Digital Optimization

How AARP Services increased referrals and membership renewals
Gaurav Bhatia
Vice President, Digital Strategy
AARP Services Inc.

Gaurav Bhatia, Vice President of Digital Strategy, ASI, has more than 15 years of online marketing and digital expertise. In his current role, Gaurav is responsible for digital strategy and execution of digital capabilities for products and services across Web, email, mobile and social media platforms.

Gaurav has extensive knowledge in both B2B and B2C digital marketing. He is a digital marketer with experience in building digital assets to drive business growth, and has led large scale digital transformation projects for large organizations.

Gaurav holds a Master's Degree in Information Systems, MBA in Strategy and a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering.
Preeti Sood
Digital Channel Manager
AARP Services Inc.

Preeti Sood, Digital Channel Manager, ASI, has more than 12 years experience in online, site optimization and digital insights/analytics. In his current role, Preeti is responsible for digital strategy and execution of digital capabilities for financial and health products and services.

In addition, she is responsible for all digital metrics and insights for ASI. Her past experience includes creating personalization and relationship marketing strategy for Choice Hotels International.

Preeti holds a Master's Degree in Direct and Interactive Marketing from NYU.
AARP is the largest member advocacy organization in the world.

37 Million Members

22 Million Households
The 50+ population is tech savvy

- 53% of American adults age 65 and older use the internet or email
- 63% have researched a product or service online
- 50+ population is the fastest growing audience on Facebook

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Surveys, April 2000-April 2012.
Online seniors need digital to deliver three critical attributes:

- **Useful (delivering value).** Just like younger users, seniors will only take the time and effort to use a site that helps them accomplish goals. Sites targeting seniors must focus on a value proposition that is both clear and valued by older users.

- **Usable (providing easy access to value).** Web users who are in their golden years benefit most when designers apply their usability best practices — like creating clear menu categories and making text legible — to a tee.

- **Enjoyable (creating an emotional connection).** The attributes that make a site enjoyable for Gen Yers — flashiness, fun, and a certain cool factor — won’t work for seniors. Instead, users from the older generations seek health, safety, connectivity, and contribution.

*Source: Designing for Seniors: Forrester Research 2009*
• Test 1 – Make it Easy to Read and Share
• Test 2 – Make it Easy to Listen
• Test 3 – Make it Easy to Find
• Test 4 – Make it Easy to Understand
• Test 5 – Make it Easy to Access
• Test 6 – Make it Easy to Use

#OpSummit
Research Notes:

Background:
- Response from site survey and usability focus groups suggested, 50+ found 9 point font size on site challenging to read content
- Background color behind text confused and caused further legibility issues
- Site usability study – focus groups (conducted every year) showed members interest in ability to share content via social media on health insurance coverage and education as part of AARP membership

Objective:
- Reduce site abandon and exit rates
- Drive higher awareness through incorporation of social media

Primary Research Question:
- Members adoption and usage of the ‘increase font size’ and ‘social media’ sharing feature

Test Design:
- Increased overall font size of text on site
- Ability to increase font size on all site pages
Control - Make it easy to read and share

Optimization Scenario

Readability Issue
1. Background grey color
2. 9 point font size
3. No ability to increase text size
4. Placement testing of email icon

Social Media Sharing
1. Members expressed interest in sharing content via feedback collected at focus groups and site surveys
Test 1 - Make it easy to read and share

Optimization Results
1. High adoption of increase text size option
2. Increased usage of Email capability
3. Growing Social media sharing usage

Incorporated feedback from focus group members recommendation on adding icon
Test 1 – Make it Easy to Read: Results

12% decrease in Page Bounce Rates

*as members can read the content*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make it Easy to Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control – 9 point font size, grey background color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment – 12 point font size, white background and text increase capability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What You Need to Understand: How users read and consume information.
Test 1 – Make it Easy to Read: Results

7% increase in Email Sharing
Prominent display of Email Share capability on the Test page

Over 3% adoption of Social Sharing
Test 2 – Make it Easy to Listen

Research Notes:

**Background**: AARP ASI digital properties serves as a gateway for our members to educate and learn about products, services and discounts. Usability studies conducted showed members interest in ability to listen to content on pages.

