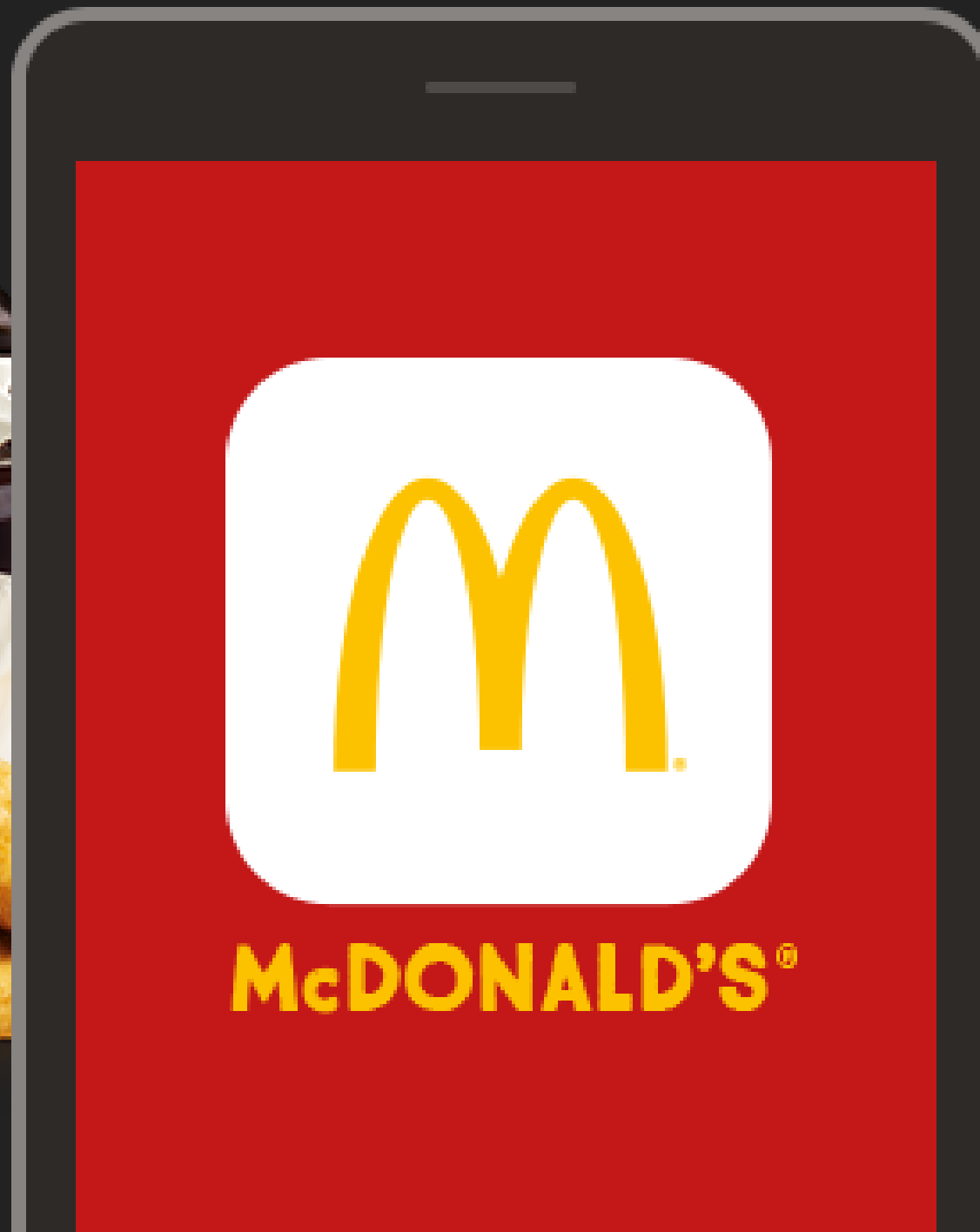


MCDONALDS:

**A UX CASE STUDY
ON THEIR WEBSITE
DESIGN**



BY CARMEN NGUYEN

OVERVIEW

WHO THEY ARE

McDonalds is one of the most renowned food brands around the world. Not only are they known for their savoriness of their burgers, they are most known for their quick, affordable and consistent method of delivering food. Opened in 1954, this to-be super brand started in San Bernardino, CA by the McDonalds brothers, Dick and Mac. The shop remained a relatively small operation until Ray Krok, astounded by the business's quick and effective operations, franchised the McDonalds name. He later purchased the entity and by following the four principles of quality, service, cleanliness, and value, he was able to scale the business into the brand it is today ("Our History", n.d.). With more than 36,000 stores across 101 countries (Rosenberg, 2018), it would be difficult to find someone who has not heard of this American fast food chain.



OVERVIEW

PURPOSE & INTENT

In the modern age of technology, it is standard for brands to create their own website. The McDonald site houses a plethora of information including company updates, nutritional facts, job postings, and even customer anecdotes. No matter the content, the website's true purpose is to serve as an outlet to communicate directly with its consumers. This will contribute to the overall goal of increasing consumer purchases and also perpetuate the storytelling behind the brand's image.

The following slides will focus on just the McDonald's brand website and highlight some recommendations to improve to user experience of those who visit.



