

Company X Website Audit Report

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TECM 5200

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Executive Summary

I conducted a study of the Company X API Portal website that consisted of an inventory as well as a quantitative and qualitative assessment. I examined your site with the use of a search engine optimization (SEO) tool to find how many URLs were involved. The resulting list of URLs was narrowed to 316 text-based addresses. I assigned each URL an ID, and noted the content, purpose, and time of last update. In addition, I assessed your site for accessibility issues and compared it to a competitor site. While your site makes use of consistent branding throughout, I found issues with update documentation and a lack of consistent use of headers. I also found that your site uses a false bottom on the Product Catalog page, something that is seen as poor usability. Lastly, I discovered an issue with the way that links display on the Product Examples page. These inconsistencies can cause problems with mobile users or those that do not have the site in full-screen mode.

Introduction

Providing customers with an efficient, useful online experience is vital for a company's success. Understanding that your site is aimed at developers makes this fact even more important. This report describes the findings in a study of the Company X API Portal Product Collection. The results of my study suggest that your site has consistent imagery and branding throughout. I found that improvements in update documentation, consistent use of headers, elimination of false bottoms, removal of unsupported APIs, and uniform display of links would benefit your site.

Methodology

In our discovery meetings, you indicated that the Product Collection was a focus of your developer business. Additionally, you stressed the importance of functioning links. To address these areas, I decided to focus my efforts on the links within the Product Collection. I started the inventory process by inputting your Product Collection's IP address into an SEO spider. This search returned over 450 URLs. I created an Excel spreadsheet based on the information I generated using this process. Any non-text files were eliminated, which narrowed the focus of my audit to a total of 316 URLs.

To organize my study, I created the following columns in the Excel spreadsheet:

- ID#
- Title
- URL
- Content Description
- Purpose
- Findability
- Consistency
- Usability
- Notes
- Last Modified

For the next phase, I assigned ID numbers to each URL based on the page's targeted use. I gave each URL a number with a two-letter designation to represent its purpose. For example, I tabbed REST APIs with RT and SOAP APIs as SP. I then added numbers to indicate the position where I found the URL in the search process. This naming convention resulted in a final ID number such as RT5 to represent the fifth REST API that I tested. For the quantitative portion of the audit, I divided the URLs into a total of 20 different categories based on the results of the inventory. I organized these categories into separate sheets in the spreadsheet so that they would be easier searchability.

For the next phase, I conducted a qualitative audit of the URLs. To simplify the audit process, I developed and used a rating system to evaluate the pages by the following categories: Findability, Consistency, and Usability. I assigned each of these categories a numerical value to represent how well the pages functioned. I used a simple 1-3 scale with 1 representing poor and 3 indicating excellent. This is shown in Figure 1 below.

The image shows a portion of a spreadsheet with multiple columns. A green circle is drawn around a cell in the first column. Several cells in the second column are highlighted in red, indicating specific data points or errors. The spreadsheet appears to be organized into rows, likely representing individual URLs being audited.

Figure 1 - Columns with ratings for URLs

In some cases, I would also consider audience and channel when conducting an audit. Since your website is targeted at developers only, this did not seem to be necessary since only developers will use the site. As a result, I eliminated these two categories.

For the next part of study, I pasted each URL into a search window to test functionality. I made notes and observations based on the performance and characteristics of the page. I used the Content Description column to provide a summary of the information on the page. The Purpose column describes the main function of the page. I added this information to the spreadsheet which resulted in a final total of 21 separate sheets. A portion of this information is listed in the Appendix and I include my spreadsheet as an addendum to this report so that you can look through it.

I wanted to get a more well-rounded view of your website, so I decided to perform two additional studies. To analyze how the site performs for users with disabilities, I decided to evaluate your site for

accessibility. I did this by using [Wave](#), a web accessibility evaluation tool. Finally, I did a comparison of your site with a competitor site. I focused on Competitor A as the competitor site and analyzed how their site and API offerings were organized. I did this as a broad overview as opposed to the more granular study of your offerings.

Findings

I found that the most notable aspect your site is the fact that the branding of pages is consistent across the entire platform. I tested a total of 316 links and only found 2 links that did not display with the Company X background and font. This is most likely because these are XML files only, but it was not clear by the audit where these pages were linked. These findings are noted in Figure 2 below.

