

# Visual Design

CRAP and other design principles



# CRAP

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C Contrast

R Repetition

A Alignment

P Proximity



# Contrast

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- More than just color!
  - If things are supposed to be different, make them *very* different.
  - If things are related, make them visually similar.
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- Text vs. background color
  - Links vs. regular text
  - Menus vs. content

# Repetition

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- Repeat certain design elements within your design:
  - Colors
  - Typefaces
  - Images
  - Positions

# Alignment

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- Line on-screen items up to create visual flow.
  - Avoid center-aligned text, it becomes very hard to read.
  - Choose a single alignment, and stick with it throughout.

# Proximity

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- Things that are close to each other seem to be related. So...
  - Group related items together.
  - Separate unrelated items.
  - Not too much space, not too little
    - Give sufficient margins and space between “the box” and its contents
- How do you know a caption is associated with an image?  
What if the caption is *between* two images?

# Other Considerations...

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- Amount of text...
  - Narrow columns are easier to read than wide swaths of text.
  - Plus, we don't like to scroll.
- Spelling, Grammar, etc....
  - What do we think when we see typos?
  - Your text is part of your design!
- Motion
  - Our eyes are drawn to motion, so only use it to capture attention.
  - Once it has our attention, MAKE IT STOP!
- Time
  - How long does it take your site to load? To read?
  - Will people give up?

# Above the Fold

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- Where do newspapers put the biggest news? When you get a paper, what is the first thing you see?
- The same holds true for Web pages!





# Above the Fold

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- People don't like to scroll.
- If they don't find what they're looking for, or at least an idea that they'll find it on your site, before they scroll or visit any sub-pages, they'll probably leave!
- Think about when you do your Web searching... what results do you generally pay attention to?

# The Fold – Lesson Learned?

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- Keep the main idea of your site, and the primary navigation system, in a smaller box located above “the fold” – be *responsive!*
- Discussion
  - Vertical vs. Horizontal scrolling – which one is almost never acceptable?

# The Elements of Design

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- Good design, applying CRAP, involves:
  - Layout
  - Graphics
  - Colors
  - Typography
- We talked typography last time, so let's focus on the others

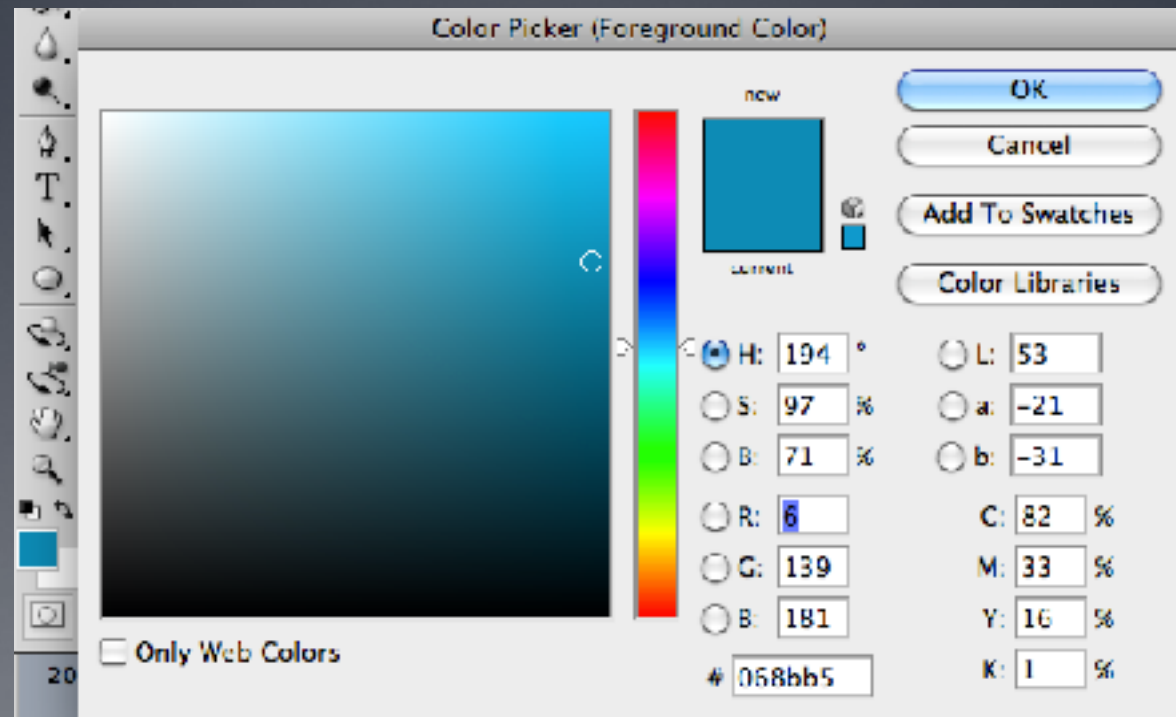
# Color

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- HTML uses color **keywords**:
  - red, yellow, cyan, purple, etc.
- We can also use *hexadecimal* values:
  - #ff0000, #ffff00, #00ccff, #cc00ff, etc.
  - Hex values give us more control over our colors.
    - 3 or 6 digits, describing Red, Green, and Blue color channels
    - o-f (16 values in hexadecimal) o = none of that color, f = all of it
  - But where do we get them from?

