

Working with Electronic Media

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Electronic media facts

1. Viewers do not read pages – they scan them.
2. Viewers stop at “the first reasonable option”.
3. If it works – no matter how badly – we stick with it.
4. We don’t care how it works as long as it works.

Electronic media facts

- The average time spent scanning text on a page is 5 seconds!
- 50 - 75% of all users find what they are looking for using Google.
- Most viewers search a page by typing in the whole name.
- The back button is the most popular web browser feature.

How we view a web page



1. The human eye goes to the top, left first.
2. Down the left side of the page next.
3. Then, travels to the right.



Web usability

- Create a clear visual hierarchy on each page.
- Take advantage of conventions.
- Break pages up into clearly defined areas.
- Make it obvious - what is clickable?
- Minimize noise – particularly for adults.

research

- Look at other sites targeting the same audience.
- What works?
- What doesn't?
- Usability testing – important!
 - Test users on their own computers. They will be more comfortable and will respond more naturally.
 - Do not interact. Give them a list of tasks and watch/film them as they respond.



Internet access

Internet access statistics

	Rural Adults	Urban & Suburban Adults
Home Broadband	24%	39%
Home Dial-UP	29 %	31 %
Work Only	05 %	05 %
Other	03 %	03 %
Don't Know	01 %	02 %
Non Internet User	38 %	30 %

Source: Pew Internet Project combined September-December 2005 surveys of 5,262 adult Americans 3,508 of whom were internet users.

Source: Nielsen/Net Rating

Connection statistics

	Rural Internet Users	Urban & Suburban Internet Users
Digital Subscriber Line (DSL)	46%	47%
Cable Modem	44%	45%
Wireless or Satellite	06%	05%
T-1 or Fiber Optic	01%	02%
Other	02%	01%

Source: Pew Internet Project combined September-December 2005 surveys of 5,262 adult Americans 3,508 of whom were internet users.

