Don't "Click here:" The Intersection of Usability, Accessibility, and SEO

SILS Seminar Friday, April 20th, 12pm



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Overview

- What are Usability, Accessibility, and Search Engine Optimization (SEO)?
- What could Usability, Accessibility, and SEO have in common?



Why worry about Usability, Accessibility, and SEO?



Search Engine Optimization

"In my experience, the traffic difference from position #1 to position #11 is...something closer to 1/100th of the visits."

Rand Fishkin CEO & Co-Founder of SEOmoz



Usability

"It's quite normal for e-commerce sites to increase sales by 100% or more as a result of usability. More important, they can probably avoid 9 of 10 returns by eliminating most misdesigned items (a 1,000% improvement of the error rate metric)."

Jakob Nielsen, Nielsen Norman Group "the guru of Web page usability"



Accessibility

"Companies that do not consider accessibility in their Web site or product development will come to regret that decision, because we intend to use every tool at our disposal to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to technology..."

Thomas E. Perez, Asst. Attorney General, US Dept. of Justice 2010 Jacobus tenBroek Disability Law Symposium

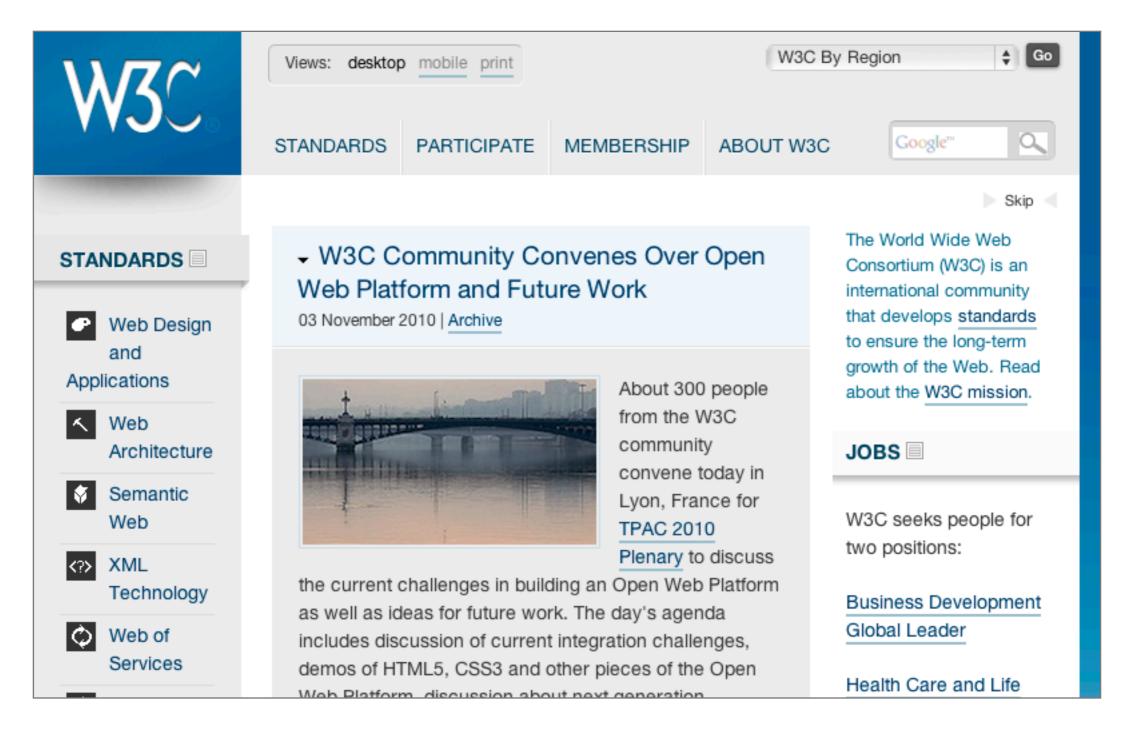


A classic blunder

Can 3 billion web pages be wrong?



W3C website: 2010





W3C website: c. 1992

World Wide Web

The WorldWideWeb (W3) is a wide-area <u>hypermedia</u> information retrieval initiative aiming to give universal access to a large universe of documents.

Everything there is online about W3 is linked directly or indirectly to this document, including an executive summary of the project, Mailing lists, Policy, November's W3 news, Frequently Asked Questions.

What's out there?

Pointers to the world's online information, subjects, W3 servers, etc.

<u>Help</u>

on the browser you are using

Software Products

A list of W3 project components and their current state. (e.g. <u>Line Mode</u>, X11 <u>Viola</u>, <u>NeXTStep</u>, <u>Servers</u>, <u>Tools</u>, <u>Mail robot</u>, <u>Library</u>)

Technical

Details of protocols, formats, program internals etc

<u>Bibliography</u>

Paper documentation on W3 and references.

People 1

A list of some people involved in the project.

<u>History</u>

A summary of the history of the project.

How can I help?

If you would like to support the web..

Getting code





"Click here"

- Emerged sometime between 1992 & 1995
- Became popular



Very, very popular

Web Images Videos Maps News Shopping Gmail more ▼ Web History | Search settings | Sign in Google click here Search About 3,350,000,000 results (0.21 seconds) Advanced search Everything Adobe - Download Adobe Reader Download Adobe Reader to view, print and collaborate on PDF files. Books Versions - Reader - System requirements get.adobe.com/reader/ - Cached - Similar Images ▼ More Click Here: A Digital Marketing and Advertising Agency Click Here is a Dallas-based interactive advertising agency with a full range of online advertising and marketing solutions, including display, search and ... Durham, NC 27713 www.clickhere.com/ - Cached Change location Consumer Opt-Out - Network Advertising Initiative All results The NAI has adopted a policy that all NAI member companies set a minimum lifespan of five years for their opt out cookies. Click here for more information. ... Related searches www.networkadvertising.org/optout nonppii.asp - Cached - Similar Wonder wheel Page previews Apple - QuickTime - Download Download QuickTime 7 Player free for PC and Mac. Upgrade to QuickTime 7 Pro and capture More search tools video with a single click or convert media into a variety of ... www.apple.com > Mac > QuickTime - Cached - Similar Something different Windows Media Player - Microsoft Corporation lovely www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/download/ - Similar failure read more rich Internet applications | Adobe Flash Player



More than the Beatles

Web Images Videos Maps News Shopping Gmail more ▼ Google Everything Videos

News

Images

Books

Bloas

▼ More

Durham, NC 27713

Change location

Any time

Latest Past 2 days

All results

Wonder wheel Sites with images

the beatles

About 68,500,000 results (0.16 seconds)

Advanced search

Search

The Beatles

Detailed history with information on their music, movies, news, and latest projects. Images, related links, and a showcase for their albums.

Songs - Albums - Video - Store

www.thebeatles.com/ - Cached - Similar

The Beatles - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The Beatles were an English rock band, formed in Liverpool in 1960, and one of the most commercially successful and critically acclaimed acts in the history ... Videography - List of The Beatles songs - Breakup - George Harrison

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The Beatles - Cached - Similar

Videos for the beatles



The Beatles 3 min - Feb 9, 2006 Uploaded by spinalcracker youtube.com



THE BEATLES- HERE COMES THE SUN 3 min - Jun 8, 2007 Uploaded by markrallim youtube.com



The Beatles -Let It Be 3 min - Feb 7, 2007 Uploaded by esperantza youtube.com

SafeSearch off ▼

Web History | Search settings | Sign in



...and major sports

786,000,000 Football

415,000,000 Basketball

216,000,000 Baseball

131,000,000 Hockey

68,500,000 The Beatles

1,616,500,000



"Click here" is bad usability

"Explain what users will find at the other end of the link, and include some of the key information-carrying terms in the anchor text itself to enhance scannability and SEO. Don't use 'click here' or other non-descriptive link text."

Jakob Nielsen Top Ten Web Design Mistakes of 2005

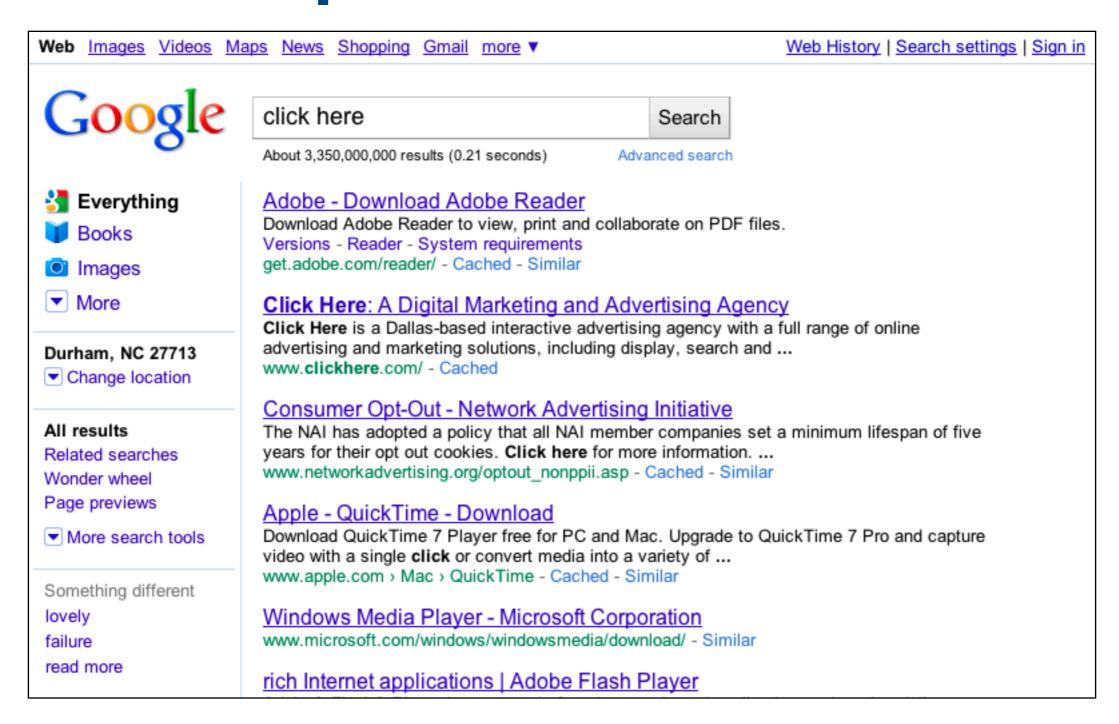


Does anyone listen?

- Can 3.3 billion web pages be wrong?
- "Click here" prevails!



On top: Adobe Reader



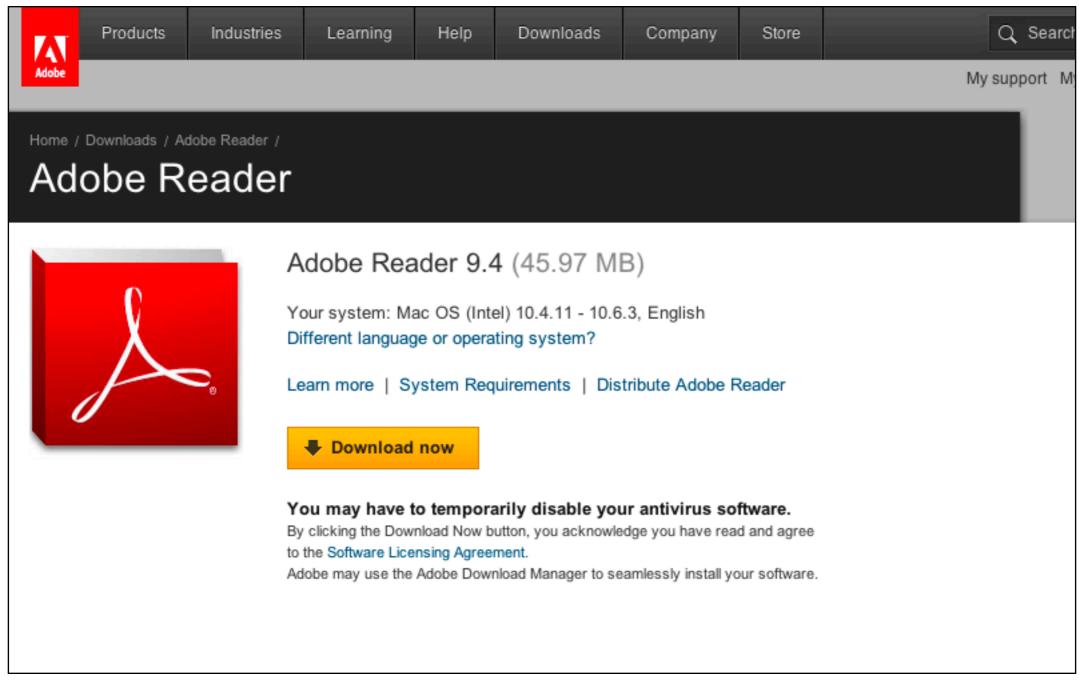


On top: Adobe Reader





Why is this top result?