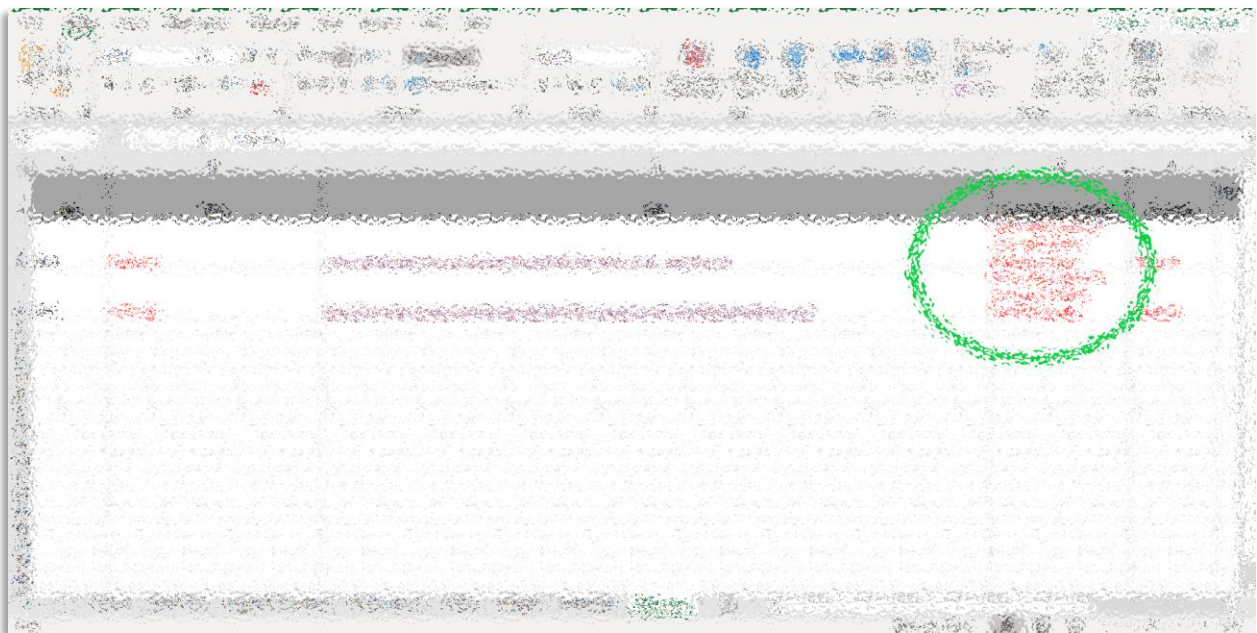


Figure 2 - Notation of site page lack of imagery

While consistent imagery is important, the consistency of site URLs is also a necessary element of a well-designed website. None of the URLs I tested lead to sites outside of Company X API Portal. Links that did not leave your site was something that you indicated was important in our meetings. Also, none of the tested URLs are broken meaning that each of the 316 URLs leads directly to a destination.

I put notes about each link that I investigated in the accompanying Excel spreadsheet. For example, some of the sections with links for login or notes about updates do not seem pertinent to your needs so they are not included in this part of the report. Based on my findings, I concluded the following sections are the most relevant to your stated needs, so I highlight them here.

Product Collection [PC0 – PR40]

I focused this study on the Product Collection since you indicated its importance. I learned that this page functions well in most instances. I found that update notes are missing from several pages, an unsupported API is still accessible, and the Examples provided on the Product page display in a confusing format. This final point is a significant issue.

Since the Product Collection is important, providing functioning APIs to your developers is an obvious priority. A REST API, Get Product Q, indicates that it is no longer supported, and developers are instructed to use V2. This is shown in Figure 3.

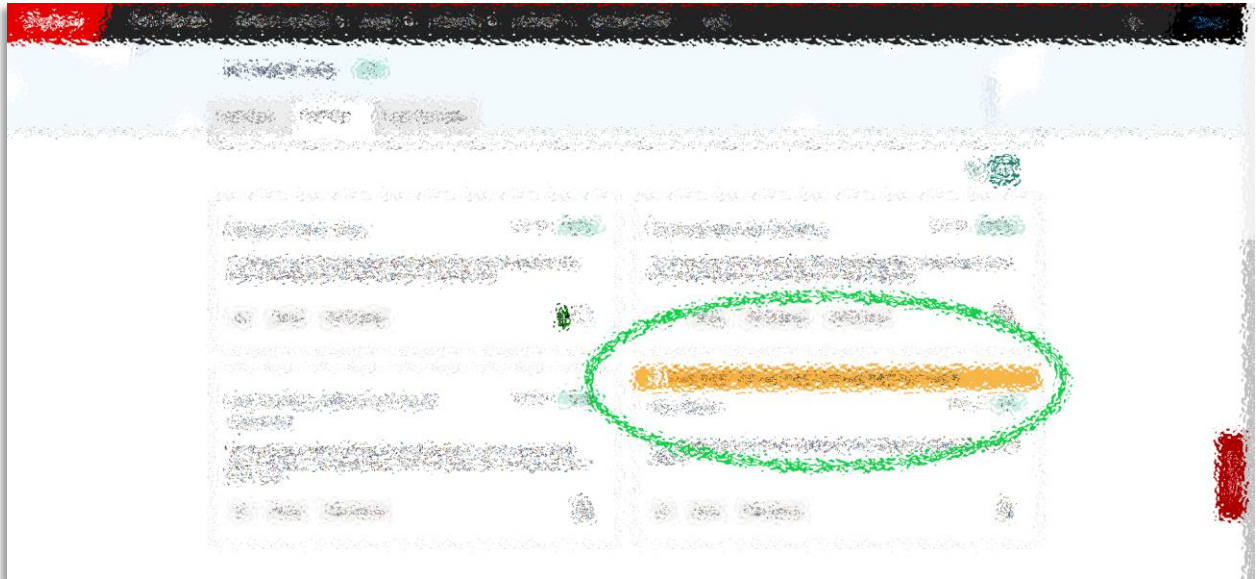


Figure 3 - Unsupported API appearing in Feature Z Search Suite

I clicked on this API and was taken to a subsequent page that restates the fact that this API is not supported. To improve the user experience, simply removing the outdated API and replacing it with the updated version is a more efficient move and one that will ultimately benefit your developers.

