AOIT Web Design

Lesson 10

Gathering and Preparing   
Web Content

Student Resources

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Student Resource 10.1

Web Writing: Adapting Content for the Web

Directions: Westside Pizza knows a lot about pizza, but it doesn’t know much about writing web content. Working with a partner, take the paragraphs below about Westside Pizza and adapt them for the home page of the company’s website. Use a page in your notebook or a blank sheet of paper to sketch out the content of the home page. Remember, on a website, people need to be able to find what they’re looking for quickly, and what they see needs to appeal to them. You don’t have to include all of this information on the home page (you probably want to just add links to some of it). Also, Westside may have forgotten some important content that it needs on its home page. If you decide to use images or infographics for some content, just make a very quick sketch, or just say what the picture will show.

Westside Pizza is your best shot for great Italian food. We serve lunch, dinner, and takeout. We have starters, salads, pastas, pizzas, calzones, sandwiches, strombolis, and desserts. All meals for kids are under $5 and include dessert.

Everything is fresh. Pasta comes with garlic bread. Salads have only the finest fresh ingredients, and they come with garlic bread too. Sandwiches come with a choice of fries or salad. There are tons of choices of meats and cheeses, hot or cold. Calzones are our specialty. The dough is filled with meat, vegetables, mozzarella, and parmesan cheese. Do you know what a stromboli is? It’s named after a volcano in Italy because it erupts with flavor. It’s pizza dough wrapped up like a volcano with incredible fillings. We’ve been known for our pizzas for over 25 years. You can get most any kind you want. And don’t forget that our desserts are big enough to share.

Come visit us: 510 38th Street, Falling Oaks, Virginia (just across from the library).

Student Resource 10.2

Examples: Effective Writing for the Web

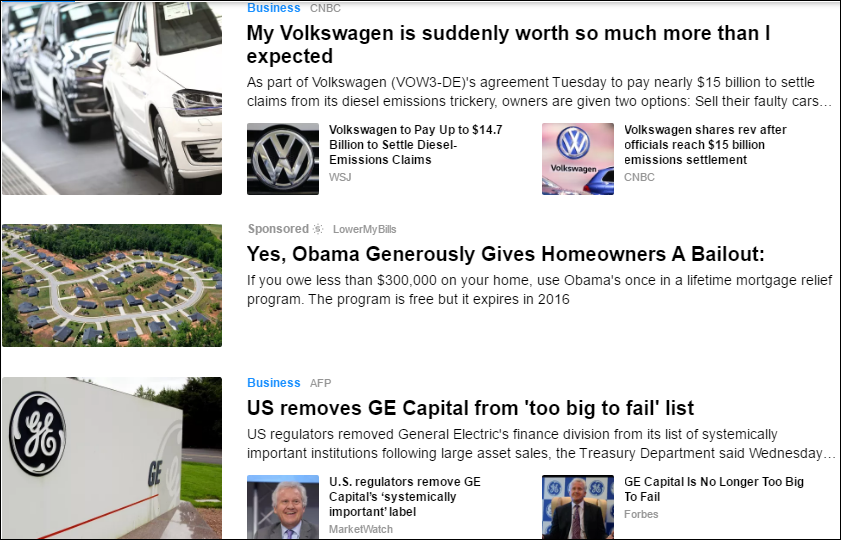
Student Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Directions: The examples in this resource illustrate the rules of good writing for the web. Study each rule and the example that illustrates it, and then answer the questions about each example.

Writing for the web is quite different from writing for print media such as a magazine, a brochure, or a book. Your job as a web designer is to make it easy for your website’s users to understand the goal of the website and find information. When people have a pleasant experience and quickly understand what a website can provide them, they will feel comfortable and return to the site. Organized content and effective writing is essential to that positive user experience.

Make Sure Your Content Is Accurate

All content must be up-to-date, accurate, and not offensive. Write text in a consistent tone, with no grammatical or spelling errors.

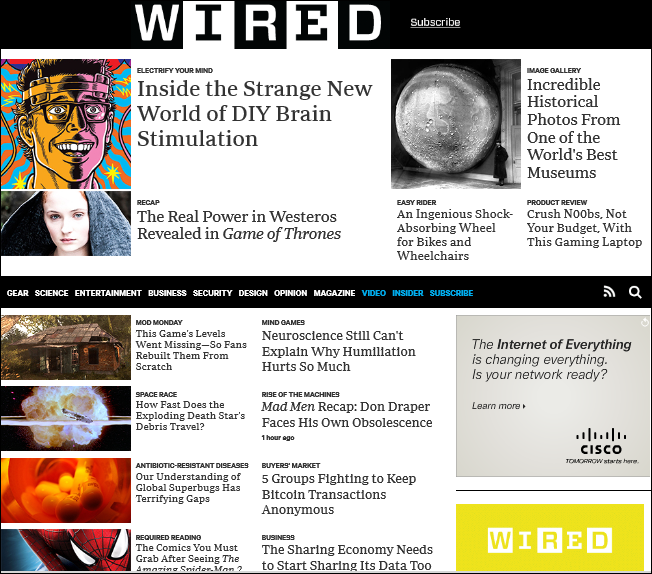


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**How can you tell these articles on Yahoo! News are up-to-date?**

Use Large Headlines with Smaller Subheads

Content should be placed in a clear hierarchy with the most important information being the most prominent. Headings can then link to more information or a complete article. If something catches a user’s eye, he or she can click deeper to learn more.



