

# Interface Redesign

Nature's Lawn and Garden, Inc.  
[www.natureslawn.com](http://www.natureslawn.com)

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## Executive Summary

Nature's Lawn and Garden, Inc. decided to have their website redesigned because of user complaints. The main complaints were the length of the pages and the confusion between the labels on the global navigation buttons and the HTML text links.

This report is organized into 4 sections and an appendix which displays screenshots of the current home page and sub pages.

### *Analysis of Current Interface*

The current interface is deconstructed into component elements and analyzed using Interface Design principles.

### *Redesigned Interface Wireframes*

Digital wireframes which show placement of interface elements were made for the Home page and three sub pages. The three sub pages were chosen because of differences in content and design.

### *Analysis of Redesigned Interface*

Improvements in the new interface and how the new interface addresses the limitations of the old one are discussed.

### *Implementation Options*

Three approaches to implementing the redesigned interface with their advantages and disadvantages are presented. The recommended approach is identified.

The redesigned interface has several advantages over the existing interface, including these enhancements:

- Page lengths are shorter and the user doesn't need to scroll down on the Home page and the Products sub pages.
- Page load times will be shorter.
- Global navigation is the same on all pages.
- There are global, easy to find links to the shopping cart and checkout.
- Colors are less bright, especially in the dead space.

## Analysis of Current Interface

### *Layout*

- The interface for Nature's Lawn and Garden (see Appendix) is fixed-width center aligned and the display is optimized for 800x600.

### *Color and Graphics*

- The colors on the website are bright. The dead space, when viewed at higher resolutions, is too bright.
- Graphics, especially on the home page and some sub pages, are excessive. The home page has 27 graphics and the sub pages have from 14 to 24 graphics.
- This results in page weights of 65k to 238k (the Home page is 150k), with page loading times of from 18 to 68 seconds (the Home page is 43 seconds) using a 56k modem (calculations based on tests run at Dr. Watson <http://watson.addy.com>).

### *Interface Elements*

The Nature's Lawn and Garden interface contains the following elements, most of which will be used in the redesigned interface; some of the elements will be redesigned.

- Order forms
- Descriptions of products and services
- Testimonials
- FAQ
- HTML text navigation
- Address, phone and email address
- Drop down menus on global navigation buttons
- Graphics
  - Logo
  - Tagline
  - Sun graphic
  - Global navigation buttons
  - Images of products
  - Images of lawns
  - Grass image at bottom of pages
  - Grass image in dead space
  - Ad for book
  - Top gardening website award
  - Shopping cart
  - Link to home page on product pages

## *Interface Design: Strengths*

The strength of Nature's Lawn and Garden is adherence to certain principles of web interface design and some of the Gestalt rules of perception.

- There is consistency in the location of some interface elements. The logo, global navigation, the company's address and the HTML text navigation are in the same location on all pages.
- The colors are consistent across the interface. The global navigation buttons are green on all pages. The headers are one shade of green on all pages except the Product pages. The Product pages use a different shade of green.
- Contrast is used. Most of the text is black on a white background.
- The Gestalt rules of proximity and similarity are used in the global navigation and the text navigation.
- The Gestalt rules of enclosure and continuity are used on the Home page for the products displayed there. They are also used on the Products pages for the order forms and for some sequences of photographs that are enclosed.

Additional strengths are:

- Because of the fixed width, the line lengths are a reasonable size and the graphics stay aligned with the text.

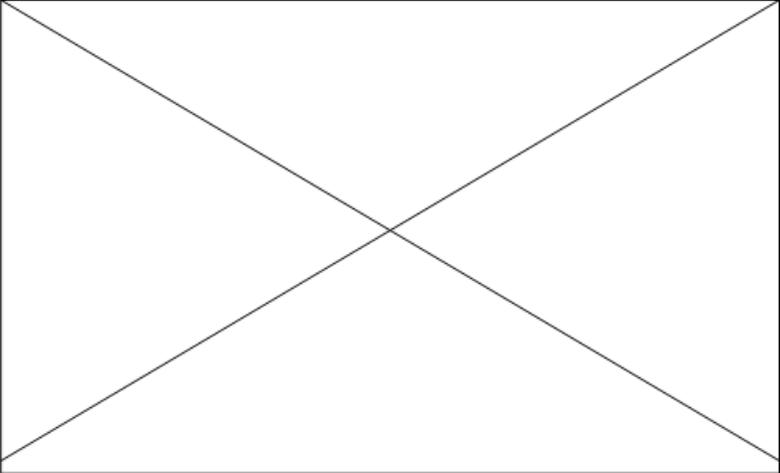
## *Interface Design: Areas for Improvement*

