

Website Analysis: Pexels vs. Unsplash

OVERVIEW

This week, I am completing a website analysis exercise. I chose two competing websites to compare based on their interfaces and how I experience them. To complete my analyses, I will be seeking to understand my emotional response to multiple aspects and features of these sites. I will assess my emotional response by formulating sentences using this format:

- ◆ _____ **makes me FEEL** _____ **because my NEED for** _____ **is OR is not being met.**

To further assist me in completing my FEEL-NEED sentences, I will utilize a [feelings inventory list](#) and a [needs inventory list](#).

While completing my analyses, I will review the following:

- The overall functionality and practicality of the website, also known as the User Experience (UX).
- The look and feel of the website, known as the User Interface (UI).

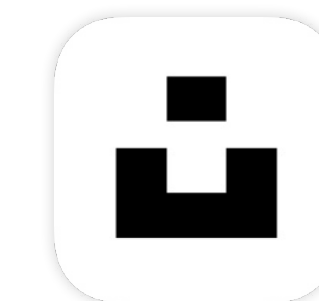
These two things often overlap. They affect how a user views and experiences a product, service, app, or website and impact the user's emotional response.

PEXELS & UNSPLASH

Two websites I visit often are [Pexels](#) and [Unsplash](#). Both of these websites are resources for free stock imagery. Photographers and artists can upload their work to both sites, which creates a profile for them, showcasing their work and helping them generate a following. Meanwhile, users can search for completely free, high-resolution imagery to download instantly and incorporate into their projects, including commercial ones. As a graphic designer, I frequent both of these sites. However, I have yet to determine whether I favor one over the other.



PEXELS



Unsplash

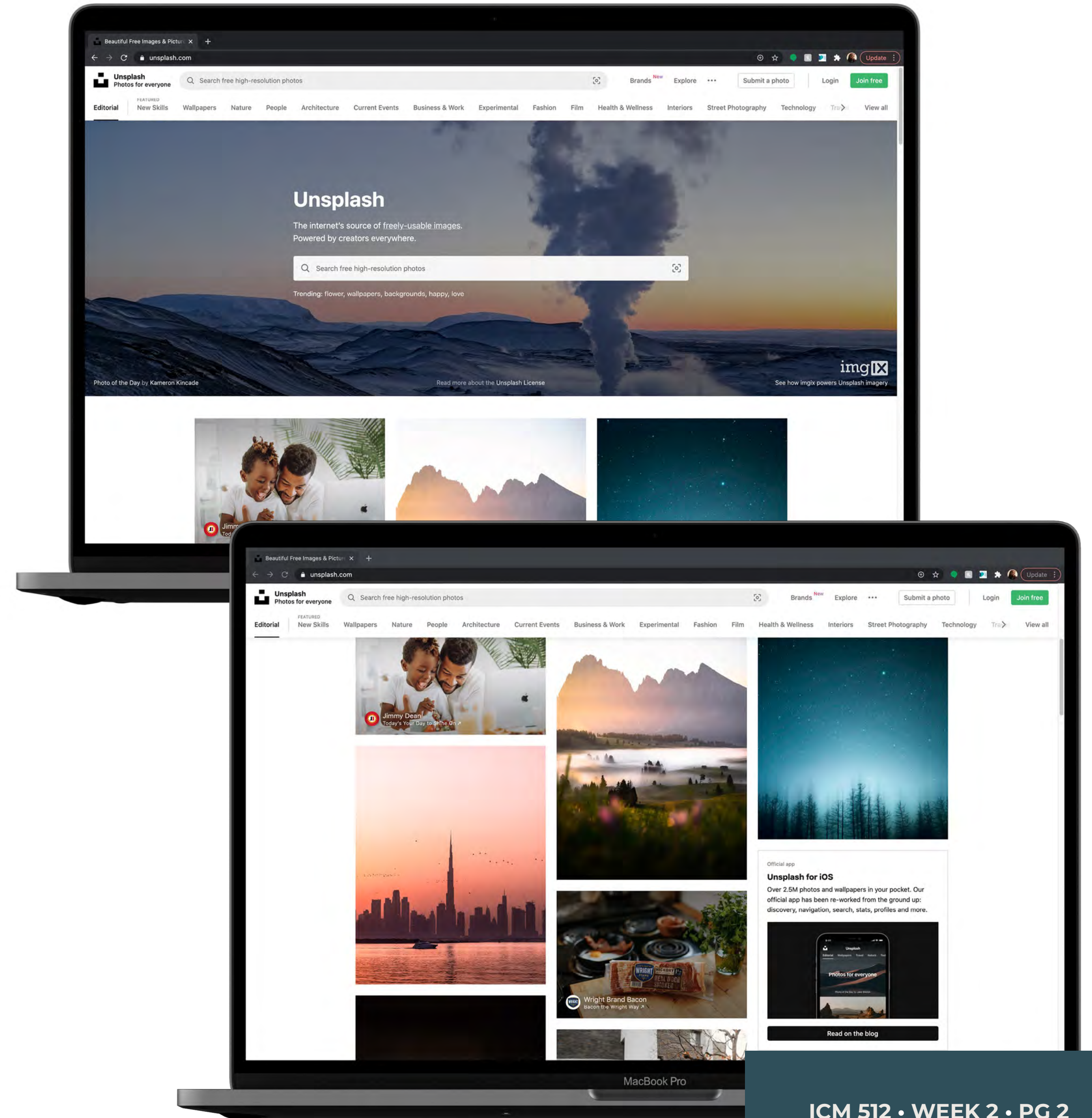


Unsplash User Experience

HOME PAGE

- ◆ **Unsplash's home page makes me feel prepared and optimistic because my needs for choice and spontaneity are met.**

Unsplash's homepage uses a three-column layout with a continuous scroll, housed underneath a full-width search bar. When I arrive on this homepage, I typically have an end goal in mind. Unsplash's homepage makes me feel prepared, helping me quickly access the search bar and find what I am looking for. It also provides a glimpse of the stock imagery available on the page, indicating that there is room for me to make a decision about the imagery I want. Therefore, I feel optimistic that I will be able to find what I am seeking.



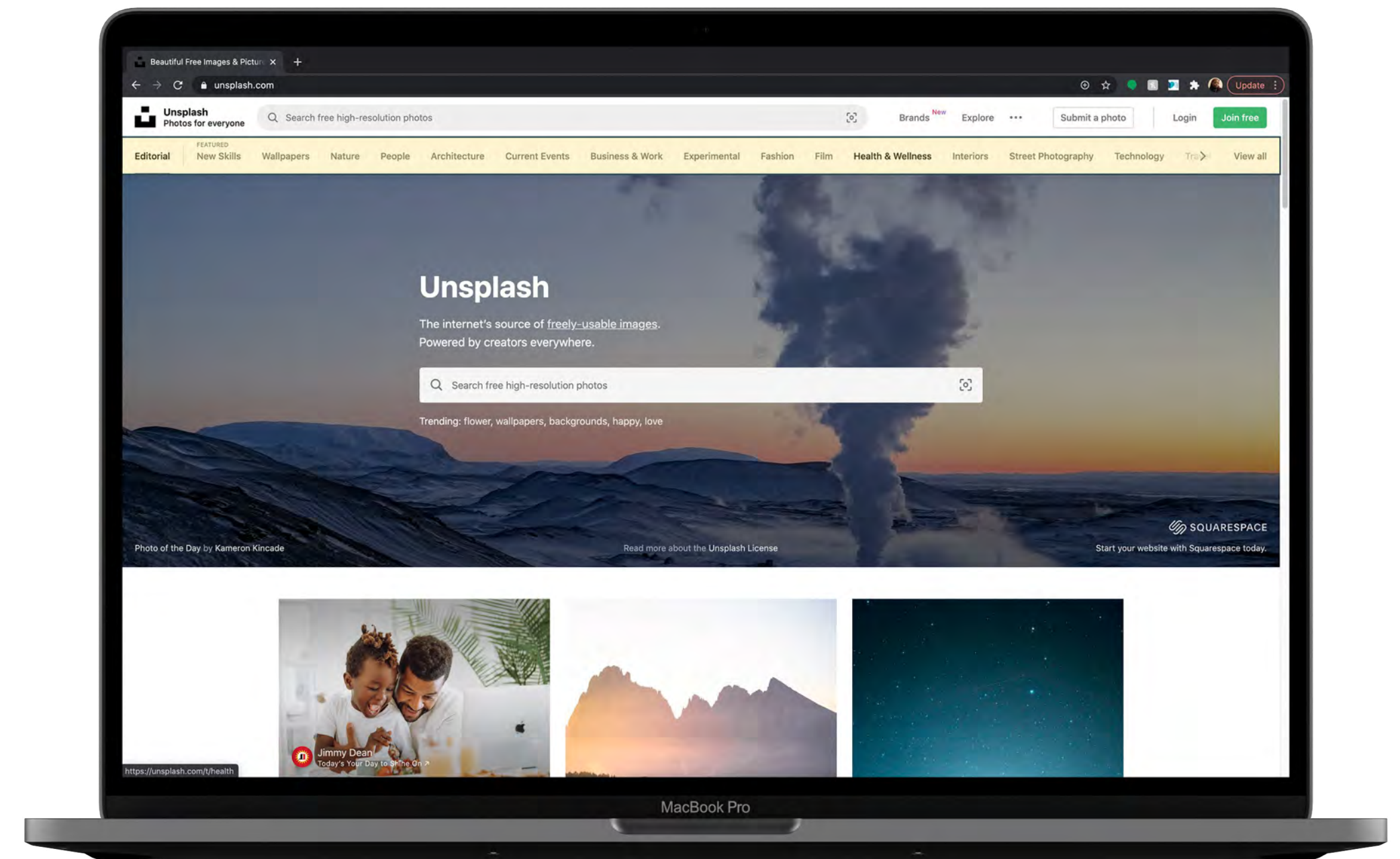


Unsplash User Experience

NAVIGATION

- ◆ The navigation makes me feel overwhelmed because my need for flow and simplicity is not met.
- ◆ Alternatively, the navigation makes me feel inspired because my need for discovery is met.

Interestingly, the navigation bar gives me a sense of duality. On one side, it makes me feel overwhelmed due to the lack of simplicity and minimal links. On the other hand, I feel a bit inspired because I know the site offers features that will allow me to explore and discover when I may not be certain about the kind of imagery I am seeking. Therefore, I have a love-hate relationship with Unsplash's navigation bar.



