

By [Claire Carlson](#)

I've seen an increasing amount of conversational language on the web lately. It's a powerful tool - when users feel talked to instead of talked at it's easier for them to build a connection with a brand. However, there is a delicate balance and, of course, it depends on the needs of the audience and the goal of the company.

Here are some examples of conversational language done right

The clothing company Anthropologie prompts users to sign up for emails in a casual and encouraging way, helping to convey a feeling that the email communication they will receive will also be harmless (see the Anthropologie caption image above). On the other hand, would you want to see this same prompt from your bank? Perhaps not.

The Escape Flight search engine takes "conversational language" to the extreme by replacing keywords in a sentence with dropdown fields. This format greatly reduces the amount of visual noise that would be present if each of these fields were separated. This language conveys a sense of playfulness and ease of use.

Escape App

Conversational language has been used more and more in error messaging to show empathy. Here's one error message from USA Today. It's clear they're putting a positive spin on a not-so-positive experience with the casual phrase "Oh, snap!" The message likely catches users off guard and might even make them smile.

USA Today

LinkedIn also uses conversational language in their error messaging. Rather than displaying the message “This account name already exists” they speculate that you already created an account at one time but may have forgotten.

LinkedIn

Bottom line, being talked to is always better than talked at. Try to use conversational language when possible and be sure to match the tone to your audience.

An oldie but a goodie: Here’s another fun implementation of conversation language from the Blink UX design library.

More great examples

Gmail

Gmail

Axure Forum

Axure Forum

Lync

Lync

Facebook

Facebook

Postach.io

Postach.io

Claire is part of the interaction design team at Blink. She loves being one of the first people in the office each morning except Friday, when you will find her at Mighty O Donuts.