



Designing for the Web

Dr Mahmood Niazi

Objectives

- To understand design principles for web sites.

Design principles for web sites

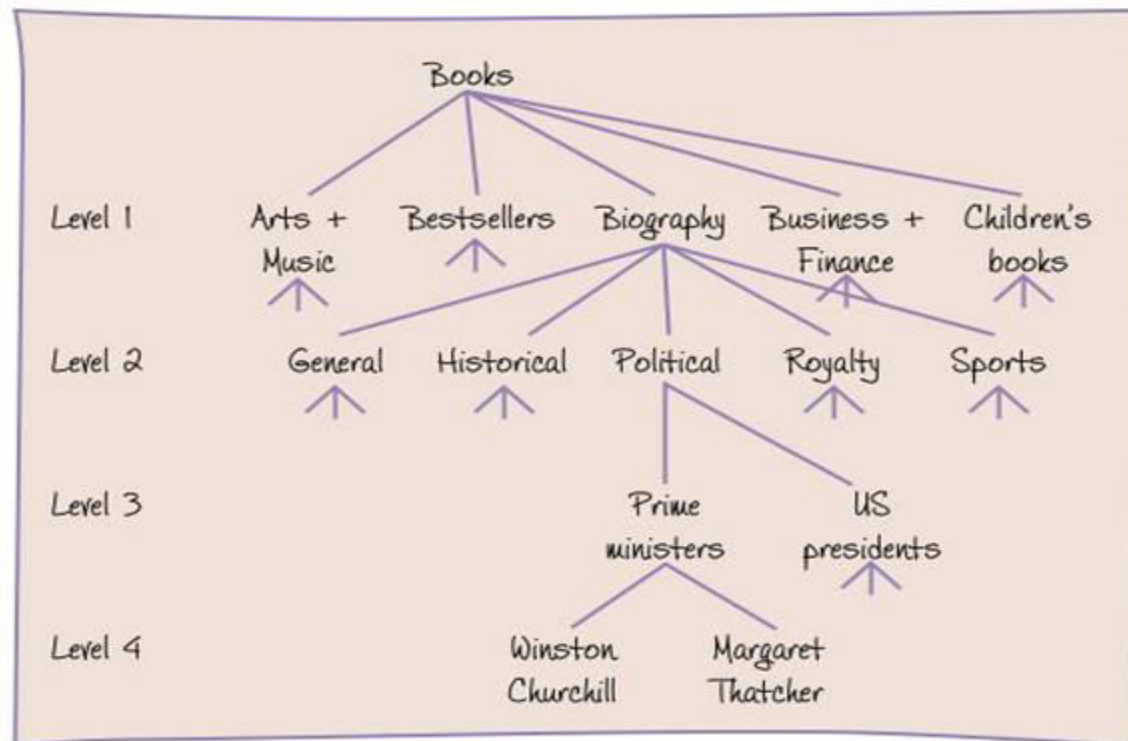
- High-quality content
- Often updated
- Minimal download time
- Ease of use
- Relevant to user's needs

Designing the web site structure

- The Web is a **hypertext** system made up of a huge number of pages that are linked together in a very complex way.
- The most common site structure is some form of hierarchy, with the home page as the root node.
- When you are designing the structure of a site, it can help to look first at the natural organization of the information.

Example: Organizing the book information

- This classification can be useful for structuring a web site to sell books.
 - A web page for each node in this classification.
 - It is often not this simple (why? see next slide)



Too many elements in one icon

- The simpler and more laconic the icon, the better. It is preferable to keep the number of objects in a single icon to a minimum.



Helping the users navigate around the site

■ Structural navigation links

- ☐ These form the underlying structure of the site.
- ☐ They point to **other web pages within the site**.

■ Associative link

- ☐ When a page is particularly long, it is common practice to have associative links that connect to **fixed places on the page**.

■ “See Also” links

- ☐ These point to **other web sites**.
- ☐

Navigation aids

- Site map
- Breadcrumb trail
- Scrolling

Site map

- Showing the site hierarchy condensed onto a single page.



Breadcrumb trail

- A “breadcrumb” (or “breadcrumb trail”) is a type of **secondary navigation scheme** that reveals the user’s location in a website or Web application
- Every level in the hierarchy from the top to your current position is listed from left to right.

The screenshot shows the eBags website interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Sign In, Track Your Order, Your Account, and Your Cart. Below these are category buttons: Home, Luggage, Travel Accessories, Business & Laptop Cases, Handbags (highlighted), Summer Sale, Backpacks, Sports & Duffels, Urban Gear, Business Accessories, Wallets, Kids & Parents, and Buy Shoe. A search bar is present with the text "Search eBags for" and a "GO" button. To the right of the search bar are links for "Request A Catalog" and "Corporate & Volume Orders". A banner below the search bar states "Free Shipping on orders of \$75 or more! Through 7/5/04 See Details".

On the left side, there is a "Narrow Your Selection" section. It includes "Narrow by Category" with links for Canvas, Coated Canvas, Corduroy, Cotton Quilted Print, Crochet, Linen, Logo Fabrics, Microfiber, Nylon, Oriental Brocade, Satin, Tapestry, and "Narrow by Brand" with links for AmeriBag, Crazy Quilts, Crumpler, Etienne Aigner, Kipling, Kulanui of Hawaii, and La Regale. A red arrow points from this section to the breadcrumb trail.

The breadcrumb trail is located at the top of the product listing area and reads: [Handbags](#) > [Shop by Material](#) > [Fabrics](#).

Below the breadcrumb trail, it says "We have 245 products listed". There is a "Sort By:" dropdown menu set to "Bestselling" and a "Products per page:" dropdown menu with options 6, 12, 24, and 50.

The first product listed is "AmeriBag - Healthy Back Bag @ Distressed Nylon Medium". It includes a product image, a customer rating of 8.6, and a price of \$60.00. The second product listed is "Kipling - 'Candy' Top Zip Front Flap Pocket Handbag". It includes a product image, a customer rating of 9.1, and a price of \$48.00. Both products have "See details" and "Add to cart" links, as well as "Compare This Item" and "Compare Selected Items" links.

Scrolling

- The most important content should be visible without scrolling.
 - Positioning content above the fold.
- Make page-length decisions that support the primary use of the Web page.
- Use shorter pages for homepages and navigation pages, and pages that need to be quickly browsed and/or read online.
- Use longer pages to ...
 - Facilitate uninterrupted reading, especially on content pages
 - Simplify page maintenance (fewer Web page files to maintain)
 - Make pages more convenient to download and print

Horizontal scrolling

- Horizontal scrolling, across the page, interrupts the flow of reading on every line.
- Try to ensure that either the text wraps to the user's screen size or the line length is less than the anticipated screen size.

Style sheets

- Use style sheets to achieve consistent visual appearance of a web site.
- Style sheets also allow you to change the appearance of the whole site with relative ease.
 - For example, if you decide that the typeface used for titles should be changed, you simply alter the style sheet rather than changing every title by hand.