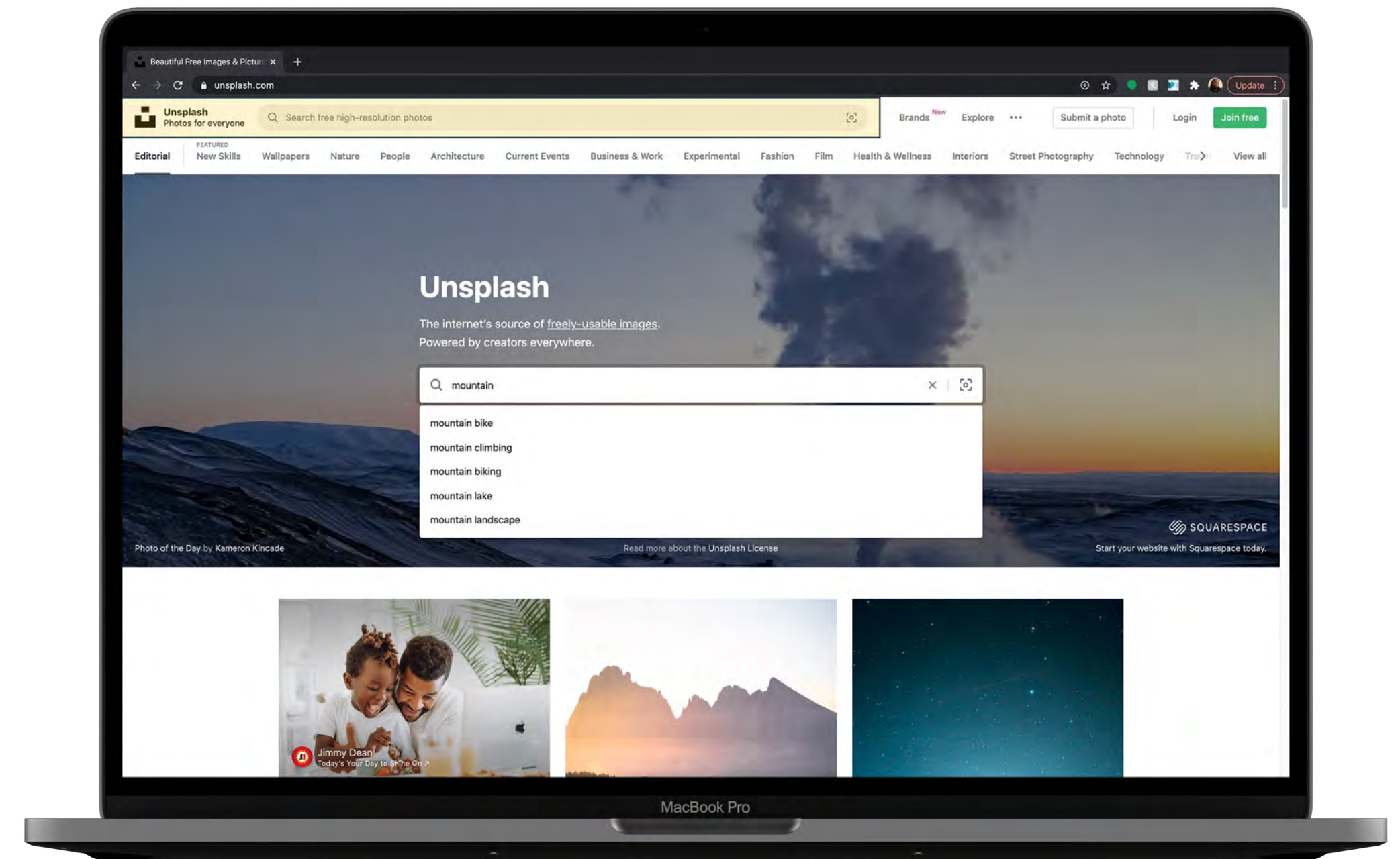


Unsplash User Experience

SEARCH BAR

- ◆ **Unsplash's search bar makes me feel intent because my need for competence is met.**

The search bar is the first thing you see on Unsplash's homepage. This makes it easy for me to find what I am seeking because there are no extra steps to search the site's imagery. The search bar gets straight to the point. You can use the search engine directly on the page or in the top bar. Either way, your search will formulate just enough results and, while typing, there are minimal additional results for features that pop up, limiting distraction.



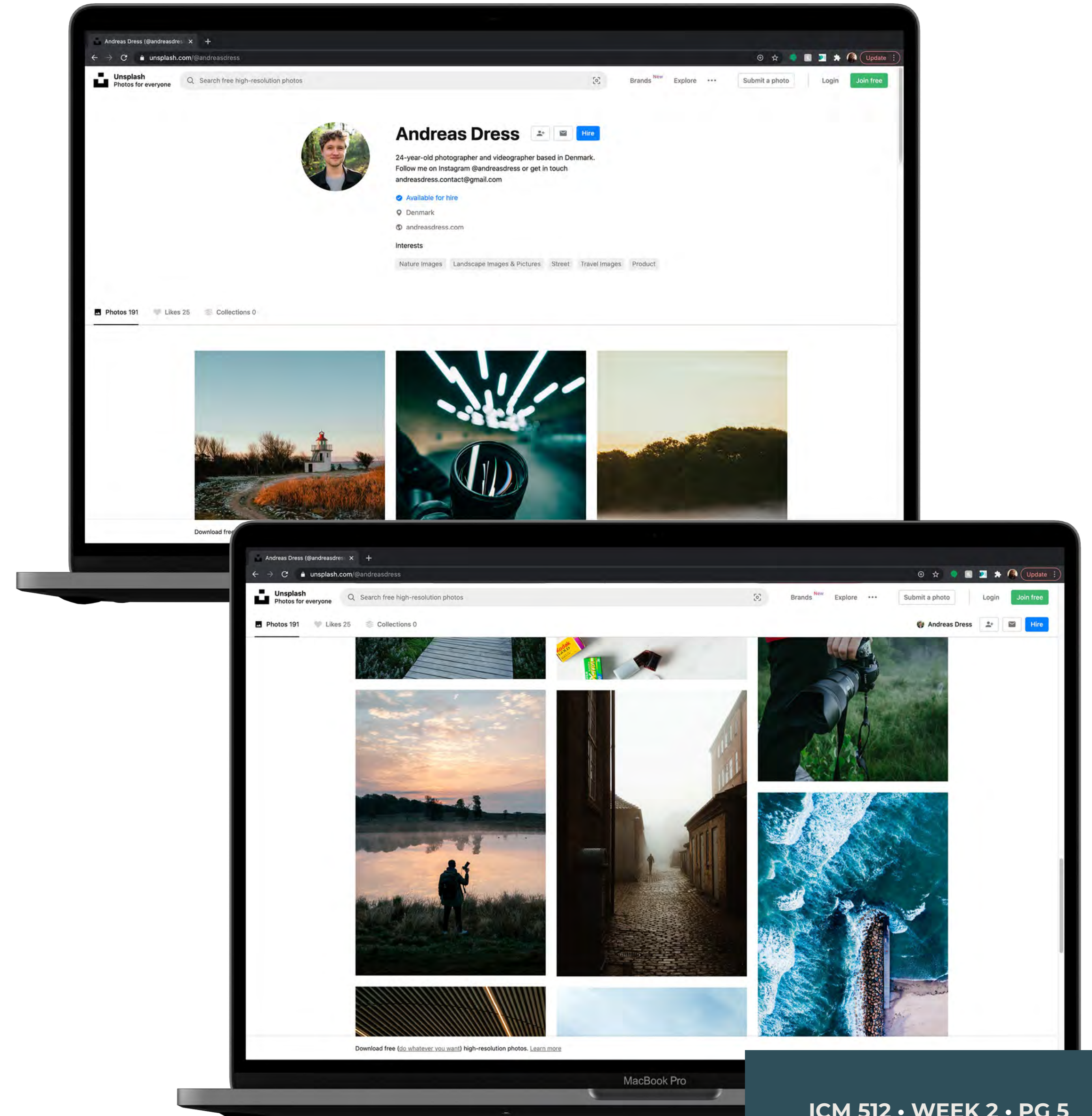


Unsplash User Experience

ARTIST PROFILE

- ◆ The artist profile page makes me feel clear-headed because my need for order is met.

This page is very clear and structured. Although I am viewing a specific photographer's profile, Unsplash maintains balance by leaving room for space and keeping things within their grid. This helps me maintain order and not get too lost on the site, even when viewing a customized profile.



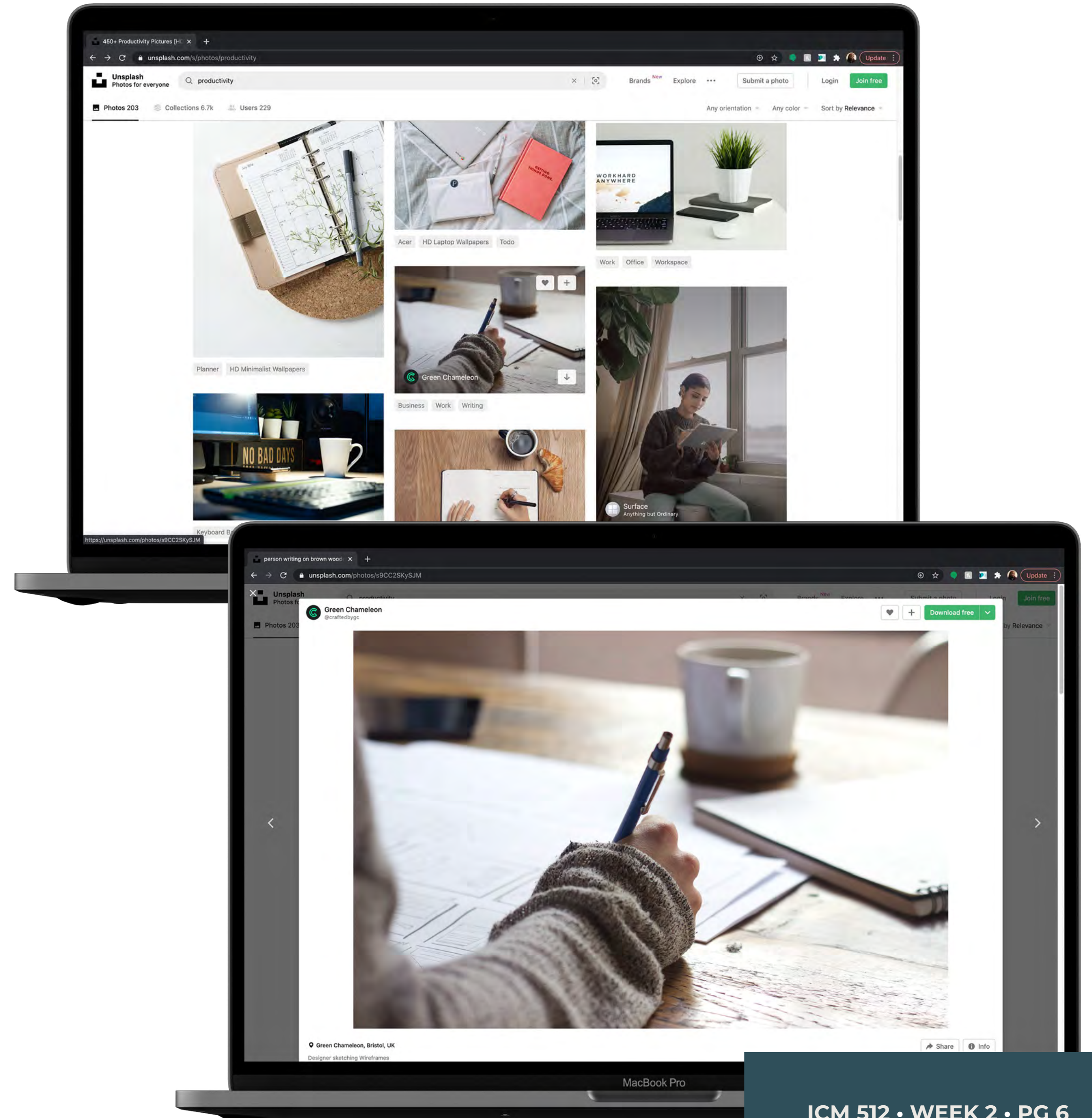


Unsplash User Experience

BASIC FUNCTIONS

- ◆ Unsplash's basic downloading functions make me feel productive because my needs for accessibility and speed are met.

I appreciate that Unsplash allows me to download an image quickly, by either hovering over it or clicking on it directly. There are multiple ways to download files directly without having to take too many steps in between, making downloading easily accessible. This keeps me focused while seeking imagery for an in-progress design project.



