

# Customer Experience & Continuous Improvement: The USPS® Digital Approach

Digital.gov University - UX Community of Practice  
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# PRESENTER INTROS



## Matt Petrowski

- Program Manager, Digital Analytics
- Began digital career in 2007
- Interested in how digital social mediums modify interpersonal behaviors



## Jeff Pass (contractor)

- UX Team Lead, USPS.com®
- Began digital career in 1997
- Interested in the hybrid of government UX and CX: citizen experience



## Alex Turgeon (contractor)

- UX Business Team Lead, USPS.com®
- Began digital career in 2015
- Interested in the intersection of data analytics & UX to empower the digital citizen

# AGENDA



- Meet Your Presenters
- Background: USPS.com<sup>®</sup>
- The USPS<sup>®</sup> Customer Experience Continuous Improvement Approach
- 2020: Lessons Learned (So Far...)
- Appendices

**Note:** For this presentation, we've tried to keep this discussion lively and have included some fun imagery. Unless otherwise noted, all imagery is the property of USPS<sup>®</sup>, the Smithsonian National Postal Museum, or the presenters. See [Appendix 4: Image & Figure Citations](#) for additional details.

CX & CI: The USPS® Digital Approach

# **BACKGROUND: USPS.COM®**



USPS.com is an important and ever-growing part of the daily USPS delivery.

# A DAY IN THE LIFE

## USPS ORGANIZATION

**472.1 Million**

TOTAL MAILPIECES

**181.9 Million**

FIRST-CLASS MAILPIECES

**\$236 Million**

DAILY AVERAGE REVENUE

Source: Postal Service, United States. "A Day in the Life." Postal Facts - U.S. Postal Service, United States Postal Service, 6 Nov. 2020, facts.usps.com/one-day/

## USPS WEBSITE

**7.1 Million**

SESSIONS ON USPS.COM

**\$890,000**

ONLINE SALES PER DAY

**57%** MOBILE

**3%** TABLET

**40%** DESKTOP



Source: United States Postal Service. "A Day in the Life." Postal Facts - U.S. Postal Service, United States Postal Service, 6 Nov. 2020, facts.usps.com/one-day/

Source: Google Analytics - Device Category for FY2020



# THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FY20 – FY24

**Goal 1:** Deliver World Class Customer Service

**Goal 2:** Equip, Connect, Engage, and Empower Employees to Best Serve USPS® Customers

**Goal 3:** Innovate Faster to Deliver Value

**Goal 4:** Invest in Our Future Platforms

**Goal 5:** Support the Legislative and Regulatory Changes to Enable This Vision



# THE IMPACT OF USPS.COM®

We play a critical role in achieving the USPS® mission: provide a reliable, affordable, universal service that binds the nation together.<sup>1</sup>

- 24-hour access to USPS products and services
- 40 million transactions per month<sup>2</sup>
- 9 years of steady growth; \$1 billion+ in transactions 3 of the past 4 years<sup>2</sup>
- Key enabler to meeting USPS's "Ready-Now > Future-Ready" goals<sup>3</sup>, especially those related to CX
- A major success story at a time when USPS faces unprecedented market and legislative challenges
- Reduces burden on Post Office™ Locations and Operations
- Provides USPS with opportunities to gain competitive advantages, drives revenue, and improves overall CX
- Cultural relevance

1. Paraphrased for brevity

2. Source: USPS Customer Payment Team

3. USPS Five-Year Strategic Plan, FY2020-FY2024



# ■ USPS.COM® FRAMING



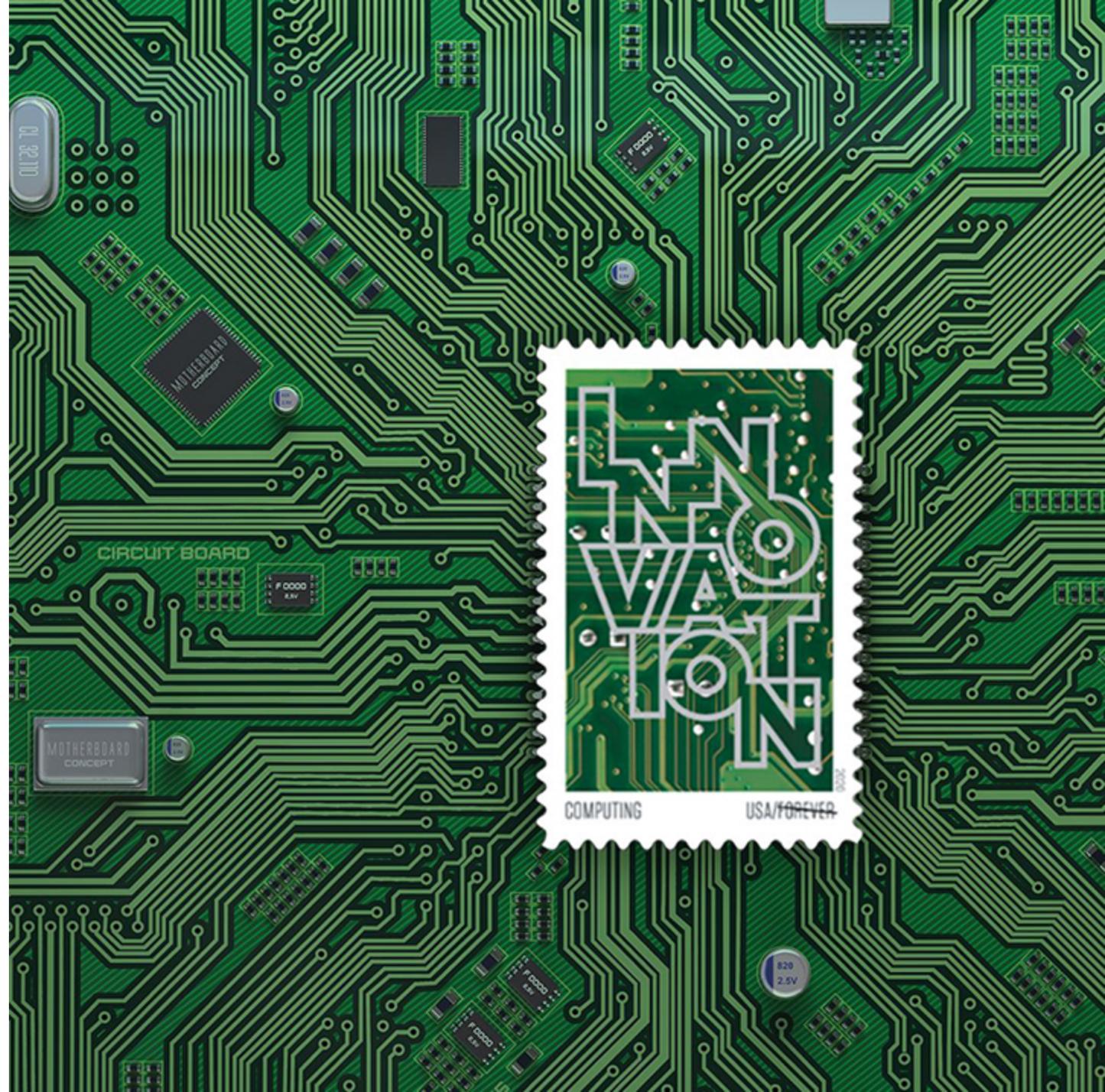
The digital storefront for USPS® and a unique Federal Government website:

- Collaboration with foreign counterparts, direct competitors and partners, and ecommerce sites
- Straddles the world of .gov and retail websites
- Audience: the American public (residential consumers), small and medium businesses, as well as foreign shippers
- Constantly evolving, but at a slow, deliberate pace (7 site ‘designs’ in 23 years, most recently in 2019)
- Always adding new content and functionality, but not necessarily pages

# USPS.COM® HISTORY & INNOVATION

USPS.com went live in the fall of 1997. It was an ecommerce site from day one.

Let's take a quick look at some of the USPS.com homepage designs over time and how the homepage (and larger site) has evolved over the last 23 years...



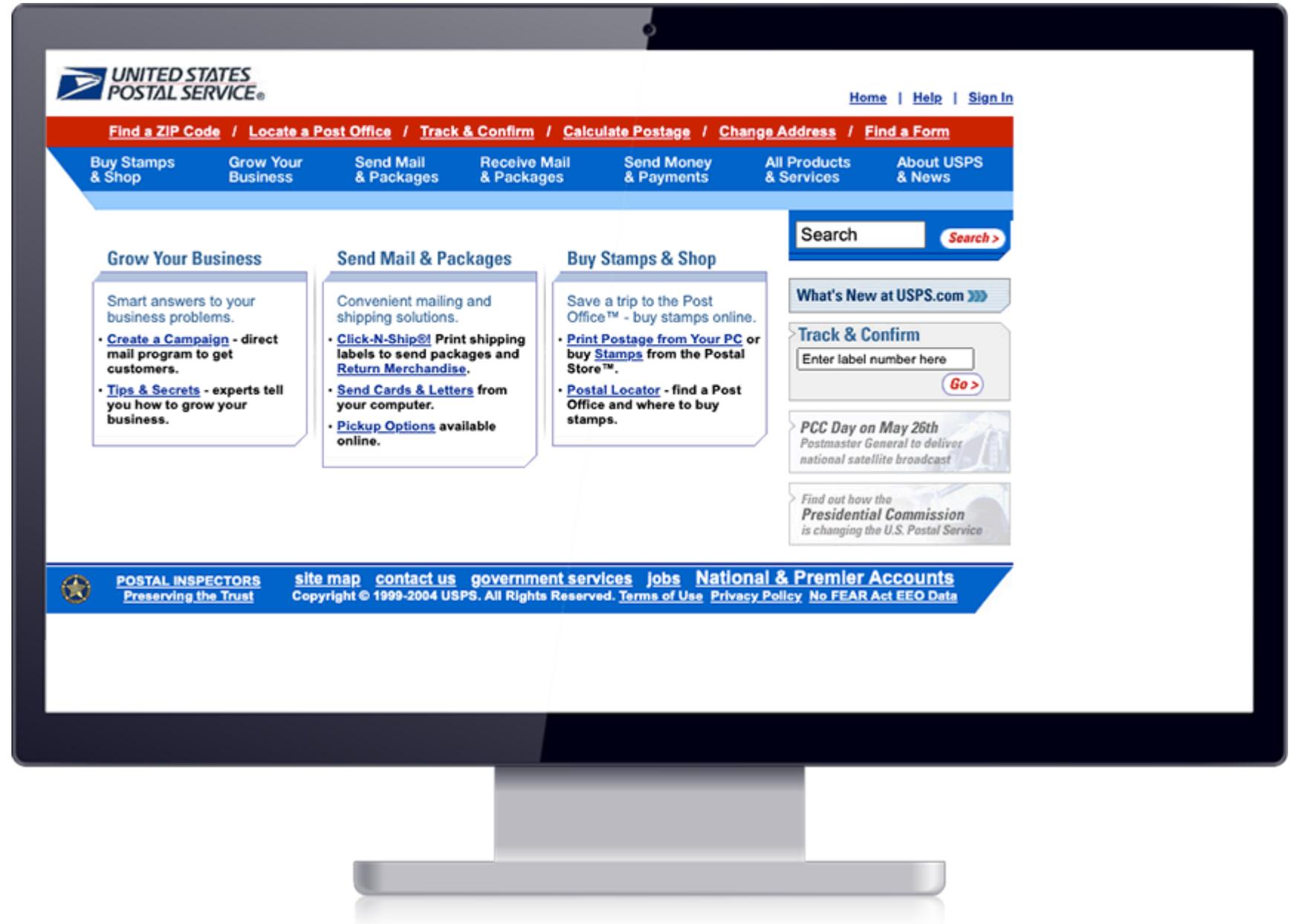
# USPS.COM® CIRCA 1997

- Version 1.0
- Postage (paid shipping labels) and stamps available for sale
- Key tools and applications introduced; many in the header navigation
- Yes, the background did tile in perpetuum...



