SITEWORX

USG.com
Sample UX Insights & Recommendations

OCTOBER 27, 2017

Situation Analysis

B2B customers now expect an online experience as good as the one they have on Amazon.com or Homedepot.com.   They want to be able to find and compare products easily, read product information that answers their questions, and then easily specify or find a distributor – or even better, transact – once they've decided what they want to buy.

Unfortunately, USG.com does not currently meet these expectations. The site is not easy to browse or search for products, and it provides very little guidance to help customers understand the difference between products.   Much of USG's best product information is still buried in its print catalogs.

Recommendations

The ideal web strategy for USG.com focuses on helping customers find products and on providing content that answers their questions. This will require significant improvements to the site's global navigation, search, faceting browsing, product category and detail pages, and product information.

But we realize this takes time and often business process change. In the slides that follow, we offer both short-term tactical and long-term strategic solutions to the user experience issues we've observed on USG.com.

Siteworx welcomes the opportunity to discuss these and other recommendations in more detail. We're passionate about helping your business thrive and making sure you get the most value out of your investments in digital.

Observed Issues & Recommendations

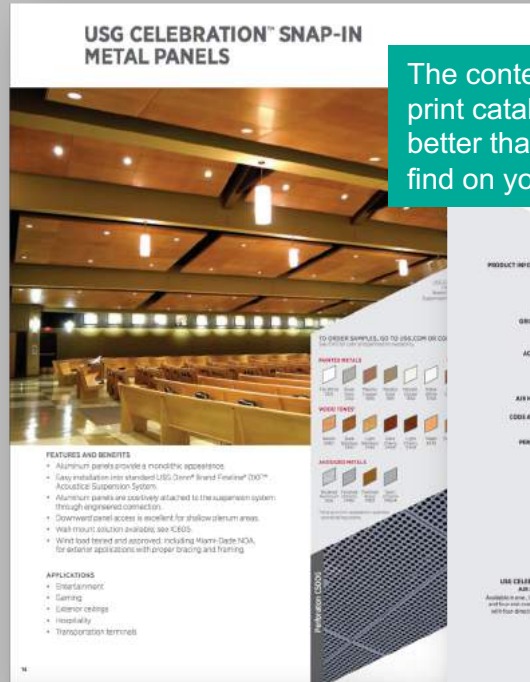# Don't hide all your best content in print catalogs

Print catalogs are expensive to produce, out of date the moment you publish them, and are not searchable, interactive, or mobile friendly.

While print catalogs still have their place, online catalogs are simply much easier and faster for customers to use (and for you to update)!

Your website is the first place most customers go for product information. And they expect that information to be as good – if not better – than what they can find in print.

So don't bury all your best stuff in your print catalogs. Put it on your website!

The content and imagery in your print catalog is much much better than what customers can find on your website.

Print Catalog

Product Page on Website

VS.

Make it easier to find and research products

As a manufacturer, the vast majority of your site's visitors are looking for product information; thus, your site's global navigation should be optimized for finding products over other content.

Products & Solutions as a label says nothing unique about USG, has no SEO value (nobody searches for "Products" in Google), does not contain any keywords customers are looking for, and forces customers navigate one level deeper in the site tree than is necessary.
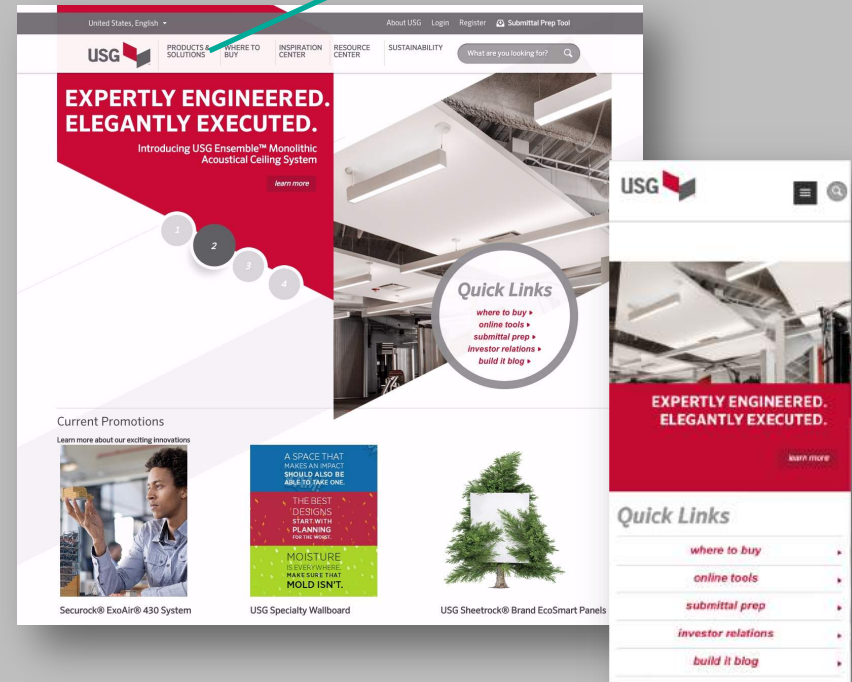
List Product Categories at the Top of Your Global Navigation