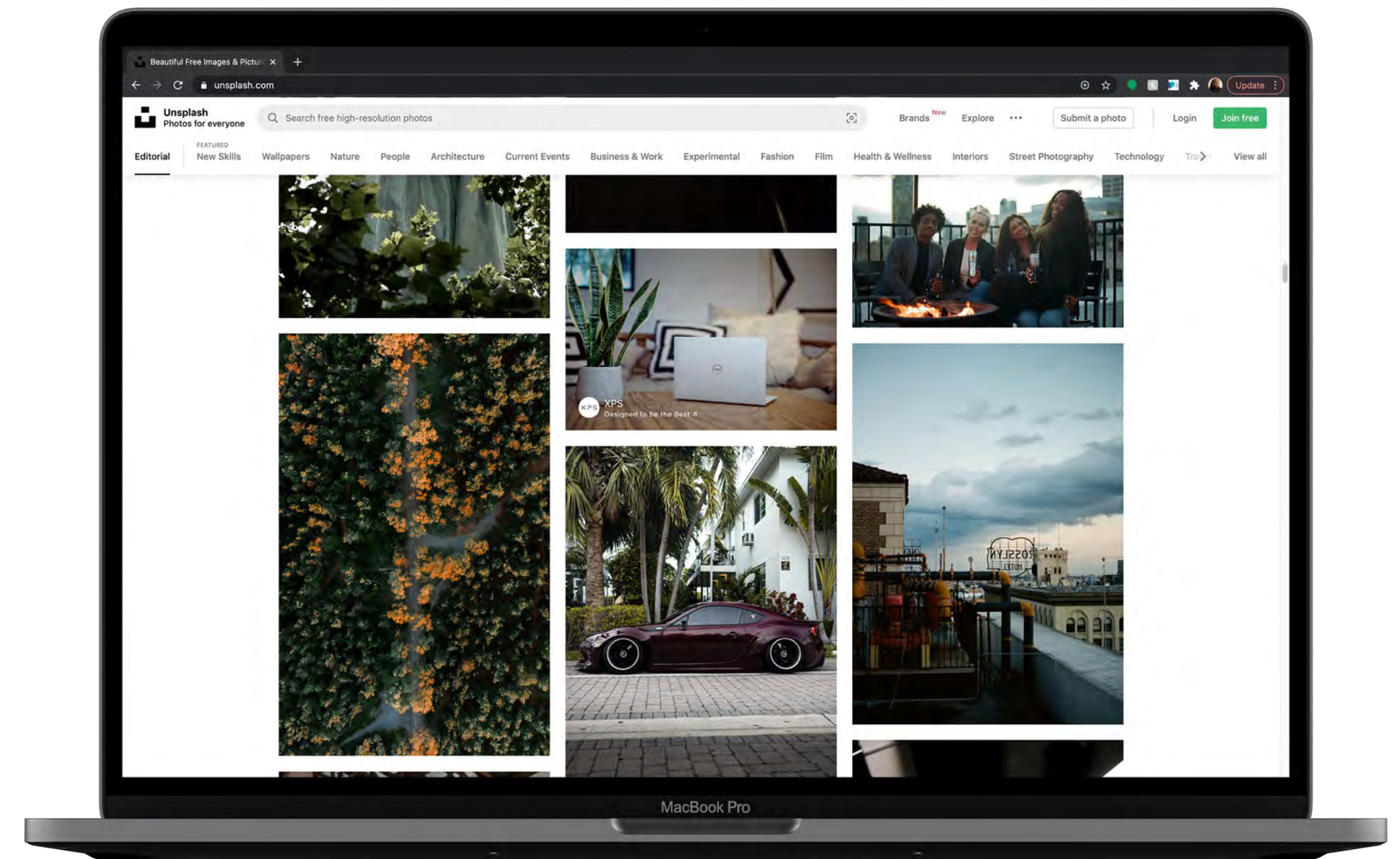


Unsplash User Interface

LAYOUT

- ◆ **The layout makes me feel organized because my need for efficiency is met.**

Unsplash uses three columns in the page layout. This leaves room on both sides of each page for whitespace. Comparable to the site's homepage and artist profiles, this helps me maintain balance and structure, as I am not engulfed in a sea of imagery. As a result of Unsplash's layout and clear delivery, I am more efficient in my image-seeking process.



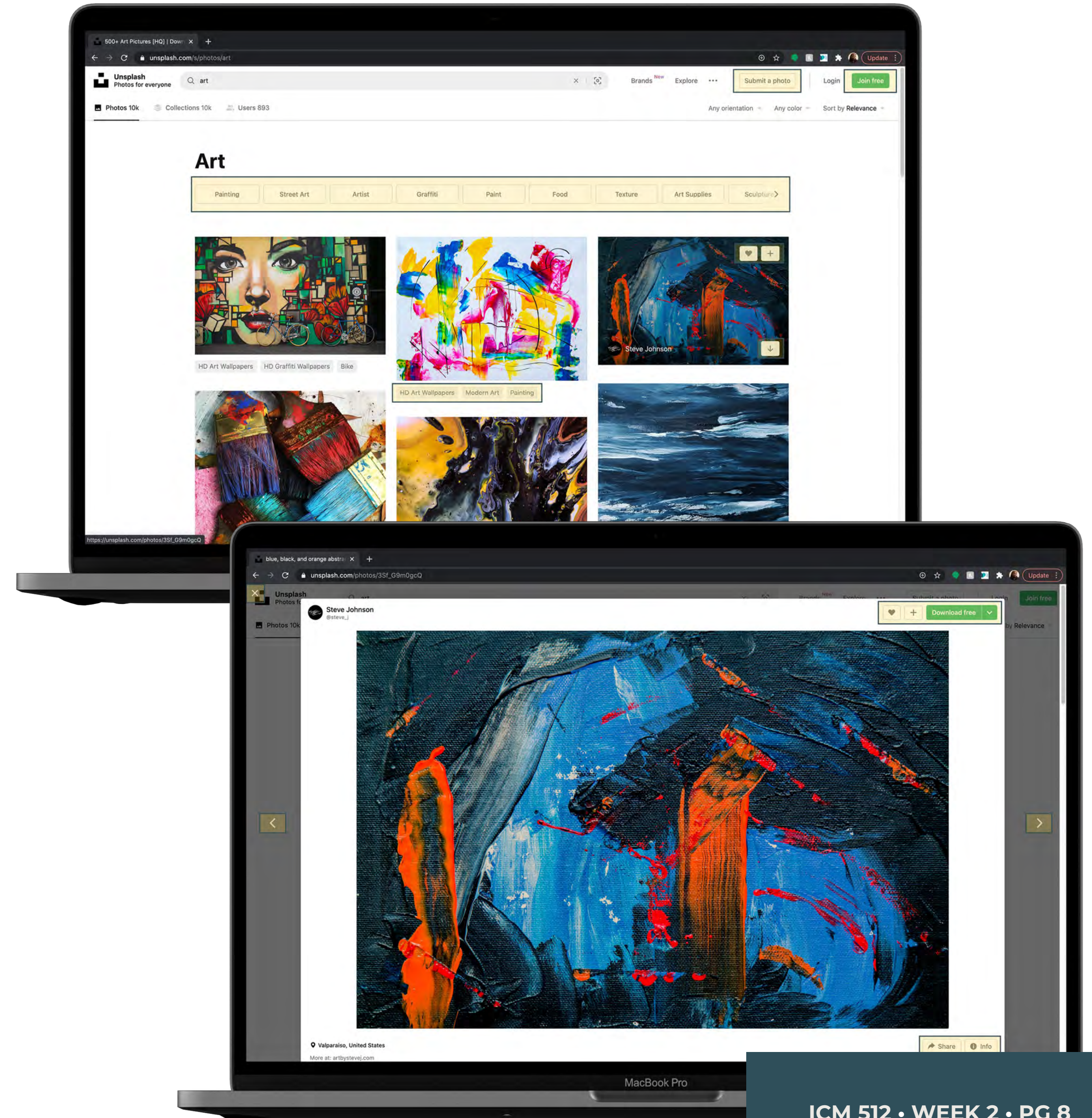


Unsplash User Interface

BUTTONS

- ◆ **Unsplash's buttons** make me feel **empowered** because my need for **practicality** is met.

The buttons on Unsplash are probably the most distinct part of the page. Many of them are bold, rounded rectangles, which are easy to locate. The most important buttons that a user is likely to look for are highlighted in green. The style of the buttons helps me accomplish exactly what I came to the site for.



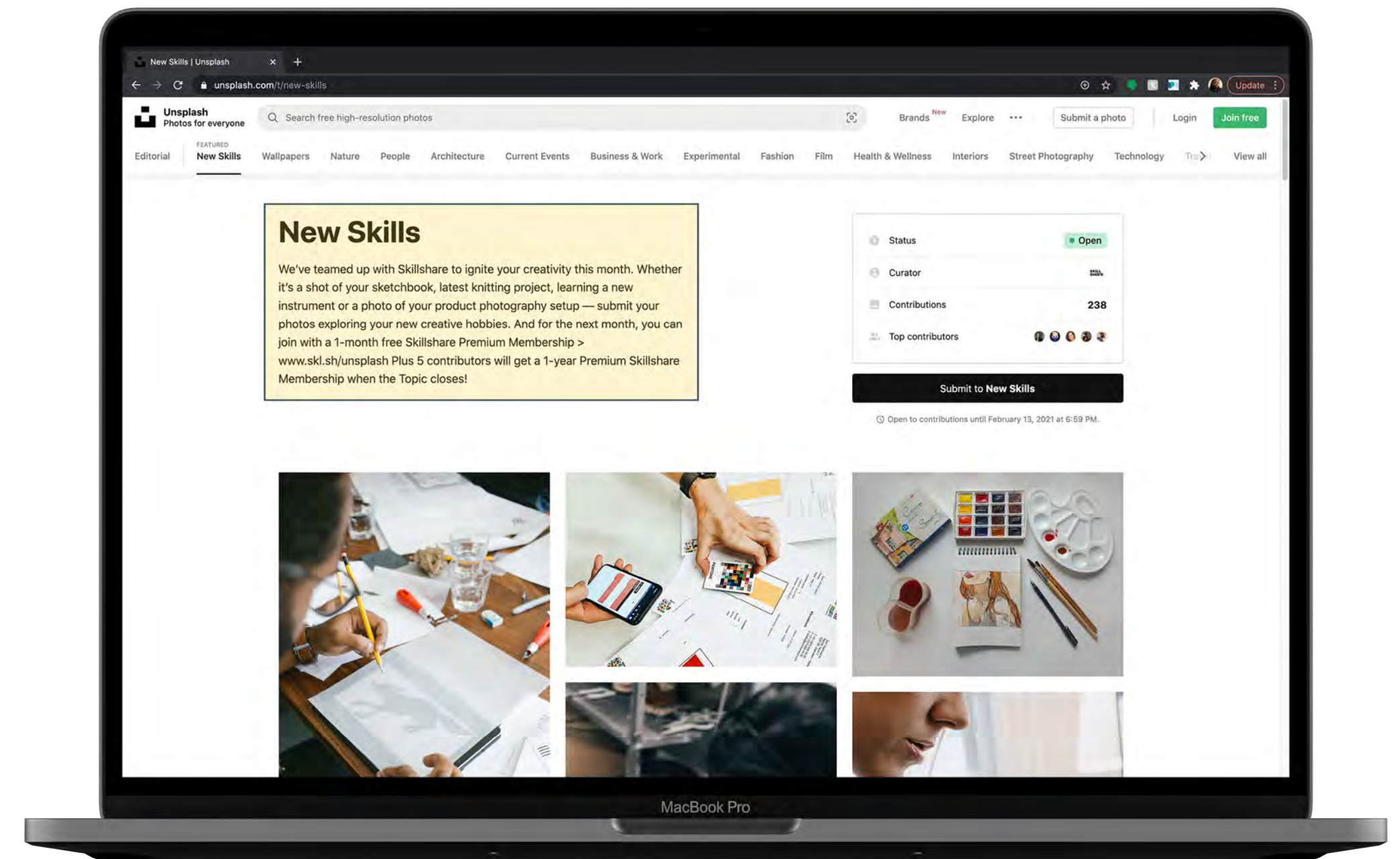


Unsplash User Interface

TYPEFACE

- ◆ The typeface makes me feel comfortable because my needs for simplicity and are met.

Unsplash's typeface reminds me of many other online, sans-serif typefaces I encounter on a regular basis. It resembles the typefaces utilized on various social media platforms and commonly used websites. It blends into the rest of the typefaces I encounter regularly, therefore, I feel at home when I am on Unsplash's site. When viewing type, I don't have to put in any extra effort to read because I am familiar with the typeface Unsplash uses.



