

Webpage design

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Preface

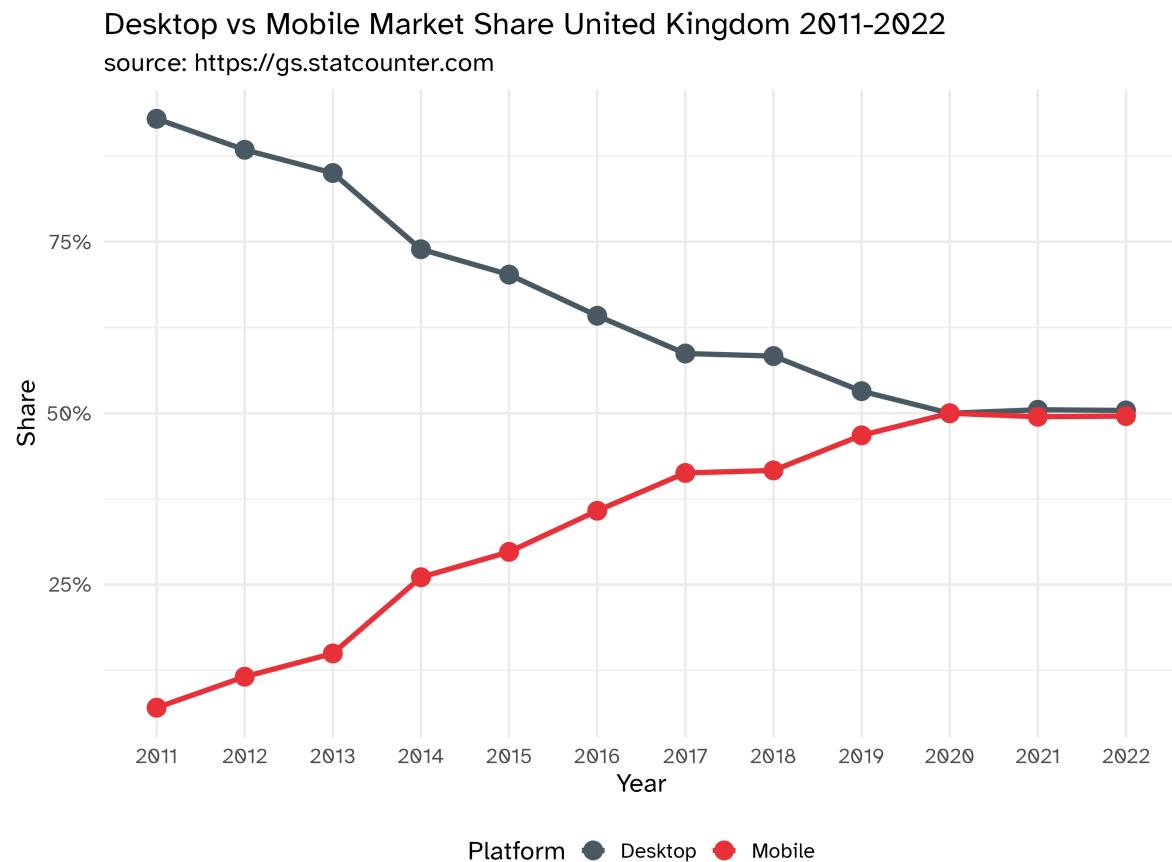


Figure 1: The world wide web turned 34 years old in 2023. The grey line shows the share of web views in the UK from desktop computers and the red line shows the share of web views in the UK from mobile devices.

1 What to read instead

Nielsen Norman Group and Gov.uk

<https://www.nngroup.com/articles/how-users-read-on-the-web/>

<https://www.nngroup.com/topic/writing-web/>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-design-principles>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/content-design/writing-for-gov-uk>

<https://southampton.on.worldcat.org/oclc/798674328> Letting go of the words Janice Redish

2 Service design

What are we trying to achieve?

