Evolving User Experience in 2020: 10 Ways to Build Trust

Reason One

To put it mildly,
2020 has been rough.

2020

The events of this year have had (and continue to have) an enormous impact on the way users* feel, act, and speak.

* We are users ourselves! We all use online experiences like websites, donation forms, ad campaigns, and blogs.

BLACK LIVES MATTER

“Money is tight during quarantine. Is this worth it?”

“How can I do [insert action] virtually from home?”

“Where does this company stand on [insert social issue]?”

“How does [insert company] help the environment?”

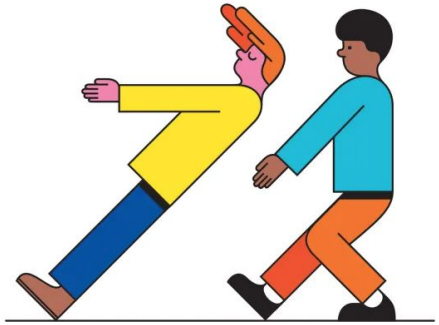
UX is influenced by our environment

From the COVID pandemic and raging wildfires to police brutality and the Black Lives Matter movement, 2020 has changed the way we live and work. These changes have caused an evolution in our needs and expectations, too.

POST
TRUTH

We’re living in a post-truth world

The ‘post truth era’ (also Oxford Dictionary’s word of the year in 2016) means that every time we look for information online, we are wading through nearly infinite sources — some legitimate, some trustworthy, and some not.



It’s hard to know who to trust.

And trust is the foundation of all donor-brand relationships.

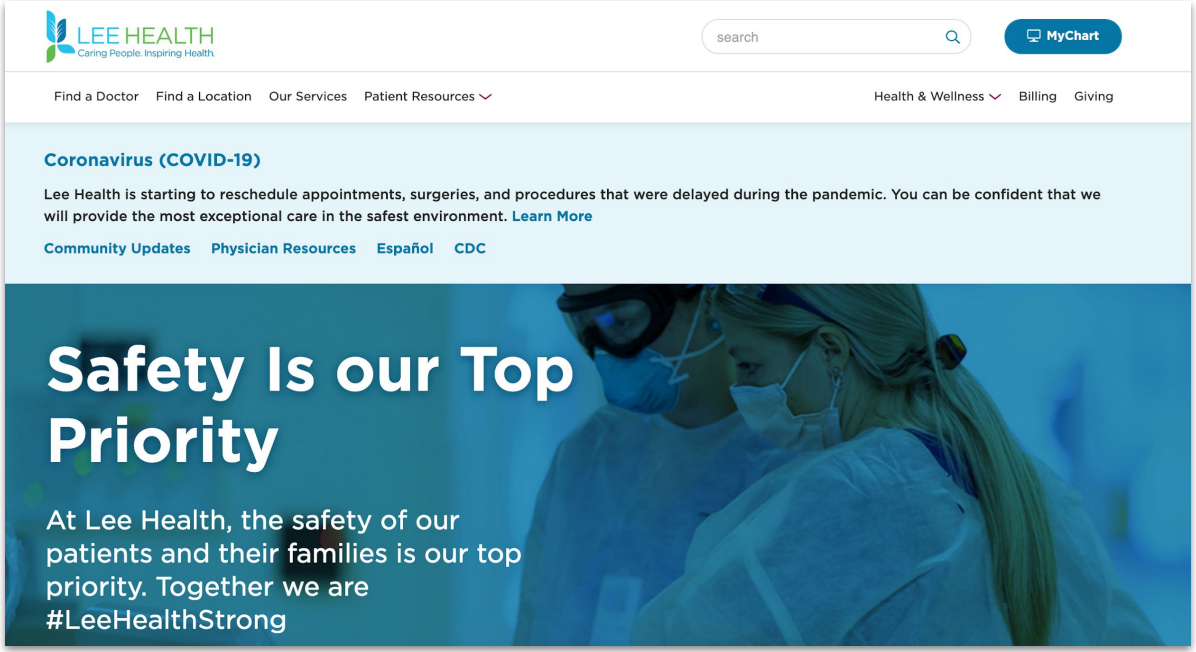
User behavior has changed.
User experience has to adapt.