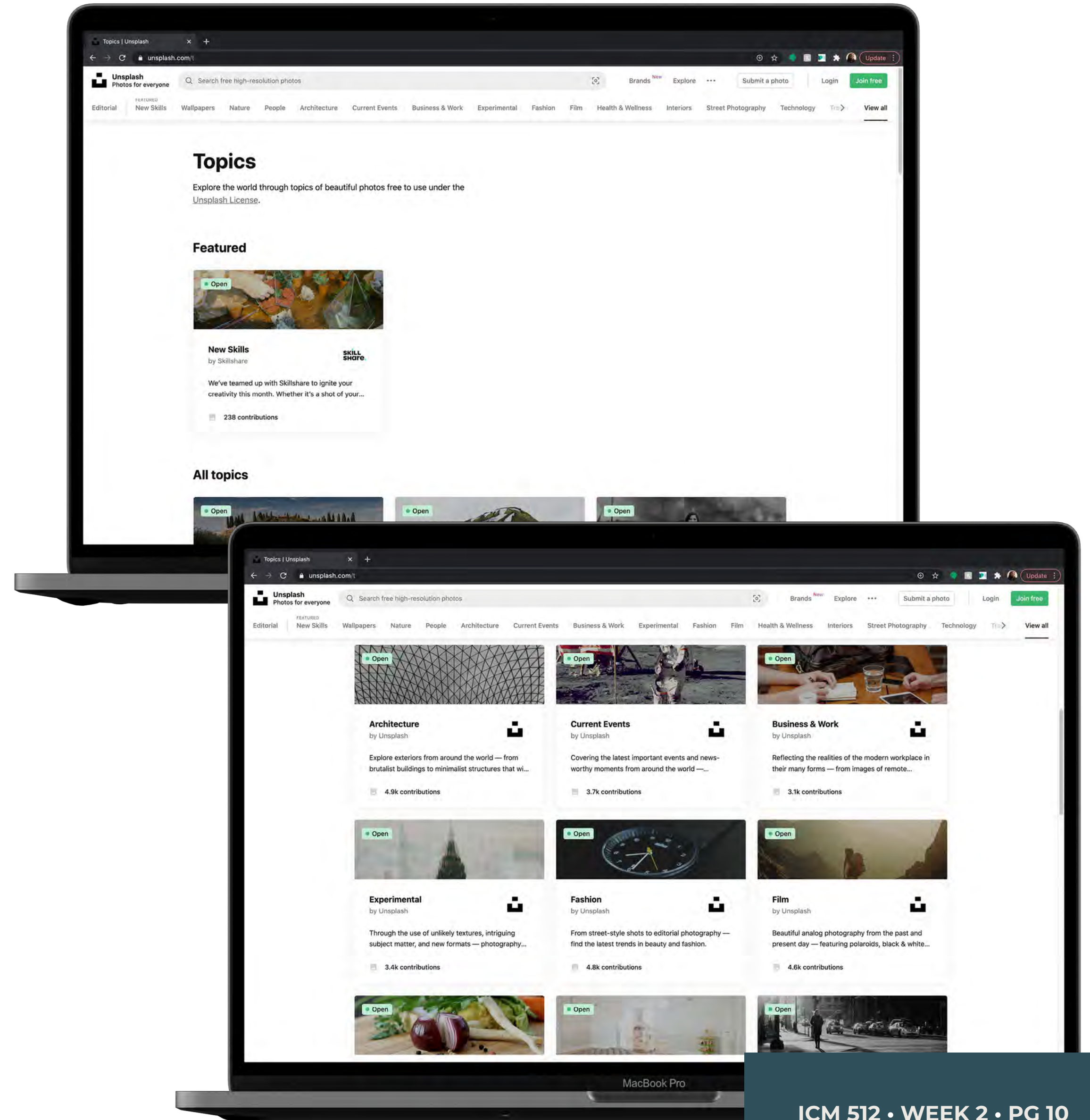


Unsplash User Interface

ADDITIONAL AESTHETIC CHOICES: TOPICS

- ◆ **Unsplash's topics** make me feel **motivated** because my need for **exploration** is met.

Although I rarely visit this site with the intention of taking time to explore all the site has to offer, Unsplash has various topics that users can access to “explore the world through... beautiful photos.” Whenever I need an environment that fosters exploration, I know exactly where to go on Unsplash's site. This part of the website inspires me, motivates me, and encourages me.



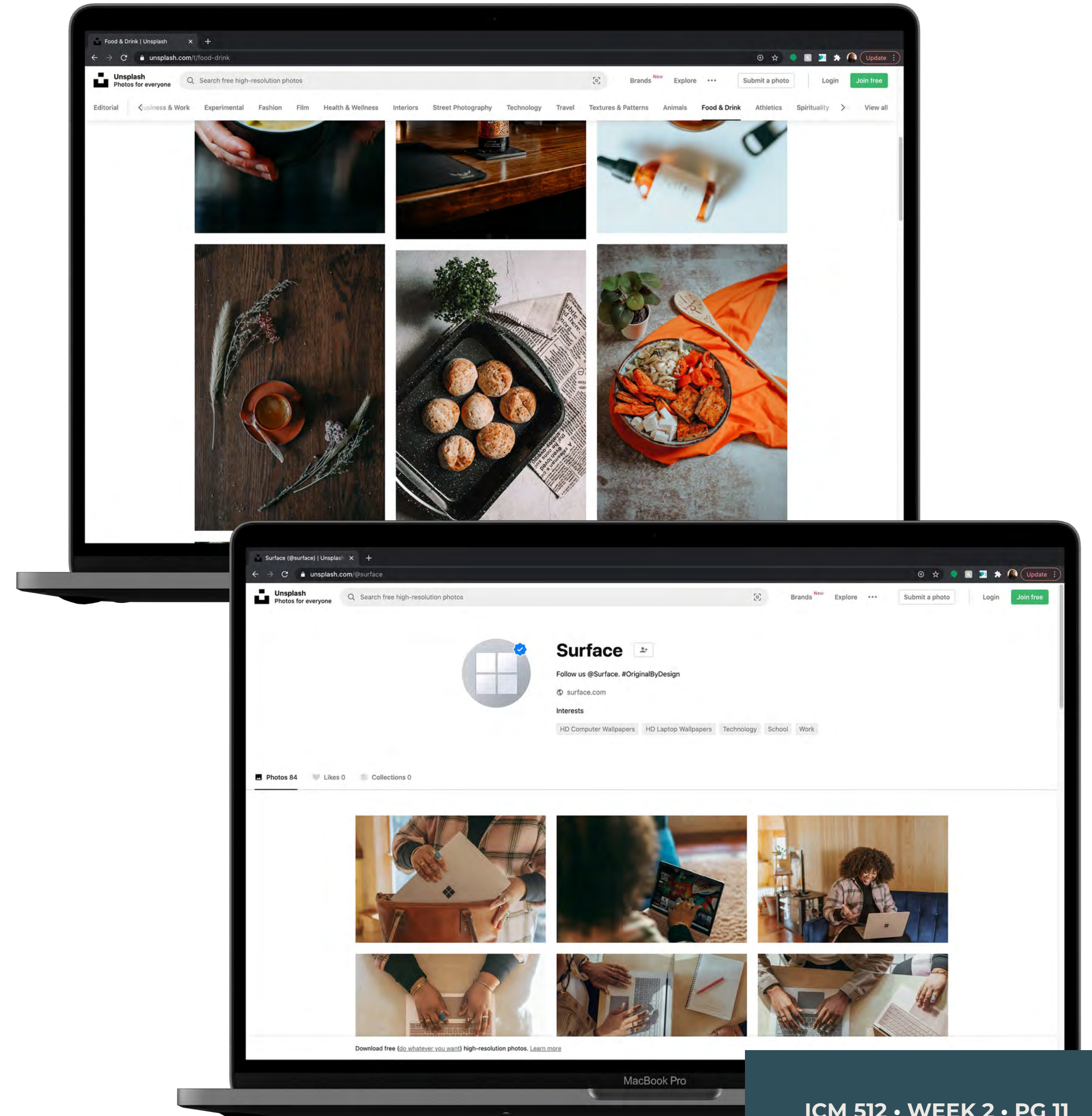


Unsplash User Interface

ADDITIONAL AESTHETIC CHOICES: WHITESPACE

- ◆ The whitespace makes me feel calm and centered because my needs for order and balance are met.

Though mentioned earlier, I really benefit from the whitespace on Unsplash, as it keeps me organized, focused, and balanced. The website uses mostly light colors all-around, which drives me straight to the images. Flooding the site with photos and color would likely distract me and shift my attention elsewhere. Navigating the site is easy and calming and centering for me because the whitespace keeps everything in its place.



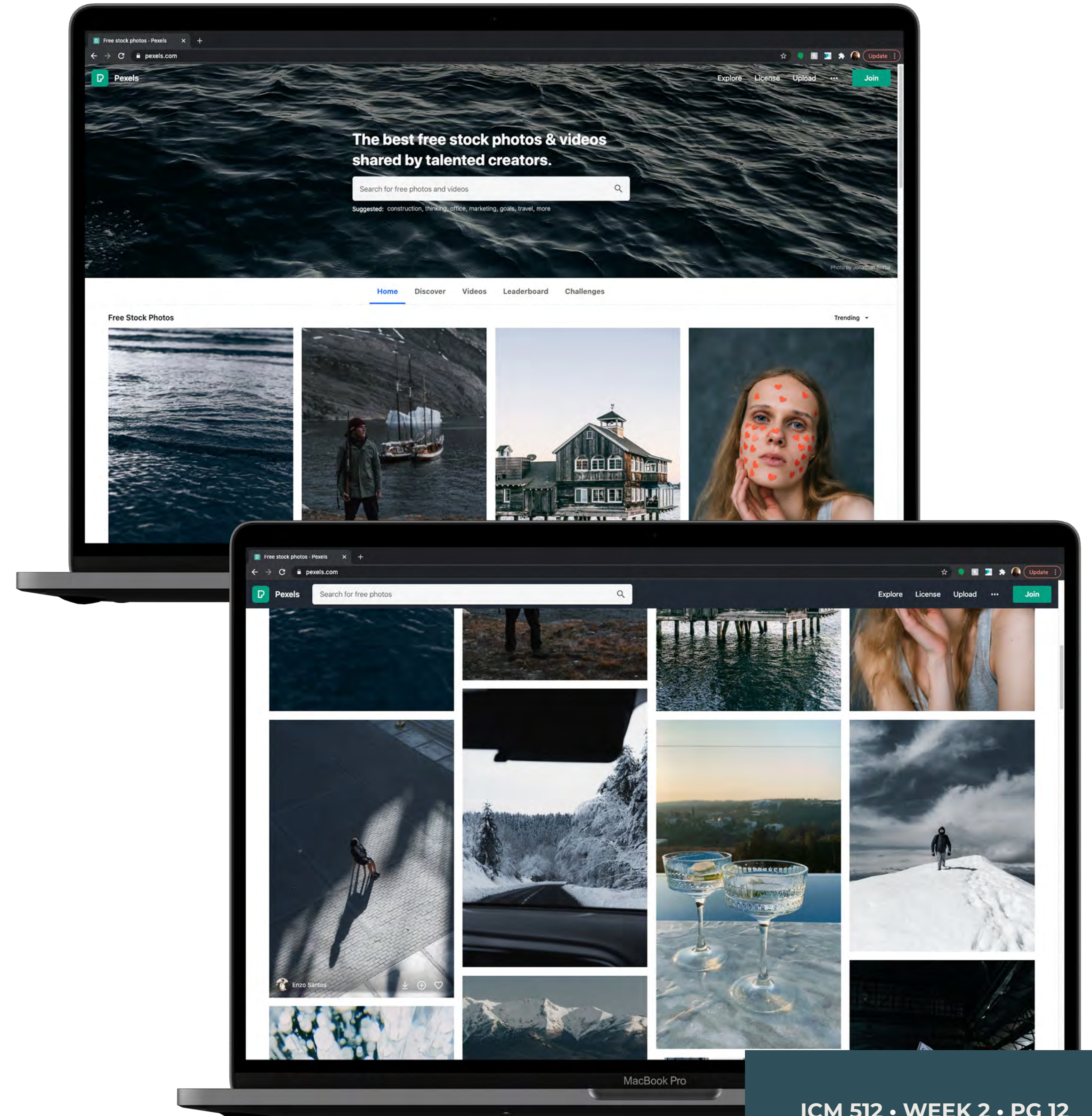


Pexels User Experience

HOME PAGE

- ◆ **Pexels' home page makes me feel inspired and intrigued because my needs for artistry and expression are met.**

I absolutely love Pexels' homepage, especially if I have time on my hands to explore the work on the site. When I go to the Pexels site, I automatically feel inspired and intrigued because the images and videos on the homepage captivate me instantly. Although this homepage is very similar to Unsplash's with a top search bar, columned layout, and continuous scroll, there are slight differences between the two, therefore both homepages evoke varying emotions.