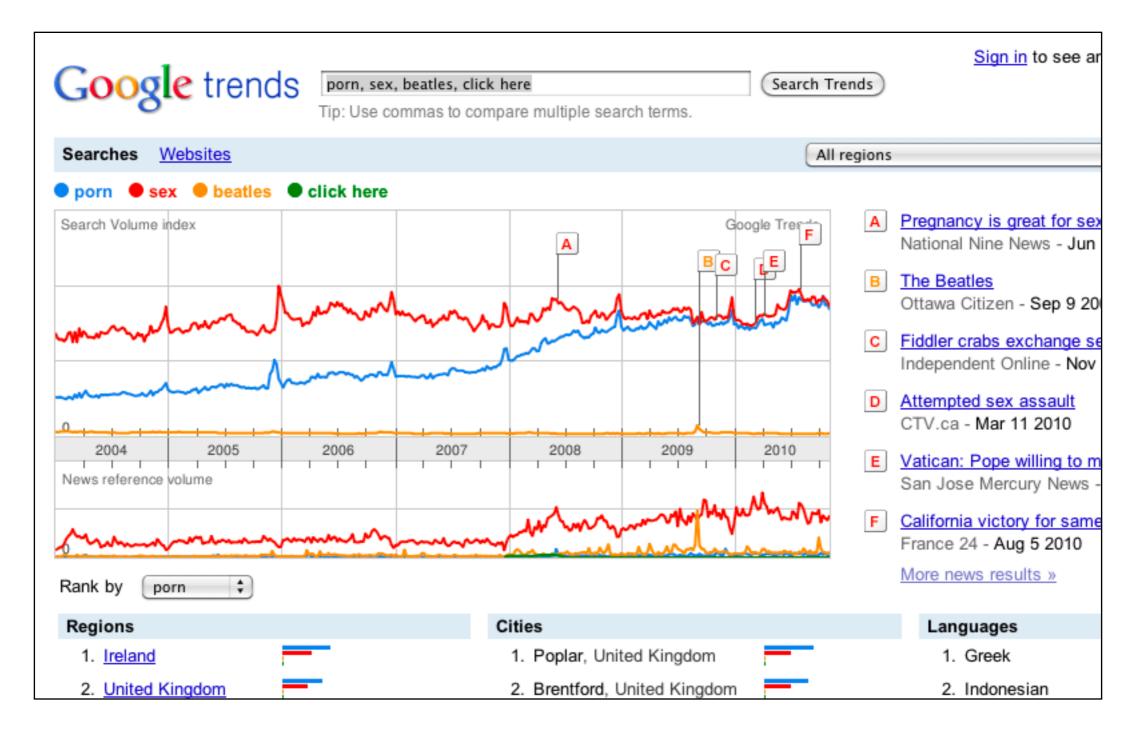
Incoming links

Tens of thousands of incoming links, like this:

"You will need Acrobat Reader to read or print this document. To download Acrobat Reader click here."



Real life searches





"Click here" is bad SEO

- Some are swayed by SEO angle
- "Click here" still prevails, mostly



Types of Users

Three samples — how different are they?



Three sample groups

- Sighted human
- Sight-impaired human
- Robot



Sighted user

- Uses visually rich web browser
- Read non-linear
- Use visual cues to determine relevance



Sight impaired user

- Uses Assistive Technologies (AT)
- Read non-linear with difficulty
- Can't use visual cues to determine relevance



(Search engine) robot

- Reads code without rendering
- Reads linear
- Can't use visual cues to determine relevance



What about mobile?

- Usually limited mouse emulation
- May need to reduce or disable sound
- May need larger text size
- May not be able to install plug-ins



What do they have in common?



Usability

"Usability means making sure something works well, and that a person* of average ability or experience can use it for it's intended purpose without getting hopelessly frustrated."

Steve Krug, Author — Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability

*be they sighted, sight-impaired, or a robot



Structure vs. Presentation

Appearances may be deceiving



Structure tags

HTML tags used to identify the significance of content, such as:

- <title> document title
- <h1> level one headline
- paragraph



Presentation

The style applied to content that affects the way it looks. An example of a CSS style:

```
h1 {
   font: bold 24px arial;
   margin: 10px 0 10px 0;
}
```



Good usability

Improving Your Web Site's Accessibility

Label Graphics and Images

First, did you label everything on your web site that isn't strictly text? In most cases, this means using alternative text to describe the function of the item. In HTML, you can provide alternative text for images by adding alt="your description of the image" within the image tag. Pictures are probably there for a reason. Certainly, graphical links have a purpose. Image maps need to have alt-text for each "clickable" region. And, be sure to use client-side image maps, not server-side, or you'll have even bigger problems. Learn about the difference between client-side and server-side image maps here.

Tips for Writing Effective Alt-Text

Now you're going back to label those few problematic images on your site. How do you know what to write? Of course, the description of an image is just as subjective a matter as the image itself, but a few suggestions will help. Describe the function of the image. Especially if the image is a link, "Search the Card Catalog" is much more useful than "Photo of a collection of books and other reading materials scattered on a library table." Read more tips for writing alt-text here.

Labeling Links

If a graphic is a link, it absolutely must be labeled meaningfully. But, text links must make sense, too. Many visitors to your site will read only the links, skipping over explanatory text. Others will not be able to see the relationship between the explanation and the link particularly if they are using a <u>screen reader</u> and tabbing from link to link. So, using "click here" as link text is bad. Many people will hear only "click here" and will have no idea which way to go to find the explanation.



Underlying structure

<H1>Improving Your Web Site's Accessibility</H1>

<H2>Label Graphics and Images</H2>

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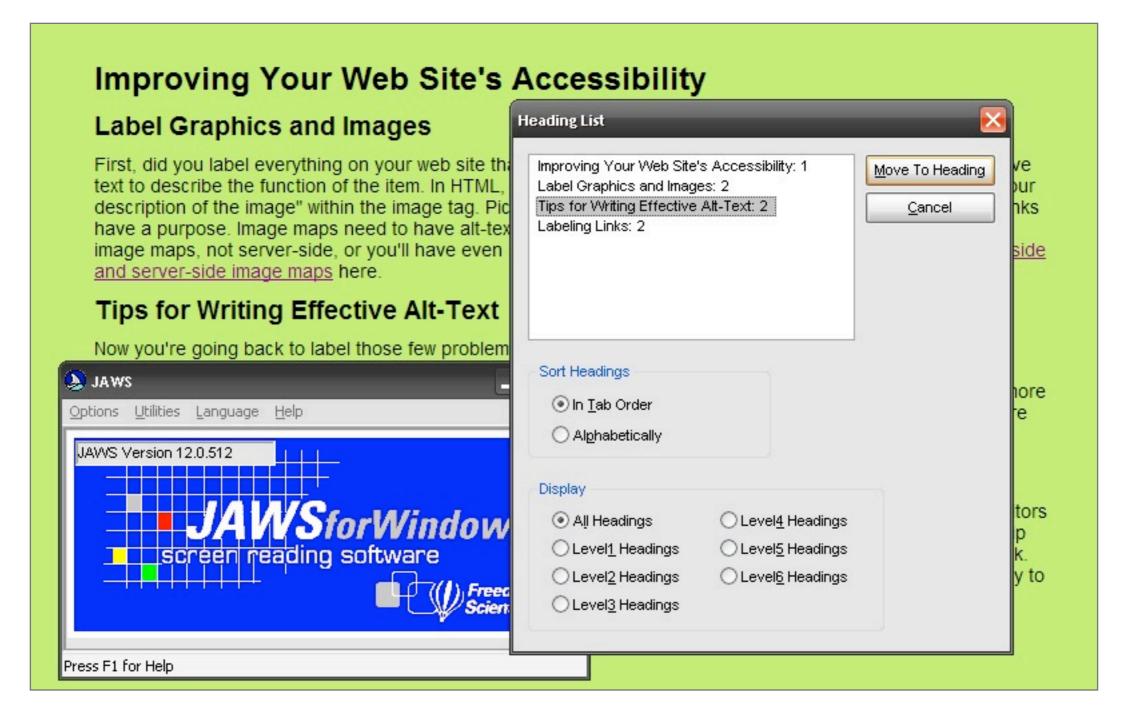
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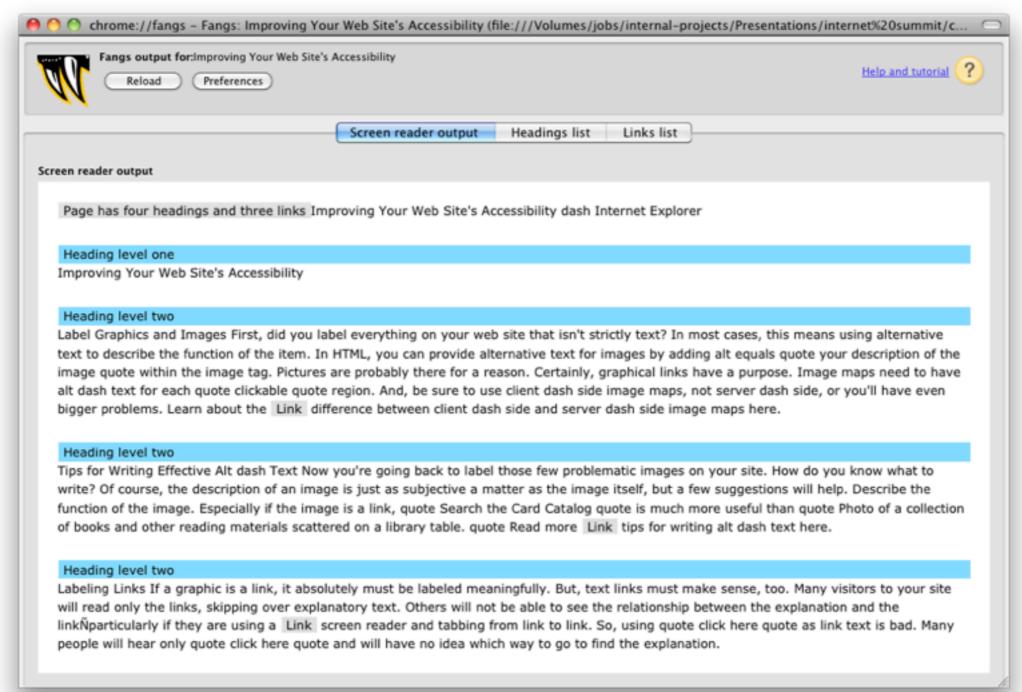