- There is too much dead space on both sides of the interface and the dead space is too bright and the eyes are drawn to it because of that.
- The pages are too long. The Product pages have the order form near the middle or bottom of the page. There is too much text on those pages. The Nature's Lawn logo is too large and takes up too much vertical space, which adds to the length of the pages and which puts the global navigation buttons lower on the page.
- Because of the fixed width that's optimized for 800x600, there is a horizontal scroll bar at lower resolutions.
- There is inconsistency in the global navigation buttons on the Products pages, FAQ and Testimonials. On those pages, it is different from the global navigation on the other pages.
- All of the product pages have a link to testimonials above the text which is unnecessary because there's a Testimonials button in global navigation.
- Some of the pages with information only do not have the HTML text navigation or Nature's Lawn and Garden, Inc.'s address, phone and email.

- There is an inconsistency where the Products for Sale on all of the pages except the Products pages goes to the Home page. On the Products pages, Products for Sale goes to a page labeled Products for Landscapes and Do It Yourselfers.
- Some of the Products pages have within page links which would be useful on all the Products pages. These links on one page are at the top of the page and are farther down the page on another. It's not obvious that these are within page links.
- Printing does not work well with the interface because the fixed width is too wide which causes cropping.
-

## Redesigned Interface Wireframes

### Home Page

Logo and tagline				 Checkout Contact Us Sitemap	
<b>Online Sales</b>		Product Testimonials	Product and Lawn Care Information	<b>Buffalo, NY Services</b>	
<b>Home</b>	FAQ	Products		Programs/Services	Free Estimate
PRODUCTS Aerify! Plus Aerify! Nature's Magic Fish Emulsion Bioenhanced Liquid Fertilizer Biological Dethatcher Nature's Insect Guide Wipeout					
 Top Gardening Website Award		Address Phone Email <hr/> Copyright © 2009-2010 Nature's Lawn and Garden, Inc. All Rights Reserved		 Lawn Care Simplified Link to Manual	

Sub Page 1

Logo and tagline				 <a href="#">Checkout</a> <a href="#">Contact Us</a> <a href="#">Sitemap</a>
<b>Online Sales</b>		Product Testimonials	Product and Lawn Care Information	<b>Buffalo, NY Services</b>
<a href="#">Home</a>	<a href="#">FAQ</a>	<a href="#">Products</a>	<b>Programs/Services</b>	<a href="#">Free Estimate</a>

### Programs/Services

Why Nature's Lawn

Lawn Programs

Tree and Shrub Care

Special Services

### Why Nature's Lawn

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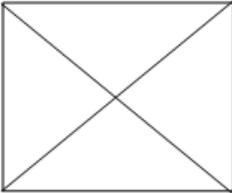
Sample text sample text sample text sample text sample text  
sample text sample text sample text sample text sample text

Address
Phone
Email

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Sub Page 3

Logo and tagline				 Checkout Contact Us Sitemap		
<b>Online Sales</b>		Product	Product and Lawn		<b>Buffalo, NY Services</b>	
Home	FAQ	Testimonials	Care Information		Programs/Services	Free Estimate
<b>Product Name</b>		Product Description				
		Sample text sample text				
<a href="#">Link to product information page</a>						
ORDER FORM						
Address Phone Email		Copyright © 2009-2010 Nature's Lawn and Garden, Inc. All Rights Reserved				

## Analysis of Redesigned Interface

The redesigned interface has benefits over the existing interface. An improvement is in page length and what's available above the fold.

- The Home page and Products sub pages fit on an 800x600 display without scrolling.
- To make these pages fit, the logo has been reduced to half size.
- The products are listed as links on the home page.
- The Product sub pages include the product name, a picture of the product, a short description, the order form and a link to a product description page if the customer wants more information.
- The HTML text navigation at the bottom of the pages has been removed since it was so different from the global navigation button.
- The award graphic and graphic link to their lawn care website is at the bottom of the home page.

Improvements in page loading times have been made.

- The number of graphics on all pages is reduced to improve page loading times.

Some global elements have been added or improved.

- The drop down menus have been eliminated.
- The copyright and the company's address, phone number and email address are at the bottom of all pages.
- There is a global shopping cart and checkout links at the top right of each page.
- The sun graphic has been removed. The grass in the dead space has been removed and will be replaced with a light green.

Other improvements are included on the sub pages.

- With the exception of the FAQ and Testimonials sub pages, the text information on all pages has been moved to their own pages. The global navigation has a button for Product Information. The Product Information sub page has links to all of the Product sub pages.
- The Program and Services sub page may or may not have the four photographs shown on the wireframe and those photographs may be interspersed with the text instead of at the left.
- The Free Estimate, Product and Lawn Care Information, and Product Testimonials sub pages will look like the FAQ subpage and may or may not contain photographs.

