

Best-in-Class Swatch Ordering

Overview

Optimizing the swatch ordering experience both on dedicated landing page and PDP by addressing business goals and user pain points.

UX / UI Designer

Carly Addison

Product Manager

Andrew Paget

Duration

Ongoing

Software used

Sketch, Invision

Research Methods and UX Tools used:

- Stakeholder Interviews
- Voice of the Customer and Moderated User Interviews
- Screen Flows
- Competitive Analysis
- Design System Implementation

Understanding the Problem

Users who order free swatches are ~70% more likely to purchase an upholstery item. However, since there is no order tracking, we don't have exact numbers nor can we follow up with customers.

I performed stakeholder interviews to understand known user and business pain points with the current experience.

Business goals:

- Every swatch will be assigned a \$0.00 SKU, allowing it to be added to cart like any other product. Swatch ordering through the cart will allow for order tracking.
- Continue to allow user to order swatches directly on Product Detail Page, keeping bounce rate low. Optimize experience.

Success metrics:

- Reduce time from swatch order to furniture purchase.
- 15% increase in conversion and a 6% increase in revenue across upholstery PDPs.

UX goals:

- Human-Centered Design: Understand the user's swatch ordering behavior and pain points through user interviews and then develop solutions for these problems.
- Responsive design and implementing the new Design System.
- Continue to iterate and build out new features.

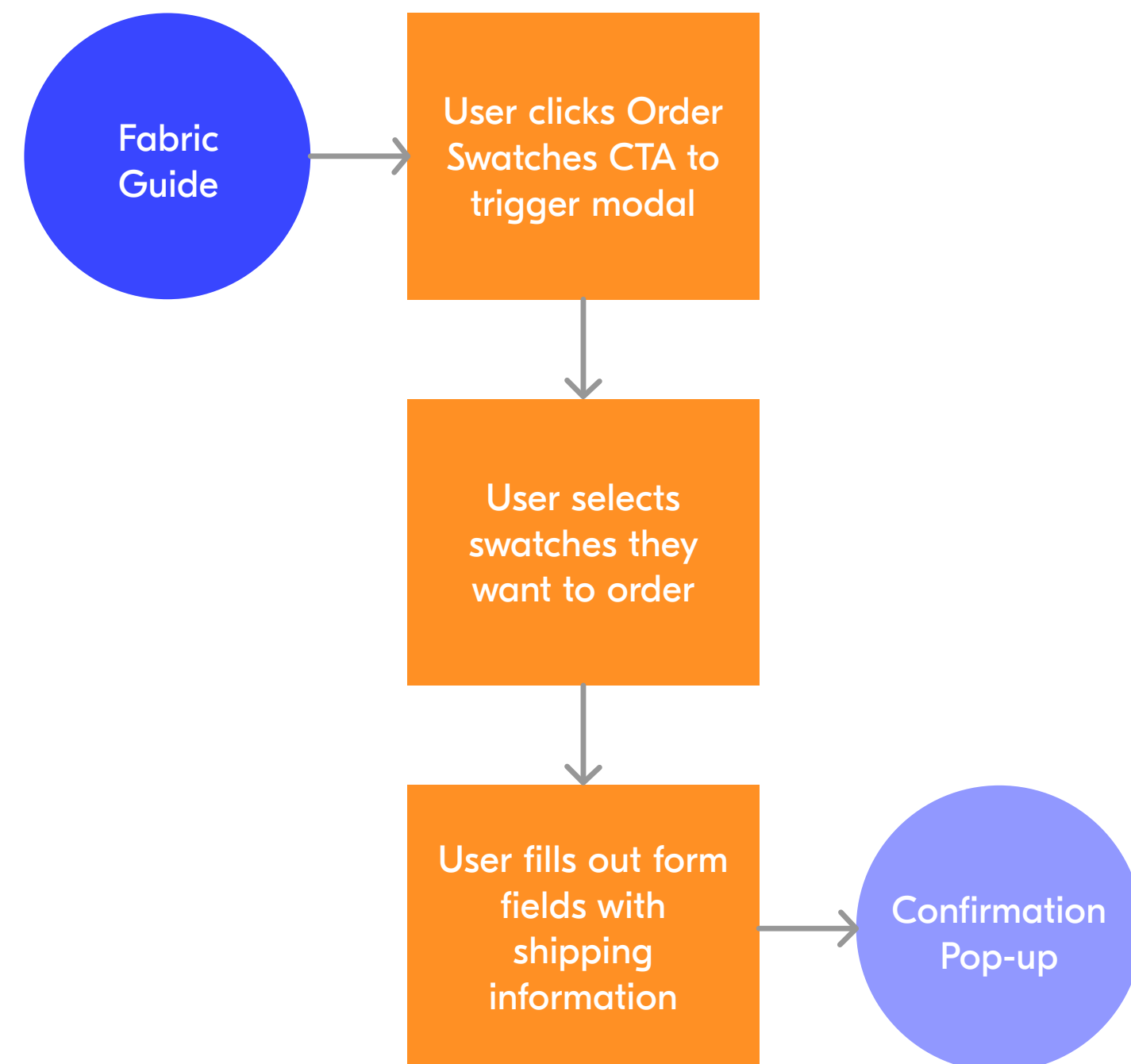
User flow of existing experience to understand how the user currently orders swatches.