Keeping up with the times takes a lot of effort

But don’t call 2020 a total loss just yet. We’ve seen brands get incredibly creative this year, and it’s paid off big time for them. Brands are connecting with their audience like never before, but a few foundational changes need to be made.

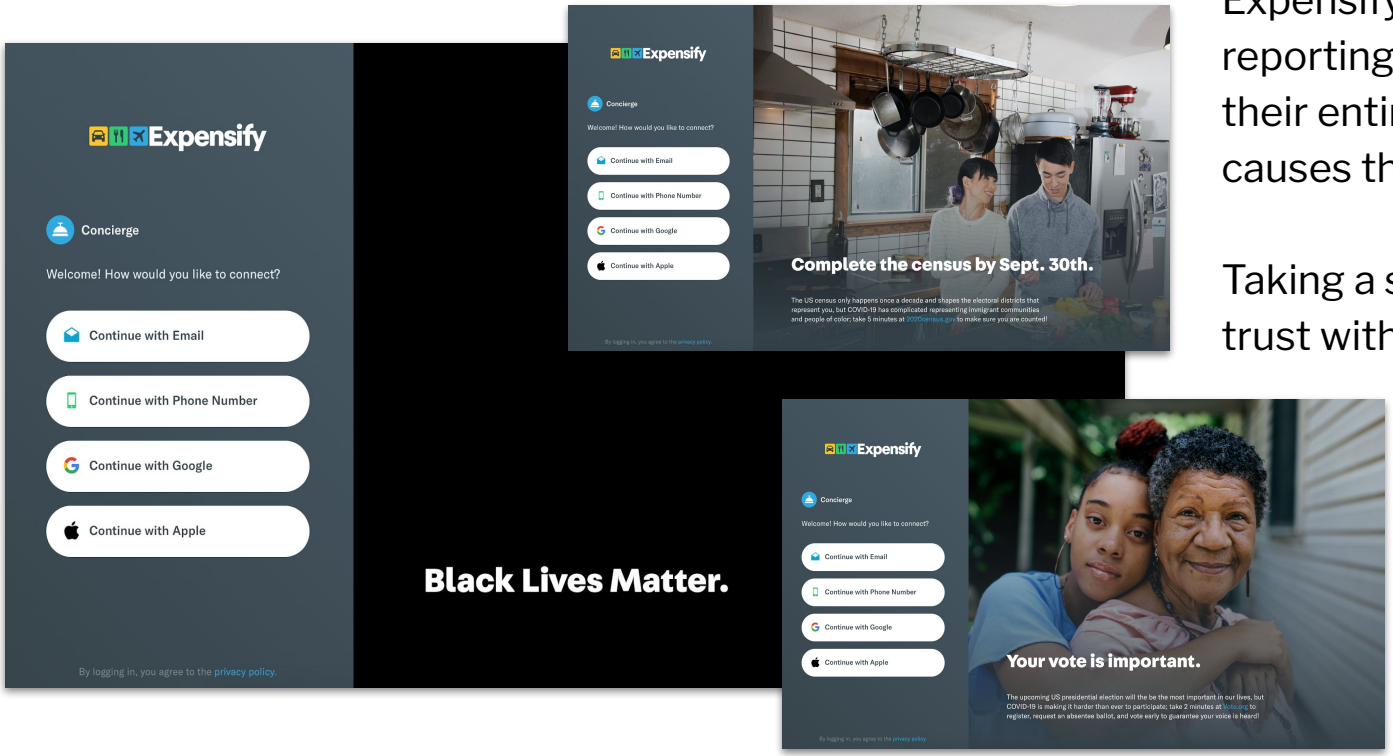
Take these 10 steps to build trust with your audience in 2020 (and beyond).

1. Reassure users with safety measures & action plans. 📋



Here, Lee Health displays a COVID response statement (and resources) in a highly visible alert banner on their homepage.

2. Take a stance on social & political issues.



Expensify, an expenses reporting software, dedicates their entire homepage to causes they care about.

