

PART I

Usability Audit

freetrail.com

ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

1 Header:

The website is not very user-friendly and lacks intuitiveness. There are issues with text contrast and readability. The social media buttons are hidden from users, making them hard to access. Additionally, their size makes them virtually invisible on larger screens with a width of 1920px or more. The purple section on the first level of the header visually squeezes the social media and search buttons with the login.

2 Search:

It opens as a full-screen PopUp, blocking access to the content. When the Hero banner is dimmed, the bright white PopUp creates a high-contrast load on the user.

3 CTA (Button):

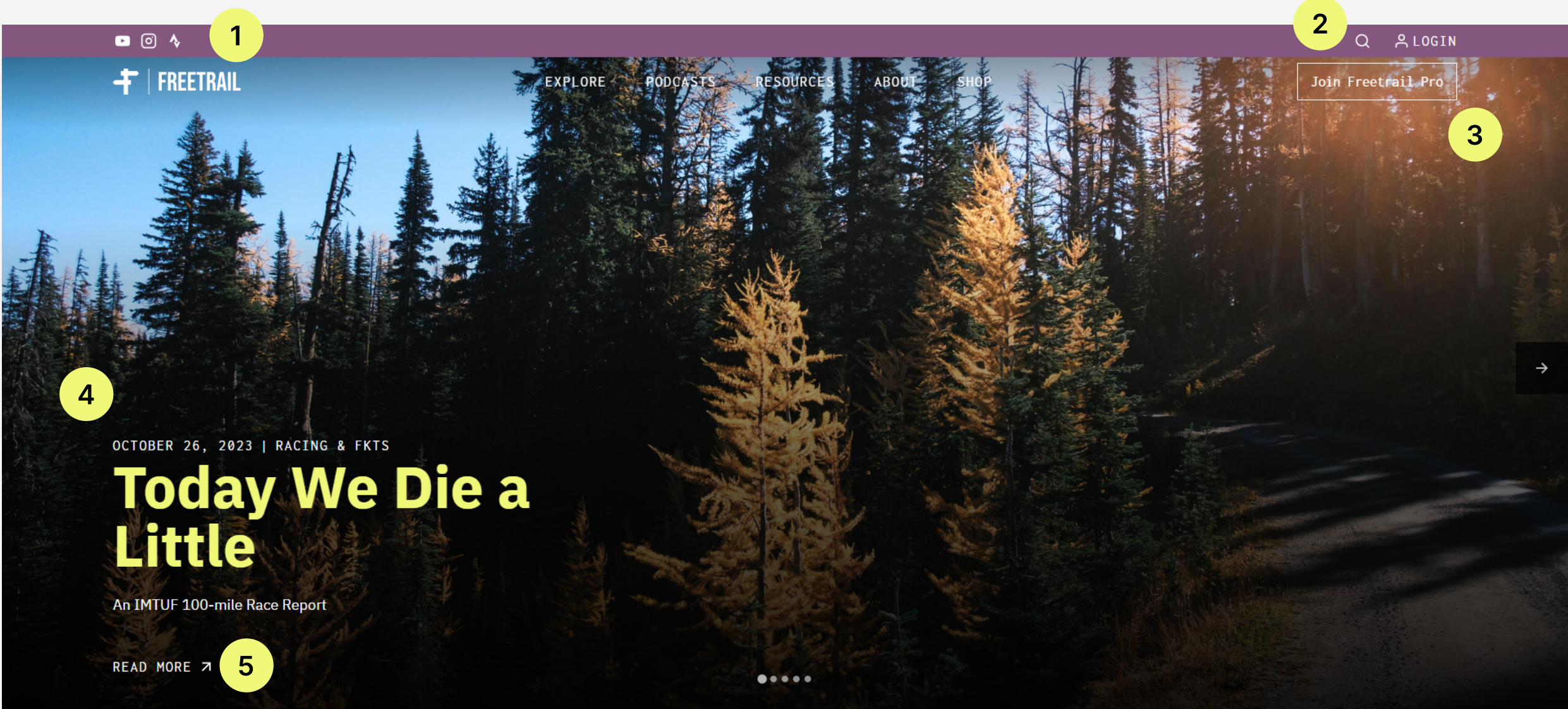
It is visually inconspicuous and insignificant. The text contrast with the background is compromised, resulting in difficulty in locating and reading the button text.

4 Arrow (Button):

The absence of an arrow for slide navigation (unlike the one on the right) leads to unclear slide transitions and the inability to view the previous slide.

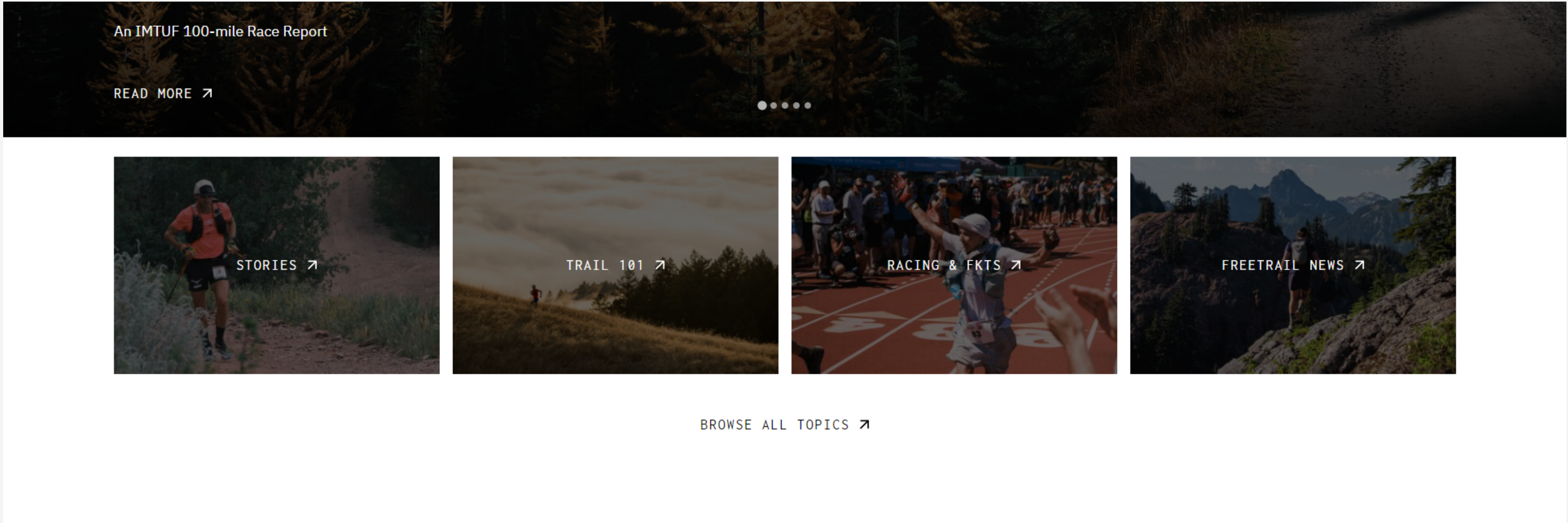
5 Butto (Link):

The 'Read More' button is visually disconnected from the text block with the article title and description.