# Getting Colors

- Mac OS X DigitalColor Meter
- ColorZilla
- Photoshop



# Color Schemes

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Not all of us are designers or artists, but that doesn't mean we can't make good design choices. CRAP can help us a lot, and there are also tools out there to help us make better COLOR choices too:

- [Adobe Color](#)
- [Colour Lovers](#)
- <http://colorschemedesigner.com/>
- And more... use your Google-fu!



# But be careful...

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- Color should not be the only way you convey information!
- What about colorblind users?
- Test your site!
  - <http://colorfilter.wickline.org/>



[illegible]



# Rule of Thirds

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# Hick's Law

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*Every additional choice increases  
the time required to take a  
decision*

# Imagine all of Amazon on one page

The screenshot displays the Amazon homepage with a clean, organized layout. At the top, the Amazon logo is on the left, and navigation links for 'Today's Deals', 'Gift Cards', and 'Sell' are on the right. Below the logo, a 'Shop by Department' dropdown menu is visible, listing categories like Video, Music, Cloud Player, Kindle, Fire Tablets, and more. The main content area features a large banner for the Kindle Paperwhite, highlighting it as 'The best device for reading, period.' Below this, a section for 'Amazon Fashion' promotes 'Spring Dresses' with a woman in a floral dress. To the right, there are several promotional tiles: 'Tax Central' with a calculator icon, 'Try Amazon Prime FREE for 30 days' with a clock icon, '10% Off Select Home Audio Products' with a speaker icon, '40% More Off Select USB Flash Drives' with a USB drive icon, and '\$30 Off Instantly' with a credit card icon. At the bottom, a row of movie and TV show covers is displayed, including 'The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1', 'The Hunger Games: Catching Fire', 'The Hunger Games: The Mockingjay Part 2', 'The Hunger Games: The Mockingjay Part 3', 'The Hunger Games: The Mockingjay Part 4', 'The Hunger Games: The Mockingjay Part 5', 'The Hunger Games: The Mockingjay Part 6', and 'The Hunger Games: The Mockingjay Part 7'. Each cover includes the title, rating, and a brief description.

# Fitt's Law

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*The time it takes to take an action is a function of the distance from the target and the size of the target.*

# Fitt's Law (Simply Spoken)

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The larger and closer a button is,  
the faster the user can decide  
to click it.

Address:

Reset



Address:

Submit

Reset

# Usability

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1. Don't make users Think / Keep it Simple
2. Don't test user's patience
3. Focus users
4. Strive for interaction exposure
5. Use effective writing
6. Use Conventions