Taking a stance can build trust with your target audience.

3. Adapt designs & experiences to support older users 👵🏻

As all major services shift online, UX needs to accommodate older adults more than ever before.

Better hierarchy, prominent calls to action, and clear microcopy will help older adults use and understand what they see online.

4. Acknowledge that language and word choice matters. ✍️

JUNE 30, 2020

Uppercasing ‘Black’

The Times will start using uppercase “Black” to describe people and cultures of African origin, both in the U.S. and elsewhere. Read more in this note from Dean Baquet and Phil Corbett.

Dear Colleagues,

At The Times and elsewhere, the nationwide protests over racism and police violence have prompted discussions about many aspects of our

Investing in inclusive language welcomes users from all backgrounds and abilities to feel a part of your brand’s cause.

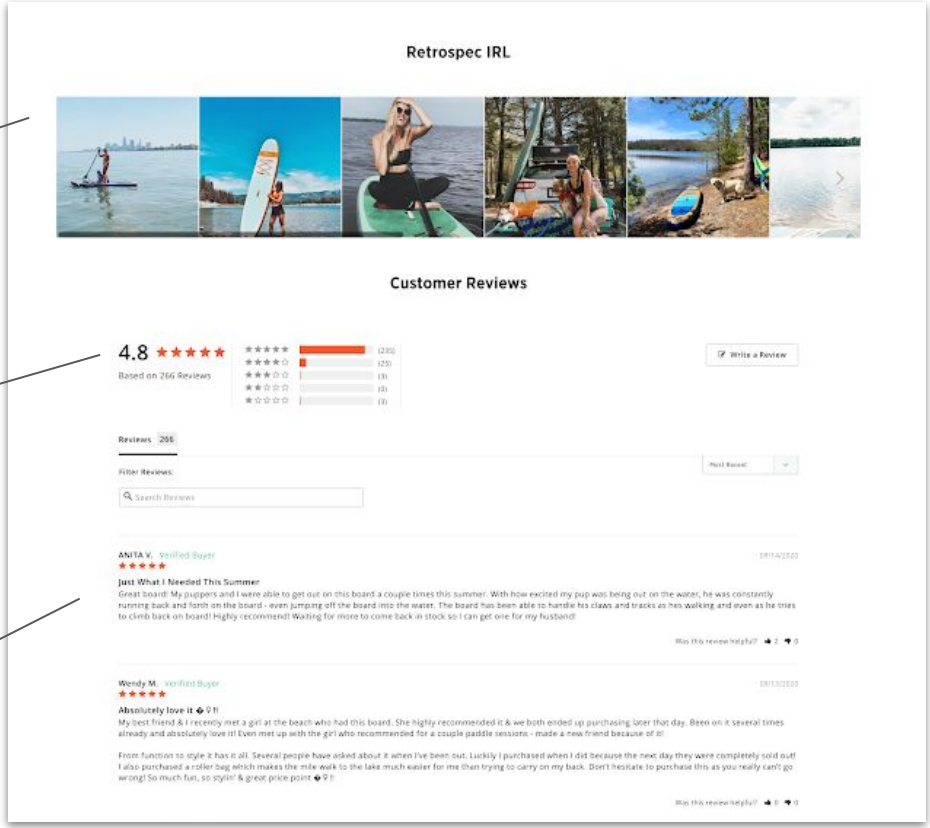
Your competitors are updating their race and gender language, instituting accessibility practices, and editing for plain language. Adapt or be outdated.

5. Leverage user-generated (peer) content. 👍

Designate a place to show real users (donors, supporters, advocates) in their own photos

Give your audience a chance to provide feedback so they feel invested in the future of your cause. Then, share that feedback (good and bad!) for transparency points.

Your audience will trust their peers more easily than they will trust your organization. Share donor and advocate stories in their own words.