Recommendations:

1. Replace the Header.
2. Change the implementation of the search from PopUp to another type, like prada.com / theclymb.com / adventure-journal.com / or use a Slide Out (Expanding) style.
3. Make the CTA more prominent and visible to the user and style it appropriately.
4. Add a button for slide navigation.
5. Visually unite the article title and the link to it.



ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

This section is clear, but it needs to be visually separated from the Hero Section. It is recommended to make it a separate section and move it down below the Podcasts block. Instead of it, a good solution would be to create an 'About Us' section.



About Freetrail

Freetrail is a community dedicated to the life-changing sport of trail running. Our team lives and breathes the trail running lifestyle and is committed to reflecting its values in everything we do. Our mission is to use trail running as a tool with which we can positively influence the lives of individuals and the world as a whole. To this point, our business focuses on three main avenues to advance this mission: media, training, and events.

The Freetrail media network includes three popular [podcasts](#), [film production](#), and [written publishing](#) from some of the great minds in the sport. Our [Freetrail Pro community](#) is comprised of hundreds of trail runners around the world who share a passion for personal improvement and personal connection, both online and IRL. Freetrail co-owns and directs the [Gorge Waterfalls](#) trail race – one of the premier events on the West Coast, happening every April in Cascade Locks, OR.

Our small team views our efforts here as our life's work. We hope you'll allow us to accompany you on your trail running journey.

Trail Culture

Our overarching mission as a business is to spread Trail Culture, and in doing so, we believe that trail running can and will save the world. We frame our Code of Conduct by first sharing our definition of Trail Culture.

Trail Culture represents the spirit of the global trail running community. We

ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

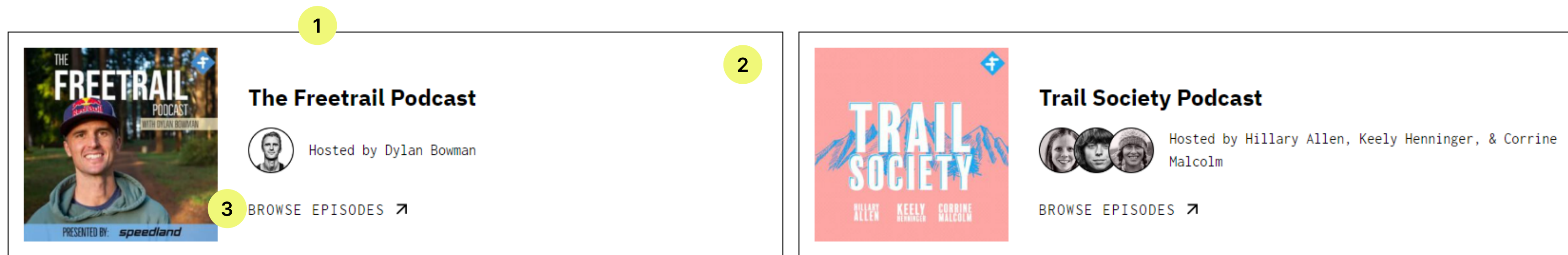
The 'About Us' section should include brief information about FreeTrail, its vision, and priorities. This will allow new users to quickly get acquainted with and become interested in the company's activities.

Recommendations:

1. Highlighting the 'About Us' section on FreeTrail is essential as it addresses the problem that new users face and offers solutions while satisfying their desires.
2. Using information from freetrail.com/about/ and summarizing it in 2-3 sentences can captivate the user and prompt them to learn more about the company and why it's beneficial for them.
3. A visually appealing format could be a combination of a photo, text, and a 'Read more' button that links to the About Us page, enabling users to quickly explore in-depth information about FreeTrail, its philosophy, and the team.

Catch up with the Pods.

One great sport. Two amazing podcasts. Find your daily dose of #trailculture in your favorite Podcast player.



ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

- 1 Tiles:**
The tiles featuring links to podcasts are intuitive and visually appealing. If there's a need to accommodate more podcasts, consider adding scrolling functionality or arranging them vertically, but limit the visible tiles to no more than 6 at a time. Additionally, include a 'Show more' or 'Show all' button that directs users to the podcast page for further exploration.

- 2 Browse Episodes:**
Optionally, consider relocating the 'Browse Episodes' button to the top right corner for better visibility and accessibility.

- 3 Browse Episodes:**
Optionally, include a 'Subscribe on Spotify / Apple Podcasts / RSS' button.

Recommendations:

1. Attempt to establish a vertical content hierarchy within the 'Podcast' tiles.
2. Implement horizontal scrolling for the tiles in the case of a large number of podcasts, or consider adding a 'View All' button/link that directs users to the podcast page.

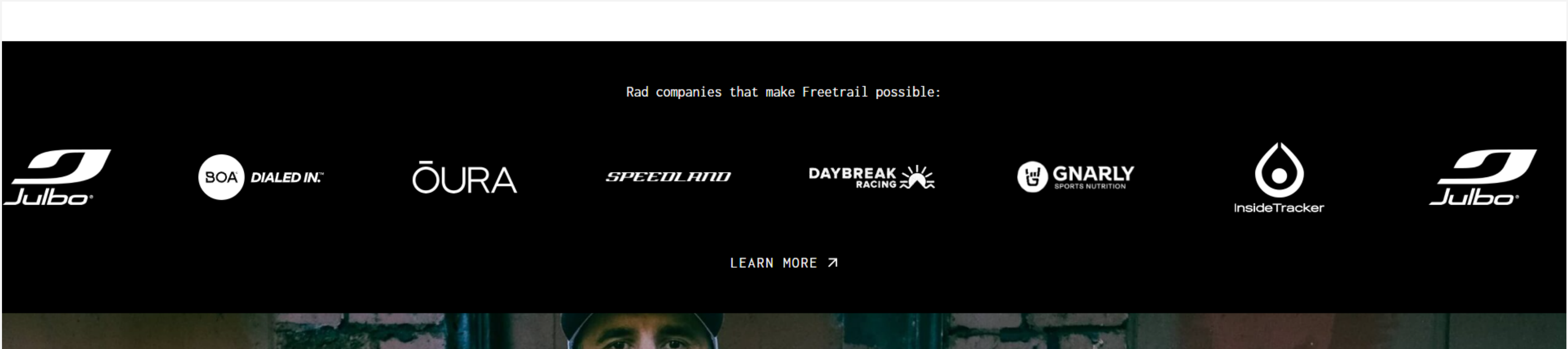


ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

Banner:

The banner with a link to purchase products does not effectively convey that FreeTrail offers items for sale. It's necessary to implement a more informative format, such as product cards (3-4 items) with a 'View All Products' button/link.

