

# Against best practices

Examples of unconventional UX approaches

UX Vienna Meetup · July 2025

Little  
Language  
Models



## About me

- **Delfina Hoxha** (she/her)
- Founder of Little Language Models
- Worked with tech startups, leading agencies, orgs, and Fortune 500 companies
- Albanian based in beautiful Vienna



**How do we  
structure  
information so it's  
easier to find?**

I've dedicated my career to  
answering this question.

Through clear language and data-driven content organization (a practice known as **information architecture**), I've supported multiple clients like Sony and Microsoft in:

- 
- ① increasing conversion rates

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  - ① reducing customer service costs

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  - ① reducing learning curves for new users

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  - ① increasing Customer Satisfaction Scores

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30+

Led the navigation redesign of  
30+ enterprise websites and apps



Managed thousands of URLs and  
hundreds of terms



Made quite a few mistakes along  
the way



Went against “best practices”  
many times

“A best practice is a standard or set of guidelines that is known to produce good outcomes if followed.”

Tech Target definition



As designers, we often rely on best practices.

Local Guide · 72 reviews · 2 photos

★☆☆☆☆ 5 months ago

YES I KNOW I SAID 1 STAR. I do not like the colour yellow so I always rate 1 star so that there is less of it on my screen. THIS IS A POSITIVE REVIEW. NOT A BAD REVIEW, I AM RATING ONE STAR TO PREVENT YELLOW

THANK YOU

 2 

**Best practices save time and help us prioritize our efforts—  
but is there a limit to their usefulness?** In this presentation,  
I'll share some common design best practices and  
unconventional UX decisions I made that worked in real life.

Counterintuitive UX choices

# Unclear names in navigation

# **Products**

Analytics Keep

Pro Series Analytics Tool

Analytics Hybrid

Obscure product names are quite common in user-facing navigation structures.

Reusing internal jargon is an abdication of responsibility that someone, *somewhere*, is suffering the consequences of, whether that's the brand team, customer service reps, or sales.

# *WHAT*

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Public library website redesign

**I put a cryptically named Whimsy Wonderland\* item in the website navigation.**

\*not the real name

# WHAT

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## Public library website redesign

**I put a cryptically named Whimsy Wonderland\* item in the website navigation.**

\*not the real name

# WHY

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- Famous yearly event - excitement, traditions built around it
- Brand equity
  - “The value premium that a company generates from a product with a recognizable name, when compared to a generic equivalent.”

Counterintuitive UX choices

Hiding “Sign in”



## Secure elec- tronic registration

Further information on electronic identity verification  
can be found [here](#)

To register



### Login with ID Austria

Your ID Austria (electronic identity) is your highly secure  
key to the online services of the Austrian Social Insurance

Simple, secure and free.

Further information about ID Austria can be found [here](#).

### Login with ID Austria and use of the "ID Austria" app

All information on using and activating the "ID Austria" app  
can be found [here](#).

### Login in representation

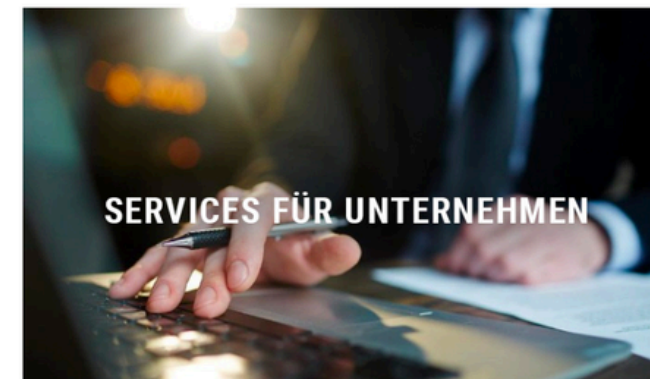
From now on, the online services of the Austrian Social  
Insurance can also be used on behalf of another person:


[Granting power of attorney and login as representative](#)

If you have any questions, please contact the  
oesterreich.gv.at Service Center :

oesterreich.gv.at Service Center: [+43 50 233770](tel:+4350233770) (Monday  
to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

[hilfe@oesterreich.gv.at](mailto:hilfe@oesterreich.gv.at)



 Unternehmensservice  
Portal



# *WHAT*

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Financial services firm replatform

**I hid the “Sign in” button by only placing it in the footer.**

# *WHAT*

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Financial services firm replatform

**I hid the “Sign in” button by only placing it in the footer.**

# *WHY*

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- Aggressive timeline
- Ruthless prioritizing of key audiences and user needs
- Content format preferences

The image features two identical white lambs standing side-by-side in a field. The lambs are positioned in the center of the frame, facing forward. The background is a soft-focus field of grass. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark teal filter. Centered over the lambs is the text 'Counterintuitive UX choices' in a white, serif font.