OVERVIEW

KEY PAIN POINTS



Pain Point #1:

The disconnect from the web browser to the mobile app



Pain Point #2:

The experience of the top navigation



Pain Point #3:

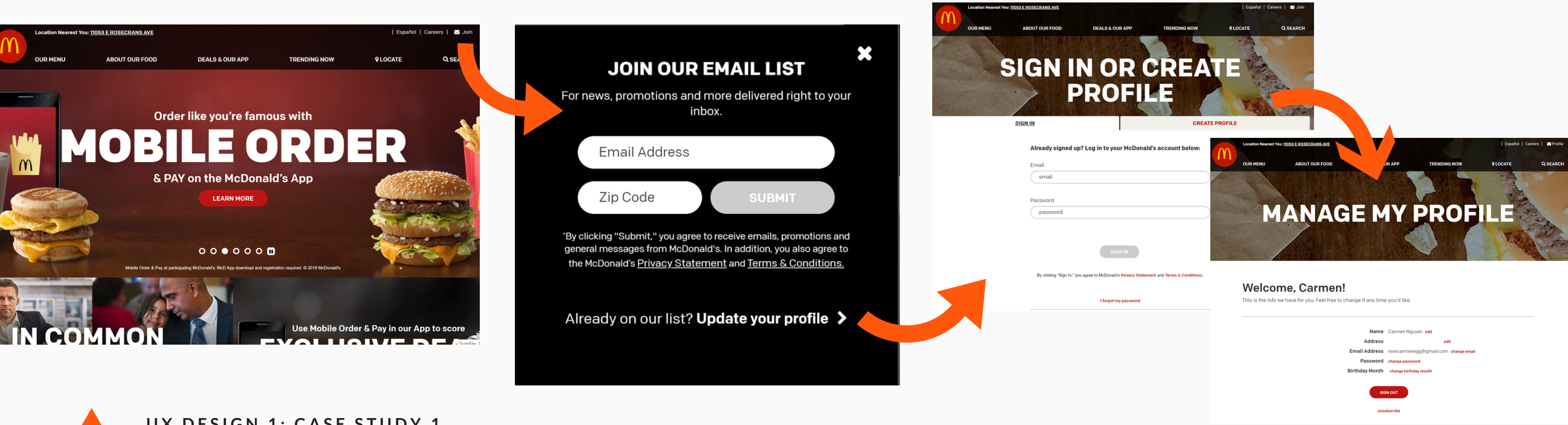
Online menu is cluttered, making it difficult to find particular items on the menu



Disconnect from Browser to the App

THE PROBLEM

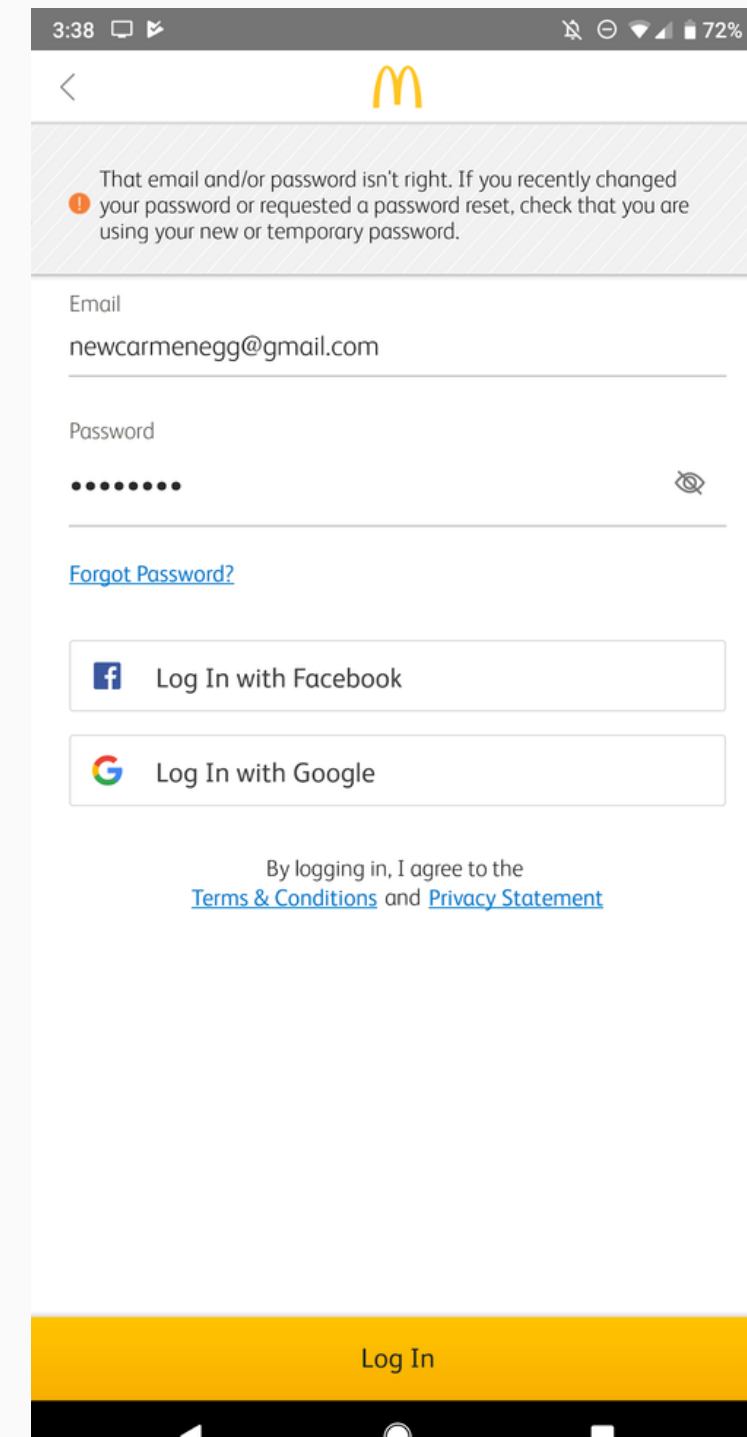
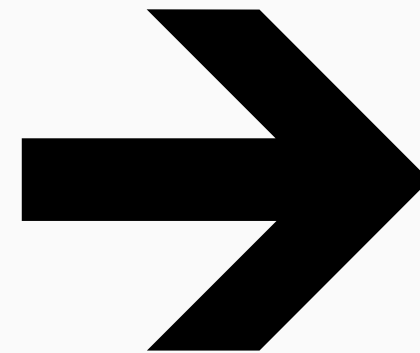
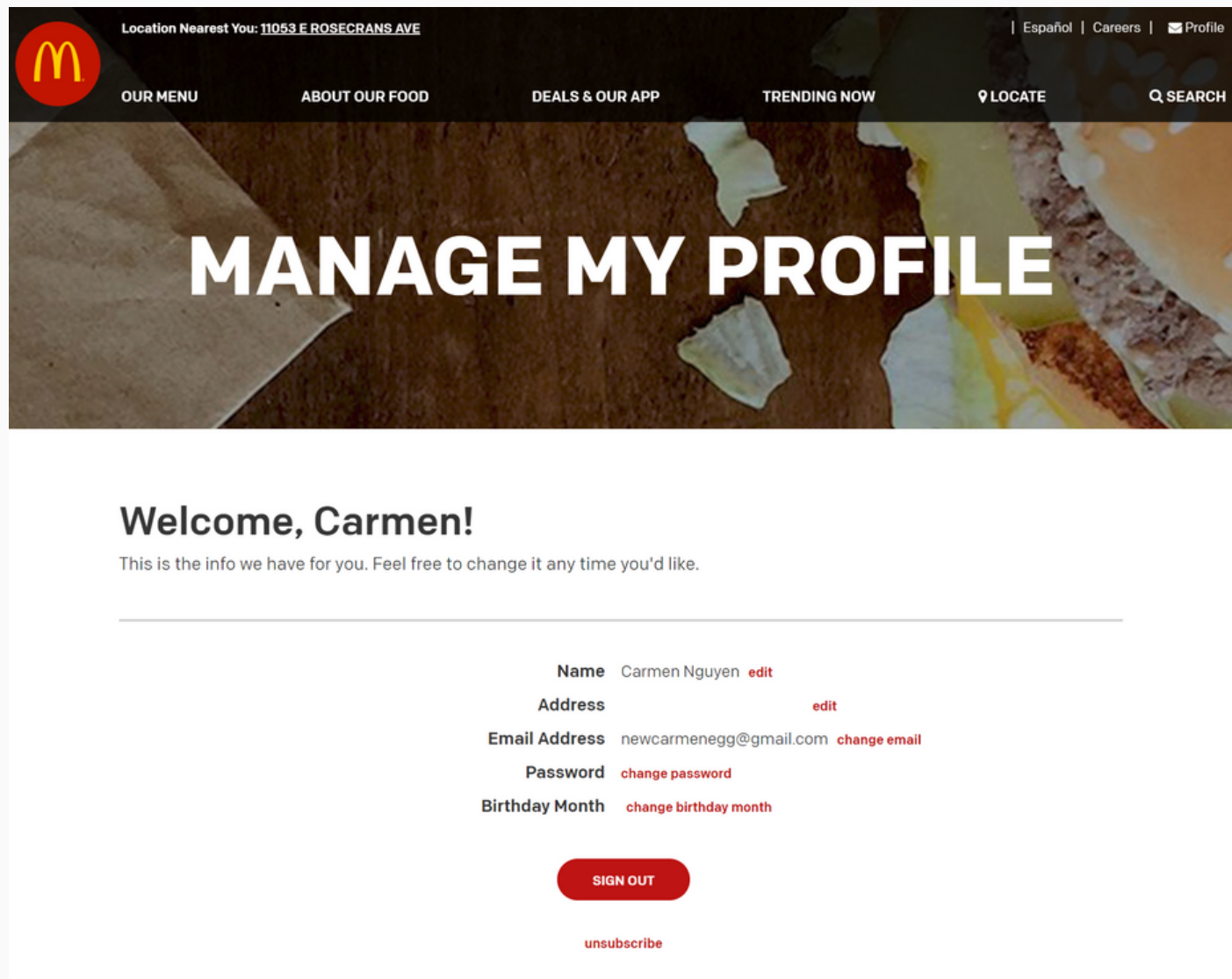
Most fast food businesses offer the option to place online orders. According an industry report on restaurant technology, online ordering is the number one most important technological feature customers are looking for in a restaurant (Toast, 2017). While McDonalds has this capability through their mobile app, they still lack the functionality of online ordering through their web browser. After customers log into their account, they would discover that the login feature lacks complexity. It only allows users to change their personal information and provide responses to questionnaires. The images below depict the customer journey from the homepage to the login segment of the website.



