Web Applications

Web Site Design Issues

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What makes a Web site good to use?

Issues in Web Site & Web Page Design

- Informative well written, well-illustrated content
- Logical structure of web site and content
- Navigational aids
- What's in a page: quantity / "readability"
- Individual page design
    - Use of colour
    - Use of fonts
    - Use of images
    - Use of links
    - Consistency
- Administrative data

Information structure / organisation

Logical structure of web site and content

- Organise the information content with care
  - identify main categories of information (may be sections and subsections)
- Divide information into "logical" chunks of information that may appear on a single page
  - Overviews (links) *vs* specific topics
- Hierarchies and linear sequences
  - often need both
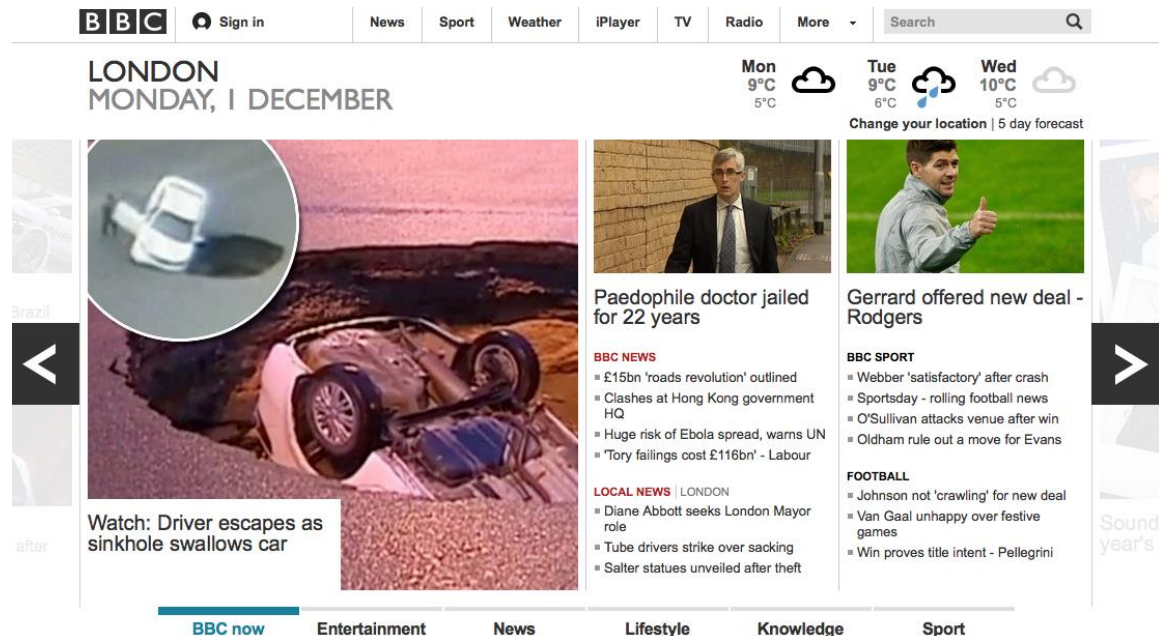
Hierarchies and linear sequences

Hierarchies :

 root may be overview of the entire subject matter : i.e. home page.

