

Styleguides for the Web

Paul Robert Lloyd

Oxford Geek Night 21
13 April 2011

Big Clients



- At Clearleft we work with a lot of big organisations.
- Working on projects of this scale means having to think differently than you would on smaller projects.
- You **can't design all the pages** that will appear on the site.
- Therefore we think a lot about **design systems** that can outlast our time on the project.

Brasília

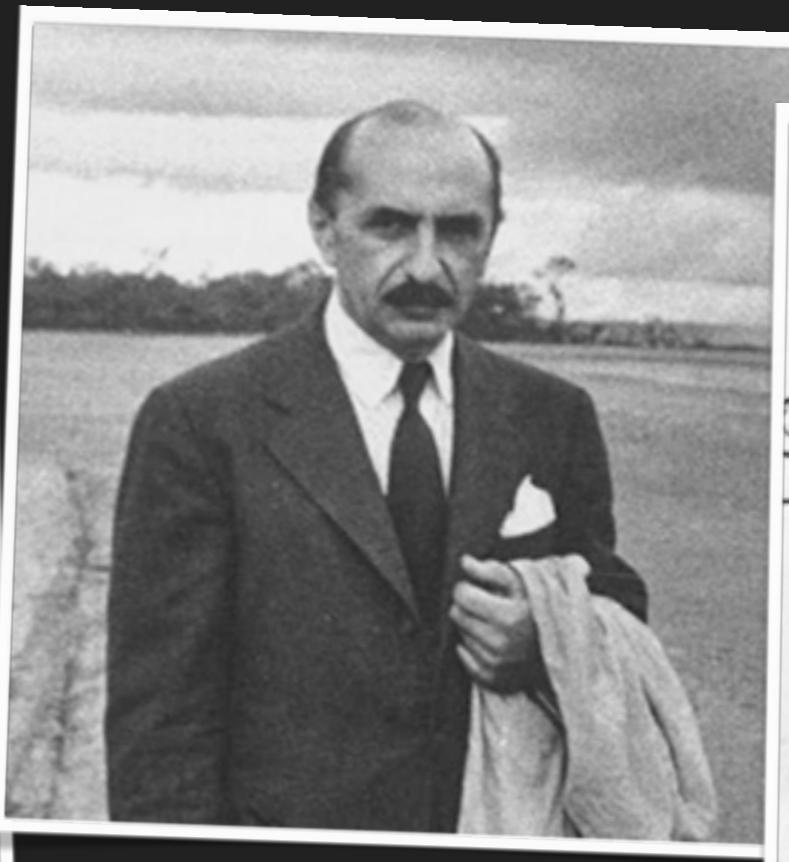
Design on a grand scale

- Last month I travelled to Brasília, the capital city of Brazil that was purpose built during the mid-1950's.
- Built in the very centre of the country's sparse interior.
- Completed in just 41 months, inaugurated in April 1960.

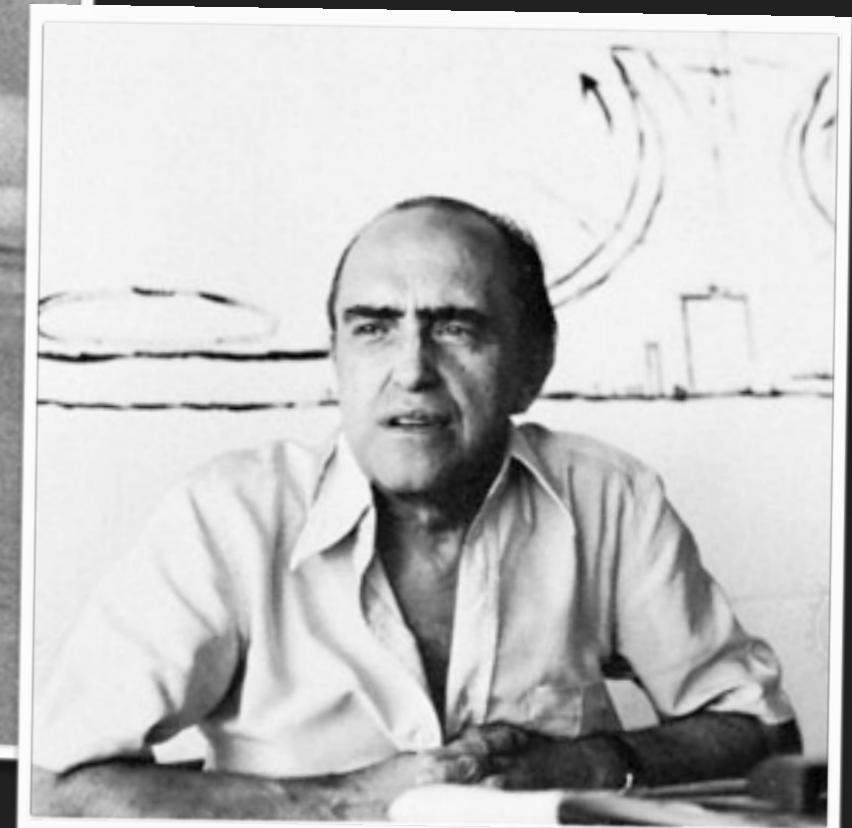
'Fifty years progress in five'



Juscelino Kubitschek
President



Lúcio Costa
City Planner



Oscar Niemeyer
Architect

- Honoured a campaign pledge of **President Juscelino Kubitschek** who promised 'fifty years of progress in five'.
- Street layout devised by **Lúcio Costa** resembles an aeroplane or bird, with the city divided into different sectors.
- Modernist architecture attracts most attention, with all its major buildings designed by **Oscar Niemeyer**.
- For the first time an architect was able to design on the scale of a city.
- By designing on this grand scale, he was able to apply patterns.