Example: theclymb.com / adventure-journal.com



ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

The presence of the 'Our Partners' section is well-justified and visually sufficient. It would be great to place this block after the 'Shop' section (or after the 'About Us' section if there's a need to emphasize partnerships with other companies or teams).

Become a Freetrail Pro member

Get exclusive access to premium content, our private trail community, and more. Just \$10/month or \$96/year.

Join Freetrail Pro

ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

Lack of information with a brief explanation of how a FreeTrail Pro subscription benefits a user who is new to FreeTrail.

Recommendations:

1. Replace the banner "Become a Freetrail Pro member" with a section with cards (as shown in the example on the right - a section from freetrail.com/freetrail-experts/). The goal is to introduce the user to the opportunities that they can get by subscribing.
2. Make a comparison between:
 - **Standard Plan:** Detail the advantages of registering on the site, describe the resources available to users with a basic subscription. Emphasize a few key benefits to encourage users to sign up.
 - **Pro Member:** Specify who this subscription is designed for, list its advantages, highlight why it's superior to the standard subscription. Mention the extensive resources and courses that will only be accessible to users with this subscription.

ESSENTIALS PLAN

\$200 /MONTH*

For the athlete looking for a custom plan with professional support, but is fairly independent, has a consistent life schedule, and just needs a bit of regular feedback to stay on track.

- Initial kick-off call to talk goals, season planning, experience, schedule restraints, and challenges
- Custom training plan
- Final Surge account to track training and coach collaboration
- 1 x week coach workout review, feedback, and plan adjustments in Final Surge
- 1 x month phone check-in
- Freetrail Pro membership

Get started

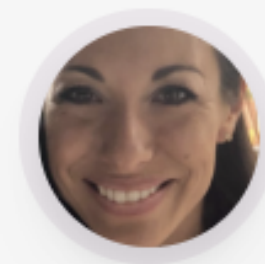
PRO PLAN

\$300 /MONTH*

For the dedicated athlete looking to go all-in. Get regular feedback and schedule adjustments to dial in your training and maximize potential. Also great for athletes with a hectic schedule, who may need extra flexibility and support fitting quality training into a busy life.

- Initial kick-off call to talk goals, season planning, experience, schedule restraints, and challenges
- Custom training plan
- Final Surge account to track training and coach collaboration
- 2 x week coach workout review, feedback, and plan adjustments in Final Surge
- 1 x week email check-in
- 2 x month phone check-in
- Freetrail Pro membership

Get started



Freetrail is not only an amazing community of passionate trail runners but a place where knowledge is shared freely, support is given to all equally, and the overarching intent is to celebrate the beauty and difficulty of our amazing sport with others. The Freetrail Femmes is a group of female identifying individuals whom I am proud to know and who constantly inspire and motivate me. I truly appreciate the opportunity to engage with more of the community both on and off the trails through the Freetrail connection.

- CORINNE SHALVOY

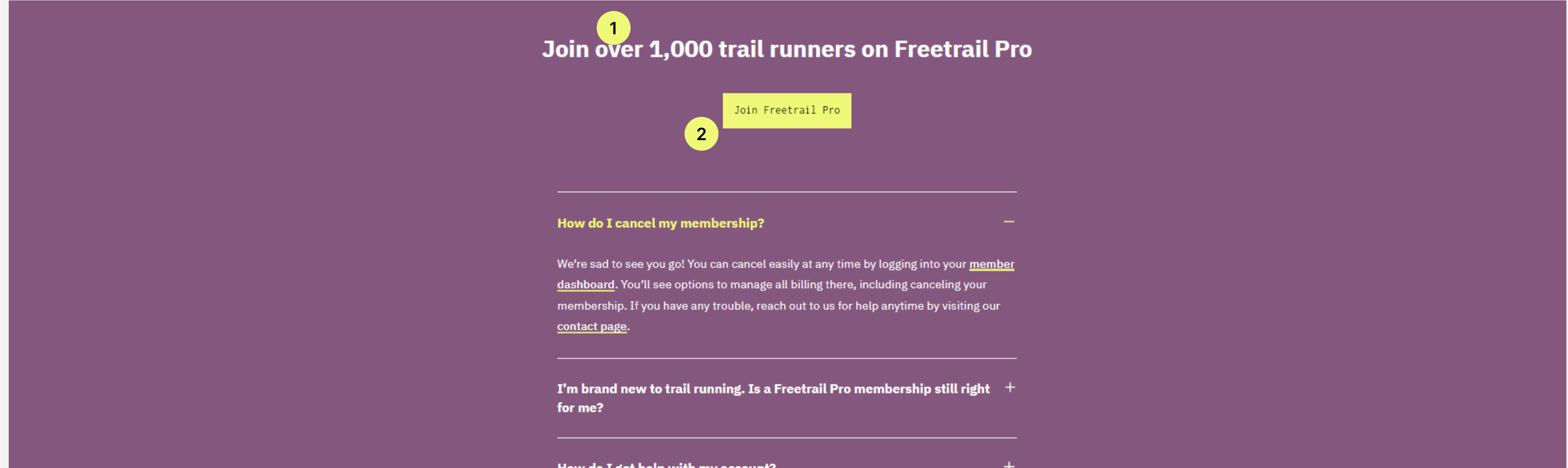


ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

After the 'Become a FreeTrail Pro member' section, it's important for users to see testimonials from real customers and their positive emotions from interacting and collaborating with FreeTrail. It's necessary to add a 'Testimonials' section and include positive reviews to encourage users to register and persuade them that subscribing to 'FreeTrail Pro member' would be an excellent choice.

Recommendations:

1. The current section (example from freetrail.com/freetrail-pro/) appears visually outdated, with a large amount of text using minimal space, leaving significant empty space on either side. Centering such a volume of text makes it challenging for readability and content comprehension.
2. It is necessary to replace the structure of the "Testimonials" section with a more understandable and visually pleasing one (maybe try 3-4 cards, with scrolling), with the text centered on the left)



ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

- 1

Title:

After the 'Testimonials' section, it would be an excellent choice to add a dedicated 'FAQ' section to acquaint users with the most pressing questions and provide necessary answers. Therefore, there is no urgent need to create a half-banner, half-FAQ section.
- 2

Button:

This button is unnecessary here and only distracts the user.