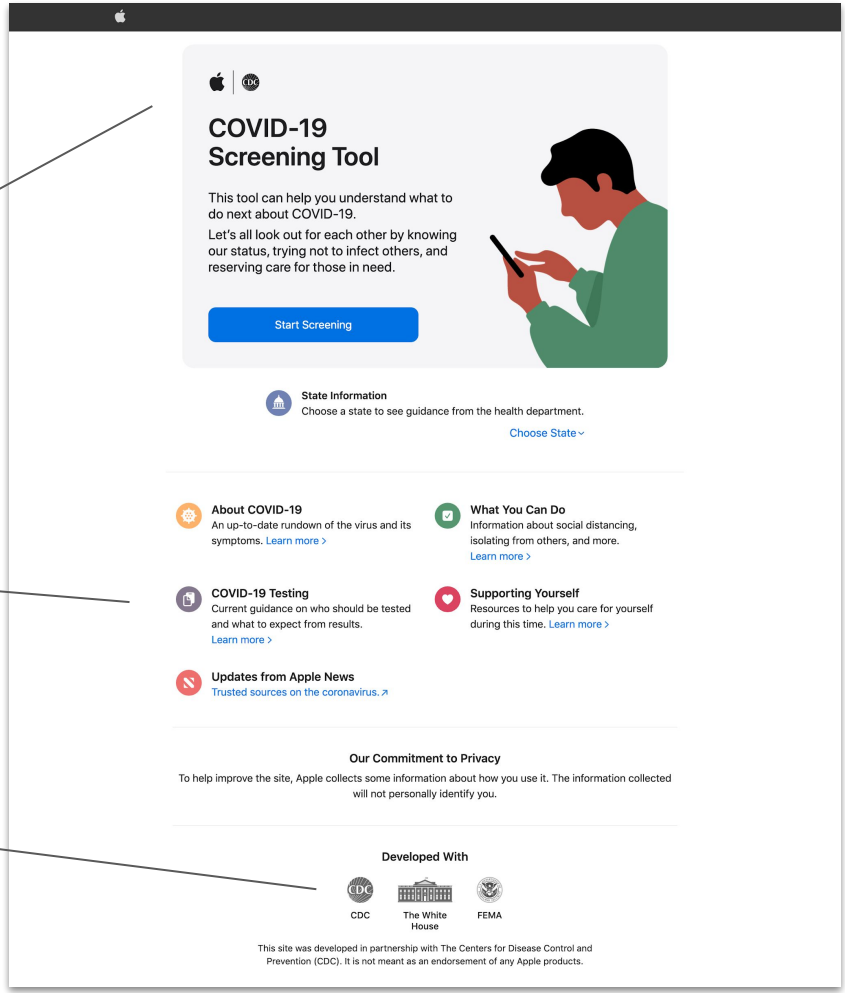


6. Show sources & proof to add legitimacy ✓

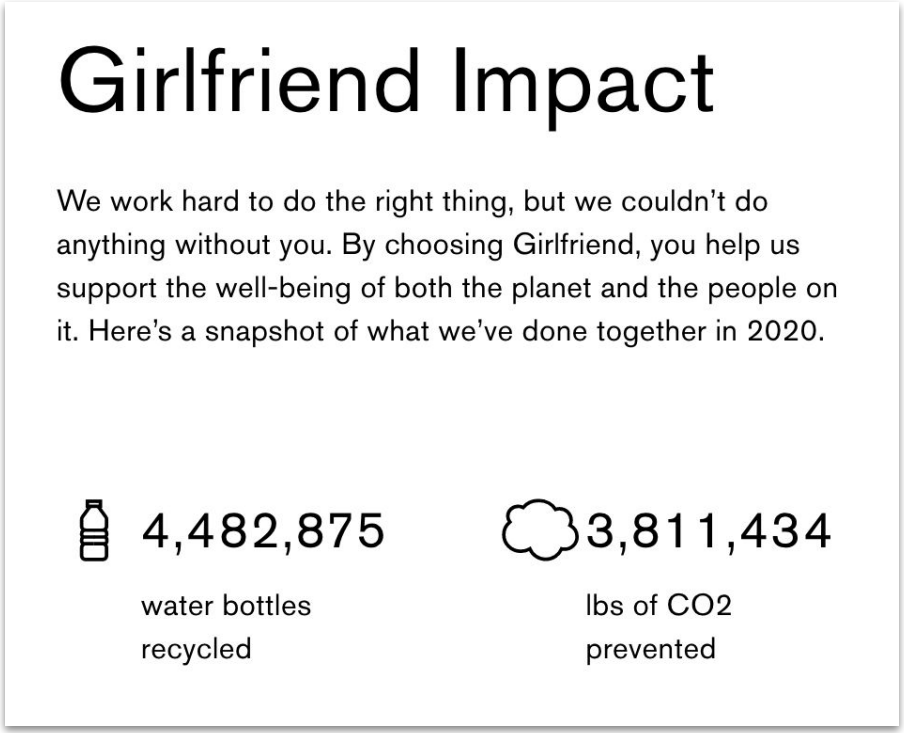
Co-brand or partner with other organization users already trust

