

Background

"Bruja Buena" is a project alias for an e-commerce store that sells alternative clothing. When the company first approached us, they were one of the leading providers in customized corsets, however, for various reasons they wanted to enter the larger alternative fashion space and expand their audience.

While the larger scope of the work for them was on the paid media & search engine optimization front, my role was to look for quick site improvements to generally help the user experience overall.

Project Goal

The goal of the project from a design standpoint was to visually improve their site and look for opportunities to improve user experience to increase conversions.

Additionally, I was to work in tandem with our digital strategist to find other opportunities to improve customer retention.

Research

Our first resource for information was Google Analytics data, which was collected over about two years. Two key takeaways from the data was the demographic data — primarily female ages 18 to 34 — and user behavior showing a steep drop-off from users visiting a product page to adding a product to their cart. More information on how we approached the latter in the Product Pages section.

We were provided with a short list of competitors, and we looked particularly closely at Dolls Kill, a leading alternative fashion brand. One particular strategy we found interesting was their use of persona-based product collections (rather than categorical based collections). This had a strong influence on some of our homepage elements. Additionally, I looked at Rebel Circus and Hot Topic for use of imagery, messaging and taxonomy models.

I also looked to other major retailers in the e-comm space that share a similar audience — such as Old Navy, Forever 21 and Urban Outfitters — to identify common UI patterns, use of imagery and customer retention strategy.

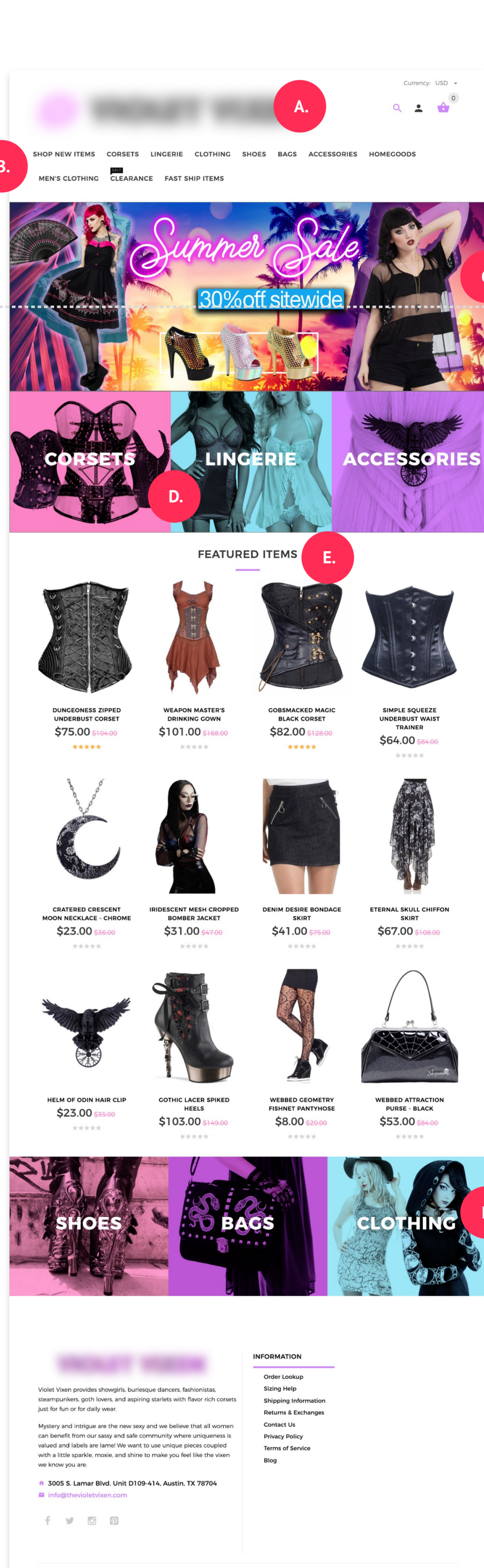


Design

Original Homepage Design

Because the scope of the project didn't entail a full website redesign, I wanted to take an approach that would be quick and easy to implement but would potential have big benefits. During my first pass of the site, I reviewed their homepage for visual clarity, use of typography, color and imagery.

- A. Site Branding / Logo**
While a prominent logo is important for building brand recognition, there are other opportunities to achieve this. Simply put, the logo size was excessive and pushed vital information below the page.
- B. Navigation**
There was no clear strategy behind the navigation, and the amount of menu items made the menu wrap to a second line, which pushed content below the fold.
- C. Homepage Hero**
Between the wrapped navigation and the categories below, the hero was very busy and asking a lot for the user to digest. Additionally, it did not provide a clear CTA or focal point for the user (i.e., Shop this specific collection of hand-picked products).
- D. Quick Categories**
These categories are a reiteration of the prominent navigation above. I looked for a better, more strategic way to use this space based on research findings.
- E. Featured Products**
There didn't seem to be a clear strategy behind which products were being fed into the "Featured Items" product grid.
- F. Additional Categories**
This is another instance of categories that reiterate items in the prominent nav bar.

