

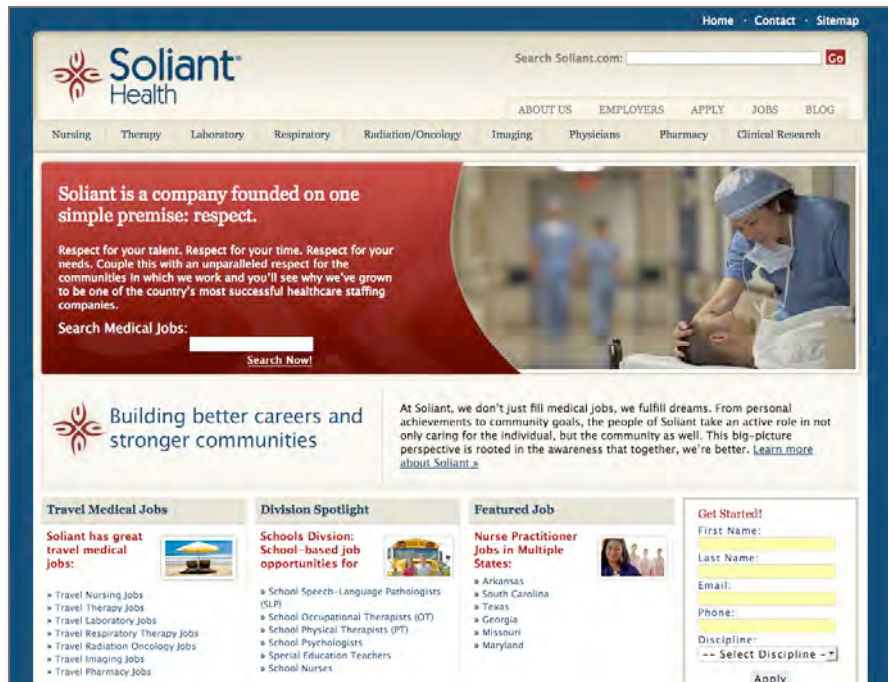
Principles of Website Design

Graphic Design for websites

- The process of creating the web site in an attractive, logical manner.
- When done successfully, it attracts attention, adds value to a message, enhances readership and readability, simplifies, organizes, provides selective emphasis, and creates unity.

Graphic Design for websites

Good Design



Bad Design



Building a better boat

- **Form follows function**
 - Design Theory is the missing link for many un-trained but otherwise talented designers.
 - Photoshop is just a tool, much like a paint brush to a traditional artist. You need to step away from it for a while and learn about design theory, not just spend all your time learning what filters and blending modes do.
- **Usability** and the utility, not the visual design, determine the success or failure of a web-site.
 - Since the visitor is the only person who clicks the mouse and therefore decides everything, user-centric design has become a standard approach for successful and profit-oriented web design. If users can't use a feature, it might as well not exist.