Recommendations:

1. Replace the semi-banner that is located on top with the Title for the section - "FAQ"

2. The presence of the button in this case is unnecessary. From the user's perspective, it distracts from the absorption of the content located below, which includes questions and their respective answers.

3. Currently, the questions and answers are visually squeezed in the center, with not enough space on the left and right sides. It is necessary to increase the width of the area for this content in accordance with the grid and as a result - visual facilitation for familiarization and perception of the text

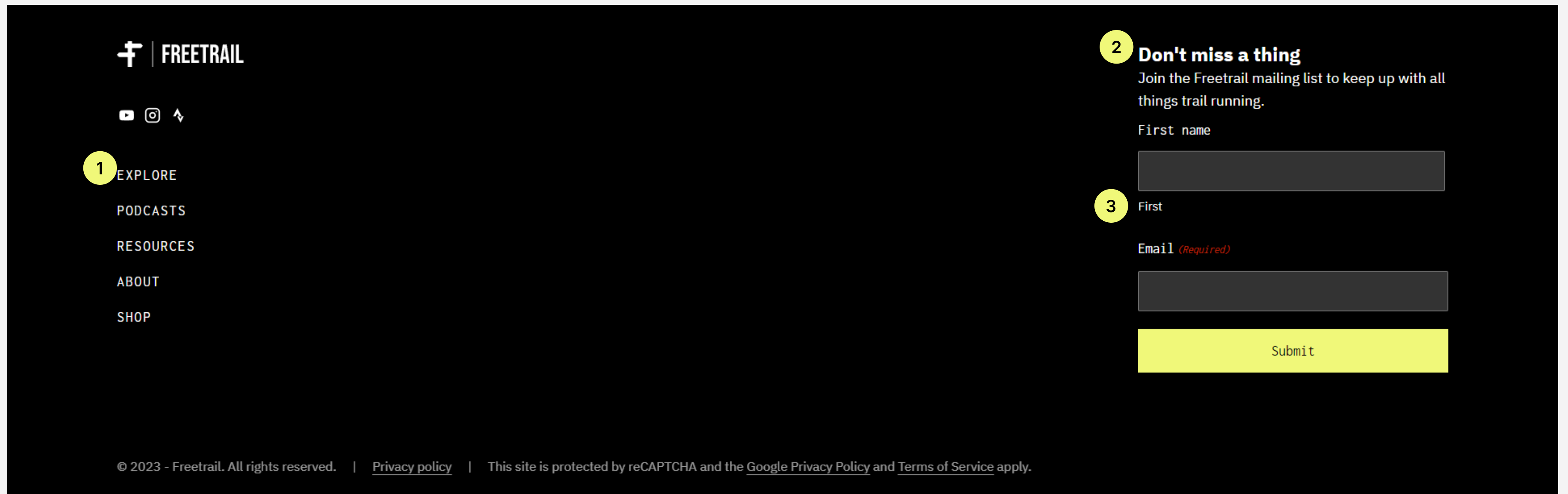
Become a Freetrail Pro member

Get exclusive access to premium content, our private trail community, and more. Just \$10/month or \$96/year.

Join Freetrail Pro

ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

Following the 'FAQ' section, it would be an excellent choice to place a CTA banner encouraging users to 'Become a FreeTrail Pro member.' Since the user has already been introduced to all the privileges and subscription benefits, the goal of the banner is to solidify the user's belief that this action will only bring them benefits and resolve internal questions. Therefore, the user should not hesitate to subscribe to access all the advantages that FreeTrail offers to Pro members.



ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

1 Links:

Links to other pages of the website visually appear to be glued to the left, leaving a large empty black space in the center. The links themselves do not contain the necessary information about the site structure.

2 Form:

In a design context, the feedback form also appears pinched and glued to the right.

2 Help Text?:

It's unclear what function the word 'First' serves under the input field for the name.

Recommendations:

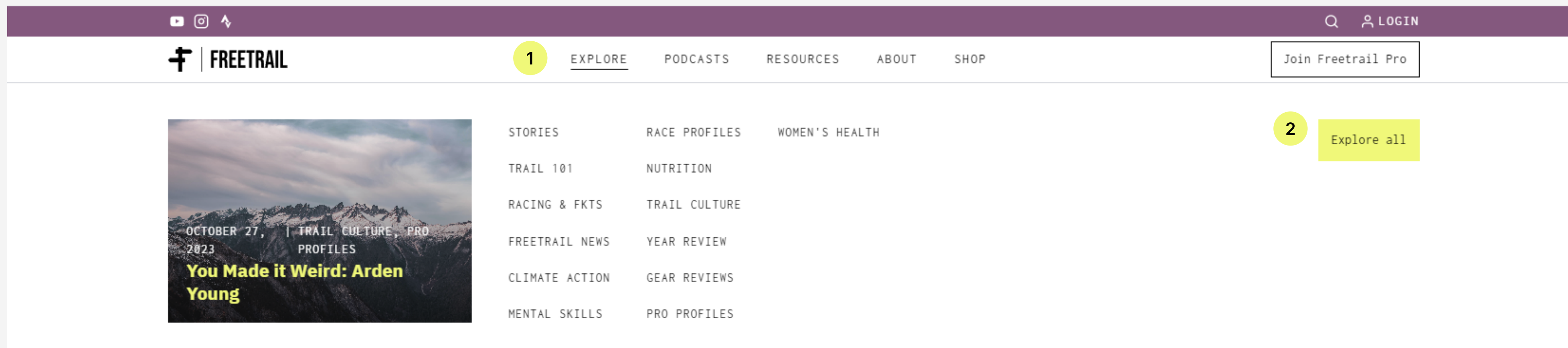
1. Change the placement of links in this section. Center them, group them by categories, and reflect a more realistic and clear site structure, specifically, all the currently hidden pages, to make navigation and transitioning between pages easier for the user.
2. Make the feedback form wider and visually less squeezed to the right.
3. Remove the unclear help text 'First' from underneath the 'First name' input field.

