Green Diaper Babies
Website Audit

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Project & Goals

The goal of this audit is to craft a detailed review of the existing Green Diaper Babies website. The audit endeavors to provide a set of design-based insights outlining where the site merits improvement in terms of usability and communication. Green Diaper Babies will be able to select which recommendations to incorporate in the site refresh project with CyberOptik.

Starting Point
https://www.greendiaperbabies.com

Initial Overall Impression

Below are four main categories where I provided a score with some thoughts on both the positive and improvable aspects of the site holistically. I am happy to expand wherever you might need clarification.

Purpose/Message
Score: 9/10.
What's Good: The name of the company is a clear indicator of the purpose of Green Diaper Babies. The content indicates that the company provides a service in Chicago.
What Could Be Improved: Consider including a Cloth Diaper 101 page, as the site makes the assumption that I know about the jargon and have an idea of what cloth diapering entails.

Aesthetics
Score: 4/10.
What's Good: There is a unifying color theme and buttons are obvious. The images for the store products are simple and effective.
What Could Be Improved: The hierarchy of text sizes needs to be adjusted for readability and scanability. Text should be left aligned in nearly all cases. The images feel haphazard and not well-integrated. Emphasized text should not be bold green (gives the sense of clickability).

Content
Score: 6/10.
What's Good: The tone of the content is solid and friendly. There is flexibility for new customers. There are blog posts with relevant information.
What Could Be Improved: There are some inconsistencies with pricing across the site. As mentioned above, there is an assumption of knowledge around cloth diapering that could be addressed with some introductory content. Some content is disparate/detached from related information.

Usability

Score: 5/10.

What's Good: The site has largely approachable language and text directions. The navigation bar is easy to see and the footer provides direction.

What Could Be Improved: The language throughout the site can be honed for increased usability and user friendliness (i.e. navigation bar options should all be nouns, buttons should all be verbs). The visual text hierarchy needs to be addressed in order to improve scanability. The sign-up form & How It Works page need significant overhauls so that a user can process the content without becoming overwhelmed.

Cognitive Walkthroughs

Cognitive walkthroughs are a common tool used to evaluate a site's usability. I began by defining a few tasks based on imagined user goals and the target audience. By moving through the site with the specified task in mind, you can identify potential problems. Below, you'll find my thoughts based on my experience walking through each task. The first column denotes if the note is positive (+), neutral (0), or negative (-). The second column notes the categorical nature of the comment.

Task 1: I'd like to learn if cloth diapering is for me. I'm particularly unsure about the smell.

0	Experience	The homepage is fairly repetitive with content and doesn't explicitly lead me anywhere except signing up, unless I make it all the way to the bottom and find the vaguely titled "Natural Parenting Blueprint."
-	Experience	I see the "Why Cloth Diapers?" header and click on it, but find that once I'm there it's why a cloth diaper *service*, which is a level deeper than I'm looking for.
+	Experience	I see an upfront header saying I can learn more through a diapering class with a button to get me there.
-	Experience	When I get to the classes page, I don't learn anything about what will be covered. The registration & contact us are the same form which is confusing. Am I registered for a class or reaching out because I can't make it?
-	Experience	Ultimately, I decide to go elsewhere to learn about this.

Task 2: I need to determine whether the subscription service is within my budget.

0	Usability	I see a menu item called "Our Services" which I assume is where I would find information about this.
+	Usability	When I go to click on "Our Services," a set of options pop open, one of which includes "Pricing."
-	Aesthetic	After spending a moment to orient myself, I find the prices for each package, though they are a bit buried and I'm not sure if the $40 starter kit is an add-on or included.

-	Usability	The table of package options is very difficult to parse and keep track of what comes with each. I also cannot select a package from this screen.

Task 3: I'd like to sign up for a cloth-only service for my newborn.

0	Experience	Although I cannot choose a package directly from the pricing page, there is a "Sign Up" now button at the top.
-	Experience	The sign up form is long and relies on my memory of package contents when making my selection which is stressful. There are also a variety of terms and add-on options I don't know anything about (e.g. NOLEO, wet bag, etc).
-	Usability	The add-on bundles allow for multi-select, but only if you know how to use that selector type. It is not obvious.
-	Experience	For a number of the add-ons (e.g. laundry detergent) it is unclear if I'm signing up for this to be a part of my weekly delivery or if it's a one-time addition.
-	Experience	The "Submit" button does not offer an idea of what lies ahead. Will I be charged? What can I expect next?

Task 4: I want to know about the products included in a subscription, specifically about their material contents.

-	Experience	I'm going to start with the "How It Works" tab under "Our Services" because none of the other options feel obvious. An initial scan doesn't yield anything relevant. I've already been to the "Pricing" tab and know that it's not there.
-	Experience	Knowing this isn't where I'd find the information, I think my next best option is "Why Cloth Diapers." A cursory scan however does not lead me to believe any of the headers include the information I'm looking for.
-	Experience	My final shot is looking in the "Store" for a cloth diaper product that has material information. However, clicking on the "pre-fold diaper service" option does not provide any details.

Improving the Site

Below you'll find the prioritized list of site improvements. I utilized Design Heuristics as a basis for my comments (for more information, I've included a list of them in the appendix). These heuristics focus largely on usability, and place less emphasis on the interface visuals. I am happy to elaborate, clarify, or discuss your reactions to my notes if you like.

Prioritized List of Improvements

This is my suggested order of importance based on severity ratings (see note below table for reference), but I acknowledge that external factors will play into feasibility and priority, so feel free to adjust as makes sense for your company.

