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

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LFE Medieninformatik

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SS2005

http://www.medien.ifi.lmu.de/

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

Lorem ipsum dolor

Justification and "rivers"

The relatively primitive text justification available today on the Web creates word spacing problems that result in "rivers" of white space that seem to run down the page.

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

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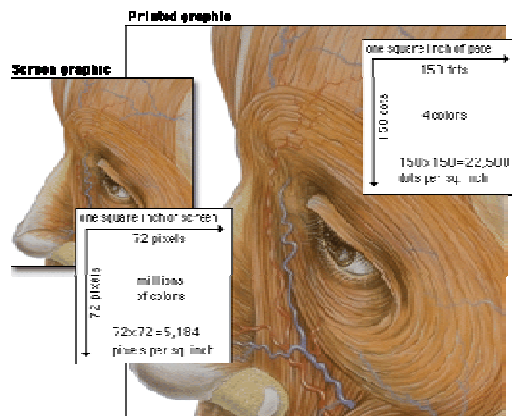
- Screen size
- Screen resolution
- Color resolution
- Gamma
- Download time

Web design guides

- Not just one …

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

The site development process

- 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

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

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

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

http://www.webstyleguide.com

COMPLEX
Educated
audiences
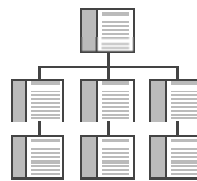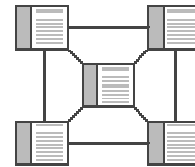
SIMPLE
Basic content,
training sites
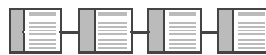
LINEAR NARRATIVE
Predictable structure

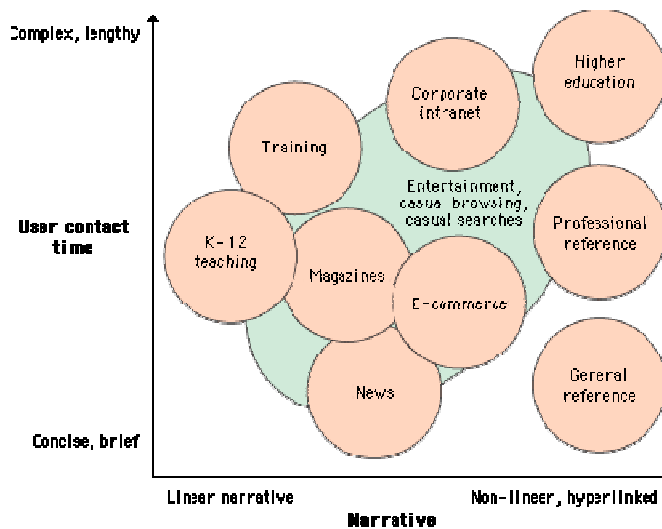NON-LINEAR, HYPERLINKED
Flexible, may be confusing

Site Design Themes (1)

http://www.webstyleguide.com

Complex, lengthy

User contact
time

Concise, brief

Higher
education

Corporate
intranet

Training

Entertainment,
casual browsing,
casual searches

Professional
reference

K-12
teaching

Magazines

E-commerce

News

General
reference

Linear narrative

Non-linear, hyperlinked

Narrative

Site Design Themes (2)

http://www.webstyleguide.com

SENSATION   INFORMATION

Magazines   E-commerce   Professional reference

Entertainment   News   K-12 teaching   Training   Corporate intranet   Higher education
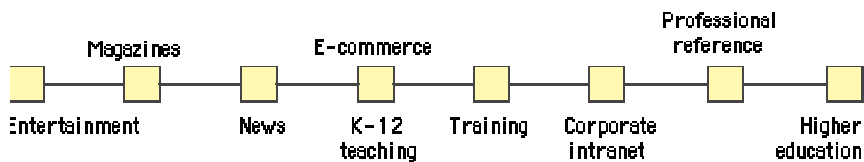
- Design, technology, and structure has to fit the anticipated target user
- Consider time spend on a page, attention span, and main goal of the user