These are the categories that customers are looking for! This strategy far is better for SEO, for company identity, and for findability, because it encourages browsing, which is far more accurate than searching.

This will likely require you to combine some categories (e.g., you could create a new category called Ceilings for Ceiling Panels, Suspension Systems & Ceiling Systems).
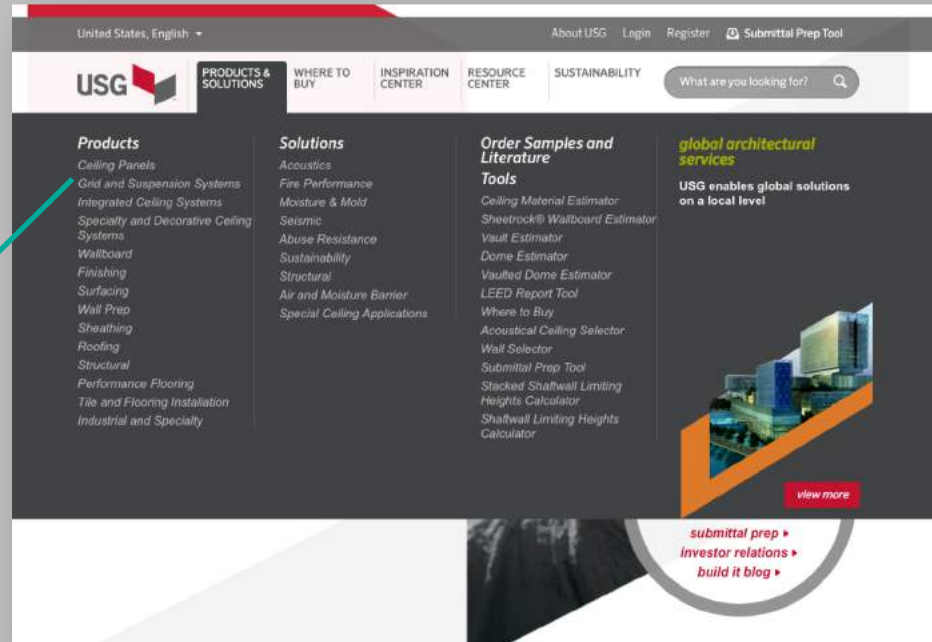
Where to buy is great! But making it a button would even be better, especially since it's not really a "section" of your site. (it's a single-page tool -- though a very important one.)

Unfortunately, few customers will go to the Sustainability part of your site; thus, make sure you do a good job of integrating this content into your product catalog's browse flow and product pages – so customers are exposed to it as they research products.

United States, English

About USG   Login   Register   Submittal Prep Tool

USG

PRODUCTS & SOLUTIONS   WHERE TO BUY   INSPIRATION CENTER   RESOURCE CENTER   SUSTAINABILITY   What are you looking for?

EXPERTLY ENGINEERED.
ELEGANTLY EXECUTED.