# USPS.COM® CIRCA 2003

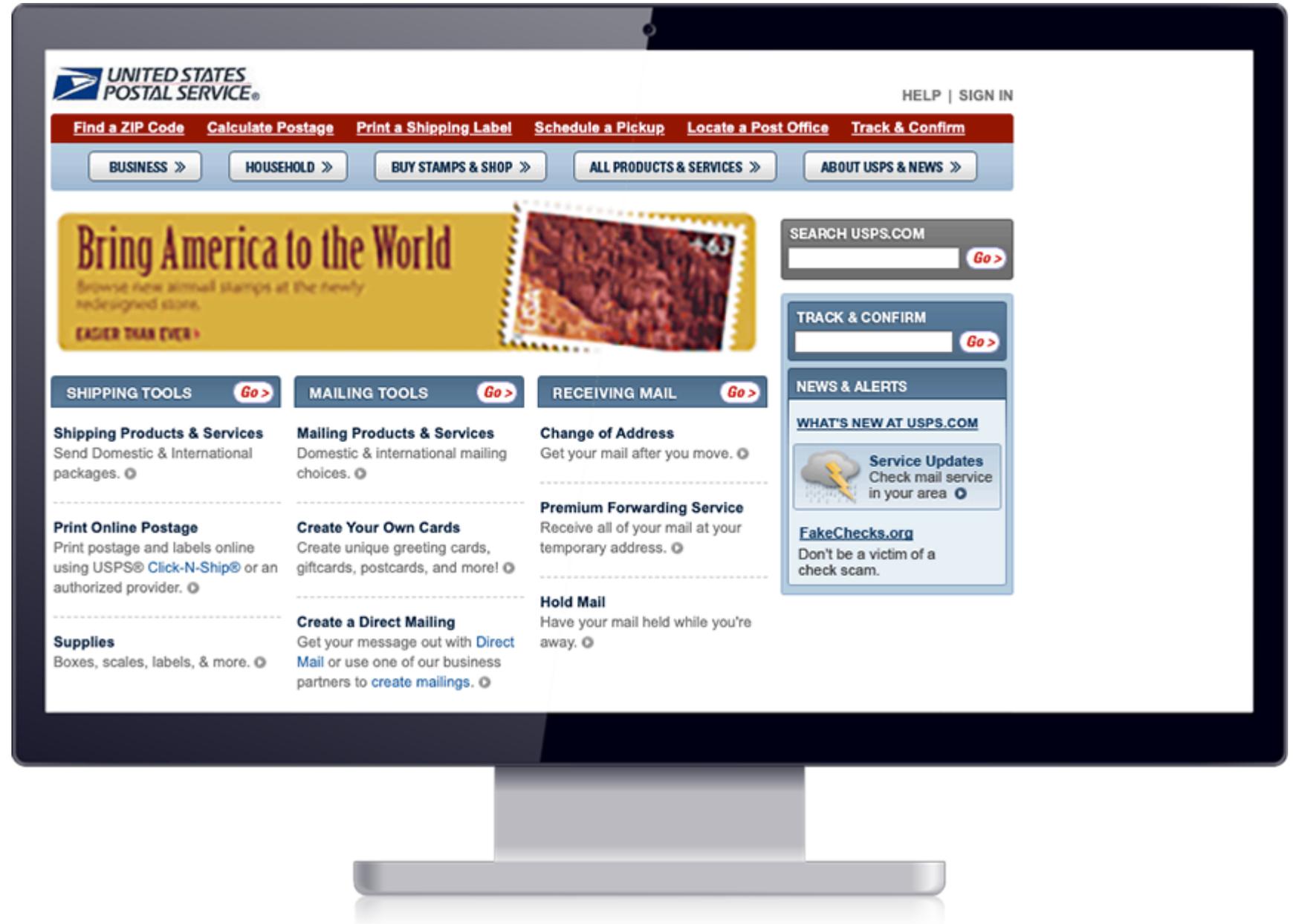
- Expanded content and functionality (but not max screen width)
- Evolution of the navigation to include 'rows' of navigation links
- Move toward increased information density



# USPS.COM® CIRCA 2007

Introduction of...

- The utility bar navigation
- Audience segmentation (residential consumers & business)
- ***THE BANNER!***



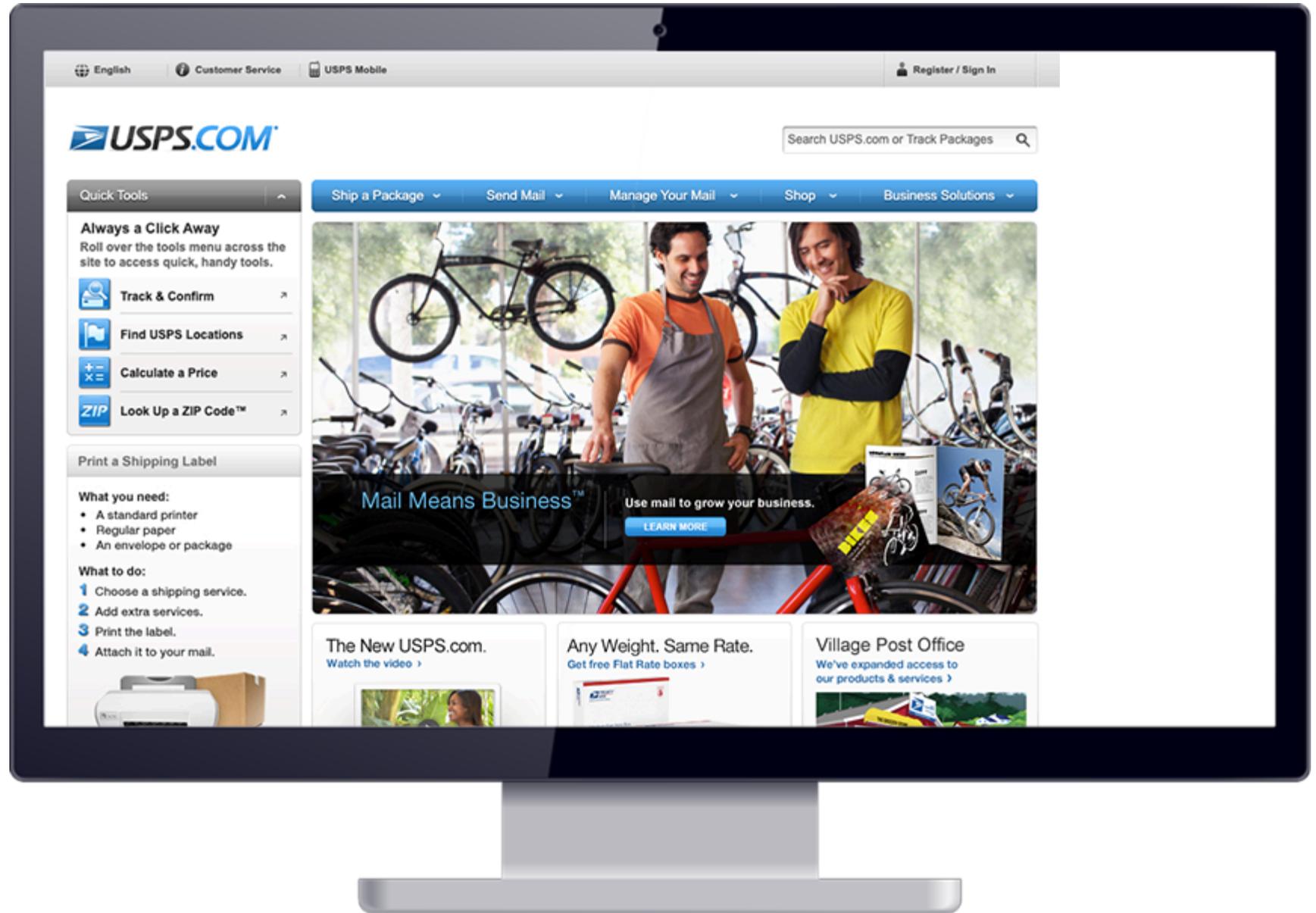
# USPS.COM® CIRCA 2008

- Refresh of 2007
- New emphasis on product imagery and promotion
- The banner grows and becomes a carousel (with up to 10 'slides')
- Centered body content, but still based on a narrow max width



# USPS.COM® CIRCA 2011

- Beginning of 'lifestyle' and small business focus, including an emphasis on diversity (as policy)
- Introduction of Quick Tools menu
- Move toward modular design and reusable components



# USPS.COM® CIRCA 2014

## ‘Site Simplification’:

- Reduced site from ~250 to 50 pages
- Beginning of focus on mobile
- First full-width (desktop) design
- Quick Tools menu
- Retired carousel; introduced ‘heroes’
- Introduced ‘cards’
- Start of ‘false floor’ dilemma