Disconnect from Browser to the App

THE PROBLEM PT. 2

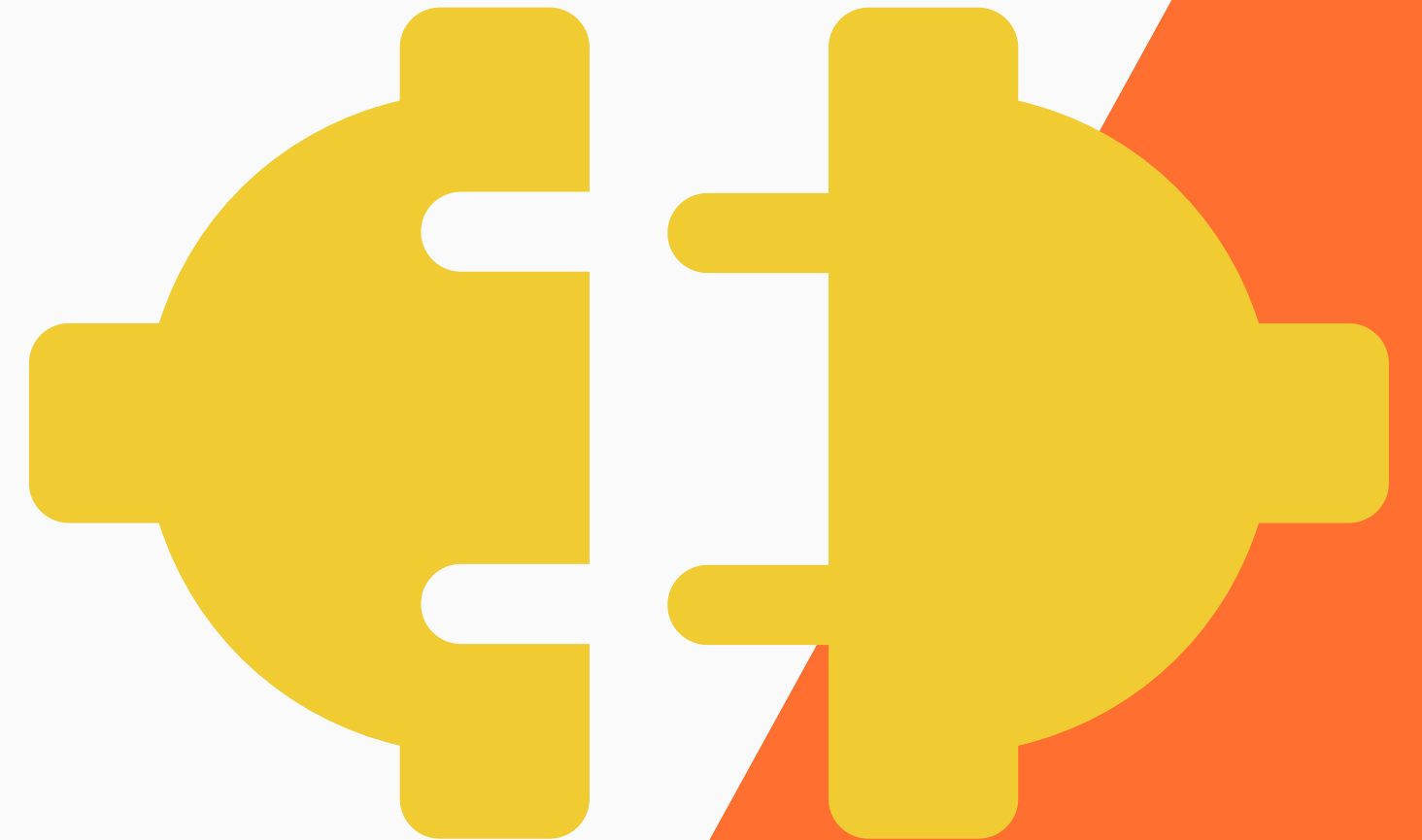
There is a clear disconnect between the systems of the website and the mobile app. The first item of notice is the ability to log into the app using social accounts. This was not an option for the web browser. Then, when attempting to log into the mobile app using the account created from the web browser, an error is displayed.



Disconnect from Browser to the App

WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?

In the new age of technology, having online presence is not enough. It is about how restaurant brands are webbing the experience of both online and offline together. According to Google Research, 98% of Americans switch between devices each day. Research done by Aspect Software states that businesses who adopt omni-channel strategies achieve 91% greater year-over-year customer retention rates when comparing to businesses that do not (V12data, 2018). Customers are looking for convenience and want to be able to achieve the same tasks from desktop, to tablet, to mobile phones. Currently for the McDonald platforms, any user who wishes to place an order line is required to download the app. This greatly limits online and mobile ordering to the users who are willing to use their storage to download the app. It is also perplexing that McDonalds would still provide the option of creating a user account even though there is little functionality beyond changing your e-mail subscription information. An example of a business that has an amazing omnichannel experience is one of McDonald's biggest competitors, Starbucks. Customers are able to place to view their points, load money, and even purchase items on all channels. Though each of their differing channels has its own weaknesses and strengths, but all are unified by one user management system.



Disconnect from Browser to the App

THE SOLUTION

By concept, the solution is easy. For a successful omnichannel experience McDonalds will need to create a unified user management system. However, it is always easier said than done. Functions like online payments and order management would need to be created and integrated with the unified system. This request would be a large project that would require convincing of not only the executives of the company, but also their large investors. Forecasts and past statistics would need to be shown in order to make a case for the large investment. The biggest selling point of integration would be the comparison of other competitors who have already began building their omnichannel experience. Failure to follow suite may cause them to fall behind.



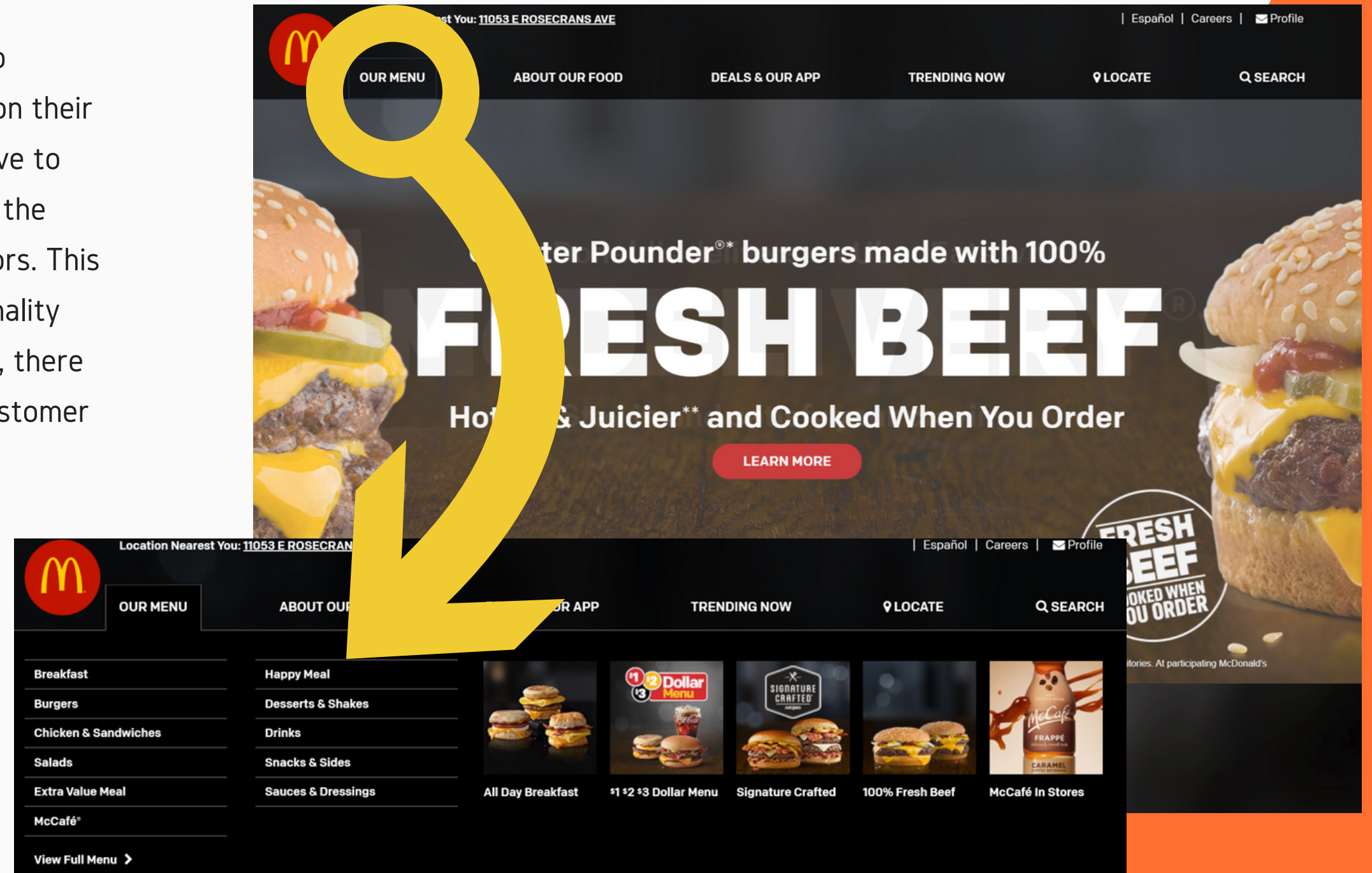
Image showcases Ideal Omnichannel experience for McDonald (Worldline, n.d.)