Screen reader



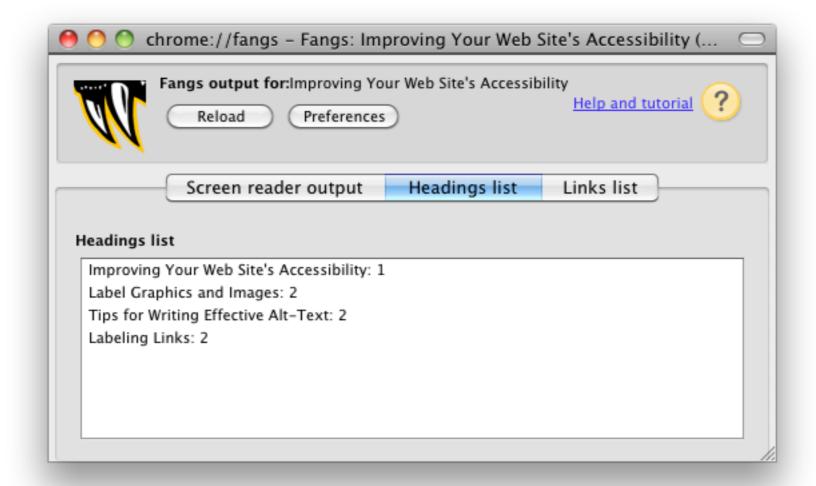


Accessibility simulator



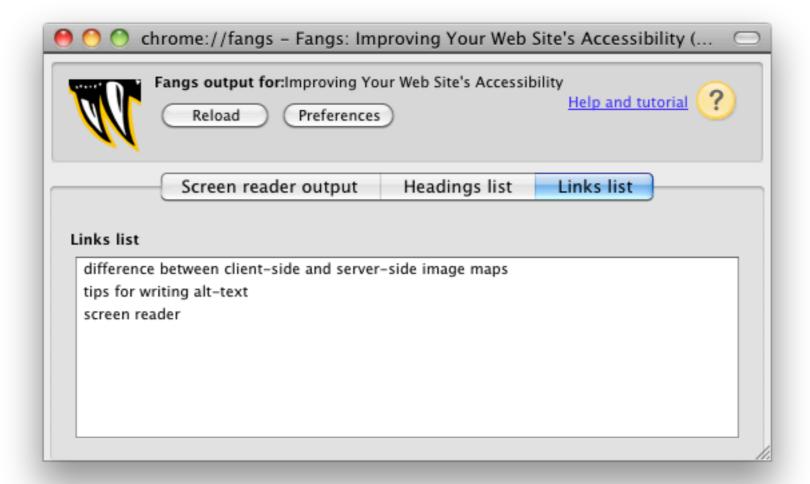


Fangs: Heading list





Fangs: Links list





Poor usability

Improving Your Web Site's Accessibility

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Underlying structure

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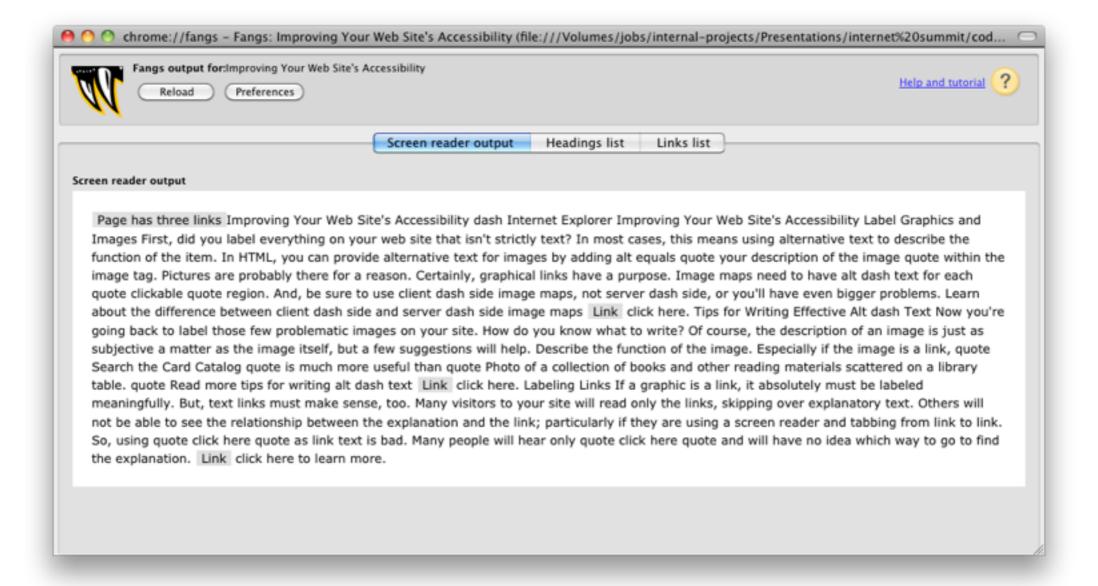
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Accessibility simulator



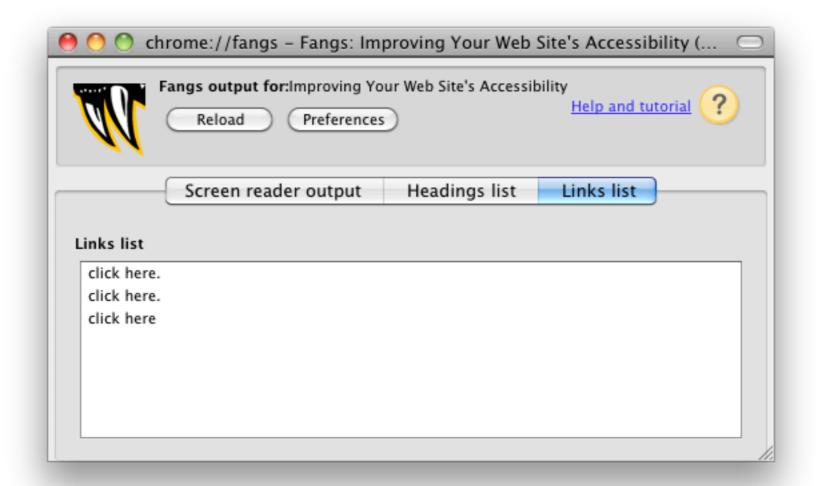


Headings list

Fangs output for:Improving Your Web Site's Accessibility Reload Preferences Screen reader output Headings list Links list Headings list	\varTheta 🤭 chrome://fangs - Fangs: Improving Your Web Site's Accessibility (
	Help and tutorial (?)				
Headings list		Screen reader output	Headings list	Links list	
	Headings lis	st			



Links list





Accessibility Tools

Learn through experimentation



Screen readers

- WebAnywhere (web-based screen reader)
 http://webanywhere.cs.washington.edu/
- NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA)
 http://www.nvda-project.org/
- JAWS for Windows

```
http://www.freedomscientific.com
```

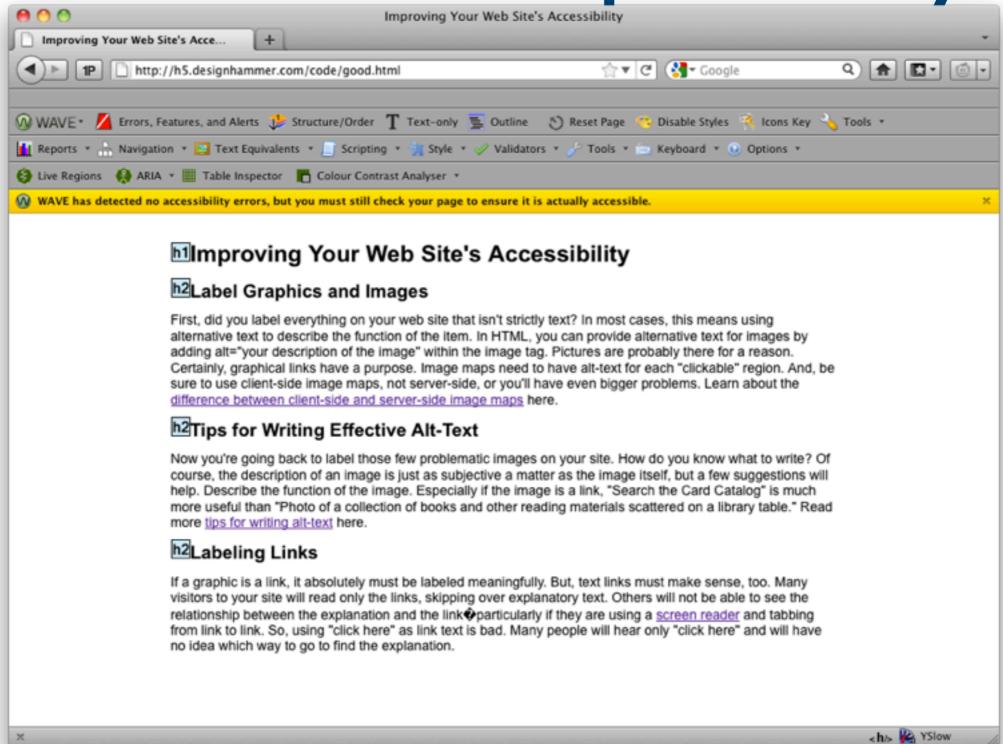


Accessibility simulators

- Fangs (Firefox)
- WAVE Toolbar (Firefox)
- Accessibility Evaluator for Firefox
- Juicy Studio Accessibility Toolbar (Firefox)
- NHN Web Accessibility eXtension (Chrome)