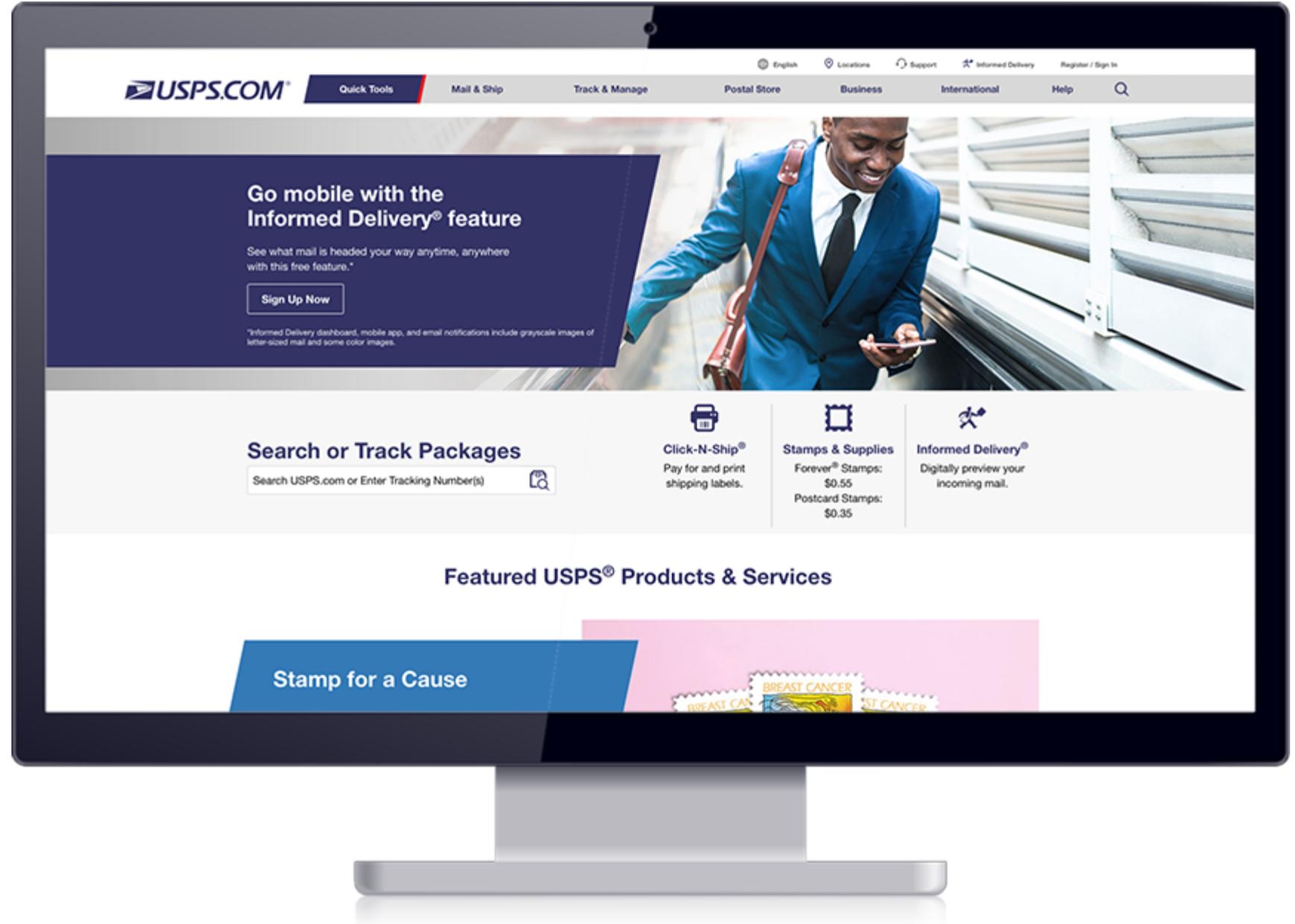
# USPS.COM® CIRCA 2018

- Introduced new megamenu navigation, USPS® Digital palette, and modular UI components
- Said goodbye to custom/premium fonts (to promote uniform CX)



# USPS.COM® CIRCA 2019

- Fully mobile responsive
- Design system-based
- Added configurable promos and removed promo carousels
- In 2020, we also introduced new primary navigation categories
- Data-driven design approach

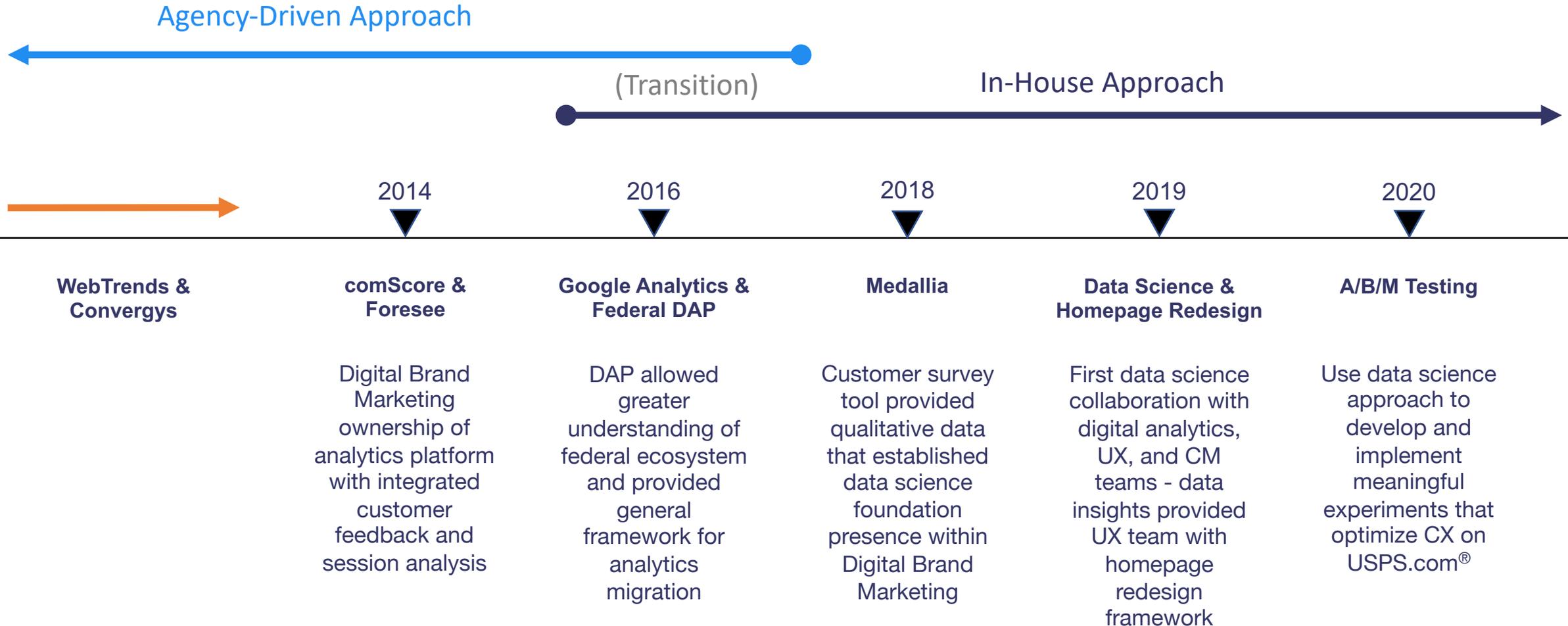


CX & CI: The USPS® Digital Approach



**THE USPS® CUSTOMER  
EXPERIENCE CONTINUOUS  
IMPROVEMENT APPROACH**

# A BRIEF HISTORY: ANALYTICS & CUSTOMER FEEDBACK



# HONING THE USPS® DIGITAL ANALYTICS APPROACH

1. Provide mail service information while generating revenue\*
2. Our approach took time and continues to evolve
3. Data science is a game-changer

\* Recent USPS partnership with CASETiFY (right)



# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AT USPS.COM®

## Imperatives of CX

**Audience:** USPS® has constant (often daily) interactions with the American Public, businesses, and shippers worldwide

**Expectations:** we are judged against customers last, best CX, and must adapt and evolve accordingly

**Value:** we must deliver both value and valued digital experiences

**Mission:** uphold and promote the USPS mission and values

## CX Priorities

**Service:** serve our customers and recognize them as the heart of USPS.com

**Listening:** use quantitative and qualitative data to drive and measure CX

**Consistency:** ensure brand cohesion, a unified UX, and a consistent, accessible, usable experience through the domain

**Sustainability:** continuously deliver services while helping to modernize/digitize key USPS interactions and services

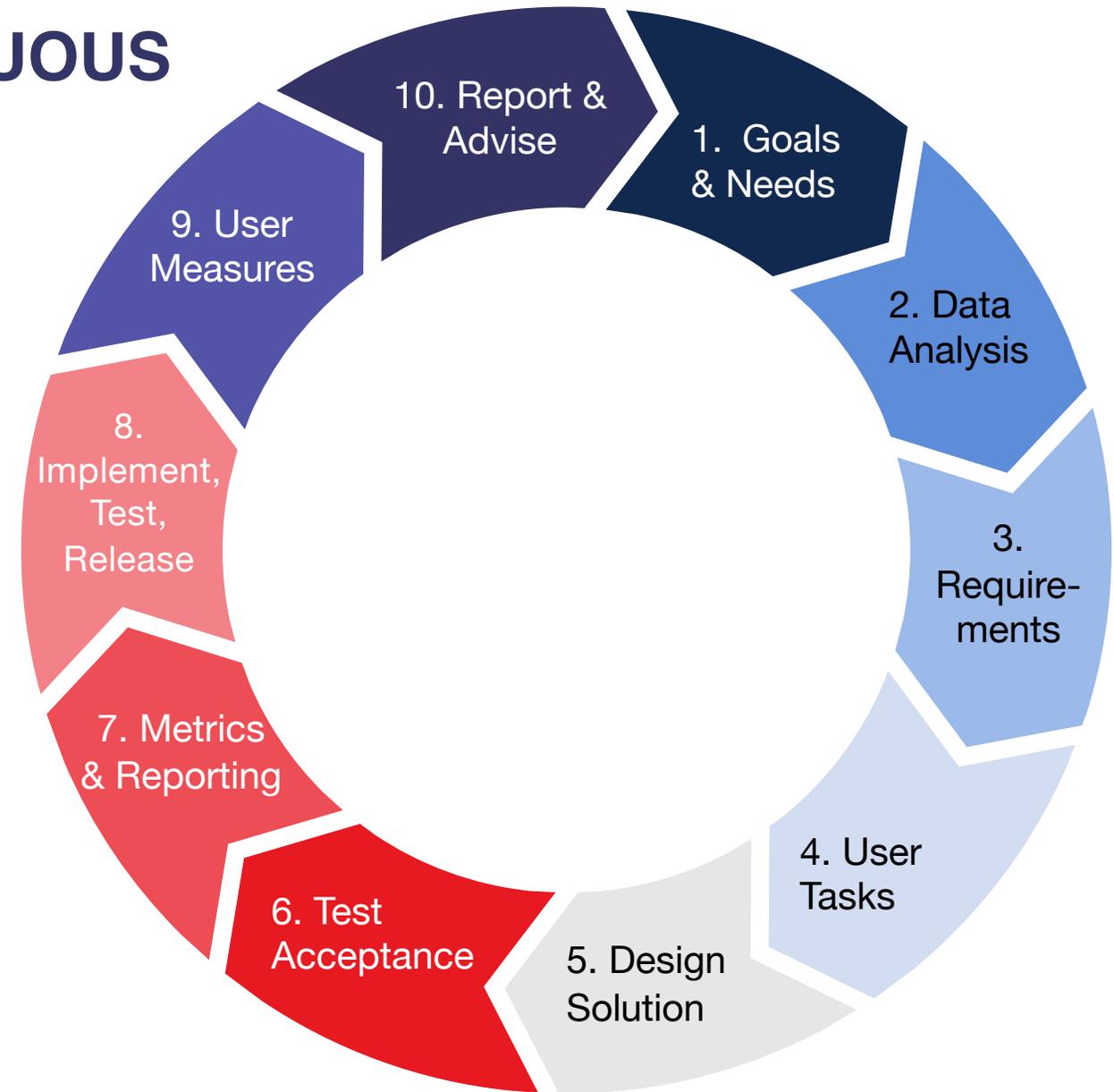
**Inform:** provide leadership with current, accurate, actionable intelligence to drive CX

**Promote:** USPS, customer relations, content, services, and, of course, CX

# THE USPS® DIGITAL CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT APPROACH

Our 10 step CI approach combines UX and CX tools, techniques, and best practices to monitor, improve, and evolve the USPS.com® domain.