Share additional expert sources

Demonstrate partnerships and share sources / verification of any medical or scientific content.



7. Communicate eco-benefits & impact 🌱



Here, Girlfriend Collective shows us their impact in real numbers and graphics we can understand. They commend their audience for joining the cause alongside them.

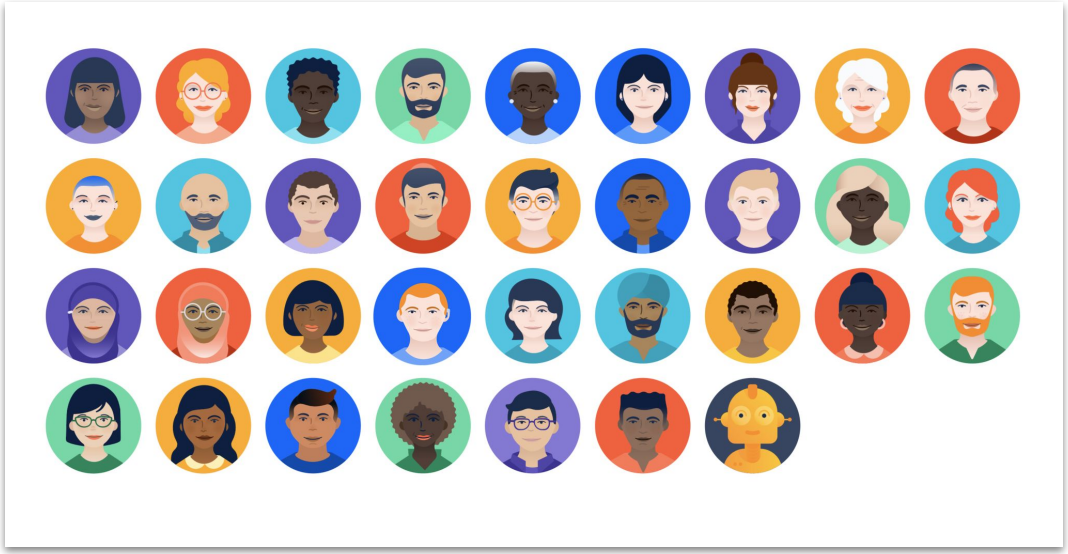
Climate change affects *everything*. How does your nonprofit act against climate change? Or, how is your cause affected by climate change?

8. Ditch stock for authentic imagery. 👩🏽‍⚕️

At first glance, which image feels more legitimate? Trustworthy? Professional?

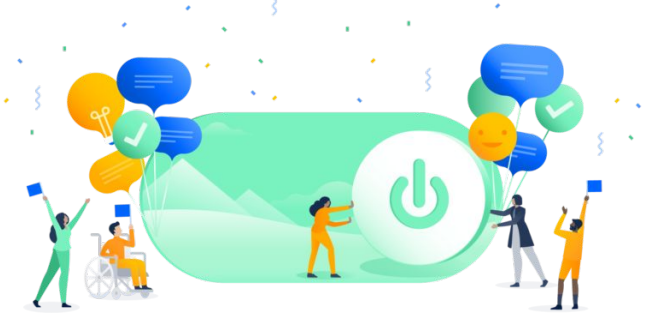
Opt for real photography whenever possible (it's worth the investment), and add captions to let user know what they're seeing is authentic.

