Business Builder
Tips & Techniques to Help Your Business Grow

How We Really Use the Web Part #1

When we create a website, we act as though people are going to pore over each page, reading our finely crafted text, figuring out how we've organized things, and weighing their options before deciding where to click next.

What they actually do most of the time (if we're lucky) is *glance* at each new page, scan *some* of the text and click the first link that catches their interest or vaguely resembles the thing they're looking for.

Why do we scan?

- **We're usually in a hurry.** Much of our Web use is motivated by the desire to save time. As a result, Web users tend to act like sharks: they have to keep moving, or they'll die. We just don't have time to read much.
- **We know we don't *need* to read everything.** On most pages, we're really only interested in a fraction of what's on the page. We're just looking for the bits that match our interests or the task at hand, and the rest of it is irrelevant. Scanning is how we find the relevant bits.
- **We're good at it.** We've been scanning newspapers, magazines and books all our lives to find the parts we're interested in, and we know how it works– so scanning a website just comes natural.

When writing the content of your website, remember to think about the "scanners." Try to use words or phrases that seem to match (a) the task at hand or (b) the reader's current or ongoing interest. And of course, make sure you use the trigger words that are hardwired into our nervous system, like "Free," "Sale," and "Sex."

For more on this subject, check out this website: www.sensible.com

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