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Site Design Themes (3)

http://www.webstyleguide.com

- 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
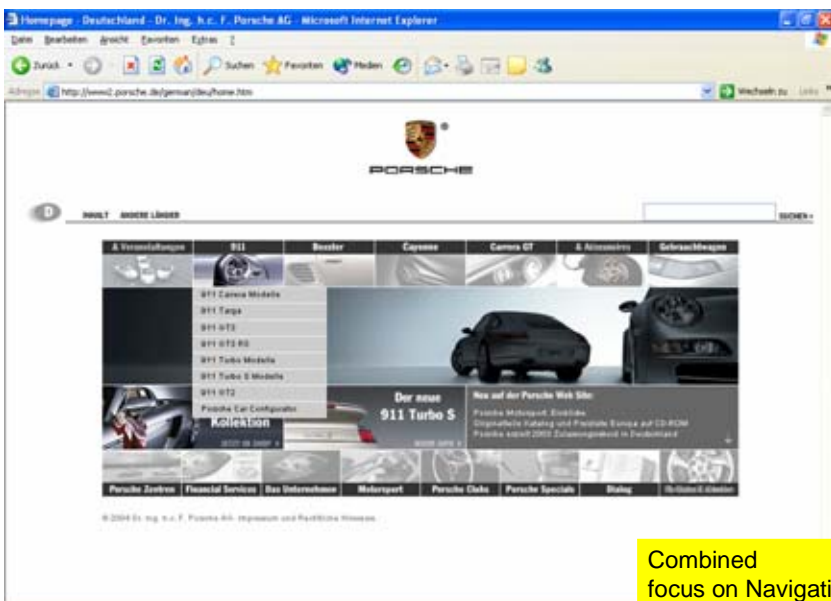
Combined

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
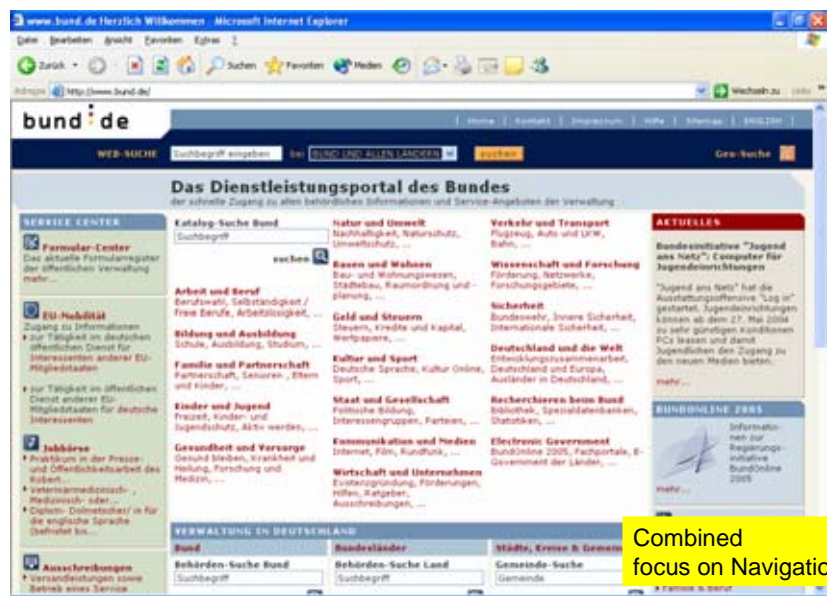
Home Pages – Example 6