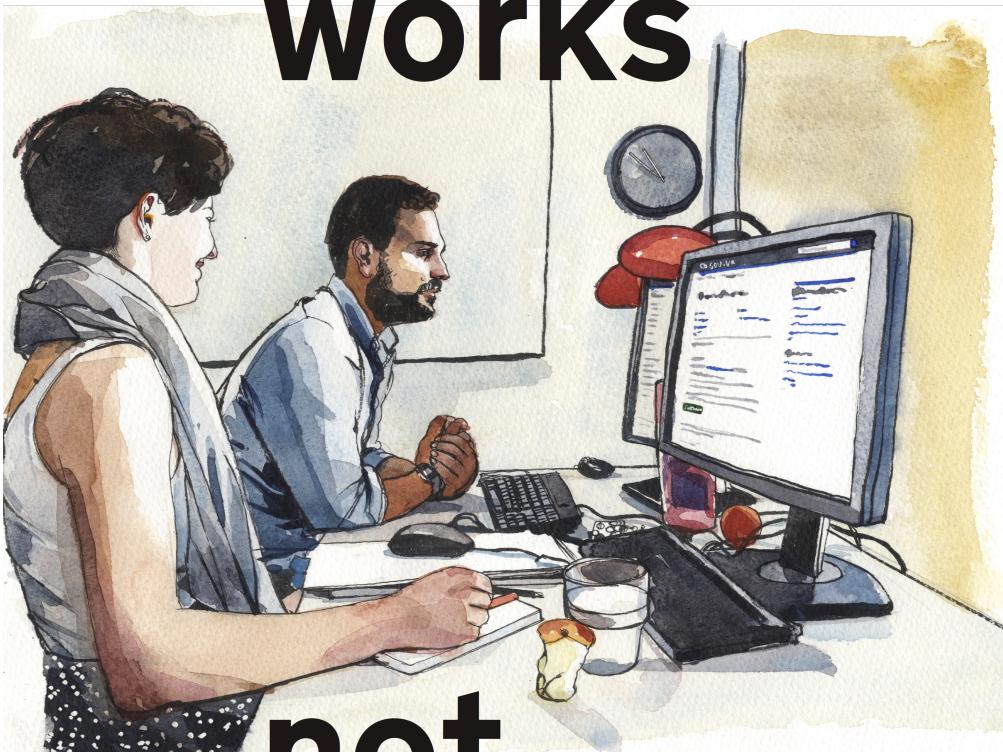
2.1 Optimisation and Enshittification

This section can be skipped, but if you are interested in thinking more about why web experience has got worse over time

[Ivan Vendrov The Tyranny of the Marginal User](#)

[Cory Doctorow on The ‘Enshittification’ of TikTok](#)

find what works



not what's popular

User
research
isn't about
finding
out what
users like,
but what
works best
for them.

Government Digital Service

userresearch.blog.gov.uk

Figure 2.1: Find What Works, Not What's Popular poster, GOV.UK Government Digital Service.

3 How do people read webpages?

3.1 What's the first thing we do on landing on a web page?

Check we are where we want to be! If not, we move on.

What does that imply about page design?

3.2 What is the difference between the web and other formats?

- We scan in an F-pattern.
- Long form (>1,000 words) we read in chunks, look for summaries, highlights or key-points.

4 Writing better sentences

4.1 How do we improve sentences?

Bennett Rules: <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/jfb/bengor.pdf>

1. Verbs are better than nouns
2. Adverbs are better than adjectives
3. Favour the Anglo-Saxon
4. Banish ‘very’ and its ilk
5. Abstract nouns should be fought like the devil
6. Avoid undue repetition
7. Be careful with commas
8. Attend to the sound

5 Using imagery and visuals

5.1 Why would we use visuals?

- To impart information that cannot be easily expressed in words e.g. trends.
- To create ambience.

5.2 Why would we not use visuals?

- They make scanning more difficult, especially on mobile devices.

References