Lines



- Of course most buildings are rectangular or cuboid, but here the forms are exaggerated.
- **National Congress, Brasilia Palace Hotel and the National Library.**

Curves



- Strong lines often contrast with soft curves (Niemeyer said these curves are symbolic of the curves of Brazilian women!)
- **Chamber of Deputies** (upturned dish), **Federal Senate** (Dome) and **Museum of the Republic**.

Reflection



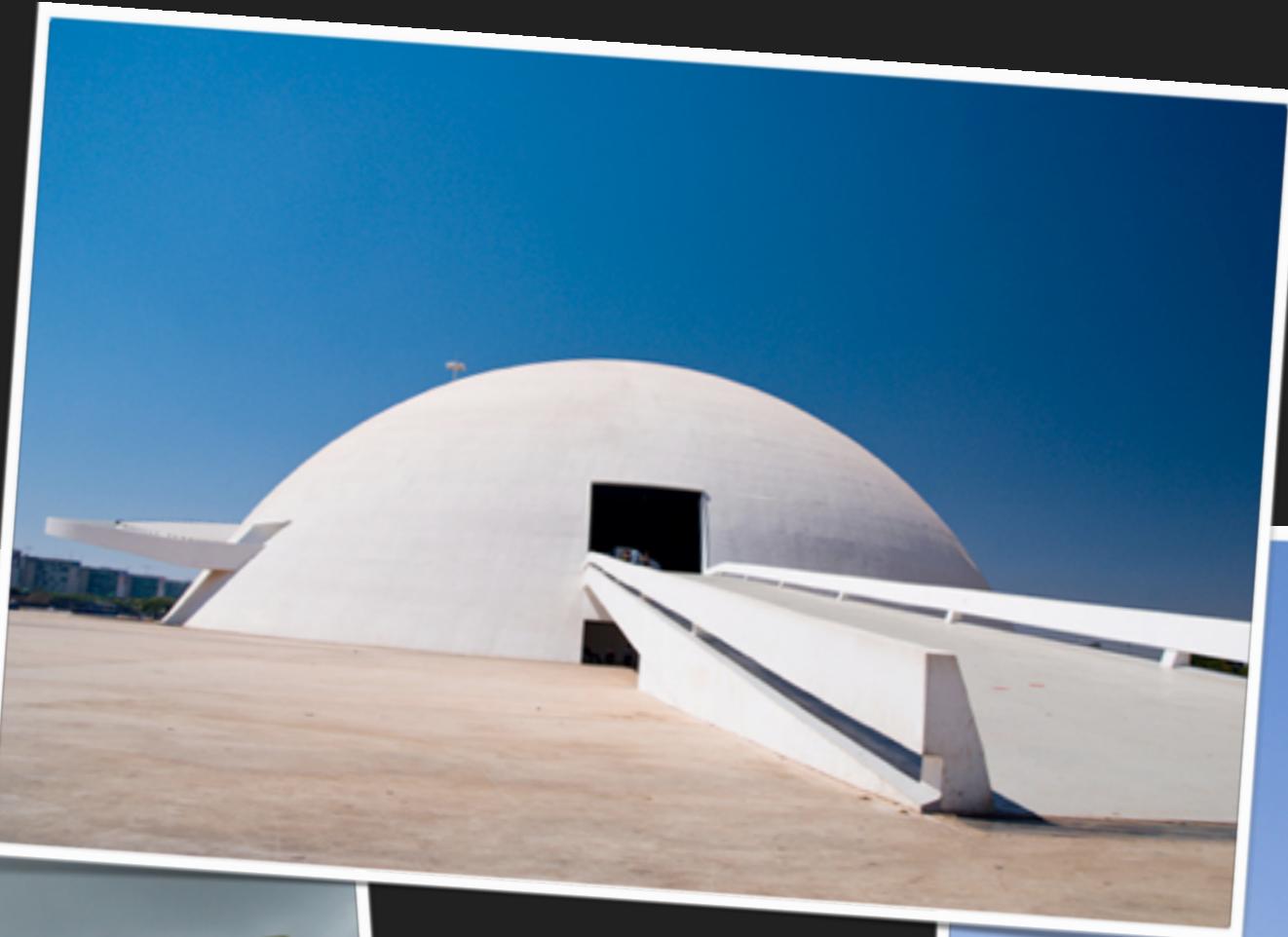
- Largely concrete buildings are often softened by being set next to pools of water, creating these strong reflections.
- **National Congress, Itamaraty Palace and the Presidential Residence.**

Suspension



- One of Niemeyer's favourite tricks is show his buildings suspended off the ground.
- Accomplished by using these very distinctive pillars.
- Here at the **Supreme Court**, at the **Presidential Residence** and at the **Presidential Palace**.

Entrances



- Perhaps the most notable feature of his buildings is how you enter.
- Long, sometimes winding ramps.
- **Museum of Indigenous People, Museum of the Republic, and at the National Congress.**
- Not always external, can be internal too, the best example is at the **Metropolitana Cathedral...**

Entrances



- Here you decent down a long ramp into darkness...
- ...before arriving under the beautiful stained glass roof, with light flooding in.
- The very definition of user experience!

Common identity

- Utilising these patterns (and more) ensured the new capital had unique but distinct identity.
- Tying all the major buildings together.
- Niemeyer is still working at the age of 103, and is still Brasilia's go-to-man for many of their key building projects.
- Upon passing away he will have left a living breathing style guide for the city.