Pros

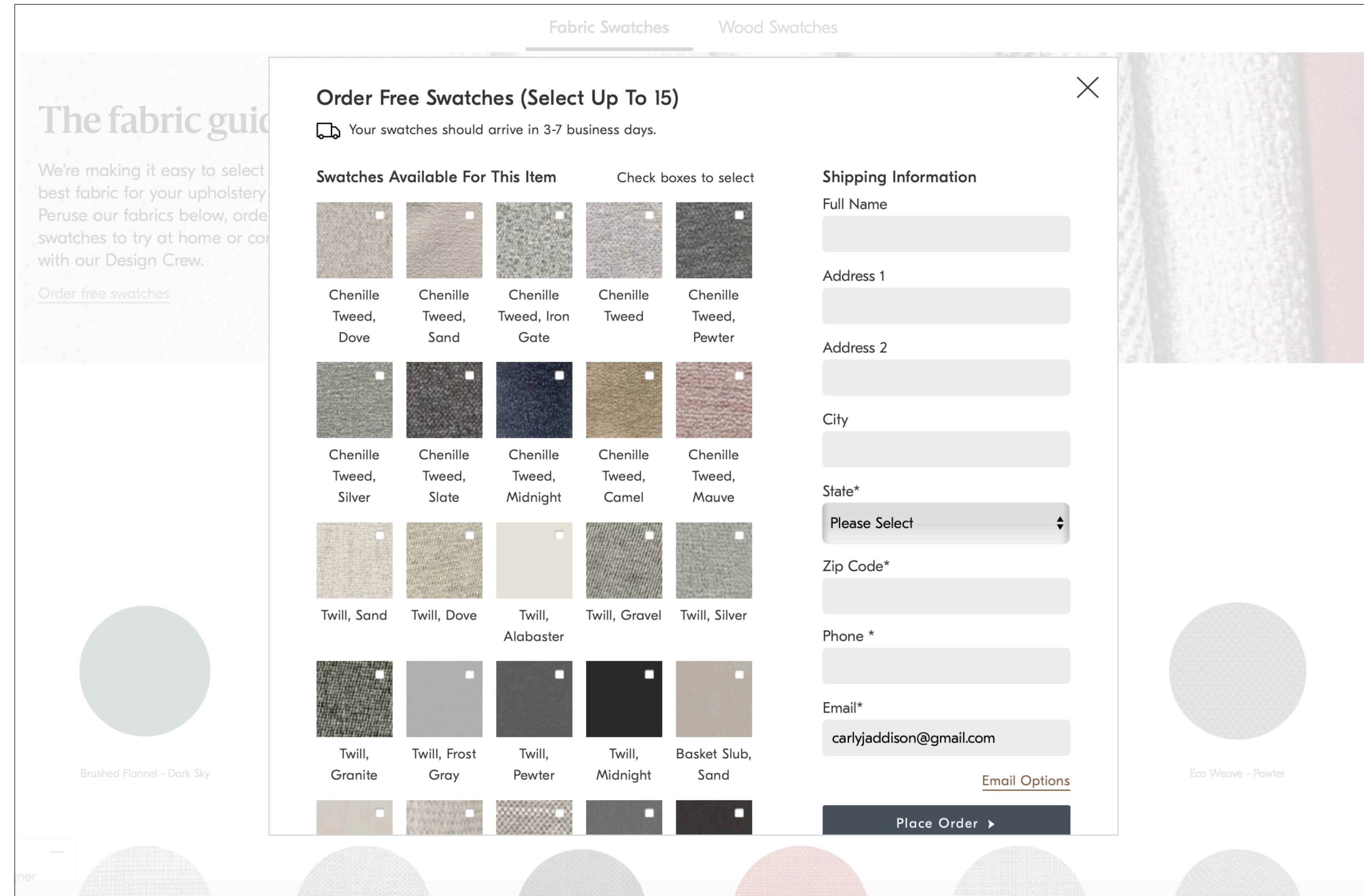
- Straightforward, with minimal steps.

Cons

- Doesn't allow for order tracking, order confirmation.
- If user is on product with 100+ swatches, no way to filter them down, making for an overwhelming experience.
- Not responsive and not utilizing Design System.



Method 1: Swatch Landing Page



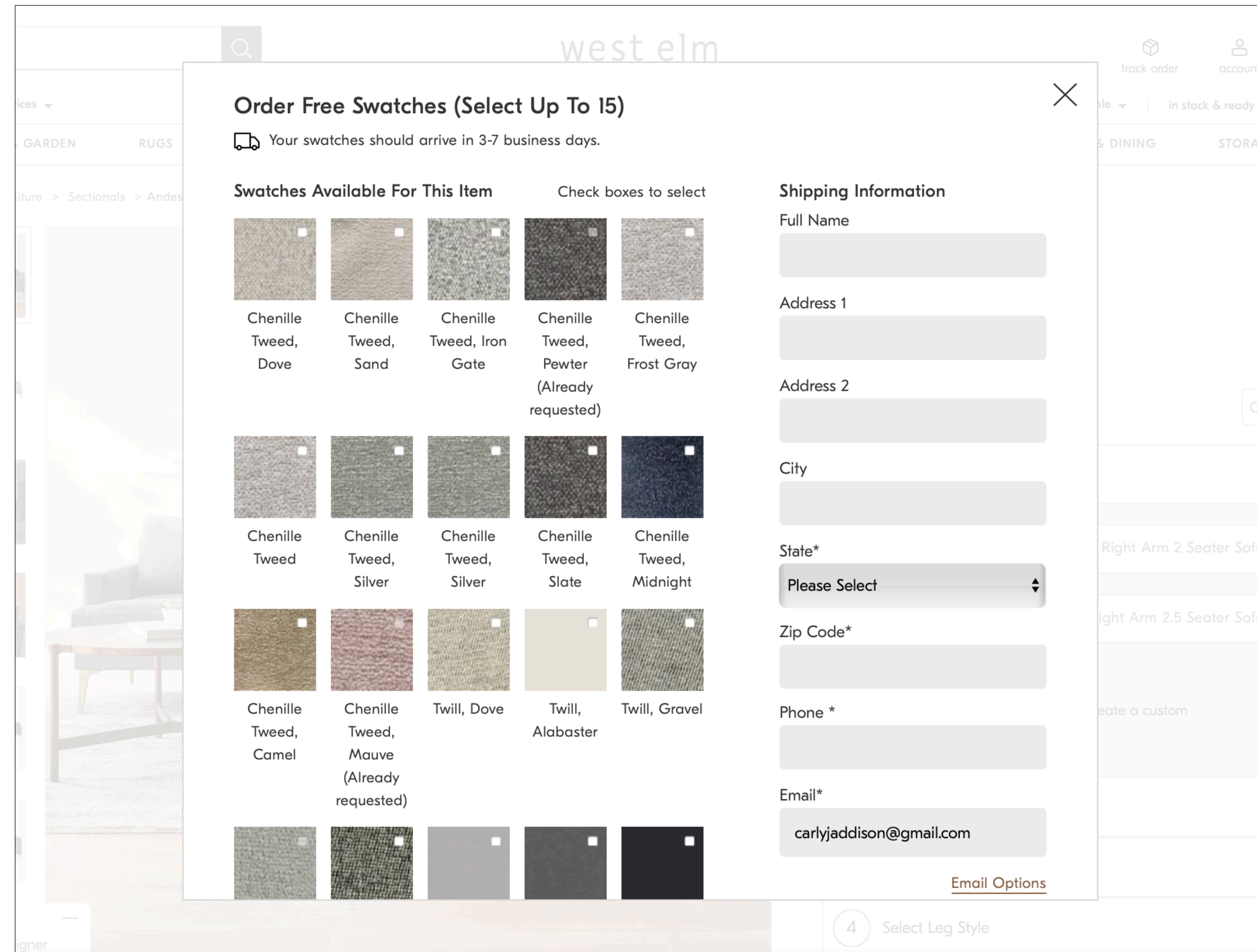
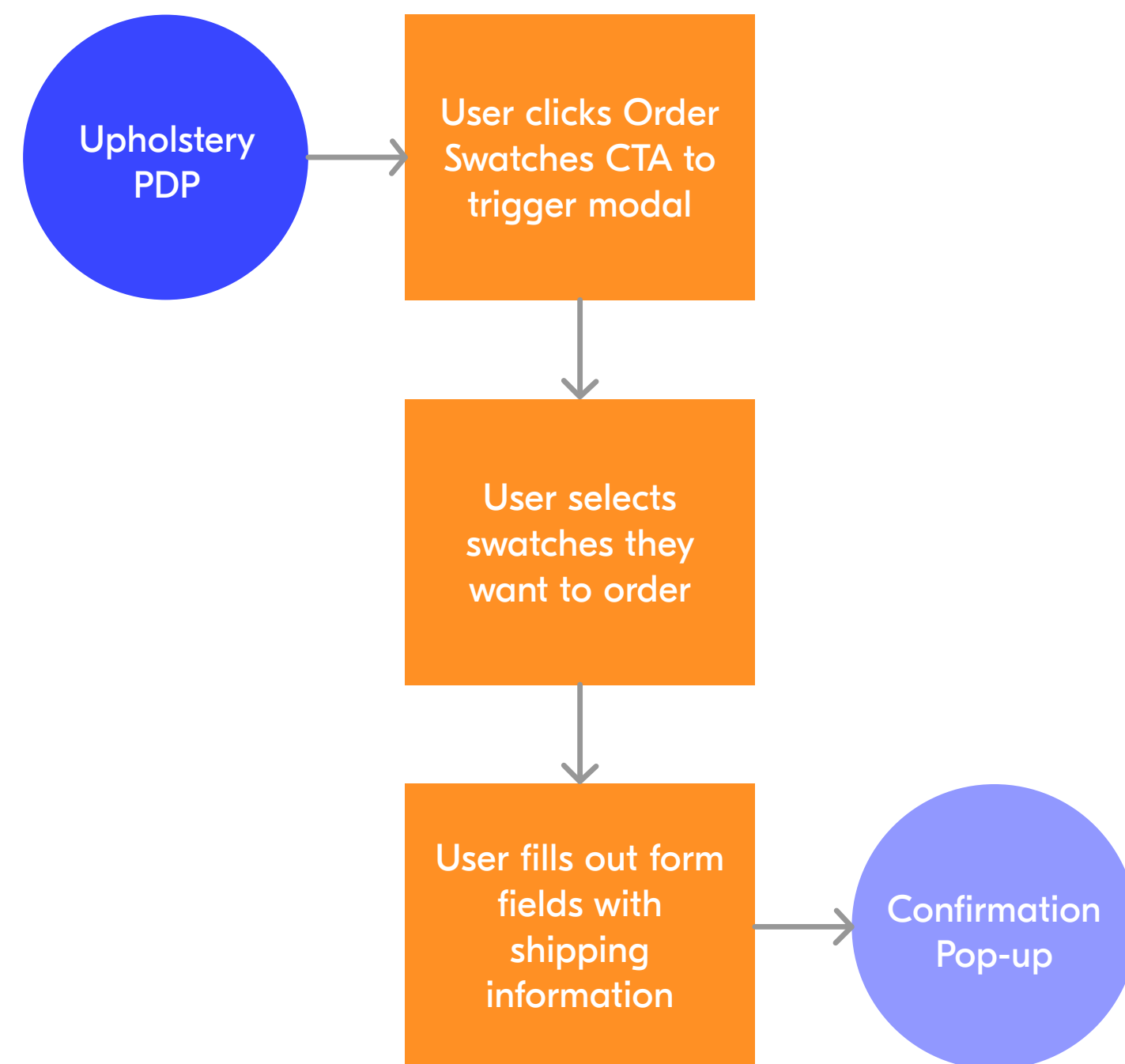
User flow of existing experience to understand how the user currently orders swatches.