1. Goals & Needs
2. Data Analysis
3. Requirements
4. User Tasks
5. Design Solution
6. Test Acceptance
7. Metrics & Reporting
8. Implement, Test, Release
9. User Measures
10. Report & Advise



# ■ USPS.COM® CI APPROACH: UX-FOCUSED STEPS

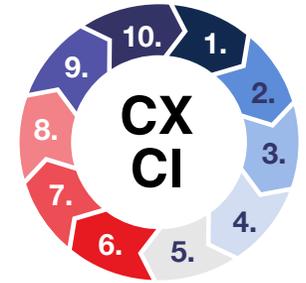
**Discover:** Objectives, requirements, devices, and technologies; create roadmaps

**Analyze:** Use quantitative and qualitative data to identify issues and opportunities

**Advocate:** Focus on the user; avoid unnecessary effort, complexity, and functionality

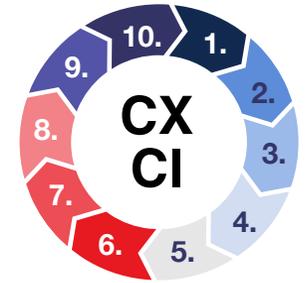
**Design:** Design for simplicity, usability, scannability, and minimal cognitive load

**Assess:** Test solutions iteratively; ensure user acceptance and consistent UX



1. **Goals & Needs**
2. **Data Analysis**
3. **Requirements**
4. **User Tasks**
5. **Design Solution**
6. **Test Acceptance**
7. Metrics & Reporting
8. Implement, Test, Release
9. User Measures
10. Report & Advise

# ■ USPS.COM® CI APPROACH: CX-FOCUSED STEPS



**Define:** Data that solidifies ‘current state’ behaviors to challenge assumptions

**Report & Analyze:** RASTA (Relevant, Accurate, Simple, Timely, Annotated)

**Test:** Data-centric and involves UX to identify bugs and avoid short-cut fixes

**Measure:** Can quantitative data bridge any qualitative gaps in UX?

**Advise:** Data visualization, information mapping, and narrative techniques

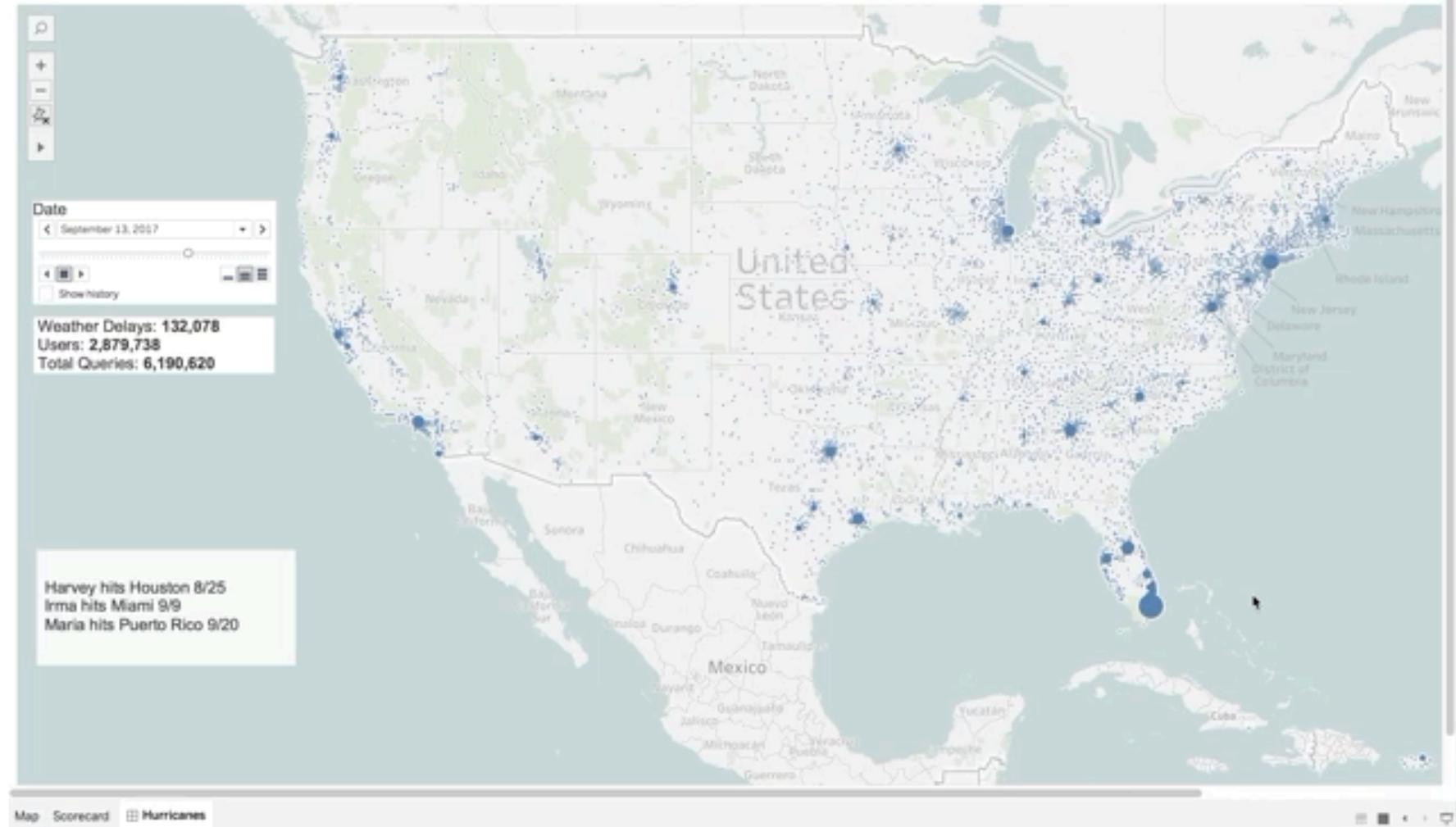
1. Goals & Needs
- 2. Data Analysis**
3. Requirements
4. User Tasks
5. Design Solution
6. Test Acceptance
- 7. Metrics & Reporting**
- 8. Implement, Test, Release**
9. User Measures
- 10. Report & Advise**

# REAL-TIME REPORTING: HURRICANE WEATHER DELAYS

- Demonstrates systemic ramifications of local service interruptions
- Helps contextualize issues and facilitate decision-making

Dots represent where users received the Tracking status 'Processing Exception, Regional Weather Delay'

September 13, 2017



 **AND THEN THERE WAS...**

**2020**

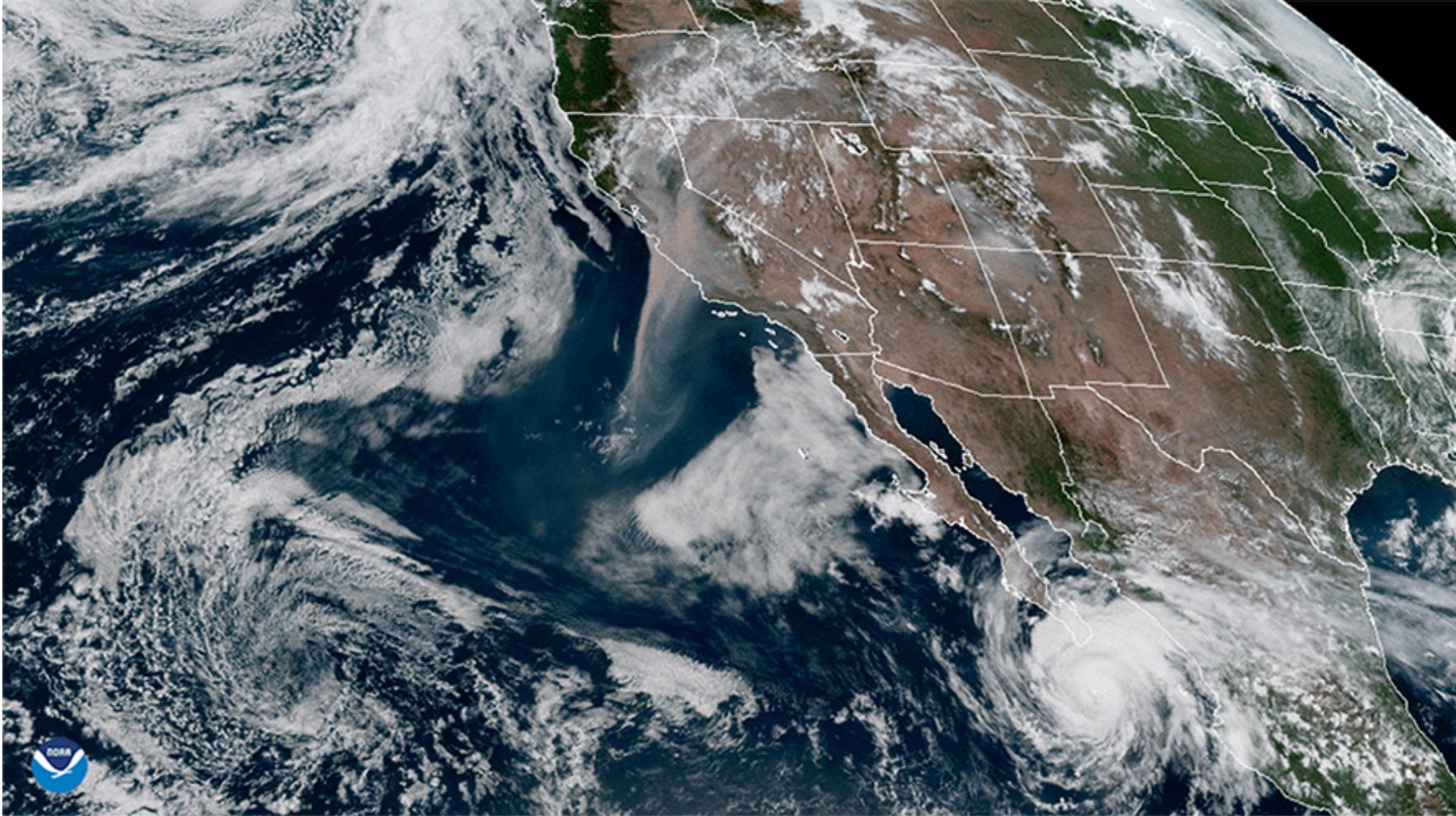
**THE YEAR THAT PUT EVERYTHING TO THE TEST**



## WITH **COVID-19** USPS® FACED:

- A transformed retail and delivery environment
- Decreased mail traffic
- Increased package traffic
- Impacts to domestic services
- International service interruptions and halts
- Complex and costly safety and cleanliness requirements
- PPE availability challenges
- Staff exposure

## **BUT IT WASN'T JUST COVID, THERE WERE...**



- Storms, fires, and all manner of service interruptions (sometimes in the same screenshot; August 20, 2020 was *interesting*)
- Distributed IT teams with limited resources
- And so much more...