Improving Top Navigation

PROBLEM & WHY IT IS A PROBLEM

Users moving through McDonald's top navigation take a longer time to achieve their tasks. Some of these tasks include, searching for items on their menu or looking up latest deals and discounts. The links are nonreactive to the user's mouse movements which can slow down or even disengage the visitor. The font on the drop down menu is small and in monotone colors. This makes it very hard to distinguish between the links. While the functionality and responsiveness of the navigation on browser and mobile are good, there are aspects of the top navigation that can be improved to increase customer satisfaction when using the site.



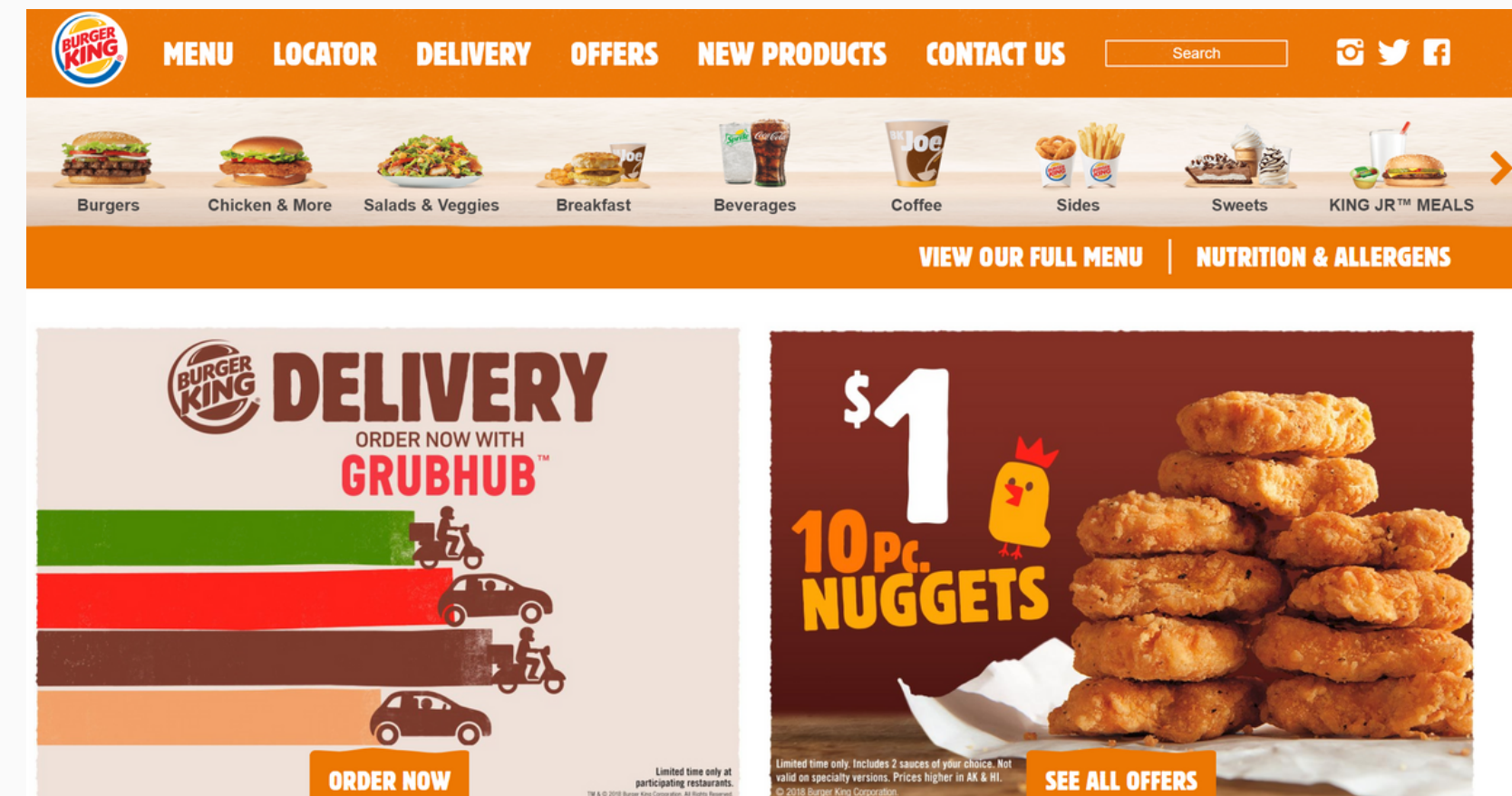
Improving Top Navigation

TASK ANALYSIS

3 users were asked to visit the top 5 highest revenue generating fast food websites and were given one item from each site to find. At the end, they were asked which site had the best navigation and why . The brands are as follows:

1. Subway
 2. McDonald's
 3. Taco Bell
 4. Burger King
 5. Pizza Hut
- (Tyler, 2018)

All 3 users unanimously agreed that Burger King had the best navigation. When asked why, one user stated that it was easier to see the different categories already laid out. Another user liked that she did not have to click through too many links to get to the information she needed. The third mentioned that she liked how the icons moved to notify her that she was hovering over the correct link. Users answered a follow up question as to why they disliked the navigation for other websites, the number one reason was the number of steps/clicks required to get to the information they needed. Overall, it was how efficient Burger King's "easy-to-find" navigation was what made them the winner of the five.

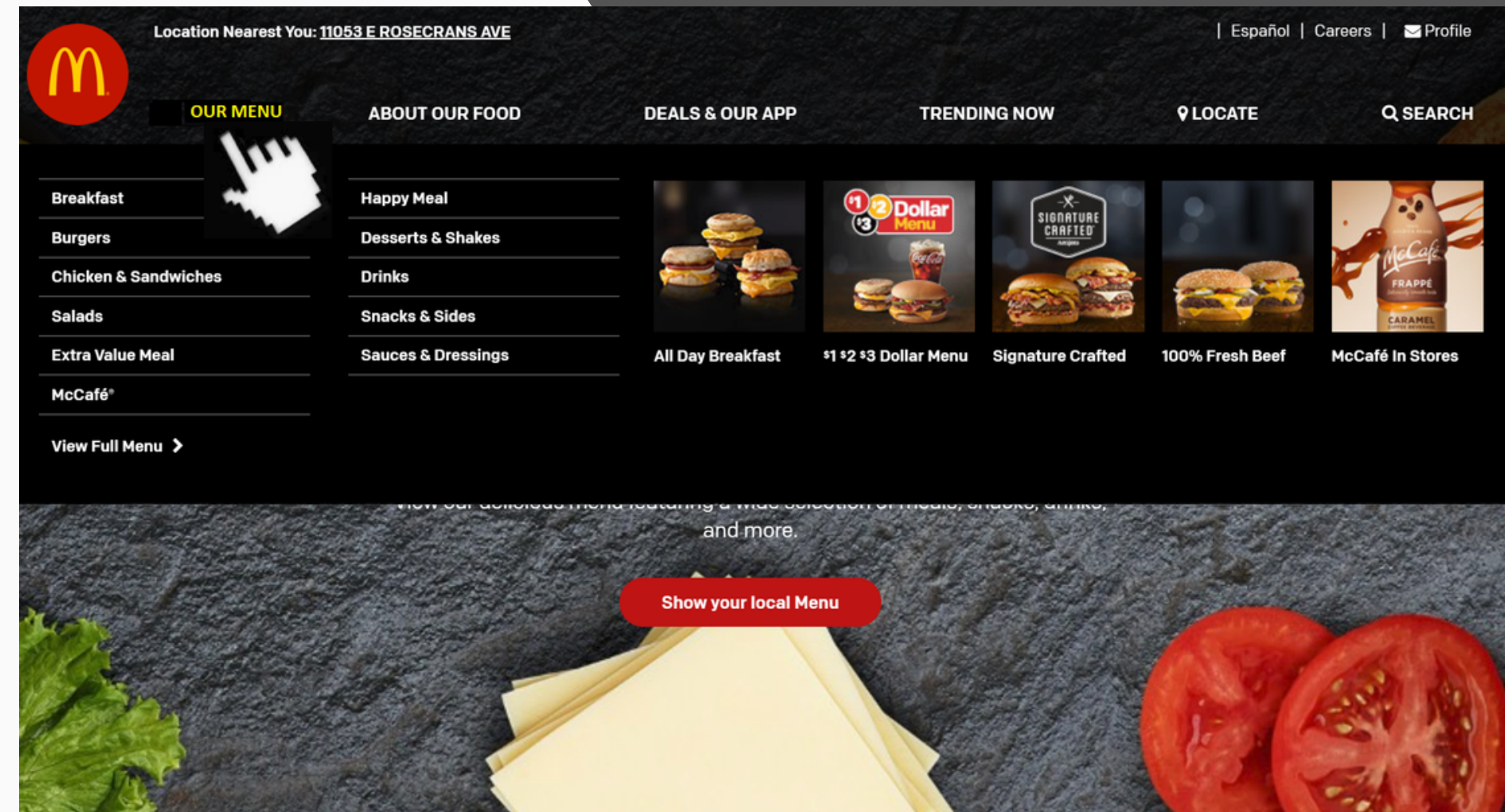


Improving Top Navigation

THE SOLUTION

A reactive navigation will speed up the time it takes for customers to find the information they seek. A suggestion for reactive navigation could be a mouse over function (such font change through size or color, or even background change). Not only will this speed up time, but improves visibility and can even leave links available for other uses. Because the user no longer needs to click the link to view the fly-out navigation, McDonalds may use the "click" to direct the customer to a page that makes sense. An example of this would be their menu link. Currently, clicking on "Our Menu" expands the flyout. However, McDonalds can use the opportunity to link "Our Menu" text to the "View Full Menu" page instead. This can be positive change as it is an additional entry point for the "View Full Menu" page and would be more efficient for users who originally intended to view the page.