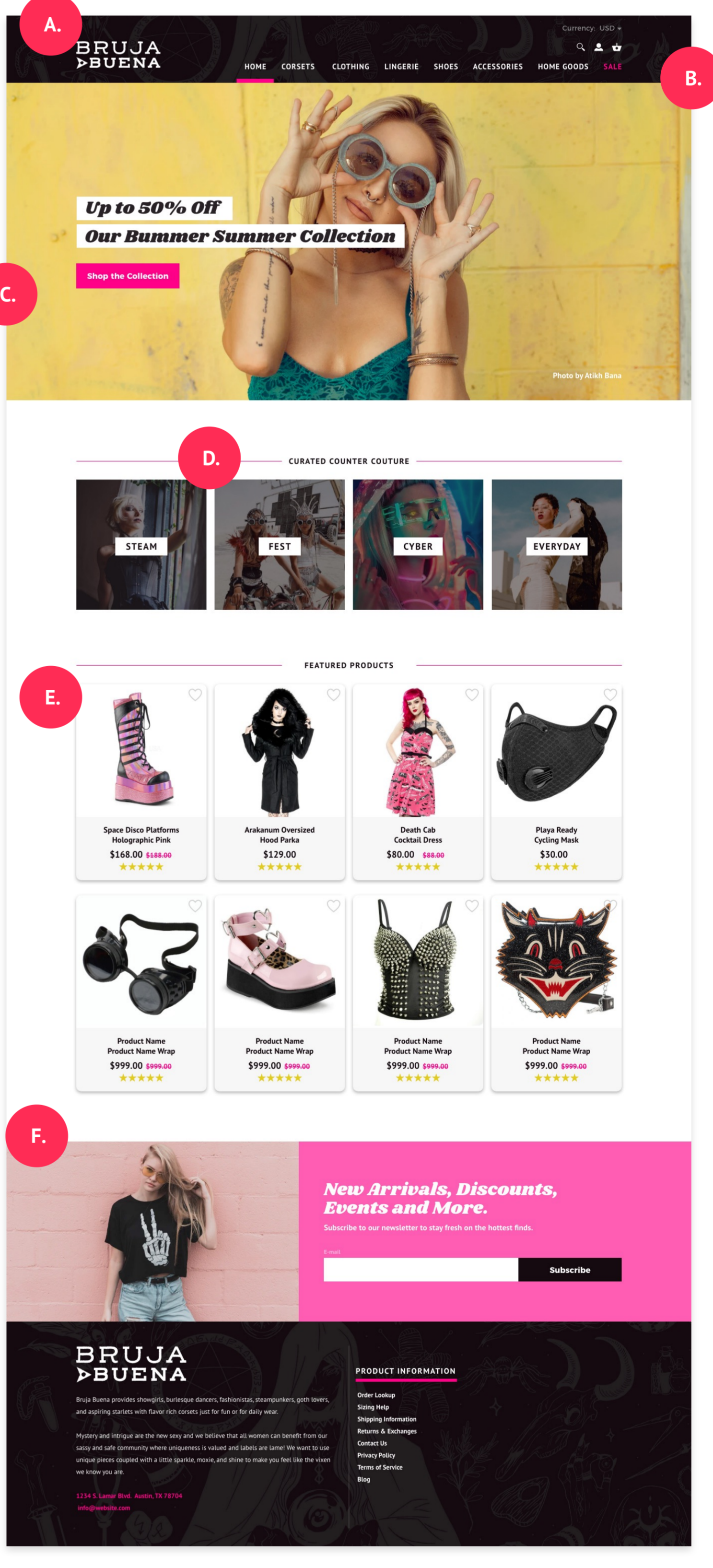


Above the Fold Line

Optimized Homepage Design

The optimized homepage redesign sought to achieve a number of things. Specifically I wanted to provide visual clarity to the user, help direct the user to their desired section of the site and support the larger marketing strategy.

- A. Site Branding / Logo**
The logo is prominent, but not too large. It provides the function of telling the user that they are at the right place and allows them to return to the homepage.
- B. Navigation**
Categories and sub-categories within the navigation were consolidated to keep the user from having to think too much trying to find products.
- C. Homepage Hero**
I recommended the use of bold, lifestyle-centered imagery that focuses on one subject — in this case a girl wearing accessories that are presumably found in the "Bummer Summer" Collection. I also recommended that the CTA should have one strong ask in order to "hint" to the user where they could start. In this case, the user is being asked to view a single curated collection.
- D. Featured Collections**
Rather than using these collections to reiterate collections that are featured in the navigation, these collections are curated based on different personas — something we found to really stood out on the Dolls Kill site.
- E. Featured Products**
We recommended that there be no more than 8 featured products in this product grid. The feed would be based on top-selling products that are in stock.
- F. E-mail subscription**
Visually, I wanted this subscription form to be a hard stop, because I felt that a mailing list would strongly support the bigger company growth strategy.