# Keep It Simple

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# User Patience

**Name**

First

Last

**Choose your username**

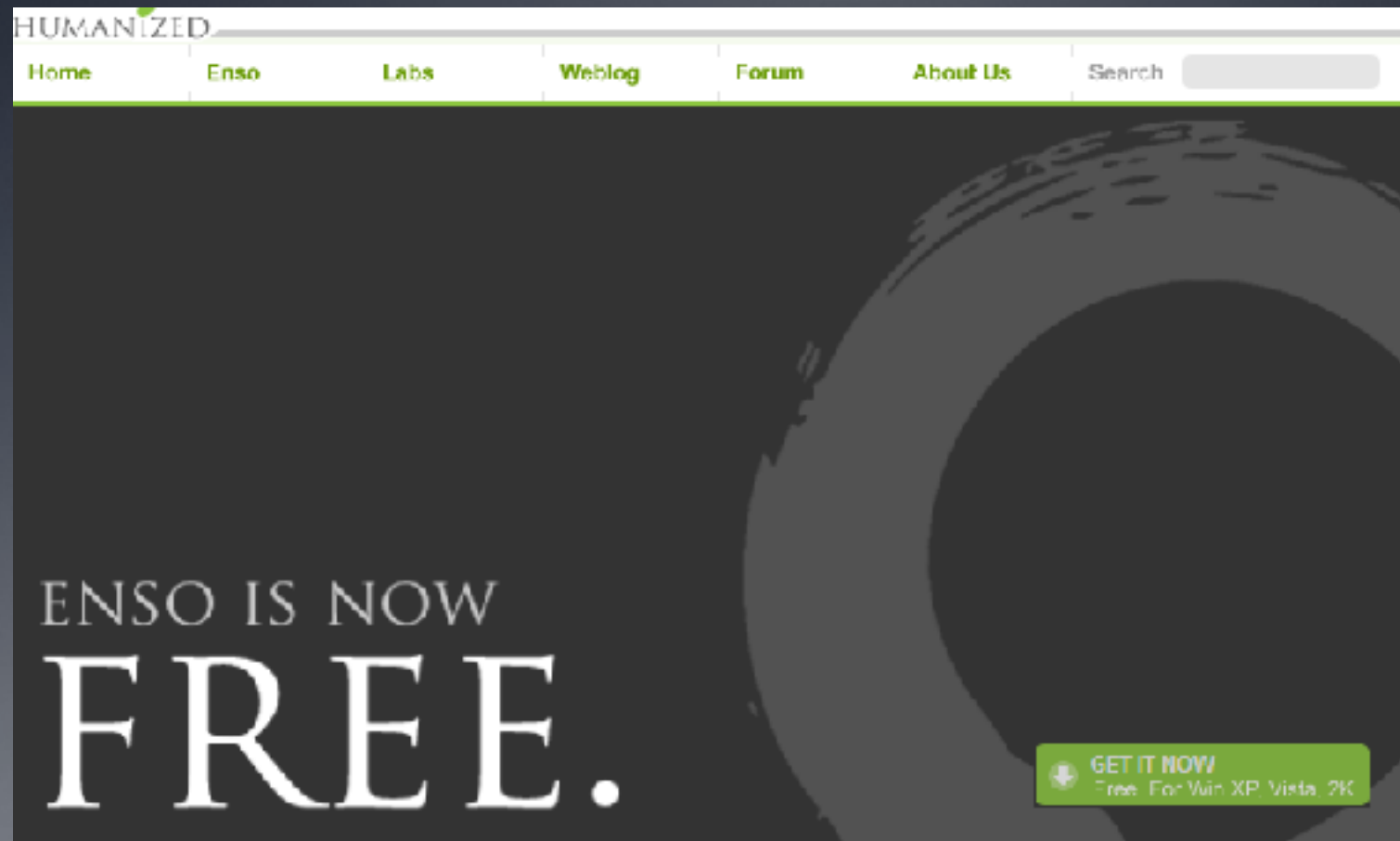
chooseyourusername

@gmail.com

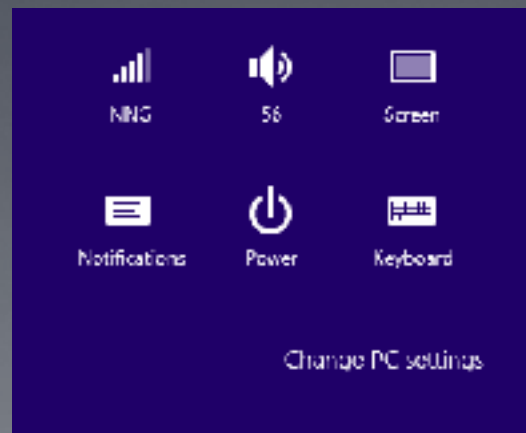
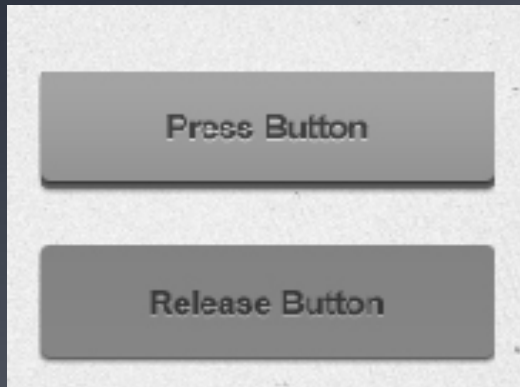
Someone already has that username. Try another?