Keep it simple

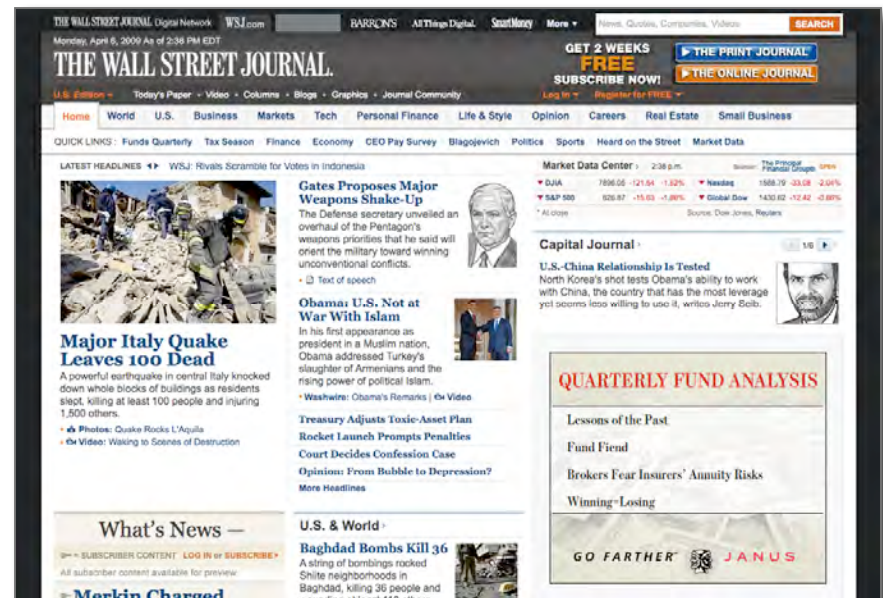
- Users are rarely on a site to enjoy the design
 - in most cases they are looking for the information *despite* the design.
- **Economize:** Do the most with the least amount of cues and visual elements. Four major points to be considered:
 - *Simplicity* – only the elements that are most important for communication.
 - *Clarity* – all components should be designed so their meaning is not ambiguous.
 - *Distinctiveness* – the important properties of the necessary elements should be distinguishable.
 - *Emphasis* – the most important elements should be easily perceived.

Process

- Audience
- Purpose
- Goals
- Content
- Grid
- Typography
- Color
- Add and manipulate graphics
- Refine and fine-tune

Audience

- Different demographics of users use the web in different ways. Design with your target market in mind.



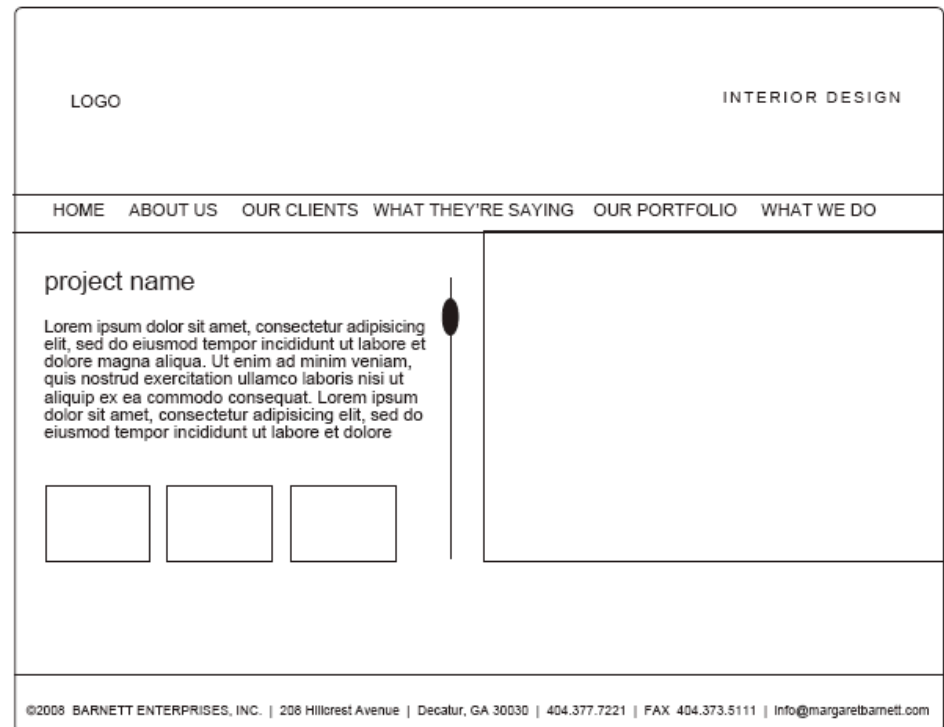
Organization

- **Users don't read, they scan.**
 - Users search for some fixed points or anchors which would guide them through the content of the page.
- **Information & design hierarchy determines much of design including the layout itself.**
 - Familiarize yourself with the content as much as you can and organize it hierarchically.
 - Design hierarchy is all about the importance of visual information and giving it assigning levels of importance to make the message of the design get across.