PART II

Menu Updates

freetrail.com

Home Page (Desktop)



ISSUES AND TRIGGERS

- 1 Link:**

The main issue with these categories lies in the internal logic of user interaction with the menu categories, duplicating functions, and, as a result, creating confusion about the user's current stage in the User Flow. 'Explore' serves the function of revealing the Slide In & Out Menu on hover, as well as acting as a link leading to the freerail.com/explore/ page. Here, users are immediately presented with a news block and a complete list of article categories.
- 2 Button:**

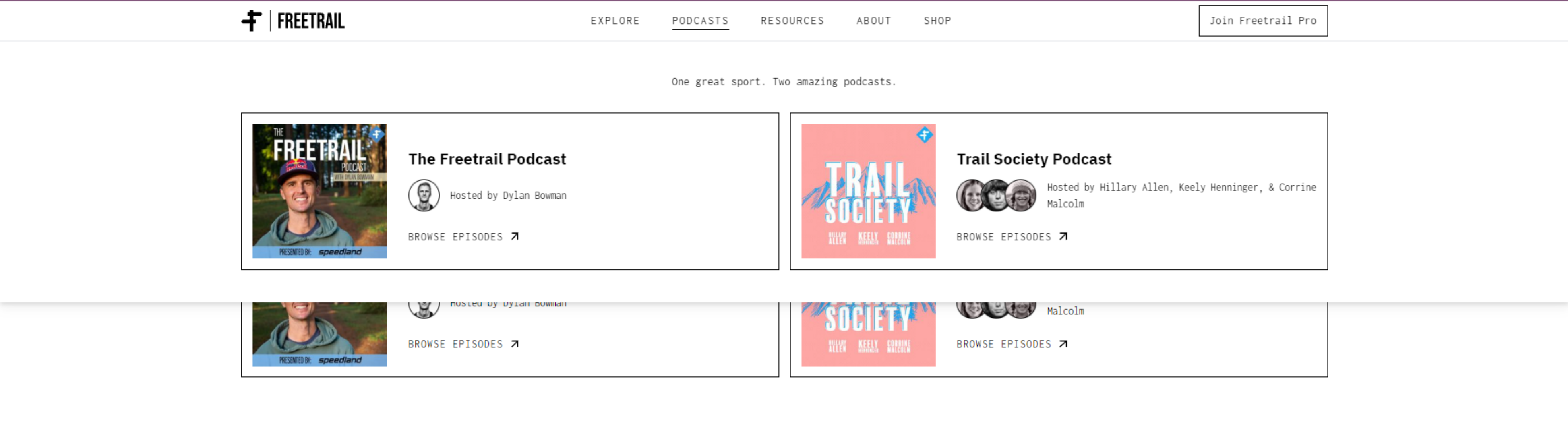
This button opens freerail.com/all-topics/, a page containing all article categories, essentially duplicating the 'Explore' link.

Recommendations:

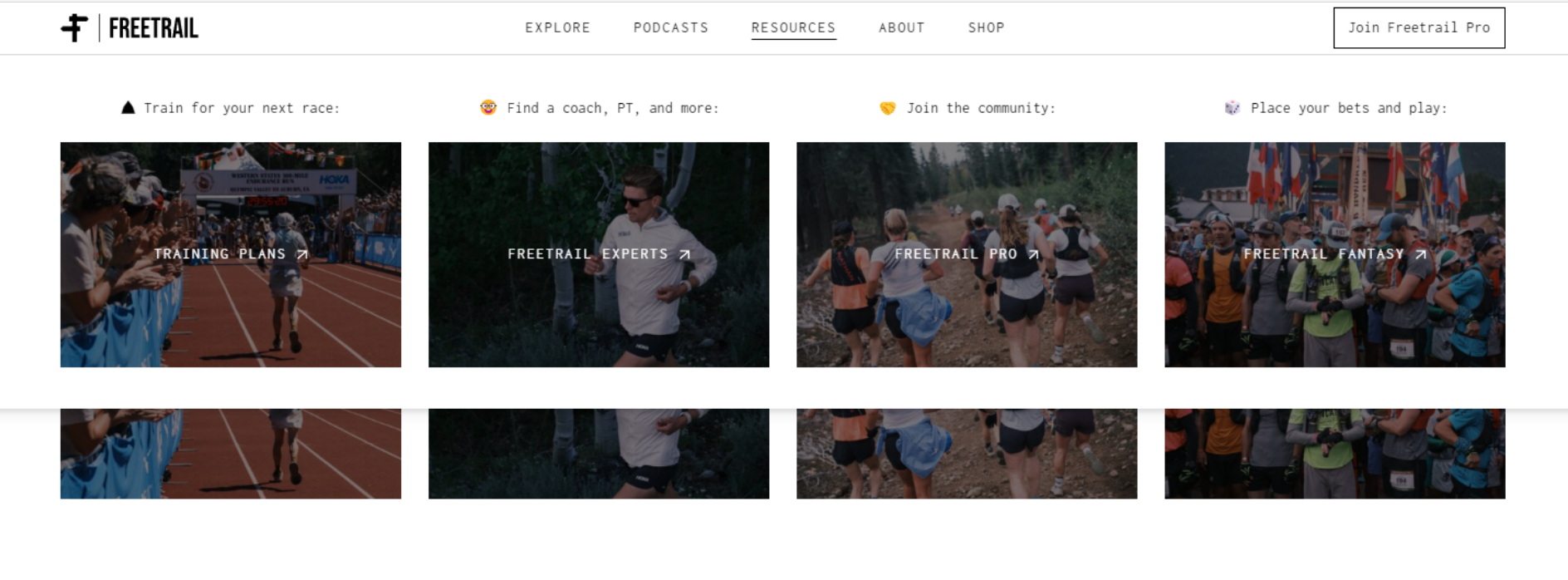
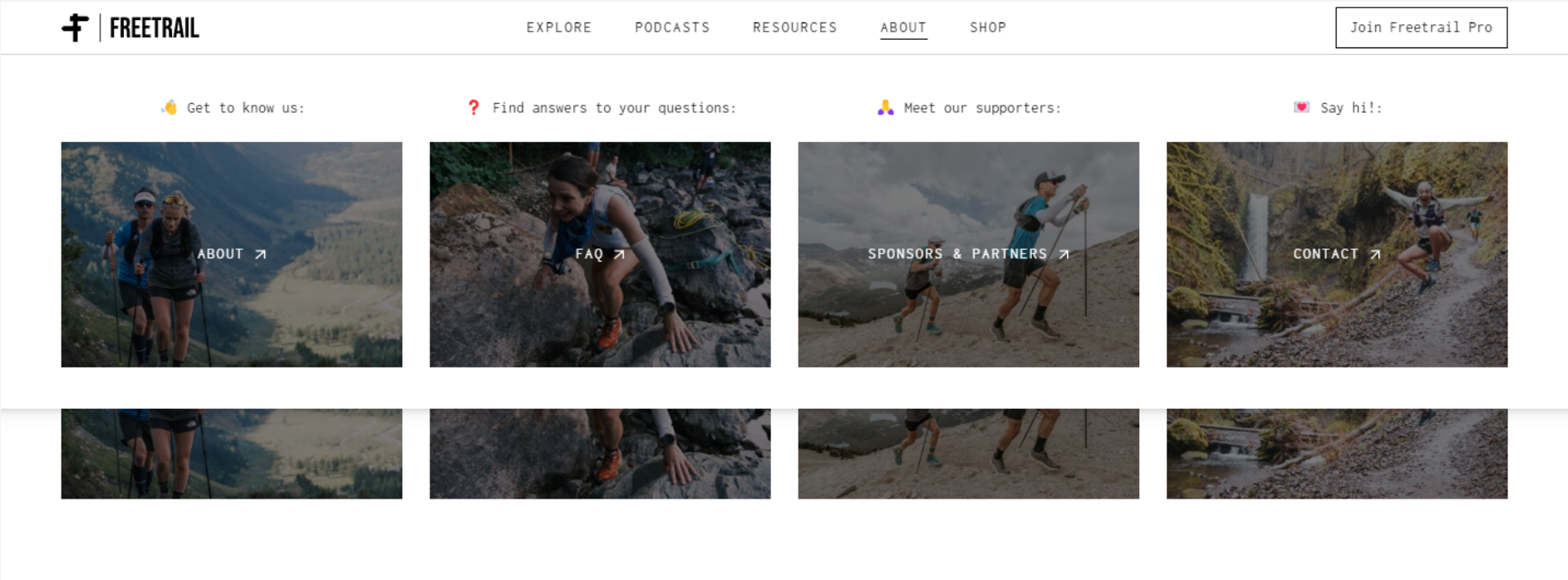
1. Change the header to match the required functionality and visual design
2. Reduce the number of duplicate functions so that the user does not have to choose between different actions with the same result.

