Wayfinding for the Mobile Web

2015 IASummit  #ias15  #wayfinding

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A story about wayfinding
this is the real world we design for...
When wayfinding goes awry

1. You blame yourself
2. You feel anxious, frustrated
3. You resent the system
even the **possibility** of becoming lost is enough to trigger anxiety.
AIN'T NOBODY GOT TIME FOR THAT
61% of mobile users said they’d quickly move onto another site if they didn’t find what they’re looking for right away.

https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/research-studies/what-users-want-most-from-mobile-sites-today.html
The Responsive Conundrum

we want simple mobile interfaces...
The Responsive Conundrum

we design *really* complicated sites.
192 clickable elements

4.7”
You can do it!
...but should you?
“Most designers approach solutions to signing and wayfinding through the door of visual composition rather than information”

-Boyd Morrison
the cognitive and perceptual tools we use to navigate through **physical space** also help us navigate **virtual space.**
1. wayfinding basics
2. concepts in action
3. mobile UI
Wayfinding Basics

“all the ways people and animals orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place.”
Where am I?
How did I get here?
Is my destination nearby?
Where do I go from here?
Information Processing
Survey environmental for cues & options

Decision Making
Come up with a plan (satisfice)

Decision Executing
Transform intention to behavior
We only see glimpses of the whole, each window a new vantage point.
Memories

Past Experiences
cognitive maps reflect our understanding of our surroundings, and enable route planning
Concepts in Action

Circulation Systems

Landmarks

Edges

Signs
Circulation Systems and Paths enable people to move through cities.
Paths should be visibly exposed and identifiable
Through paths, people should be able to discern the system.
Hierarchical Structure
Nested Doll
funnels user toward content, along a linear path
Hub and Spoke

A central anchor screen, that directs you to independent site sections
Bento Box

A dashboard that pulls in multiple sets of data or content
Filtered View

good for browsing a single data set from different views
2. Landmarks

memorable visual cues within a space (or interface) that helps users orient themselves.
Landmarks can give a space identity
Landmarks can also act as route markers.
Global

Unique, globally accessible elements

EXAMPLES

Logo
Menu icon
Breadcrumbs
Footer links

Local

Page or flow-specific memorable modules

EXAMPLES

Section banner
Slideshow
Calendar Widget
Call to action
for the sake of multiscreen behavior
design for continuity
Chicago 2.0
In-stock. Ships in a day or two. Sponsored by An Event Apart.

$25 + shipping
Chicago is the birthplace of the skyscraper. What better to represent the Local 312 than the Skyscraper-Formerly-Known-As-The-Sear-Tower? Black Willis Tower on a Red American Apparel 100% cotton tee.

Choose your size. (Not sure? Check your measurements: girls, guys, kids.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEN S</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>$25</td>
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<td>MEN L</td>
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<td>MEN XL</td>
<td>$25</td>
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<td>MEN 2X</td>
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<td>WOMEN L</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOMEN XL</td>
<td>SOLD OUT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“...as long as you don’t mess with the quicklinks.”

—a client word of warning

More familiar users rely more heavily on landmarks.
3. Edges and Regions
MEDICAL BILL SHARING PLAN OPTIONS

- For Individual and Family
- For Seniors
- For Groups

ADDITIONAL MEDI-SHARE PROGRAMS

- Medi-Share Disability Assistance
- Medi-Share Health Coaching
- Plus One

MONTHLY AMOUNTS

Family options average less than $300 a month!

FIND YOURS
Recognizable with Clearly defined target areas

Register Now

Register Now

Register Now
Use touch friendly tap targets, surrounded by inactive buffers.

MINIMUM TARGET SIZE 8-9MM
Signs: Text & Symbols
“information at the wrong place, is as good as no information at all”

-Arthur & Passini, Wayfinding Design
Environmental Perception is based on scanning and glancing
Glare and Contrast

2.0/W3C Minimum Color Contrast Guidelines for Mobile

Small text: 4.5:1
Large text: 3:1

http://www.w3.org/TR/mobile-accessibility-mapping/
ICONS vs. TEXT!
Icons can be ambiguous and have dual or different meanings across sites and platforms.
“The speed at which the average user can deduce an icon’s function from the image is directly proportional to the speed at which the design team can agree on what the ideal image for that function should be.”

