Vorlesung Advanced Topics in HCI (Mensch-Maschine-Interaktion 2)

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Quick tour of basic design guidelines (1)

- Text
  - Scannable (users mainly scan new pages on the web)
  - highlight keywords
  - headings and subheadings
  - bulleted lists
  - Structure and white space
- Writing
  - Inverted Pyramid (conclusion at the beginning)
  - Use shorter text than in paper writing (e.g. 50%)
  - Write in the users' language
- Graphics
  - Use where appropriate
  - Consider size

Quick tour of basic design guidelines (2)

- Navigation
  - Consistent control over the whole site
  - Keep browser functions (back, forward)
  - text menus
- Context
  - Site maps
  - Context of page within site
  - previous / next page buttons
  - navigation
    - table of contents
    - breadcrumb trail
- Links
  - what the web is all about
  - no dead end pages

Typography on the Web some issues

- Books have about 1200dpi screens have about 100dpi
- Very few fonts are commonly installed!
- Justification is often poor with current browser

http://www.webstyleguide.com

Some rules of thumb for text layout

- Column width about 365 pixels for a 12-point font
- About 8 to 10 words per line (in English)
- Increase line spacing (e.g. 16 points for a 12 point font)
- Separate paragraphs by at least an empty line
- Use typeface that is easily readable on screen resolution, use fonts designed for use on screens, e.g. Times New Roman for body text and Verdana for headings
- Use CSS and specify alternatives, e.g.
  `P {font-family: "Times New Roman", Georgia, Times, serif }`
- Don't use capitals only

MONOTONOUS RECTANGLES   Monotonous rectangles   http://www.webstyleguide.com

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About Texts and Links

- Be short and precise
- Page titles should include important information
  - They are used in bookmarks and search engines
- Think global – people may come from everywhere
- Make useful link text – not "click here"
- It may be useful to discriminate links
  - Navigational links
  - Content base links
  - External links
- Placing links into written paragraphs can be contra-productive – people are invited to leave to another page while reading a sentence…

Graphics

- Screen size
- Screen resolution
- Color resolution
- Gamma
- Download time

Web design guides

- Not just one …

- Example: http://www.webstyleguide.com/

The site development process
http://www.webstyleguide.com

- Every significant Web project poses unique challenges, but the overall process of developing a complex Web site generally follows six major stages:

1. Site definition and planning
2. Information architecture
3. Site design
4. Site construction
5. Site marketing
6. Tracking, evaluation, and maintenance

Information architecture
http://www.webstyleguide.com

Typical results or contract deliverables at the end of this stage could include:

- Detailed site design specification
- Detailed description of site content
- Site maps, thumbnails, outlines, table of contents
- Detailed technical support specification
- Browser technology supported
- Connection speed supported
- Web server and server resources

- Proposals to create programming or technology to support specific features of the site
- A schedule for implementing the site design and construction
- One or more site prototypes of multiple pages
- Multiple graphic design and interface design sketches or roughs

Design
http://www.webstyleguide.com

Typical results at the end of this stage could include:

Content components, detailed organization and assembly
- Text, edited and proofread
- Graphic design specifications for all page types
  - Finished interface graphics for page templates
  - Header and footer graphics, logos, buttons, backgrounds
- Detailed page comps or finished examples of key pages
  - Site graphic standards manual for large, complex sites
- Interface design and master page grid templates completed
- Illustrations, Photography

Functional and logic components
- JavaScript scripts, Java applets designed
- Database tables and programming, interaction prototypes completed
- Search engine designed and tested

Site Construction
http://www.webstyleguide.com

Typical results at the end of this stage could include:

- Finished HTML for all Web pages, all page content in place
- Finished navigation link structure
- All programming in place and linked to pages, ready for beta testing
- All database components in place and linked to site pages
- All graphic design, illustration, and photography in place
- Final proofreading of all site content

- Detailed testing of database and programming functionality
- Testing and verification of database reporting features
- Testing of site reader support procedures, answering email, etc.
- Archives of all site content components, HTML code, programming code, and any other site development materials

