	\$199	\$109
Annual Membership Fee	\$109	\$169	\$199	\$109

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: Remember the bank at the beginning, and I said, we would show you a chart and an increase. Here is the best. Not this, but this. Now, I want you to see how we made the...we changed it from a data set to a chart, from a table to a chart with much less content carefully organized to make it easier for you to see, and then, notice how we weighted one of those particular options, so that you didn't get trapped, unable to make meaning out of the page.

Disorganized content slows down the velocity of the transaction momentum. Velocity is the marketer's friend. They should move faster and faster through the sales journey and if you slow them down, making them to try and process and make decisions, sometimes even go on research before they make the decisions or hunt around the page for the information they need to make the right decision or click too many times to get to the right decisions, you are jeopardizing your transaction by slowing down the forward momentum. Velocity is critical. Friction, obviously, impairs velocity.

HIDDEN FRICTION #6

Disorganized content Live Optimization

Channel:

PPC, direct

Target Audience:

iPad owners

Page Objective:

Click “add to cart” and buy.



Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: So, let's go on. I have another example submitted by someone in the audience. We have four minutes. We are just going to do this. I am going to have the audience quickly talk to me. Tell me real fast. What you would do on the basis of everything we have said? All six principles, how would you make this better?

"Too many choices", says Karen. "Woah", says Dina. All right. "The call to action", says Daniel. "Draw out the call to action", says Stephanie. "The dark background is a problem." many of you say and you are right. "A better eye path." Yes. "We don't need the video", says someone else. Again, "Kill the black background". Scott says, "Move the social buttons below the call to action".

Another one says, "Eyes go to the right, but the call to action is the left". Those are all good points, and we are short on time, Chris. I think we are just going to wrap this piece up as quickly as possible by just helping you get a sense.

Basically, it is like I have two pages cramped into one. I have the left side talking, and I have the right side talking. The problem is the left side is saying something and the right side is showing something. So, my eyes go to the right side, which means I can't hear. Think of the word "hear" in quotes. I can't hear what is being said on the left side.

The page has no eye path. It forces me to move in circles to try and capture meaning. Oh, we could improve the button. We could improve the headline. There is no headline. We could improve the paragraph. It is too long with no bold font. It is white on black, which makes it difficult to read. We could improve the graphic, the image. This one is different. I didn't note that long narrow string is, but it is in

the way of the transaction. We can improve all of that, but at the bottom line, we don't have a linear flow. So, it is so hard to make meaning of the page.

Summary: Putting it all together



Key Principles

1. Friction does not occur on a page, it occurs in the mind of the prospect.
2. Friction is more complex than simple issues of page length, form amount, or number of steps.
3. Most Friction goes undetected by marketers:

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: The good news is for anybody that we have talked to this way in this clinic that means there is an enormous amount of upside waiting for you to capture with the opportunities. I have lots of people trying to get my attention. I have in front of you a slide that summarizes everything. This will be released in a video, so soon, you will be able to watch the video again, see the slides, see our team talking, and participate.

Our next Web clinic...

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: But I have been told to show you this. So, if you are interested, look at this case study.

Experiment: Background



Experiment ID: *NAS Content Approach*

Location: MarketingExperiments Research Library

Test Protocol Number: TP4067

Research Notes:

Background: North American Spine is a medical provider specializing in treating chronic back pain. They are the sole providers of a minimally invasive, innovative pain management procedure.

Goal: To determine which content approach is most appealing to visitors making condition-based searches

Primary Research Question: Which content approach will achieve a higher click-through rate?

Approach: A/B multifactor split test

Dr. Flint McLaughlin: We talked about this before North American Spine. We worked with Tim, an ROI revolution, an agency on their paid search campaign for this group. They are a solid agency, producing a lot of gains for their clients. We have certified and trained and taught everyone there and they brought us this challenge.

Experiment: Treatments

Treatment Design:

- Template test in 6 condition-based ad groups
- Headline specific to ad group
- Variable is description line one
 - Value is the content approach

T1: Back Pain Resources

[\[Condition\] Sufferer?](#)
 Free access to back pain resources from the experts in spine health.
[NorthAmericanSpine.com/\[condition\]](#)

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: We looked at a version of it, and then, you came along and helped us design a treatment. The audience did.