Pros

- Straightforward, with minimal steps.

Cons

- Doesn't allow for order tracking, order confirmation.
- If user is on product with 100+ swatches, no way to filter them down, making for an overwhelming experience.
- Not responsive and not utilizing Design System.



Research

To start getting an idea of user behavior and pain points, I took a look at user feedback through our **VOC** platform, which would then inform our in-depth user interviews.

Relevant quotes

- “Ordered 10 swatches for a couch - received 8, 6 of which were double - so essentially only received 5 swatches out of the 10 and can't remember which of the ones I'd looked at so essentially have to start over.”
- “Where in the @\$%&! do I find information on the different types of velvet? Should I just guess and hope it's the right one?”
- “The product description says order free swatches but that's not anywhere actually on the website or in the search.”
- “You need a central place where people can order swatches for all products. It's a pain to have to go from product to product ordering different batches of swatches.”
- “On ordering fabric swatches, I expected a confirmation email sent to me.”

Insights

- Not receiving the correct swatches that the user ordered.
- No order confirmation email, no place to track order or to help remember which ones were ordered.
- Lack of information on fabric types.
- Difficulty finding swatch landing page.
- No central location for ordering all types of swatches: fabric, rug and wood.

I teamed up with our UX Researcher who performed in-depth **user interviews** to shed light on swatch ordering behavior and pain points.

Insights

- Most customers completed their upholstery purchase process (initial ideas to purchase) within three weeks (40%).
- Material (specific type or durability), color (to match other decor), price are the most important factors in choosing a fabric, followed by grade and cleaning care.
 - 73% users said narrowing swatches down by Material is important or very important.
- Using merchant terminology (e.g., lightly textured blend) to describe fabric confused customers; Understanding how the fabric feels, is cared for, and availability status was desired.
- Scrolling through large quantities of swatches in a carousel did not resonate with customers.
- Customers did not connect with the circular-shaped swatches.
- Small sized swatches on the page limited customers' ability to imagine how fabric felt. A strong need existed to display swatches in the lightbox, if feasible, from light to dark to simplify comparisons.
 - 90% said a large swatch image is important
- Fabric color, type / material selection occurred simultaneously during the purchase journey
- 64% customers consult someone (partner or store associate)

Feature Prioritization

After speaking with stakeholders and users, it is clear we have many business and user goals, but which will make the biggest impact with lowest effort?

BUSINESS NEEDS

- 1. Every swatch, free or for purchase, will be assigned a \$0.00 SKU, allowing it to be added to cart like any other product.**
 - Allows for order tracking.
 - Ensures 1) user receives the correct swatches that the user ordered and 2) user receives confirmation email.
 - Allows for follow up with customers that have ordered swatches through various marketing and communication channels = higher conversion.

USER NEEDS

- 1. Scrolling through large quantities of swatches in a carousel did not resonate with customers. Provide a way to narrow swatches down.**
- 2. Since 64% users consult with someone before purchasing, provide link to Design Crew.**
- 3. More information on fabric types.**
 - Prioritize material/durability, color, grade and cleaning care.
- 4. Confidence that their order was placed correctly.**
- 5. UI that resonates with users more and is more helpful in choosing swatches.**
 - Use lightbox to give user a better idea of look and feel, as 90% users say a large image is important.
 - Customers did not connect with the circular-shaped swatches.