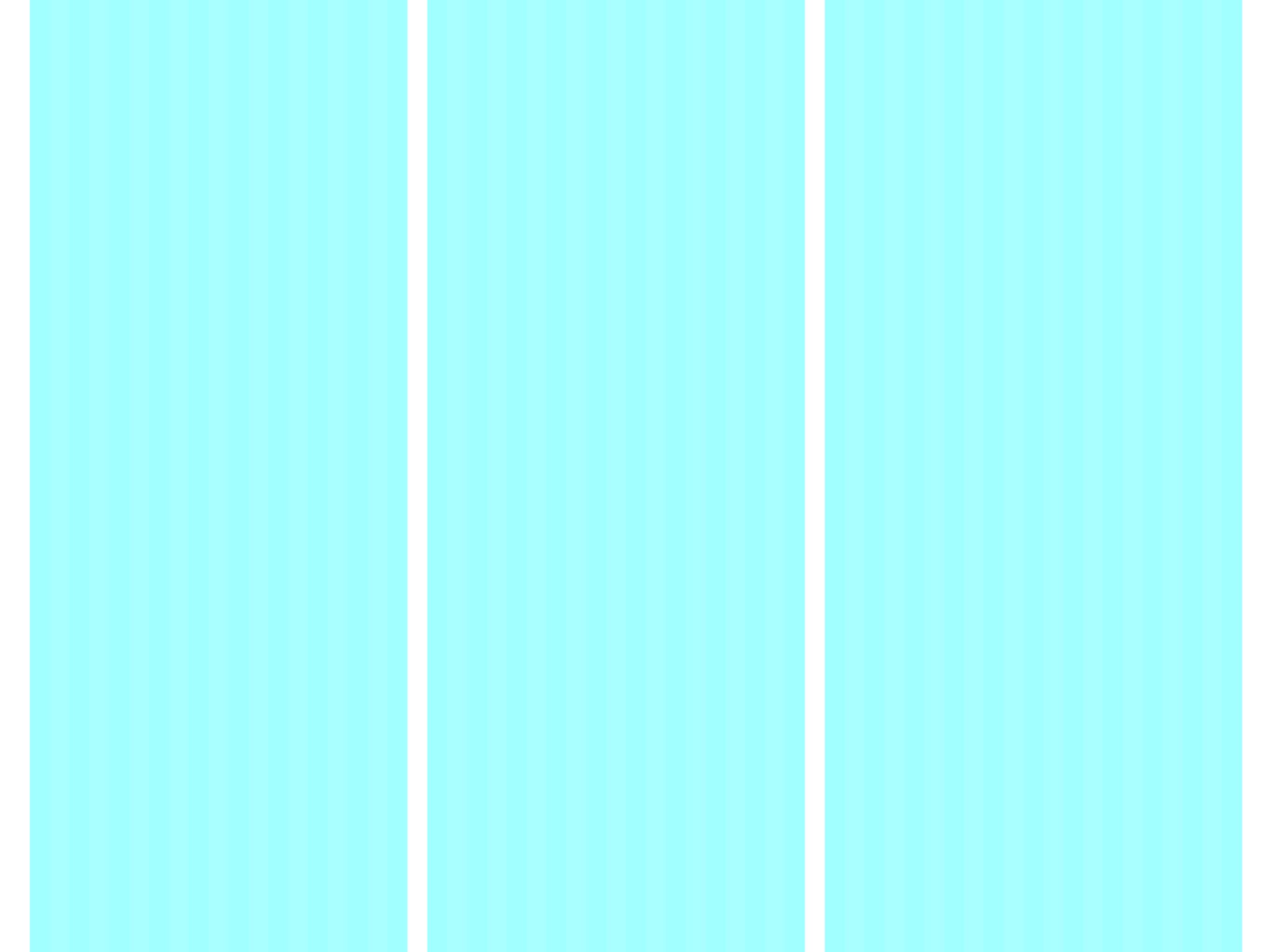
BBC Global Visual Language

- The BBC for a long time had a **segregated and disjointed website** at cost of brand and user experience.
- Expensive **redesigning the wheel for every new website**.
- Started using visual design guidelines called the GVL, which was essentially a global header and footer and simple grid.
- Last year the BBC announced GVL3, third version of its Global Visual Language.

BBC Global Experience Language

- Later renamed GEL—Global Experience Language.
- Contained design pattern library as well as visual design guidelines, took into account interactions and behaviours as well.
- An acceptance that visual design on the web is one part of a larger experience.

- There is an underlying grid of 61 vertical 16 pixel wide units.

- 
- On top of which large columns can be formed, typically three like these.
 - The right column is slightly larger to accommodate ads on international versions of the site.

- There is also a baseline of 8px which encourages horizontally alignment of typography and different elements...



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- ...such as the global header and footer.

9 April 2011 Last updated at 11:50

RSS

LATEST: Ballabriggs wins the 2011 Grand National ahead of Oscar Time and Don't Push It

Bomb 'could have caused carnage'

Police say that a 500lb bomb left in a van under the main Belfast to Dublin road near Newry may have been destined for a town centre.

Police officer on Newry bomb

Watch/Listen

Sunshine changes
Britain's mood

US building implodes
in planned blast

BBC News Channel

BBC Radio 5 live

Ballabriggs seals National glory

Ballabriggs, ridden by Jason Maguire and trained by Donald McCain, produces a superb display to win the 164th Aintree Grand National. SPORT

Ed Miliband urges hacking probe

Army in Egypt protest crackdown

Six killed in Dutch mall rampage

Features & Analysis

In pictures

Photos from the action at Aintree on Grand National day

Royal wedding quiz

Which royal bride didn't promise to 'obey'?

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- There are now clearer guidance around type usage with recommend sizes, letter spacing and spacing.
- The primary font is Arial with Gill Sans reserved for the local headers.

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- Images and videos align with the underlying grid.

NEWS

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|| < >

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- A custom icon set was created, so all these sites share the same iconography.
- Consistent placement: left of text, top left of images.

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- There are also common design patterns.

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Pattern Library

Local Navigation

Carousel

Autosuggest

Overlay Panel

Tool Tips

Slideshow

- A pattern library documents key interactions used across the site.
- Auto suggest, Navigation, Carousels, Auto suggest, Tooltips, Slideshows.
- ‘A comprehensive set of re-usable page components’.

The image displays three distinct BBC website sections side-by-side:

- NEWS BUSINESS**: A vertical sidebar on the left featuring news about US banks in 2010, historical royal wedding highlights, a timeline of key events, and a 'Share this page' section.
- HUMAN PLANET EXPLORER**: A central section with a large banner image of a person swimming. It includes links for Home, Environments, Seasons, Life events, and Survival skills, along with a video player showing a nature documentary.
- FOOD OCCASIONS**: A right-hand section for 'Thai New Year' featuring a photo of green onions and garlic, and a 'COMMISSIONING' section for 2011 and 2012.