Introducing USG Ensemble™ Monolithic
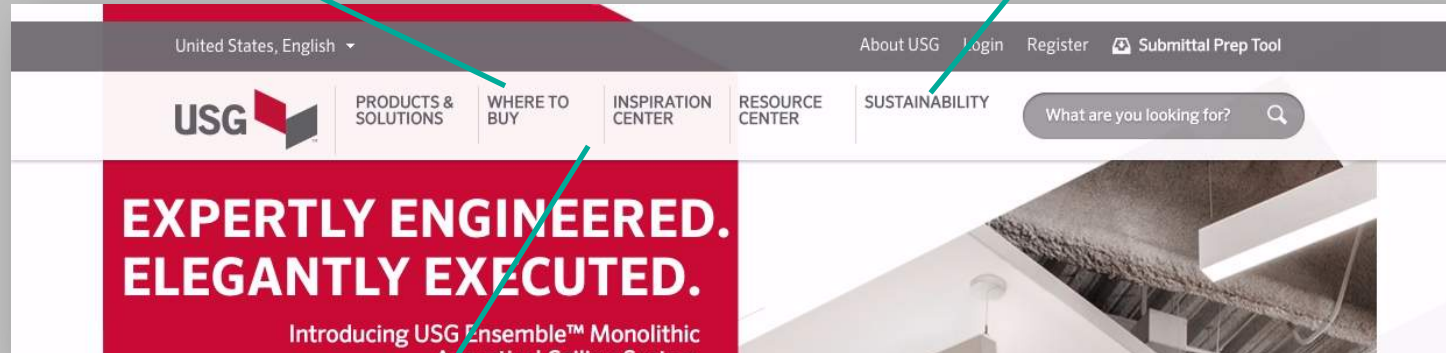
Consider adding Industry and Performance (e.g., Acoustics) sections, since many of your products are tagged by these specifications already.

Don't hide sub-categories and products

The main purpose of your product category pages is to help customers find the right sub-category or products – so don't hide them inside accordions!
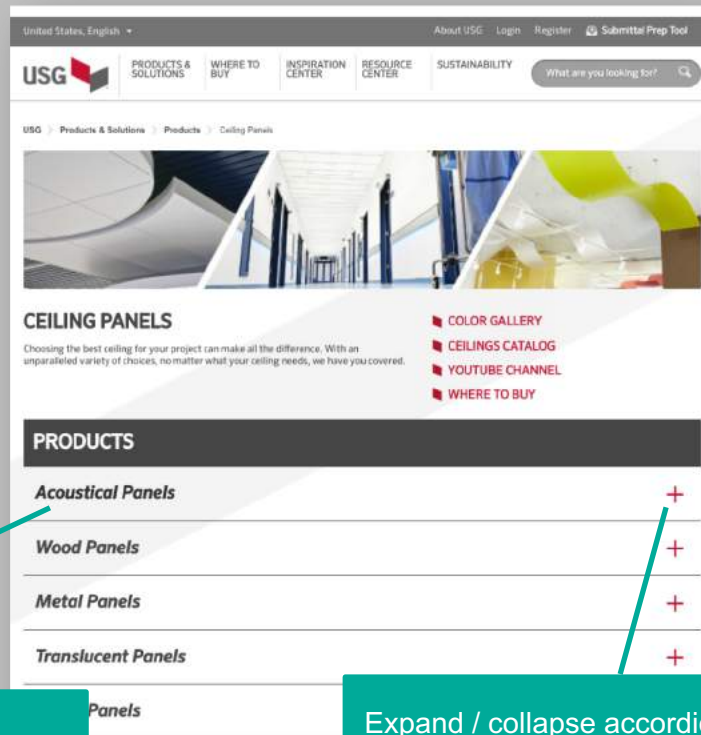
RECOMMENDATION
Instead of accordions, build landing pages for each category (e.g., Acoustical Panels, Wood Panels) and link to them via thumbnails.   Having landing pages for your main product sub-categories is much better for SEO and findability.

Expand / collapse accordions are not recommended as a way to display important product category navigation.   Accordions are just too good at hiding content.

Give Customers Enough Information to Select the Right Product

There's not enough information here for customers to differentiate one product from another. A single picture and product title are simply not good enough.