 - should point to the main categories (sections),

•   each category of which leads in turn to sub-sections,

     Or to related topics at same level

Linear sequences

```
a → b → c → d → e → f → g
```
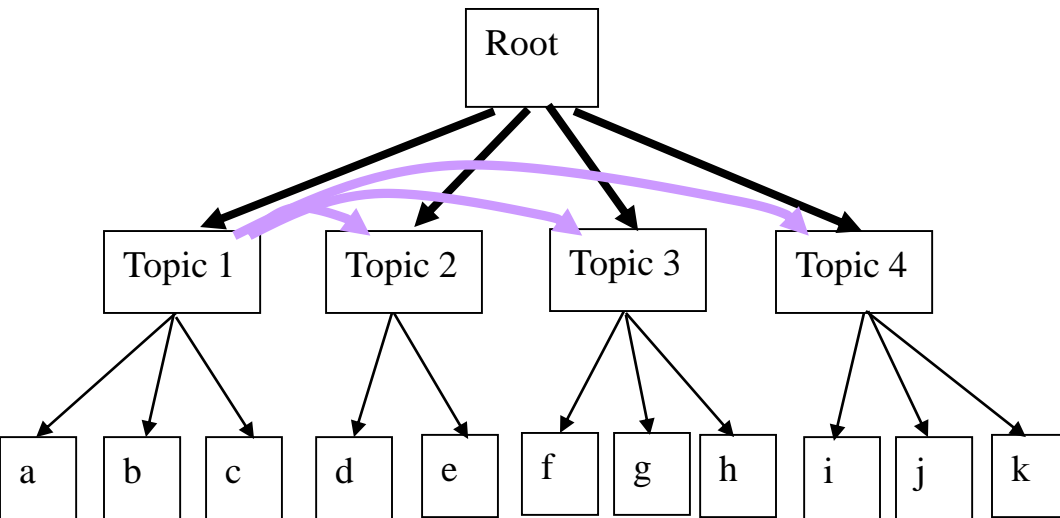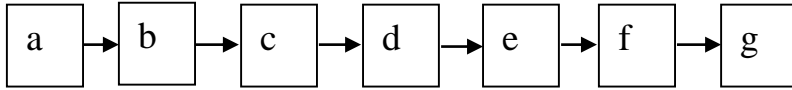
- Sequences lead the user through an individual topic that is best treated in an ordered manner.
- For most sites a sequence will correspond to a section or subsection of information content

```
            Root
       /    |    |    \
  Topic 1  Topic 2  Topic 3  Topic 4
   /|\       / \     /|\       /|\
 (a→b→c)   d→e    f→g→h     i→j→k
```
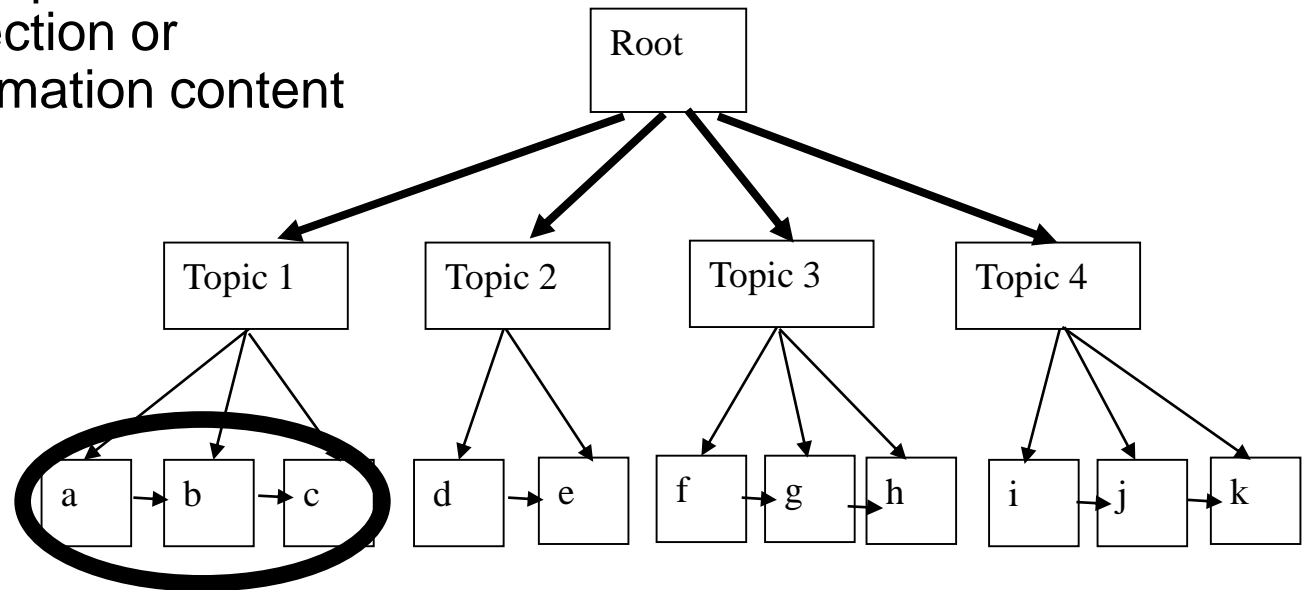
Navigational Links:
Do not let the user get lost in hyperspace

- Home page should list all major categories of information
  - Good if ALL pages list major categories
- Where am I? For all pages, at least provide:
  - an indication of the category / section to which it belongs
  - a link to home page

What navigational aids on this site?

- In a hierarchy ensure that user can easily ascend:
  - via a home page link at least
  - maybe also to local sections or overviews

- In a linear sequence, ensure that they are all linked by *next* and *previous* links
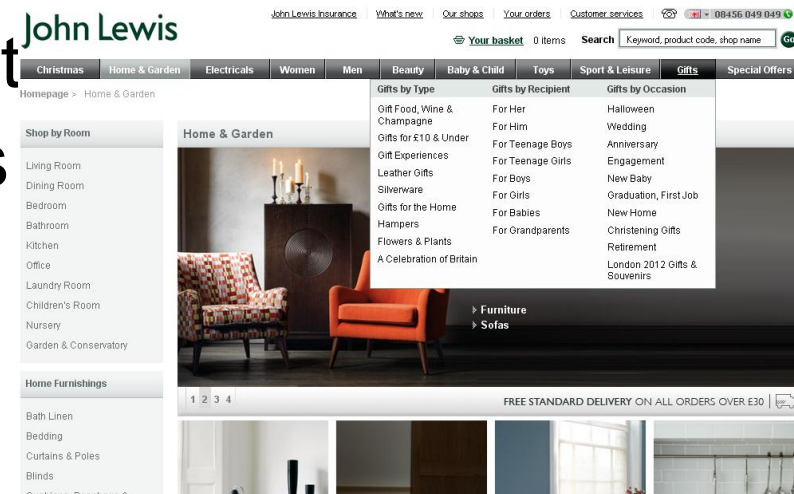
What's in a web page?