Organizational Tools

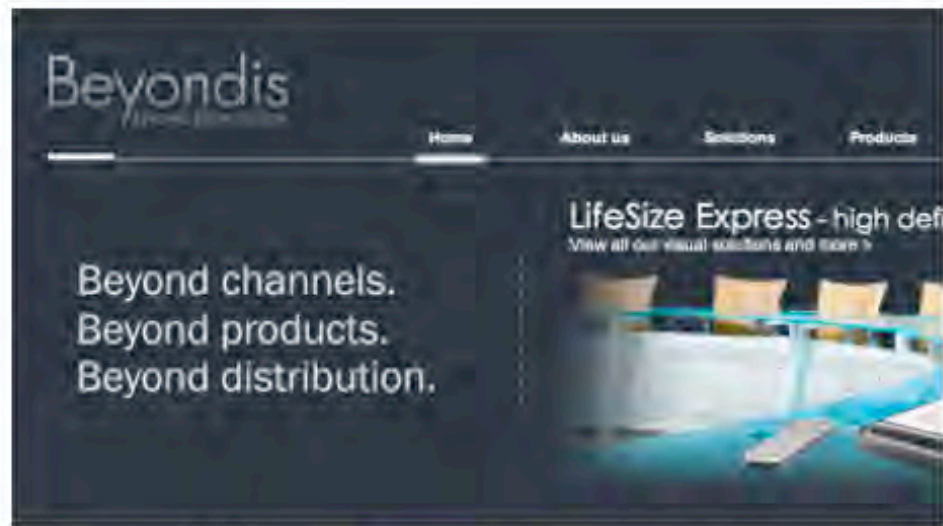
- Just like house-painting, success is in the prep-work
- Site maps, site-flow diagrams, and wireframes convey how the site will work from a practical perspective before you get too far ahead.
- Useful tools:
 - Protoshare
 - Visio
 - Omingraffle
 - Neo Office

Example sitemap and wireframe



Don't make me think

- the web-page should be obvious and self-explanatory



Let's take a look at an example. Beyondis.co.uk claims to be “beyond channels, beyond products, beyond distribution”. What does it *mean*? Since users tend to explore web-sites according to the “[F](#)”-pattern, these three statements would be the first elements users will see on the page once it is loaded.

Although the design itself is simple and intuitive, to understand what the page is about the user needs to search for the answer. This is what an *unnecessary question mark* is. It's designer's task to make sure that the number of question marks is close to 0. The visual explanation is placed on the right hand side. Just exchanging both blocks would increase usability.

Don't make me think



[ExpressionEngine](#) uses the very same structure like Beyondis, but avoids unnecessary question marks. Furthermore, the slogan becomes functional as users are provided with options to try the service and download the free version.

By reducing cognitive load you make it easier for visitors to grasp the idea behind the system. Once you've achieved this, you can communicate why the system is useful and how users can benefit from it. People won't use your web site if they can't find their way around it.

