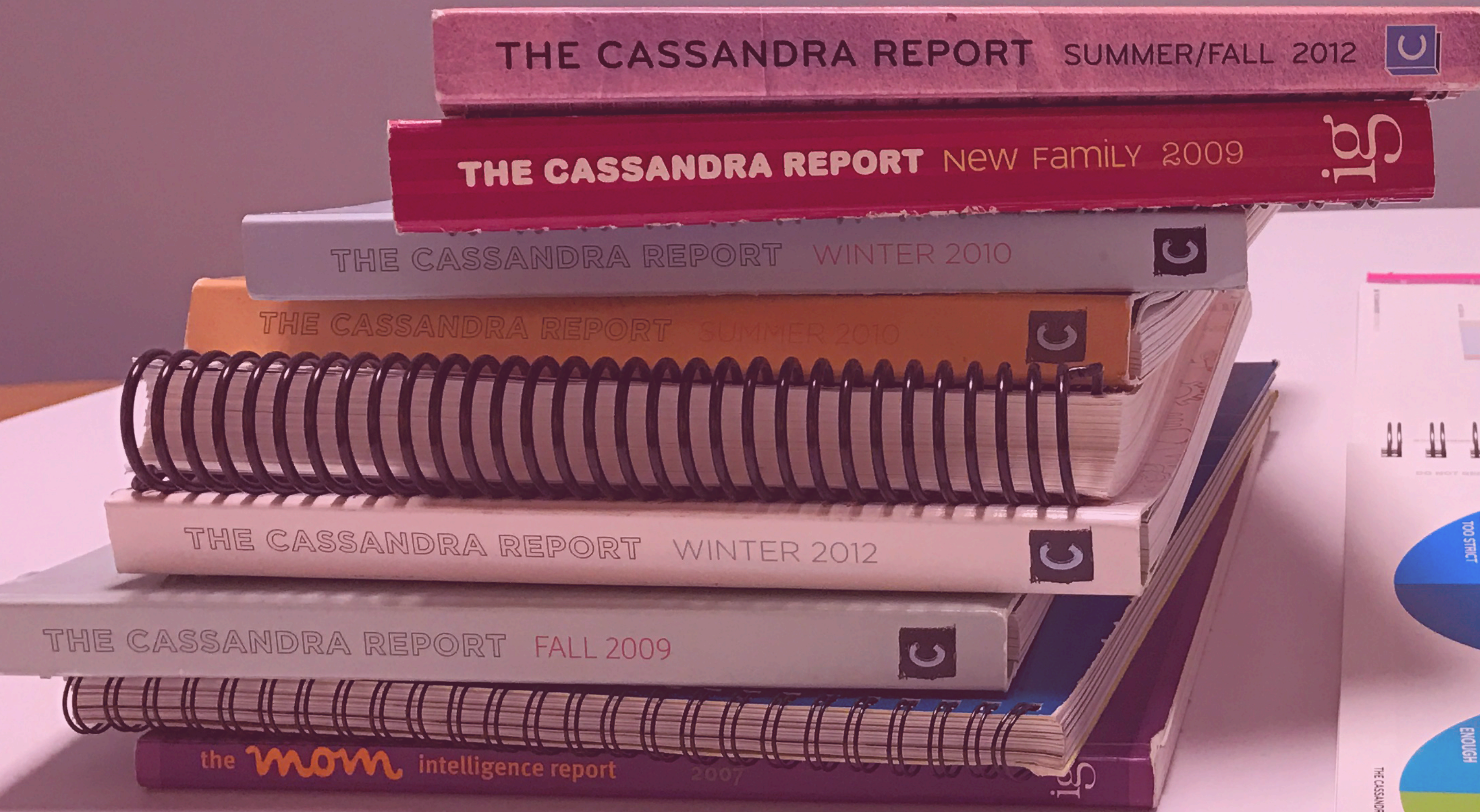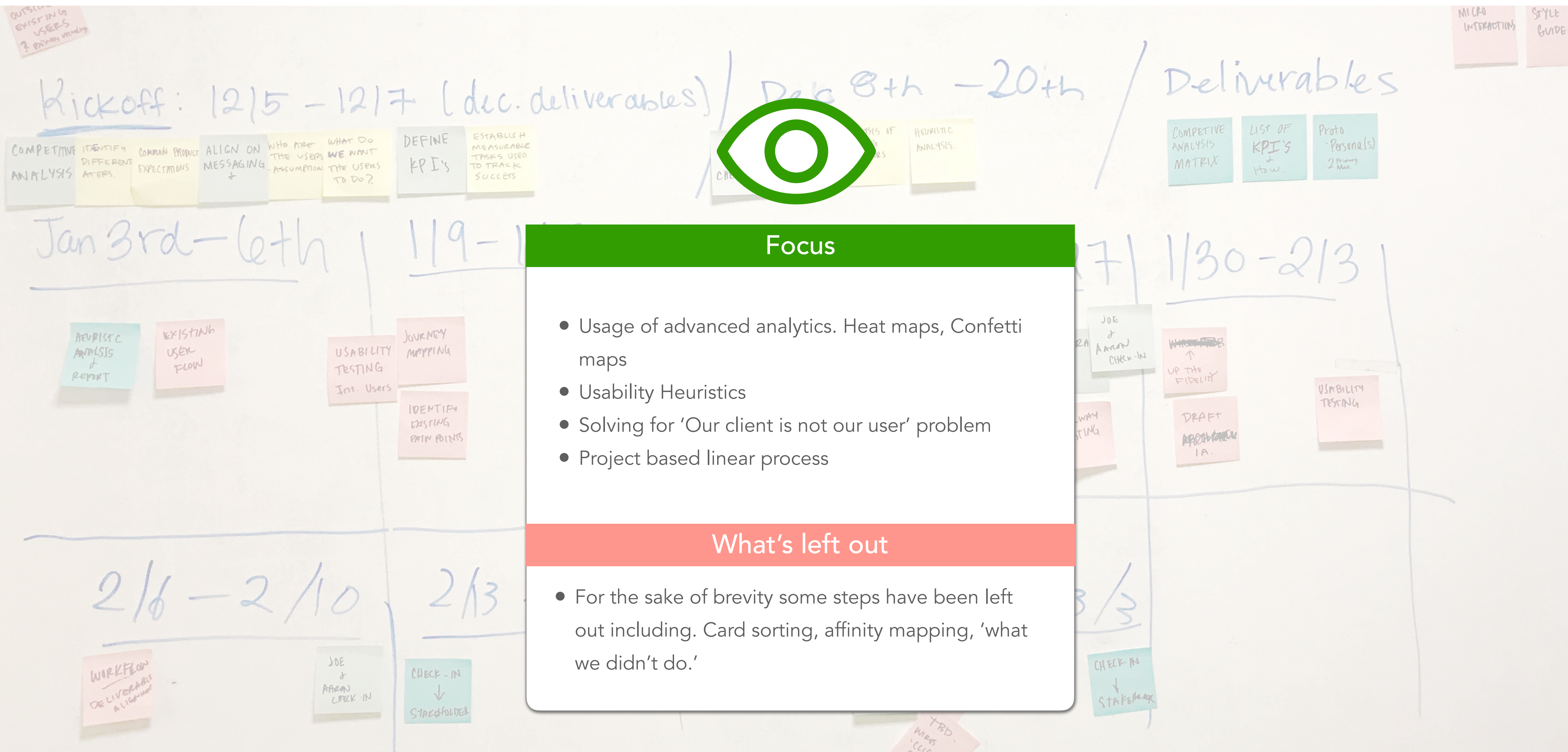# CASSANDRA