# USPS.COM<sup>®</sup> DURING COVID-19

Almost all site metrics have seen significant impacts

\* Based on SPLY comparison (same period last year)



## APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2020

### WEBSITE TRAFFIC

**2.3 Billion (+96%)**

SESSIONS

**\$473.6 Million (+84%)**

REVENUE

### DEVICE BREAKDOWN

MOBILE



**1.7  
BILLION  
(+113%)**

TABLET



**44.0  
MILLION  
(-9%)**

DESKTOP



**587.5  
MILLION  
(+71%)**

Source: Google Analytics - Audience Report for FY2020

### AREAS OF LARGEST SESSION GROWTH



**+230%**  
FAQ



**+218%**  
SCHEDULE A PICKUP



**+158%**  
POSTAL STORE



**+140%**  
INFORMED DELIVERY



**+106%**  
TRACKING

Source: Google Analytics - Audience Report for FY2020

# THE POWER OF THE TWEET

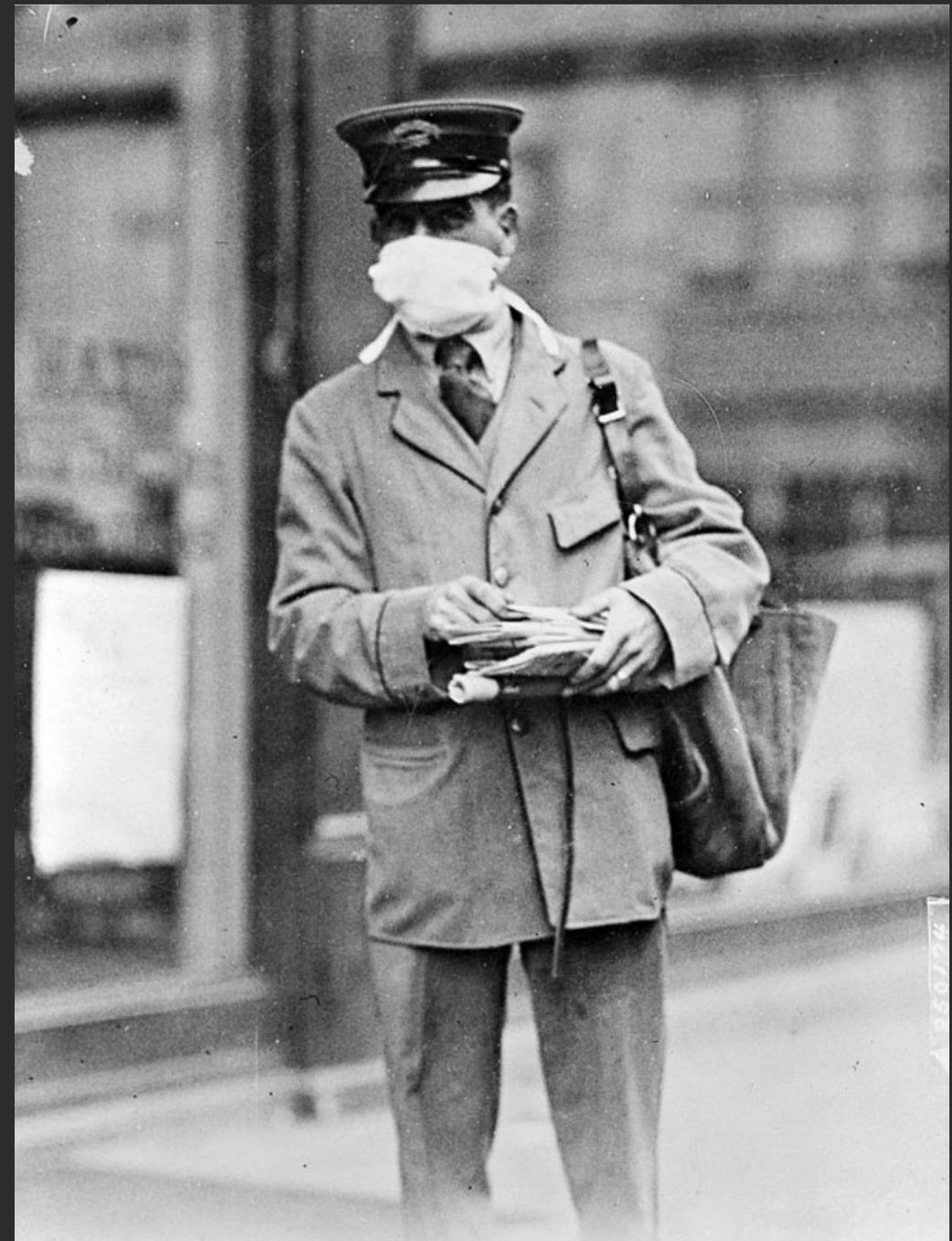


## MOBILIZING OUR CI APPROACH

Like during the Spanish Flu (1918-20), USPS® applied its operational know-how to the problem at hand. We performed:

- Metrics and customer satisfaction monitoring, reporting, and advising
- Competitive and data analysis
- UX heuristic reviews
- User interviews and usability testing
- Iterative, data-informed design sprints
- Alert and notification approach standardization and UI improvements, plus updated/expanded/new content and cross-linking

**Let's consider some of those steps in detail...**



# ANALYTICS & FEEDBACK AS EARLY WARNING

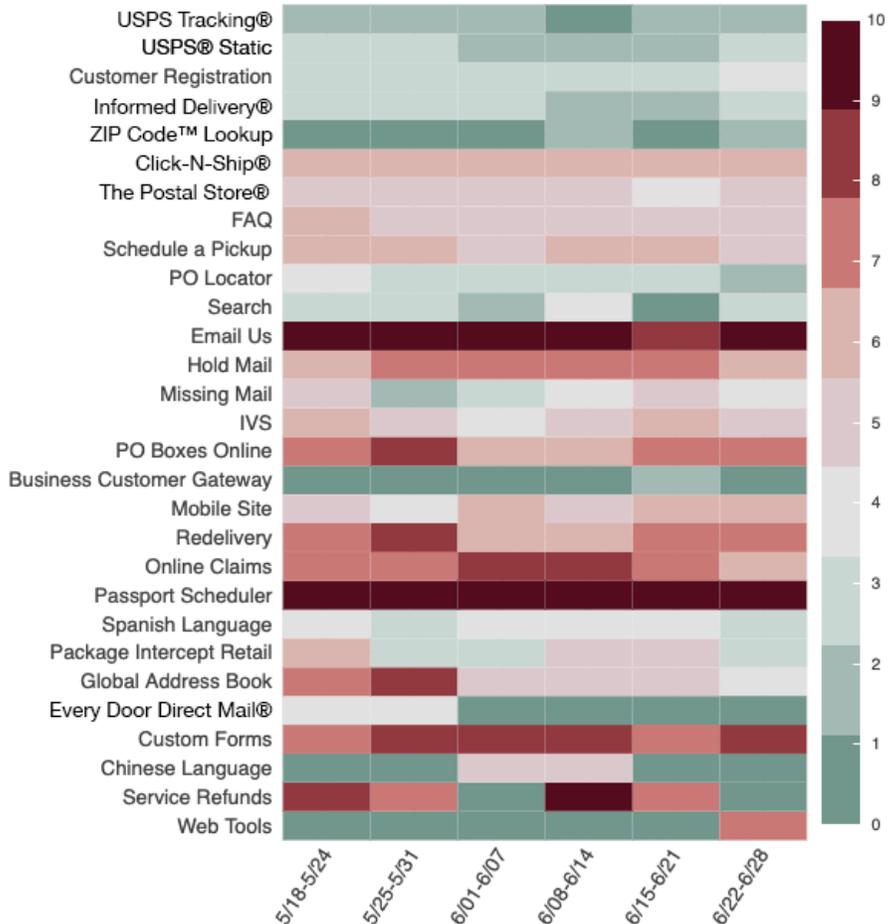
Always-on, real-time reporting:

- General and targeted approach
- All data direct to Google Big Data
- Identifies most site issues; often faster than system outage reporting)
- Custom dashboards promote understandability and decision-making
- Proven usability study recruiting mechanism

## Severity of App Issues

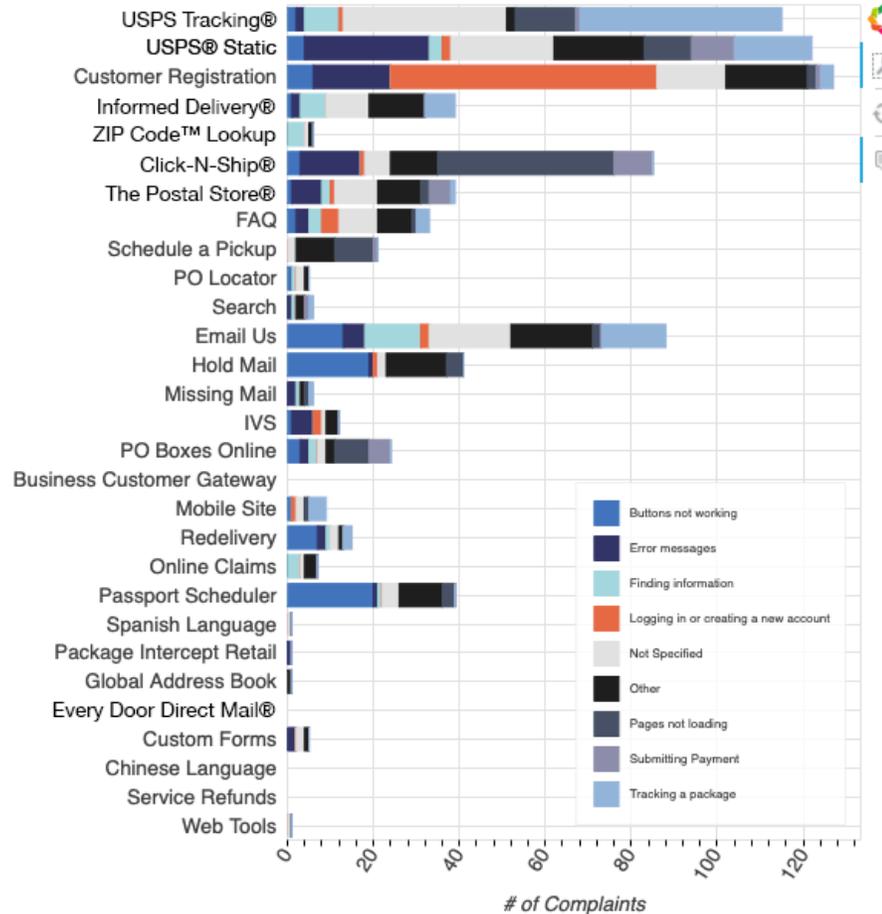
(10 = needs attention)