What key pieces of additional information do customers need to decide between these products? Available colors and shapes? Price? Acoustic properties? Ease of installation? Price? This is the kind of information customers need to see here.
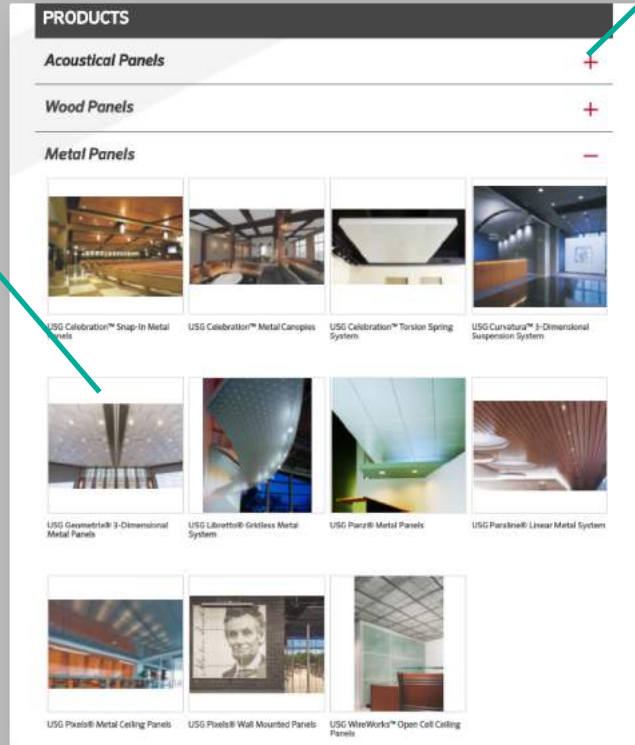
It's unexpected to click "Acoustic Panels" and be directed to a new page. The "+" and accordion style UI suggests an expand / collapse interaction, not a link

Consider including other ways to navigate beside material, such as by color, shape, acoustic properties, or collection name.

There's a mix of categorization here that can be confusing to customers. Wood and Metal are materials… but what are Acoustic Panels made of? Retail is a market area.

PRODUCTS

Acoustical Panels +

Wood Panels +

Metal Panels −

USG Celebration™ Snap-In Metal Panels
USG Celebration™ Metal Canopies
USG Celebration™ Torsion Spring System
USG Curvatura™ 3-Dimensional Suspension System

USG Geometrix® 3-Dimensional Metal Panels
USG Libretto® Gridless Metal System
USG Panz® Metal Panels
USG Paraline® Linear Metal System

USG Pixels® Metal Ceiling Panels
USG Pixels® Wall Mounted Panels
USG WireWorks™ Open Cell Ceiling Panels

Make unexpected link destinations clear

Customers expect links within a website to take them to other web pages within the same site.

If you're linking to something that's NOT a page within the same site – like a PDF or microsite – you need to clearly indicate this.
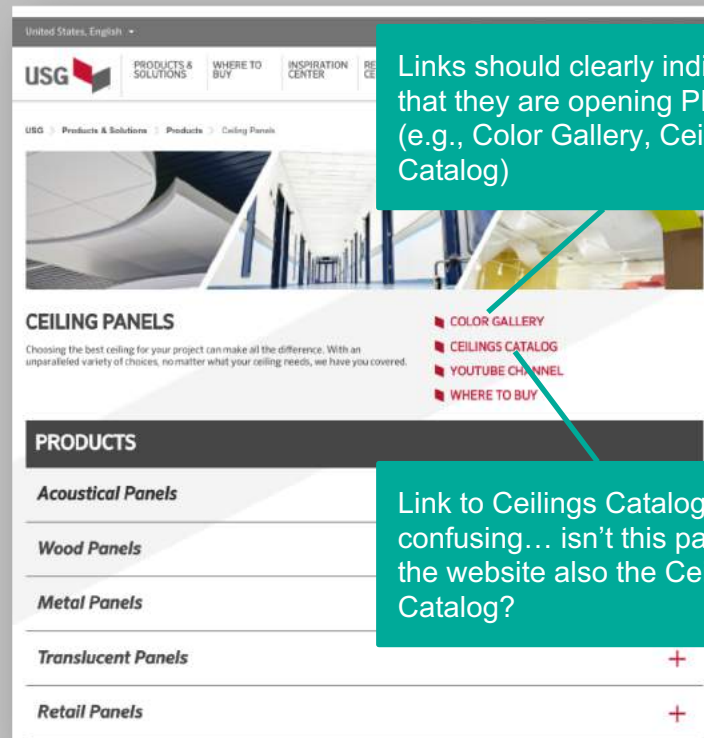
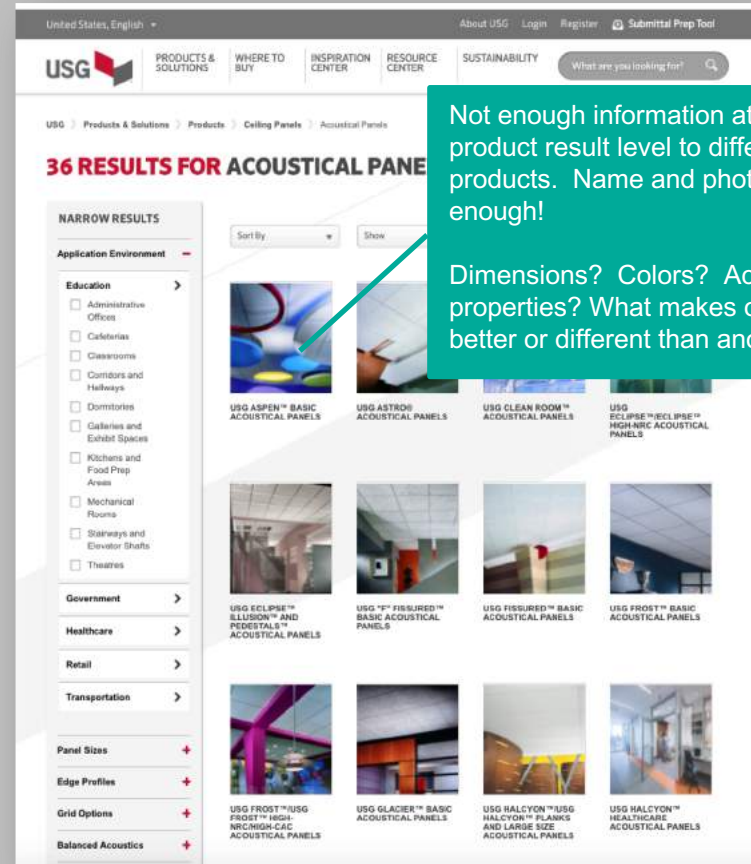Links should clearly indicate that they are opening PDFs (e.g., Color Gallery, Ceilings Catalog)