Cassandra empowers Fortune 500 companies to see the future through trend forecasting, research, strategy, and brand consulting to drive innovation and stronger engagement with youth.

Why this case study…

Focus

- Usage of advanced analytics. Heat maps, Confetti maps
- Usability Heuristics
- Solving for 'Our client is not our user' problem
- Project based linear process

What's left out

- For the sake of brevity some steps have been left out including. Card sorting, affinity mapping, 'what we didn't do.'

Going Digital

Cassandra had succeeded in digitizing their content but were looking for way to re-imagine the product to leverage the new digital medium. **H**ow **M**ight **W**e make it a more meaningful experience for our user?

Past

Present

Future

- Printed publication delivered quarterly annually for 20 years
- Physical books weighed a ton and were not shareable
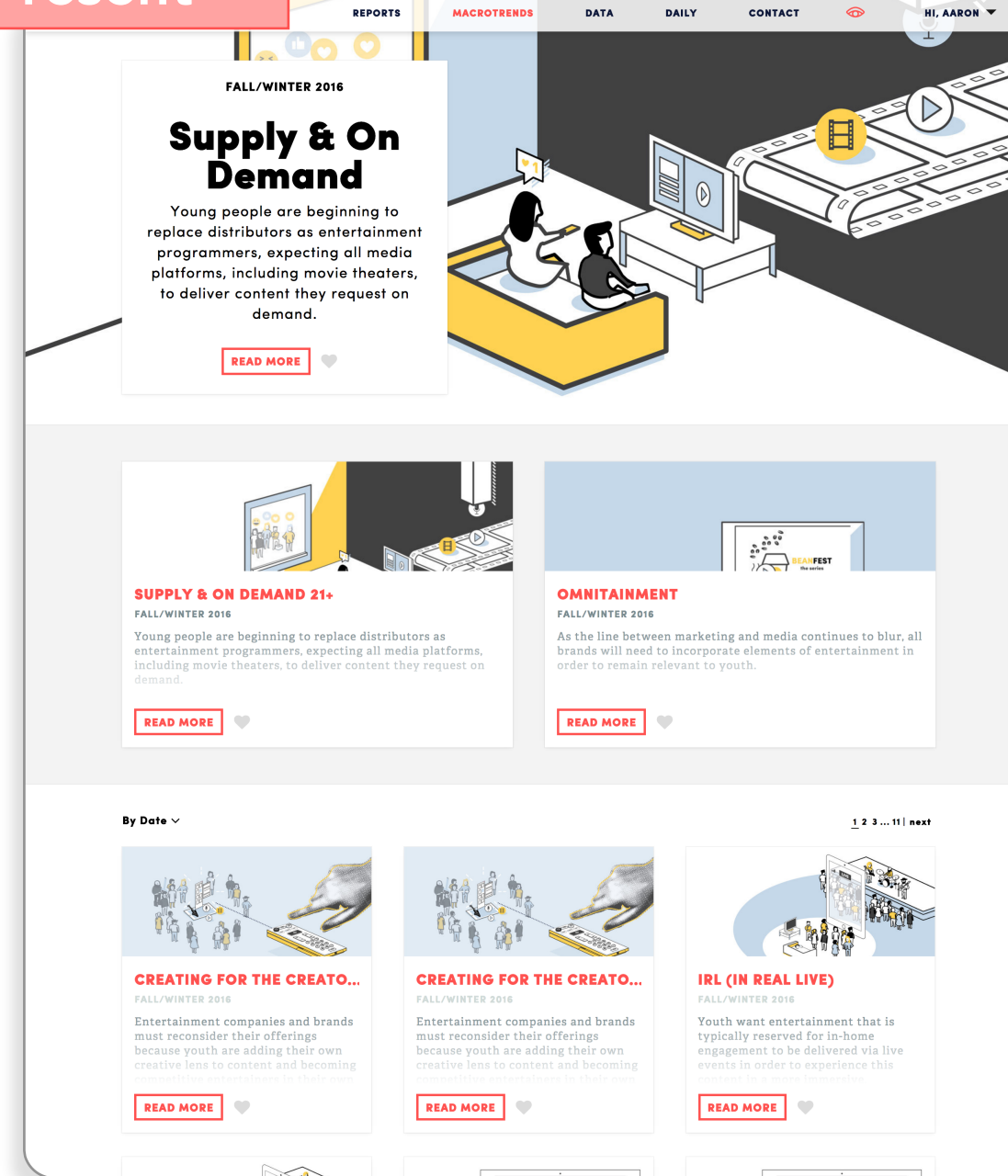
- Content migrated to a digital format. "Encyclopedia style"
- Cumbersome, lacked a clear narrative for users
- Low usage. Most users just printed out PDFs mimicking the physical book use case.