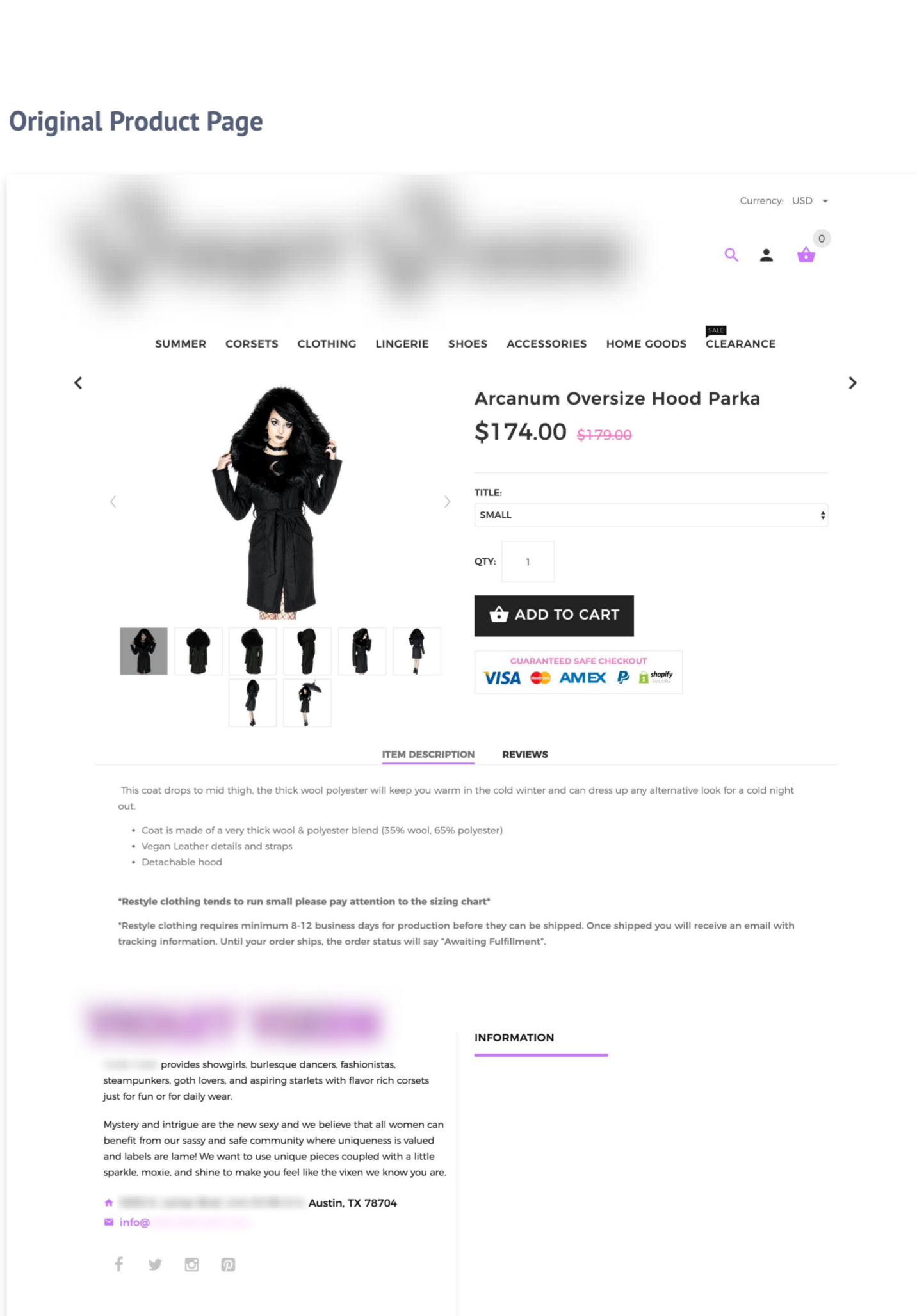


Product Pages

In addition to the homepage design, I recommended the product pages. As mentioned before, there was a steep drop off in users visiting product pages that don't add a product to their cart. My approach was to provide focus on the product and related products, build trust and support the overall company growth strategy.