Link to Ceilings Catalog is a bit confusing… isn't this part of the website also the Ceilings Catalog?

Improve information and filters on browse pages

The goal of the faceted browse page is to make it easy for customers to find the product that meets their needs.

In order to do this your:

- Product results must contain the key pieces of information customers need to decide between products.

- Facet labels must be customer-friendly and organized based on customer (not company) preferences.

Not enough information at the individual product result level to differentiate products. Name and photo are not enough!

Dimensions? Colors? Acoustic properties? What makes one product better or different than another?

List the most important facet groups to customers first (are applications really the most important facet to customers?)

Multi-level facets are not usually recommended

Facet groups should not be collapsed by default

Are these results product families? Individual SKUs? There's no good way to know.

United States, English ▾

About USG   Login   Register   🖨 Submittal Prep Tool

USG

PRODUCTS & SOLUTIONS | WHERE TO BUY | INSPIRATION CENTER | RESOURCE CENTER | SUSTAINABILITY

What are you looking for? 🔍

USG › Products & Solutions › Products › Ceiling Panels › Acoustical Panels

36 RESULTS FOR ACOUSTICAL PANELS

NARROW RESULTS

Sort By ▾   Show ▾   View: ▦ ▤

Application Environment —

Education →
- Administrative Offices
- Cafeterias
- Classrooms
- Corridors and Hallways
- Dormitories
- Galleries and Exhibit Spaces
- Kitchens and Food Prep Areas
- Mechanical Rooms
- Stairways and Elevator Shafts
- Theatres

Government →
Healthcare →
Retail →
Transportation →

Panel Sizes +
Edge Profiles +
Grid Options +
Balanced Acoustics +

USG ASPEN™ BASIC ACOUSTICAL PANELS
USG ASTRO® ACOUSTICAL PANELS
USG CLEAN ROOM™ ACOUSTICAL PANELS
USG ECLIPSE™ECLIPSE™ HIGH-NRC ACOUSTICAL PANELS

USG ECLIPSE™ ILLUSION™ AND PEDESTALS™ ACOUSTICAL PANELS
USG "F" FISSURED™ BASIC ACOUSTICAL PANELS
USG FISSURED™ BASIC ACOUSTICAL PANELS
USG FROST™ BASIC ACOUSTICAL PANELS

USG FROST™/USG FROST™ HIGH-NRC/HIGH-CAC ACOUSTICAL PANELS
USG GLACIER™ BASIC ACOUSTICAL PANELS
USG HALCYON™/USG HALCYON™ PLANKS AND LARGE SIZE ACOUSTICAL PANELS
USG HALCYON™ HEALTHCARE ACOUSTICAL PANELS

Clean up and Standardize Facets.