Site Marketing

Your home page URL could appear in:

- Print advertisements
- Radio and television advertisements
- Lobby kiosks in high-traffic areas of your enterprise or in local libraries, schools, or other suitable venues
- Direct mail campaigns
- Business cards
- Stationery
- Bills and statements
- Product manuals and product packaging
- Response cards and warrantee cards
- Publications and promotional materials
- Press releases
- Posters and billboards

Organizing Information

There are five basic steps in organizing your information:

1. Divide your content into logical units
2. Establish a hierarchy of importance among the units
3. Use the hierarchy to structure relations among units
4. Build a site that closely follows your information structure
5. Analyze the functional and aesthetic success of your system

Basic Organization Patterns
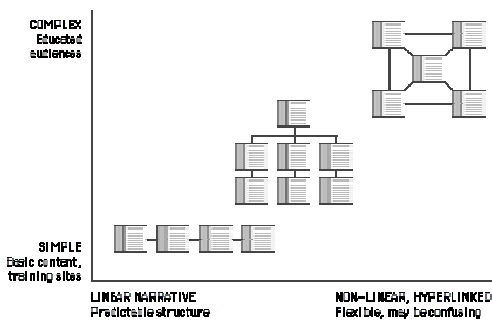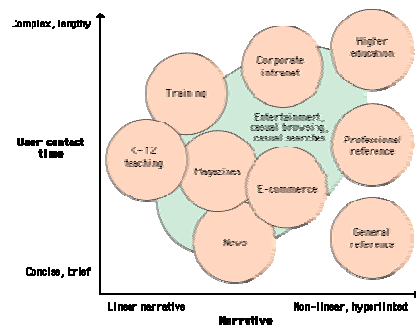
Site Design Themes (1)

Site Design Themes (2)
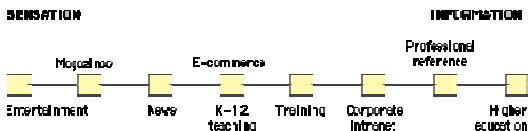
- Design, technology, and structure has to fit the anticipated target user
- Consider time spend on a page, attention span, and main goal of the user

Site Design Themes (3)

- Training
- Teaching
- Continuing education
- Reference
- Entertainment and magazine sites
- News sites
- E-commerce

Site Elements

- When designing a site the basic site elements can help to create a clear design, examples are:

- Home pages
- Information pages ("the meat")
- Menus and subsites
- Resource lists, "other related sites" pages
- Site guides
- "What's new?" pages
- Search features
- Contact information and user feedback
- Bibliographies and appendixes
- FAQ pages
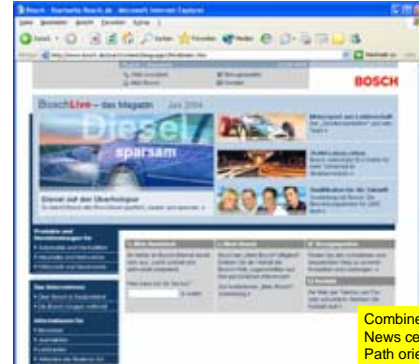- Custom server error pages

Site Elements – Home page

- Logical entry point to a site, often the most visited page on a site
- First impression – everything that is really important has to be visible without scrolling
- All pages in the site should link back to this page
- Typical function
  - Show important content and news
  - Link to all parts of the site (home for navigation)
- Home page types
  - Link/navigation/menu page
  - News pages
  - Path-oriented pages (dividing the visitors - *information for …*)
  - Splash screens/cover page (be careful! hard to make them useful!)
  - Combined (Navigation with paths, news integrated)
- Home pages have often a distinctive layout within a site

Home Pages – Example 1

Combined

Home Pages – Example 2

Combined
News central
Path oriented navigation

Home Pages – Example 3

Home Pages – Example 3

Combined
focus on Navigation

Home Pages – Example 4

Navigation / Menu

Home Pages – Example 5

Combined focus on Navigation

Home Pages – Example 6

Splash Screen with Navigation and one news item

Home Pages – Example 7

Combined Direct access to services (e.g. hotels, map, events)