Design Decisions

Business Ask

Swatches to become \$0.00 SKUs to be ordered using the cart.

This will allow users to receive a confirmation email, track their order, and reference past orders resulting in a 15% increase in conversion and a 6% increase in revenue across upholstery PDPs.

Although the process is a bit longer (user flow on next page), users are able to speed up the checkout process by:

- Bypassing checkout if they are signed in
- Bypassing payment in checkout if they only have free swatches in their cart

Link to prototype [here](#).

Up to 50% off new clearance styles → | Up to 40% off in-stock furniture → | Shop all warehouse deals →

west elm west elm kids west elm contract pottery barn pb apartment pottery barn kids pottery barn teen williams sonoma ws home rejuvenation mark & graham

My Store Empire Stores Opens today 10am - 8pm

Search

west elm

track order account favorites (3) cart (1)

design & values free design services


tour this desert haven new & notable in stock & ready to ship friends & collaborators

FURNITURE OUTDOOR & GARDEN RUGS BEDDING BATH LIGHTING PILLOWS & DECOR WINDOW ART & MIRRORS KITCHEN & DINING STORAGE SALE KIDS

Shopping Cart

Share a link to your cart →

Shipping

	Center Stripe Shag Rug, 5x8, White #71-7555624	Item Price \$445	QUANTITY 1	Item Total \$445
--	--	----------------------------	---------------	----------------------------

Update

Delivery Estimate


Order now for delivery May 2 - May 4 to zip code: 11215

[Save For Later](#)

× Remove

Swatches

[Order Swatches Only](#)

	Fabric Swatch, Distressed Velvet, Burnt Umber #71-7854643	Item Price \$0.00	Item Total \$0.00
---	---	-----------------------------	-----------------------------

Delivery Estimate

Order now for delivery April 24 to zip code: 11215

[Save For Later](#)

× Remove

Order Summary

Subtotal (2 Items) **\$445**

Total does not include shipping, gift wrap, discounts & tax.

Financing options to help you save:

Earn \$44.50 (10%) for your first 30 days² with the West Elm Credit Card. [Learn more →](#)

As low as \$41/month or 0% APR with [affirm](#). [Learn more →](#)

VISA Mastercard AMERICAN EXPRESS DISCOVER and more

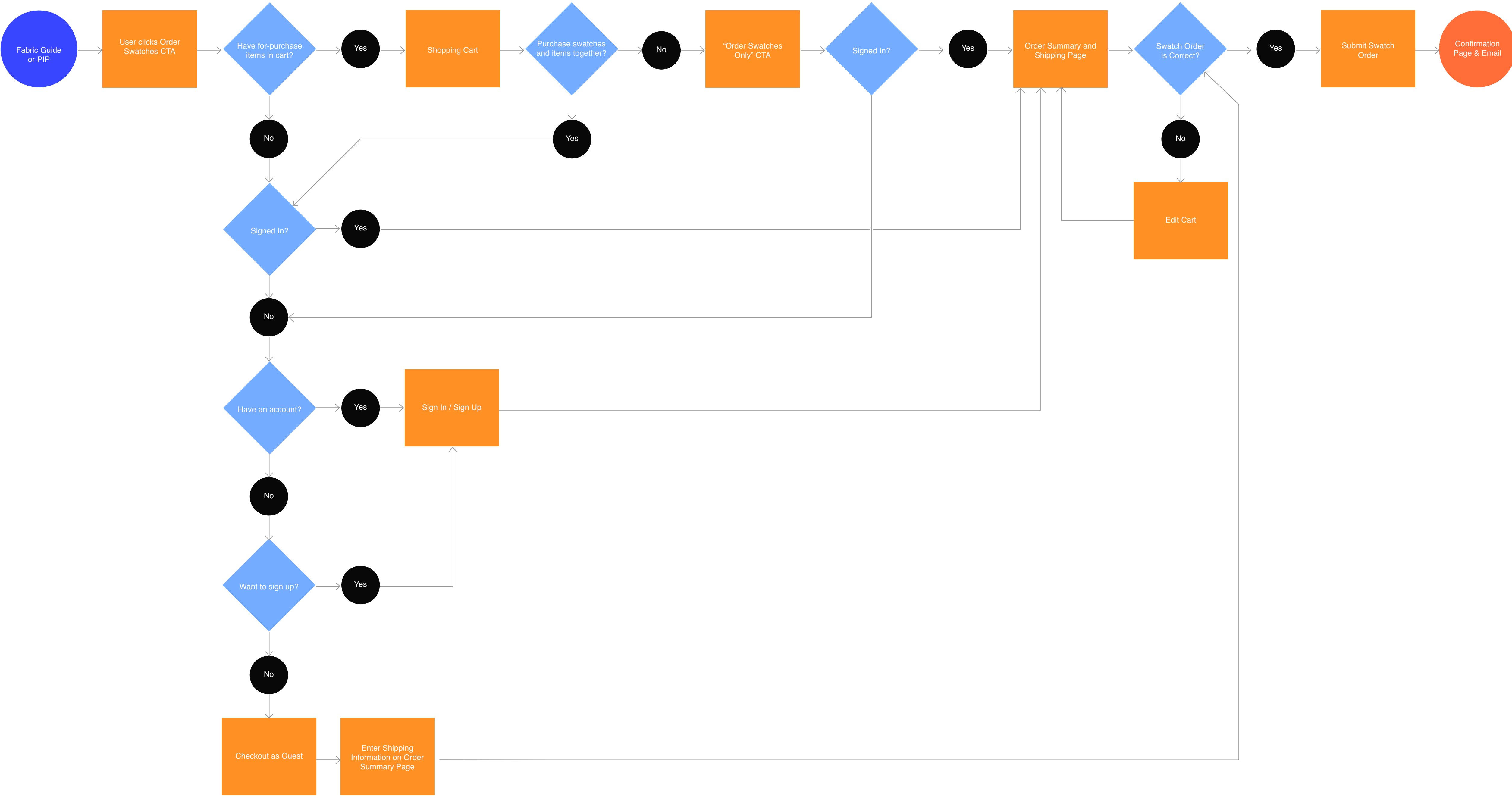
PayPal

By continuing with your purchase you agree to our [terms and conditions](#) and [privacy policy](#).

Checkout

Express Checkout

Our Shopping cart reflects each item's most recent price. Price and availability is subject to change.