- Panel Size facet group contains a mix of dimensions and units (mm, inches, feet). Best practice is to pick one type of unit.

- List facet values in the most customer-friendly way. Panel Sizes should be listed from smallest to largest size (or the reverse).

- Add number of matching items in parenthesis after the facet value label.

Illustrations for Edge profiles are great!!

Consider "Acoustic Performance" rather than a vague label like "Balanced Acoustics."

Simplify SKU selection and provide richer information on product family page

The main goals of the product family page are to:

- Help customers understand your product, with real information that answers customers questions.

- Help customers select among a product's variations and options (if there are multiple SKUs in a family).

- Add to cart or call a sales rep!

This is great information, but the table is hard to navigate and there's no call to action.

There are 5 columns hidden behind the arrows. Many customers will miss these.

If you need faceted filtering just to navigate a product's variations, your family pages are far too complicated.

RECOMMMENDATIONS

- Instead of a SKU table, use an interactive UI that enable customers to select the product variations (size, color, etc.) they are interested in.

- Create smaller product families with fewer SKUs that differ by fewer variations.
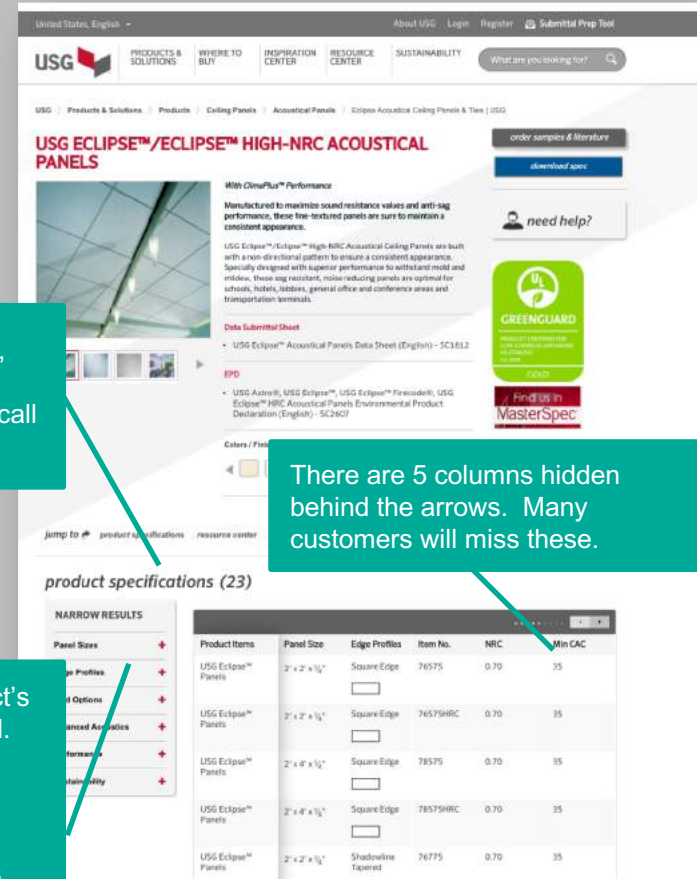
The links should be styled as links and indicate when they're opening a file (such as a PDF).

These buttons make it seem as if customers can "select" a color, but nothing happens when you click the swatches. At the very least, customers expect the main mage to show a product matching the selected color.

A long SKU table is not the expected experience for a specifications table. What about the specifications that are common across all SKUs in the family?

Good calls to action, but it's better just to enable customers to download literature directly

Add This Missing Information!

- Pricing (there are creative ways to handle customer-specific pricing – list price, relative pricing – that are far better than no pricing!)

- Customer reviews

- Questions & answers

- Cross selling of accessories, with links to product pages

Improve Cross Selling of Accessories and Related Products

These grid illustrations are great, but it's unclear how they connect with the ceiling tiles. Are all of these compatible with all the SKUs… or only some? To be useful, customers need to understand which accessories work with which SKUs.