I noticed that there are many examples on the Product Examples page. These examples seem helpful and allow your customers the ability to access Company X technologies as “discrete services.” While this is a valuable resource, I realized that the way that these links display when selected is confusing. When the page is full-screen and an example is selected, it displays to the immediate right. I show this in Figure 4.

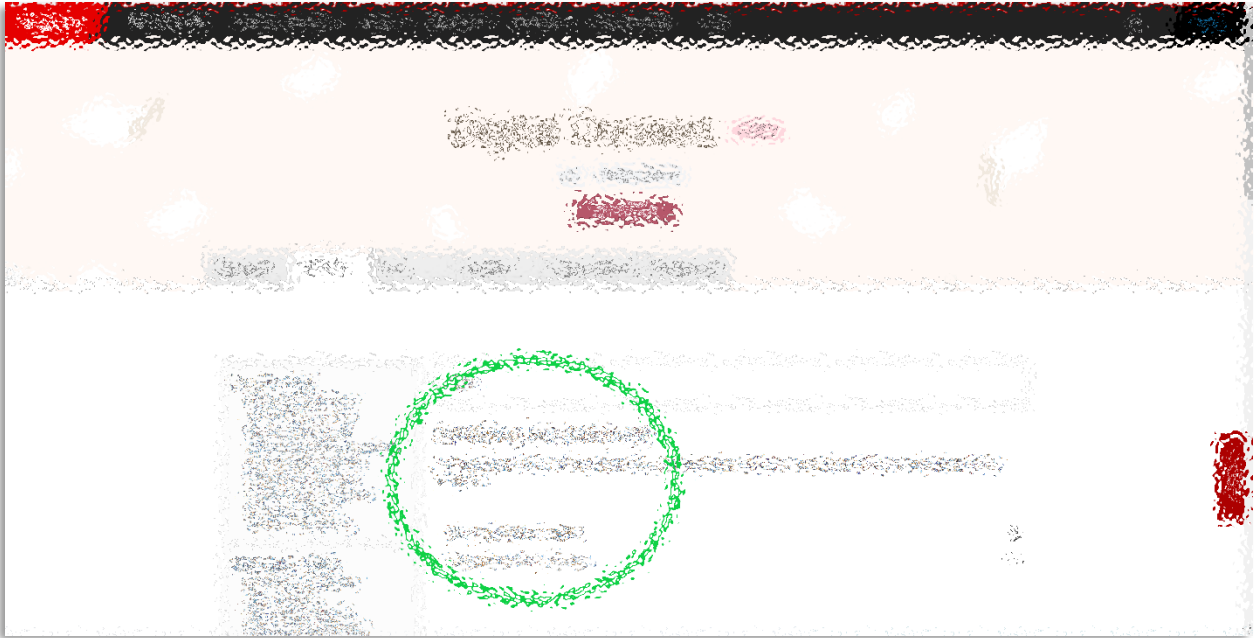


Figure 4 - Example displays next to menu in full-screen view

If your user is not using full-screen or if the page is accessed on a mobile device, the examples display at the bottom of the page as shown in Figure 5.

