

Senior citizens

Sociology, Communication



Over the past few years, with the help of modern technology, people have obtained access to virtually anything they desire at the simple click of a mouse button. Now, information can be accessed through various websites without having to visit a library, go to a store, a friend's or relative's home, or even travel agencies. The Internet is for all people- regardless of age, race, ethnic background, class, or religion.

When it comes to marketers and which strategies will be most effective and efficient to become a successful website, every product in the market is geared towards a specific target group, regularly based on demographics. Whether it is where a person lives, their marital status, age, or occupation, marketers try to target one particular area where they feel that their product will be benefited the most and where profits will be most generated for the business.

One particular area that has been expanding not only in website visitations but also in new website formations is the senior citizen age group. Now, seniors are the fastest growing audience on the Internet. What is more interesting is the fact that they put their money where their " mouse" is. This age group's frequent use of the Internet is absolutely amazing and unbelievable. There are hundreds and hundreds of websites designed to be most suitable or more geared for this target group. The websites are specifically designed to meet the needs of older adults about the ages of 60 and above, and grandparents. It does not steer towards a certain economic or religious class.

The majority of these websites provide much information on healthcare, health issues that affect them, relationships, money, news, entertainment, and childcare.

Part 1B- Competitive Analysis

Under the top 10 most popular sites for “ www. seniorcitizens. com”, I chose the top four websites to analyze the areas in order to compare and contrast where www. seniorgold. com is strong and where it needs some work.

The first site is called www. senior. com. Like any website, it will have many strengths and weaknesses. Allow me to discuss this website’s strengths first. The page was downloaded quite easily, with no error messages to refresh the page. Overall, the designs of the pages are colorful and have very clear graphics. The text is very clear without being too wordy and misleading. The home page also has a search engine that allows the user to quickly find what he/she is looking for. In addition, it has a large variety of topics to choose from with easily accessible features.

This website does contain a vertical and horizontal scroll bar on its homepage which makes the first impression for users a tedious one. It becomes very frustrating when someone has to keep scrolling up and down to search any information. The contents on the homepage of a website should be clear, brief, and concise allowing you to link to it if more information is what is desired of the user. Another weakness would include the arrangement of topics on the homepage. They begin with serious news that then descends down to tacky, irrelevant links. Although the content of

the text itself is clear, it looks all jumbled up, busy, and confusing. In order to be simple, and to the point, the topics should become more condensed, including the amount of links it has.

Compared to [www. seniorgold. com](http://www.seniorgold.com), this website is more visually appealing to the eye. It appears to be more youthful through the use of cartoon characters and bold color schemes.

The second website, [www. elderweb. com](http://www.elderweb.com), has tab links at the top of the homepage which allows the user to click on the tab which is relevant without having to search endless rows of subcategories to see which one applies to their information search. There are no distracting side links that allows the user to choose to read the information or simply click on where they wish to go on the site. Unlike [www. senior. com](http://www.senior.com), the page is very consecutive with the stories and features. The current headlines are brief and to the point. And, each headline gives the user a good sense of what each story is about without getting too wordy or redundant. There aren't any banner ads that enable the user to concentrate more on his/her search without being distracted.

One feature that I felt was quite important (especially since it is geared toward an older age group) was a button right on the home page that says, “Increase Text Size”. This is one feature that I had never seen on any of the other websites for senior citizens. This is an important feature because, unfortunately, there are many senior citizens that do have visual impairments, and by using this feature, it facilitates their use of the website.

A weakness that this website had was that it contained the same dull format and style throughout the whole website. The uninteresting graphics were all the same no matter which link you clicked on to view. The use of mute colors did not make this website very visually stimulating or appealing. This site also had a scroll bar, which, again, made the layout of the page seem very busy and unorganized. This was the first senior website that did not have a search engine located anywhere. So, if you wanted some information, regardless of how consecutive or concise the text and layout may appear, you would not be able to simply type in what you were looking for to search.

Compared to [www. seniorgold. com](http://www.seniorgold.com), Elderweb has a very dull appearance. It looks very plain and old fashioned. It seems as though this site is geared more towards seniors that have a more traditional or conservative way of thinking. They prefer simplicity (i. e. light, dull colors, same graphics, etc) over complexity (i. e. bold/bright colors, cartoons, modern graphics, etc).

