

## **Don't Make Me Think! A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability**

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*a summary by Professor Joan Inderhees, Spring 2009*

**As far as humanly possible, when I look at a web page it should be:**

**Self-evident**

**Obvious**

**Self-explanatory**

### **How do we really use the web?**

- o Scanning—hopping around to find only what we're looking for
- o Sacrificing—we choose the first reasonable option
- o Muddling through—few people read directions. We plod along because we use an old method that still works (no matter how weird), and we don't care, really.

### **Design pages for scanning, not reading.**

- o Clear visual hierarchy
- o Use existing style and layout conventions to our advantage
- o Break up pages into clearly defined areas
- o Make it obvious what's clickable
- o Keep the 'noise' down to a dull roar

### **Omit needless words.**

No 'happy talk' or instructions

### **The home page and navigation**

People won't use your site if they can't find their way around it.

Compare your site to walking into a mall to buy a specific item ASAP.

Keep wording absolutely consistent from page to page

Place navigation and logos at the top or on the left

### **Navigation bars**

Give us a constant element — persistent navigation

Tell us what's there (how big the store is)

Tells us how to use the site

Helps us trust the site owner and their designer

**Search boxes** are very useful on large sites

### **Designing the home page**

Convey the 'big picture' clearly

'Where do I start?' answered clearly

### **Usability testing**

Don't skip this or shortchange it. Review results promptly before you forget.