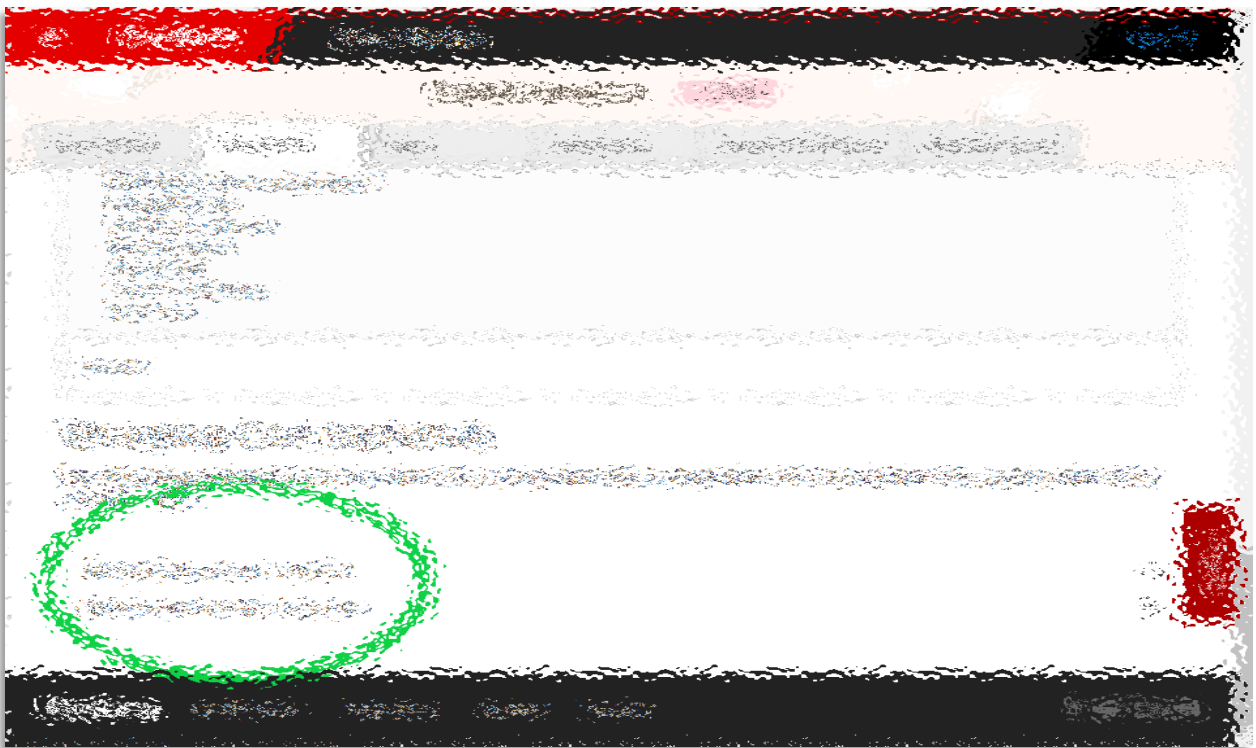


Figure 5- Examples displayed at bottom of page

I believe that this resizing issue can cause significant usability issues. Unless your user is familiar with the way your site functions, it appears as if none of the links in the left-hand menu work when they access the site in anything besides full-screen mode. This was my assumption when I first used the page. Having the examples appear on a subsequent web page regardless of the mode the screen is in would allow your users to have a more consistent experience and minimize any confusion.

Blog [BG0 - BG10]

Your blog pages provide convenient insights and updates for your developers. I found that the imagery and font use on these pages is consistent. When I conducted the inventory, I found that most of the pages provide dates of the last update. I did find that this information was lacking on the blog post landing page. I show this in the spreadsheet as indicated in Figure 6.

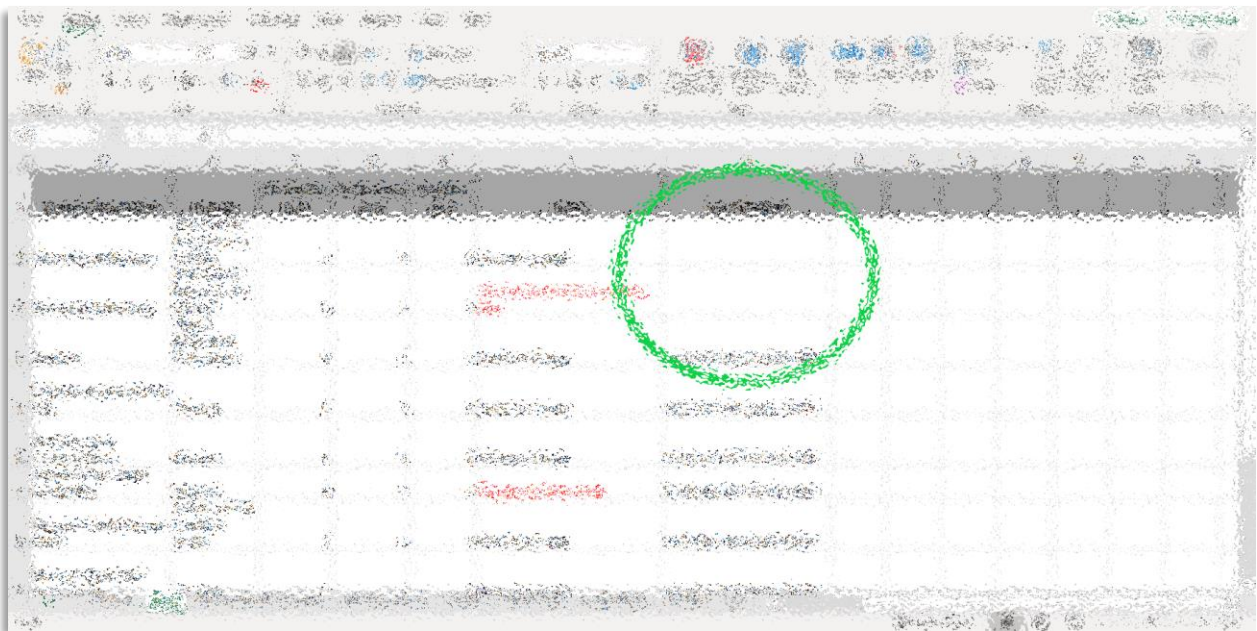


Figure 6- Lack of update information for blog landing pages

The remaining pages in the blog section offer valuable insights for developers. One page provides users with information about the Developer Partner Network, something that I learned is a recent effort by Company X that started in October 2020. Aside from the lack of update information on the homepage, I found that this section does not present any significant issues and instead provides an accessible forum for developers.

Developer Guides and Concepts [DG0 - DG20, CP0]

Your developer guides and concepts provide developers using your site with information about products and concepts that they may encounter in the Aspect B industry. This is very valuable, particularly for new developers. The main issue I discovered with these pages was the fact that the H1 title never coincided with the true title of the page. All the pages displayed in this section have “Guides” listed at

the top of the page while the true title of the page was at a lower HTML level. I included Figure 7 as proof of this issue.