Text or image?

1. Text + image works best
2. Text only
3. Image only

Grids vs. Lists

graphic grids help with visual differentiation and detail

vs.

lists for efficiently surveying easy to distinguish options.

image source: http://www.nngroup.com/articles/image-vs-list-mobile-navigation/
Drama + Drama = Hamburgers!
Alta Resources, UW Oshkosh College of Business partner in Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation

UW Oshkosh announced an agreement with Alta Resources on ...Read more ...

Visit Campus
• 146 things clickable elements.

• Lots of people’s faces.

• 116 requests, 1.2mb, 29.926s
Simplify:

Organize
Reduce
Optimize

Photo by @lapideo CC license https://flic.kr/p/9egBCu
Organize (SLIP)

Sort
Label
Integrate
Prioritize
Alabama Campus
Arizona Campus
Atlanta Campus
Bay Area Campus
Chicago Campus
Colorado Campus
Kansas Campus
Miami Campus
Northwest California
Pasadena Campus
Sacramento Campus
Sort

Groupings of 3 or 4 items can be better read in single glances.

Flush left alignment for lists is easier to scan than center or right aligned.
**West Coast**
Bay Area
Northwest California
Pasadena Campus
Sacramento Campus

**Midwest**
Chicago Campus
Colorado Campus
Kansas Campus
Tulsa Campus

**Southeast**
Atlanta Campus
Alabama Campus
Miami Campus

Label
Labels add context to the packet of information. Also helps for assessing relevance.
West Coast Campuses
Bay Area
Northwest California
Pasadena
Sacramento

Midwest Campuses
Chicago
Colorado
Kansas
Tulsa

Southeast Campuses
Atlanta
Alabama
Miami

Integrate
Additional information in the titles may seem redundant on larger screens, but can introduce clarity and reduce the need to rely on memory in small viewports.
Main Campus Location
Bay Area
Northwest California
Pasadena
Sacramento

Midwest Campuses
Chicago
Colorado
Kansas
Tulsa

Southeast Campuses
Atlanta
Alabama
Miami

Prioritize
Establishing visual hierarchy helps draw attention and focus to the most salacious information.
Reduce
(shrink, hide, embody)


**Shrink:** Remove Unnecessary UI

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**Academics**
- Majors & Minors
- Areas of Study
- Academic Catalog
- Enrichment Programs
- Services & Support
- Office of the Dean
Tap to Reveal (Hidden)

- Minimal UI Saves space
- Trigger words hidden
Off-Canvas (Hidden)

- Minimal UI Saves space
- Trigger words hidden
- When used in conjunction with multi-level off-canvas, can result in confusion between link area and reveal more trigger.
Multi-toggle (Visible)

- Top level trigger words visible
- Can create result in confusion between what is the active link area, vs. what is the toggle trigger.
Skip to Bottom (Visible)

• Top level trigger words visible
• Easy to access from top of page
• Doesn’t leave the user at a dead end (or require them to swipe back up) when they reach the end of the page
Visible: Fixed/Sticky Navigation

- Takes up a perpetual amount of screen space
- Can obstruct too much of the screen in landscape orientation
- Fixed positioning has less the stellar support
EMBODY: Content as Interface
NUI

Without indirect manipulation we must be more cognizant of reach and proximity of interface controls.
Optimize Performance

“savings in time feels like simplicity”
in summary...
Remember that people are fallible, so don’t let visual composition trump information...provide them with clear orientation cues so they can make sense of the system, maybe by progressively revealing navigation and keeping your paths visible...or by creating continuity across screens and devices, and clearly defining screen regions and tap targets; also focus on legibility and always simplify (sensibly).
Thanks!

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#ias15 #wayfinding