



UMASS DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY WEBSITE BEST PRACTICE

Presented to the Content Manager Forum

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BEST PRACTICE FOR WEBSITE DESIGN



Page Layout



Browser Compatibility



Navigation



Color and Graphics



Multimedia



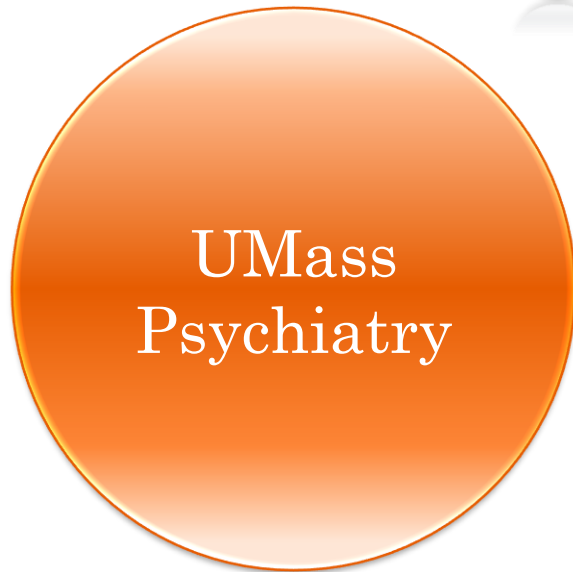
Content Presentation



Functionality



Accessibility

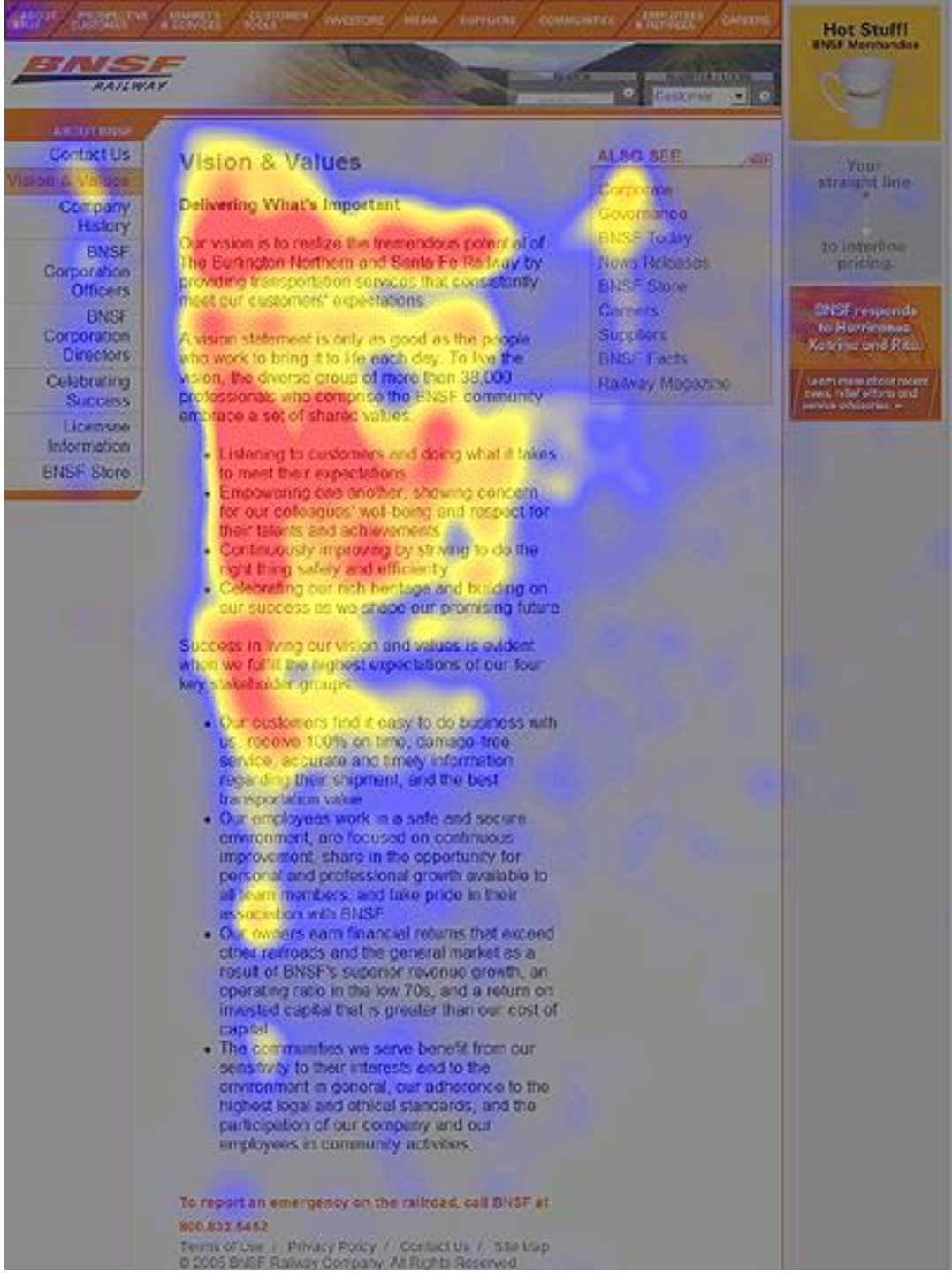


HOW USERS READ ONLINE

They **don't**.

They **scan**.





F-SHAPED PATTERN

- 232 users
- Thousands of Web pages



IMPLICATIONS

- Users won't read your text thoroughly
- First 2 paragraphs state most important info
- Start subheads, paragraphs, and bullet points with information-carrying words
- Not to repurpose print content



WRITING FOR THE WEB

Web pages have to employ **scannable text**, using

- highlighted **keywords**
(hypertext links + typeface variations + color)
- meaningful **sub-headings** (not "clever" ones)
- bulleted **lists**
- **one idea** per paragraph
- **inverted pyramid** style, starting with conclusion
- **1/2 the word count** than conventional writing



USABILITY FOR CONTROL CONDITION

Site Version	Sample Paragraph	Usability Improvement (relative to control condition)
Promotional writing (control condition) using the "marketese" found on many commercial websites	Nebraska is filled with internationally recognized attractions that draw large crowds of people every year, without fail. In 1996, some of the most popular places were Fort Robinson State Park (355,000 visitors), Scotts Bluff National Monument (132,166), Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum (100,000), Carhenge (86,598), Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer (60,002), and Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park (28,446).	0% (by definition)



IMPROVED USABILITY I

Site Version	Sample Paragraph	Usability Improvement (relative to control condition)