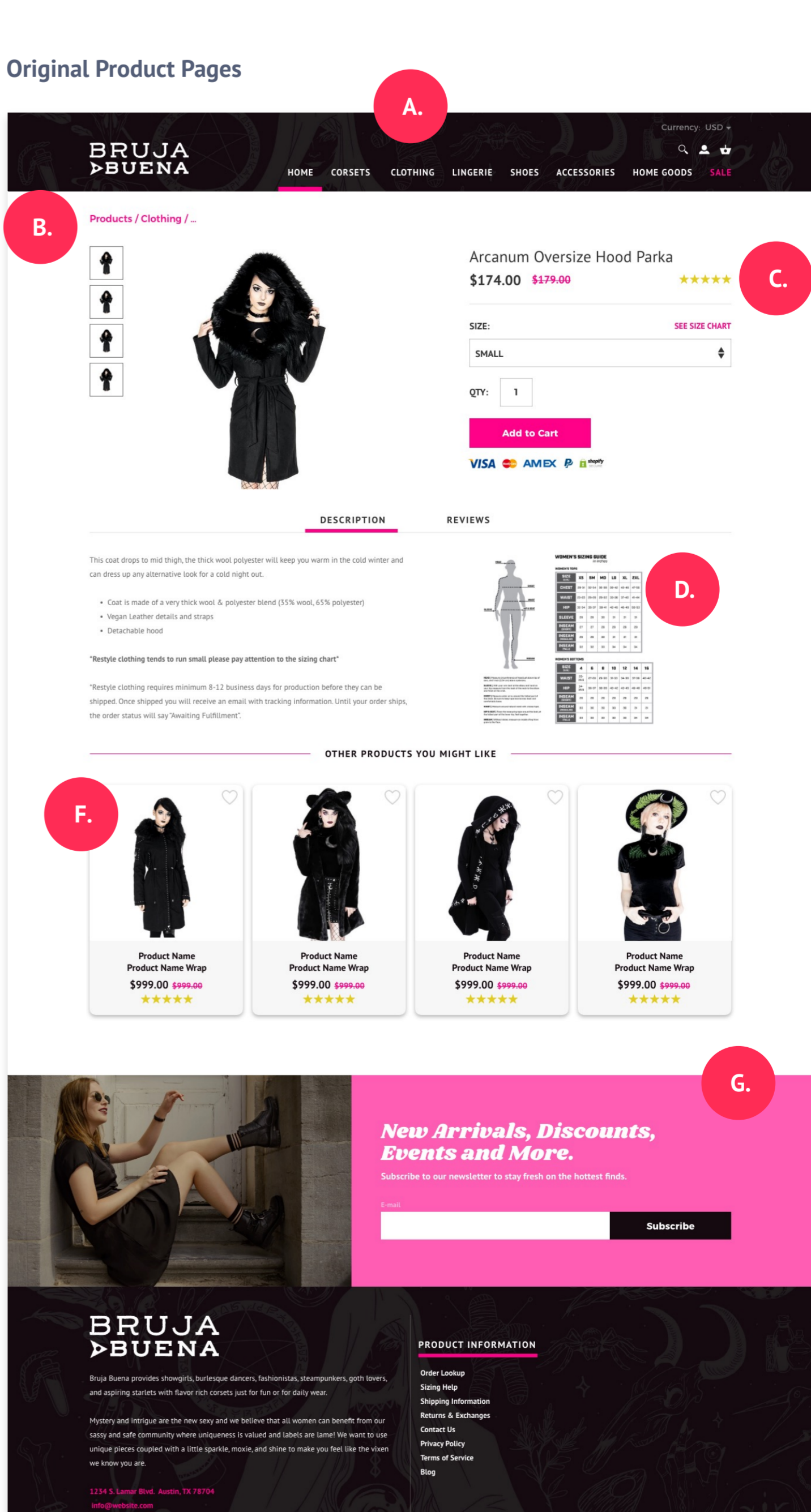
While some of improvements to the homepage helped clean up product pages — namely designing the navigation — other improvements were made through the use of UI elements, navigational tools and other features.

Original Product Page



- A. Branding and Navigation**
Decreasing the size of the logo and creating contrast between the navigation and content helps provide focus on the products.
- B. Breadcrumbs**
The use of breadcrumbs allows users to easily navigate back to the parent categories without having to push the back button or use the top navigation to find similar products.
- C. Reviews**
As a general trust builder, reviews were incorporated to help support a users decision to purchase an item.
- D. Size Chart**
To ease a users reluctance to make a clothing purchase online, we recommended that size charts be available for each product.
- F. Recommended Products**
Including a feed to similar products makes it easy for users to stay within the same eco-system of products without being distracted by other unrelated products on the site.
- G. Email Subscription**
The inclusion of a mail subscription supports the overall company growth strategy to improve customer retention.

Original Product Pages



Conclusion

While the recommendations were not fully implemented, some of the more crucial improvements to the homepage and product pages were made. Google Analytics showed a substantial increase in month to month conversions shortly after the launch of the optimized site.

Unfortunately, however, the account signed off soon thereafter, and we were unable to continue monitoring and testing the site's performance.

