



MIS3690 WEB TECHNOLOGIES

BABSON COLLEGE
TOIM DIVISION



WEB AND WEBSITE DESIGN



FOUR IMPORTANT TOPICS

- What are the do's and don'ts of web design?
- What are the basic structures of a web site – when is one better than the other?
- What options do we have for hosting?
- What is a domain and why is that important?

TOP 10 MISTAKES IN DESIGNING WEB PAGES (FROM JAKOB NIELSEN'S ALERTBOX)

10. Bad Search options

- Make it visible and easy to find (search “box”, clearly titled)
- Don't offer Advanced Search and other complicated search options (auto completion, re-formulation etc.)
- Simpler the better

9. Using PDF files for additional content

- Breaks the flow of reading
- Users, often, do not bother.

8. Not changing colors of visited links

- Does not help with understanding navigation
- Must use colors and underline.

TOP 10 MISTAKES IN DESIGNING WEB PAGES (FROM JAKOB NIELSEN'S ALERTBOX)

7. “Text wall”

- Too much text is bad for interactive experience
- Use short paragraphs, sub-heads, bulleted lists, highlighting of key words, simple language, and above all, nothing condescending.

6. Not using consistent Font Size

- CSS gives you power to change sizes – don't change it.
- Arial is considered best for on-line reading (not TNR, which is best for print).

5. Using Page Titles with Low Visibility

- Search engines use this to index pages and only show 66 characters of the title in search results.
- Simple, humble and informative titles are best
- Favorites are book-marked using the title. Make it meaningful.
- Don't start titles with “The” or “Welcome” – your page gets indexed under T or W and your company's name that starts with a B gets listed under T or W.

TOP 10 MISTAKES IN DESIGNING WEB PAGES (FROM JAKOB NIELSEN'S ALERTBOX)

4. Having “Advertisy” thingys

- Banner-Blindness, Animation Avoidance, Pop-up Purges
- Even genuine use of the above will still cause the users to “turn-it-off”!

3. Not having Consistency of Design and Appearance

- When everything behaves the same way, user is not worried about “what will happen”.
- The more expectations that prove right, the more comfy is the user.
- “Users spend more of their time on OTHER websites” – they form expectations based on what is typically done in most other sites. If you deviate, your page will be harder to use

2. Creating New Browser Window (to open new links)

- Designers love to create more windows – don't. Users don't want their screen taken over by a mutating and multiplying web site!
- New window disables the “BACK” button on the browser – self defeating.

TOP 10 MISTAKES IN DESIGNING WEB PAGES (FROM JAKOB NIELSEN'S ALERTBOX)

I. Not answering user's questions

- Your web site needs a goal – why would I want to go to your site?
- If your content does not deliver on this goal, you have misled users!!
- Think about what questions you will have if you go to your site – make sure these are answered.
- Common mistake – not providing price (contact for price options, click here to see price, go to cart to see price etc.) – really poor idea.

ADDITIONAL “USABILITY” GUIDELINES

- What the “value” to users? (how are you different).
- Liquid layout
 - Allow for users to adjust window and content based on their own monitor sizes.
- Use graphics to show “meaningful” content – not to make the page look cool
 - Showing images of people with clear connections to your content is better than a picture of a top model with no connection to your site.
- Keep content dynamic (update/change it constantly)
 - Allow users to easily see and read the new/changed content.
- Don’t have a link to your home page on your home page (unless it is to a specific subsection).

GOOD THINGS TO DO

- Name and Logo on each page – in the same location!!
- Simple and easy to understand headlines and titles.
- Use links (or scroll windows) to reduce displayed content (don't make the page “crowded”)
- Show product photos – with minimal details.
 - Use links to show the user bigger/detailed photos
 - Show relevant aspects of the photo instead of resizing the whole photo.
- Make sure you consider users with disabilities (color blindness, visually challenged and others)
- Do what everyone else does!!!!

READING

- 10 Things Every Web Designer Just Starting Out Should Know
(http://sixrevisions.com/web_design/10-things-every-web-designer-just-starting-out-should-know)
- Essential Tips for Designing an Effective Home Page
(http://sixrevisions.com/web_design/essential-tips-for-designing-an-effective-homepage)
- In-Class Activity (next slide)

WEBSITE EVALUATION EXERCISE

- Rank these college websites

- www.babson.edu

- www.bc.edu

- www.bu.edu

- www.bentley.edu

- On each of these factors

- Beauty of site

- Help in deciding whether to apply, general student

- Help in deciding whether to apply, baseball athlete

- Ease of finding a faculty profile/bio

- Ease of finding a map of the campus and directions to get there

- Ease in making a donation

- Other factor you think is important: _____

WEBSITE EVALUATION EXERCISE

- Rank these retail websites

- www.macys.com/
- www.kohls.com
- www.jcpenney.com
- www.nordstrom.com

- On each of these factors

- Beauty of site
- Ease of finding a product you want in a given price range
- Ease of finding a store location
- Determining if you can return item bought on web at a store
- Ease of creating a wedding gift registry
- Ease of determining shipping price for item in shopping basket
- Other factor you think is important: _____

WEBSITE EVALUATION EXERCISE

- Rank these city government websites

- www.cityofboston.gov

- www.lacity.org

- www.nyc.gov

- www.sfgov.org

- On each of these factors

- Beauty of site

- Ease of finding the latest local news

- Ease of finding things for a tourist to do

- Ease of finding how to get a parking permit

- Ease of dealing reporting a missed trash collection

- Ease of determining what permits I need to open a restaurant

- Other factor you think is important: _____