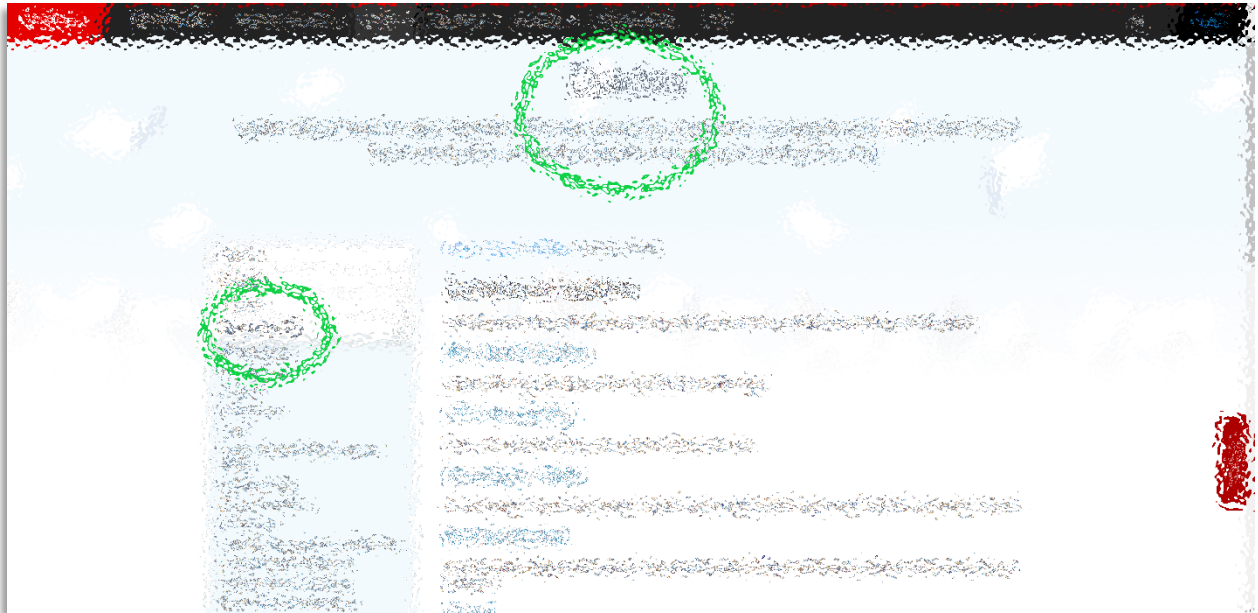


Figure 7- Main H1 title does not match title of page

I initially had trouble finding the Developer Guides from the main page. This was compounded by the discrepancy between the H1 heading displayed and the actual title of the page. Restructuring the main menu to include Developer Guides as opposed to the generic term Guides would make for a more user-friendly experience. This change should also carry over to each of the individual pages in the Developer Guide so that the function of each page is displayed as the primary heading of the page.

Product Catalog [PR0 – PR6]

In our meetings, you indicated that the Product Catalog is the main source for your APIs. My initial view of the main landing page showed that there are a total of 455 different results relating to the Product Catalog. Fortunately, I found no major problems in the Product Catalog. I did find several minor issues. As a result of the inventory, I learned that none of the dates for last update are noted. This is shown in Figure 8.

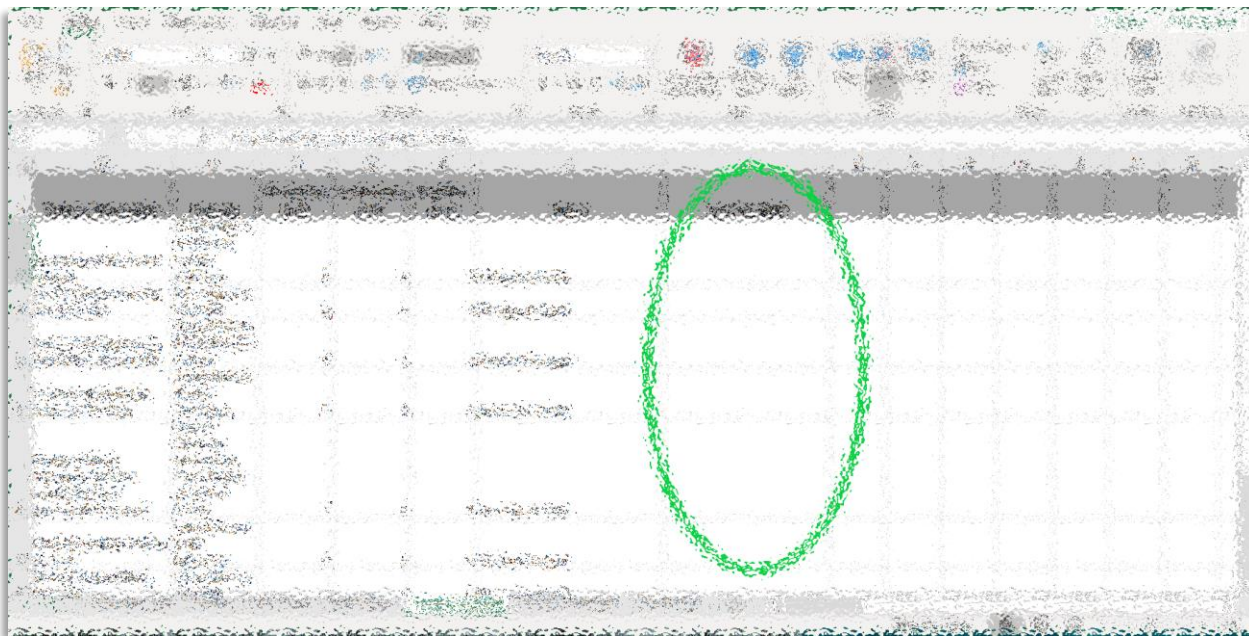


Figure 8- No information for last update

Since this information would be valuable to your developers, it should be added. Another issue I found with several pages of the Product Catalog is the concept of a “false bottom.” An example of this is on the main landing page. When the page is displayed, the scroll bar to the right indicates that there is not much below the section that is above the fold. Figure 9 shows how this appears in a browser.