9. Use illustrations & graphics that represent the real world and its people. ♿



Representation matters!

When your audience can see themselves represented in your organization's imagery, illustrations, icons, and graphics, they are more likely to trust and engage with you.

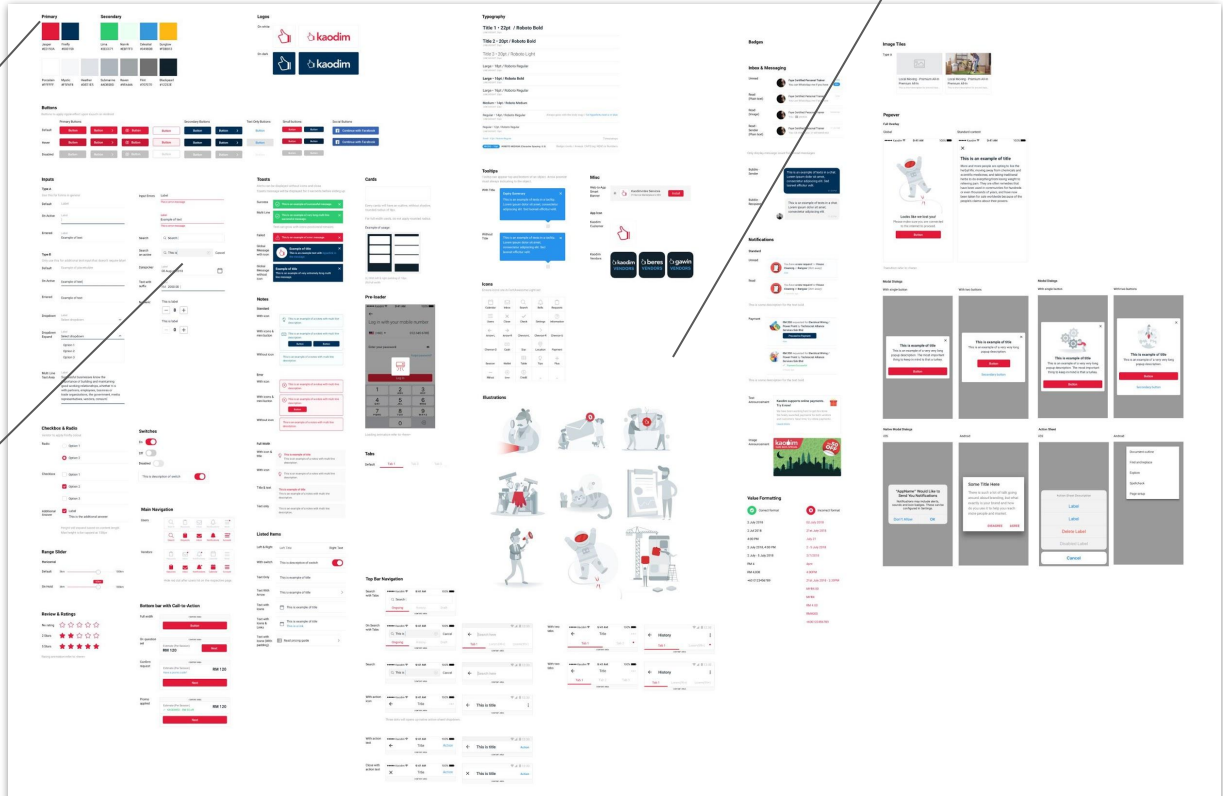


10. Establish a flexible design system. 🧘🏿‍♀️

Ensure graphics are consistent across all domains, microsites

Establish a flexible color palette for accessibility compliance and use across different mediums.

Create components that are visually consistent but fit many different types of content. This gives you more flexibility for all types of communication with your audiences.



What do all of these steps have in common? Empathy. Authenticity. Understanding.

Show genuine care and compassion beyond your cause.

Sound overwhelming?

Don’t worry. We can help 2020-proof your UX.

Meet Reason One, your full-service digital partner.

Contact us:

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