- A 'platform' for clients to access content most relevant to their needs
- Ability to save and share findings with teams
- Serendipitous experience connecting seemingly unrelated content.

Basic Process

Since this was a project based approach, the process was pretty waterfall. Not how I would normally approach a problem but a good example of end to end execution.

Discovery

| Heuristic Analysis | Competitive Research | Usability Testing | Card Sorting | Analytics |

| Key Metrics | Proto-Personas | Journey Map | Synthesize |

Execution

| Define Features | Flows | Architecture |

Delivery

| Annotated Wires | Feature Documentation |
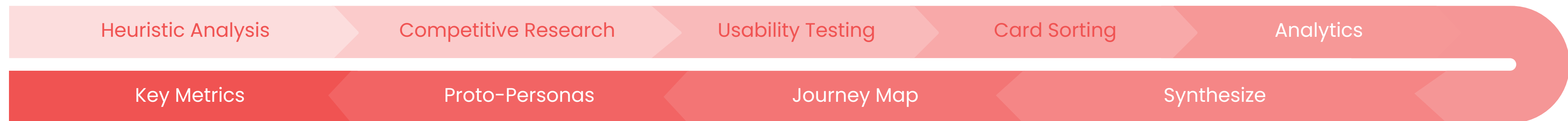
For more insight into my 'Process', check out my case study on how I go more in-depth on my approach.

Buyers are *NOT* our users.

Cassandra sold exclusively to Fortune 500 companies. Senior leaders bought the product for on-demand access to Cassandra's insights. The end user tended to be IC an level marketer, data analysts, and in house researchers. The end result was the a conflict between the 'decision maker' vs 'who is using the product'.

Buyer

"How will this impact my business"

"What am I getting?"

"How much does this cost?"

"Can I see an example"

User

"Where Do I Start?"

"What should I do next?"

"Is this content relevant to me?"

"Where is the 21+ Conent?"

Problem: Users were not engaging with content

Macro trend Articles are looooong. Users were not scrolling to the end and seeing 'related content', resulting in 'one and done' sessions. I implemented heat mapping using CrazyEgg to support Google analytics and usability tests findings

Analysis:

- Majority of users scrolled once before making a decision to navigate a away from the page.
- Content didn't even start before the average page fold.
- Relevant data was not accessible without a lot of scrolling.

Business Problem:

Increase Engagement. (Defined as number of articles user user engaged with per session)

User Problem:

Users need a way to navigate to related content, because they're currently unaware of what Cassandra articles are related to the content that they are reading.

On average it took about 5-6 scrolls to get to the "blue area" given window screen size of 1500px. Recommendation CTR: >5%