Counterintuitive UX choices

**Duplicate content**

Duplicate content often falls through the cracks, resulting in outdated, misleading information.

We want every word or action on a platform to serve a purpose that makes user and/or business goals easier to reach, whether it's building trust, answering a question, or simplifying onboarding.

# *WHAT*

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Pathology clinic website redesign

**I repeated the same term 4 times on  
the website navigation.**

# WHAT

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## Pathology clinic website redesign

**I repeated the same term 4 times on the website navigation.**

# WHY

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- Building a powerful and easy-to-use test directory (250+ tests) was a key goal
- Highlighted the test directory as an L1 item and as an L2 under each of the three main pathology specialties, linking to the specialty-specific test filters, e.g., Neuropathology tests

L1 - Level one navigation item (displayed)

L2 - Nested navigation items

Counterintuitive UX choices

Encouraging users to leave a  
website

External links provide users with the option to leave the site, which may result in them not returning to your site.

The LinkedIn algorithm is an example of this.

# *WHAT*

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B2B resource center IA redesign for a  
consumer electronics company.

**I prioritized an external link in the  
website navigation.**

# WHAT

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B2B resource center IA redesign for a consumer electronics company.

**I prioritized an external link in the website navigation.**

# WHY

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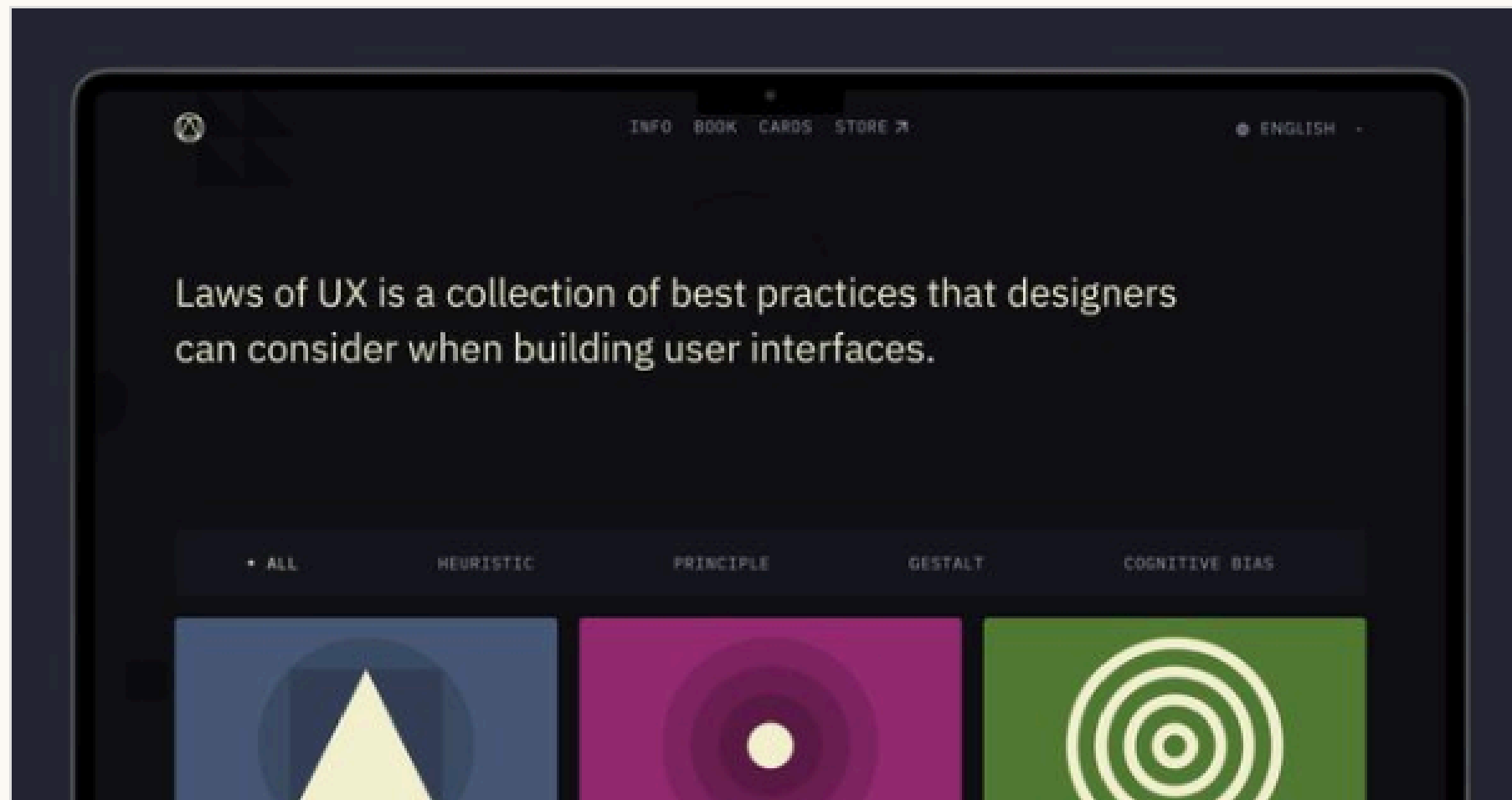
- Highlighting the e-commerce site in the navigation helped reach key business goals (increased sales)
- Using analytics data to match user search intent

**This was my list of counterintuitive UX choices I've made despite advising others against doing the same.**

Heuristics like best practices are helpful and save us time, but their effectiveness relies on context consideration.