## Implementation Options

The redesigned interface can be implemented in several ways. Each approach has advantages and disadvantages.

### *Approach 1: Fixed-Width, Left-Aligned*

- The design can be coded with a fixed width and left aligned.
- The logo would be on the left top corner.
- The global navigation buttons would go across the pages.
- The right top corner would have the shopping cart, checkout and contact us links.
- Pages with two columns would have a narrower left column with subnavigation links and a right column with a photograph or text content.
- The advantage of this fixed-width approach is that there is exact control over the alignment of all elements and the line lengths are reasonable.
- This approach also stays in balance because page elements are in the same relative position when the window is resized or screen resolution is changed.
- The disadvantage of this approach is that all the dead space is to the right of the interface.

### *Approach 2: Fixed-Width, Center-Aligned*

- The design can be coded with a fixed width and center aligned.
- This approach has the same benefits as Approach 1. The dead space is on both sides of the interface instead of only on the right.

### *Approach 3: Fixed-Width and Variable-Width Columns*

- This approach combines fixed-width and variable-width elements.
- On the pages with two columns, the left column would be fixed and the right column would be variable-width. On the pages with one column, the column would be variable-width.
- The advantages to this approach are that dead space is eliminated, page length is kept short especially at higher resolutions and printing should be functional.
- The disadvantages to this approach are that content in the right column and the single column pages could become unaligned and that page widths could become too long.

### *Approach 4: Variable-Width*

- This approach is not recommended for the two column pages because of complete lack of control over location of page elements.

### *Recommended Implementation*

The recommended implementation is the second approach. The page length issue has been addressed in the interface redesign by making the Home page and Products sub pages completely above the fold. The other pages are all information pages that are longer which the customers would be able to read if they want.

Appendix

Figure 1: Home Page Top



Figure 1: Home Page Top (17" monitor, 1280x1024 screen resolution, window maximized)

Figure 2: Home Page Middle 1

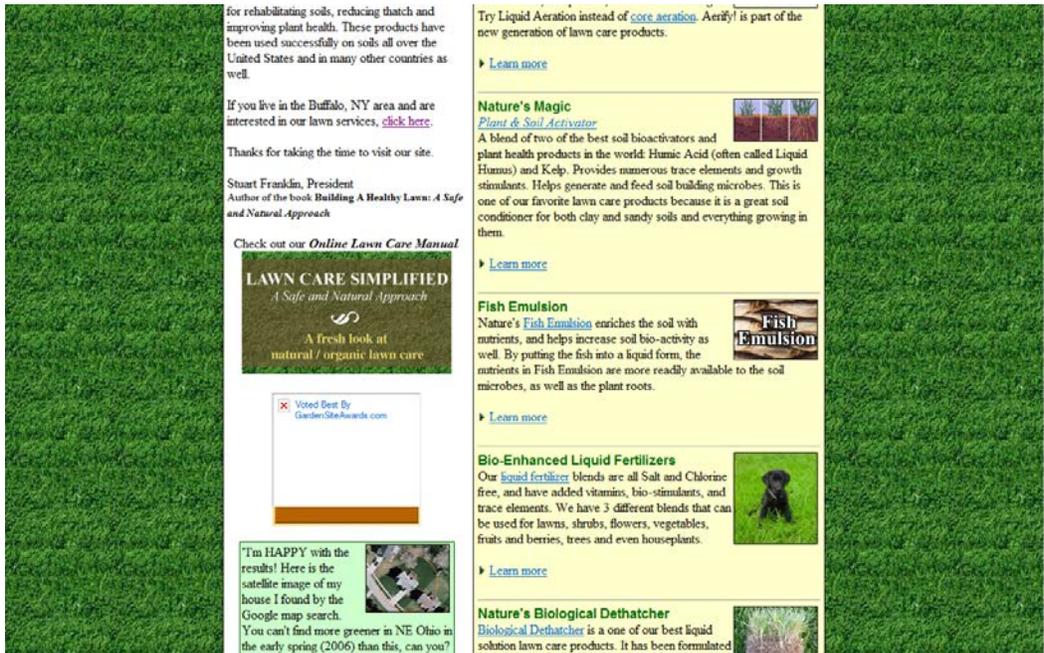


Figure 2: Home Page Middle 1 (17" monitor, 1280x1024 screen resolution, window maximized)