The third website, [www. thirdage. com](http://www.thirdage.com), I would have to say is the best website for senior citizens-conservative and avant-garde. It contains a great color scheme of white and a soft green with no overwhelming or any dull graphic design. It does not have too many divertive banner ads. The search engine appears on every screen for easy access. It has a modern, strong homepage that is visually appealing with more interesting topics and subcategories geared more towards advice and different lifestyle levels.

This page does have a scroll down bar which could have been easily prevented by filling in the right side with that information. The whole right side is completely blank. This should have been used to condense the

homepage without having to scroll down. Editorially, this page is not set up well. It has many scattered features, which makes everything look disjointed. The pictures all depict a youthful, healthy person. Obviously, the illustrations, which seem unrealistic, are not very reflective of their target audience.

Measured up to [www. seniorgold. com](http://www.seniorgold.com), this website is more appealing visually. The topics are not as condensed or as easily accessible as that of the one referenced above.

And lastly, [www. 1travel. com](http://www.1travel.com), is the website which I felt was least relevant to senior citizens. It may have special discounts for them, however, on the homepage, it is not mentioned at all that any senior citizen discounts exist. This means that if there are any discounts, the user has to go searching for it. It is not easily accessible from it's main page. It does not indicate at all that this site is geared toward senior citizens. It is another website to make travel/car/hotel reservations. Why not visit any other travel websites that could probably give better bargains?

A good feature on this website includes easy search methods (several search engines for each category). Also, the layout is immediate, it is in your face and very easy to gain access to. It contains excellent searching options and subcategories along with any questions with regard to the user's travel needs. The layout of it has very basic colors- not too bold, yet not too boring either and there aren't many banner ads in this page.

This website does contain vertical and horizontal scroll bars. The graphical layout overwhelms the text. The site seems to appear very busy, too wordy,

or too much text perhaps. The text is also not very concise it seems scattered everywhere and is extremely redundant with several topics (ie FAQ's, etc).

Part1C-Site Analysis

Seniorgold. com makes information searching very obtainable through the use of its shortcuts, word searches and options located on the left of the homepage layout. The layout is very colorful. The drop down menus are very resourceful in enabling the user to find what he/she is looking for without having to search the whole website to find it.

However, this site has a few weaknesses as well. One includes the busy-looking and visually unclear graphics. The site looks too full of activity with banner ads whose color schemes clash with the site's design. Another important thing to note about this site is that it is outdated! I couldn't help but notice that on the home page of this site it still had the link to: "Thanksgiving Preparation". We're in December!!! Websites that are not updated lose the interest and use of their web visitors. It is crucial for web page designers to keep their websites up-to-date with any new events. Users may see this and see it a site deficiency.

Part2A-Drive More Traffic To This Site

I would recommend that the website changed its design layout. It should have a color scheme that compliments the text. The use of the drop down menus is very clear and concise. However it should concentrate on condensing the home page (it's three pages long!).

<https://assignbuster.com/senior-citizens/>

One way of driving traffic to the site is to create banner ads for other senior citizen sites, as well as for nursing home sites, parenting sites, travel sites, and recreational activity sites. What could also be done is to pay major Internet servers such as America Online, Yahoo, MSN, etc. for keyword bidding,

Part 2B-Create A Stronger Community Among WWW. Seniorsgold. Com Site Members

I believe that this web site has a strong community as long as the above changes are made. This website does provide recreational activities such as casino resort trips and other activities that they could consider joining. Another addition may include the access to play games. For example, Bingo is a recreational game that senior citizens are notorious for.

Another feature that I believe is important in creating a strong community is the chat rooms. Senior citizens, since retirement or death of a loved one, feel a little lonely at times. I feel this is a great opportunity for them to communicate with other people without spending money.

This website does have chat rooms. My experience of trying to enter a chat room, became well, quite discouraging. Under " Directory Word Search" I typed in " chat". Once I got to the next page, it did not take me to any chat rooms or choice from various ones. Instead, it took me to a page where I could find out where my roots come from!!! After scrolling down almost to the bottom of the page, I found a link to chat and clicked on it. I never reached a chat room. The website needs to create word searches that

facilitate the search, not make it more difficult. In addition to chat rooms, I think it should develop a variety of rooms where people can interconnect discussing similar hobbies such as golf, or crocheting, etc.

Senior citizens need a sense of community and what best way to do it than by helping them find other people who feel the same!