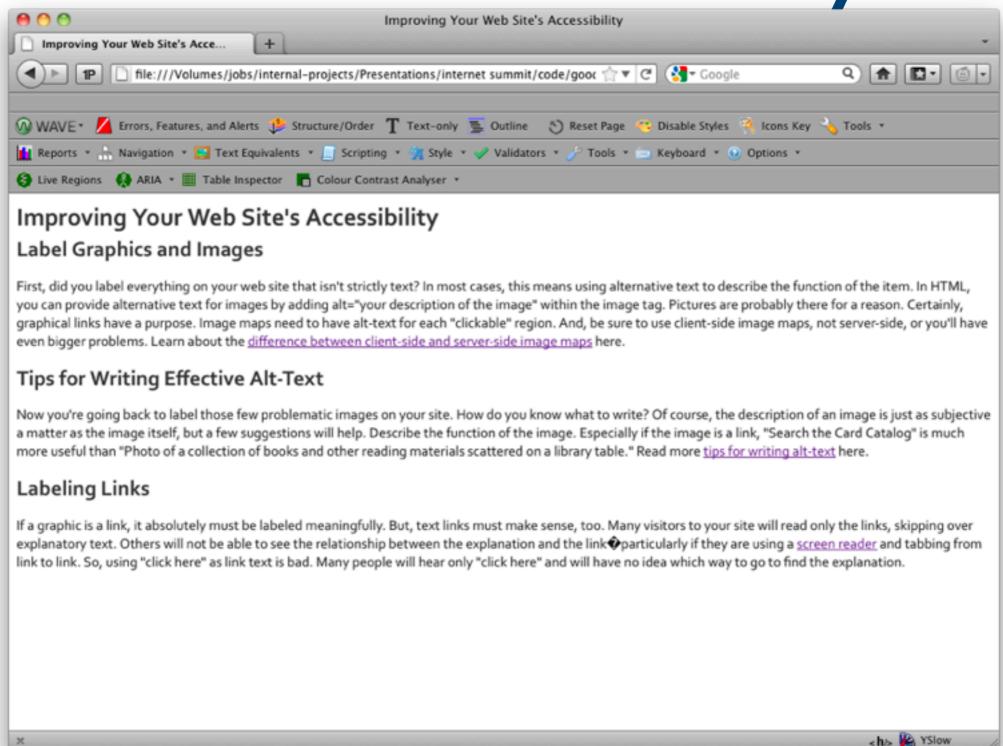


WAVE: Compatibility



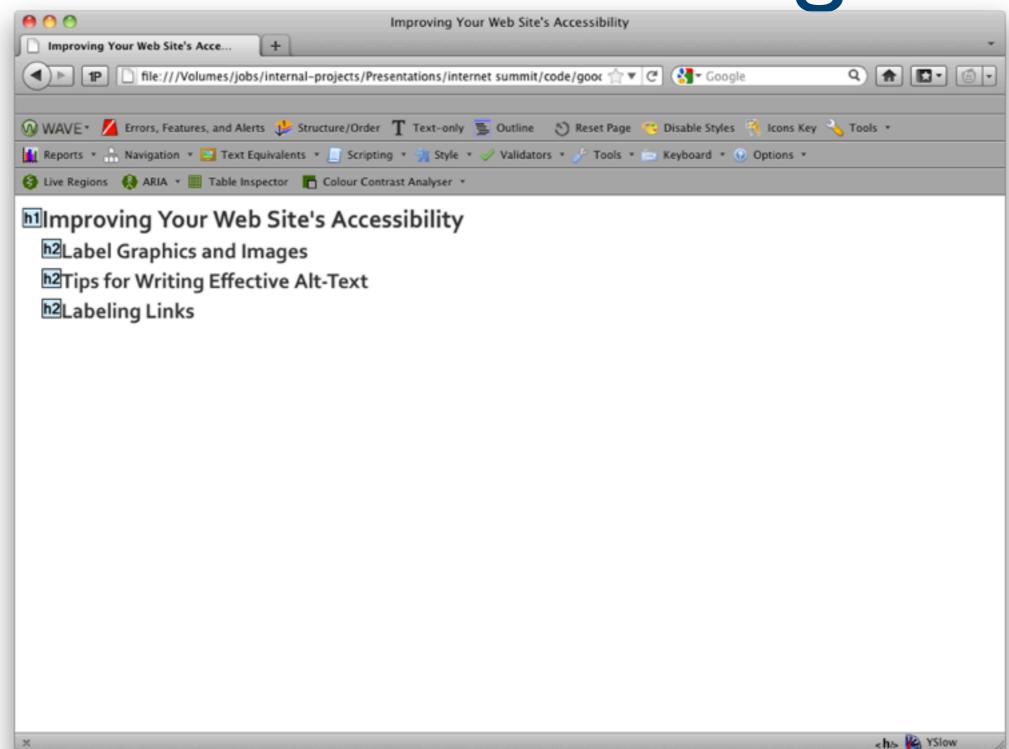


VVAVE: Text only



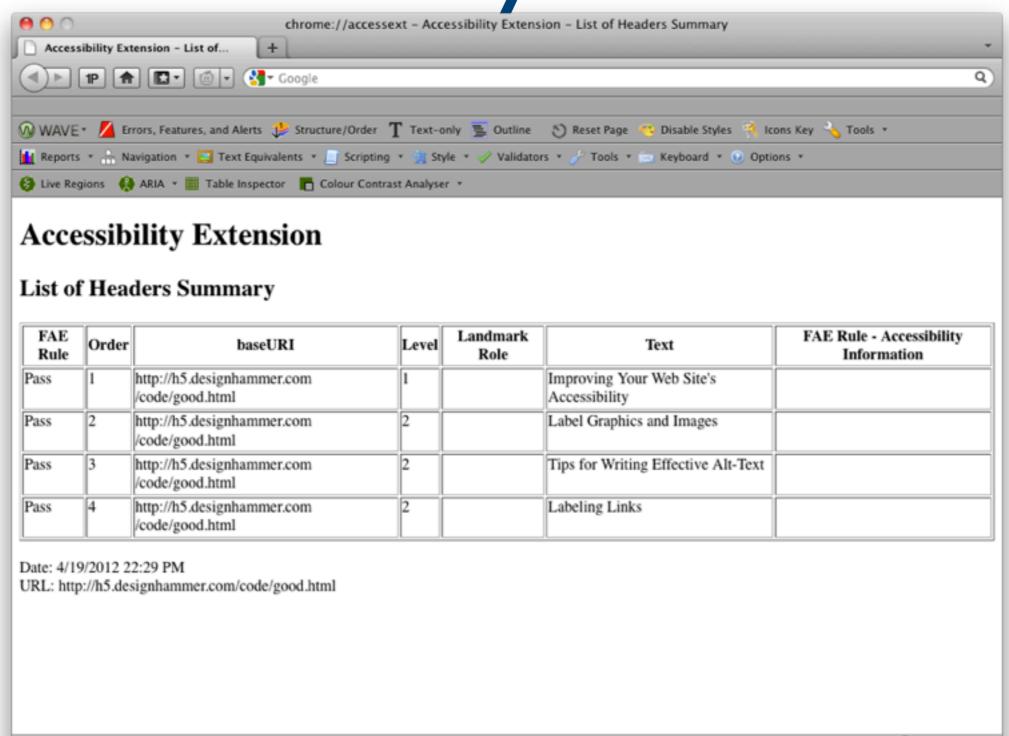


WAVE: Headings





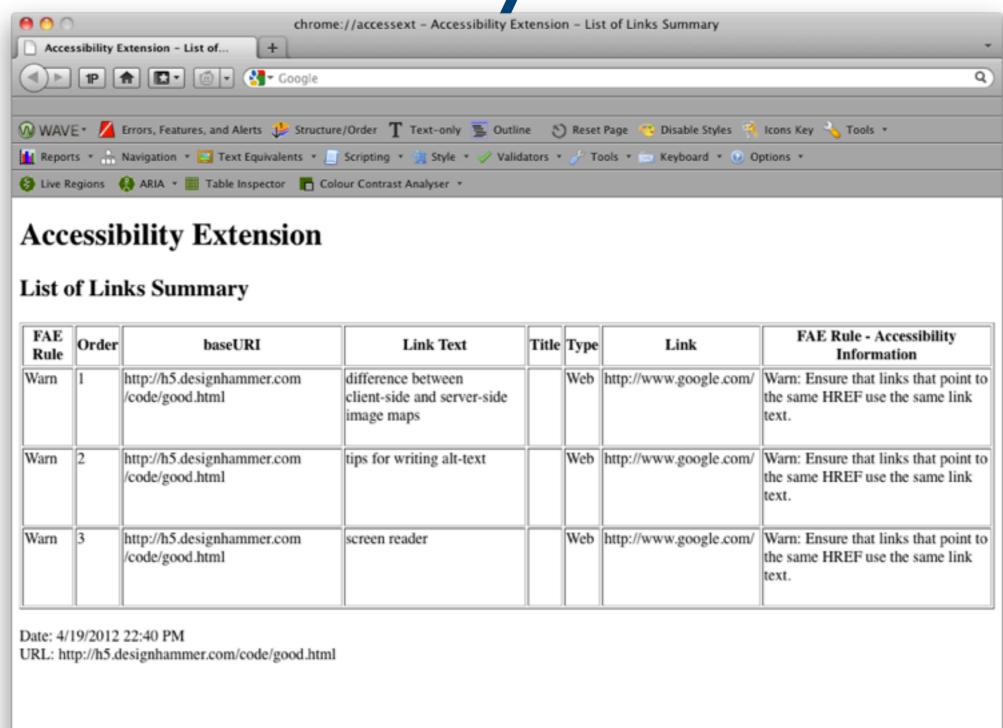
Accessibility Extension





<h/>
<h/>
YSlow

Accessibility Extension



<h/>
<h/>
YSlow

NHN Web Accessibility





Images

Don't miss an opportunity!



Sees images





Images

What a sight-impaired user & (Search Engine) robot may see



Empty <alt> text





Helpful <alt>text

"Twitpocalypse is upon us!"