\*Apps sorted by traffic



## What issues are users reporting?

\*Includes the last week of data



# COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

## USPS.COM SMALL BUSINESS SECTION COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS MARCH 2020

The following table outlines opportunities for the USPS.com Business and Small Business section identified during the USPS.com Business Competitive Analysis\*. Each Feature, Tool, and Application is mapped to the associated USPS Direct Competitors, Foreign Counterparts, USPS Vendors, Partners, and Associates, and/or Commercial Third-Party Platforms



Category	Features, Tools, & Applications	Direct Competitors			Foreign Counterparts			Third Party Platforms						
		FedEx	UPS	DHL	Royal Mail	Canada Post	AU Post	Deutsche Post	Amazon	Etsy	eBay	Shopify	Shippo	Pitney Bowes
Features/Service Options	Business-specific 800 (info and help) numbers	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙								
	Business-specific email / contact forms	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	
	Chat (live-chat capability)	⊙												
	Business-specific FAQ (interactive; natural language-based questions)		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	
Content/Information	Small Business Content Center													
	<b>Coronavirus-Related Site Content, Messaging, and Designs</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>AU Post</b>			<b>Deutsche Post (.DE)</b>								
			Y/N	Link(s)	Note(s)	Y/N	Link(s)	Note(s)						
	<b>Phase 0   Essential (March 23, 2020)</b>													
Online Services	<b>COVID/Corona Landing Page URL</b>	30	Yes	<a href="#">auspost.</a>	Includes country-by-country up	Yes	<a href="#">deutsche</a>	English language version						
	<b>Main Site URL</b>	32	Yes	<a href="#">auspost.</a>	Alert + section mid-way down	Yes	<a href="#">deutsche</a>	Separate, reduced English						
	<b>Home Page: Alert Bar</b>	20	Yes			Yes		Points to COVID section						
	<b>Home Page Modal/Interstitial</b>	2	Yes		Via (closable) site-wide alert bar	No								
	<b>Feature Text Promo</b>	20	Yes			Yes		Points to COVID section						
	<b>Graphic Promo/Banner</b>	14	Yes			No								
Features/Service Op	<b>Link to CDC Page</b>	13	No		NA: Non-US site	No		NA: Non-US site						
	<b>Links to WHO/Other Resources</b>	7	No			Yes	<a href="#">rki.de/DI</a>	Link to Robert Koch Institut						
	<b>Sitewide Link (header/footer)</b>	10	Yes		Via site-wide alert bar.	Yes		As an alert header						
	<b>FAQ collection</b>	17	No			Yes	<a href="#">deutsche</a>	Within COVID section						
	<b>Coronavirus/COVID tag + search</b>	6	No		No search results for Coronavirus	No								
	<b>Official Press Statement</b>	19	Yes		Incorporated into Coronavirus	No								
	<b>Phase 0 Total (March 2020)</b>		<b>8</b>			<b>7</b>								

## Industry reviews for informed CX:

- Simple, informative, and actionable
- Presents large amounts of contextual data
- Focuses on tactical criteria and data often missed otherwise
- Tempers Federal tendency towards myopic POV
- Grounds content, design, and UX work within the competitive landscape

Images: USPS

# STYLE & USABILITY HEURISTIC REVIEWS



## Welcome to the USPS® Digital Style Guide

This is version 4.0; for a revision history, see the [Release Notes](#).

This Digital Style Guide (DSG) applies to all content on the USPS.com domain (and subdomains), unless you get a specific exception from the USPS Digital Style Guide Governance Working Committee (GWC). We verify DSG compliance during regular Style Guide Compliance Reviews.



### Copy, Tone & Manner

High-level goals and USPS.com-specific style and usage



### Design

Including branding, colors, typography and imagery



### Elements

Specifications and examples of HTML page elements



### Resources

Additional guidance around accessibility, legal compliance, and topics

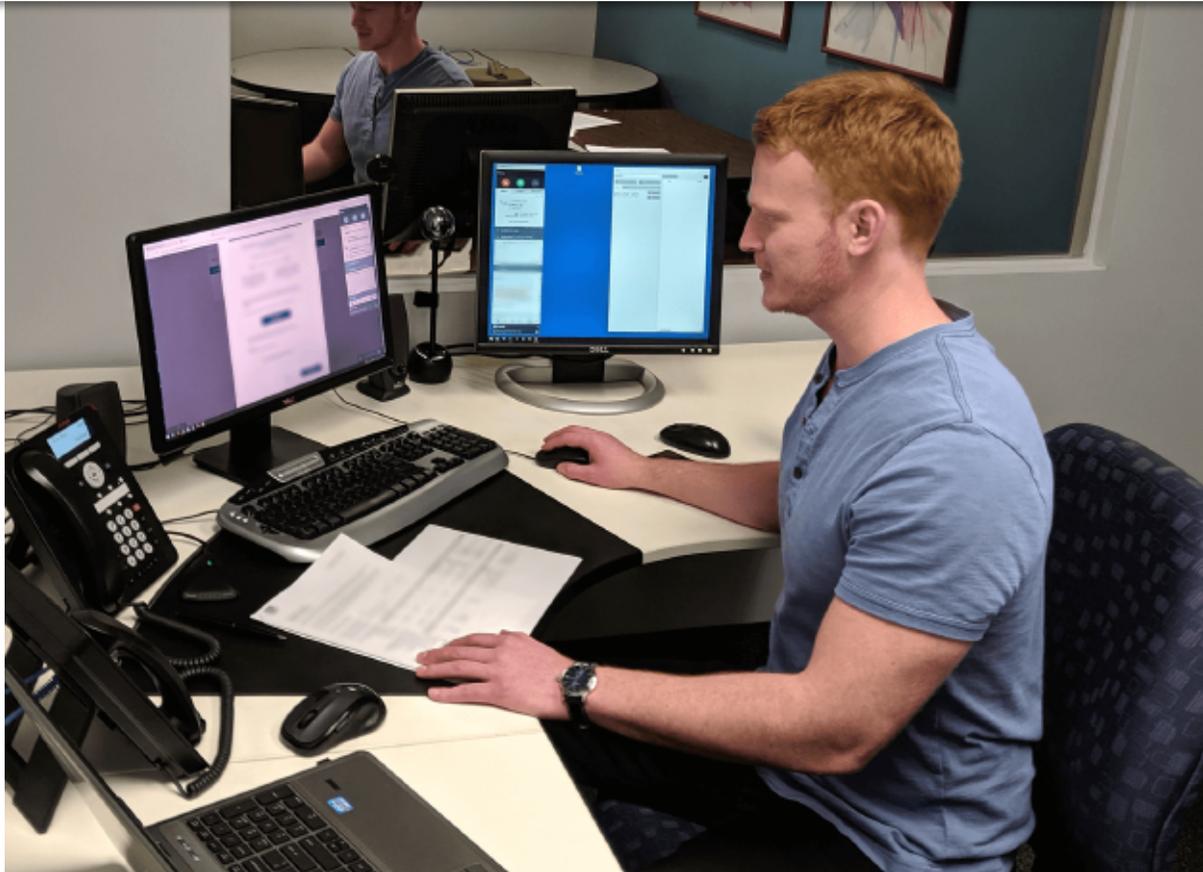
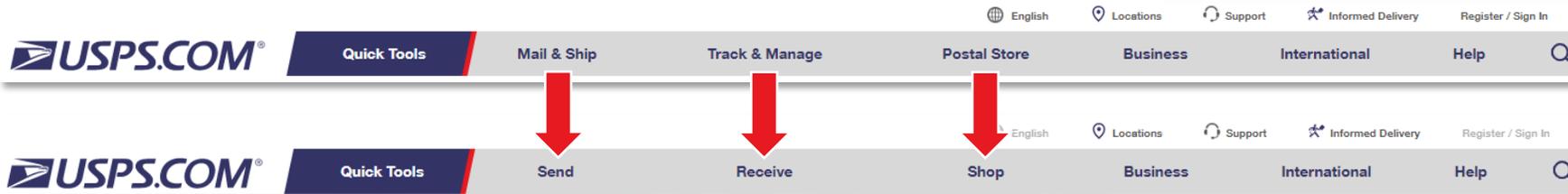
Heuristic	Rating	Notes
Findable	4	Strong homepage, global navigation, section linking; poor search results showing
Accessible	1	Form fails 508 review; poor labeling/flow, load and access issues
Clear	3	Reduce cognitive load (less text, simpler instructions/flow, no unnecessary fields)
Communicative	3	Too much text, can simplify/improve labels, instructional text, error messaging
Useful	4	Relatively simple application, performs as expected, saves users time and PO visits
Credible	5	Global elements present, largely consistent look-and-feel
Controllable	2	Some CTAs, controllers difficult to see/use; calendar experience frustrating
Valuable	5	Relatively simple application, saves users time and PO visits, common use tool
Learnable	3	Order and calendar have learning curve; improve instruction and error messaging
Delightful	3	Highly functional, on brand, <u>relative</u> simple, a time saver; plus above noted issues
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>3.3</b>	Utilitarian, relatively simple application with considerable room for improvement

Ratings: 5 Excellent 4 Good 3 Acceptable 2 Poor 1 Bad

Standards-based approach to optimize CX:

- Digital Style Guide (DSG) and UX Heuristics help ensure a consistent CX
- Heuristics simplify reviews and provide a language of critique
- Iterative DSG, UX heuristic, and related compliance reviews power the CI lifecycle