Effective writing

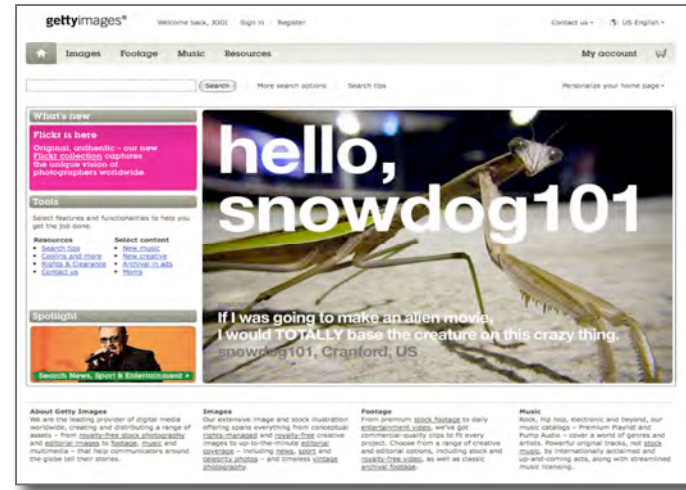
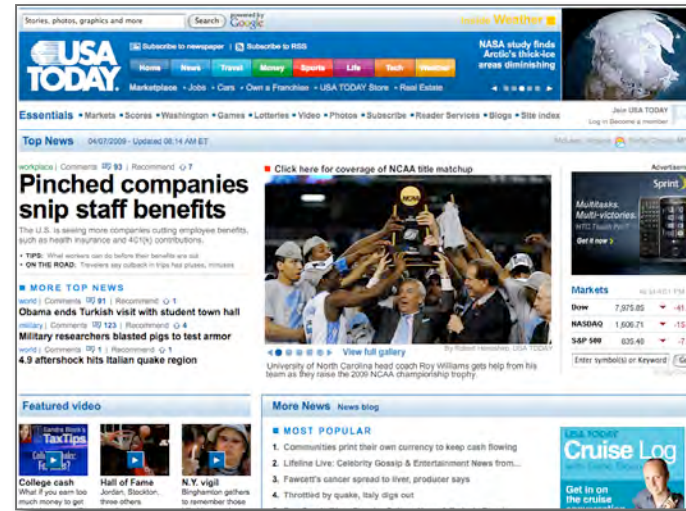
- The Web is different from print, — adjust the writing style to users' preferences and browsing habits.
 - Promotional writing won't be read.
 - Long text blocks without images and keywords marked in **bold** or *italics* will be skipped.
 - Exaggerated language will be ignored.
- **Talk business.**
 - Avoid cute or clever names, marketing-induced names, company-specific names, and unfamiliar technical names.

Format (grids)

- Provides solid visual and structural balance for website
- Enables user to scan, read and understand a page quickly
- You can have more than one grid.
 - Your front page could be based on a five column grid while inside pages with ads on a six column. There is no one right way.
- Think about the grid not only vertically but horizontally, too.
- Build in white space.
 - Adding just a little more space in alleys/gutters and between stories will add emphasis to the story, and improve readability.

A page without a grid is a usability nightmare

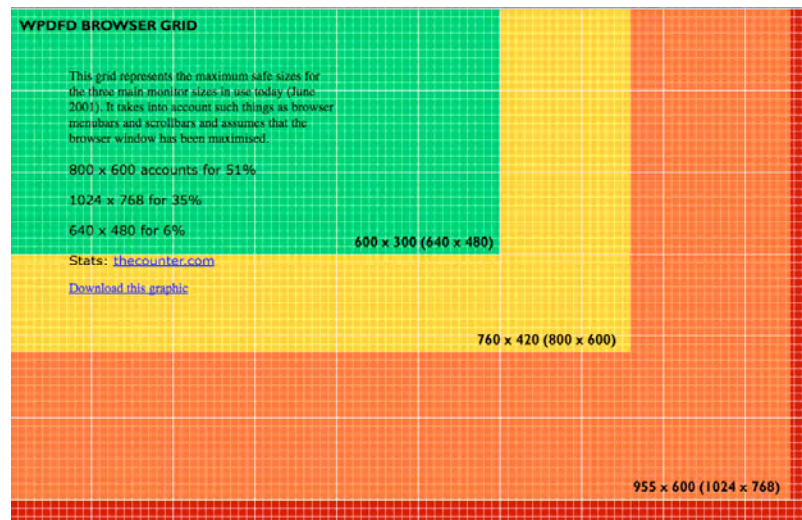
Grids in use



Grids — useful tools

Browsergrid

<http://www.wpdfd.com/browsergrid.htm>



CSS grid builder

<http://developer.yahoo.com/yui/grids/builder>



Did I mention white space?