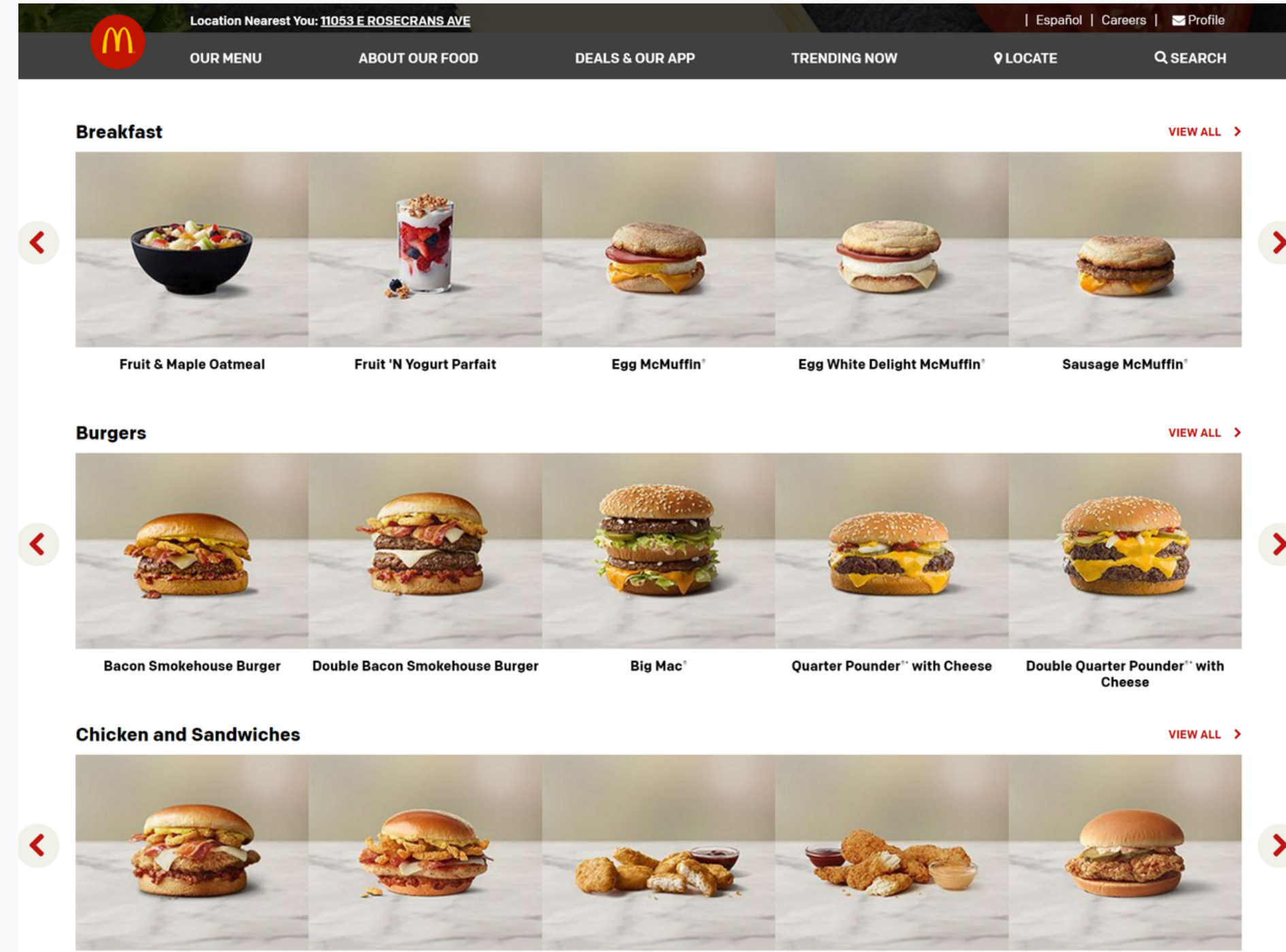
Alternatively, if data shows that most users who visit the McDonalds site are searching for specific information, a recommendation for a second tiered navigation can be made. This is similar to the Burger King's navigation displayed on the previous slide. If customers are coming to the site in search of the menu, categories from the menu such as burgers can be listed on the second navigation below the first.



Cluttered Full Menu Page

THE PROBLEM & WHY IT IS A PROBLEM

OpenTable surveyed around 6,000 US diners and discovered that 86% of American restaurant goers check out the online menu before visiting the establishment (Srinivasan, 2015). This statistic highlights the importance of the menu page for a restaurant's website. However, when analyzing the journey a customer makes to view items on the McDonald's menu, I found the visuals to be overwhelming and the overall task to be cumbersome. To the right is a snapshot of the full menu page on the website. There are too many visuals which clutters the screen, making it harder for the eye to focus from one item to the next.