<img src="/twitpocalypse.png"
alt="Twitpocalypse is upon us!">



Types of Disabilities

Five classes, each with different needs



Types of disabilities

- Visual
- Auditory
- Motor/Mobility
- Seizures
- Cognitive/Intellectual



Visual disabilities

- Blindness
- Low vision/Poor vision
- Color blindness



Auditory disabilities

- Deafness (no hearing)
- Hearing impaired



Motor disabilities

- Paralysis
- Lack of fine motor control
- Tremors



Seizures disabilities

Photoepileptic seizures



Cognitive disabilities

- Developmental disabilities
- Learning disabilities

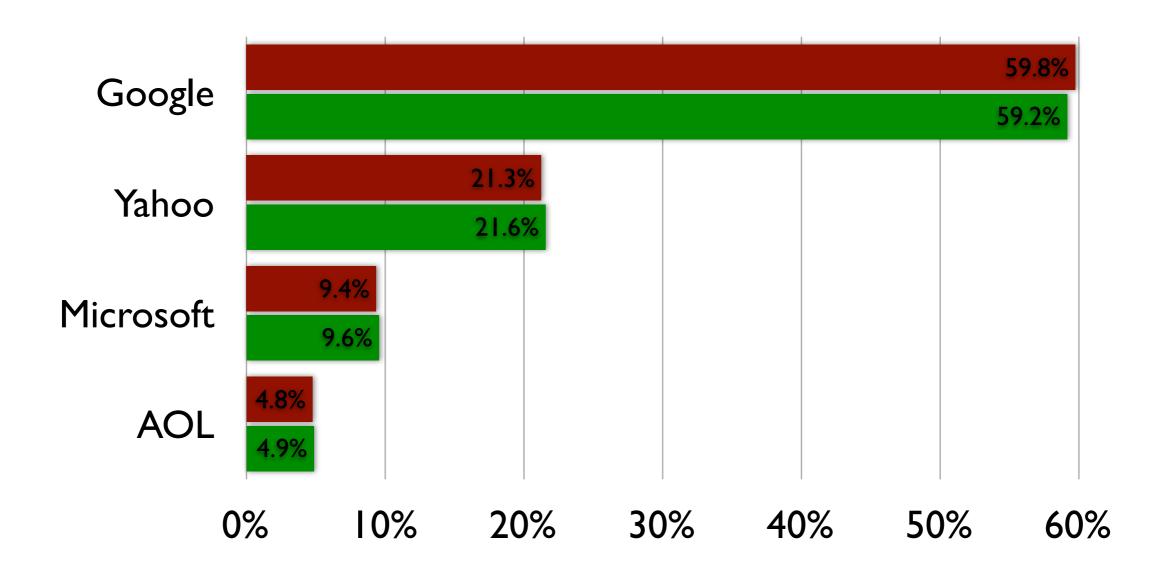


Color Deficits

Don't rely on color to express information

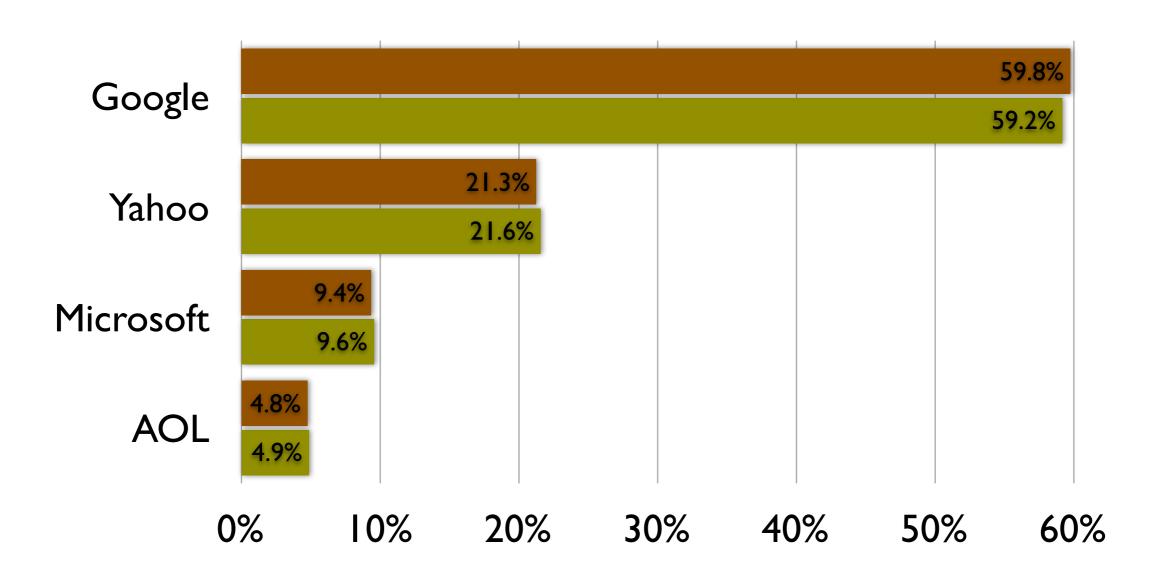


Normal vision



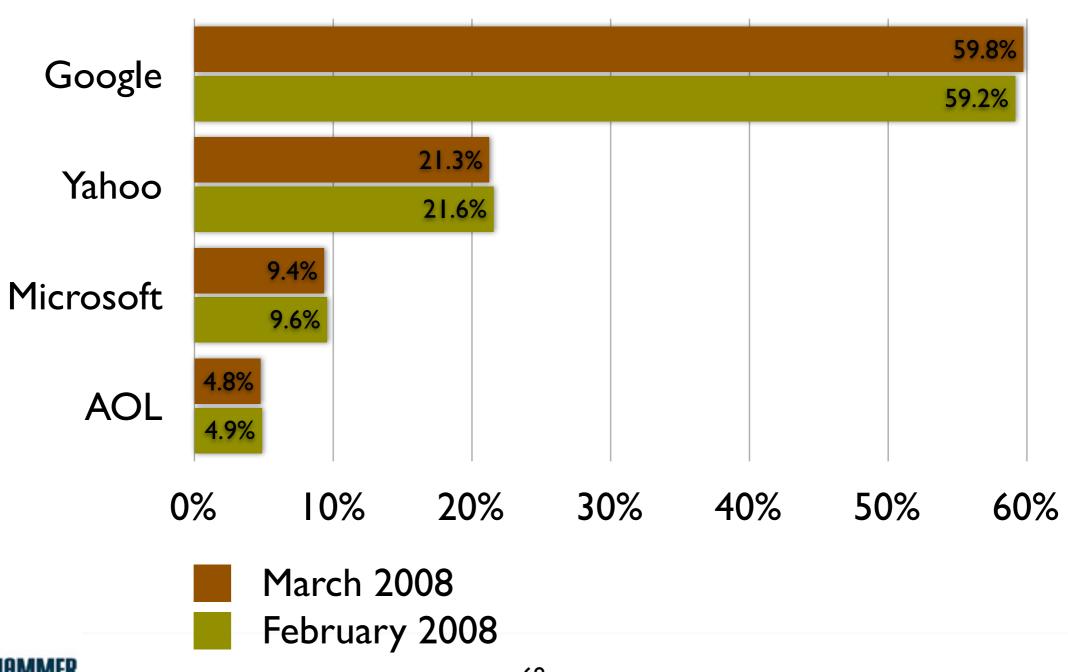


Deuteranope view



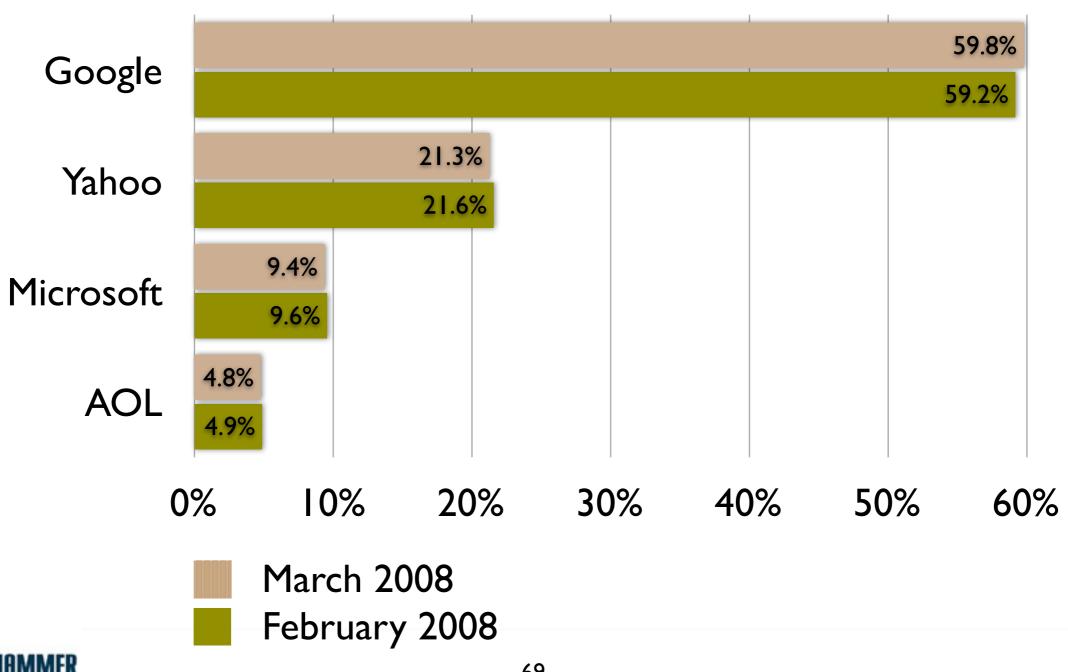


Good: add legend



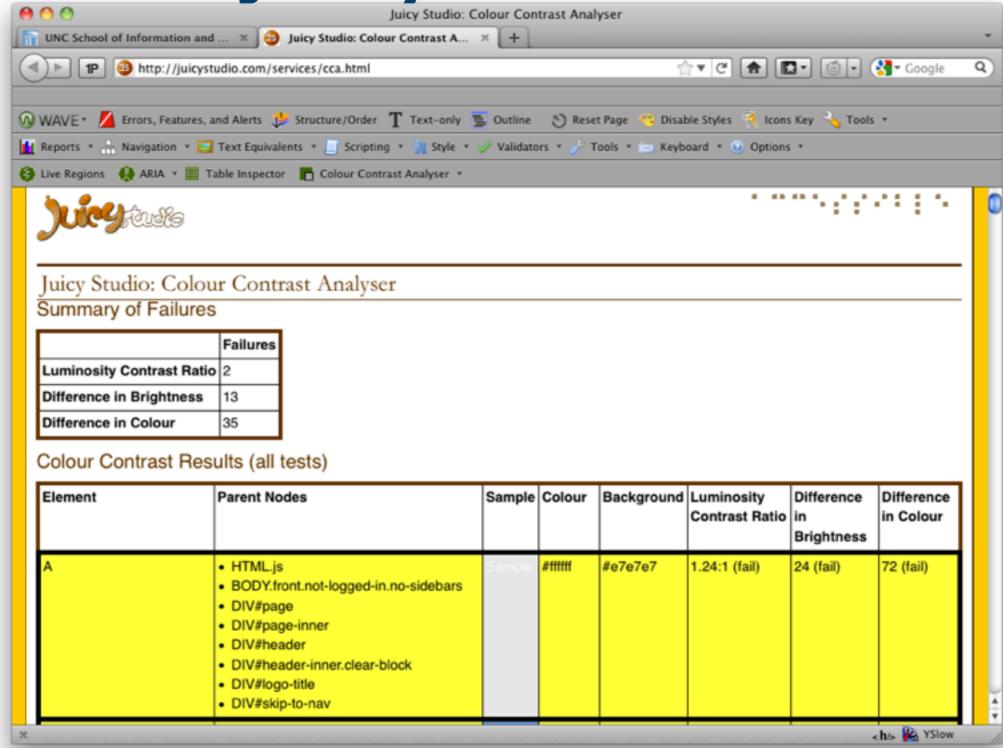


Better: add pattern





Juicy Studio





Audio & Video

What a hearing disabled user may experience



Video without text

The White House Blog

Weekly Address: "It's Time Washington Acted as Responsibly as Our Families Do"

The President previews his budget, explaining that it will help the government live within its means, while still investing to make sure America wins the future.





Audio & Video

What a hearing disabled user & (Search Engine) robot may experience



Video without text

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Subtitles & transcript

The White House Blog

Weekly Address: "It's Time Washington Acted as Responsibly as Our Families Do"

The President previews his budget, explaining that it will help the government live within its means, while still investing to make sure America wins the future.



Video Transcript

February 12, 2011 - Washington, DC:

"A few months ago, I received a letter from a woman named Brenda Breece. I wanted to share her story because it speaks to what a lot of families are going through - and it offers a good example of the kind of responsibility that's needed in Washington right now.

Brenda is a mom and a special-ed teacher from Missouri. Her husband, David, was employed at the local Chrysler plant for nearly four decades. They've worked hard their whole lives. But like a lot of folks, they've taken some hits over the past few years. When the Chrysler plant closed, David had to take early retirement. His pension helps, but it's half of what he earned before. Meanwhile, because of budget cuts, Brenda has had to buy school supplies for her students out of her own pocket - because it's her job and she cares about those kids..." Read Full Transcript

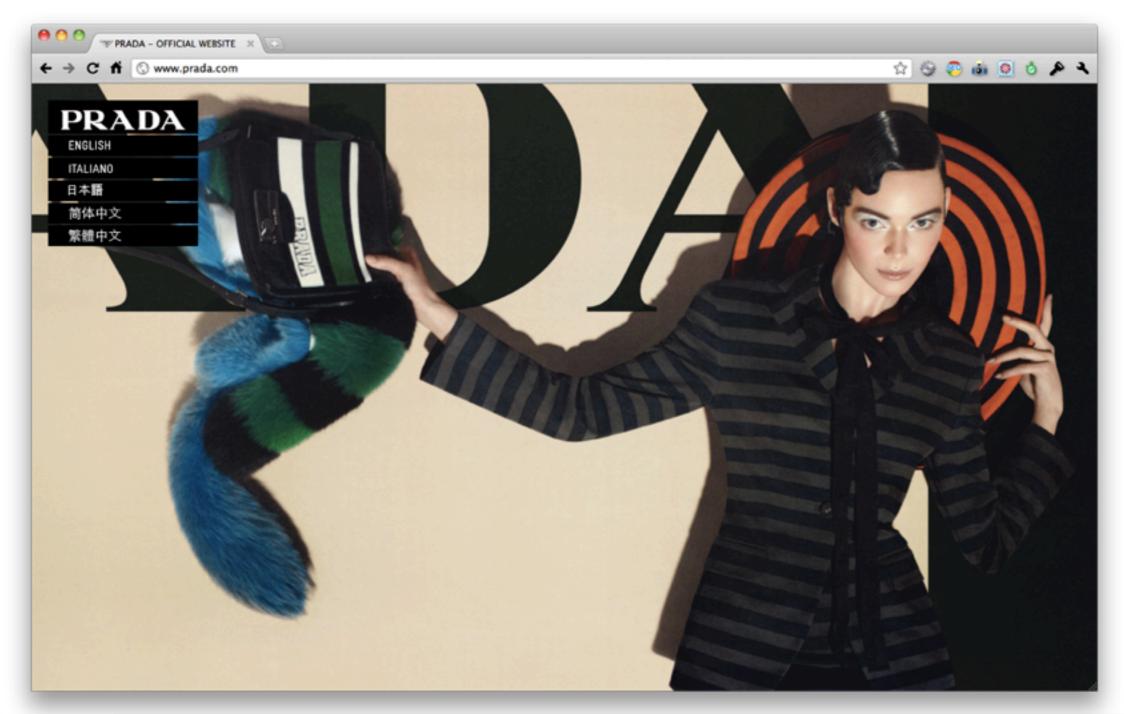


Prada S.p.A.