- Built upon common components and design elements.
- Fits in with other sections of the website, even though they may have been designed by different people.

The image is a collage of several BBC website screenshots, illustrating how brands can express themselves within the BBC's digital ecosystem. The websites shown include:

- BBC Radio 2**: Features a large orange '2' logo, a 'Listen' button, and sections for 'Home', 'Shows', 'Schedule', and 'Music'. It includes a quiz about Strictly Come Dancing and links to 'Slink Mail' and 'Links'.
- Strictly Come Dancing**: Shows the title card with the show's name and a group of contestants.
- BBC Three**: Features a woman holding a microphone, with a pink frame around the right side of the screen.
- Being Human**: Shows the main cast of the TV show.
- BBC News**: Shows a news article about 'Not everything about being human is nice.' by George.
- BBC Radio 1**: Shows a digital radio player interface with 'Digital Radio' and 'Downloads' buttons.
- BBC Sport**: Shows a section for 'Get help with ways to listen'.
- BBC Weather**: Shows a snowy landscape with the text 'Snowy Christmas! If it's warm inside and snowy outside, we're loving it.'

- Yet brands can still express themselves within this framework too.

Built-in flexibility

We wanted to create something that is flexible enough to allow our brands their full expression whilst uniting them into a coherent user experience.

Bronwyn van der Merwe

Head of Design and User Experience, Central Team, FM&T

- The existence of guidelines **doesn't mean strict conformity**.
- Guidelines can remain flexible enough to allow for different brand expression.

Common foundation

- **Separate design agencies** or groups can build different websites yet have them work as part of a greater whole.
- It also makes it **easier for users to use** the site; experiencing common interactions, navigation, placement of content.

It's like trainspotting for BBC websites!

The screenshot shows a BBC website with a yellow header bar containing the BBC logo and navigation links for Home, About, Archive, RSS, and a search bar. The main content area has a white background with a large orange header "GELLED". Below it is a section titled "Music Showcase" with a camera icon, followed by a "Launched: November 2010" message and a paragraph about the site's purpose. A "Experimentation" section follows, discussing the visual design and its experimental nature. Another section covers the "Home page and overall IA", mentioning the use of AJAX and spinner effects. The "The Play Bar" section discusses the play bar feature. A "Further Reading" section lists three BBC Internet Blog posts. At the bottom, there are social sharing icons and a note section with one entry from "zonovo". Navigation arrows for "Next Post" and "Previous Post" are also visible.

Mobile

Home | About | Archive | RSS

GELLED

1 December 2010 1 note

BBC
MUSIC ALPHA

Home Showcase
Collections | Browse Clips | FAQ

Audio & Video Collections
Exclusive music clips curated by presenters, guests and BBC staff.

Jools Holland Collection
Later with Jools Holland

Gideon Coe Collection
Interview Classics

INCLUDING ARTISTS
Kings Of Leon / Arctic Monkeys / Robert Plant
Adele / Bryan Ferry / and more

INCLUDING ARTISTS
Siouxsie Sioux / Leor
Marvin Gaye / Bruce

music Alpha

1 note

zonovo liked this

gelled posted this

Next Post Previous Post

BBC GEL Guidelines
BBC Internet Blog

About
Archive

Clearleft

Thinking in patterns

- When we are asked to deliver HTML code, we now take a modular approach.

Pattern Portfolio

Home Welcome back Username Your account Log in

razoo

donate >
Find and support your favourite causes

fundraise >
Start raising money for worthwhile causes

FIND A NONPROFIT OR FUNDRAISE

Home > Foo > This page

Name of non-profit

120 x 120

Verified explanatory paragraph with a class of verified.

XX Donors [Be the first](#) | **XX** Fundraisers | **XX** Fans [Become a fan](#)

This project ends on **XX Month Year**

Your donation will be matched **Name of benefactor**

[Link to more information](#)

Share this

550 x 415

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Duis fermentum faucibus augue. Sed in eros et nunc ullamcorper tempus in at augue. Aenean aliquam sem ut metus ullamcorper sed iaculis risus commodo. Etiam egestas lacinia tellus ac consequat. Morbi varius lectus at turpis sodales eget sagittis felis gravida.

Lorem ipsum dolor.

75 x 75 75 x 75

Vestibulum blandit lacinia enim, ac tincidunt neque sagittis nec. Pellentesque semper tincidunt sollicitudin. Nullam nec eros nunc, eu posuere arcu. Morbi dapibus varius velit at luctus. Nulla at ante eget mauris viverra convallis. Nullam rhoncus sollicitudin diam in faucibus. Proin quis dignissim elit. Mauris luctus, metus sed volutpat lacinia, elit nunc egestas justo, ut feugiat arcu mi eu lacus. Cras ut feugiat est. Duis rutrum velit vitae odio semper cursus. Donec ut mi sem. Sed elementum volutpat purus, ut mattis augue vestibulum sed.