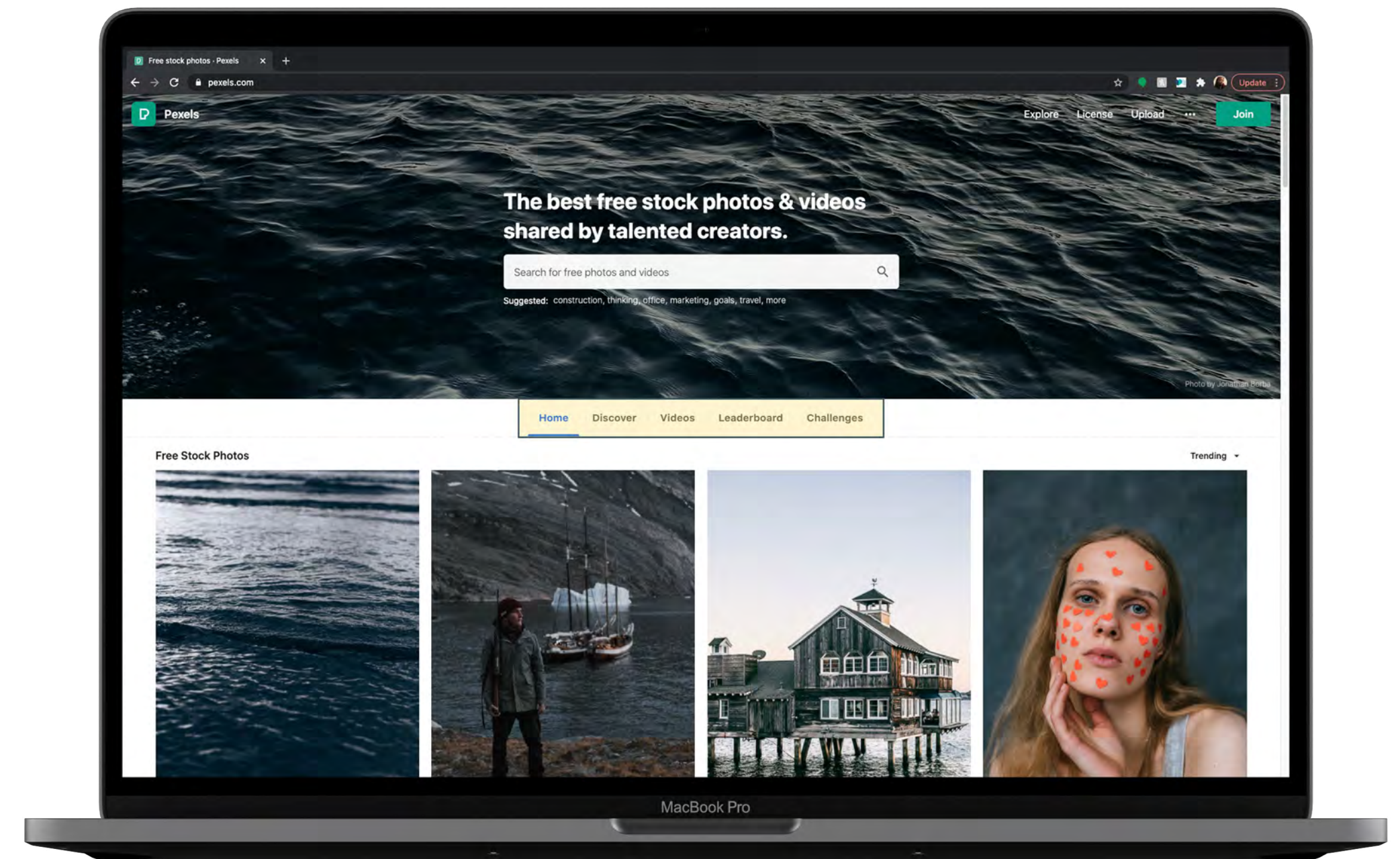


Pexels User Experience

NAVIGATION

- ◆ The navigation makes me feel content because my needs for ease and simplicity are met.

Pexels' navigation bar is simple, much simpler than Unsplash's. There are only five main pages to navigate through, and the bar is housed below the search bar instead of above. I am content with Pexels' navigation bar because it is not overwhelming. It's straightforward and easy to use.



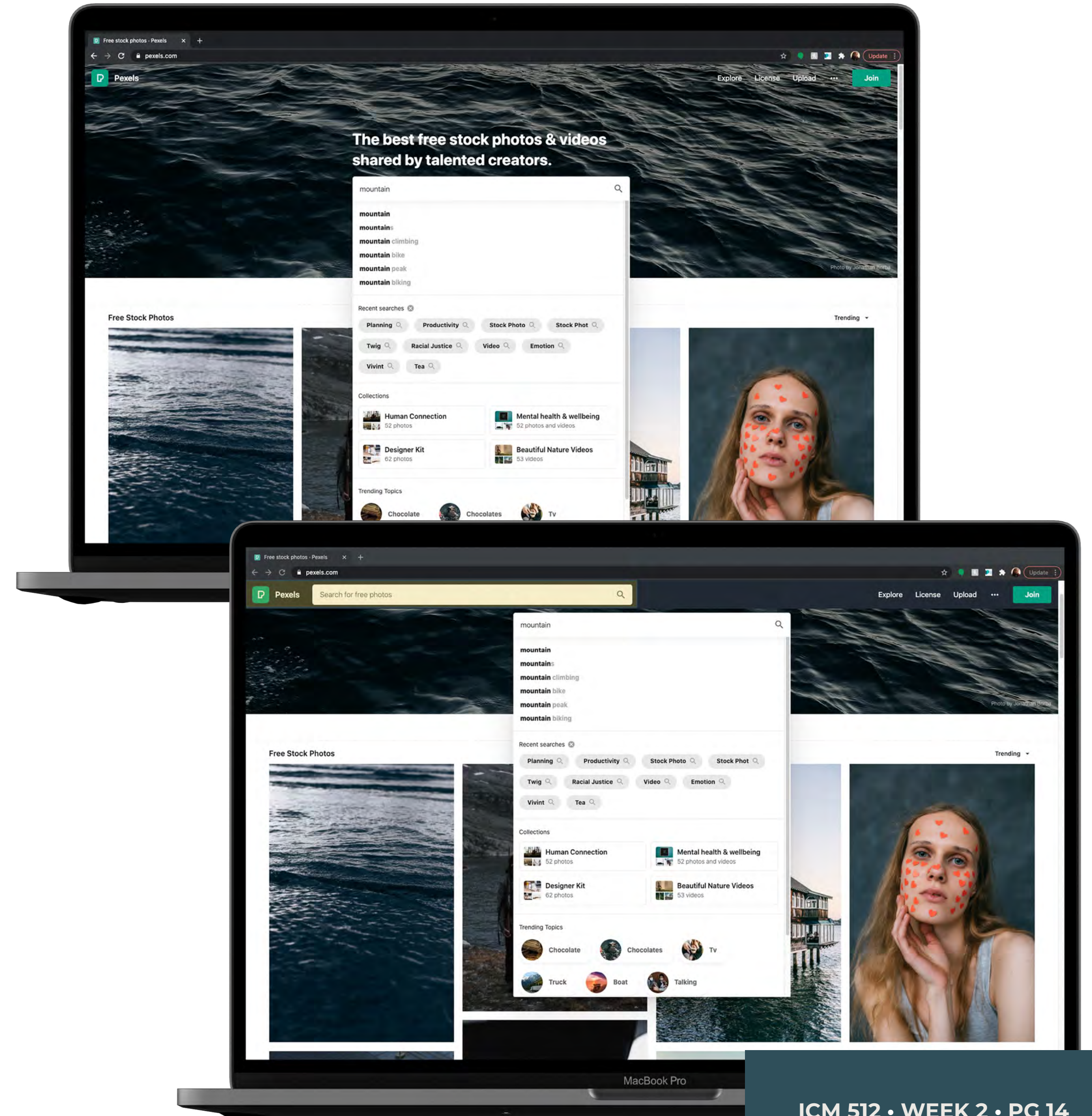


Pexels User Experience

SEARCH BAR

- ◆ **Pexels' search bar** makes me feel satisfied, excited, and optimistic because my needs for options, freedom, and results are met.

The search bar is similar to Unsplash's search bar, as you can access it in the top left of some pages and also in the main block of each page. However, Pexels' search bar offers a lot of variety and freedom. As you search you will see recent searches, collections, and trending topics. I am satisfied, excited, and optimistic when using the search bar because I am able to find what I need and more all in on feature.