Splash Screen with Navigation and one news item

Home Pages – Example 7
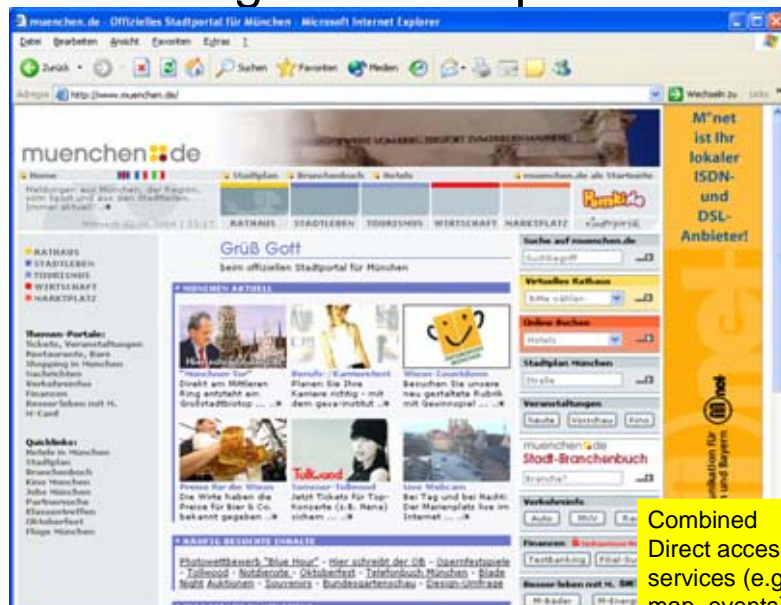
Combined Direct access to services (e.g. hotels, map, events)

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
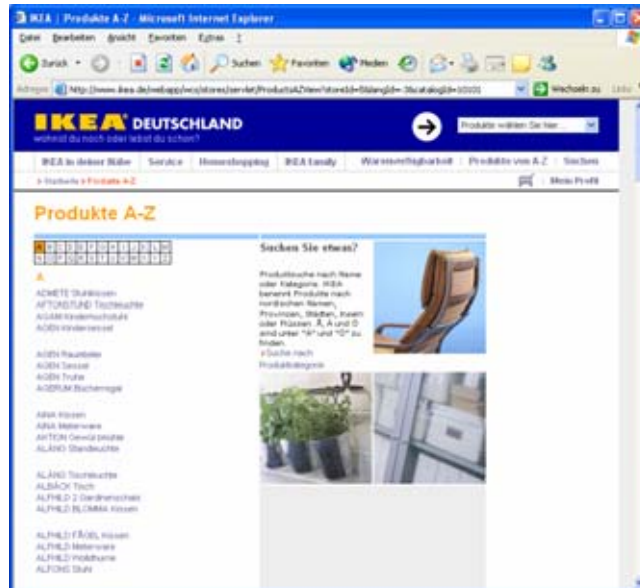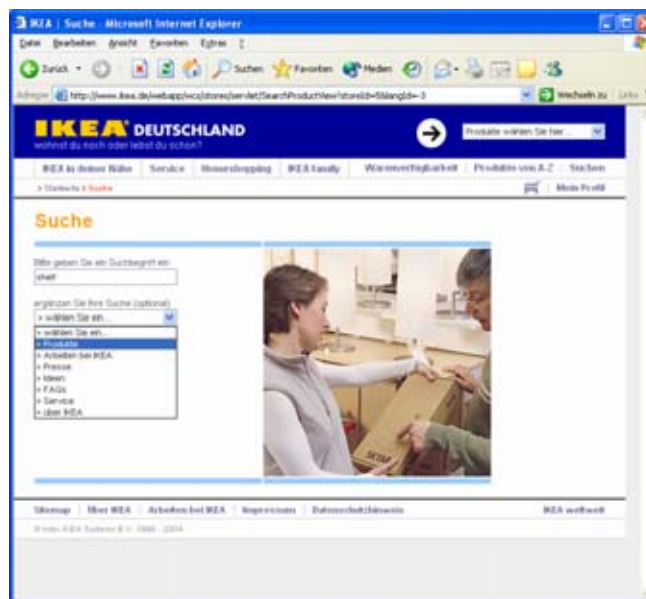
Index – Search