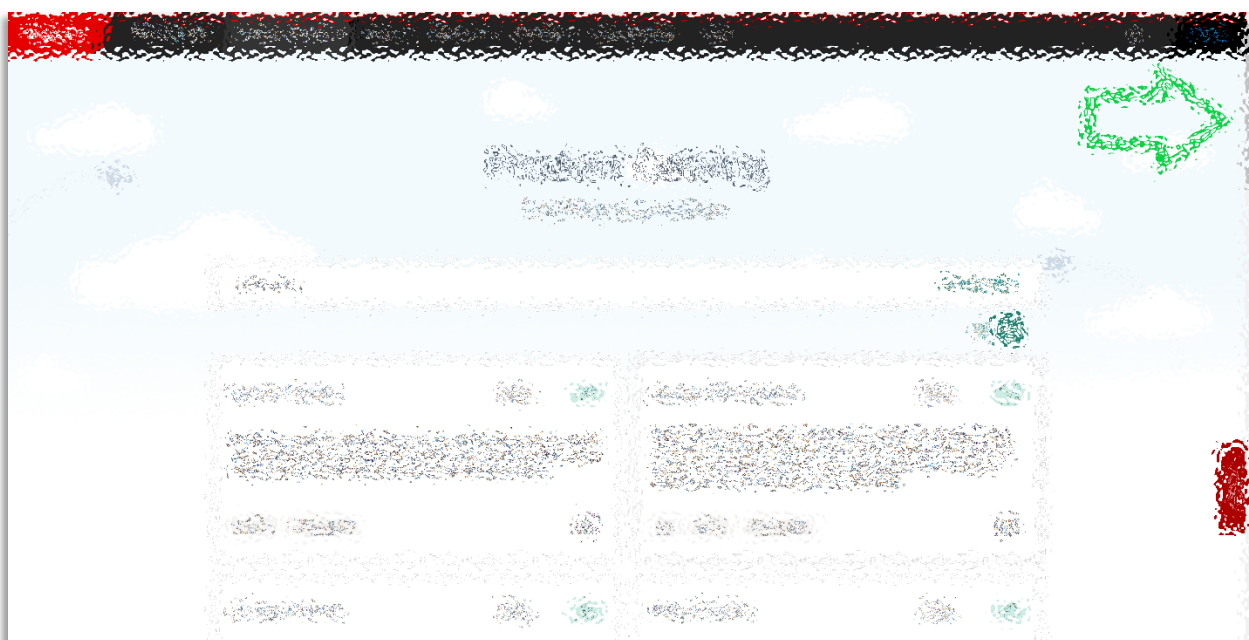


Figure 9- Initial position of scroll bar

After scrolling to what I assumed to be the bottom of the page, the scroll continued. This is shown in Figure 10.