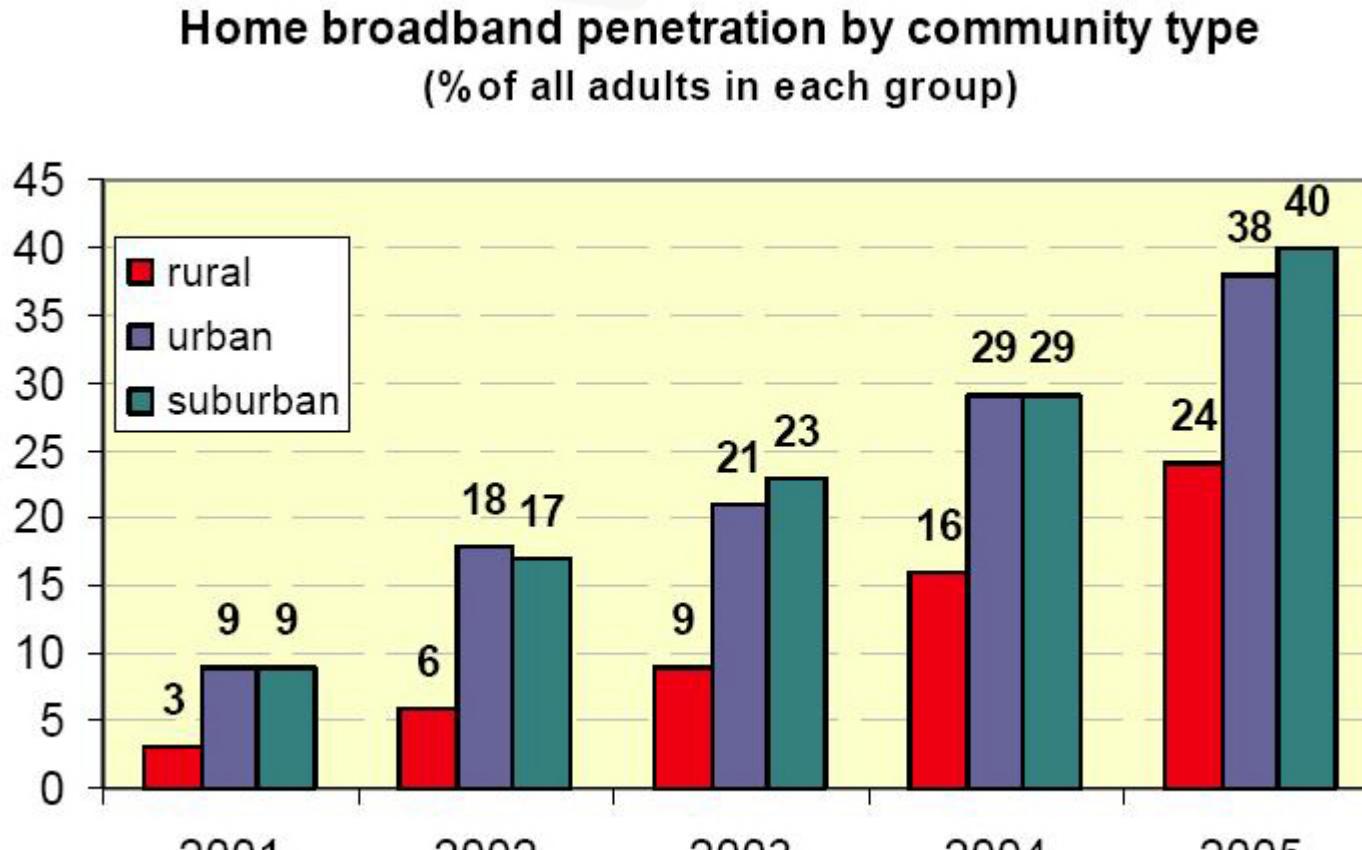
Source: Nielsen/Net Rating

Broadband use

Year	US Broadband Composition (%)	PC Time per Person (hh:mm:ss)
February 2003	33	25:33:24
February 2004	45	27:52:29
February 2005	55	27:49:58
February 2006	68	30:35:54

Source: Nielsen/Net Rating

High speed access data



Source: Pew/Internet & American Life Project

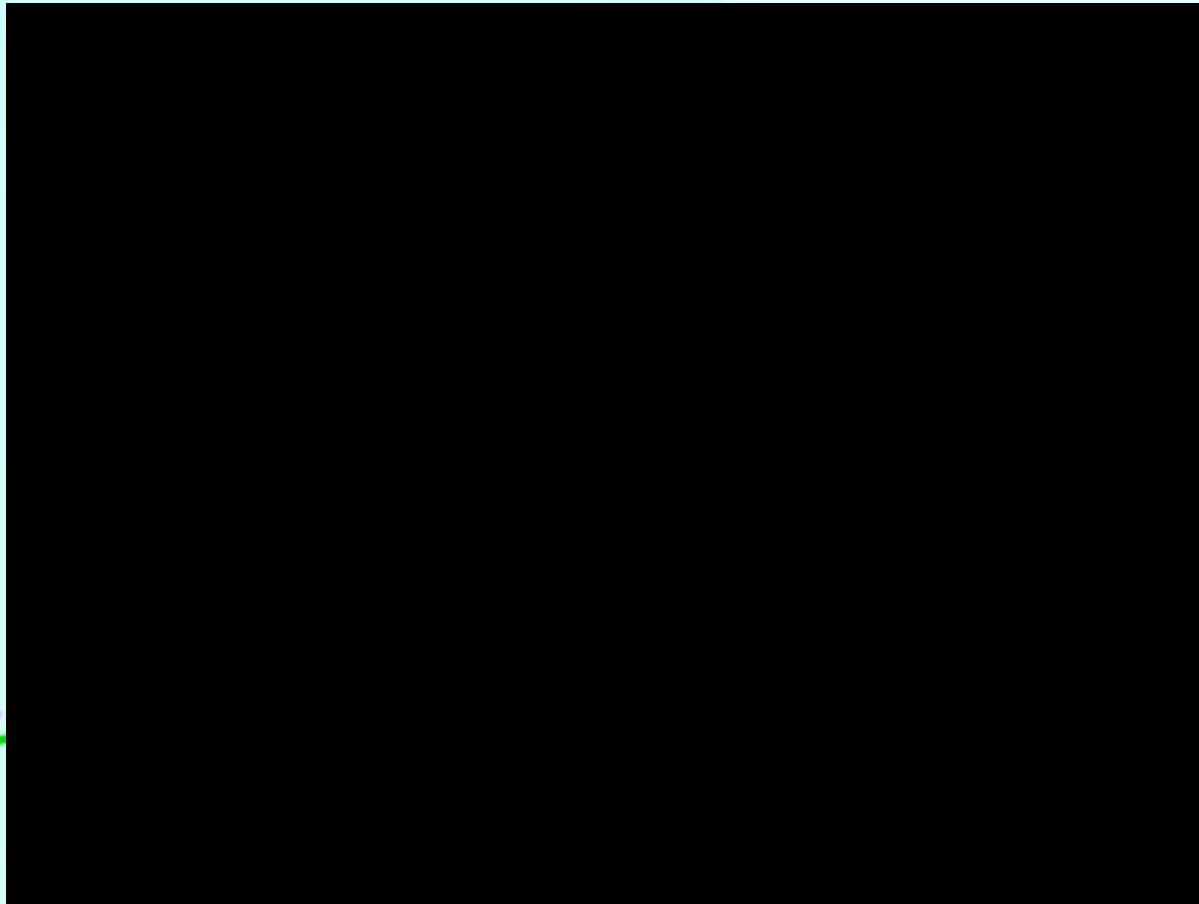


software

Buying/adding software

- Caveat emptor – let the buyer beware!
- Just because it is - the latest and greatest – that doesn't mean you should buy it or use it!
- Will you use it? Are you sure?
- Will your audience find it useful/worthwhile? What is the download time?