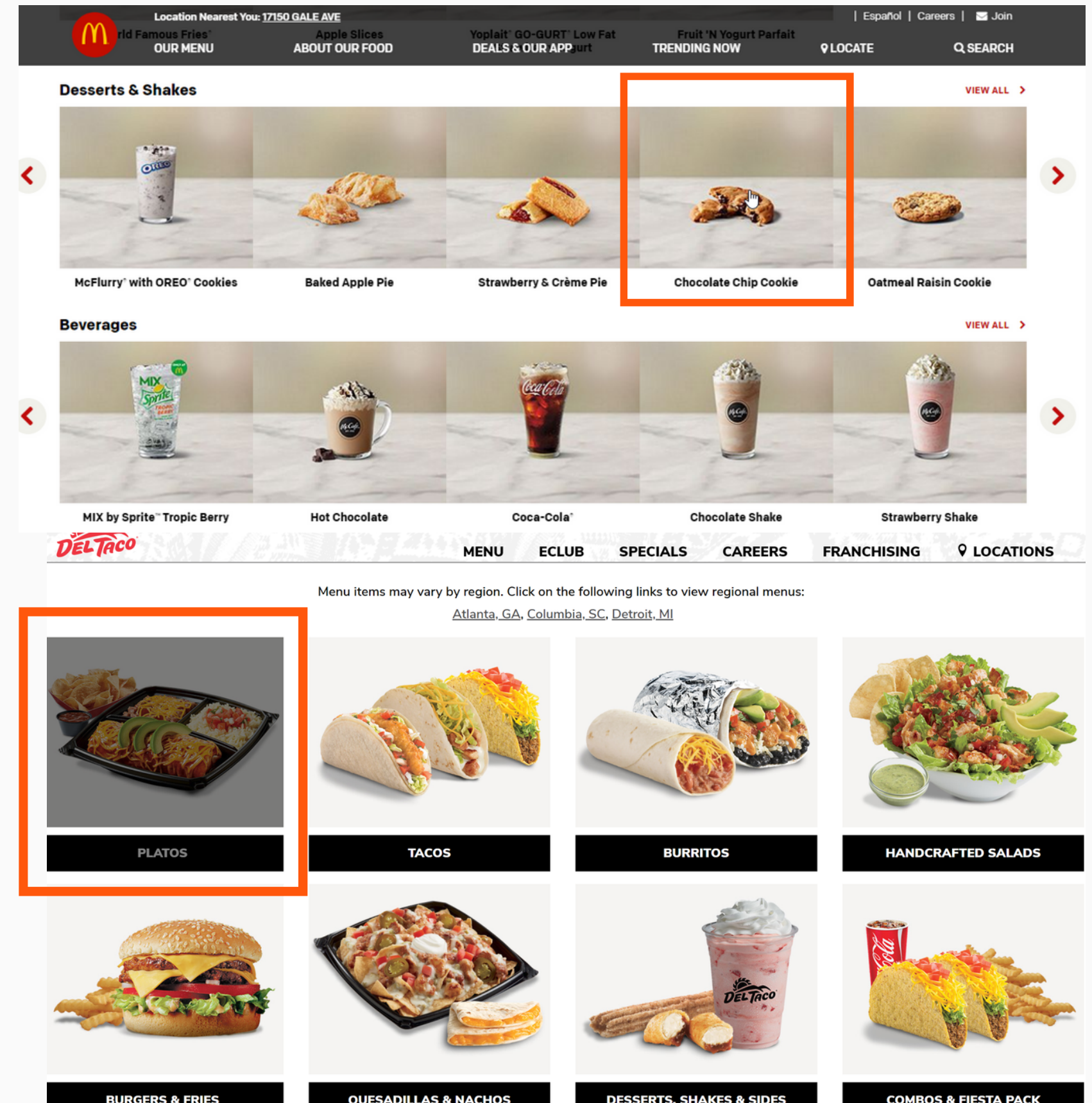


Cluttered Full Menu Page

TASK ANALYSIS

5 users were asked to name their favorite item on the McDonalds menu. They were then asked to find that item on the McDonalds website via their full menu page and provide feedback to its user experience. Users were able to find their favorite items easily as they chose popular menu items like Big Mac which were listed at the top of the site. I then gave them the task of finding something more difficult like the chocolate chip cookie. All users were also eventually able to find the item, but took twice as long as the first task. I noticed that the users were not using the visuals, but were relying heavily on the category titles of the carousels. At the end of the task analysis, I had the users look at the Del Taco menu for comparison and pick between the look and feel of McDonalds full menu versus Del Taco's. They then were asked to pick their preference. Everyone unanimously picked Del Taco for its visual clarity and simplicity.

Users feedback mentioned that they did not like how small the font was for the headers and product titles. Another user mentioned that the background image made it difficult to see the product image and that the size of the products should be enlarged. All agreed that the mouse over effect didn't have much impact to the browsing ability on the site. The overall feeling of the users mentioned that they were okay with the menu page as it "got the job done", but only if they knew what they were looking for. If were unsure and were browsing for items to order, they would not find the experience pleasant.



The two images above are compare the mouse over effect from the McDonalds vs. Del Taco. The McDonalds mouse over effect is so minimal, the differences can not be seen from a screen shot.

Cluttered Full Menu Page

THE SOLUTIONS

The task analysis results showed that the full menu page fulfilled its basic functionality when the user already knows what he or she is looking for. However, users agreed that the page is not ideal for browsing. From the observation in the previous task analysis relating top navigation, we saw that customers who already knew what they were searching for would use the category links displayed on fly-out navigation to filter to their item. The full menu page's purpose should be more for browsing than for searching. Rather than focusing on taxonomy and categorization of products on the full menu page, McDonalds should focus on following suggested visual elements:

IMPROVING PRODUCT THUMBNAILS

Removing the background of the product images removes any unnecessary distractions and allows the user to get a better look at the product. In the task analysis, it took users a much longer time to identify the item because the product titles and the product image within the thumb nail was not large enough.

MOUSE OVER ELEMENTS

Changes from a mouse over action should be exaggerated so it is easily noticeable to the user. Examples of this would include color overlay and image enlargement.

VISUAL NAVIGATION WITH EXPANDABLE MENU

Visual navigation by category helps users easily identify which categories they are looking for. If the user has no interest in the salads category, there is no need to display the carousel for it as it presents unnecessary information. Perhaps the carousel or menu can be expanded instead of having to load a new page for the list of items.

INCREASING FONT SIZE

Users in the task analysis mentioned that they did not read the product titles at all because of how small the font was. Increasing the font size can will increase the usefulness of the product titles.

Conclusion

Though the signature golden arches is globally recognized, their brand's user experience is not. The biggest hurdle McDonalds will have to face will be the task of creating cohesion between all their channels to consumers. First steps would include bringing their mobile and web browser onto one unified platform. Through tasks analysis, we saw that users had difficulty navigating between the links of the pages. A recommendation can be made for McDonalds to map the customer journey users make on their site. Navigation and visuals are important for customers to be able to get to the information they need in a quicker manner. These recommendations include increasing font size and having mouse over effects so users can distinguish items between the links. Even though McDonalds has made monumental efforts to move towards technological advancements, their website still have improvements that can be made.

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