- White space (the absence of text and graphics) is vital to graphic design.
- The key is to add just enough white space so the eye knows where to go and can rest a bit when it gets there.
- You can control white space in the following locations:
 - margins
 - paragraph spacing
 - spacing between lines of text
 - gutters (the space between columns)
 - and surrounding text and graphics

Typography



- Don't underestimate its importance.
 - The best ideas, the most beautiful imagery, the most harmonious color combinations will be blighted by inferior typography.
- Good typography depends on the visual contrast between one font and another, and the contrast between text blocks and the surrounding empty space.
- Don't set body text below 10 or 12px and, if possible, make it bigger. *What is legible on your HD monitor might not be so on a 15" laptop. If in doubt, make it bigger.*
- Limit the number of different fonts you use.

Typography - hierarchy

- Varying type size is one of the best ways to differentiate content.
 - Colors and pretty boxes might help, but different sizes of type, used consistently throughout your pages, will signal loud and clear to your readers the relative importance of your pages elements.
 - It also means that if your readers are in a hurry, they can quickly pick out the important bits and that could mean that they stay longer and read on.
- Hierarchy can be achieved in other ways too.
 - we can also use different styles:
 - all-caps
 - using italic for sub-headings
 - serif and sans serif faces can also be mixed to good effect

Typographic hierarchy

Primary	roman lower case
Secondary	Roman Upper Case ROMAN SMALL CAPS roman text figures: 1 2 3 <i>italic lower case</i>
Tertiary	<i>True Italic (Cursive) Upper Case</i> <i>italic text figures 1 2 3</i> SLOPED SMALL CAPS roman titling figures: 1 2 3 bold lower case
Quaternary	<i>False Italic (Sloped Roman) Upper Case</i> Bold Upper Case BOLD SMALL CAPS bold text figures: 1 2 3 <i>bold italic lower case</i>
Quintary	<i>Italic Titling figures 1 2 3</i> <i>Bold Italic (Sloped Roman) Upper Case</i> <i>bold italic text figures 1 2 3</i> Bold Titling Figures: 1 2 3
Sextary	<i>Bold Italic Titling Figures: 1 2 3</i>

Have you heard about white space?

- White space is not the enemy.
- Let your type breathe.
 - Don't be afraid to leave blank spaces in your pages. This negative or white space will help focus attention on the text and it's the text that speaks loudest, so let it be heard.

Typography Tips for the web

1. Limit the number of fonts you use.
2. Add extra space between lines. More space between your lines will make your body copy less overwhelming and more digestible.
3. Tweak letter, word, and line spacing in your headlines
4. Serif font for headlines and sans serif for body copy
5. Use proper characters:
 - Stop using straight quotation marks, straight apostrophes
 - Use a dash instead of two hyphens
 - Use a proper ellipsis instead of three periods

Color

- With colors you can set a mood, attract attention, or make a statement. You can use color to energize, or to cool down.
- By selecting the right color scheme, you can create an ambiance of elegance, warmth or tranquility, or you can convey an image of playful youthfulness.



Color Psychology







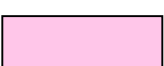
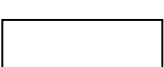



- Colors often have different meanings in various cultures. And even in Western societies, the meanings of various colors have changed over the years.
- There are many resources available on the web the talk extensively on this topic.

Color Psychology in Marketing

- Colors not only enhance the appearance of the item — they also influence our behavior.
- The effects of color differ among different cultures, so the attitudes and preferences of your target audience should be a consideration.