Media software



Media software

- Now easier to use and edit.
 - *Software:*
 - Flash
 - Captivate
 - Windows Movie Maker



graphics

- Consider the download time for the average user.
- Gif vs Jpg
- Software packages for graphic creation/modification





Figure 1. (Gif)



Figure 2. (Jpg)

A Gif should be used when the image contains less than 256 colors. For example a clip art image (figure 1). A gif is 250 colors or less. It cannot support a more complex graphic such as a photo. A jpg or jpeg will hold more color information allowing it to produce subtle color changes and shading.

Html

- HTML – hyper text markup language.
 - The universal language of the internet.
 - Quick download time
 - Difficult to control placement of graphics
 - Print varies (css help)
 - If the markup is incorrect, site looks unprofessional.
 - Check site on different browsers, browser versions, screen sizes and settings.

PDF

- PDF – Portable Document Format
- WYSIWIG file – **What You See Is What You Get.**
- You must have Adobe Acrobat Reader (free) to view.
- Works best for complicated formats with multiple graphics and/or print.

FlashPAper 2

- Flash documents are 508 compliant.
- The files are easily created from all Microsoft programs (Word, Access, Excel and can be placed within a webpage.
- Cross browser and cross platform compliant.
- FlashPaper 2 creates pdf's as well as flash documents.

Script languages

- Script languages are programming languages that allow you more advanced capabilities such as:
 - Password protection
 - Interactive graphics and displays
 - Rollovers

Server issues

- Can your server/provider do what you want to do? (ex: e-commerce)
- Charges
- Time provider has been in business. Internet providers start up all the time and before you know it they are gone along with your money and files.
- Be sure to get it in writing.
- Beware of hidden costs.

Server sided software

- Software such as ColdFusion and Oracle, allow you to create interactive documents on the web. They are great, but:
 - Expensive to buy and maintain
 - Require a dedicated server
 - Must have a programmer knowledgeable about the software.

Bringing visitors to your site

- How do visitors find your site?
- Register your site with major search engines.
 - *Ex: register with Google:*
<http://www.google.com/addurl/?continue=/addurl>
 - *Ex: register with Yahoo:*
<http://docs.yahoo.com/info/suggest/>
- Title text is important.
- Meta tags – be sure to add them.

Tracking visitors

- Software is available (free and otherwise) that will track your “hits” and give you valuable user information such as:
 - Where are your hits coming from?
 - Where are they entering your website?
 - How long do they stay?
 - Where do they go on your website?
 - Do they download files?
 - What time of day/day of the week are they likely to go to your site?

Update your files

- Be sure to check your site frequently for:
 - Out of date information
 - Missing links
 - Hackers!

Disability issues

- Federal regulations require government agencies to design their websites for users with disabilities. You should check your site to be sure it meets federal guidelines.
- To check your site for 508 compliance go to:
 - **Accessible Web Design**
 - **<http://accessible.org/>**

Copyright Issues on the Web

- Enforcing copyright on the Web is an entirely different world. There is often the prevailing attitude that: "If it's on the Web, it must be free." This isn't true, as many people are finding out. One of the reasons that copyright issues are so challenging is that there are many gray areas.

Copyright Ownership as an Employee/Independent Contractor

- If you work for a company as an employee and you take photographs as part of your job, then **those images belong to your employer**, unless you make prior arrangements otherwise. This applies even if you've not signed an agreement. If ownership of the photographs is important to you it's necessary to create an agreement *in writing* of your request. A verbal agreement is *not* enough.
- If you're an independent contractor/freelancer, the photographs that you take are yours, but when you hire yourself out to a client there may be some misunderstandings about who owns the images (and the copyright). **According to copyright law, those images belong to you, the originator**, unless you agree otherwise.



**It is important to
never...**

Go live when you are ready



- Your site should NEVER include:
 - “Under Construction” signs
 - Missing links
 - Difficult to view documents



remember

- People on the internet are very impatient. Road rage is nothing when compared with web rage. Frustrated viewers are bad news!



Helpful resources

- Adobe/Macromedia – web software
<http://www.macromedia.com/>
- Copyright Issues:
<http://www.photosource.com/cpyright/copypre.html>
- *Don't Make Me Think* by Steve Krug
- iStock Photos – Good source of photos for reasonable price:
<http://www.istockphoto.com/index.php>
- Jakob Nielsen - web usability guru
<http://www.useit.com/>
- Jupiter Media – Good source of photos/clipart - expensive:
<http://www.jupitermedia.com/>



Questions?

acknowledgements

- Don't Make Me Think by Steve Krug
- Nielsen Norman group
- Pew Internet Life

