BRIDGING ONLINE CONTENT TO YOUR USER: BEST PRACTICES FOR LIBGUIDES & ONLINE PATHFINDERS

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Agenda

1. Why is Design Important?
2. Layout
3. Color
4. Writing for the Web
5. Group Critique
6. Incorporating Multi-Media
7. Troubleshooting with HTML
8. Do’s & Don’ts
Why is design important?

Don Norman: *Emotional Design*

“Attractive things work better”

3 Components of Product Design:
- Usability
- Aesthetics
- Practicality

3 Levels of Design:
- Visceral
- Behavioral
- Reflective
How’s this for Visceral Communication?

IMAGE REMOVED

Raphael

Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints
ca. 1504
...and how about this?
“Hierarchy of contrast & viewer attention”

- Focal areas
- Entry points
- Rest areas
- Uniformity

“Every extra design element detracts from all the other design elements on the page. When you push irrelevant links at people, you teach them to ignore the ones that matter.”

- Jakob Nielsen
http://www.useit.com/alertbox/bad-design.html
1. Centered: stable, still, peaceful, passive... boring!
2. Left-weighted, suggests movement left
3. Right-weighted, suggests movement right
4. Top-heavy, suggests upward movement
Nielsen's Guidelines for Designing around the F-Shaped Pattern:
1. Navigation on the left.
2. Main content a bit further in on the left.
3. Most important stuff between one-third and halfway across the page.
4. Secondary content goes on the right.

http://www.useit.com/alertbox/reading_pattern.html
Nobody likes to read a page full of text, or a page that is overcrowded with information and images. You’ve probably heard this dozens of times about designing Powerpoint slides—the same idea applies to designing research guides. Our eyes have trouble focusing if there is too much going on on the page—think Jackson Pollock. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Cras aliquet tincidunt sapien a dapibus. Nam ac orci sapien. Donec egestas enim id orci viverra aliquam. Ut gravida vehicula tempor. Vestibulum vel nisi quis sapien tempor dignissim. Maecenas iaculis massa nec orci dictum in scelerisque magna interdum. Nam pulvinar accumsan libero sed molestie. Morbi condimentum dignissim massa nec blandit. Morbi ornare suscipit felis, in dapibus sapien tempor eu. Pellentesque porttitor odio in lacus imperdiet at adipiscing sapien fringilla. Vestibulum malesuada facilisis ante sed hendrerit. Quisque gravida turpis nisi. Donec nunc risus, facilisis eu rhoncus at, luctus vel lorem. Aliquam erat volutpat. Donec vulputate, nunc id feugiat ultricies, nisl tellus feugiat felis, at eleifend ipsum orci a lacus. Maecenas ut dolor vel neque iaculis lobortis eu a orci. Maecbi euismod orci vel ante dapibus condimentum. Ut posuere ma nus vel dolor posuere pulvinar.
Uniformity can:
• Set up user expectations
• Increase usability (and decrease confusion)

Talk to your coworkers! Can you agree on:
1. Single color palette for tabs & box borders?
2. A core set of content/tabs?
Color... avoid UVD*!

Color Attributes:
- Advancing/Receding
- Contrast
- Vibration
- Weight
- Meaning
- Harmony
- Saturation
- Proportion

* UVD = Unpleasant Visual Discord

IMAGES REMOVED
Josef Albers
Homage to a Square
(The Grandfather of color theory.)
Writing for the Web

Concise  
cut in \( \frac{1}{2} \), then cut in \( \frac{1}{2} \) again

Objective  
leave out the b.s. (and the library jargon)

Scannable  
formatted for the screen
Nebraska is filled with internationally recognized attractions that draw large crowds of people every year, without fail. In 1996, some of the most popular places were Fort Robinson State Park (355,000 visitors), Scotts Bluff National Monument (132,166), Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum, Carhenge, Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, and Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park.

In 1996, six of the best-attended attractions in Nebraska were Fort Robinson State Park, Scotts Bluff National Monument, Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum, Carhenge, Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, and Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park.

In Nebraska, some of the most visited places were:

- Fort Robinson State Park (355,000 visitors)
- Scotts Bluff National Monument (132,166)
- Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum (100,000)
- Carhenge (86,598)
- Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer (60,002)
- Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park (28,446).

In 1996, six of the most visited places in Nebraska were:

- Fort Robinson State Park
- Scotts Bluff National Monument
- Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum
- Carhenge
- Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer
- Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park

http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9710a.html
Writing for the Web:
Making Text Scannable

1. Prioritize
2. List
3. Distill
4. Link
5. Illustrate
6. Emphasize key words
7. Design!
Writing for the Web:
Designing Text

- Italics (but not a whole paragraph)
- Bold (but not EVERYTHING)
- No underlining... ever!
- Color (but not TOO MANY)
- Capitals (BUT NOT ALL CAPS)
- Font craziness (avoid it... esp. Comic Sans)

W I D T H & S P A C I N G
WRITING FOR THE WEB EXERCISE
Group Critique!