# USABILITY TESTING & USER INTERVIEWS



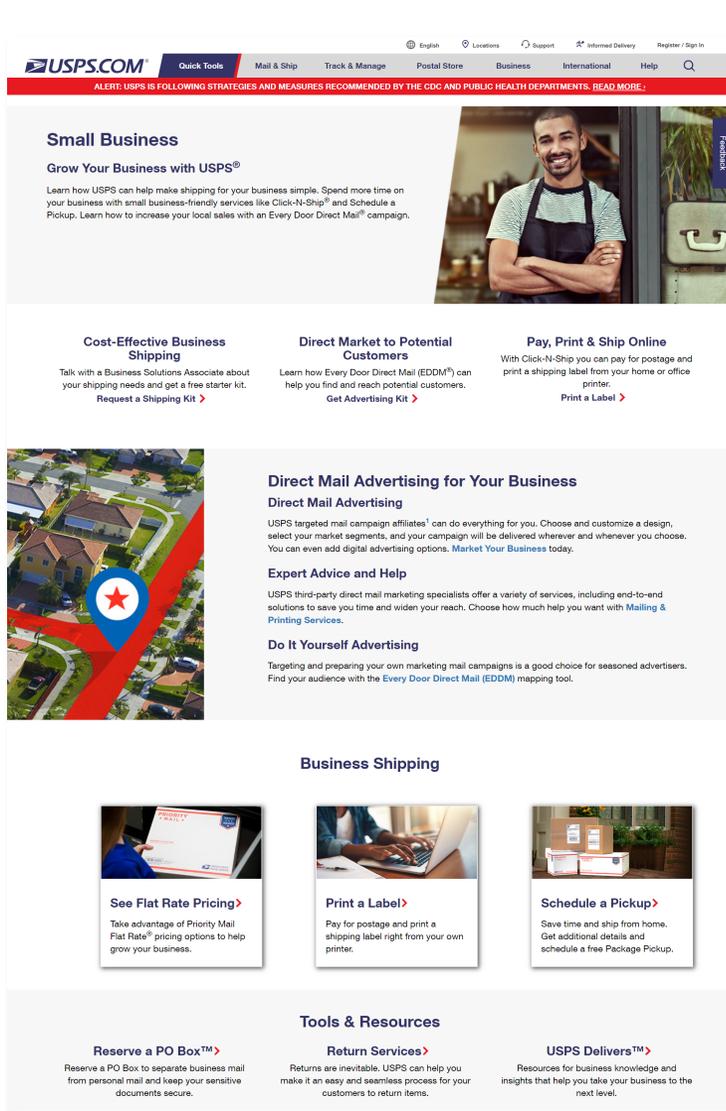
Formal, moderated usability testing, now 100% remote, enabling:

- Greater participant diversity (especially geographic, economic, industry, political)
- Simpler, quicker recruiting (the bigger the recruiting pool...)
- Greater USPS stakeholder involvement and buy-in; all sessions shared live and as recordings
- Note: Pre-COVID testing was 50% in-person, 50% remote

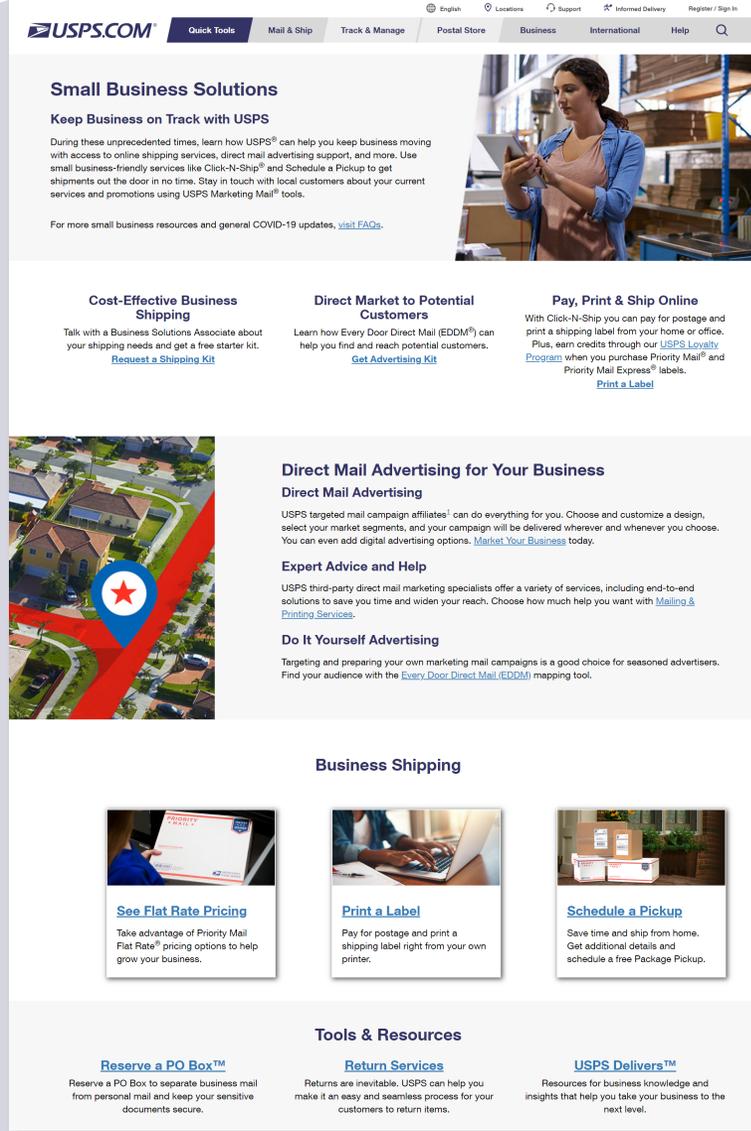
# STRATEGIC REDESIGNS

Supporting small business during unprecedented times with UX design:

- Rapid prototyping
- ‘Guerrilla’ usability testing
- Iterative design
- Integrated COVID content (not just alerts)
- Integrated National Women’s Small Business Month
- Rapid deployment

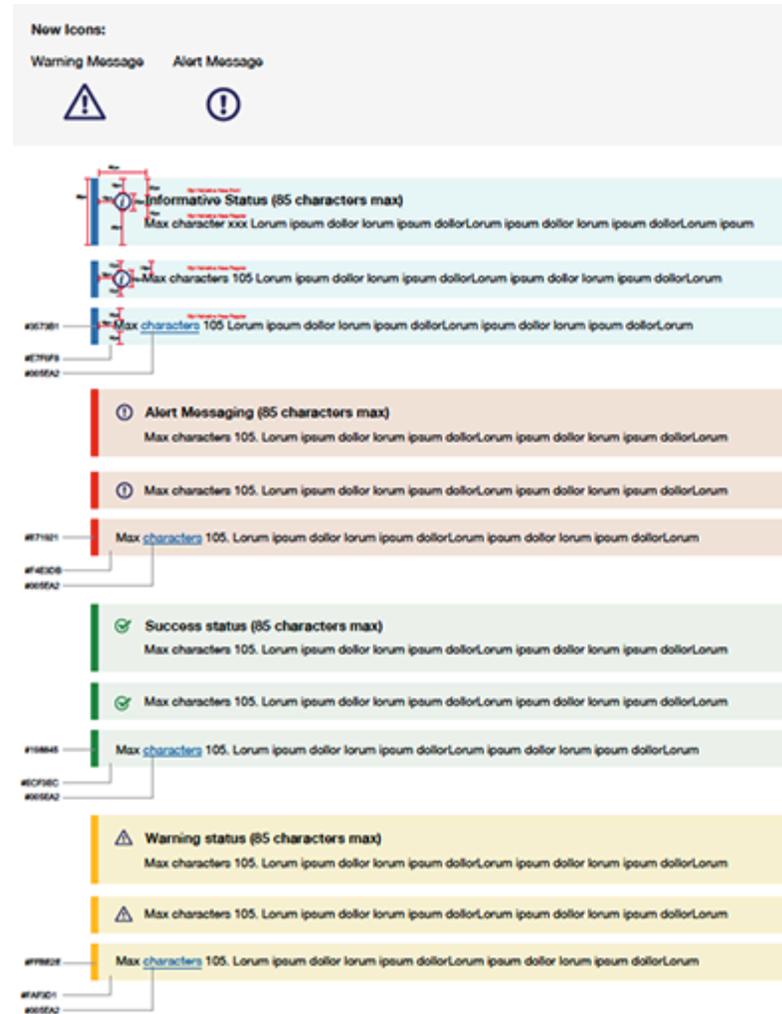
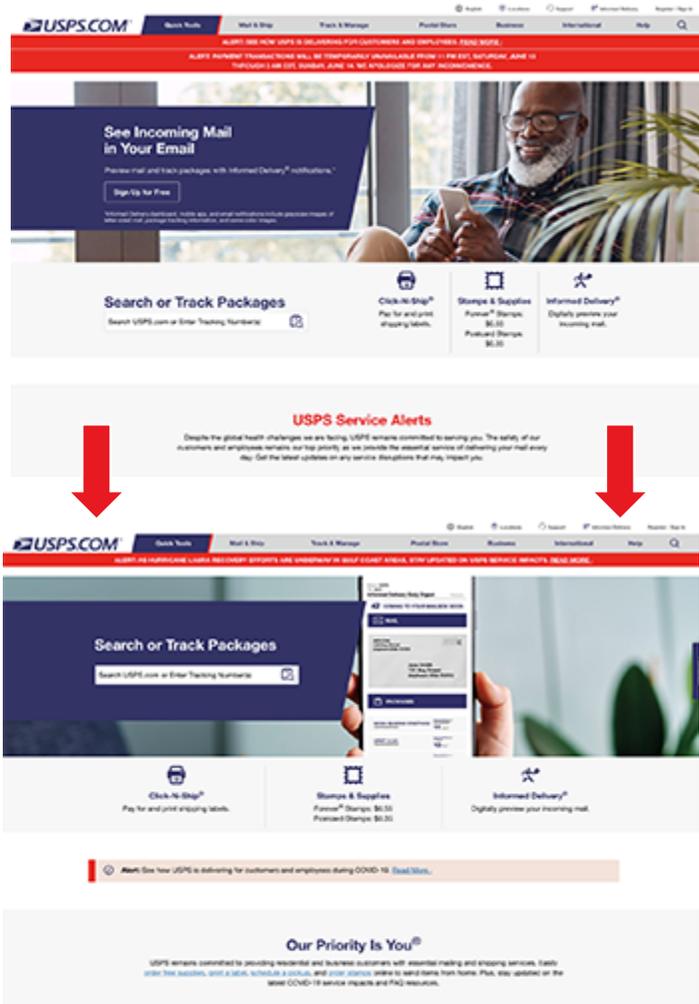


March 2020



October 2020

# ALERT & NOTIFICATIONS APPROACH



A unified, standards-based approach:

- Instituted a domain-wide approach based on the USDS design system
- Created alert and notification levels with different visual weight
- Created home- and landing-page specific alert and notification treatments
- Created corresponding standalone pages so that (linked) alerts and notifications could be kept short and easy to digest

CX & CI: The USPS® Digital Approach



# **2020: LESSONS LEARNED (SO FAR...)**

# USPS.COM® CX, UX, & CI LESSONS LEARNED

## Customer Experience

- Control of data and tools integration
- Dashboarding is not reporting and vice-versa
- Using search data, customer feedback to anticipate customer needs
- Understanding audience types and overlap
- Social media can change it all - without warning

## User Experience

- Quantitative and qualitative data to identify issues and drive design thinking
- Survey and competitive analysis to identify gaps
- Design all the things
- Test with customers and invite stakeholders to observe
- Review (UI, content, style, compliance) iteratively
- Consistency and predictability