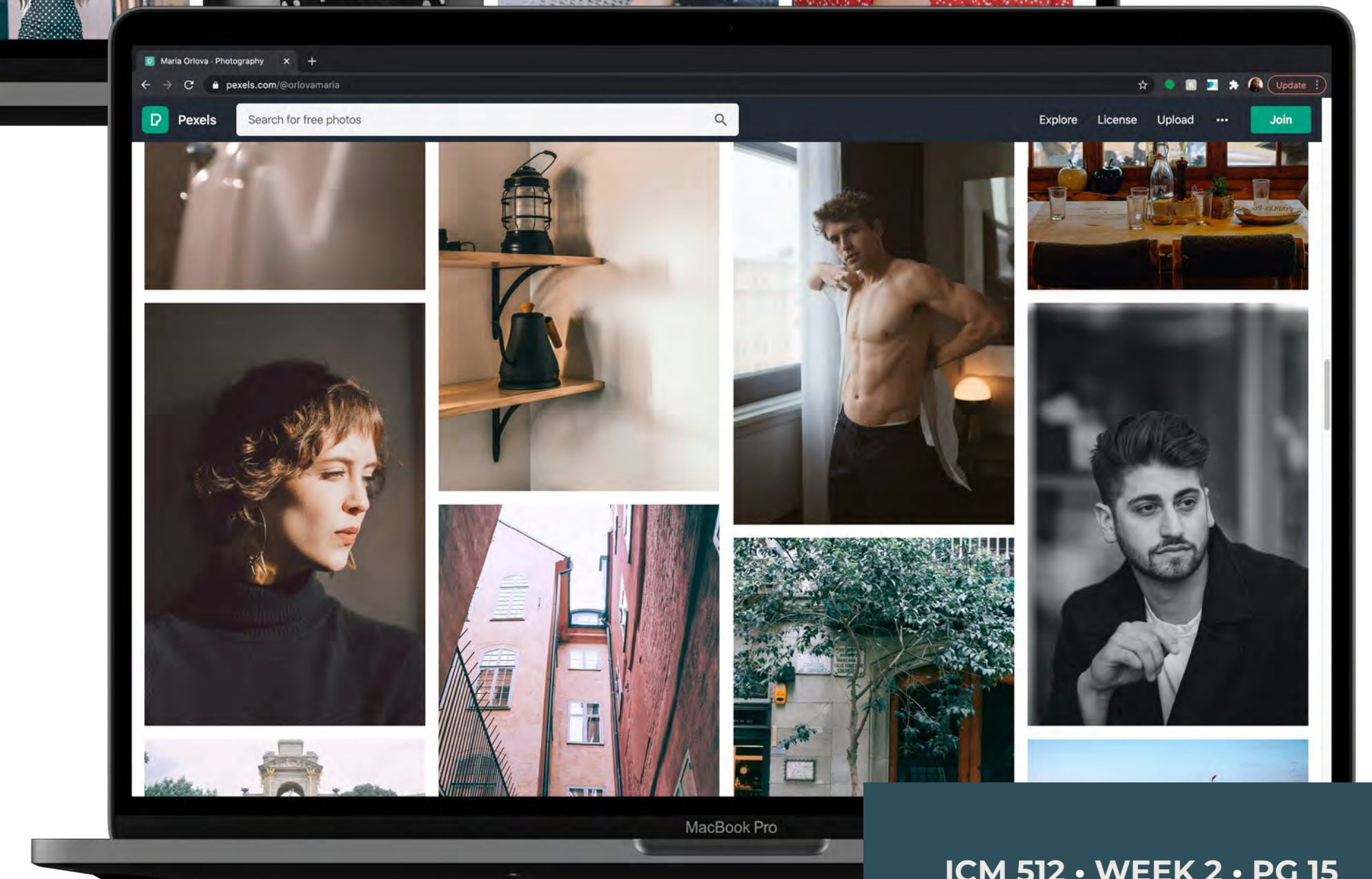
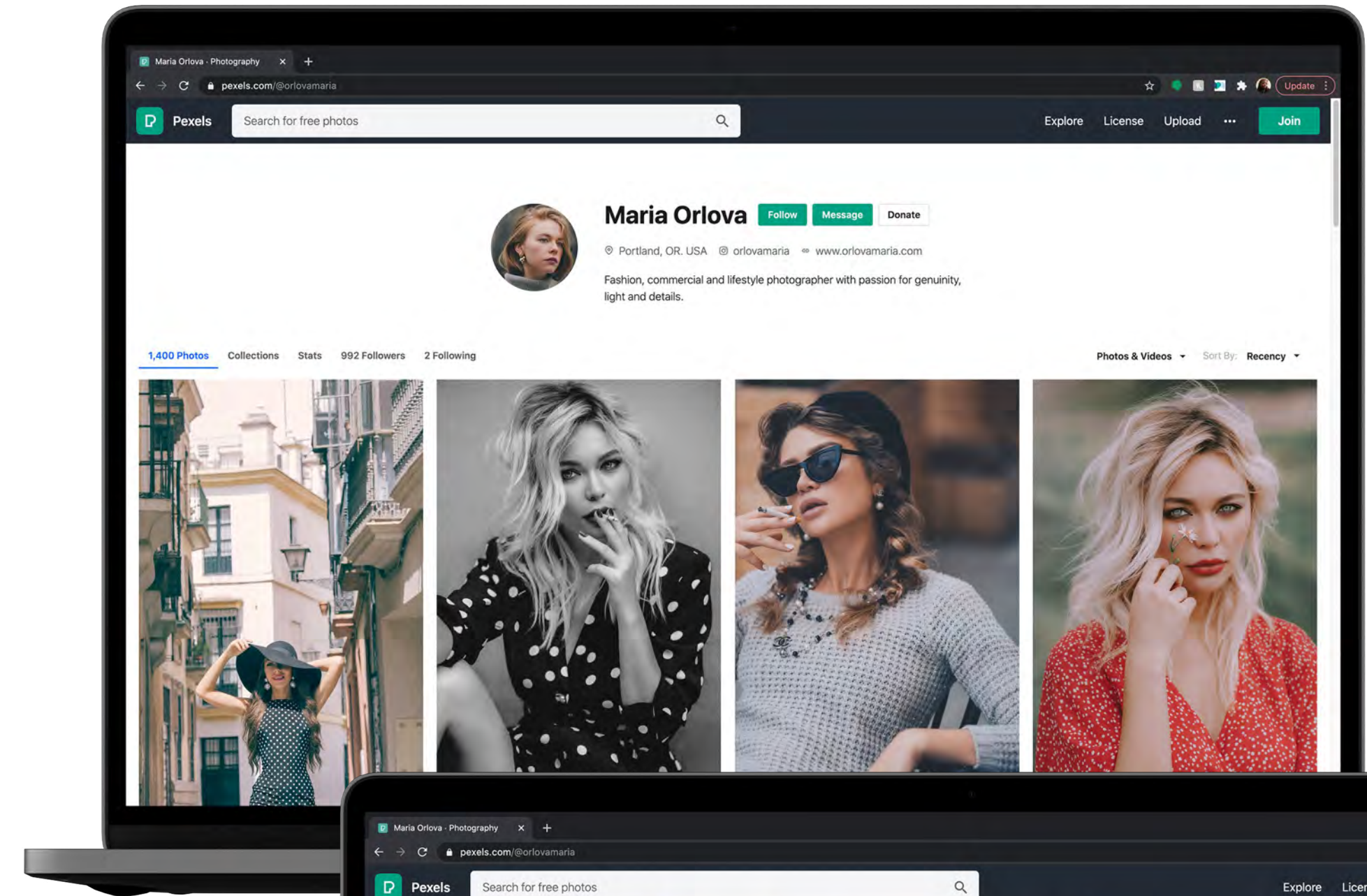


Pexels User Experience

ARTIST PROFILE

- ◆ The artist profile page makes me feel engaged and immersed because my needs for creativity and play are met.

The vibrant imagery on each artist's profile spans the entire page. This is very engaging, as it captures my attention immediately and triggers my curiosity. Pexels' profiles are much more playful and creative than Unsplash's. They also offer less structure and more freedom.



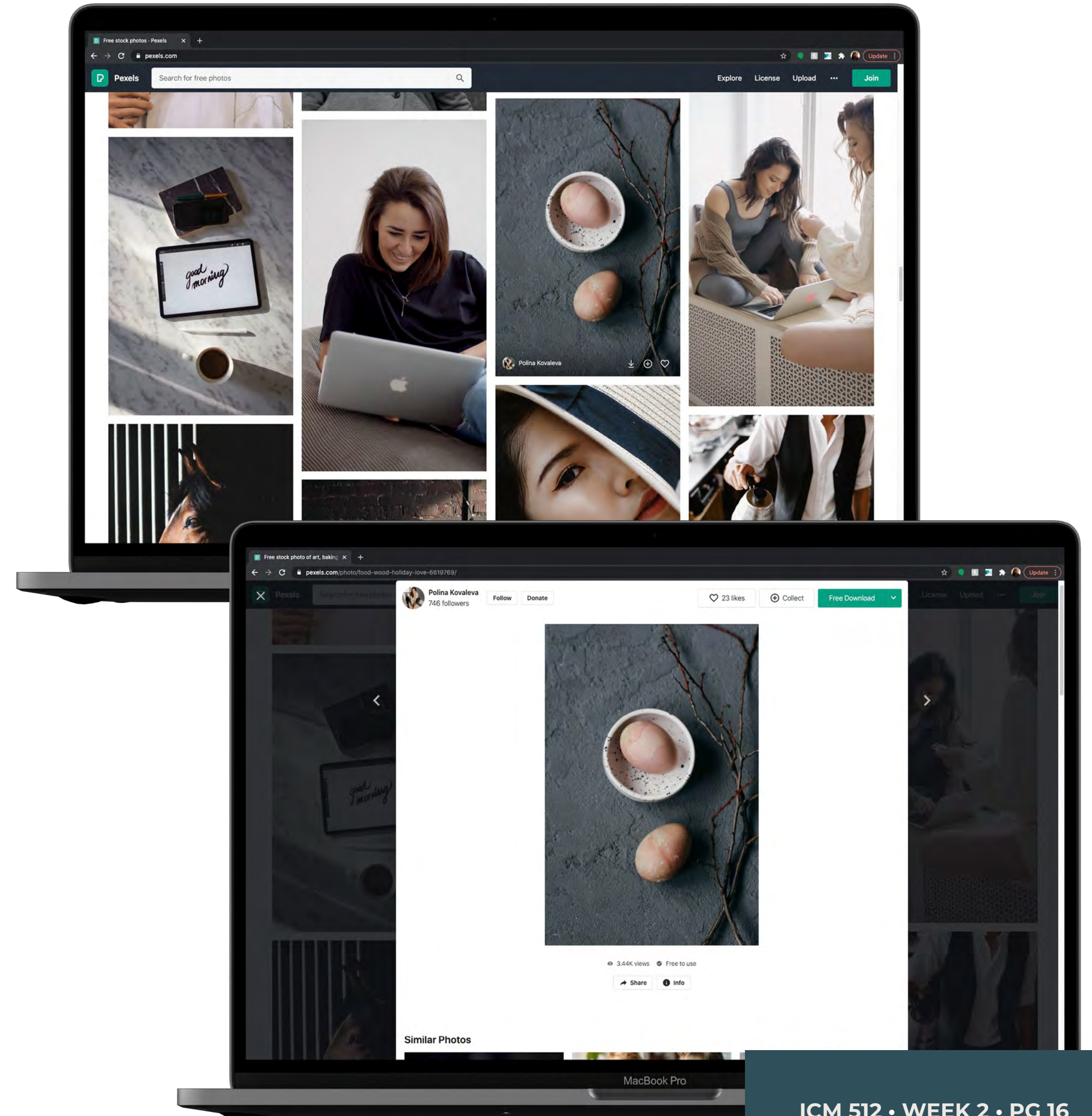


Pexels User Experience

BASIC FUNCTIONS

- ◆ **Pexels' basic downloading function makes me feel capable because my need for simplicity is met.**

The downloading function resembles Unsplash's. You can download on the main page by hovering over an image or you can click on the photo for a closer look and download from there. Each results in a direct download. This function is simple and straightforward. It makes me feel capable of locating what I am seeking.