Level two heading

[View all](#)

Make a donation

Lorum ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

\$XXX raised of \$XX

\$ **XX** lorem ipsum
 \$ **XXX** dolor sit amet
 \$ **XXXX** lorem ipsum dolor
 \$ **type your amount** min XX

ADD TO GIVING CART

Make a donation

Lorum ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

\$ **type your amount** min XX

Make this a **one-time donation**

ADD TO GIVING CART

Level three heading

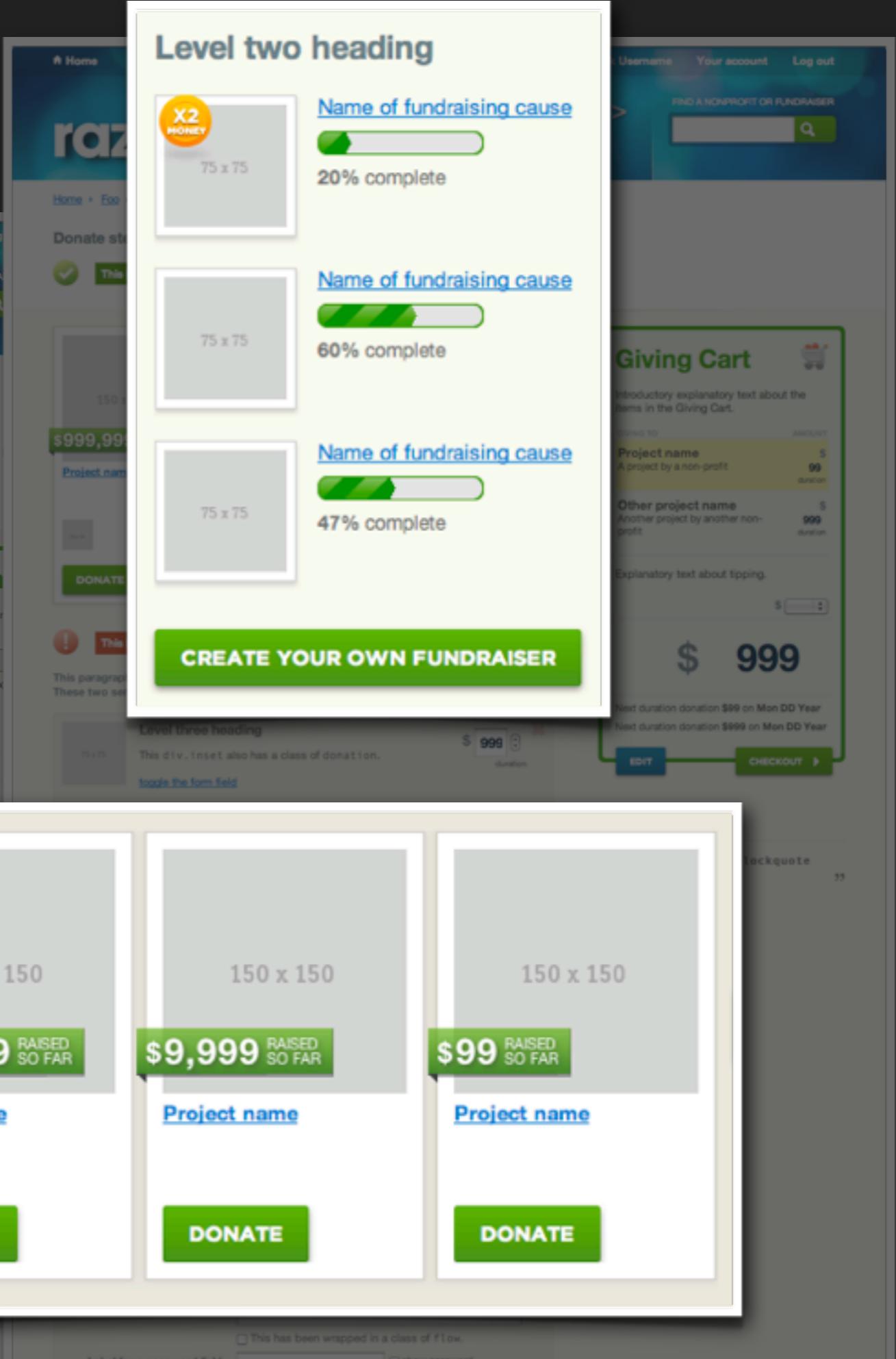
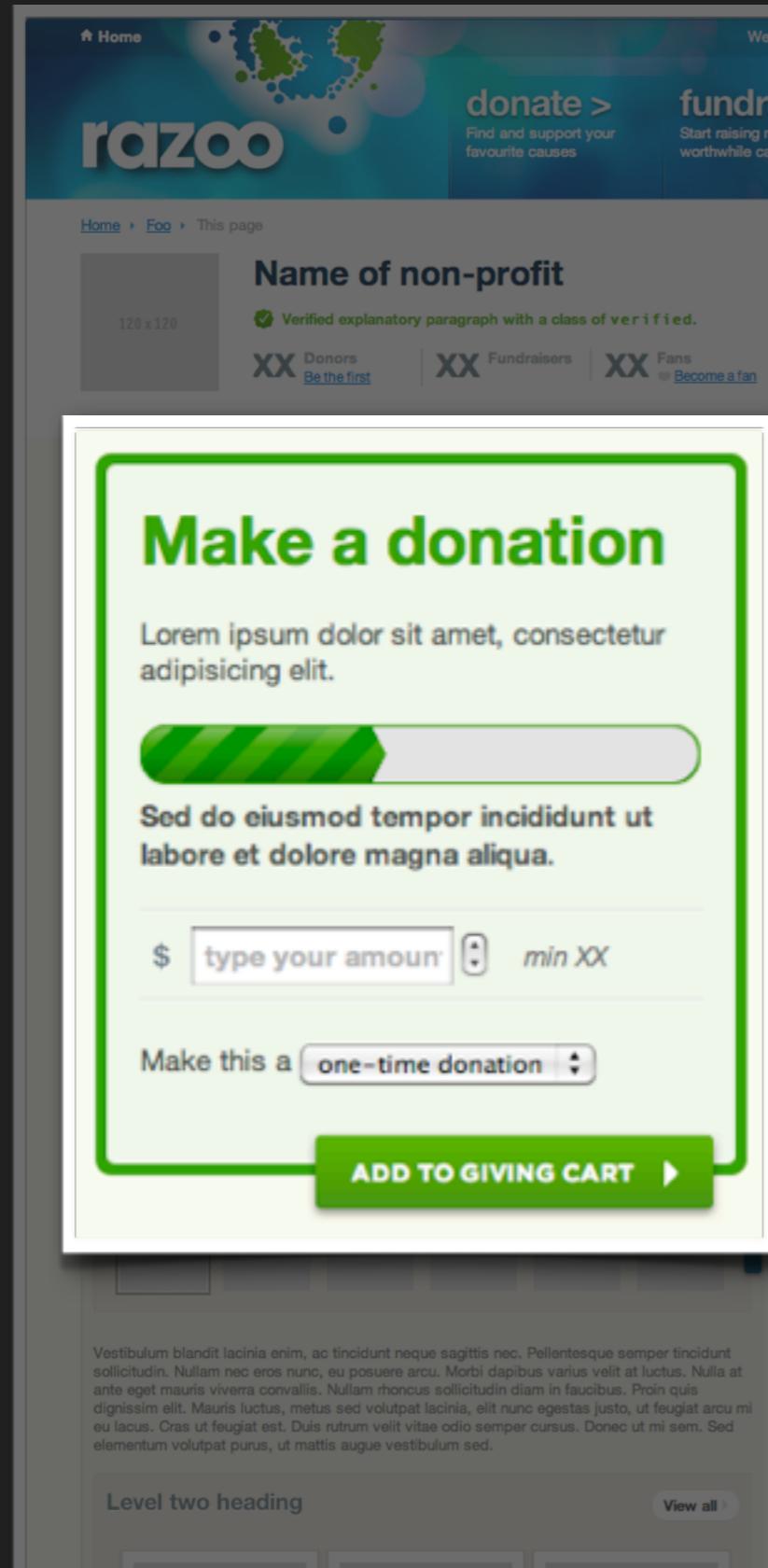
Lorum ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et

