Assignment 1: Website Review

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**Review of worldwildlife.org**

At first glance, the World Wildlife Foundation’s (WWF) website appears visually appealing portraying bright colors, high-resolution imagery and structurally organized content. It is crisp and clean, employing an adequate contrast ratio between the text and background coloring for easy readability. Through using inspirational, eye-catching interactive imagery overlaid by minimalist headings, the website successfully motivates users to click them, redirecting the user to pages containing content on specific environmental issues.

It becomes self-evident that the site was created for a nature conservation organization with the aim to raise money to protect the worlds deteriorating ecosystem. Using bright call-to-action buttons located both in the top right corner as well as in the billboard style header image (fold), the website is effective in strategically filtering users to their donation pages. The website employs sense-of-urgency marketing techniques, such as “act now” or “donate now” aimed to convert users into donating to their cause or adopting an animal.

In terms of the user experience design (UX) the homepage of the website is scannable and efficient: the content is streamlined to minimize the wording, easily navigable and organized with multiple headers. The structural architecture of the homepage employs taxonomical lists as well as highly organized content, making it simplified and user-friendly; however, in terms of the other pages on the site, the content parity is inconsistent. For example, various pages employ differing content styling techniques—such as different fonts and text colors—distracting the user. Furthermore, there is an inconsistency in the sizing of images, or grids used to align pictures, throughout the other pages making them more difficult to scan.

The website made good use of visually appealing lists, incorporating both images and text to efficiently link users to additional content. The website is useful for researching specific endangered wildlife species, as well as finding out more regarding the environmental projects the organization is engaged in.

Upon scrolling through desktop version of WWFs site, several conventions began to emerge, including:

* An interactive, clickable logo in the top, left corner of the website.
* A horizontal top utility bar containing a navigational menu bar, a search bar and obviously clickable call-to-action buttons.
* A footer menu containing an email signup section, a secondary menu of administrative content items, the companies address and contact information and social media icons.

Although, there were a few conventions that were not followed that, in my opinion, decreased the usability of the desktop version of the site, such as:

* A horizontal menu bar is pinned to the top of the page of content heavy pages to efficiently navigate through the context; however, it is unconventional in that it was a different menu bar then the main homepage bar and does not contain the WWF clickable logo to redirect the user back to the homepage. Rather, the user must scroll to the top of the page once again to access the unpinned main horizontal menu.
* The login feature is located at the bottom section of the homepage, as well as randomly placed with form fields in utility bars at the top of other pages, requiring a bit of searching to find.
* The unnecessary use of sliders to display repeating images making the website feel cluttered.
* Although there are limited distractions, such as advertisements, to persuade the user away from the websites ultimate goal—donate now—there is a banner that appears at the bottom of the species directory page that is not formatted correctly, causing it to overlay the bottom of the footer preventing the user from viewing it.

In terms of accessibility, the website has appropriately labeled button links (“Donate” and “Adopt”) as well as labeled form fields or search boxes. There exists easy to find links to search indexes of, for example, every possible animal species available for adoption. The website appears to use digital hierarchies, for example similar content is grouped together visually within a context box, image or under a main header. Although there are multiple headings and/or subheadings organized within single viewport areas that are of the same size and emphasis, making the hierarchy, or level of importance of the content, less obvious to the user requiring them to think about which content to view next.

WWFs website utilizes a responsive design: as the viewpoint window was made smaller, the content continually reformatted itself to fit within the viewport, maintaining its format and contextual styling. In addition, the navigational menu is strategically reformatted from the horizontal style menu to a hamburger style menu once it reaches a certain breakpoint within the viewpoint size. In addition, the website maintains its structural architecture when viewed on differing viewpoints, for example the desktop version versus the mobile version.

Overall, WWFs website is user-friendly and visually appealing with a well-presented informational architecture. The site is simple to use, scannable and easy to navigate limiting users from becoming frustrated and leaving. The main downsides to the website are its inconsistency of its content parity and unnecessary use of slider bars to display repeating images cluttering the page. It is successful in employing strategic marketing techniques, such as content conveying a sense of urgency, call-to-action buttons and social media links, to entice users to donate to their conservational organization or help through virtually adopting a wild animal—I *am now the proud mother of a blue-footed booby.*