Over 90%

Page Fold
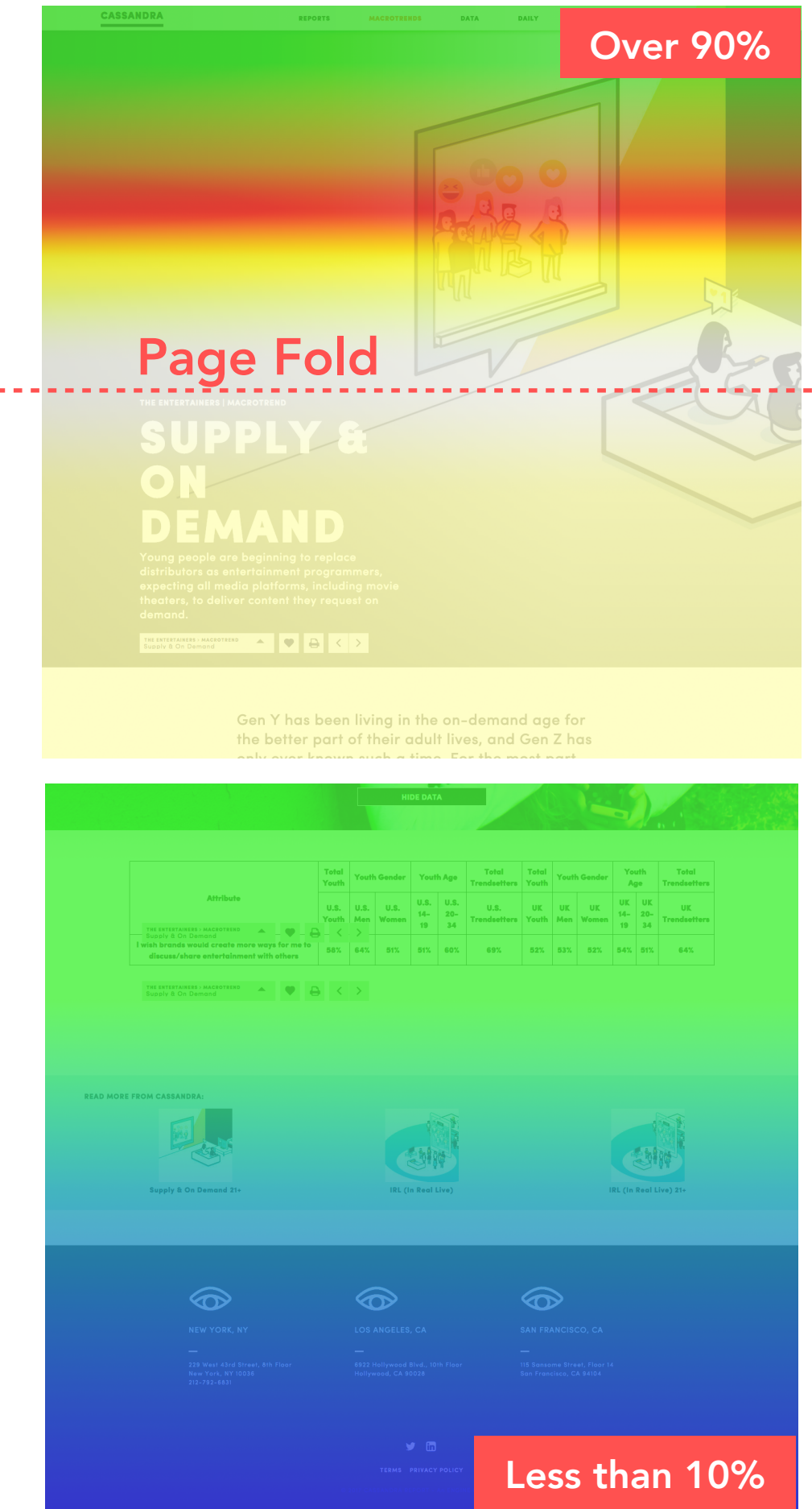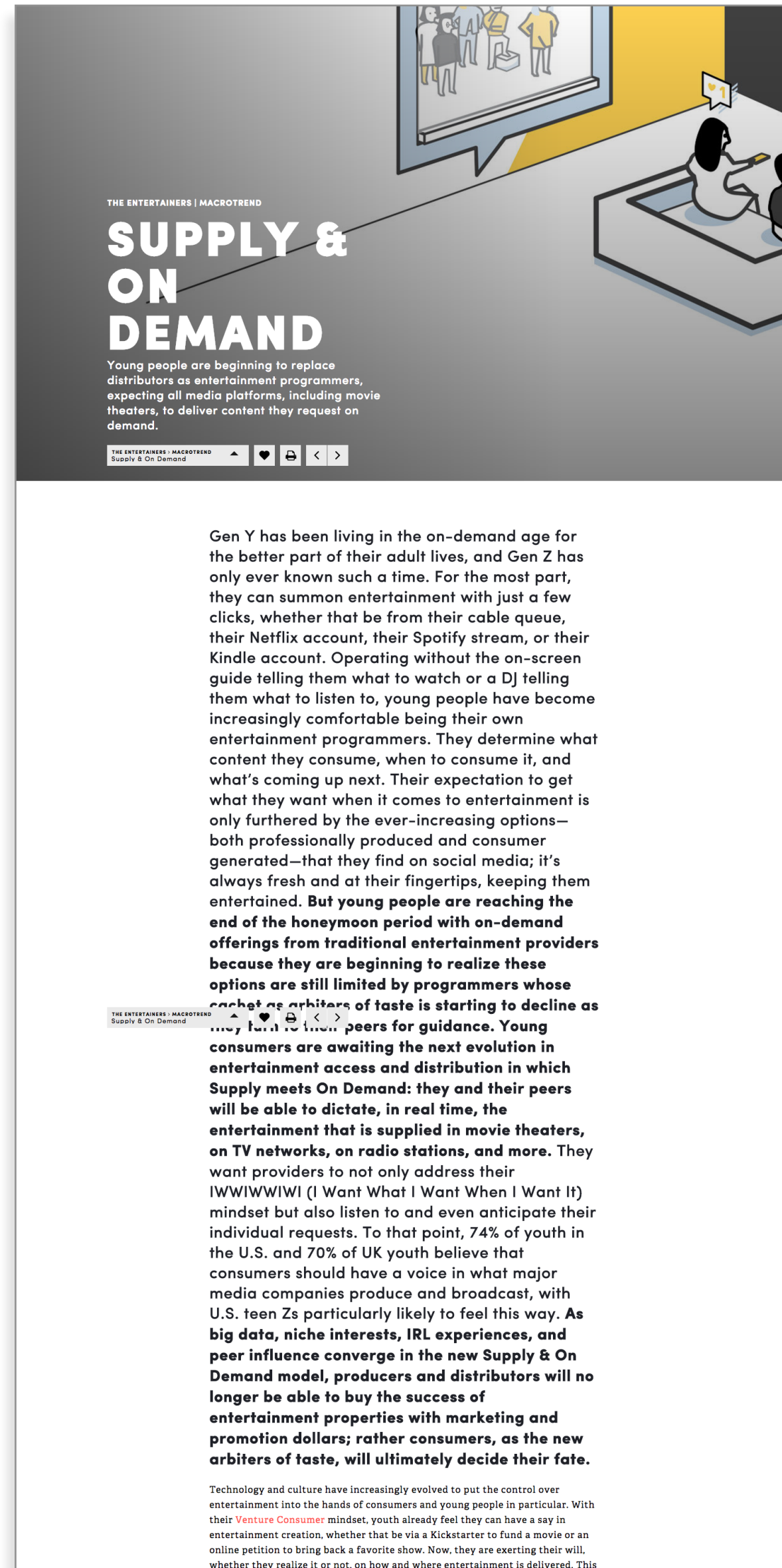
Less than 10%

Green = Over 90% is viewed on screen by users
Blue (to purple) = Less than 10% of users found it useful.

Fix: Continuous Scroll + and Summary

In a complete redesign of the page, I included a couple of features intended to improve on the users' ability to readily access related content.

Action

Continuous Scroll

Hypothesis: By creating a 'continuous scroll' sidebar feature, in which related articles 'stick' to the side of the screen user will engage with more articles.

- Articles based on our search tagging system.

- As the user scrolls the next article automatically loads.

- Included a signifier to let the user know where the are in the overall length of the article.