Business Ask

User-Centered Redesign

Optimize Swatch Guide

1. Link to Design Crew for easier consultation as 64% users consult with someone before purchasing.
2. Implement filters as users suggested looking at 100+ swatches gets overwhelming.
3. List important information such as durability, grade, cleaning care.
4. 90% said a large swatch image is important
5. Customers did not connect with the circular-shaped swatches, so updated to square.

Link to prototype [here](#).

The Fabric Guide

We're making it easy to select the best fabric for your upholstery item. Peruse our fabrics below, order free swatches to try at home or [connect with our Design Crew](#).

Filter by: Color Filter, Fabric Type, Fabric Features

Textured Weave

With raised weaves and unique color variations, textured fabrics add dimension and character.

My Selected Swatches (0)

Please limit free swatches to 15.

Order F

Delivery takes 3-

Basket Slub, Chili

76% Polyester Grade D Pet Frie

This tight weave is richly textured an amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

Chenille Tweed, Rosette

Chenille Tweed, Slate

Chunky Basketweave, Charcoal

Heathered Tweed, Charcoal

Heathered Tweed, Charcoal

Heathered Tweed, Marine

Heathered Tweed, Marine

Chunky Basketweave, Charcoal

Heathered Tweed, Charcoal

Heathered Tweed, Charcoal

Shop best-selling sofas & sectionals →

west elm west elm kids west elm contract pottery barn

west elm

The Fabric Guide

We're making it easy to select the best fabric for your upholstery item. Peruse our fabrics below, order free swatches to try at home or connect with our Design Crew.

Filter by: Color, Fabric Type, Fabric Features

View Swatches as Grid

Name of Fabric Type

Fabric Type Description Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. [More](#)

Name of Fabric Type

Fabric Type Description Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. [More](#)

My Selected Swatches

Order

Design System Implementation

In 2021, Williams-Sonoma Inc. launched a brand new Design System across all brands. In addition to addressing business and user goals, another goal was implementing the new Design System using pre-defined classes (annotated)

The screenshot displays the West Elm website's 'The Fabric Guide' page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the West Elm logo, a search bar, and links for 'My Store', 'Empire Stores', and store hours. Below the navigation is a secondary menu with categories like 'design & values', 'free design services', 'tour this desert haven', 'new & notable', 'in stock & ready to ship', and 'friends & collaborators'. The main content area features a large image of various fabric textures. The title 'The Fabric Guide' is followed by a paragraph of introductory text. Below this is a filter section with 'Color Filter', 'Fabric Type', and 'Fabric Features' dropdowns. The main content is divided into two columns. The left column is titled 'Textured Weave' and contains a grid of fabric swatches, each with a name and color. The right column is titled 'My Selected Swatches (0)' and includes a message about the limit on free swatches, a 'Track Your Order' icon, and a delivery notice. At the bottom right, there is a detailed view of a selected fabric swatch, 'Basket Slub, Chili', with its material composition and a button to 'Order Switch'.

Up to 50% off new clearance styles → | Up to 40% off in-stock furniture → | Shop all warehouse deals →

west elm west elm kids west elm contract pottery barn pb apartment pottery barn kids pottery barn teen williams sonoma ws home rejuvenation mark & graham

My Store Empire Stores Opens today 10am - 8pm

Search

west elm

track order account favorites (3) cart (1)

design & values free design services tour this desert haven new & notable in stock & ready to ship friends & collaborators

FURNITURE OUTDOOR & GARDEN RUGS BEDDING BATH LIGHTING PILLOWS & DECOR WINDOW ART & MIRRORS KITCHEN & DINING STORAGE SALE KIDS

The Fabric Guide

We're making it easy to select the best fabric for your upholstery item. Peruse our fabrics below, order free swatches to try at home or [connect with our Design Crew](#).

Filter by Color Filter Fabric Type Fabric Features

Textured Weave

With raised weaves and unique color variations, textured fabrics add dimension and character.

Basket Slub, Blue Stone | Basket Slub, Dark Horseradish | Basket Slub, Chili | Basket Slub, Midnight | Basket Slub, Midnight

Chenille Tweed, Rosette | Chenille Tweed, Slate | Chunky Basketweave, Charcoal | Heathered Tweed, Charcoal | Heathered Tweed, Charcoal

My Selected Swatches (0)

Please limit free swatches to 15.

Your swatch basket is empty. View and add swatches to your basket to place your free swatches.

Order Free Swatches

Track Your Order | Delivery takes 3-5 business days on average.

Basket Slub, Chili

76% Polyester | Grade D | Pet Friendly

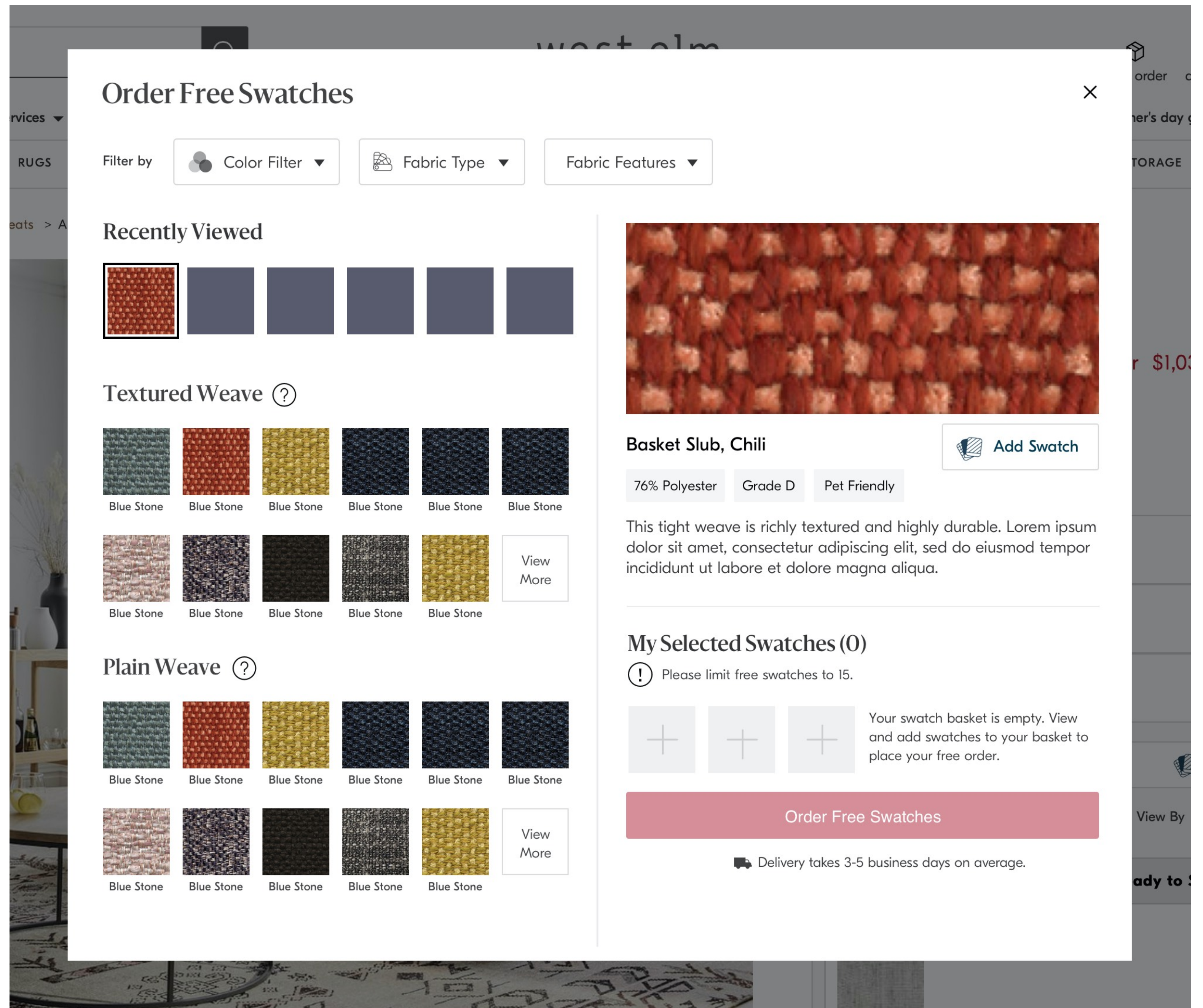
This tight weave is richly textured and highly durable. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore

Business Ask

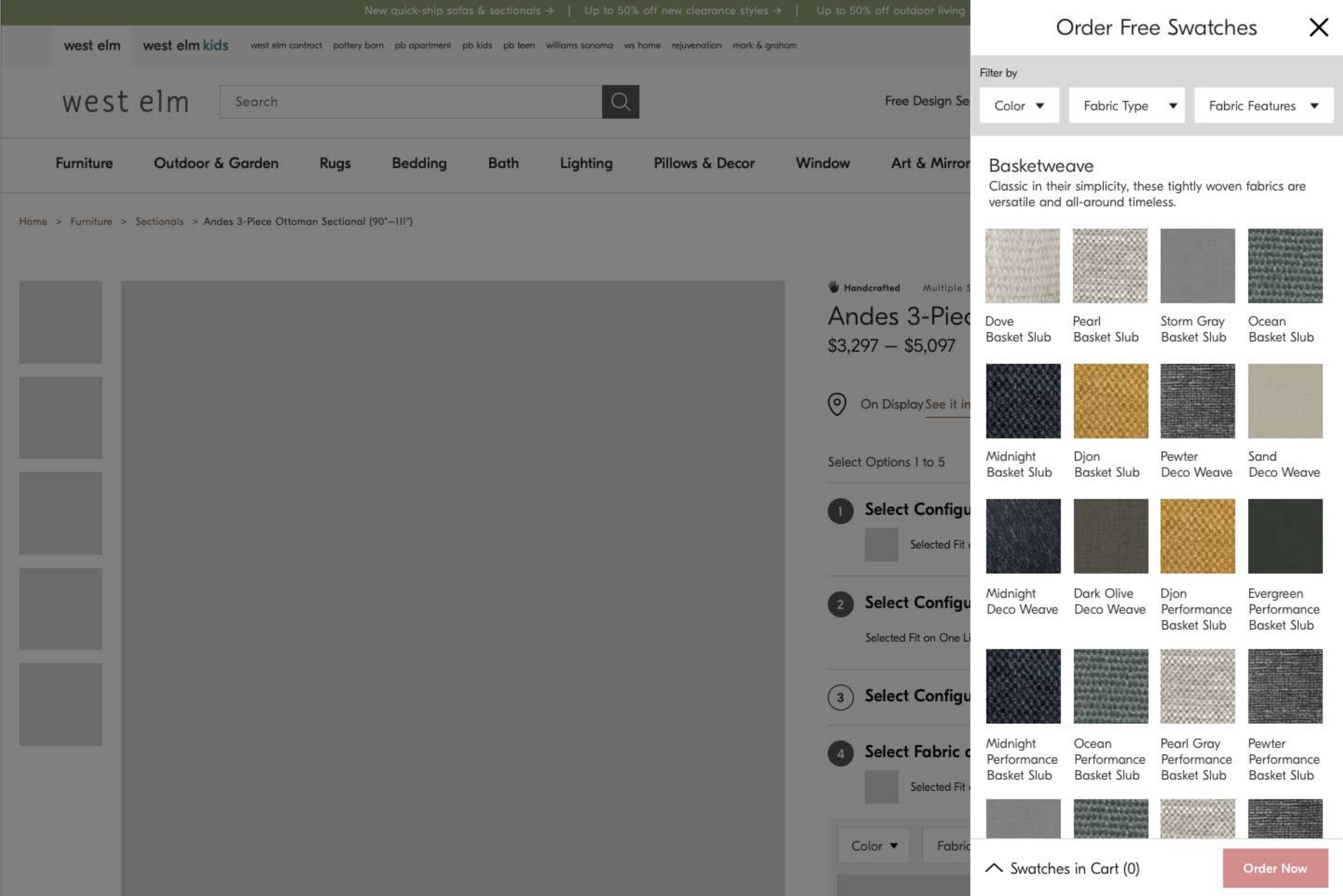
User-Centered Redesign

Optimize Swatch Ordering from PDP

I was able to leverage the same template and features from the Swatch Guide for the PDP modal.



Roadblock and Pivot



In the midst of this project, we are also moving to a new, responsive platform. After initial concepts and wireframes, I learned that we will be sunsetting the modal on this new platform because of LOE.

How can we still give users the opportunity to order swatches directly on the PDP?

Since our site utilized a flyout modal on other areas of the site, repurposing this modal proved to be a lower LOE.

Next Steps

Introducing New Features

1. Follow up with customers that have ordered swatches through various marketing and communication channels.

- E.g. Follow-up email with available products in these fabrics.
- This will increase conversion and reduce time from swatch order to purchase.