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Notice how the top news stories of the day are presented in larger text, with supporting articles listed under them in slightly smaller text? Choosing text sizes in this way helps readers figure out right away (1) what is making news right then, and (2) what else, while also interesting and important, is not as “big” a story.

**What seems to be the “biggest” news story on the page above?**

Design Content for Scanning

Text should be easily readable and “scannable”—short sentences, short paragraphs, and bulleted lists wherever possible. People are in a hurry; they want to find exactly what they are looking for quickly. They want to be able to scan the first reasonable option to see if a site has what matches their interests, and if not, try the next immediately.



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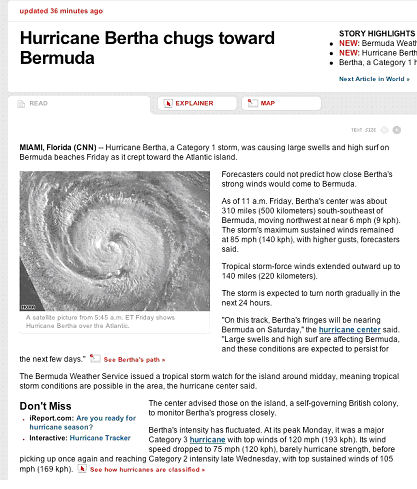
Notice how this article uses many short paragraphs, and each paragraph tells a reader a complete thought. Readers can easily get the basic facts of the story and move on, if they choose, without having to read the entire article to learn what has happened to Monta Ellis.

**Can you think of a more effective way to deliver the most important information in the sentences below about Michael Jordan?**

***Michael Jordan, a basketball player from North Carolina and father of four, loves basketball. He played for the Chicago Bulls and received 14 MVP awards, which is a record.***

Use Descriptive Titles and Keywords

Keep the content searchable: use important keywords in the title tag and repeat them throughout the copy, without sounding unnatural. Search engines pick up keywords and display titles, so these should be written to encourage people to go to your site.



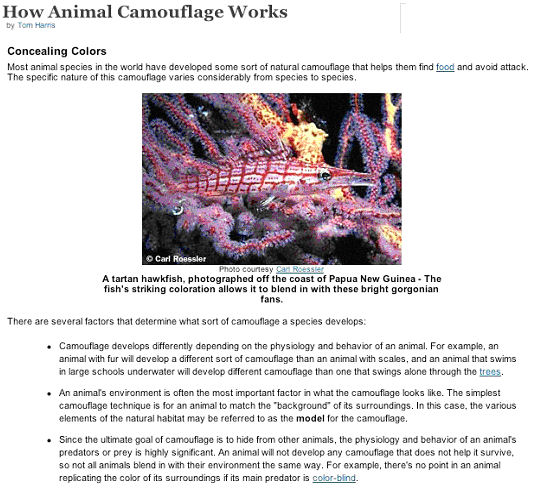
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In this story, writers have repeated the words *Bermuda* and *Bertha* many times. This will help a search engine to find the article and “understand” that the article gives information about Hurricane Bertha, which is off the coast of Bermuda.

**Circle each time Bermuda is mentioned, and underline each time Bertha is mentioned.**

Make Your Writing Concise

Users do not have time to read on the web, so they prefer when writing gets right to the point. Cut out flowery, descriptive language, omit words wherever possible, keep instructions short, and do not repeat yourself. Read the text out loud to listen for awkward phrasing, repeated thoughts, and ways sentences can be pruned.



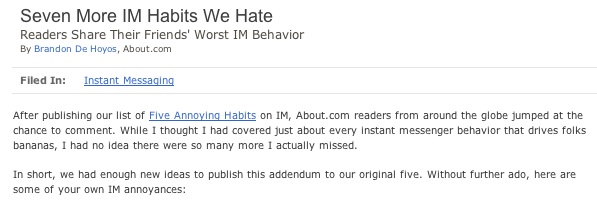
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This article, which tells how animal camouflage works, does a great job of putting the information into short, concise sentences.

**Underline two or three sentences in the article that you think are particularly good web writing.**

Give Summaries First

Start your copy with a short summary, then elaborate, and then summarize again. Readers who are scanning the text should be able to get the gist of your message in the first paragraph. If you put the most important part at the end, they may not read all the way through to get to it.