Case study: style over substance

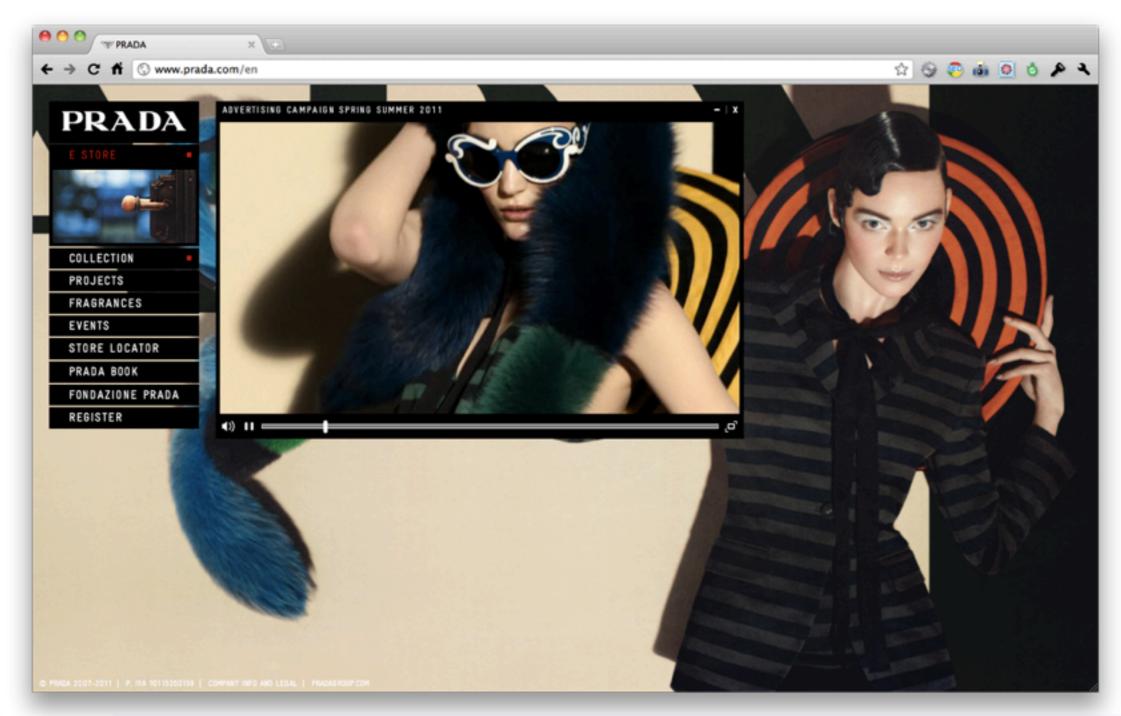


Prada home page



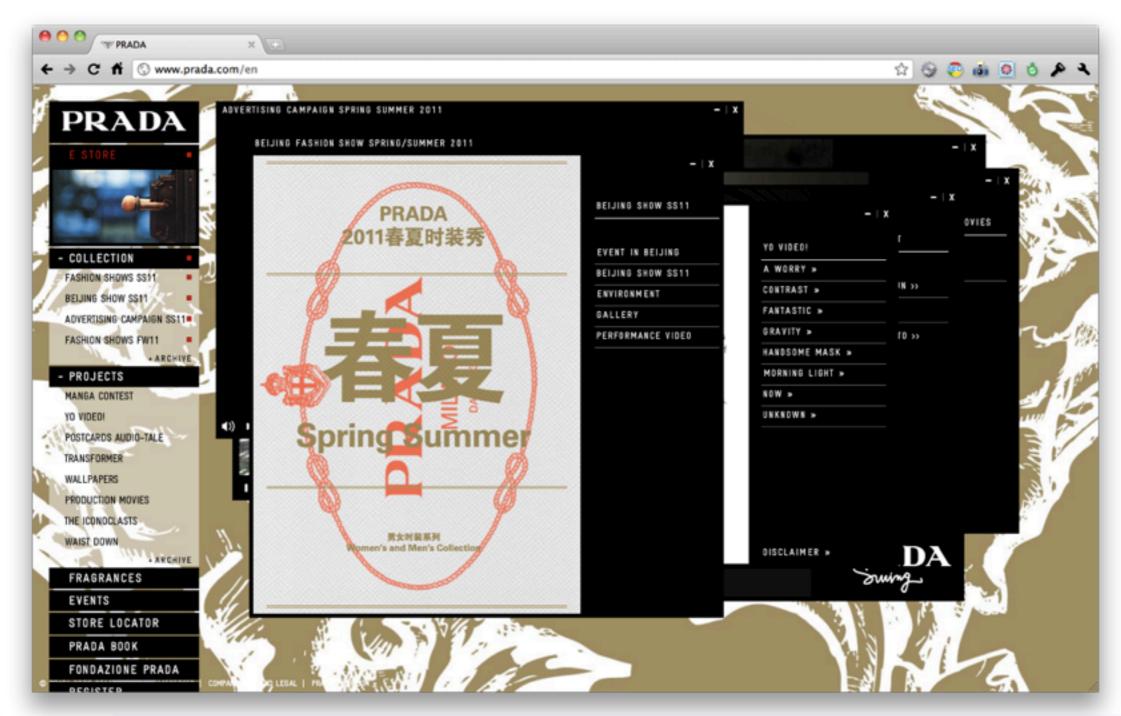


English home page



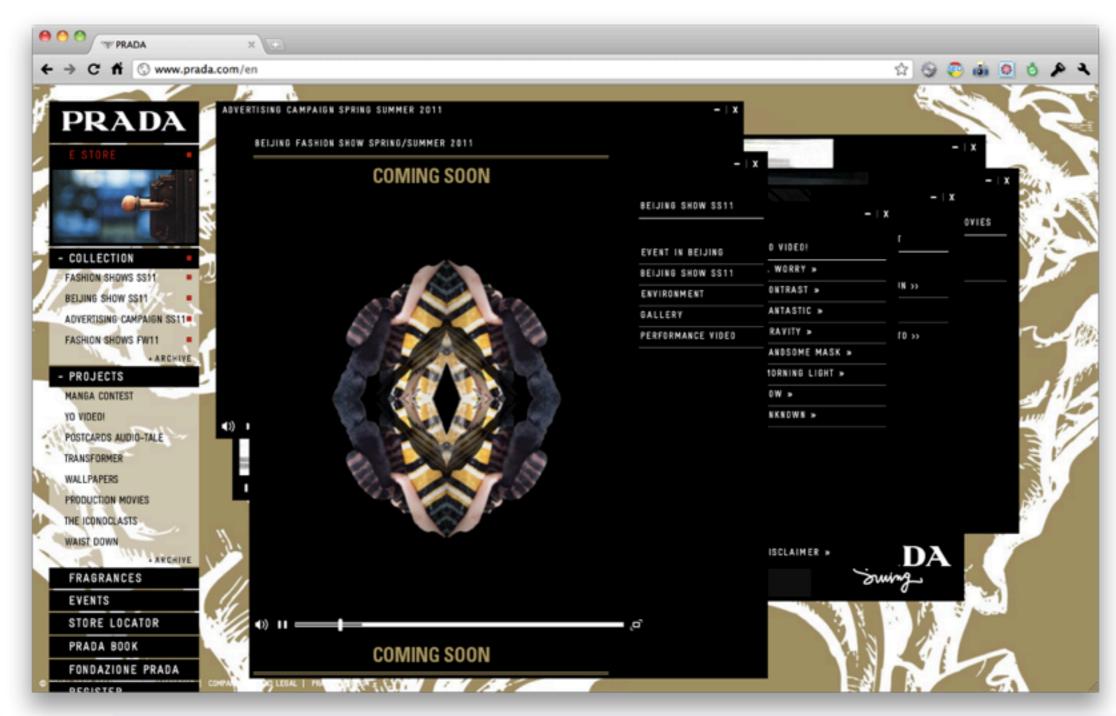


Links spawn videos



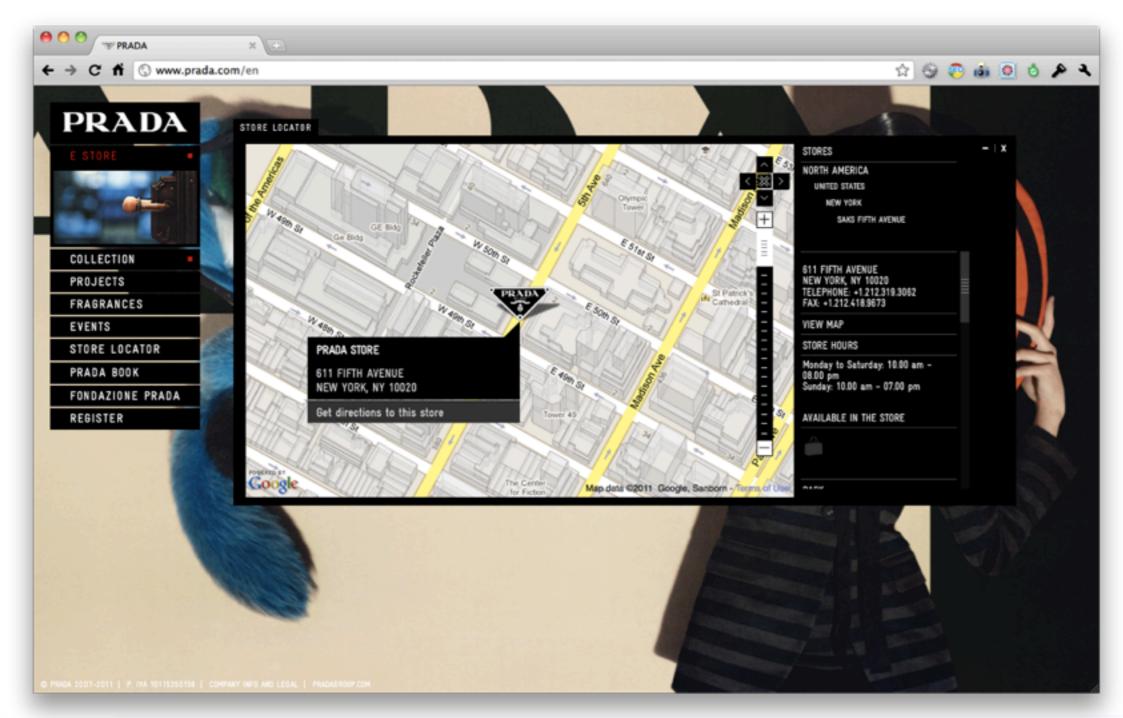


...lots of videos





Store finder

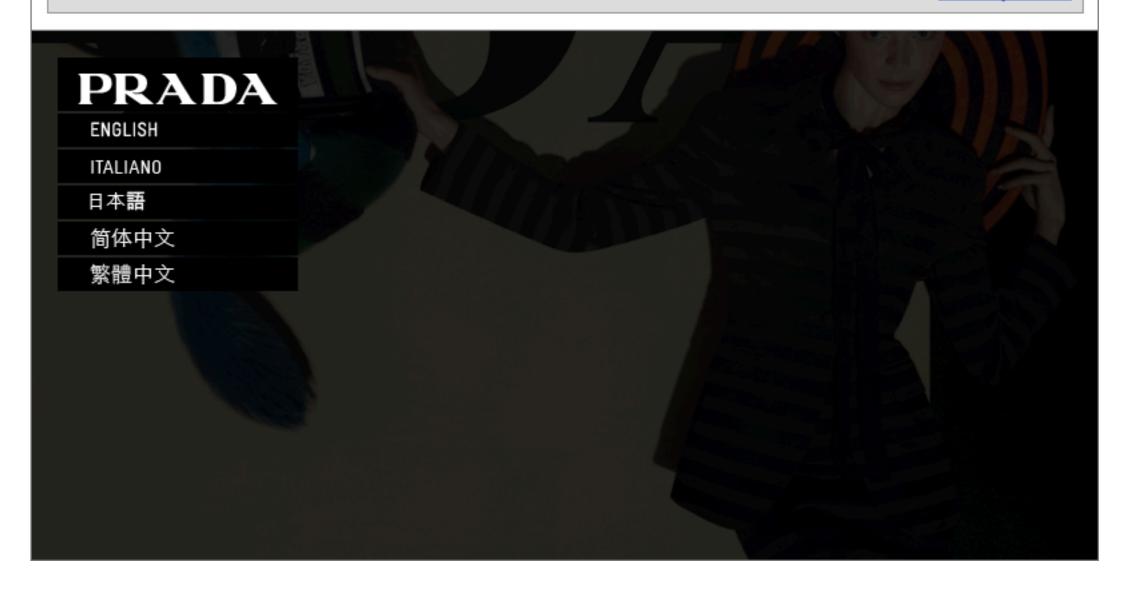




Home page

This is Google's cache of http://www.prada.com/. It is a snapshot of the page as it appeared on Feb 17, 2011 02:58:14 GMT. The current page could have changed in the meantime. Learn more

Text-only version





Home page SEO view

This is Google's cache of http://www.prada.com/. It is a snapshot of the page as it appeared on Feb 17, 2011 02:58:14 GMT. The current page could have changed in the meantime. Learn more