Objective language: using neutral rather than subjective, boastful, or exaggerated language	Nebraska has several attractions. In 1996, some of the most-visited places were Fort Robinson State Park (355,000 visitors), Scotts Bluff National Monument (132,166), Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum (100,000), Carhenge (86,598), Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer (60,002), and Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park (28,446).	27%



IMPROVED USABILITY II

Site Version	Sample Paragraph	Usability Improvement (relative to control condition)
<p>Scannable layout: same text; layout facilitates scanning</p>	<p>Nebraska is filled with internationally recognized attractions that draw large crowds of people every year, without fail. In 1996, some of the most popular places were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Fort Robinson State Park (355,000 visitors)•Scotts Bluff National Monument (132,166)•Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum (100,000)•<u>Carhenge</u> (86,598)•Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer (60,002)•Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park (28,446).	<p>47%</p>



IMPROVED USABILITY III

Site Version	Sample Paragraph	Usability Improvement (relative to control condition)
Concise text: 1/2 the word count	In 1996, six of the best-attended attractions in Nebraska were Fort Robinson State Park, Scotts Bluff National Monument, Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum, Carhenge , Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, and Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park.	58%



IMPROVED USABILITY COMBINED

Site Version	Sample Paragraph	Usability Improvement (relative to control condition)
Combined version: using all 3 improvements: <u>concise</u> , <u>scannable</u> , <u>objective</u>	In 1996, six of the most-visited places in Nebraska were: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Fort Robinson State Park•Scotts Bluff National Monument•Arbor Lodge State Historical Park & Museum•<u>Carhenge</u>•Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer•Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park	124%