Index – Search
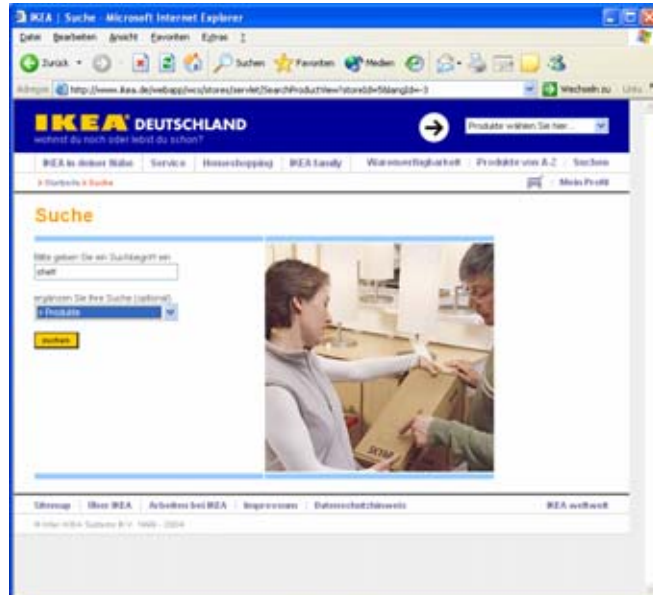
Site Elements – Contact information and user feedback

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
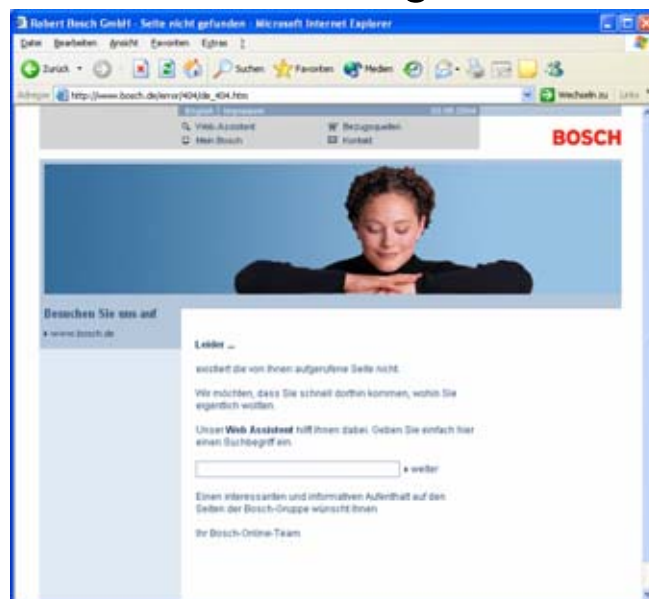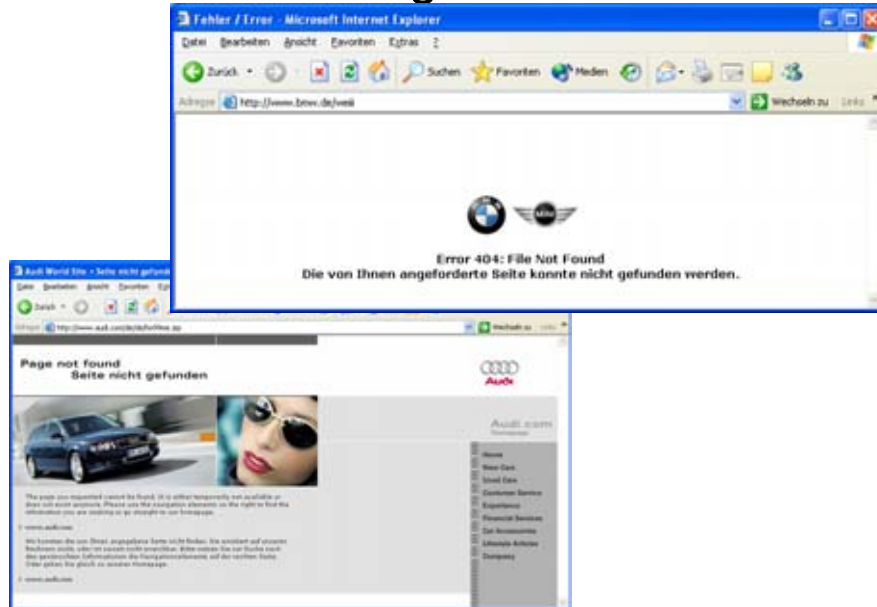
- FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

- 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