

Effective Web Site: Global Standards and Best Practices

The Internet environment is characterized by:

- Billions of web-sites, proliferation of data sources; and
- Exponential growth of online information.

How best to ensure web site visibility on the Internet?

- Positioning the project vis-à-vis a target audience;
- Selection of an overarching and "singular theme";
- Provide simple, compelling and abundant content;
- Offer user friendly and intuitive navigation tools;
- Respect the W3C accessibility rules; and
- Optimization of the site for referencing by search engines.



Identifying the Needs and Expectations of a Target Audience

Internet use is largely driven by three types of activities:

- Search for information and answers to questions;
- Communication with peers in a given environment; and
- Entertainment.

Content creation is supposed to be based on:

- Analyze key « questions » about subject;
- Create content that enables answers to questions and; and
- Vary communications media (e.g., texts, images, files, webinars, etc.)

« Visibility" on the Internet can be enhanced through the use of different WEB sources: websites, thematic directories, and social networks.



Reading Behaviors on the WEB and Writing Protocols

Writing text for the Internet differs from traditional styles of composition.

Likewise, online reading behaviors are not the same as those generally associated with reading a book. For example:

- **50% of visitors stay less than 30 seconds on a site;**
- **30% of internet users leave a site after viewing just the first page;**
- **A mere 16% of Internet users read word for word the content of a site;**
- **Reading, on average, is 25% slower than on paper; and**
- **50% of « eyeballs » are focused on merely reading titles.**



Web Page Composition: Text and Ergonomic Considerations

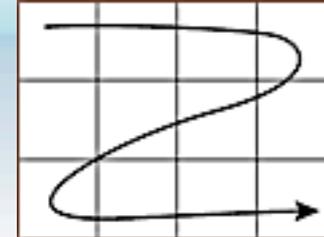
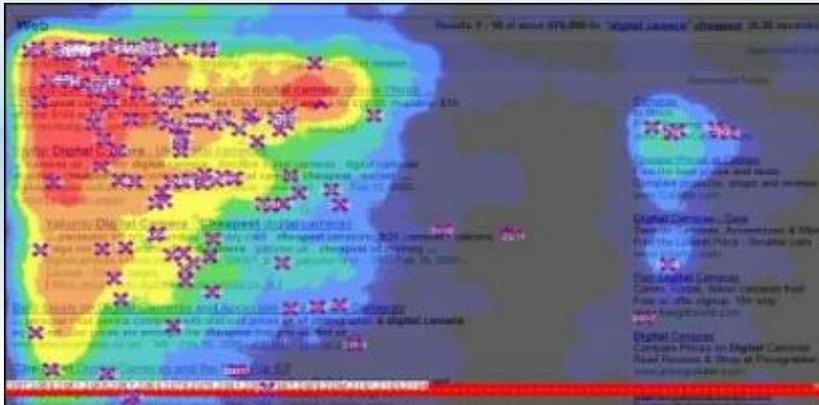
Optimized content composition (e.g., web writing and web marketing texts) and ergonomic optimization are essential features that can hold the attention of site visitors. As a practical matter, this means one ought to make every effort to:

- **Optimize menu layouts, titles and first paragraphs**
(50% of visitors stay less than 30 seconds on the site);
- **Create relevant, reach and qualitative content**
(30% of internet users typically exit a site after viewing only the first page);
- **Provide the most important information in sections "F" or "Z »**
(16% of Internet users read verbatim the content of a site); and
- **Choose colors and a fonts for easy reading**
(Reading online is on average 25% slower than on paper).



The Reading of WEB Content ... In F, Z or by the Diagonal?

The typical reader on the web exhibits a particular pattern of behavior while reading a web page. It is widely estimated, for example, that a mere 16% of Internet users read word for word the content of a given site. Indeed, readers are focused generally on the 'most visible' parts of a page (i.e., the so-called zone "F " or " Z "):



⇒ In order to capture and keep the interest of your audience, the most important information should be placed at the « most visible places » (zone " F" or "Z ").



Search Engine Optimisation (SEO): a " Must Have" Feature or Not?

If a given WEB source is created to serve the needs of a dedicated group of end users which owns the web address of a given website, and the owner of the resource is not seeking to increase its audience and traffic, then use of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) techniques is neither necessary nor desirable.

If, in contrast, the purpose of WEB-site is to become a means for promoting and enlarging of the site's potential traffic volume and audience, then SEO can and ought to be applied to:

- Texts incorporated into WEB pages;
- Keywords, titles, URLs, H1-H6; and
- Link building.



Internet Accessibility Standards: WCAG2.0 of W3C

W3C - The World Wide Web Consortium, abbreviated by the acronym W3C is an international standards organization, founded in October 1994. The W3C organization is responsible for promoting the compatibility of technology on the web, e.g., such as HTML, XHTML, XML, RDF, SPARQL, CSS, PNG, SVG, and SOAP.

WEB sites created in conformity with the WCAG2.0 Standards (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) of W3C will enable:

- **Correct display in all operating systems (Windows, Mac) and in the different "browsers » (Exporer, Firefox, Safari, Opera etc.); and**
- **Access to WEB site for all public (blind, color blindness, low vision, color blindness, etc.)**



Functional Content of the Site: Plurality of Tools and Media

Use of "alternative" and complementary media permits a plurality of users with different types of memory: visual, sensory, associative.

- **Multimedia content to reinforce a message (sound, video, etc.);**
- **Promotions, specific topics;**
- **News and Information;**
- **Interactivity (chat, forum, games, online surveys, etc.);**
- **Search engine on the WEB site; and**
- **Site Map.**



Critical Success Factors in the Creation of Effective Web Sites

- **Benchmark vis-a-vis the competition;**
- **Define strategy for market positioning or targeted public;**
- **Incorporate keywords in all pages, titles, URLs, H1-H6;**
- **Insert key information at the top of paragraphs and in the "Z" zone;**
- **Adopt a direct and clear style of composition favoring simple vocabulary;**
- **Design intuitive and user friendly graphical interfaces;**
- **Employ standard search engine optimization (SEO) techniques;**
- **Make the website 'accessible' - WCAG standards (W3C); and**
- **Animate the WEB site through regular news and other inputs!**