The screenshot shows the Razoo website interface with several key features highlighted:

- Header:** Welcome back Username, Your account, Log out.
- Top Navigation:** Home, razoo, donate > (Find and support your favourite causes), fundraise > (Start raising money for worthwhile causes), FIND A NONPROFIT OR FUNDRAISER, and a search bar.
- Page Content:**
 - Donate step X of Y Level one heading:** A green header with a checkmark icon and the text "This is a feedback message".
 - Three donation cards:** Each card has a placeholder image (150 x 150), a progress bar (\$999,999 RAISED SO FAR), a project name (Project name), a "DONATE" button, and a small "View" link.
 - Giving Cart:** A green-bordered box containing a title "Giving Cart", introductory text, a table with columns "GIVING TO" and "AMOUNT", and two items:
 - Project name:** A project by a non-profit, \$99 duration.
 - Other project name:** Another project by another non-profit, \$999 duration.Explanatory text about tipping and a tipping amount input field (\$ 0).
 - Level three heading:** A red-bordered box with an exclamation mark icon and the text "This is a feedback message with a class of error."
 - Form field with error message:** A grey inset with a "75 x 75" label, a "Level three heading" label, explanatory text, a "BUTTON →" button, and a "toggle the form field" link. It also includes a "duration" input field with a value of \$999 and a red error icon.
 - Multiple radio buttons:** A list of radio buttons grouped together with labels \$0, \$X, \$XX, \$XXX, and a "type your amount" input field.
 - A div with a class of receipt:** A green-bordered box with a "Level three heading" label, a "A div with a class of receipt" label, a "\$ 999" amount, and explanatory text about the next duration donation.
 - Form fields with validation:** A grey inset with a "Label text" field, an "Error message goes here" red-bordered box with an exclamation mark, a "Longer label text" field with an "option one" dropdown, explanatory text, and an "Even longer label text" field with a large text area.

- We develop individual modules and elements first, and provide these together in what we term a pattern portfolio.
 - This is not a single page design, but a page of elements.
 - We might also provide examples of pages constructed with these modules.

Pattern Portfolio



- Pulled out some examples contained in the Razoo pattern portfolio.
 - Sometimes designs a reference for building pages, sometime wireframes.

Pattern Primer

Pattern Primer

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit.
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit.
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit.
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit.

```
<p class="lede">Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,  
consectetur adipisicing elit.</p>  
<p class="explanation">Lorem ipsum dolor sit  
amet, consectetur adipisicing elit.</p>  
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur  
adipisicing elit.</p>  
<p class="extra">Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,  
consectetur adipisicing elit.</p>
```

[text.html](#)

Level two heading

Level three heading

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit.

```
<div class="overlay">  
<span class="pointer"></span>  
<div class="overlay-content">  
<div class="gutter">  
<h2>Level two heading</h2>  
<h3>Level three heading</h3>  
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur  
adipisicing elit.</p>  
</div><!-- /.gutter -->  
</div><!-- /.overlay-content -->  
</div><!-- /.overlay -->
```

[overlay.html](#)

Level two heading

Level three heading

Paragraph text. Lorem ipsum dolor.

```
<div class="inset">  
<div class="gutter">  
<h2>Level two heading</h2>  
<h3>Level three heading</h3>  
<p>Paragraph text. Lorem ipsum dolor.</p>  
</div><!-- /.gutter -->  
</div><!-- /.inset -->
```

[inset.html](#)

50 x 50 X days ago

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

```
<div class="hfeed">  
<li class="hentry">  
<span class="vcard author">  
<a href="/path/to/profile" class="url">  
  
</a>  
</span>  
<abbr class="published entry-title" title="YYYY-MM-DDTmm:ss">X days ago</abbr>  
<p class="entry-content">  
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur  
adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempo.
```

[hatom.html](#)

Level two heading

Level three heading

This is a feedback message.