2. Display available products upon selecting a swatch on the Swatch Guide.

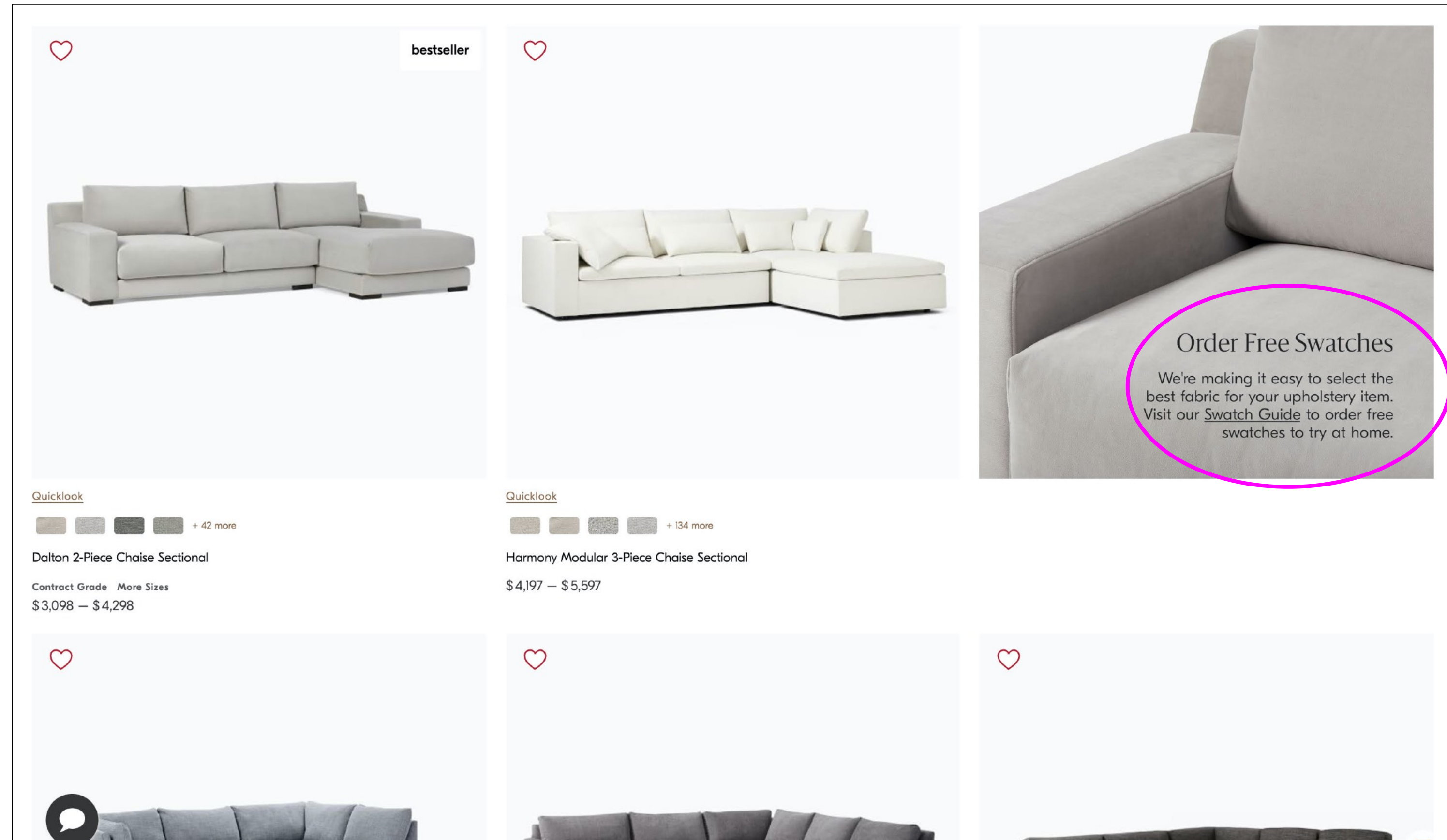
3. Increase overall discoverability of Swatch Guide.

- Users describe difficulty in finding the Swatch Guide. Consider adding to primary navigation, or link from a content block on Product Listing Page (*right*).