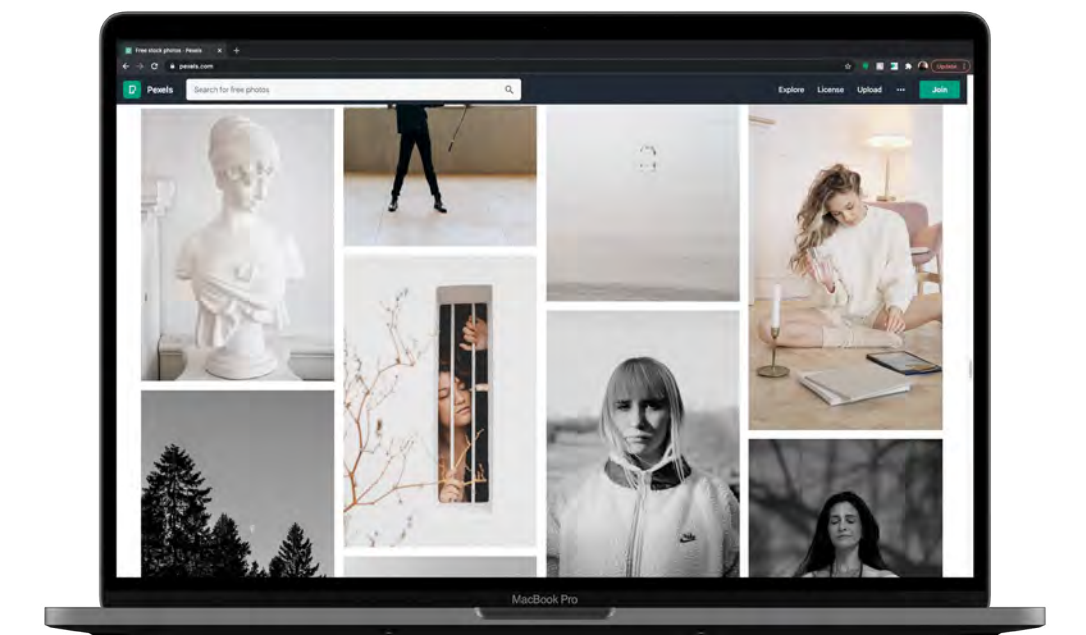
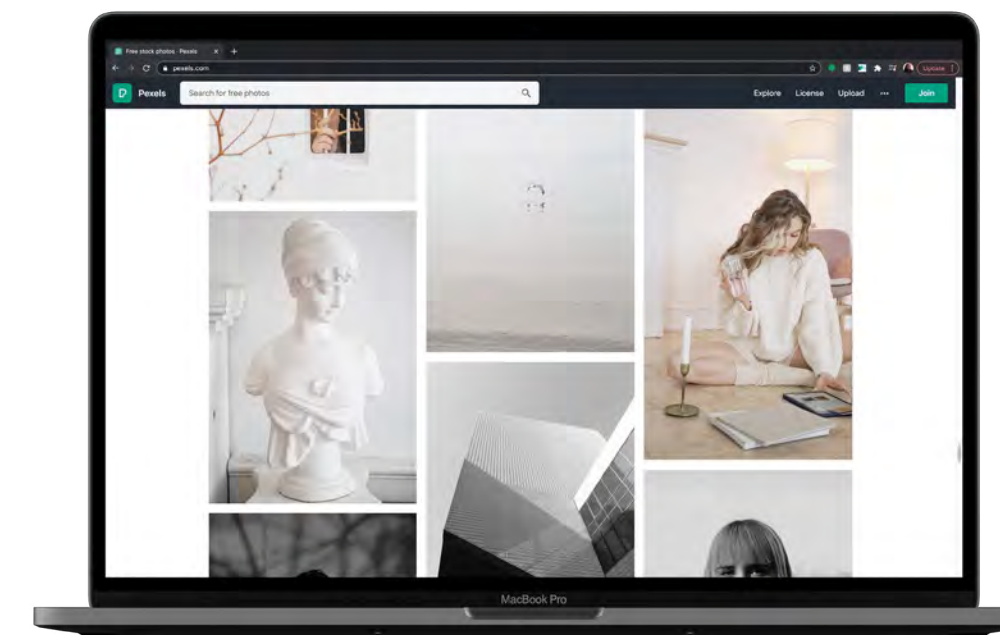
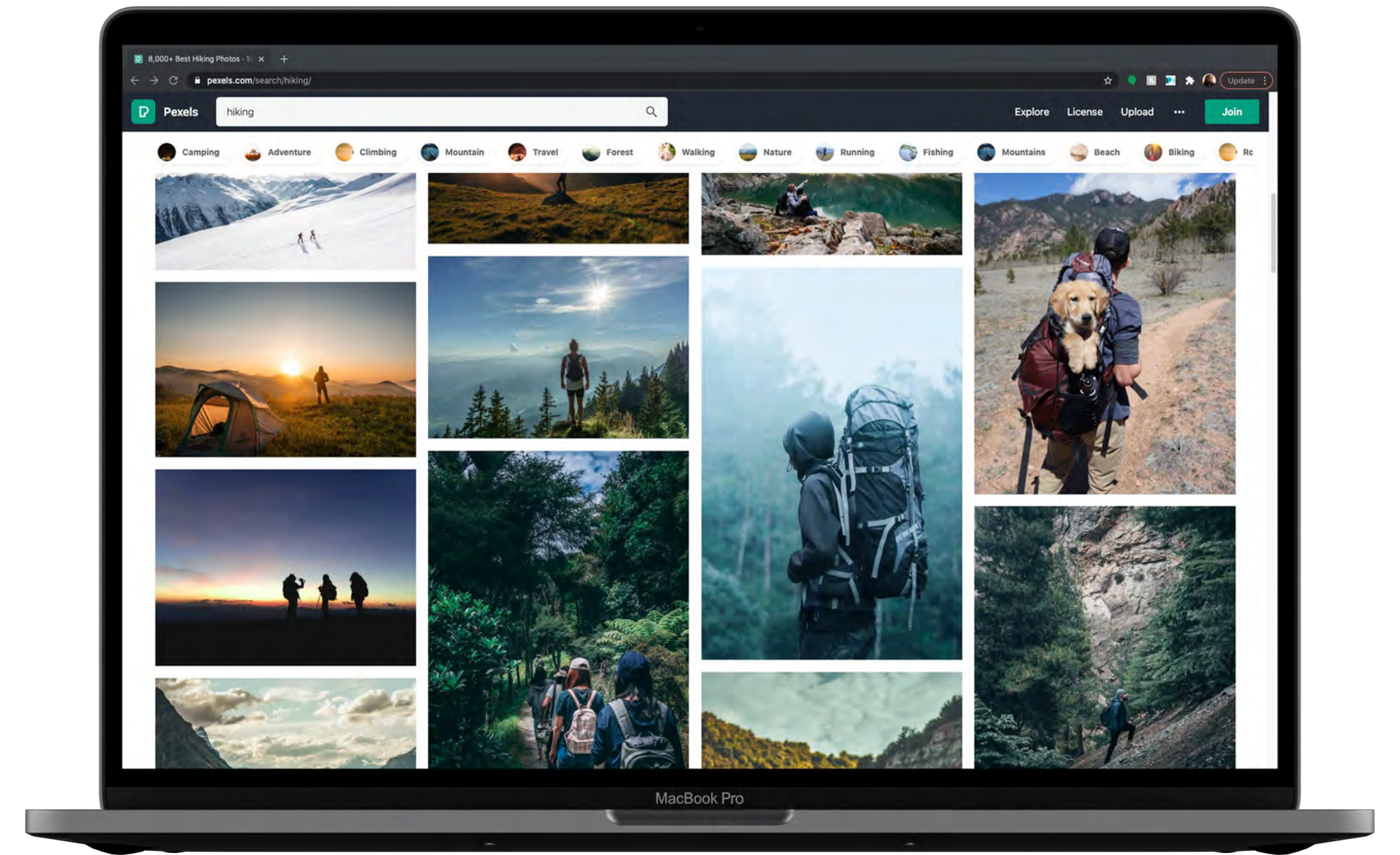


Pexels User Interface

LAYOUT

- ◆ **The overall layout makes me feel tickled and enchanted because my needs for beauty and inspiration are met.**

Pexels' layout is probably one of my favorite features. The page is responsive and the layout changes based on your screen size. My computer automatically shows a four-column layout. This makes me feel enchanted because, unlike Unsplash, there is minimal use of whitespace on Pexels' site. The user is thrown directly into a continuous feed of beautiful imagery and video. Seeing captivating images and videos span across the page makes me feel inspired.



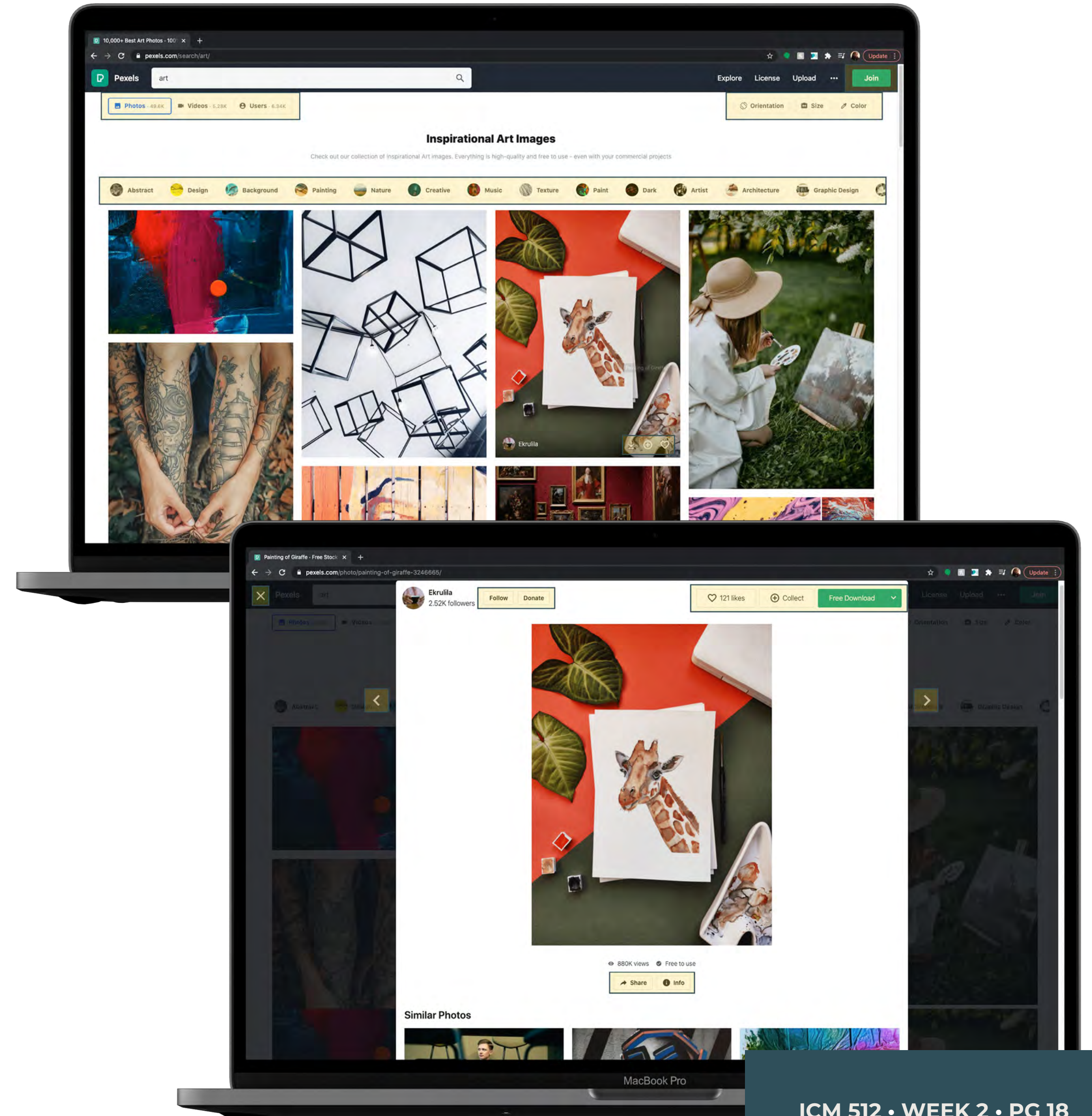


Pexels User Interface

BUTTONS

- ◆ **Pexels' buttons** also make me feel **empowered** because my need for **practicality** is met.

The buttons on Pexels' site resemble Unsplash's buttons. They are distinct, rounded rectangles that are easy to locate. The most important buttons are green. Unlike Unsplash, the buttons that appear when you hover over an image are faint and subtle. I appreciate this because they are present and accessible, but they do not take away from the vibrance and beauty of the page. Unsplash also has buttons that help you filter through your search topic. This offers more results and versatility when performing a search.



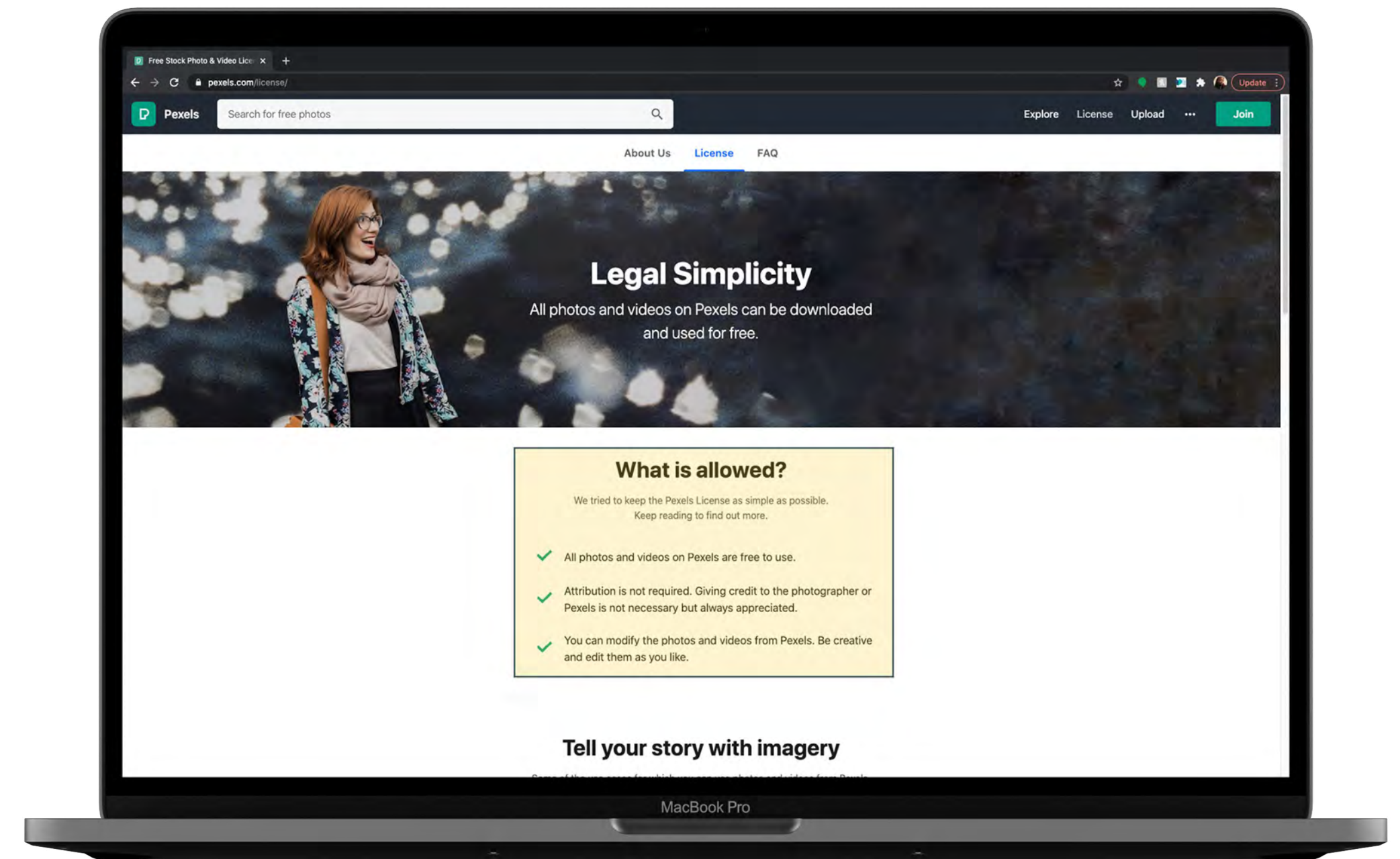


Pexels User Interface

TYPEFACE

- ◆ The typeface makes me feel content because my needs for clarity and ease are met.