Full version

PRADA

- English
- Italiano
- Japanese
- Simplified Chinese
- Traditional Chinese

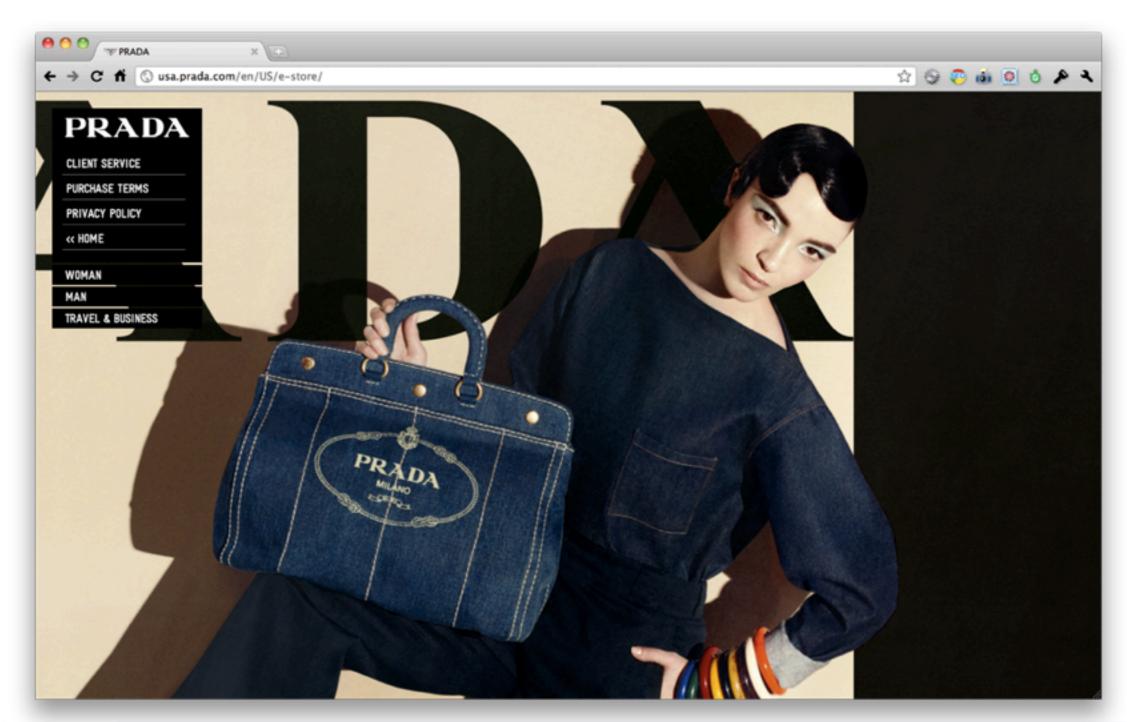


Prada Online Store

Sighted user experience

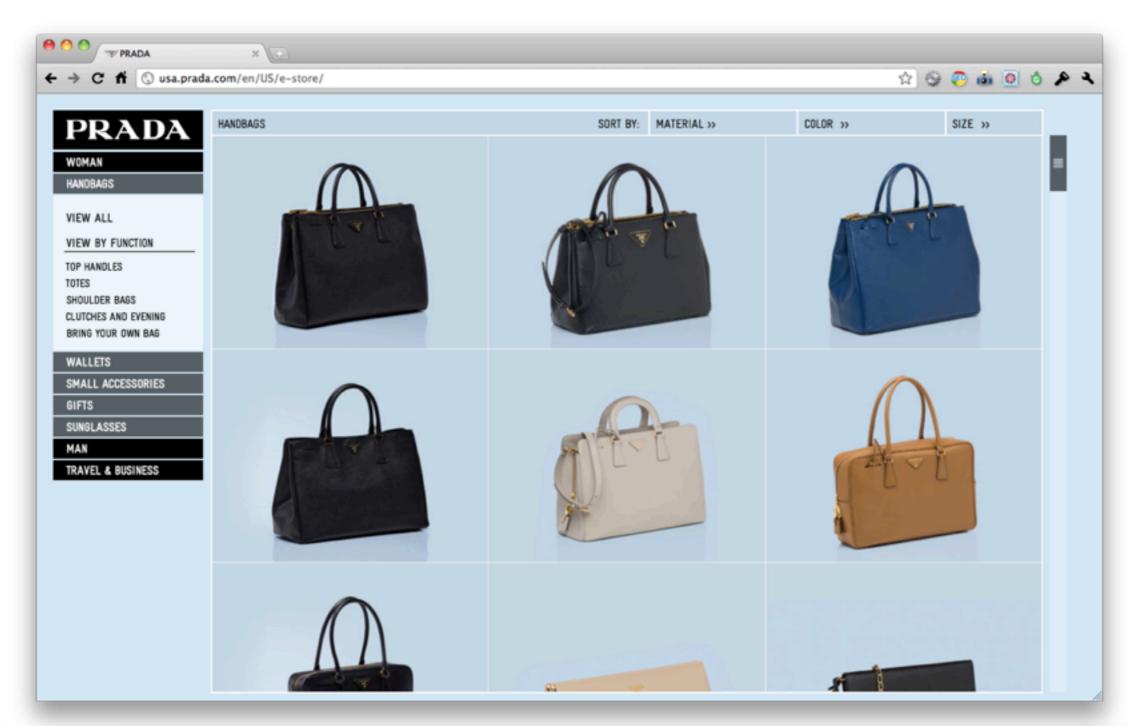


Store home page

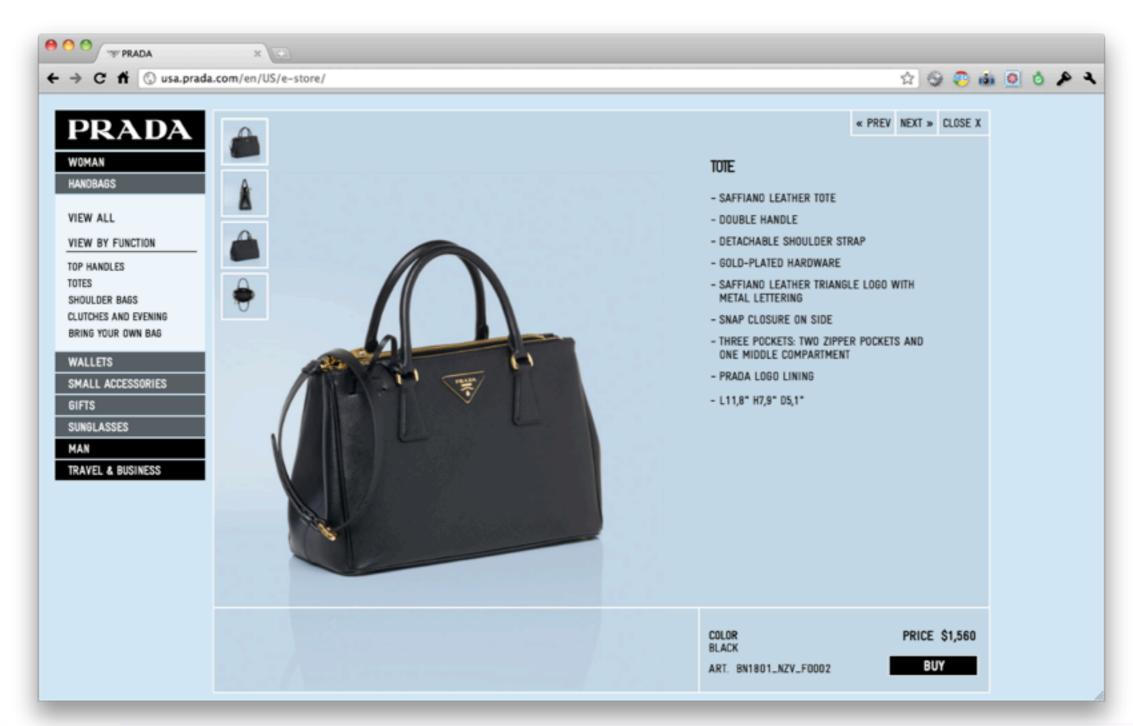




Product list page

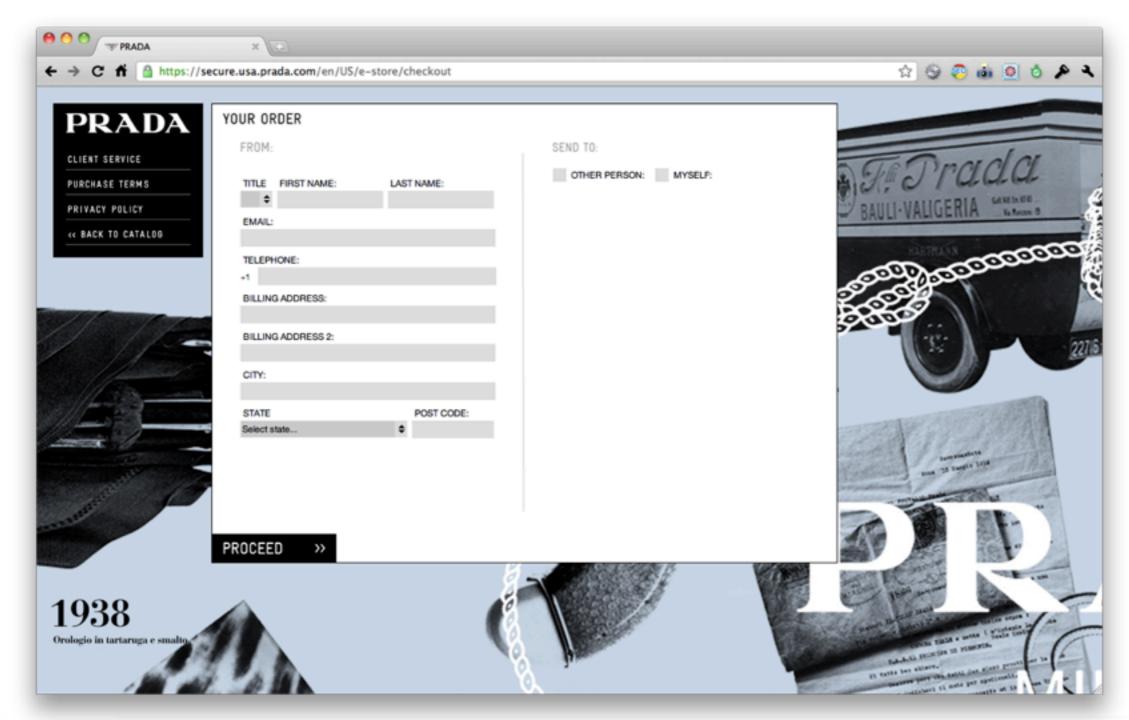








Secure checkout



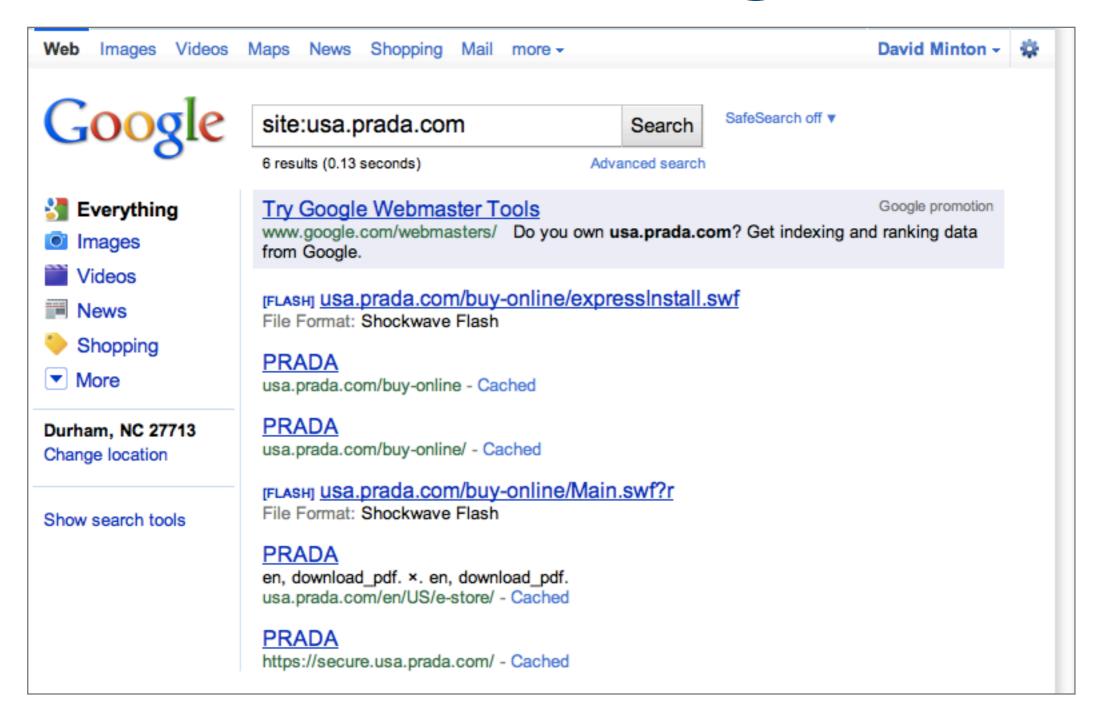


Prada Online Store

Search Engine & sight-impaired user experience



Site listing





Online store

This is Google's cache of http://usa.prada.com/en/US/e-store/. It is a snapshot of the page as it appeared on Feb 14, 2011 22:29:29 GMT. The current page could have changed in the meantime. Learn more

These terms only appear in links pointing to this page: http usa prada com en us e store

Full version

×

en, download pdf

×

• en, download pdf



Secure checkout

This is Google's cache of https://secure.usa.prada.com/. It is a snapshot of the page as it appeared on Feb 15, 2011 08:02:44 GMT. The current page could have changed in the meantime. Learn more

Full version

Get Adobe Flash player

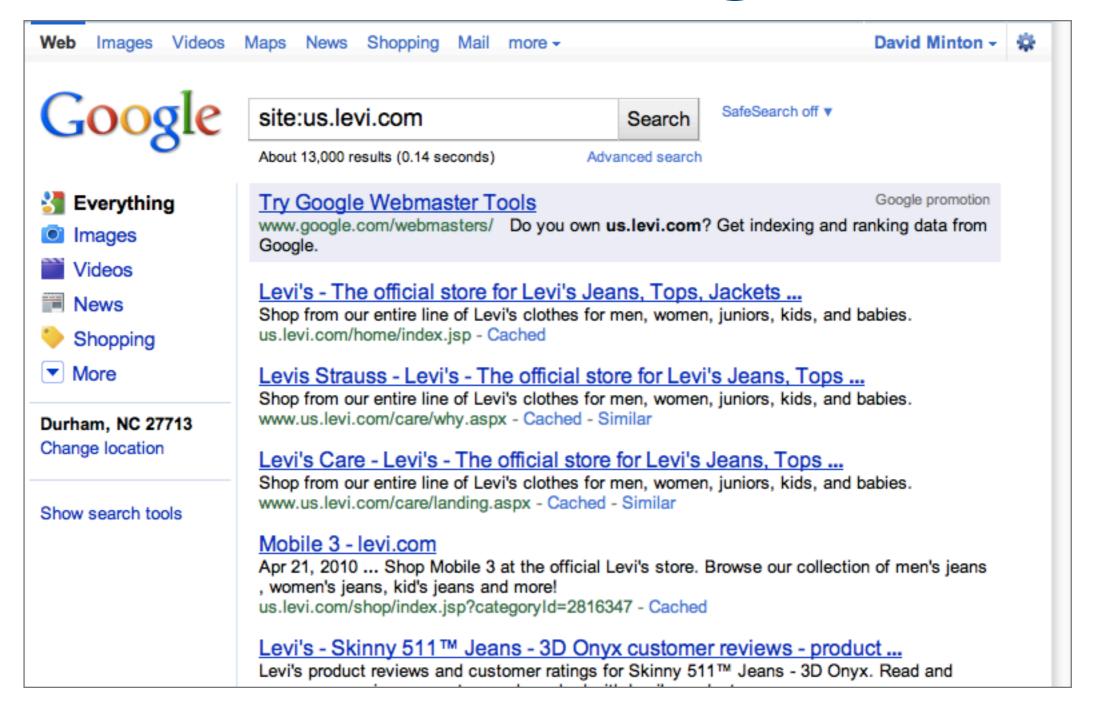


Levi Strauss & Co.