These accessories should also be links that take you to product pages for more information.
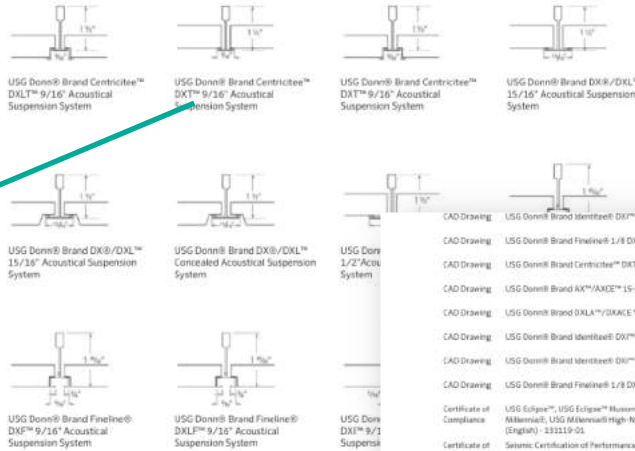
The resource center is good, but the view buttons are unnecessary (the title should be the link).

Also what about videos, case studies, photo galleries and other multimedia content?

Not quite sure why features and benefits are so far down the page. This information should be improved and raised to the top of the page.

grid profile options

resource center (41)

features and benefits

Search experience should be as good as browse

If a customer searches for "acoustic tiles" they should get the same experience as if they browse to a product category page.

Searches should prioritize product and catalog results over other site content. It's also important to support type ahead, searching by SKU number, and other common search use cases.

Searching by SKU number produces no useful results.
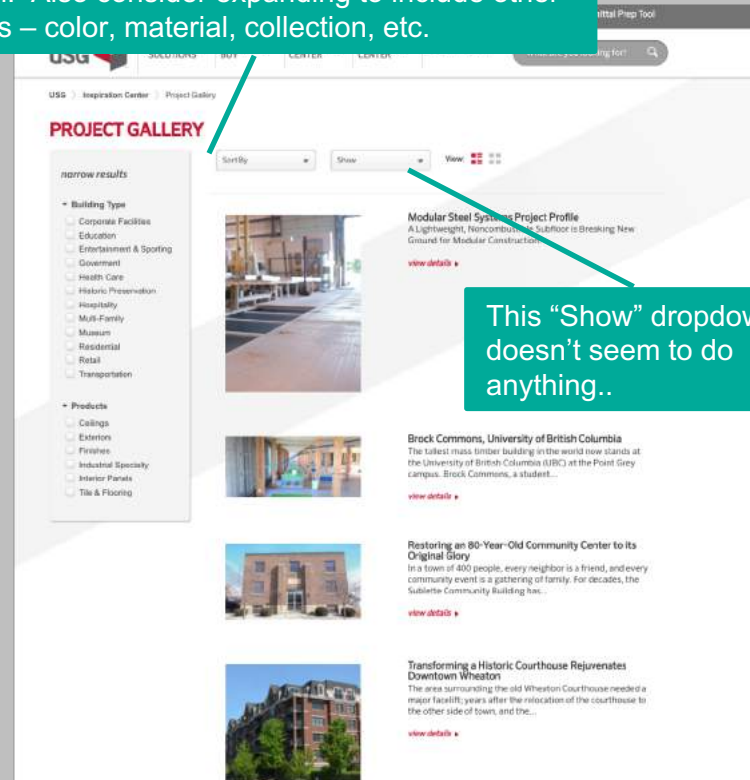
Need type ahead and search suggestions.

- Results should show matching product pages on the site, not PDFs
- Results are not categorized or filterable.
- Individual results contain very little useful information. Where will I go when I click this link? It's hard to tell…

The inspiration gallery needs to be more inspiring

The project gallery is a great resource… but much of the good content is hidden within PDFs. It makes for an underwhelming experience.

A photo gallery experience (with multiple photos to view per project) would be much more inspirational and popular with customers.

These filters are nice, but they need counts next them. Also consider expanding to include other filters – color, material, collection, etc.

This "Show" dropdown doesn't seem to do anything..

Where are the other photos?

…Oh, I need to download a PDF ☹

SITEWORX

Let's Talk!

We're here to help you achieve your B2B digital goals.

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