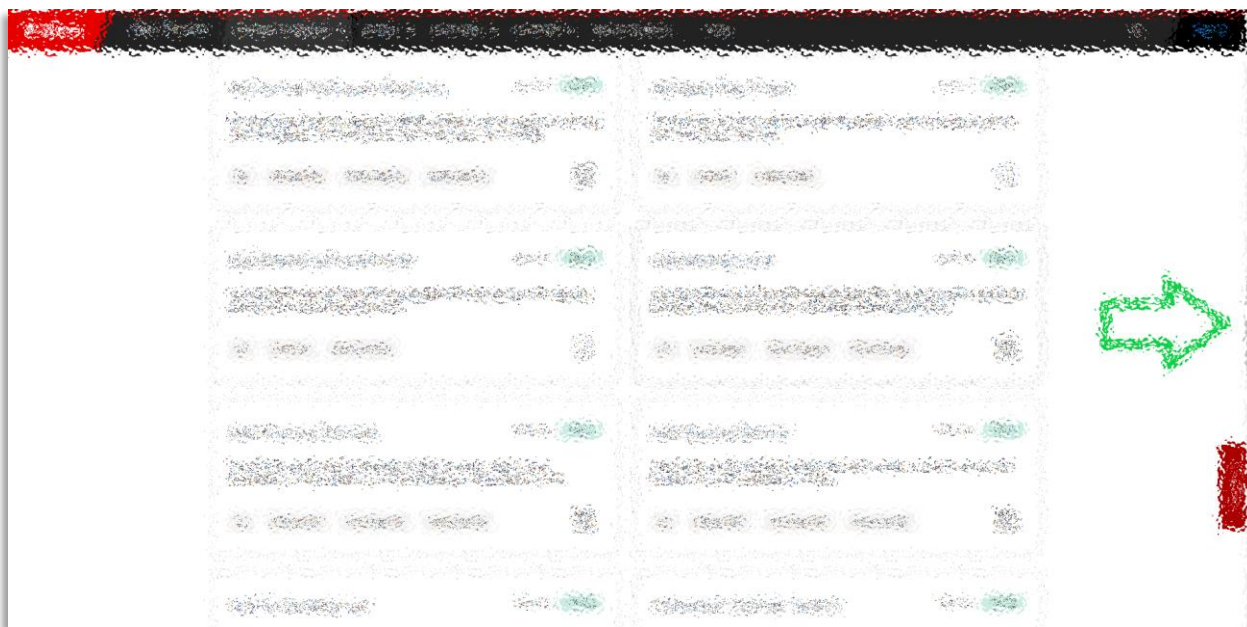


Figure 10- Scroll past assumed end of page with position of bar noted

An unfortunately common usability problem is the use of the false bottom. Users scroll to the apparent end of the page only to see that the page continues. This has been shown to frustrate users and makes usability on mobile devices more complicated. By breaking the page into several different pages with links at the true bottom of the page, your users would have a more satisfying experience.

Accessibility

I did not find any significant issues regarding the accessibility check. Contrast errors were noted 3 times. This indicates that your users that have low vision might experience issues when using your site. The only other issue of note was an empty header on the main Product Catalog page. This is shown in Figure 11.

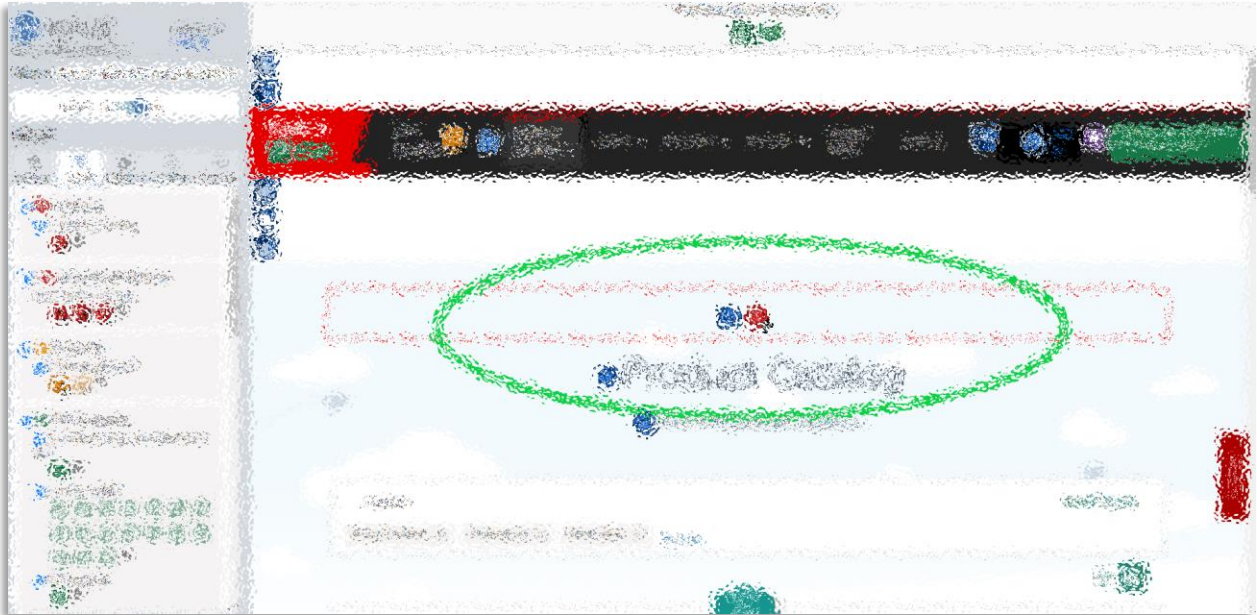


Figure 11 - Empty header found with accessibility search

Some users navigate by headers and an empty header can lead to confusion. Populating this header with text would be a way to solve this problem and increase usability of your site.

Comparison with Competitor

I decided to examine Competitor A since they are a competitor and offer APIs addressing many of the same needs that Company X does. Despite this, I found that Company X offers significantly more APIs than Competitor A. While you currently offer 455 different APIs, Competitor A offers 16. An area of interest is the way that Competitor A combines their APIs. Bundled APIs are referred to as “Kits.” This is shown in Figure 12.



Figure 12 - Competitor A APIs listed in "Kits"

Company X APIs are grouped in Collections, a similar structure to the kits that Competitor A offers. While your site provides more robust offerings, Collections might be a slightly confusing term. By using "Kits," Competitor A implies that they are providing users with something to build on. Renaming Collections to a comparable name might provide developers with a more coherent view of your offerings.

Conclusion

Your website provides developers with a large selection of APIs with which to work. Imagery and branding throughout the site are consistent and leave no doubt as to which site the user is on. Administrators of the site should consider improvements in update documentation, a more consistent use of headers, elimination of the false bottom on pages, removal of APIs that are no longer supported, and a consistent display of links. Since Company X is already a leader in the industry, implementing these changes would serve to further distance from the competition.