**Create a password**

# Focus Users

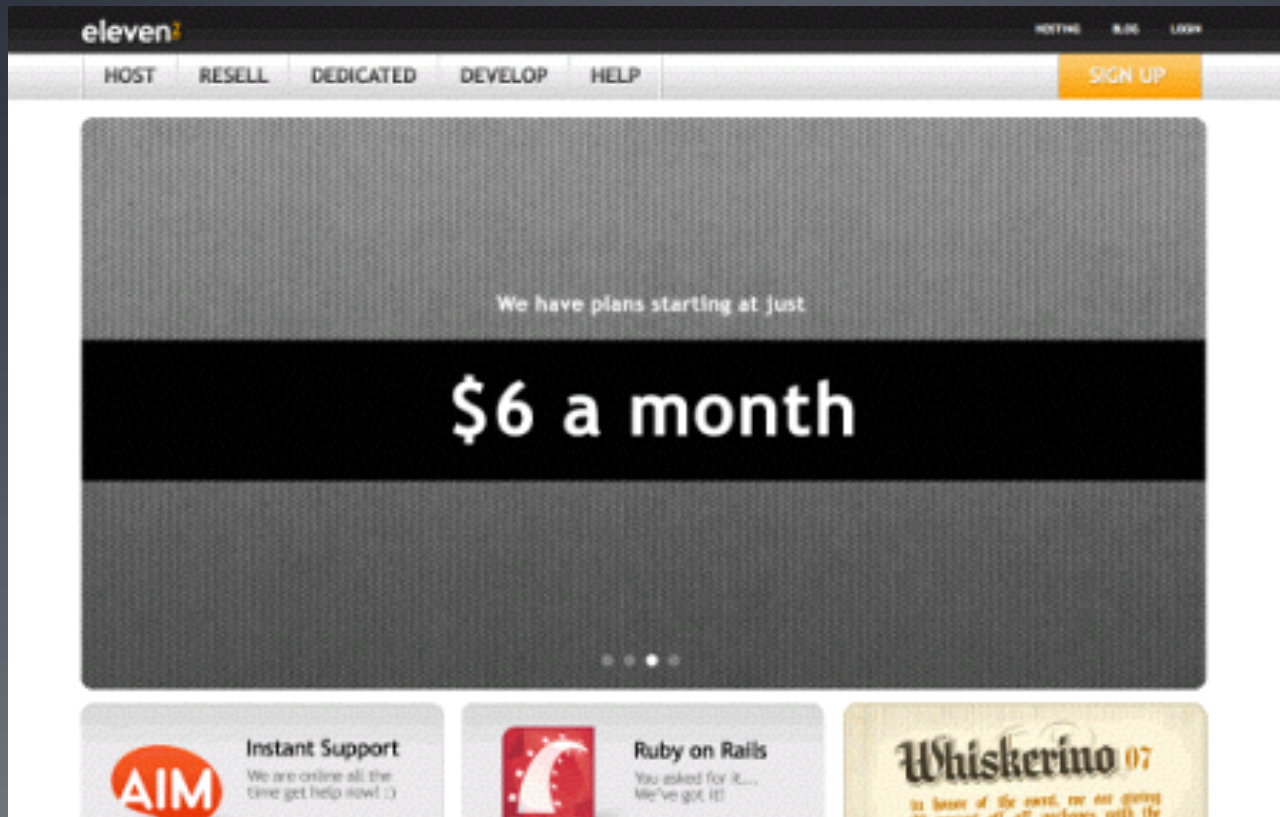


# Interaction Exposure



← No Button Visibility

# Effective Writing



# Use Conventions



# Global Design

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- The Web is a global medium, accessible by everyone in the world
  - Just because we live in the US doesn't mean the US is our only target audience

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## Elements to consider:

- text/character set
- number/date/time formats
- images
- symbols
- colors
- flow
- functionality



# Guidelines

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- Provide space for translation of text
- Avoid colloquialisms and slang
- Avoid culture-specific icons
- Avoid text in icons & graphics
- Offer different language versions?

# Are colors codes universal?

Culture	Red	Blue	Green	Yellow	White
United States	Danger	Masculinity	Safety	Cowardice	Purity
France	Aristocracy	Freedom Peace	Criminality	Temporary	Neutrality
Egypt	Death	Virtue Faith Truth	Fertility Strength	Happiness Prosperity	Joy
India	Life Creativity		Prosperity Fertility	Success	Death Purity
Japan	Anger Danger	Villainy	Future Youth Energy	Grace Nobility	Death
China	Happiness	Heavens Clouds	Ming Dynasty Heavens Clouds	Birth Wealth Power	Death Purity

# Culture-specific Icons



United States



Italia



France



Danmark



**Anything wrong with this?**

<http://talkback.zdnet.com/5208-11422-0.html?forumID=1&threadID=16303&messageID=323153&start=0>

# Internationalization

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- Bilingual requirements for Canada
- Currency
  - US \$1,234.00
  - DM 1.234
- Time
  - US 8:00pm October 24, 2001 (8/24/01)
  - UK 20:00, 24 October 2001
  - Germ 20:00, 24.10.01
  - ISO 20:00, 2001-10-24
  - Japan 20:00, 2001.10.24 or Imperial Heisei 11

# Some HTML for usability...

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- `<a href="whatever" target="_blank">Click me!</a>`
  - Opens in a new tab/window
- ``
  - Yes, we've seen this one before.
- `<a id="someplace" />`  
...  
`<a href="#someplace">Back to top</a>`

# What Not to Do...

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- [The World's Worst Website!](#)
- [The World's Even More Worst Website!](#)
- <http://www.lingscars.com/>
- <https://yvettesbridalformal.p1r8.net/>
- <https://art.yale.edu>

# ICE: Evaluating Websites

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Now we'll look at some sites, both good and bad, and see what's so crappy (or not) about them!