Site Elements – Search, Site Guides

http://www.webstyleguide.com

- Site Guides / Site Maps
  - Provide an overview (you can't flip trough the pages of a web site)
    - extent & size
    - organization
    - and context
  - Tables of contents
  - keyword indexes of the information in your Web
- Search
  - For large sites a "must"
  - Update the search content for each change or on daily basis
  - Complement to navigation and site guide – not replacement
- "What is new"
  - If pages change often and visitors look for new content
  - For regular visitors
  - Listing of recent changes / additions
  - E.g. online software archive

Site Map – Example

Index – Example
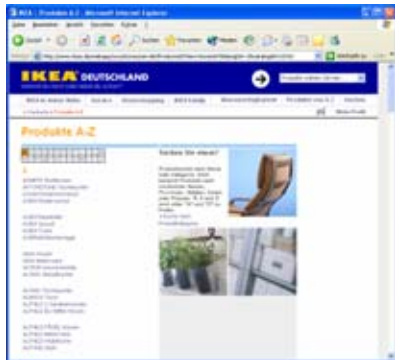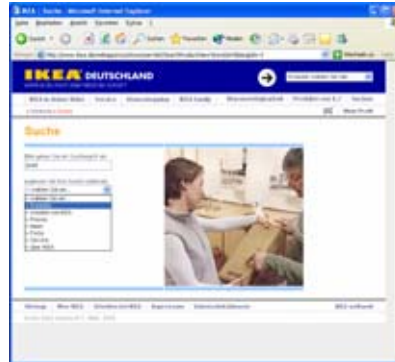
Index – Search

Index – Search
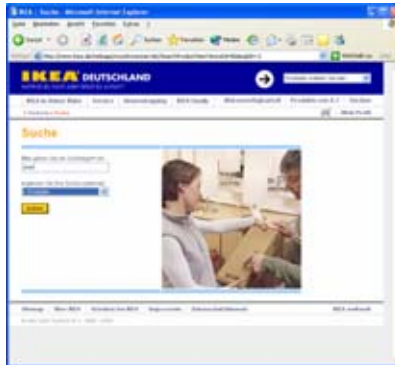
Site Elements – Contact information and user feedback

http://www.webstyleguide.com

- Contact Information
  - Information other way to make contact
    - At least Email
  - Depending on the purpose of the site
    - Postal address
    - Visitors address, map, directions, parking, public transport, …
    - Phone & Fax
    - …
- Feedback
  - Private feedback: Forms, Email
  - Public feedback: Guestbook
  - Be aware of the implications of public feedback
  - Feedback requires someone to handle it!

- In Germany in most cases an "Impressum" is required
  - Teledienstegesetz §6
  - If the site provides "geschäftsmäßige Teledienste"
  - See Teledienstegesetzes (TDG)

Site Elements – FAQ

http://www.webstyleguide.com
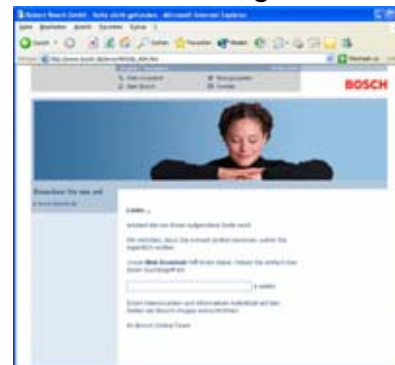
- FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

- Can help to
  - Increase usability
  - Decrease support spending

- To build up FAQs
  - Answer question received by support/comments/feedback
  - Check if the question can be avoided (e.g. by adding information at the right place)
  - If question can not be avoided and is generally relevant (if you expect someone else with the same question)
    - Generalize question and answer
    - Add to FAQ

Custom Error Pages

Custom Error Pages

References

- http://www.webstyleguide.com