In the next clinic, we are going to look at the treatment you designed. We are going to show you what happened in the test and let you learn from that regarding your paid search campaigns. It is fascinating to me because it was a test created by you on our clinics, and now, we are going to show the results for you.

Experiment: Treatments

Treatment Design:

- Template test in 6 condition-based ad groups
- Headline specific to ad group
- Variable is description line one
 - Value is the content approach

T2: Treatment Options

[\[Condition\] Sufferer?](#)
 Compare available treatments, from the experts in spine health.
[NorthAmericanSpine.com/\[condition\]](#)

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: There is a lot more to this, which I don't think I have time to go into guys, but as you can see if you are watching, there is an interesting experiment unfolding, and we are going to tell you a lot more about it.

Experiment: Treatments

Treatment Design:

- Template test in 6 condition-based ad groups
- Headline specific to ad group
- Variable is description line one
 - Value is the content approach

T3: Causes and Solutions

[\[Condition\] Sufferer?](#)

Learn about the causes & solutions, from the experts in spine health.

[NorthAmericanSpine.com/\[condition\]](#)

Experiment: Treatments

Treatment Design:

- Template test in 6 condition-based ad groups
- Headline specific to ad group
- Variable is description line one
 - Value is the content approach

T4: Recognize Symptoms

[\[Condition\] Sufferer?](#)

How to recognize the symptoms, from the experts in spine health.

[NorthAmericanSpine.com/\[condition\]](#)

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: In the meantime, you can tune in here to learn more.

Experiment: Side-by-side

T1: Back Pain Resources

[\[Condition\] Sufferer?](#)

Free access to back pain resources from the experts in spine health.

[NorthAmericanSpine.com/\[condition\]](http://NorthAmericanSpine.com/[condition])

T2: Treatment Options

[\[Condition\] Sufferer?](#)

Compare available treatments, from the experts in spine health.

[NorthAmericanSpine.com/\[condition\]](http://NorthAmericanSpine.com/[condition])

T3: Causes and Solutions

[\[Condition\] Sufferer?](#)

Learn about the causes & solutions, from the experts in spine health.

[NorthAmericanSpine.com/\[condition\]](http://NorthAmericanSpine.com/[condition])

T4: Recognize Symptoms

[\[Condition\] Sufferer?](#)

How to recognize the symptoms, from the experts in spine health.

[NorthAmericanSpine.com/\[condition\]](http://NorthAmericanSpine.com/[condition])

Dr. Flint McGlaughlin: There is a lot more to this, which I don't think I have time to go into guys, but as you can see if you are watching, there is an interesting experiment unfolding, and we are going to tell you a lot more about it.

So, I want to thank you for your participation today. I hope that you found this useful. We don't charge for these clinics. They are packed with research. There is 15 plus million dollars in research on the MarketingExperiments website that you can access for free.

There is just one thing we really asked you for, and I mean this. We really are. I am asking you, "Tell a friend". We want to build a community worldwide that is thinking about testing, that is thinking deeper, that is reflecting, that is approaching marketing, asking those profound why questions that produce the most significant results. We will be back soon. Thank you.

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- The on-demand replay of [Do You Have the Right Value Proposition?](#), where we taught five simple steps to determine your optimal value proposition
- An invitation to our next Web clinic, where we will discuss proven strategies for [Converting Leads to Sales](#)
- An opportunity to [share your optimization and testing discoveries](#) with your peers at the 2011 Optimization Summit and receive a complimentary ticket to this inaugural event.

Our job is to help you do your job better. [Let us know](#) how we can help.

Daniel Burstein
Director of Editorial Content
MECLABS Primary Research

Resource #1

Do You Have the Right Value Proposition?
How to test, measure, and integrate your Value Proposition online

According to Dr. Flint McGlaughlin, there are five simple steps any marketer can take to identify their optimal value proposition. During this dense, yet very practical, Web clinic, he reviewed two recent experiments aimed at discovering value propositions that increase customer response.

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