Heuristic: *Visibility of System Status*

Insights Summary

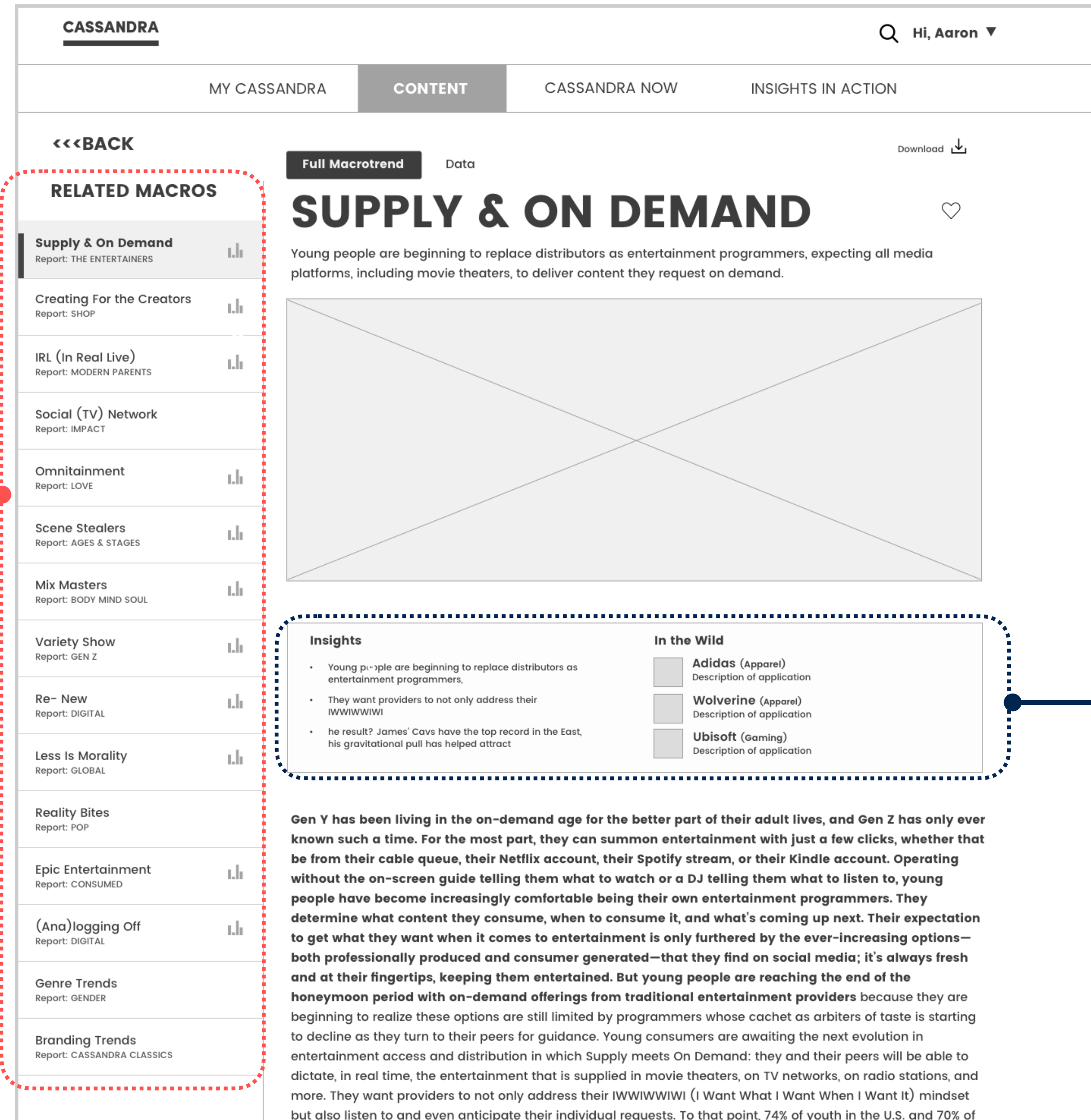Included insights at the top of the article so allow users understand the highlights of the article without having to read the entire content.

Move recommended content to the top of the article which was previously located after the end.

Heuristic: *Recognition over Recall*

CASSANDRA

Search Hi, Aaron ▼

MY CASSANDRA   CONTENT   CASSANDRA NOW   INSIGHTS IN ACTION

<<<BACK

RELATED MACROS

Supply & On Demand
Report: THE ENTERTAINERS

Creating For the Creators
Report: SHOP

IRL (In Real Live)
Report: MODERN PARENTS

Social (TV) Network
Report: IMPACT

Omnitainment
Report: LOVE

Scene Stealers
Report: AGES & STAGES

Mix Masters
Report: BODY MIND SOUL

Variety Show
Report: GEN Z

Re- New
Report: DIGITAL

Less Is Morality
Report: GLOBAL

Reality Bites
Report: POP

Epic Entertainment
Report: CONSUMED

(Ana)logging Off
Report: DIGITAL

Genre Trends
Report: GENDER

Branding Trends
Report: CASSANDRA CLASSICS

Full Macrotrend   Data   Download

SUPPLY & ON DEMAND

Young people are beginning to replace distributors as entertainment programmers, expecting all media platforms, including movie theaters, to deliver content they request on demand.

Insights

- Young people are beginning to replace distributors as entertainment programmers,

- They want providers to not only address their IWWIWWIWI

- he result? James' Cavs have the top record in the East, his gravitational pull has helped attract

In the Wild

Adidas (Apparel)
Description of application

Wolverine (Apparel)
Description of application

Ubisoft (Gaming)
Description of application

Gen Y has been living in the on-demand age for the better part of their adult lives, and Gen Z has only ever known such a time. For the most part, they can summon entertainment with just a few clicks, whether that be from their cable queue, their Netflix account, their Spotify stream, or their Kindle account. Operating without the on-screen guide telling them what to watch or a DJ telling them what to listen to, young people have become increasingly comfortable being their own entertainment programmers. They determine what content they consume, when to consume it, and what's coming up next. Their expectation to get what they want when it comes to entertainment is only furthered by the ever-increasing options—both professionally produced and consumer generated—that they find on social media; it's always fresh and at their fingertips, keeping them entertained. But young people are reaching the end of the honeymoon period with on-demand offerings from traditional entertainment providers because they are beginning to realize these options are still limited by programmers whose cachet as arbiters of taste is starting to decline as they turn to their peers for guidance. Young consumers are awaiting the next evolution in entertainment access and distribution in which Supply meets On Demand: they and their peers will be able to dictate, in real time, the entertainment that is supplied in movie theaters, on TV networks, on radio stations, and more. They want providers to not only address their IWWIWWIWI (I Want What I Want When I Want It) mindset but also listen to and even anticipate their individual requests. To that point, 74% of youth in the U.S. and 70% of