This is a feedback message with a class of error.

```
<div class="heading">  
<h2>Level two heading</h2>  
</div><!-- /.heading -->  
  
<div class="heading">  
<h3>Level three heading</h3>  
</div><!-- /.heading -->
```

[heading.html](#)

```
<div class="feedback">  
<p>This is a feedback message.</p>  
</div><!-- /.feedback -->  
  
<div class="feedback error">  
<p>This is a feedback message with a class of  
<code>error</code>.</p>  
</div><!-- /.feedback.error -->
```

[feedback.html](#)

Level two heading

placeholder text

POST

Firstname Lastname Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.
DAY AT HH:MM

```
<div class="inset wall">  
<div class="gutter">  
<h2>Level two heading</h2>  
<form method="post" action="/path">  
<div class="gutter">  
<div class="field">  
<input class="message" type="text" name="placeholder">  
<div>Placeholder text</div>  
</div><!-- /.field -->  
<button class="edit"><em>Post</em></button>  
</div><!-- /.gutter -->  
</form>
```

[wall.html](#)

- We have started to take this approach further, starting with what we term a pattern primer.
- This shows even finer detail, showing code snippets for the major underlying components.
- Combined they can create different patterns.

Pattern Primer

Level two heading

Level three heading

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit.

Pattern Primer

```
<p class="lede">Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,  
consectetur adipisicing elit.</p>  
<p class="explanation">Lorem ipsum dolor sit  
amet, consectetur adipisicing elit.</p>  
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur  
adipisicing elit.</p>  
<p class="extra">Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,
```

```
<div class="overlay">  
<span class="pointer"></span>  
<div class="overlay-content">  
<div class="gutter">  
<h2>Level two heading</h2>  
<h3>Level three heading </h3>  
<p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur  
adipisicing elit.</p>  
</div> <!-- /.gutter -->  
</div> <!-- /.overlay-content -->  
</div> <!-- /.overlay -->
```

[overlay.html](#)



This is a feedback message.



This is a feedback message with a class of error.

```
<div class="feedback">  
<p>This is a feedback message.</p>  
</div> <!-- /.feedback -->
```

```
<div class="feedback error">  
<p>This is a feedback message with a class of  
<code>error</code>.</p>  
</div> <!-- /.feedback .error -->
```

[feedback.html](#)

[heading.html](#)

BUTTON TEXT

BUTTON TEXT ➔

BUTTON TEXT ➔

BUTTON TEXT

```
<p><button type="submit">Button  
text</button></p>  
<p><button type="submit"><em>Button  
text</em></button></p>  
<p><button type="submit"><strong>Button  
text</strong></button></p>  
<p class="action"><button type="submit">Button  
text</button></p>  
<p class="action"><button  
type="submit"><em>Button  
text</em></button></p>
```

[button.html](#)

- We have started to take this approach further, starting with what we term a pattern primer.
- This shows even finer detail, showing code snippets for the major underlying components.
- Combined they can create different patterns.

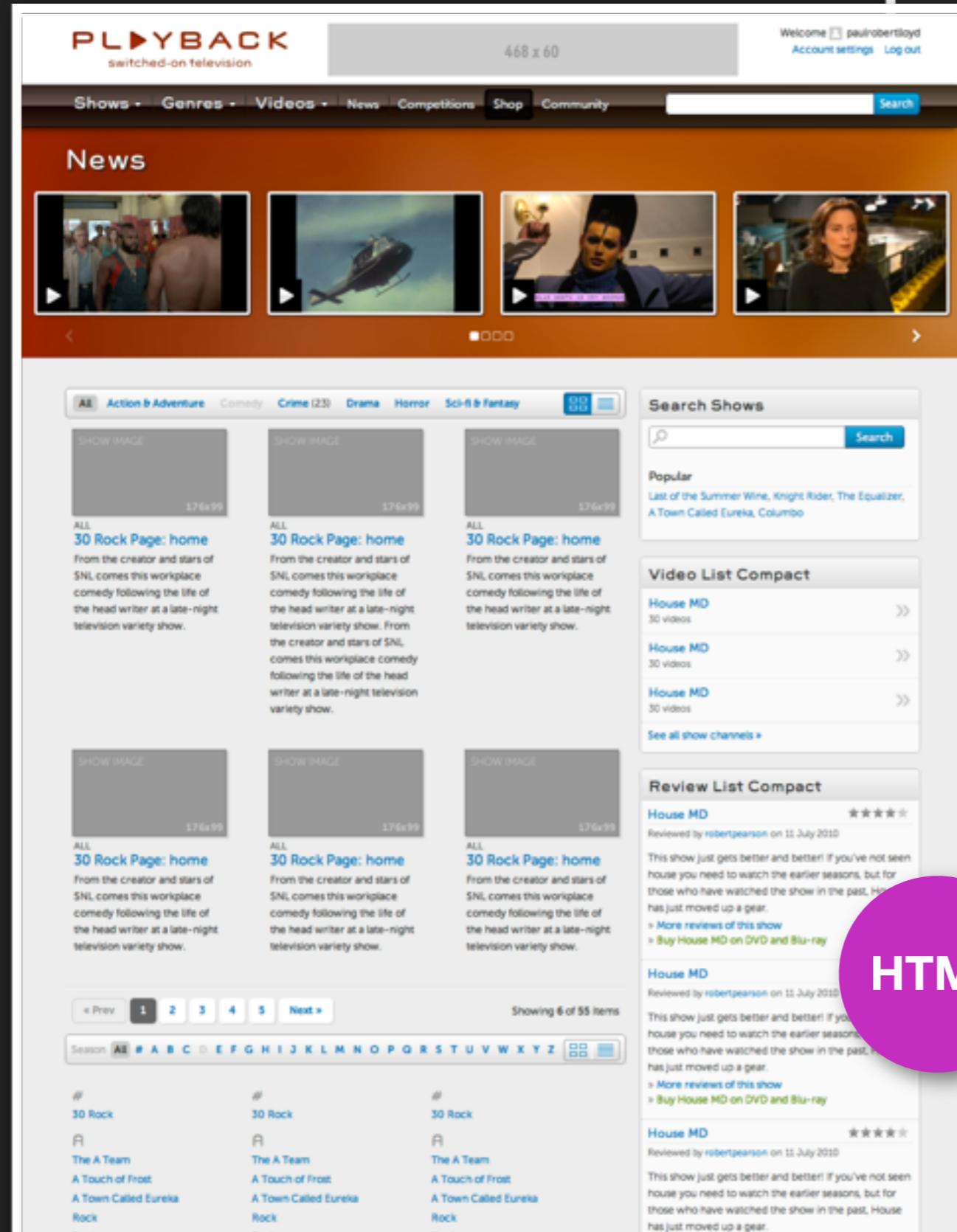
An extensible system

- Allows the developers to run with this code, develop new pages on their own.
- Transparent, not providing a closed-off final product, something that can be built upon over the lifetime of the site.
- Moves away from the notion that a website redesign is a one-time fixed length project.