Figure 3: Home Page Middle 2

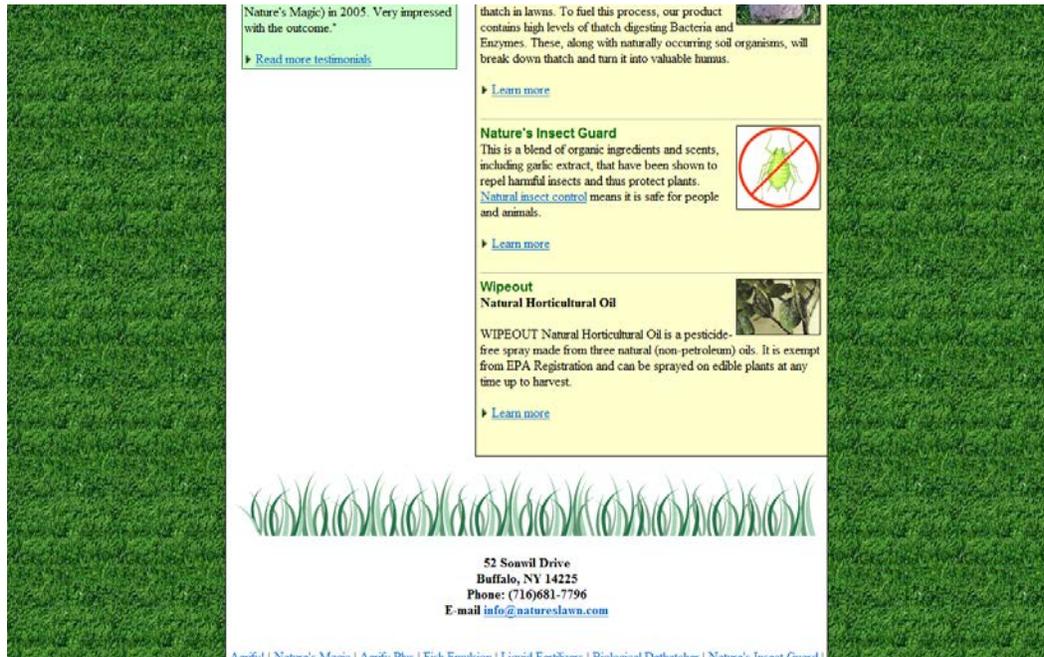


Figure 3: Home Page Middle 1 (17" monitor, 1280x1024 screen resolution, window maximized)

Figure 4: Home Page Bottom



Figure 4: Home Page Bottom (17" monitor, 1280x1024 screen resolution, window maximized)

Figure 5: Sub Page Top

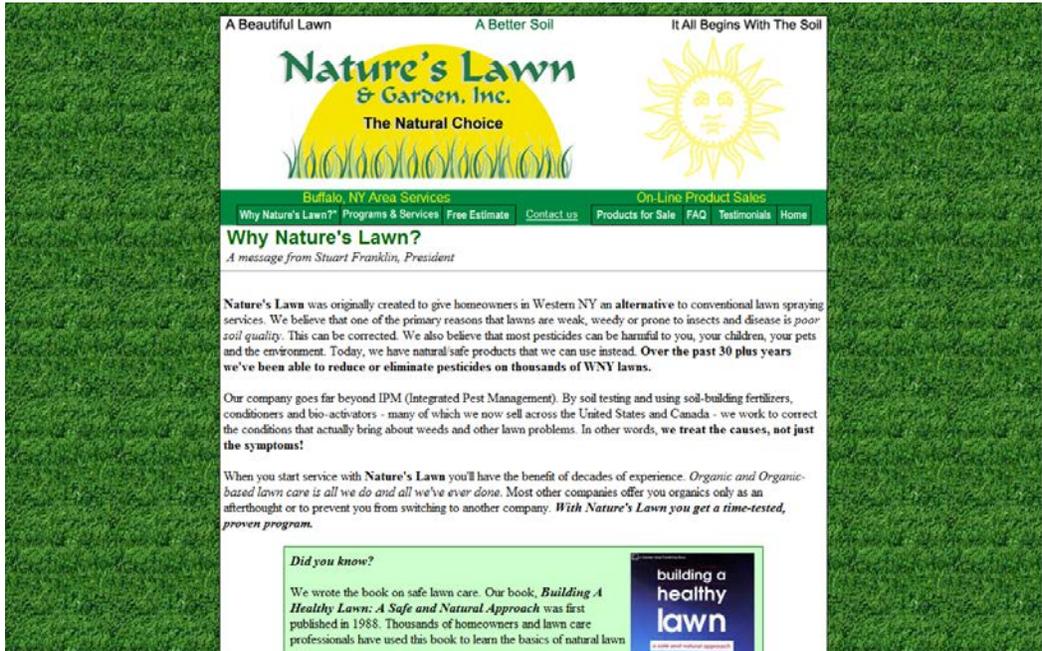


Figure 5: Sub Page Top (17" monitor, 1280x1024 screen resolution, window maximized)

Figure 6: Sub Page Bottom



Figure 6: Sub Page Bottom (17" monitor, 1280x1024 screen resolution, window maximized)