Just like Unsplash and many other websites I frequent, Pexels' typeface is modern, comfortable, and familiar. I am content with this because I am able to read and process the information on the site clearly and easily.



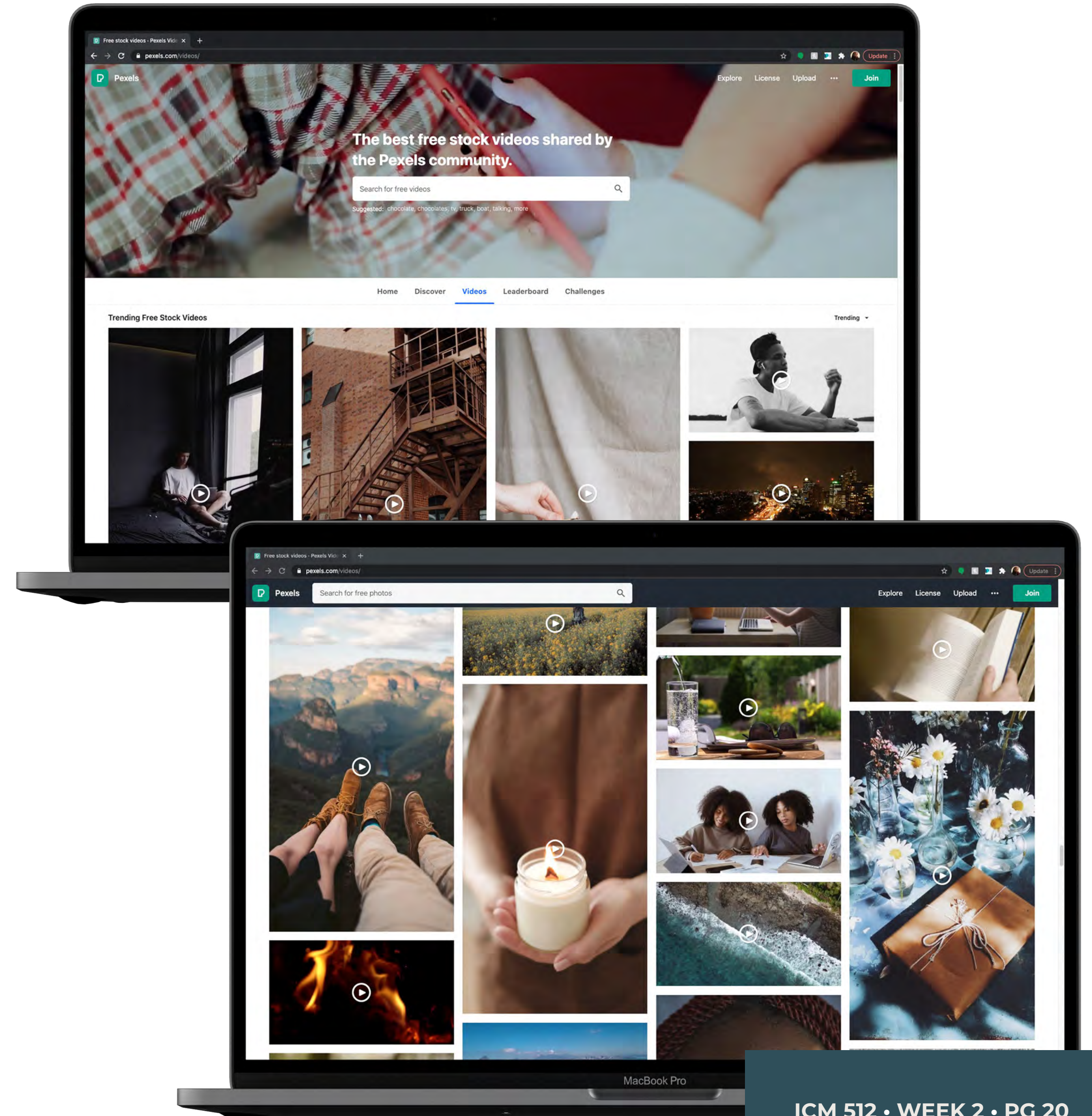


Pexels User Interface

ADDITIONAL AESTHETIC CHOICES: VIDEOS

- ◆ **Pexels' videos make me feel equipped because my need for versatility is met.**

This is another feature that I love on Pexels' site. They offer high-quality images and video, which gives me more options when I am seeking stock work to incorporate into my designs. As you scroll through the page, the videos play on a loop. This is not jarring or distracting; it is smooth and engaging. Including videos on the site makes me feel well-prepared for whatever project I may be working on.



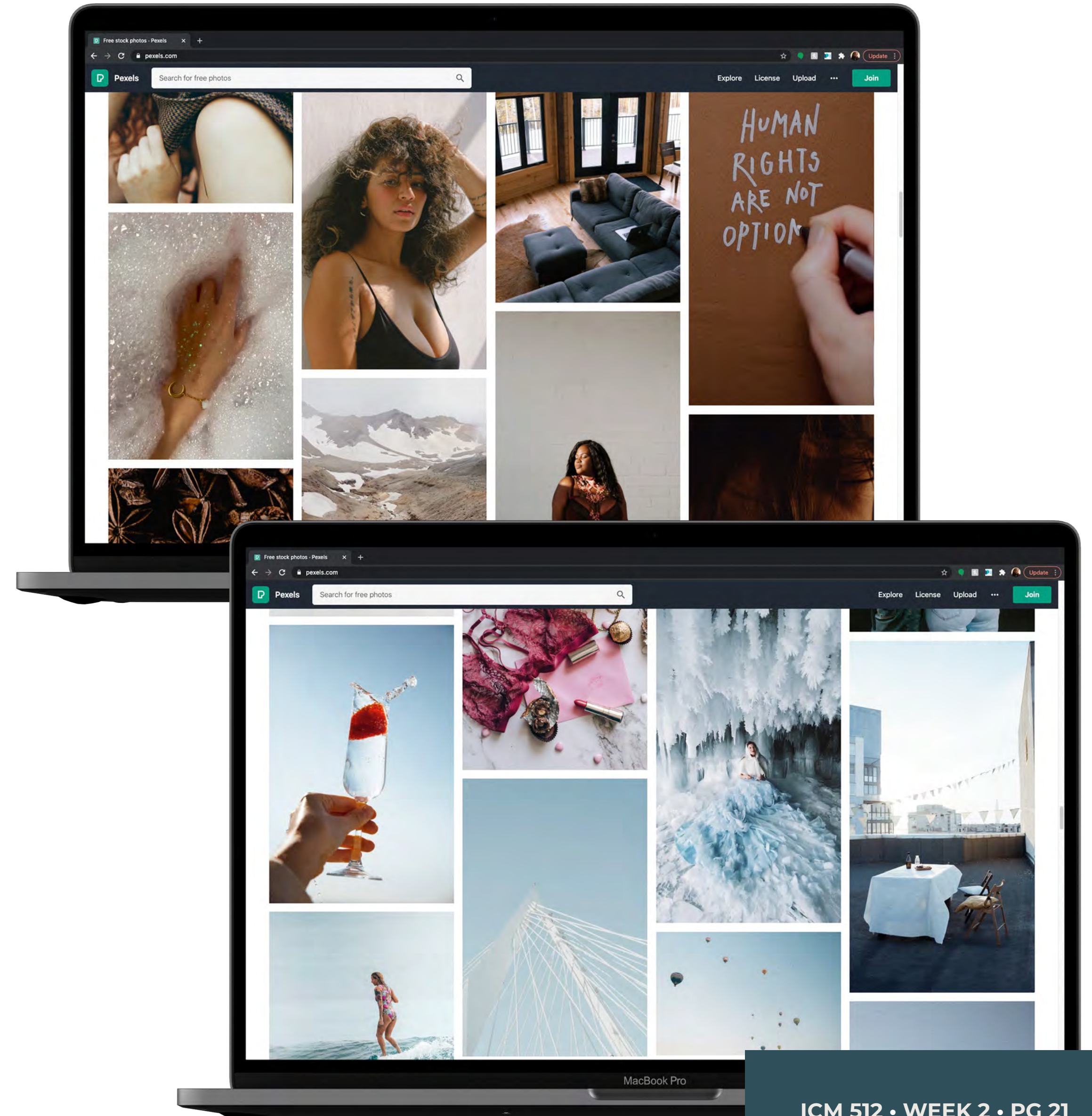


Pexels User Interface

ADDITIONAL AESTHETIC CHOICES: COLOR BLOCKING

- The color blocking makes me feel fulfilled and refreshed because my needs for attention to detail and distinctiveness are met.

Pexels organizes their imagery and videos by color, which really makes me happy. Scrolling through the page cause you to gradually transition into different colorways. Organizing things by color, whether clothes, books, etc. tickles my fancy. This extra step in attention to detail truly makes me feel excited and refreshed.



Website Analysis: Final Thoughts

PEXELS FOR PLEASURE

My use of Pexels and Unsplash correlates directly with the functionality and aesthetic features of both sites. Pexels fulfills my need for beauty and expression by utilizing a four-column layout that spans the entire width of the page. It also features strong contrast between its dark menu bar and light background. Additionally, Pexels' homepage incorporates both stock photography and active videography, which sparks my curiosity and increases my engagement with the site. As you scroll through the homepage, the photo blocks transition in color ever so slightly, while videos play on a loop. This makes me feel refreshed because my needs for attention to detail and distinctiveness are met. I can easily be immersed by the Pexels site due to highly captivating imagery.

FINAL THOUGHTS

I found that I visit Pexels when I am seeking inspiration. Alternatively, Unsplash is my go-to when I want to remain productive and efficient in my workflow. Pexels is often my destination when I have more flexibility and want to address my needs for artistry, creativity, inspiration, and spontaneity. Unsplash meets my needs of maintaining order and organization and staying calm and focused while working. I consistently benefit from both websites. However, I may favor one website over the other depending on the flexibility of my schedule, the type of project I am working on, and the intensity of my current work session.

UNSPLASH FOR BUSINESS

Unsplash's homepage is similar to Pexels's, using a column layout with a continuous scroll, housed underneath a full-bleed search bar. However, there are only three columns in the layout, leaving room on both sides for whitespace. This helps maintain balance and structure. The site is a bit more stark and bland, maintaining the use of a light color in the menu bar and background. Furthermore, the featured photos transition randomly, and there are no stock videos on this site. When I visit Unsplash, it's strictly business; no distraction. When hovering over an Unsplash photo, the download button is prominent, followed closely by the like and add buttons. I search for what I need, download it swiftly, and return to my project. This happens instinctively.