"Learn the rules like a pro,  
so you can break them like  
an artist."

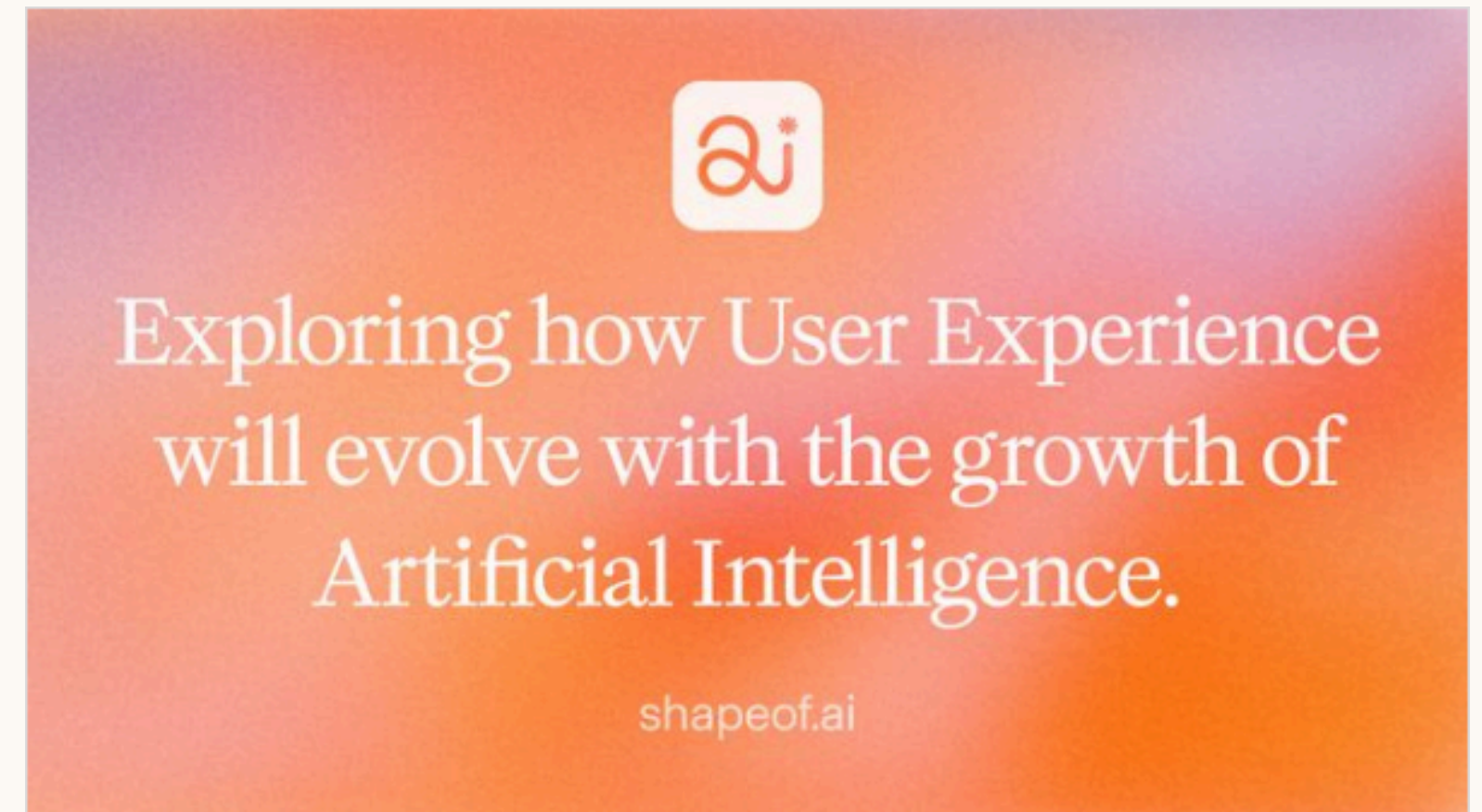
# Collections of best practices for your consideration



## Home

Laws of UX is a collection of best practices that designers can consider when building user interfaces.

 Laws of UX /



## The Shape of AI | UX Patterns for Artificial Intelligence Design

Pattern library of AIUX patterns exploring best practices for designing AI Products.

 shapeof.ai



# Thank you!

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