Outcomes

The changes showed monumental improvements in 'click through rates' after usability testing on small sample size.
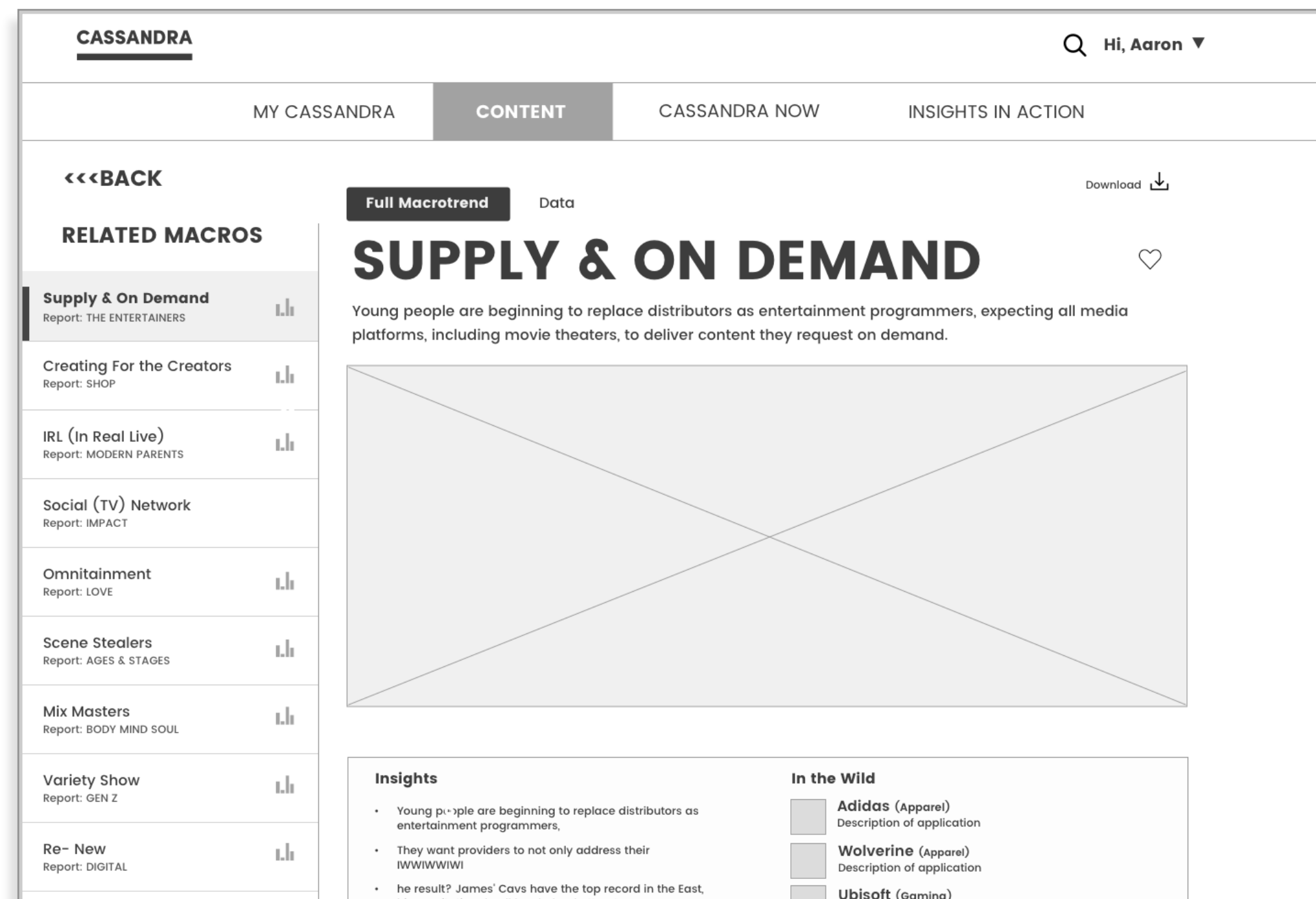
Before

Scrolls: 5-6

CTR: >5%

Average articles per session: **1.5**

After

Scrolls: 5-6

CTR: >70%

Average articles per session: **3**

*results based on before and after usability testing

Problem: Discovery

Users had very inconsistent interactions when visiting the site.
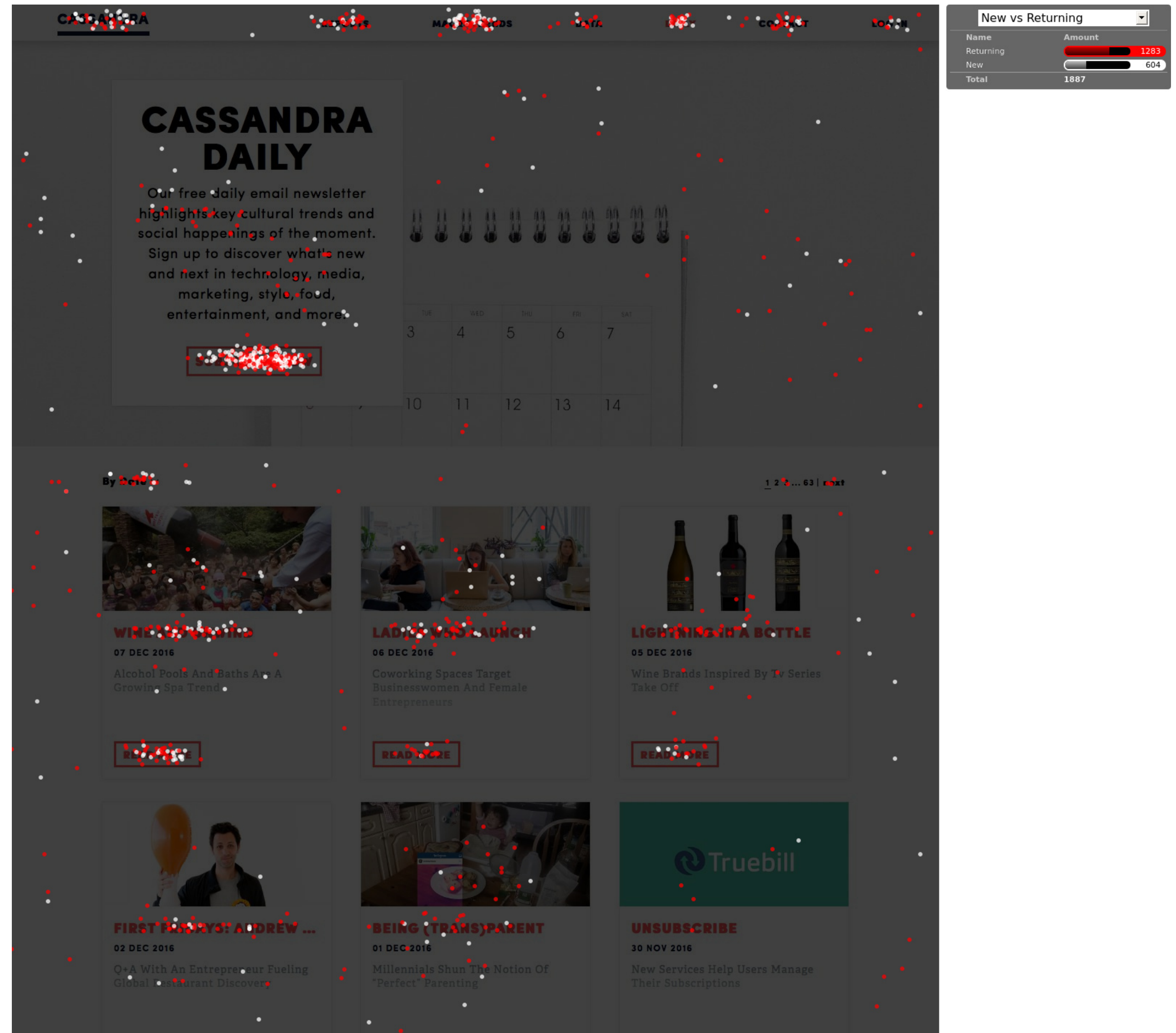
Analysis:

Confetti maps reinforced what our usability tests told us. Users were unclear on how to navigate and find the content relative to them.

Business Problem:

Bounce rate. Most users were not actually 'using' the online product. They were just downloading and printing off articles on demand.

User Problem:

Users need a way to navigate and discover relative content the site because currently the interactions users make do not align with expectations.

Action 1: Revisiting Site Structure

Action

Navigation Bar

CASSANDRA   REPORTS   MACROTRENDS   DATA   DAILY   CONTACT   👁   HI, AARON ▼

"Whats a "Macrotrend?"

"Wait, ..It's an article???"

"Data? It looks like a report?"

'Looks just like a Macrotrend'

"I wast expecting charts."
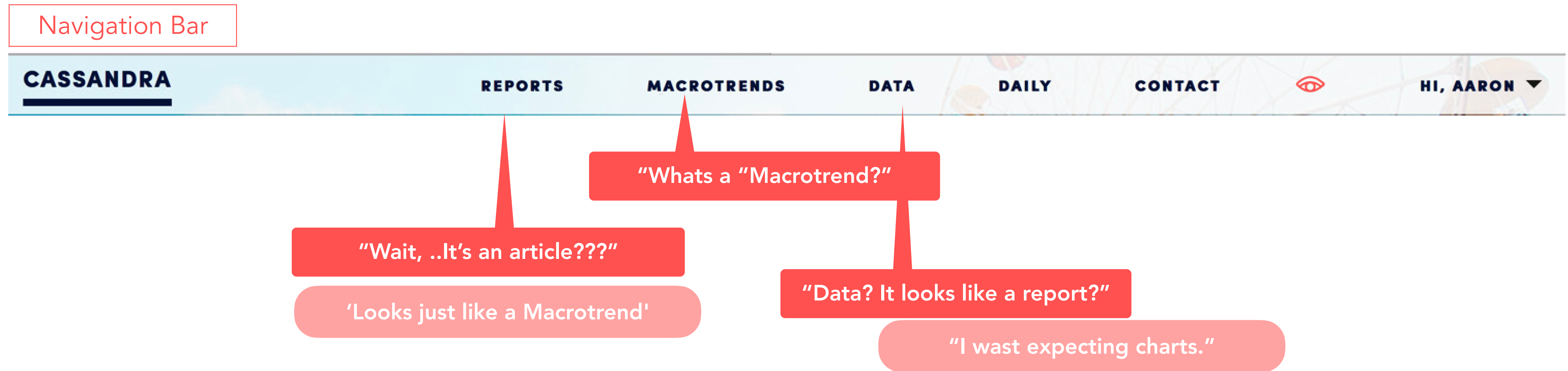
- Internal language used to organize content did not reflect the way users talked out Cassandra.
  - *Result: Users 'clicking around' to orient themselves in the product.*
- Terminology needed to be learned and was not informative.
  - Result: *Users were clicking on links expecting one result and getting something different.*

*Feedback based on in-person Usability Testing own 21 users.

Action 1: Remapped mental model

We rearranged the entire architecture to reflect the user's mental model vs. the previous 'inside baseball' version.

Heuristic: *System World Match*

Action.

Hypothesis

• Changing the language and restructuring the content to be oriented around the way the user talked about Cassandra would result in a more intentional discovery path for users.

CASSANDRA

Hi, Aaron ▼

MY CASSANDRA   CONTENT   CASSANDRA NOW   INSIGHTS IN ACTION

Home page, including past activity, personalized recs, and saved content

All Data, Macros, and Trends on place.

Case studies showcasing 'insights' garnered from Cassandra content and their bottom line impact.

Navigation
Click patterns
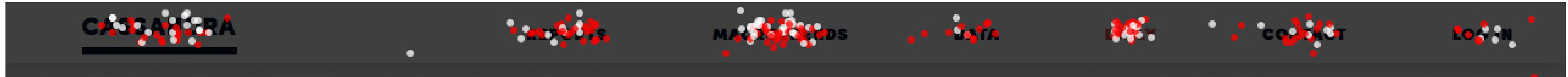
Result

Before

- There were more concentrated and less sporadic pattern in the confetti pattern post changes (image not available).