## Continuous Improvement

- Flexible and iterative approach
- Integrate all teams into CI, socialize approach, share resources
- Identify and track KPIs
- Maintain, groom, and iterate over CX and UX backlog
- Never stop never stopping

CX & CI: The USPS® Digital Approach

 **THANK YOU / QUESTIONS**

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**Alex Turgeon**  
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# APPENDICES

1. Special Thanks
2. USPS.com® Teams
3. Image & Figure Citations
4. Forever 21 Partnership
5. Digital.gov Q & A Responses

# APPENDIX 1: SPECIAL THANKS

This presentation would not have been possible without the inputs from key contributors and the diligent work of all the USPS.com® teams. We'd especially like to acknowledge and thank a few stars:

## Leadership

- **Chris Karpenko**, Executive Director, Brand Marketing
- **Kim Workinger**, Manager, Digital Brand Marketing
- **Amity Kirby**, Manager, Stamp Products & Exhibitions
- **Diane Blizzard**, Program Manager The Postal Store®
- **Alicia Marlatt**, Creative Team Lead

## Team

- Brittnee Alford (Content & Strategy)
- Claire Dykes (Design)
- Daniel Afzal (Photography)
- Dino Omerovic (Digital Brand)
- Hannah Close (Photography)
- Joe Loong (Content & Strategy)
- Kelly Brooks (Digital Brand)
- Mike Bottenberg (Digital Brand)
- Mycah Jaha-Shelton (Design)
- Stephen Barron (Digital Brand)
- Tim O'Brien (Digital Brand)



## APPENDIX 2: USPS.COM® TEAMS

The larger USPS® Digital Brand Marketing USPS.com team is made up of 10 domain-specific teams that work together seamlessly:

- Business Support (program management)
- Content Creation and Content Strategy
- Content Management and Front-end Development
- Customer Satisfaction (measurement)
- Digital Brand Marketing (leadership)
- Design (print and web)
- Digital Analytics
- Photography
- Postal Store
- User Experience & UX (application) Design



## APPENDIX 3: IMAGE & FIGURE CITATIONS (1/2)

All images of USPS.com® from USPS® and the Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/details/usps.com>). All figures created by and ©USPS and the USPS.com team. All others cited here.



Matt Petrowski Headshot, Matt Petrowski, used with permission.



Jeff Pass Headshot, Jeff Pass, used with permission.



Alex Turgeon Headshot, Alex Turgeon, used with permission.



Mr. ZIP® (Detail from the 20c Children Sledding single postage stamp), 10.28.1982. United States Postal Service® & Smithsonian Postal Museum. Usage: IIF.  
[https://postalmuseum.si.edu/object/npm\\_1988.0331.133](https://postalmuseum.si.edu/object/npm_1988.0331.133)



Innovation Stamp Series: details from Computing, Solar, and Genome Sequencing stamp promos. United States Postal Service & Antonio Alcalá. Images property USPS. Item numbers 476204, 476204, 476204. Product pages:

- <https://www.facebook.com/USPS/photos/10158854428469810>
- <https://www.facebook.com/USPS/photos/10158854428844810>
- <https://www.facebook.com/USPS/photos/10158854429049810>



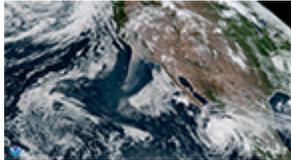
Dog Letter Carrier Costume, 843201 (currently unavailable). United States Postal Service & The Postal Store  
<https://www.usps.com/ecp/asset/images/843201-Z0.jpg>



Letter carrier walking route during COVID-19. United States Postal Service.  
<https://www.facebook.com/USPS/photos/10158748796944810>

## APPENDIX 3: IMAGE & FIGURE CITATIONS (2/2)

- All images of USPS.com® from USPS® and the Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/details/usps.com>).
- All figures created by and ©USPS and the USPS.com team.



August 20, 2020, NOAA Satellites Monitoring Massive Wildfires and Two Cyclones. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA, US DOC).  
<https://www.nesdis.noaa.gov/content/noaa-satellites-monitoring-massive-wildfires-and-two-cyclones>

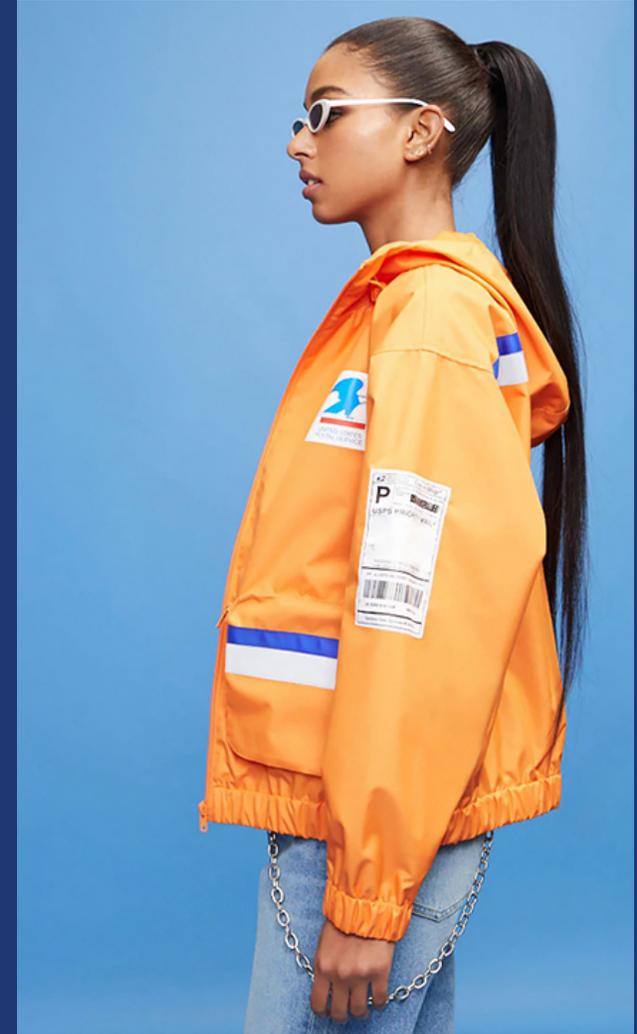


"THE USPS HAS A MERCH STORE" Twitter, 7/30/2020.  
@emercon\_Toomey (Emerson Toomey).  
[https://twitter.com/emerson\\_toomey/status/1288704240802816000](https://twitter.com/emerson_toomey/status/1288704240802816000)



Detail: letter carrier in New York wearing mask for protection against influenza (detail), New York City, October 16, 1918. Record number 165-WW-269B-15. National Archives, photographer unknown.  
<https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/influenza-epidemic/records-list.html>

# APPENDIX 4: FOREVER 21 PARTNERSHIP



# APPENDIX 5: DIGITAL.GOV Q&A RESPONSES (1/2)

QUESTION	ANSWER	SOURCES
What do you mean by "false floor"?	A false floor on a web page is an apparent end to the web page. This occurs when a web page's view falsely appears to be complete, when in fact additional content is outlined further down the page. This issue is often caused by the top content matching the web page "fold" or top view of the page, and the absence of any navigational elements further contributes to the effect. Using a downward arrow or other graphical treatment helps trigger users to keep scrolling down the page.	USPS.com UX Team (Jeff Pass & Alex Turgeon)
What do you mean by send and receive information architecture?	Information architecture (IA) focuses on organizing, structuring, and labeling content in an effective and sustainable way. Send/Receive IA is a navigational framework USPS pursued to better organize website menu content and information to be categorized by user-oriented actions (i.e., Send, Receive, Shop) and content. The goal is to help users find information and complete tasks.	USPS.com UX Team (Jeff Pass & Alex Turgeon)
AI-assisted topic bucketing of unstructured customer data (feedback, site search, Google searches, social DMs, survey free text responses, etc.) are critical for assessing and improving the customer experience. What Machine learning/ AI tools are you using to do the topic bucketing?	We are using standard natural language processing techniques to first clean the data, transform the text to numerical data (i.e., vectors), and use classification algorithms to bucket the text into topics. For classification, we are using out-of-the-box algorithms from the scikit-learn package from Python including K-nearest neighbors, support vector machines, and logistic regression.	Sherika Sylvester, USPS.com Digital Analytics
How do you analyze and synthesize what must be massive amounts of qualitative data from survey comments and other sources?	USPS utilizes Google Cloud Platform to analyze/synthesize data. There is a massive amount of customer data so having cloud computing power helps the team pull, manipulate, and transform the data in a timely manner.	Benjamin Ohno, Data Scientist, USPS.com Digital Analytics

## APPENDIX 5: DIGITAL.GOV Q&A RESPONSES (2/2)

QUESTION	ANSWER	SOURCES
<p>Do you have your Medallia connected to a CRM tool (like Salesforce)? How important is it to you to use open-source software in managing CX?</p>	<p>No, the Medallia data is not connected to CRM tools like Salesforce. The beauty of using open-source tools is the afforded customization to our use cases. Many out-of-the-box analytical solutions are not customizable to our needs.</p>	<p>Sherika Sylvester, USPS.com Digital Analytics</p>
<p>I'm curious to know about text analysis capabilities as well. What outputs do these tools provide? We've just started a pilot for text analysis and looking to chat with agencies who are exploring this need.</p>	<p>The pipeline that we use is custom built. Given our business case, our pipeline classifies search terms into customized topic buckets (i.e.. "hours", "passports", "tracking") as well as the volume of searches per topic, the number of link clicks by topic, and new language/emerging search terms. The area of natural language processing is vast, so the tools commonly used can produce several outputs including text sentiment, topics/ labels, document/ text similarity, text summaries, etc.</p>	<p>Sherika Sylvester, USPS.com Digital Analytics</p>
<p>Can you describe how USPS has brought data-driven CX models to expand continuous improvement efforts that cross multiple service channels (including non-digital areas)? How does one service channel perhaps impact success metrics of other service areas? How are these relationships tracked?</p>	<p>From a UX POV, we use research methods, spanning from usability testing, customer feedback, and focus groups to competitive analysis in order to get a perspective of the customer that spans multiple service channels in relation to their experience with USPS (both digital and non-digital). Often, impacts to user experience are tied to valuable cross-channel KPIs beyond revenue, such as reduced call center volume, self-service completion, and scheduling on-site appointments.</p>	<p>USPS.com Digital Analytics  USPS.com Digital Brand Marketing UX Team (Jeff Pass &amp; Alex Turgeon)</p>
<p>How is severity determined in the issue reporting?</p>	<p>USPS essentially takes the rate at which users on a part of the website are leaving negative feedback, and we rescale it to consider how much traffic varies across the website. USPS finds that a change in that rate of negative feedback is useful for identifying emerging issues.</p>	<p>Benjamin Makansi, Data Scientist, USPS.com Digital Analytics</p>