LibGuides Community Site:
http://libguides.com/community.php?m=g
Dear Nedda,

We are writing you because we recently noticed a posting from you of ARTstor images on the open-access websites libguides.com and research.library.gsu.edu. Several specific pages we found were: http://research.library.gsu.edu/vocalmusic; http://research.library.gsu.edu/theatre; http://research.library.gsu.edu/popmusic; http://research.library.gsu.edu/mtm3030

While we are delighted that you have taken an interest in the content in the ARTstor Library, unfortunately displaying such images on an open-access site violates our terms of use (http://www.artstor.org/our-organization/o-pdf/terms-conditions.pdf).

While we are sure that this violation was inadvertent, it’s important that users abide by our terms of use. ARTstor is a community project, and our users’ compliance with the Library terms of use help ensure that content providers feel comfortable with supplying images of their works to educational users. We therefore have to ask that you take your image down from these public-access sites.

We appreciate your cooperation. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or any of my colleagues in ARTstor’s User Services department at 888-278-0079 or userservices@artstor.org.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXXX
ARTstor User Services
Incorporating Multi-Media: Creative Commons Images

http://www.flickr.com/search/advanced/
http://compfight.com/

[Image of Advanced Search on Flickr and Compfight]
Incorporating Multi-Media: Screencasting

**Definition:**
A screen capture of the actions on a user’s computer screen, typically with accompanying audio.

**What you need:**
1. Screencasting software
   - Jing (free)
   - Camtasia
2. Host
   - Screencast.com
   - Blip.tv
   - YouTube
3. Microphone
   - Built-in
   - Stand alone

**Why to use them?**
- 24/7/365
- Learning Styles
- Space!
- Standardization
- Augment understanding
Incorporating Multi-Media:
Screencasting Best Practices

**Content:**
- Standartized/Uniform/Consistent.
- Provide outline or TOC at the beginning
- Basic → Advanced

**Preparation:**
- Practice. Practice. Practice.
- Write a script.
- Allow time for production. (Few minutes to several hours)

**Delivery:**
- Smooth mouse movements.
- Pause cursor before clicking on next link.
- Conversational language.
- Keep it short (under 3 minutes).
- Break up long casts into shorter ones.
- Clear clutter from Desktop and Toolbars.

Examples:
- Short and sweet
- Lengthy and dramatic
- Best Practices ANimated Tutorial Sharing Project (ANTS)
Incorporating Multi-Media:
Other Cool Stuff

- Concept Mapping:
  - MindMeister: http://www.mindmeister.com/

- Document Apps:
  - Scribd: http://www.scribd.com/

- Chat/IM:
  - Meebo: http://www.meebo.com
  - LibraryH3lp: http://libraryh3lp.blogspot.com/

- Polls
  - Poll Everywhere (SMS Polling): http://www.polleverywhere.com/

- Other Guide Creation Apps:
  - SubjectPlus: http://www.subjectsplus.com/ (free!)
  - Library á la Carte: http://alacarte.library.oregonstate.edu/
Troubleshooting with HTML:
The Blank Box Header

1. Create a box (any type)
2. In the Box Title field, enter: &nbsp
3. Click “Create Box.”
Troubleshooting with HTML:
The Plain-Text (HTML) View

Don’t freak out!

TIP:
First, break up the code into readable lines.
## Troubleshooting with HTML: Common Tags

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tag</th>
<th>What it Does</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;p&gt;</code></td>
<td>New paragraph or section of text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;strong&gt;</code></td>
<td>Bolds text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;em&gt;</code></td>
<td>Italicizes text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;span style=&quot;xxxx&quot;&gt;</code></td>
<td>Formats text to defined options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;font&gt;</code></td>
<td>Formats text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;ul&gt;</code></td>
<td>Creates un-numbered (bulleted) list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;ol&gt;</code></td>
<td>Creates ordered (numbered) list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;li&gt;</code></td>
<td>Makes a list item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;br /&gt;</code> or <code>&lt;br&gt;</code></td>
<td>Breaks line of text [Shift + Enter]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;a href=&quot;xxxx&quot;&gt;</code></td>
<td>Links text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Troubleshooting with HTML:

Lists

**Numbered List Structure:**

```
<ol>
  <li>List Item 1</li>
  <li>List Item 2</li>
</ol>
```

=  

1. List Item 1
2. List Item 2

**Bulleted List Structure:**

```
<ul>
  <li>List Item 1</li>
  <li>List Item 2</li>
</ul>
```

=  

• List Item 1
• List Item 2
Troubleshooting with HTML: Tables

**Basic Table Code Structure**
```html
<table>
  <tr>
    <td>Top Left Info</td>
    <td>Top Right Info</td>
  </tr>
  <tr>
    <td>Bottom Left Info</td>
    <td>Bottom Right Info</td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Left Info</th>
<th>Top Right Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bottom Left Info</td>
<td>Bottom Right Info</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Troubleshooting with HTML:
Do’s & Don’ts

- DO personalize
- DO make URLs user-friendly
- DO add tags & keywords (to increase access)
- DO update regularly
- DO include a chat/IM widget
- DON’T use library jargon
- DO borrow, but DON’T steal (i.e., ask!)