*represents results found in usability testing, actual confetti map unavailable.

After
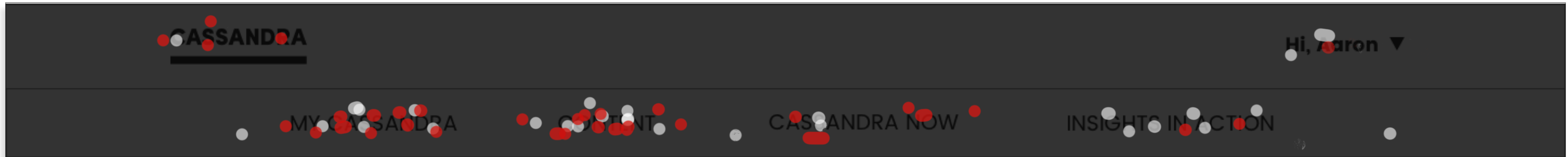
- There were more concentrated and less sporadic pattern in the confetti pattern post changes (image not available).
- **Return users were much more focused in their behaviors**
- New users still displayed (albeit less), a 'kicking tires' pattern of behavior.

*represents results found in usability testing, actual confetti map unavailable.

Action 2: Rethinking content

Complicating issues was our visual presentations were very similar. User didn't know the difference in content. Data could be found across content types depending on what you were looking for.

"Can you tell the difference?"

Macrotrends Page

Data Page

Action 2: Rethinking content

Action

Content

Content was moved into one space with the ability to filter by type.

Hypothesis: By creating a central location for content, we'll be able to centralize our user's discovery behaviors. This should result in a more efficient ability to locate and relative content.

Divided Content into their 3 categories. Macros, Themes, and Data

CASSANDRA

🔍 Hi, Aaron ▼

MY CASSANDRA | CONTENT | CASSANDRA NOW | INSIGHTS IN ACTION

FILTERS

Year

☐ 2017
☐ 2016
☐ 2015
☐ 2014
☐ 2013

Report

☐ Shop
☐ Game Changers
☐ Love
☐ Digital
☐ Pop
☐ Global

GENERATION

◉ Generation X
☐ Generation Y
☐ Millenial

Verticals

☐ Automotive
◉ Banking
☐ Consumer

MACROTRENDS | THEMES | DATA | Results: 48

✕ Generation X ✕ Banking ✕ Social Media

SUPPLY + ON DEMAND 11/20/17
Young people are beginning to replace distributors as entertainment programmers, expecting all media platforms, including movie theaters, to deliver content they request on demand.
Word Count: 8,806

2016 SHOP REPORT

Read Full Macro ›

RELUXE 11/13/17
It's not an easy time to be a luxury brand. Between the recent U.S. recession, the downturn of a once-reliable Chinese market, and the climate of political and economic unrest across the globe, scaling has never been more challenging. On top of this, the misconception that Ys aren't shelling out for luxury has left many high-end brands ready....
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2016 GAME CHANGER REPORT

Read Full Macro ›

WHAT'S IN STORE 11/6/17
Young shoppers feel the draw of innovative retail storefronts that deliver experiences online retailers have yet to match.
Word Count: 8,806

2016 LOVE REPORT

Read Full Macro ›

Action 2: Rethinking content

Filter Bar
Implementation of a filtering sidebar for discovering content. The categories were based on indexing pre-existing tagging system

Key Functionality
1. Turning on and off toggles auto populates the results on the right hand side.

2. Total results a updated as well to give the user reference to how much content is being returned.

3. Results could be 'deleted' to change results

Result

User could actually find content.
70% reduction in the use of search

*results based on before and after usability testing

GENERATION

- ⊙ Generation X
- ☐ Generation Y
- ☐ Millenial

Verticals

- ☐ Automotive
- ⊙ Banking
- ☐ Consumer
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Fast-Moving Consumer
- ☐ Financial

Topics

CASSANDRA   🔍 Hi, Aaron ▼

MY CASSANDRA   CONTENT   CASSANDRA NOW   INSIGHTS IN ACTION

FILTERS

Year
- ☐ 2017
- ☐ 2016
- ☐ 2015
- ☐ 2014
- ☐ 2013

Report
- ☐ Shop
- ☐ Game Changers
- ☐ Love
- ☐ Digital
- ☐ Pop
- ☐ Global

GENERATION
- ⊙ Generation X
- ☐ Generation Y
- ☐ Millenial

Verticals
- ☐ Automotive
- ⊙ Banking
- ☐ Consumer
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Fast-Moving Consumer
- ☐ Financial

Topics
- ☐ FOOD
- ☐ FASHION & RETAIL
- ☐ TECH & INNOVATION

MACROTRENDS   THEMES   DATA   Results: 48

✕ Generation X   ✕ Banking   ✕ Social Media

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2016 GAME CHANGER REPORT

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Young shoppers feel the draw of innovative retail storefronts that deliver experiences online retailers have yet to match.

Word Count: 8,806

2016 LOVE REPORT   Read Full Macro ›››

PARENTING IN PARTNERSHIP 10/22/17
Parenting is becoming more communal, with modern moms and dads involving their friend groups in their family lives.

Word Count: 8,806

2016 GAME CHANGER REPORT   Read Full Macro ›››

REALITY BITES 10/15/17

Much, much more.

This was a large project over a long time. The previous examples are only part of the story. There were a lot of iterations and problems that didn't find their way into this case study

Additional issues addressed

Meeting Users where they are

Ability to download PDFs

Lighten cognitive load on users

Including summaries within articles outlining key takeaways vs. putting the onus on users to extract the key takeaways.

Homepage

Created the ability to save articles.
Users could 'continue where they left off.
Allowed Cassandra to feed recommendations based on past history.

One last thought…

The Problem with Case Studies.

By default, cases studies are recaps of past work. It's what I 'did'. Not what I would do. It lacks context of the situation, reflection, and the messy parts of the process.

Hopefully this succeeded in touching on interesting problems and solutions I've seen. Feel free to reach out for more insights in this project or others.

Thanks!