Case study: hard working website

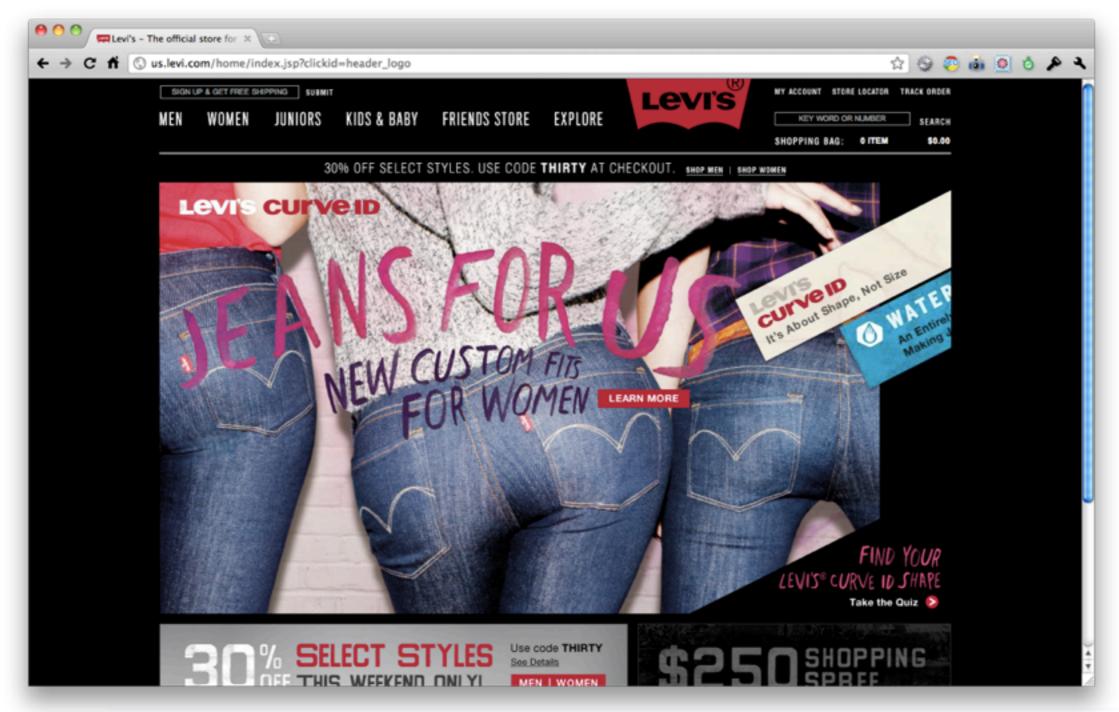


Site listing



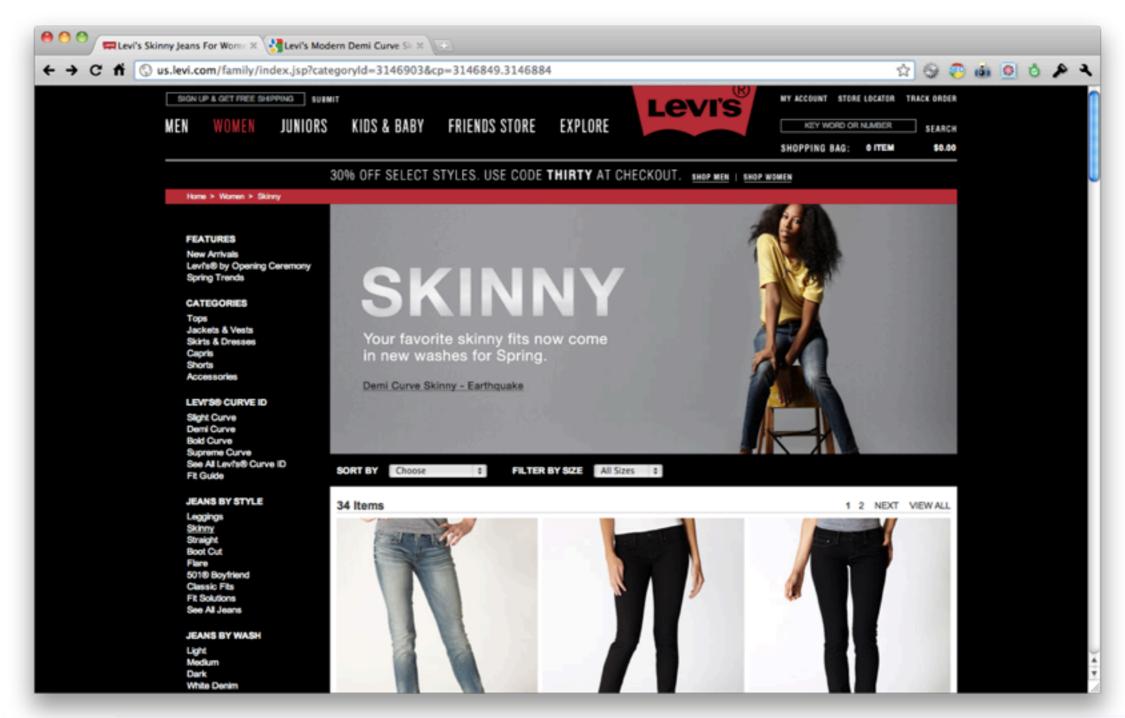


Levis home page

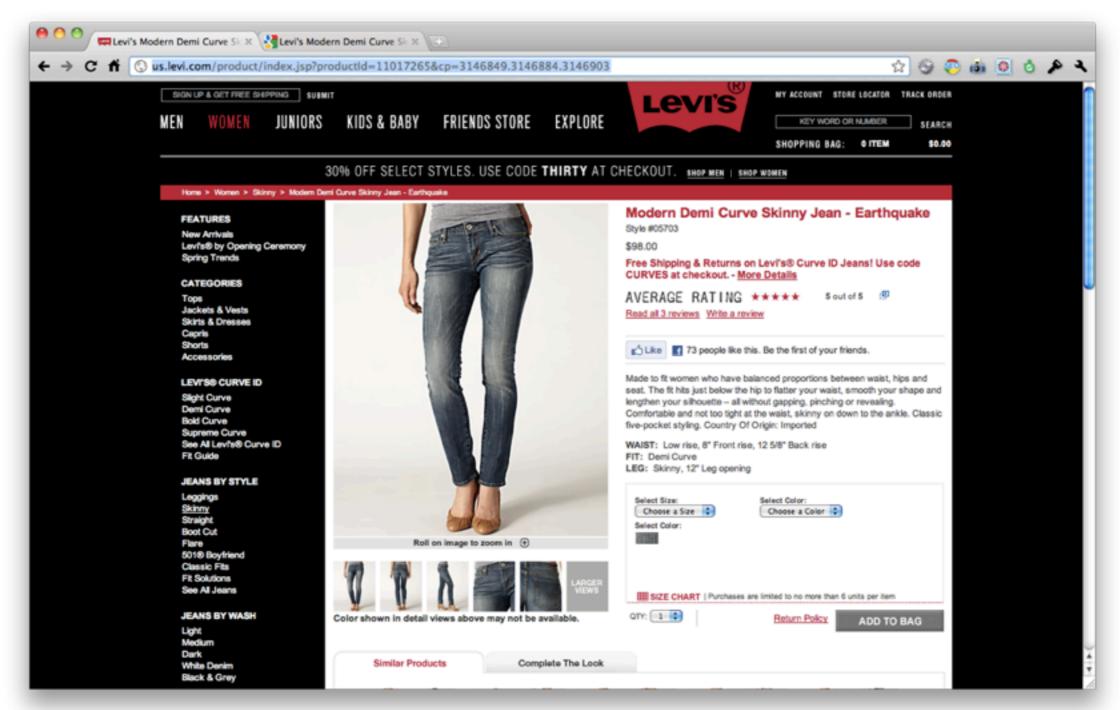




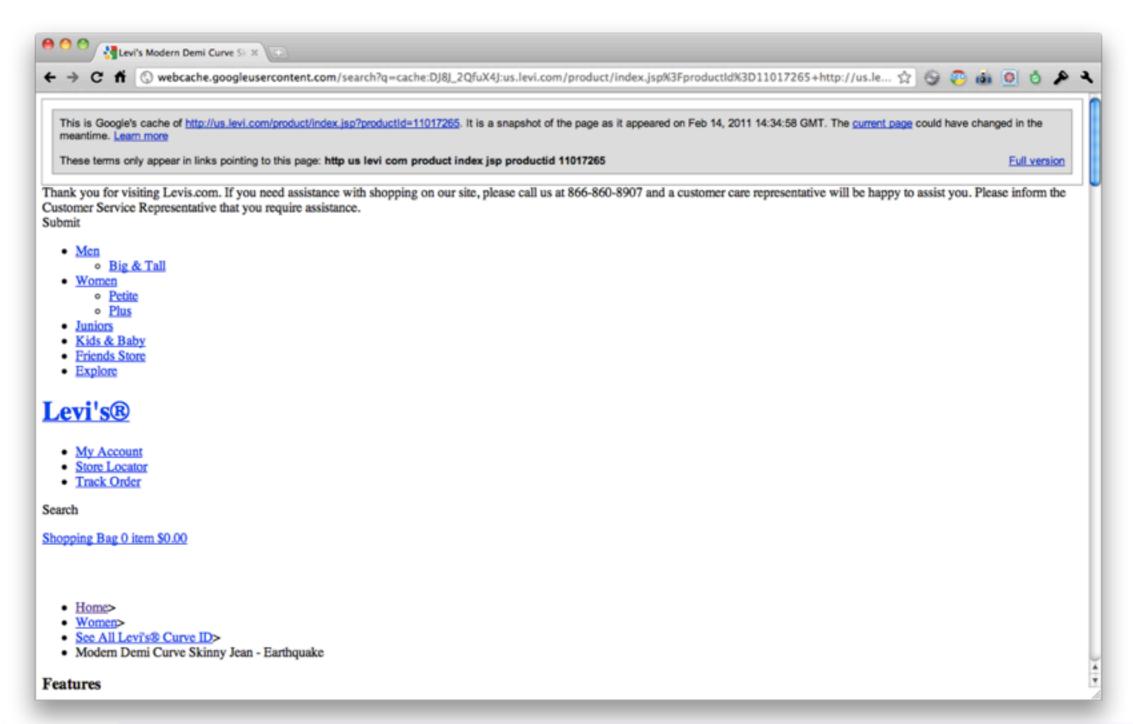
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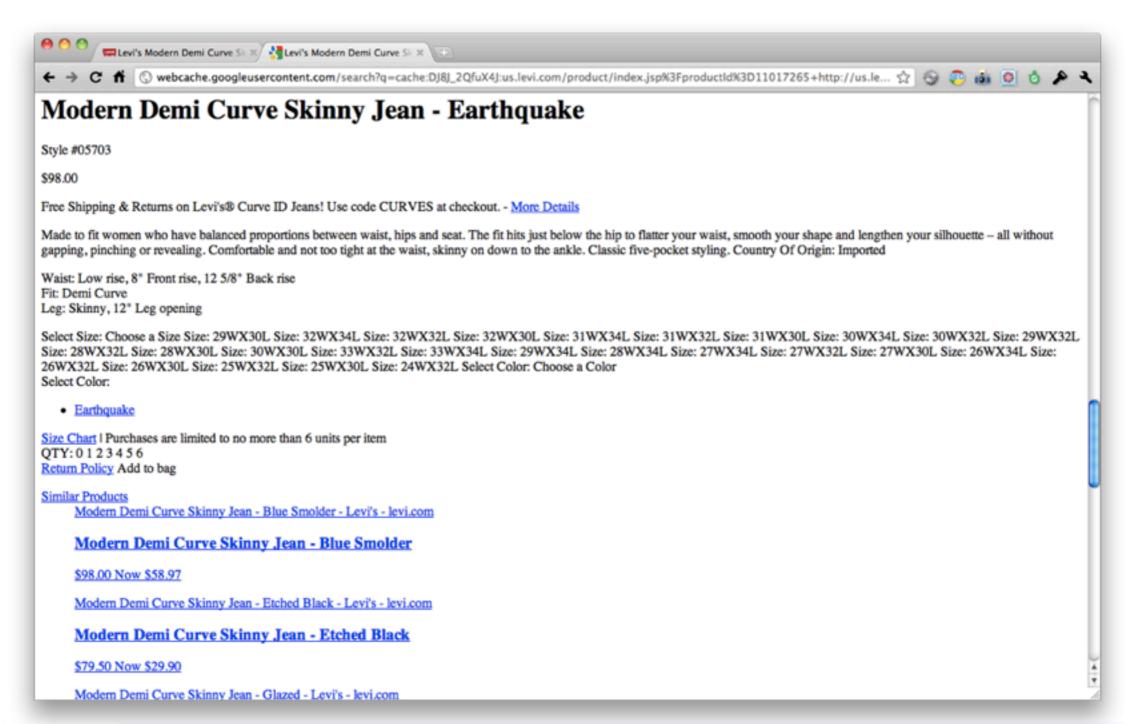














It Doesn't End Here

There are many Usability pitfalls out there.



Other Hurdles

- Flash and AJAX
- Frames and framesets
- Dependence on visual cues
- Poorly written content



Conclusion

- Call it Usability, Accessibility, or SEO; it's all about Usability in one form or another.
- If you do nothing else, SEO best practices can help improve usability for sighted as well as sight-impaired users.





David Minton

Managing Partner @DesignHammer @DH_David www.designhammer.com