When clicking on "Explore", the user will see a menu with all categories of articles;
Clicking on "Explore" will take him to a page where he will also see all categories of articles;
Clicking on "Explore all" - the function is duplicated and he will see all categories of articles again

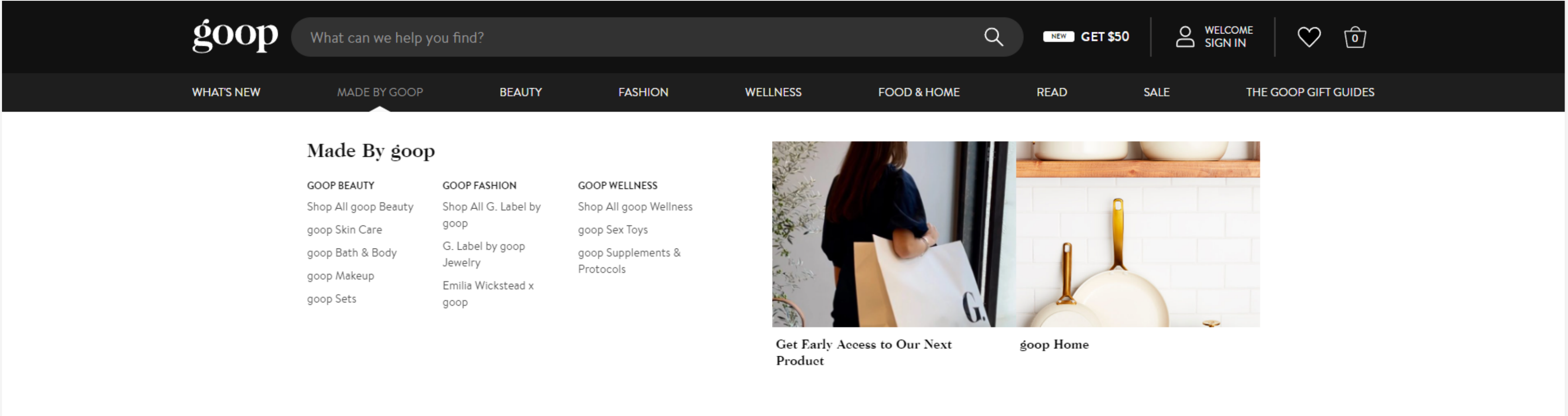
Home Page (Desktop)



For a more precise description of this problem, pay attention to how the duplication of category hover functionality coexists with the open page displaying the same categories.

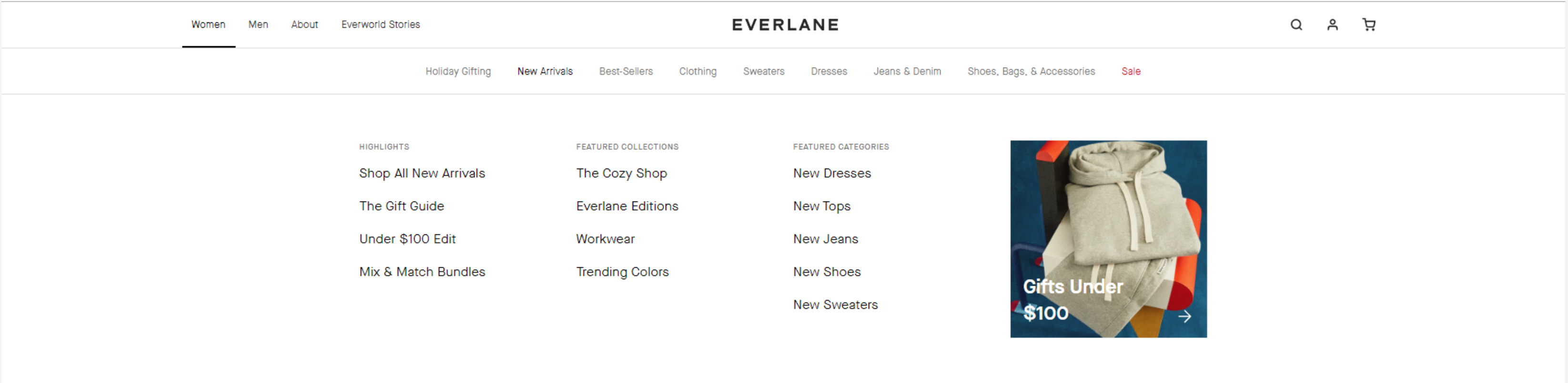


Home Page (Desktop)

