

## Reflection – Scanning Patterns

When looking through web pages for information, users rarely look through all the content the pages provide, especially if they are looking for a topic in particular and even more if they have some urgency to find it. Because of that users would subconsciously develop scanning habits to help them find information of their interest in an efficient manner. Throughout the years researchers were able to identify multiple patterns user would use to scan through information, and among them lie 4 well known one:

- F-Pattern: When subheadings and bullets are not present, users would focus on words at the top of the page and at the beginning of lines, which creates an eye tracking pattern resembling an F.
- Spotted Pattern: The user would focus on specific words or chunks of text throughout the page that were highlighted to stand out or resemble words that are of their interest.
- Layer-Cake Scanning Pattern: The user would mostly focus on the headings and subheadings of a page until they find one of their interest, to which they proceed to read the body text below.
- Commitment Pattern: While time consuming, users would read most if not all of the content out of good motivation or interest of the topic, leading to great comprehension.

When looking back at the prototype my team has developed so far, I have noticed that the Layer-Cake Scanning Pattern is present, with most screens featuring headings and subheadings with text below them.

Knowing this will be relevant for my team to have in consideration for our prototype to fulfill our non-functional requirements as, by knowing which scanning pattern our users will rely on to when navigating through our application, we can design the UI around it to give them an easier time looking through information, in turn improving user experience.

Reference:

Pernice, K. (25/08/2019). *Text Scanning Patterns: Eyetracking Evidence*. Recovered from <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/text-scanning-patterns-eyetracking/>