Appendix

ID#	Title	URL	Content Description	Purpose	Feasibility (1-3)	Consistency (1-3)	Usability (1-3)	Notes	Last Modified
PC0			Landing page for Product Catalog	List and links to all APIs and Product Collection	3	3	3	URL takes user to same Product Catalog page as previous link (PC0)	
PC1			Agency Profiles in product collection	Provide a package of services for users	3	3	3		Fr, 02 Apr 2021 15:50:59 GMT
PC1.1			Product Catalog showing only REST APIs	List and links to REST APIs	3	3	3	URL takes user to same Product Catalog page as previous link (PC1)	
PC2			Allows customers to use Sabre technologies as discrete services	For airlines - allows them to write own client software	3	1	2	Unwanted pop-up about satisfaction w/Digital Connect	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:00:13 GMT
PC3			Online travel agent Product Collection API	Sabre basics for Online Travel Agencies	3	3	3	Consistent with other API pages	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:00:17 GMT
PC4			Digital Connect Check-in API in Product Collection	API for passenger check in	3	3	3	Unwanted pop-up about satisfaction w/Digital Connect	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:01:00 GMT
PC5			Content Services for Lodging in Product Collection	Lodging related APIs	3	3	3	APIs for lodging related issues	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:01:30 GMT
PC6			Agency Profiles in product collection	Overview of travel industry	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:02:14 GMT
PC6.1			Product Catalog listing SOAP APIs	List and Links to SOAP APIs	3	3	3	URL takes user to same Product Catalog page as previous link (PC6)	
PC7			Product collection agency profiles	List of profiles	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:02:16 GMT
PC7			Account login page for developers	Account login	3	3	3	No issues on page	
PC8			loyalty Management/Hospitality profile API	Allows viewing of agent and profile	3	3	3	No issues on page Seems like one of the more important offerings, first mention of bundled APIs	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:02:34 GMT
PC9			Agency Sabre Basics	Sabre in-a-box bundle	3	3	3		Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:23 GMT
PC10			Car booking API in product collection	Car rental API	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:24 GMT
PC11			Passenger Name Record Collection API	Bundle that is for ordering a flight (SOAP and REST APIs)	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:25 GMT
PC12			Airline Profiles product collection	Suite instead of bundle (difference?)	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:26 GMT
PC13			Inspirational Search and Intelligence APIs	API to improve customer planning	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:26 GMT
PC14			for Search Suite API in Product Collection	Bundle that is for ordering a flight (SOAP and REST APIs)	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:27 GMT
PC15			Air Search Suite setup and guide	Instructions for setting up air search suite	3	3	3	Suite and bundle? Use consistent terminology	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:33 GMT
PC16			Inspirational Search and Intelligence APIs reference page	API to improve customer planning	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:37 GMT
PC17			Digital Connect Help	Help for digital connect API	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:41 GMT
PC18			Reference page for Agency Sabre Basics	Reference page for Agency Sabre Basics	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:43 GMT
PC18			Car Product Collection Reference page	Reference for product collection for car API	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:47 GMT
PC19			Reference page for Sabre Basics for Online Travel Agents	Workflow and API information	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:48 GMT
PC20			Reference page for Content Services for Lodging	Workflow and API information	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:49 GMT
PC21			Inspirational Search and Intelligence API Setup and Guide	Setup guide for Inspirational Search and Intelligence APIs	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:49 GMT
PC22			for Search Suite API reference page	Workflow and API information	3	2	2	Get Seats Rest API no longer supported but still appears on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:53 GMT
PC23			Digital Connect Check-in Release notes	Release notes for Digital Connect	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:57 GMT
PC24			Digital Connect Check-in Setup and Guide	Help for Digital Connect Check in	3	1	1	Just refers user back to help tab	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:57 GMT
PC25			Digital Connect Check-in Reference page	Reference page for Digital Connect Check in	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:03:59 GMT
PC26			Digital Connect Setup and Guides	Setup and guide for digital connect	3	2	2	Refers back to help tab, but links are active and relevant	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:03 GMT
PC27			Sabre Basics for Online Travel Agents Setup and Guides	Guide to build APIs	3	3	3	Links lead to help subjects	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:03 GMT
PC28			Digital Connect Reference page	Reference page for Digital Connect product collection	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:04 GMT
PC29			Car Product Collection Setup and Guides page	Setup page	3	1	1	Page is blank	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:05 GMT
PC30			Passenger Name Record Collection Setup and Guides	Setup and guide with working links	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:05 GMT
PC31			Content Services for Lodging Setup and Guides	Setup and guide information with working links	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:06 GMT
PC32			Digital Connect Product Collection Examples	Allows airlines to present offers and give passengers ability to build/book itinerary	3	3	3	Page is under "Examples" tab, but 1 does not show examples	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:07 GMT
PC33			Digital Connect Check-in Product Collection Help	Check-In API Help	3	3	3	Page is under "Help" tab but 1 provides no help on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:07 GMT
PC34			Passenger Name Record Collection	SOAP and REST APIs for Passenger Name Record Collection	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:11 GMT
PC35			Agency Sabre Basics Setup and Guides page	Guide for Sabre basics to help developers get started	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:12 GMT
PC36			Airline Profiles Setup and Guides	Page w/links to help developers get started	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:14 GMT
PC37			Airline Profiles Reference page	SOAP APIs relating to Airline profiles	3	3	3	No issues on page	Fr, 02 Apr 2021 16:04:15 GMT
PC38			Content Services for Lodging (CSL)	Helps find properties	3	3	3	No issues on page	
PC39			Air Search Suite References	Reference page for Air Search Suite	3	3	2	Get Seats Rest API no longer supported but still appears on page	
PC40			Passenger Name Record References	Reference page for Passenger Name Record Collection	3	3	3	No issues on page	