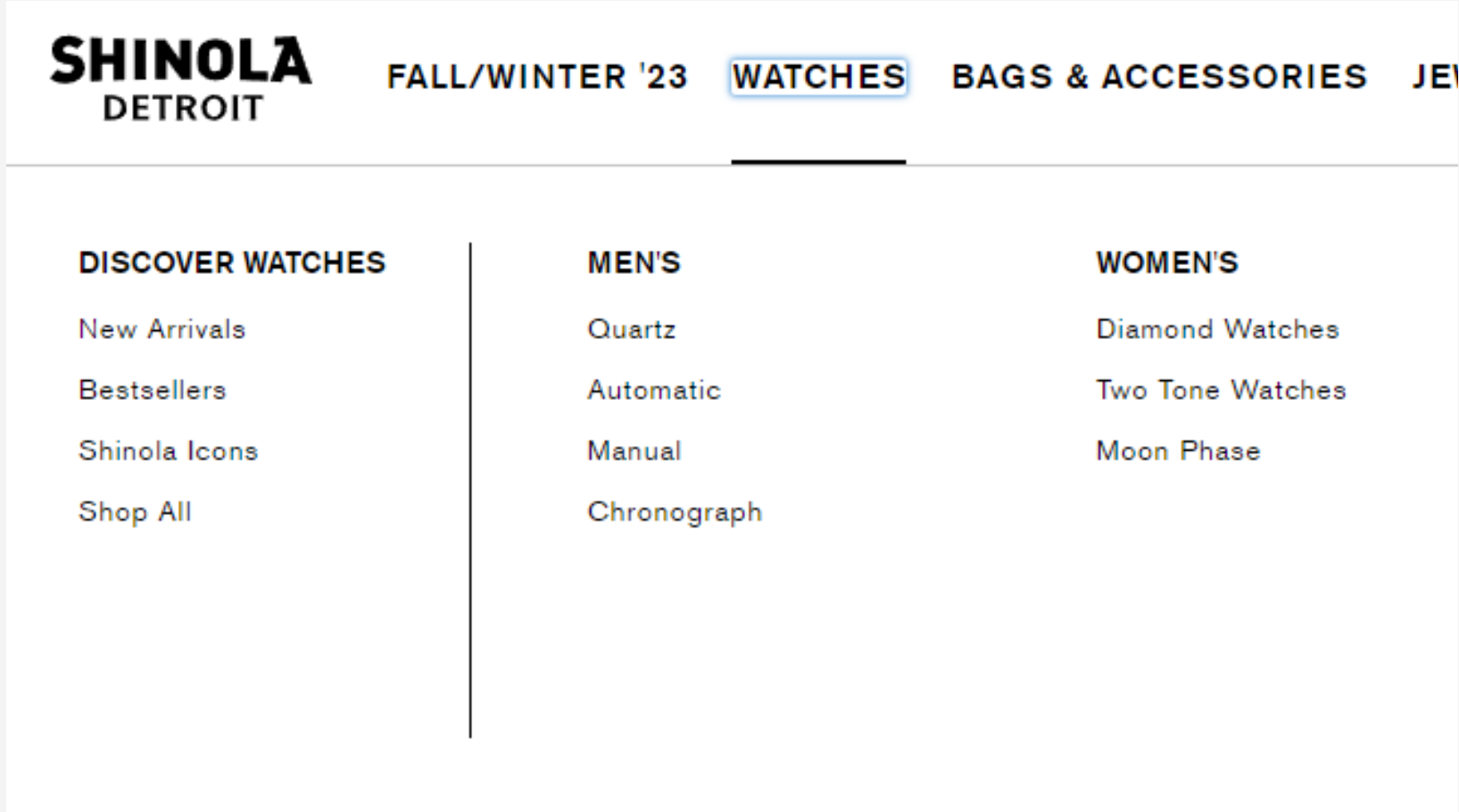


As an example, you mentioned [goop.com](https://www.goop.com). Each category on their website serves solely as a hover function, and there are no duplicate buttons or links that might cause potential conflicts in user interaction with the website. This example showcases an excellent UX solution widely used by many companies in various industries.