- Limit amount of data in a page
  - lots of scrolling can be annoying
  - internal page links ? Maybe separate pages are better
- Make sure language is clear
  - proof read content carefully (use spell checkers)
- Avoid monolithic pieces of text
  - screen more difficult to read than hard copy

To make reading the text easier :
→ divide up content using ***headings and subheadings***
→ use lists to make a series of points – bullet points

Page Layout

- Organise content of the page
- Create coherent units of information
- Regular pattern / structure is easier to read
- The brain tends to seek out patterns, so give it some

Layout Grids

Use "white space" to separate logical units

Be consistent

Aspects of Consistency

LOCATION on page of
- Logo / title of page
- Navigational aids
- Main content
- Related information / features

USE of
- Colours
- Text Fonts

Colour Use

- Readability of text affected by tonal contrast Light on dark use dark on light background or vice versa. Light on dark Some combinations are difficult to read:

Readability of text affected by tonal contrast – use dark on light background or vice versa. Some combinations difficult to read.

Low tone contrast	GREEN		GREEN
Higher contrast	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN
		Simulation of red/green colour-blindness	Grey scale helps to appreciate level of contrast

red-green colour blindness example

Copyright : Chapman : McAvon Media

Images

- Help to illustrate concepts and may make site attractive

- Also can waste space and can take too long to download

  – So make sure image increases information content of the page

- If images liable to occupy too much space on a page use thumb nails (i.e. click for full size)

- Background images :

  – can divert attention from the information content of the web page

    (if in doubt don't bother)
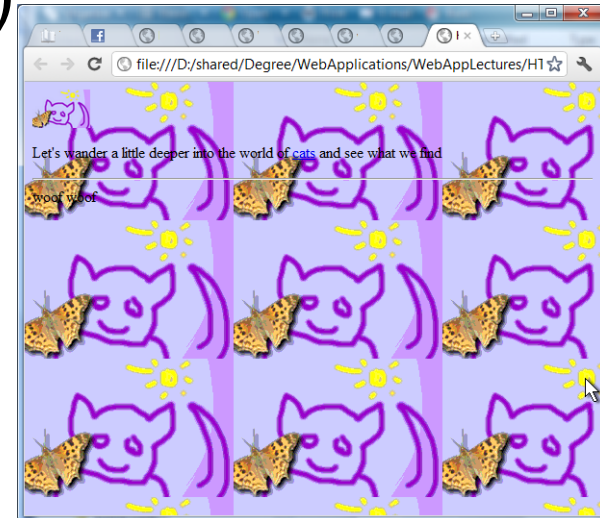
Links (explicit *vs* implicit/in-line)

- *Explicit* – if main purpose is to inform user of associated documents, then put in a list

- *Implicit* / tangential information – place links in-line

"when approaching the magical sight that is Merthyr Tydfil I spotted a woolly beast that waved a ….

? Not so good:
"when approaching the magical sight that is Merthyr Tydfil (click here for details), I spotted a woolly beast that

Cardiff

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For other uses, see Cardiff (disambiguation).

Cardiff (pronounced /ˈkɑːdɪf/ (◄listen), Welsh: *Caerdydd (info)*) is the capital, largest city and most populous county of Wales. The city is Wales' chief commercial centre, the base for most national cultural and sporting institutions, the Welsh national media, and the seat of the National Assembly for Wales. According to recent estimates, the population of the unitary authority area is 324,800,[2] while the wider metropolitan area has a population of nearly 1.1 million, more than a third of the total Welsh population.[3] Cardiff is a significant tourism centre and the most popular visitor destination in Wales with 14.6 million visitors in 2009.[4]

The city of Cardiff is the county town of the historic county of Glamorgan (and later South Glamorgan). Cardiff is part of the Eurocities

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Text and fonts

Font variables :
name/family; height; **weight**; *style*; <u>decoration</u>; colour

Use of many different named fonts can become messy

What can the font <u>variables</u> be used to communicate?

Administrative information

- Useful data:
  - contact address
  - email address for feedback
  - date document last modified
  - person who maintains web site
  - the information may vary according to part of web site

  Can use the `<address>` tag in HTML for this type of information

Postal Address

Cardiff School of Computer Science & Informatics,
Cardiff University,
Queen's Buildings,
5 The Parade, Roath,
Cardiff CF24 3AA,
UK

Tel: +44 (0)29 2087 4812
Fax: +44 (0)29 2087 4598
Email: comsc-ug@cs.cardiff.ac.uk

Head of School: Professor S. Hurley

Cardiff University Links
➡ Travel directions.
➡ The University maps and location guide.

This page was last modified on 20 November 2013, at 12:15.

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