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Though the article above goes into great detail, it starts with a good summary of what the article is about, why it is being written, and why a reader would want to keep reading.

**From these four short sentences, tell exactly what you expect to find in this article.**

Know Your Audience

Content should reflect what target users of the site will find valuable and be written in a way to hold their attention. Answer the questions below to examine how message targeting affects writing.

From American Girl:



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**Who is this page designed for?**

**Give at least five clues that tell you who the intended audience is.**

Use Obvious Buttons and Links

Make it easy for users to get to their desired destination by making new and visited links obvious through color. Make button descriptions short but clear.



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**Look at the color used for links on this page. List the names of the links the user has clicked on:**

Chunked Content

Organize your content into logical categories or “chunks.” Stand-alone blocks of two to three sentences are more easily scanned and require less scrolling. Long paragraphs are hard to read on a computer monitor.

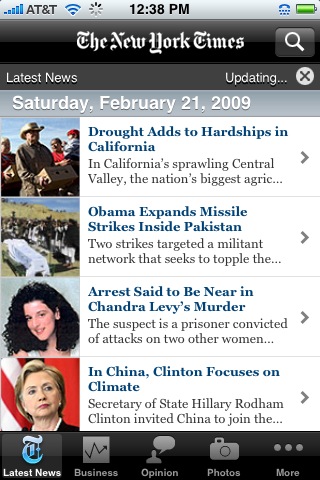


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**What “chunks” of content can you see here?**

Adapting Content for a Mobile Website

You will need to adapt a website for viewing on a mobile phone. On a mobile website, all of the content must be useful. In general, mobile content should be more actionable and focused on user needs. It should be fast, highly readable, and easy to navigate. As an overall rule, give a summary paragraph with bulleted key points and a link to the full text. To favor search engine optimization (SEO), focus on descriptive titles rather than clever ones. Remember that mobile users are dependent on search.



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**What makes this web page look different from a web page that is not adapted for mobile?**

Student Resource 10.3

Note Taking: Preparing Images for the Web

Student Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Answer the following questions as your teacher demonstrates how to prepare images for the web.

1. Which type of image will we use in our client’s website: raster-based or vector-based?
2. Where can we obtain photos or clip art for our site?
3. What are some ways we can use our own artwork or photos for our website?
4. What are some guidelines for adhering to image copyright laws?
5. Where on our client site will we use inline images? Will we use web graphics in any other way?
6. Are any of our graphics photos? Which format should we use: JPEG, GIF, or PNG?

1. Do any of our graphics require transparency? Which format can we use—JPEG, GIF, or PNG—and how do we create transparency?
2. Describe the difference between the file size and the physical size of an image. What is the recommended file size maximum for web graphics? What is the recommended overall file size for a web page, including all of the images and the web page file itself?
3. What is the standard resolution (pixels per inch) for our web graphics?
4. Should our web graphics be in CMYK or RGB color model?
5. Why is using height and width attributes to resize an image in HTML not a good idea? How will we resize our images?

Student Resource 10.4

Checklist: Preparing Your Client’s Website

You have mapped out the scope of the content for your website in your site map. You know where each type of content will reside on the pages per your wireframes, and you have sample pages created from your template. Now you need to fill in the blanks by creating and placing content onto your web pages. Your client may already have content for you to use—a brochure, a marketing packet, or a newsletter, for instance—but you will still need to turn that material into content for the web.

As you create your web content, first write all the text in each section of the page using Dreamweaver in Design view. Then assign the content to headers and apply boldface, italics, colors, and list formatting. Remember to read your text out loud, and then make any final modifications.

Make sure your materials meet or exceed the following assessment criteria:

**Written Content Criteria:**

* All content is complete, accurate, up-to-date, and grammatically correct; has no spelling errors; and is written in a tone appropriate for the audience.
* Content is written and categorized logically and has appropriate hierarchies and headlines/subheads.
* Text is written for scanning, with short paragraphs, bulleted lists, concise text, and up-front summaries.
* Links and visited links are made obvious through color.
* Descriptive titles and keywords are used throughout the text.

**Graphical Content Criteria:**

* All graphics are raster-based RGB images at 72 ppi, and all contain useful <alt> attributes. All images combined for the web page are no larger than 144K, unless there is an exceptional reason the combined images are larger, such as an image gallery page.
* All graphics are obtained legally and are used tastefully and consistently within the site’s visual design and color scheme.
* Photos are in JPEG format, and logos, banners, and other simple graphics are in PNG or GIF format.
* Transparent images are created without a halo.
* Images are fully optimized, no height and width tags are used to resize images, and images that link to other pages or documents are coded correctly.
* All image files follow the site’s naming convention and are placed properly within the directory structure.