Severity	Heuristic Violated	Description	Suggestions
5	Consistency & Standards	Pricing is not consistent across the site.	Ideally, centralize the pricing on the Packages page and do not post it elsewhere (simply link back).
4	Recognition Over Recall	Package information is not readily available on the sign-up page.	Customers should not have to exit the sign up flow in order to re-reference the package options. They should be easily viewable during the process. Consider restructuring the form as follows.
4	Error Prevention	The sign-up form has too many options and not all are relevant to a given customer. The experience of filling it out is overwhelming.	Segment the sign-up into conditional pages that load based on previous selections. See suggested layout here.
4	Error Prevention	The sign-up form fields are not intuitive and may lead to erroneous selections.	Please see this page for sign-up form suggestions.

4	Familiar Language & Metaphors	The site assumes a certain level of familiarity with cloth diapering lingo that can be alienating to potential customers.	Try to minimize lingo (e.g. pre-folds, all-in-ones) and when used, always pair with the word "diaper."
4	Help & Documentation	The site assumes a certain level of familiarity with cloth diapering lingo that can be alienating to potential customers.	Develop a Cloth Diapers 101 page featuring an introduction to terms, what extra supplies are needed for cloth diapering, how to use the diapers, what works for what different situations, how cleaning works, etc. The "Why Cloth Diapers?" section has a lot of good content but it is buried under headings that don't give me an idea of what I'd learn if I clicked.
4	Flexibility & Efficiency	All service information is not centralized in one place (specifically towel delivery being separate).	Collate all service information into a single page.
4	Show System Status	The cart in the store is somewhat hidden and does not follow typical web design convention.	Move the cart to the top right of the screen. Consider adding a mild visual cue when the cart updates.
4	Consistency & Standards	Emphasized text is in bold green which implies clickability.	Only use bolded green for links. For emphasis, consider italics or just bolded black.
3	Flexibility & Efficiency	The text hierarchy does not lend itself well to scannability.	Left-align nearly all text. Shrink body text to something around 14-16 pt and do not bold. **Incorporate headers** throughout that are larger than the body text and stylistically distinctive. Do not use green bolded text for emphasis.

3	Aesthetics & Minimalism	A significant portion of the copy is repetitive.	Reduce copy throughout the site. Please reference the linked documents here for suggested content paring.
3	User Control & Freedom	When viewing pricing, there is no way for a customer to trigger the process by selecting a package from that page.	The ideal fix would be to begin the sign-up process from buttons on the packages page with the selection pre-filled in the sign-up form. At minimum, the sign-up page should also have package details incorporated.
3	Consistency & Standards	The paper-only subscription option is confusing when shown next to the cloth packages since it does not have a set price.	Consider removing the paper-only subscription package and including it solely as an option in the store (one-time delivery versus monthly subscription - a la subscribe & save).
3	Show System Status	Some navigational menu items have dropdowns and some don't, and clicking on the main label opens the first option of the dropdown, even if the name is different.	If a navigation option has a sub-items in a dropdown, do not make the original label clickable. Instead, the user should select from among the dropdown options.
3	Flexibility & Efficiency	In the sign-up form, what is and is not required is inconsistent.	Consider this suggested flow for the sign-up form. Only ask for necessary information. Update the form field types so that options that would require a "none" selection can be skipped over entirely.
2	Show System Status	The "Why Cloth Diapers?" header links to a page	Relabel that link in the navigation bar to "Education" so that it encapsulates a variety of content from across the

		about why a cloth diaper subscription service *specifically*, which is a different set of content than expected.	site. A subselection option can be "Why Cloth Diapers?" See [this proposed navigational tree](#) for reference.
2	Aesthetics & Minimalism	The pictures throughout feel haphazard and do not align well with the text.	Consider incorporating photos into text sparingly or not at all and use only as visual grab as fits with the template. When photos are incorporated, wrap within the text.
2	Aesthetics & Minimalism	The spotlighted Yelp reviews are six years old.	Either add more timely reviews or remove the date.
2	Help & Documentation	The home page is the only place where Chicago is mentioned.	Is there some sort of map that shows coverage area? If so, please incorporate it into the "How It Works" page.
1	Aesthetic & Minimalism	At the bottom of the "Dirt on Disposables" page is a bunch of context-less links.	If you choose to keep this page (which I advise again -- simply roll it up into the Cloth Diaper 101 page or move it to the blog) make sure these links either have a header or are in-line incorporated into the page content.

Severity Rating Scale

For your reference, I used the following scale to assign the severity rating.

1: cosmetic - not great, but the error does not significantly impede usability

2: minor - addressing would improve the site but is not critical to usability

3: moderate - addressing would benefit usability substantially

4: severe - important to address in some way, as error hinders usability

5: extremely severe - very important to address, usability significantly impacted

Appendix: Design Heuristics

Show System Status

Systems should provide feedback about what's happening and where the user is within it (with regards to: time, space, change, action, next steps, completion, etc)

Familiar Metaphors & Language

Terminology used should be familiar and understandable

User Control & Freedom

There should be no forced paths: users should be able to undo, redo, and explore

Consistency & Standards

The layout should be consistent, naming should be natural, and choices should be specific

Error Prevention

Prevent data loss, clutter & duplicates, confusion, bad input, and unnecessary constraints

Recognition Over Recall

Avoid using codes, minimize hurdles and steps, lead with reasonable defaults, and offer previews where applicable

Flexibility & Efficiency

Enable expert users with shortcuts, encourage efficiency with helpful defaults, provide relevant ambient information, offer proactive messaging where appropriate, and make recommendations

Aesthetic & Minimalistic Design

Prioritize the "above the fold" information, decrease noise and busyness, avoid redundancy, and focus on relevant functionality

Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover From Errors

Make any problems clear and offer a solution, show path forward, propose alternatives

Help and Documentation

Offer examples, guide the user, show the steps, point out features, be clear and sincere