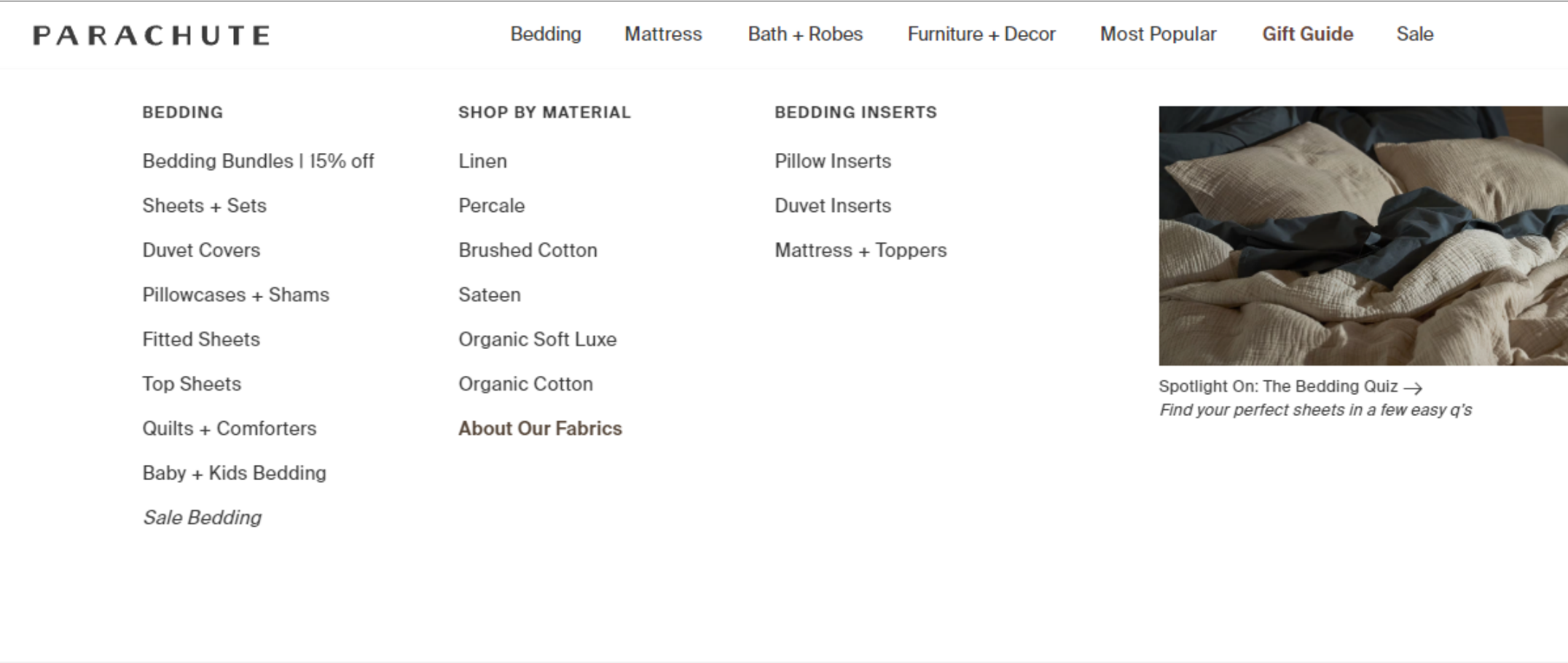
www.everlane.com/



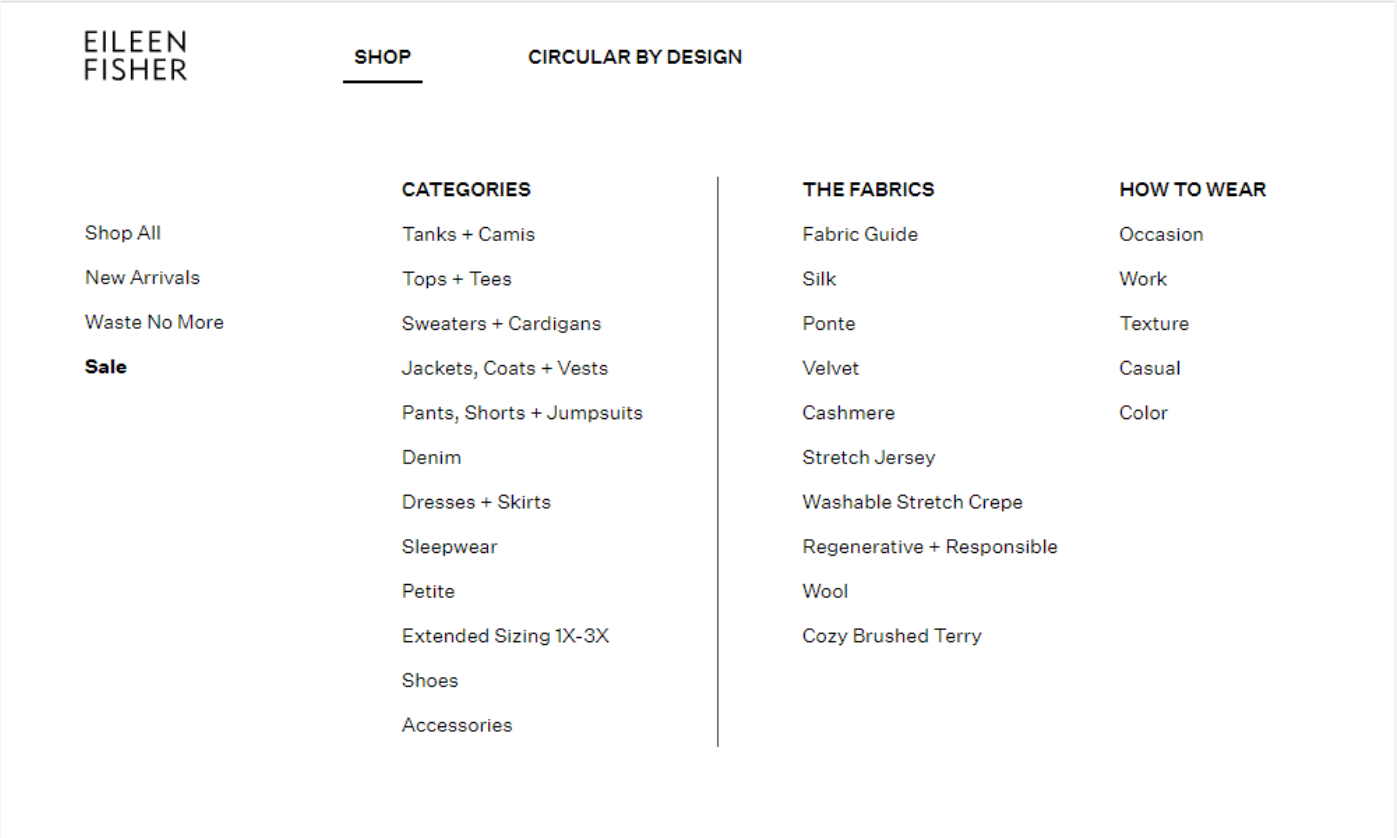
Home Page (Desktop)



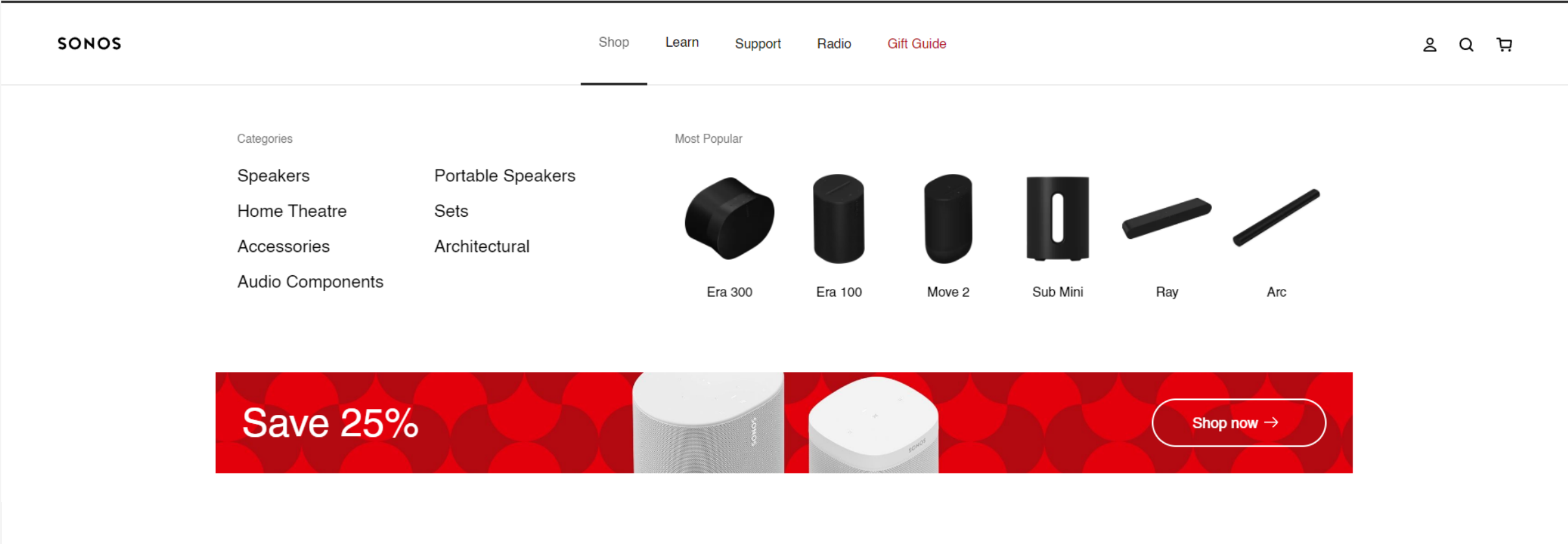
<https://www.shinola.com/>



<https://www.parachutehome.com>



<https://www.shinola.com/>



<https://www.sonos.com/en/home>