North American mainstream culture

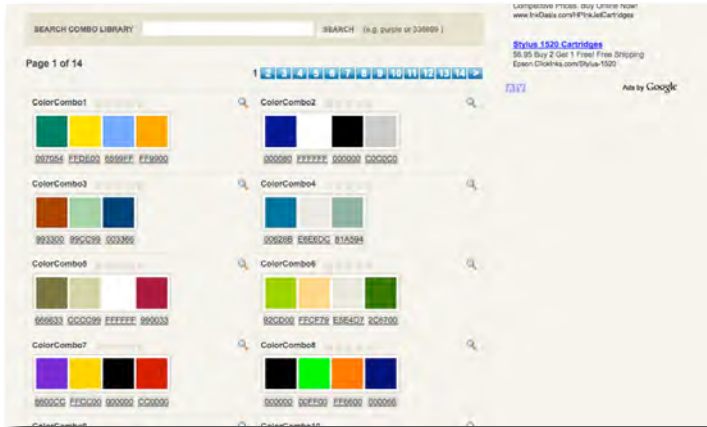
	excitement, strength, sex, passion, speed, danger
	trust, reliability, belonging, coolness
	warmth, sunshine, cheer, happiness
	playfulness, warmth, vibrant
	nature, fresh, cool, growth, abundance
	royal, spirituality, dignity
	soft, sweet, nurture, security
	pure, virginal, clean, youthful, mild.
	sophistication, elegant, seductive, mystery
	prestige, expensive
	prestige, cold, scientific

Color Psychology in Marketing

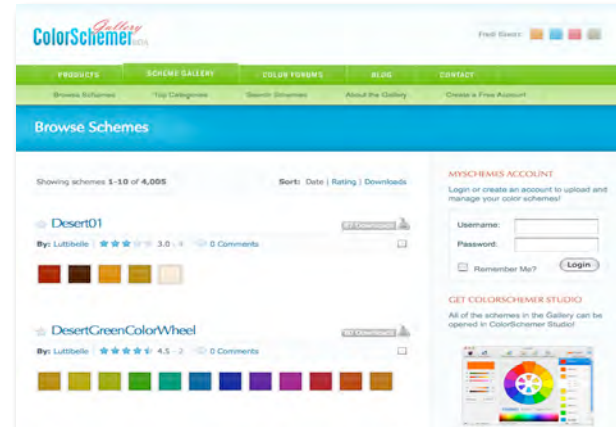
- Market researchers have also determined that color affects shopping habits.
 - Impulse shoppers respond best to red-orange, black and royal blue.
 - Shoppers who plan and stick to budgets respond best to pink, teal, light blue and navy.
 - Traditionalists respond to pastels - pink, rose, sky blue.

Color Tools

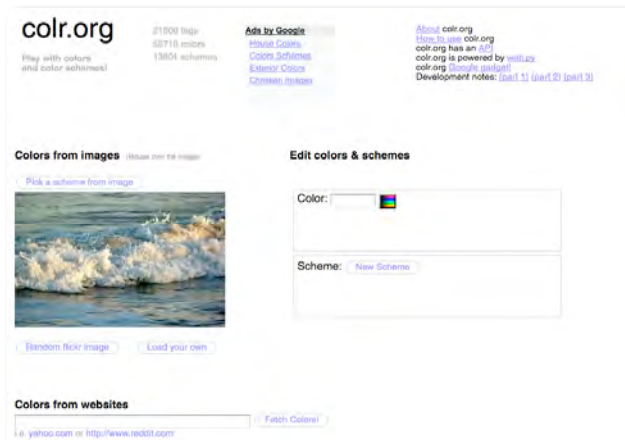
<http://www.colorcombos.com/>



<http://www.colorschemer.com/>



<http://www.colr.org/>



Add and manipulate graphics

- Look at well designed sites often
- Emulate
- Keep it simple, less is more
- Be consistent
- Design is not about decoration, it's about communication and functionality
 - If something is not furthering the message or the function, it should not exist

Conventions

- innovate only when you know you really have a better idea, and take advantage of conventions when you don't.

Refine and retune

- When you think you are finished designing, step away.
- Come back to it fresh and refine it, step away.
- Proof for typos, alignment, spacing, sizing, color, consistency, etc.
- Proof it again

Craftsmanship

- Good design furthers the message, the goal
- Poor design buries the message and hinders the goal.
- Good craftsmanship can carry a weak design
- Poor craftsmanship can wreck a good design