4. Incorporate wood, leather and rug swatch ordering using a tabbed approach.

5. Allow users to order Swatch Kits, a pack of pre-selected swatches based on palettes or fabric family.

6. Be more descriptive in how fabric *feels*, rather than looks. E.g. soft, scratchy, fuzzy.

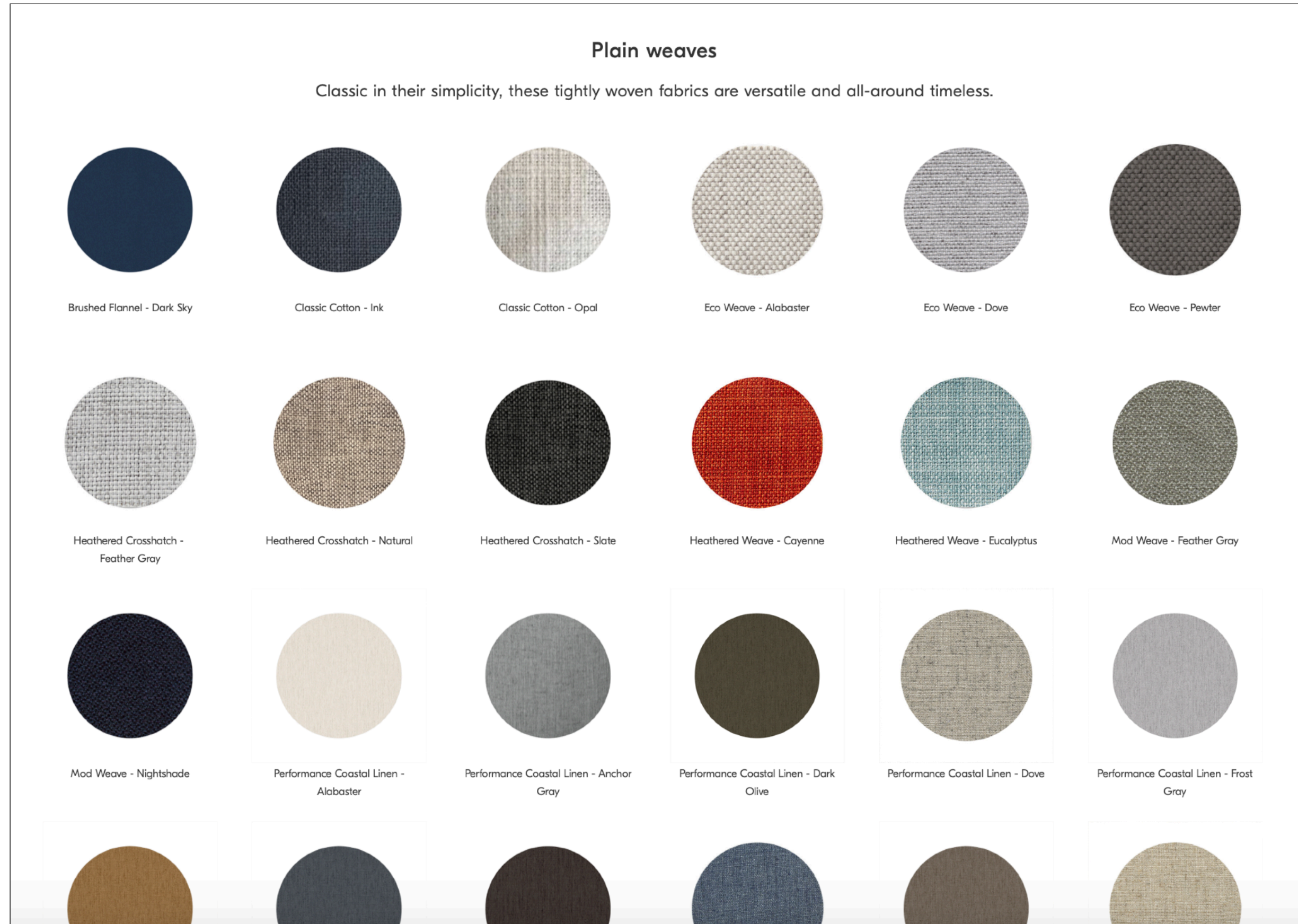


Appendix

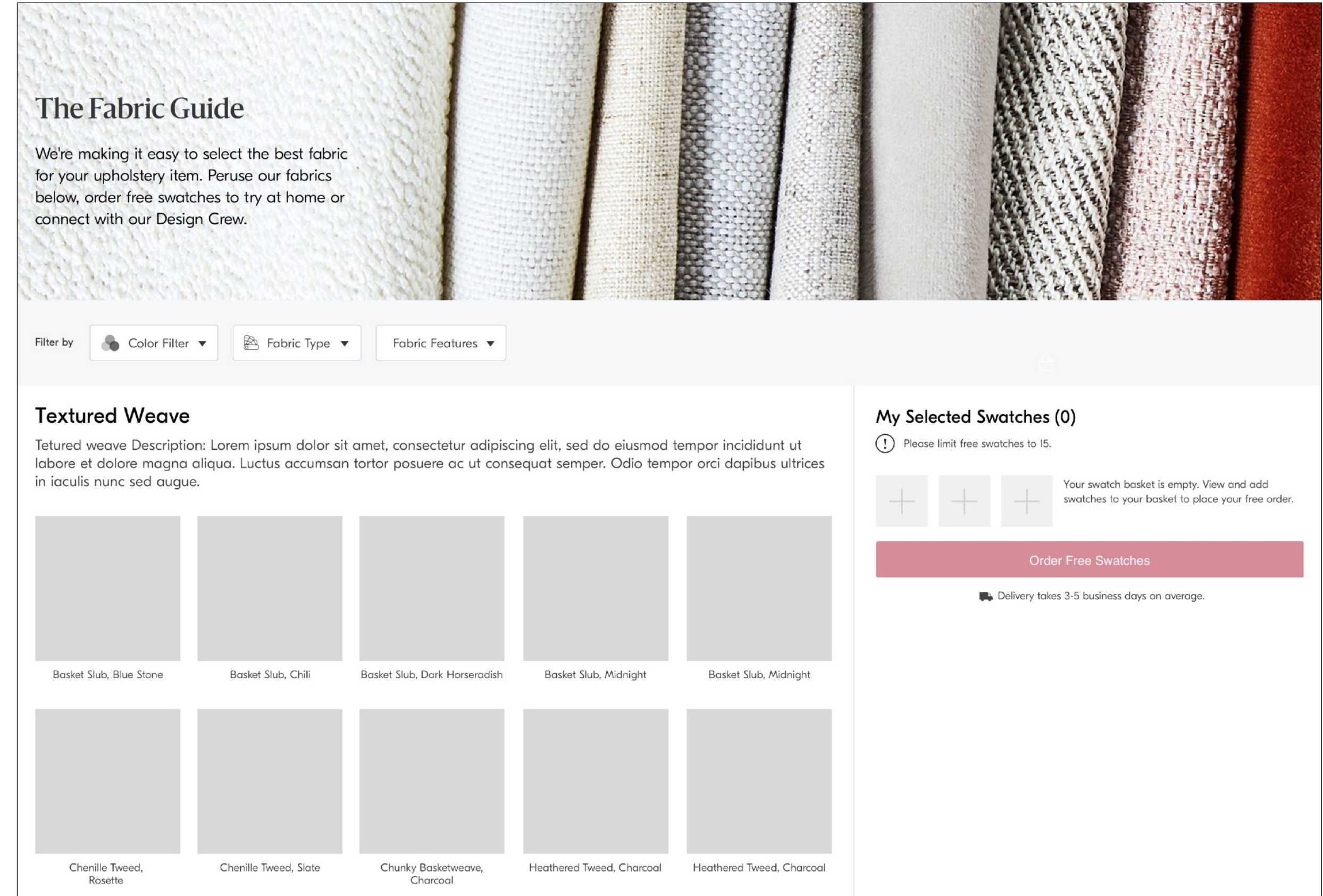
Swatch Ordering Competitive Audit Matrix

	West Elm	Interior Define	Restoration Hardware	Joybird (Swatch Kits only)	All Modern	Maiden Home
Direct order on PDP	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Filtering Capabilities	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Order Tracking	No	No	No	No	No	No
Fabric Descriptions	Minimal	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No

Swatch Guide Landing Page



Before



After

Swatch Ordering on PDP

Order Free Swatches (Select Up To 15)

Your swatches should arrive in 3-7 business days.

Swatches Available For This Item Check boxes to select

Chenille Tweed, Dove	Chenille Tweed, Sand	Chenille Tweed, Iron Gate	Chenille Tweed, Pewter	Chenille Tweed, Frost Gray
Chenille Tweed, Silver	Chenille Tweed, Silver	Chenille Tweed, Silver	Chenille Tweed, Slate	Chenille Tweed, Midnight
Chenille Tweed, Camel	Chenille Tweed, Mauve	Twill, Dove	Twill, Alabaster	Twill, Gravel
Twill, Silver	Twill, Granite	Twill, Frost Gray	Twill, Pewter	Twill, Midnight

[Email Options](#)

Shipping Information

Full Name

Address 1

Address 2

City

State*

Zip Code*

Phone *

Email*

Before

Order Free Swatches

Filter by

Velvet

Subtle shine, rich color and plush texture define our velvet fabrics.

Burnt Umber Distressed Velvet	Camel Distressed Velvet	Dune Distressed Velvet	Frost Gray Distressed Velvet
Ink Blue Distressed Velvet	Mauve Distressed Velvet	Midnight Distressed Velvet	Mineral Gray Distressed Velvet
Pewter Distressed Velvet	Sand Distressed Velvet	Camel Performance Velvet	Dark Olive Performance Velvet
Dijon Performance Velvet	Frost Gray Performance Velvet	Ink Blue Performance Velvet	Mauve Performance Velvet
Dark Blue Performance Velvet	Dark Gray Performance Velvet	Light Gray Performance Velvet	Medium Gray Performance Velvet

After - Live