Final Thoughts

Taking this further

Visual Styleguide



This screenshot shows a detailed view of the Playback website's video library. At the top, there's a promotional banner for BT Total Broadband. Below it is a navigation bar with 'Shows', 'Genres', 'Videos', 'News', 'Competitions', 'Shop', 'Community', a search bar, and a 'Search' button. The main content area lists several video entries: '30 Rock' (3:21), 'A Town Called Eureka' (2:23), 'Alias Smith & Jones' (2:14), 'Amazing Stories' (0:45), and '30 Rock Season 3 Trailer' (30 Rock). Below this is a 'Section Title (h1)' followed by a 'Second Level Heading (h2)'. The text discusses the fourth season of 'The Office: An American Workplace'. To the right, there's a 'Module Heading (h2)' for 'Third Level Heading Linked (h3)', which provides details about the show's executive producer, Gervais and Merchant. It also mentions the character Dr. Gregory House and his role as the Chief of Diagnostic Medicine. A note at the bottom states that 'WITH LEVEL HEADING (a.show, a.genre) IS USED FOR LINKED HEADINGS SUCH AS FOR GENRES AND SHOW TITLES'. The bottom part of the screenshot shows a 'Review List Compact' for 'House MD' with a 4-star rating, a review by 'robertperson' from July 2010, and links for more reviews and buying on DVD/Blu-ray. It also includes sections for 'ARTICLE IMAGE SMALL THUMB' (240x171), 'VIDEO IMAGE WALLPAPER' (144x81), 'PHOTO THUMB' (60x45), and 'USER' (48x48). A large pink circle labeled 'HTML' is overlaid on the left side of the screenshot, and another large pink circle labeled 'PNG' is overlaid on the right side.

- Starting to think along similar lines further up the design process.
- Last few projects, pulled together different patterns in Fireworks towards end of the design stage.
- Forces you to think about the design and help you apply styles consistently.
- Starting point for front-end development, and to compare the final build with the original design.

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Third Level Heading Linked

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Please correct the following fields

A paragraph with a note

- First name is required
- Last name is required
- Username is required

Please enter the following information to sign up with Universal Playback, or [sign in](#) if you already have an account.

First name

Last name

Email address

Gender Female

Username

Password

Confirm password

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You can use your Facebook account to log in to Playback

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HTML

The screenshot shows a complex web page layout with several distinct sections:

- Header:** Features a "PLAYBACK" logo, a "BT Total Broadband" advertisement, and social media links for "Sign In or Register" and "Connect".
- Navigation:** Includes a "Genres" dropdown menu, "Videos", "News", "Competitions", "Shop", "Community", a search bar, and a "Search" button.
- Content Area:** Displays a list of video items with thumbnails, titles, and descriptions. Examples include "30 Rock", "A Town Called Eureka", "Alias Smith & Jones", and "Amazing Stories". Each item includes a play button icon and a duration (e.g., 1:21, 2:23, 2:14, 0:45).
- Section Headers:** "Section Title (h1)", "Second Level Heading (h2)", and "Module Heading (h2)" are visible.
- Text and Notes:** A note about required fields ("Please correct the following fields") and a note about first names being required.
- Form Fields:** A registration form with fields for First name, Last name, Email address, Gender (Female), Username, Password, Confirm password, and a checkbox for Newsletter subscription.
- Facebook Integration:** A section for logging in with a Facebook account, including fields for Username and Password, and links for "Forgot?" and "Log In".
- Footer:** Includes links for "About Universal Playback", "Contact Us", "Newsletter", and copyright information.
- Image Placeholder:** A large pink circle containing the word "HTML" is overlaid on the page, indicating where certain visual elements are defined in the source code.
- Image Legend:** A legend at the bottom right shows various image sizes and types: ARTICLE IMAGE (240x144), VIDEO IMAGE/WALLPAPER (176x99), PHOTO THUMB (144x81), USER (48x48), SHOP ITEM MAIN IMAGE, SHOP ITEM LARGE THUMB, and SHOP ITEM SMALL THUMB.
- PNG Placeholder:** A large pink circle containing the word "PNG" is overlaid on the page, indicating where certain visual elements are defined in the source code.

PNG

Developer Friendly

- Like to think how we can bridge the gap between design and development (there shouldn't be a gap)
- Encourages discussion earlier in the design process (naming conventions etc.)
- Thinking in terms of components as a designer closely aligns with how a front-end developer might build a site.
- But shouldn't we be thinking in this way even earlier?

Responsive Design

In order to embrace designing native layouts for the web we need to shed the notion that we create layouts from a canvas in. We need to **create layouts from the content out.**

Mark Boulton

'A Richer Canvas'

- This modular, holistic approach echos some of the thinking behind responsive design.
- Mark Boulton has been speaking about designing from the content out.
- May still need a phase in which you define an overall look and feel.
- Think about the design of individual components, modules and elements earlier in the design process.
- Reduces the chances of a layout-centric approach.

Consistent experiences

- By focusing on those parts of the sites that are shared, ensures that different parts of the site tie together.
- Parts of the design where we can bring the brand through to all pages.
- Allows thinking on a holistic scale without having to design every aspect of it.

Just the beginning. . .

- Ideas still percolating in my mind.
- Would love any feedback you have.

Credits



Lu Monte
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- Sadly most of my photos weren't as good as those I found on Flickr!

Thank-you.

 paulrobertlloyd.com

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