**Objective**: Improve member experience on ASI digital properties and reduce site abandon rates

**Primary Research Question**: Evaluate need and adoption of ‘content listening’ module

**Test Design**: A/B Test – Incorporate content listening module on test page; control pages did not have any module
Test 2 – Make it Easy to Listen

Optimization Results
Tested providing content listening capability resulting in over 3% adoption
Test 2 – Make it Easy to Listen: Results

5% click-through rate
On key product pages driving Web referrals; providers interested in integrating capabilities on their sites

What You Need to Understand: Listen to your member feedback and industry trends.
Test 3 – Make it Easy to Find

Research Notes:

**Background:** AARP Members found it difficult to locate products/services/discounts on ASI digital properties assessed through site metrics, focus groups and site survey.

**Objective:**
- Improve site navigation for members
- Provide clear paths for members to find products and education section
- Improve Web referral rates

**Primary Research Question:** Did you find what you were looking for?

**Test Design:**
- Tested two product focused navigation menus via focus group
- Evaluate effectiveness of new site navigation
Test 3 – Make it Easy to Find

Situation – Control
Site analytics and usability suggested visitors were not able to infer what content would be located in the main navigation sections.

Optimization Results – Test 1
Product- and category-focused navigation drew positive reaction. Users were able to infer what content would be located in the main navigation section (focus group was used to test effectiveness of new site navigation).

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Test 3 – Make it Easy to Find: Results

15% increase in Web referral rate
Product-focused navigation menu allowed easy access

Site navigation tested in focus group (Test 2 winner):

Member Feedback to control navigation: Grouping all products in a single category made it impossible to view product types at a glance

Member Feedback to Navigation Test 1: Separate category for Credit Cards and Services & Planning section nomenclature confused members

Member Feedback to Navigation Test 2: Participants were able to easily discern the range of products and services available under new categories
Test 4 – Make it Easy to Understand

Research Notes:

**Background:** Member confusion around site purpose through focus groups and site survey responses

**Objective:** Make it clear to understand the purpose of the site and what they get in a concise manner

**Primary Research Question:** Do you understand the purpose of the site?

**Test Design:** Conducted 2 focus groups (over 20 people – active Internet users, AARP and non members) to test various site value statements that expressed site purpose and placement on site
Test 4 – Make it Easy to Understand

Optimization Opportunity

Site value Statement: Explains clearly the value and purpose to site visitor (utilized on mobile and social as well)
70% responded positively to Statement #1
Responding favorably to the idea of the site as a “gateway” and characterization of the products as “trusted”

What You Need to Understand: Listen to members and their feedback.
Test 5 – Make it Easy to Access

**Research Notes:**

**Background:** No easy access from home page to find products and information users were coming to site to find
Test 5 – Make it Easy to Access

Pre-design Home Page Activity

Situation
1. No direct path to Product Pages
2. High usage of 800 #, Getting My Questions Answered (GMQA)

Post-design Home Page Activity

Optimization Opportunity
1. Quick links on home page driving over 50% clicks to product page
2. Reduced 800 # calls and visits to GMQA section

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Test 5 – Make it Easy to Access: Results

25% increase in Web Referrals
As members found their path to product and services on site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control – No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Added Quick Links for products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reduced billboard size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Optimized page content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Moved left navigation to top of page to be consistent with other pages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What You Need to Understand: Make it intuitive for members.
Research Notes:

**Background:** Site includes product finder tool to help members find products and services based on their age and state. Tool’s conversion metrics showed fall off at the last step in the process of starting search.

**Objective:** Improve conversion rate for product finder tool

**Primary Research Question:** Understand usage metrics for tools, fall off at every step.

**Test Design:** Simplify user experience and ascertain conversion rate
Test 6 – Make it Easy to Use

Old Version

Prior to optimization, 83% of customers complete the Product Finder Tool session.

Lost 11% of customers when they needed to enter age as they didn’t realize they needed to fill two fields.

New Version

95% of customers complete the Product Finder Tool session.

Prior to optimization, 83% of customers complete the Product Finder Tool session.
Test 6 – Make it Easy to Use

12% increase in conversion

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control – No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment – Provided choice to select for one or two. In addition, separated age selection criteria.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What You Need to Understand: Don’t ignore data and develop data insights review practice.
Make it easy to learn

Measure

Tools:
- Survey
- Metrics & Insights
- Usability

Optimize

Learn

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Questions?