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The Reading Report for EDIT 188

The Basic Principles of Corporate Training Web Page Design

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Abstract

This essay offers several basic points on designing a corporate training website. Most firms have customer service website, internal website and training website that are designed with similar principles. As we have found, the one thing that, a corporate training website should pay more attention to is increasing learners' effect instead of concentrating on fancy special effects and elegant yet wordy compositions. In this essay, we will discuss how to increase efficiency, while keeping the quality of instructional lessons.

Introduction

Online trainings, Web-based courses and e-classes are popular topics in education field ever since the internet becomes widely used. Many educational institutes tried to develop their own web-based courses, but some of them oversaw certain bottlenecks of the internet, i.e. downloading speed, and proceeded to focus on the visual aspect of the web pages by putting a lot of graphics, flashes, hyperlinks and words on the page. Some institutes seek help from professional web designers, that often resulted in a lack of consideration from the end-user perspective.

An educational website is different from a business website, a media website or, and a personal website. In this essay, we will try to figure out how to make an educational website easy to use. There are a lot of things about setting up a website, the limited scope of this paper will lead us to focus mainly on the part of web page design.

A corporate training website is an educational website for working adults. Most of them are preoccupied with their daily job when under learning, and voluntarily seek out the site to be trained. With such voluntary motivation in seeking and using the site, the site's pages don't need to be designed fancily to attract users. The focus should be on the user-friendly aspect , saving them time and frustration navigating the site while offer suitable functions to help them learn and research efficiently.

Here are some basic principles on designing a corporate training web page:

Load faster: do not put so many fancy stuffs for visual attraction.

The first point of corporate training web design is: save download time as much as possible. Many designers like to put lots of graphics, flashes, or sound effects to show their skills and creativity, but it's not necessary because time is money for both employees and bosses. People also don't like to wait minutes just for some fancy but meaningless logos, photos, or flash animations. Since we don't have to use those fancy stuffs to attract customers or readers. As said, visitors of this type of web site have enough voluntary motivation to seek this site out when in need of information. The most important thing for these learners is: save more time for them to let them learn efficiently.

Make things clearly

When designing the corporate training course homepage, categories should be made as clear as possible. Try to not name the category using special or unfamiliar words that may lead to confuse the visitor or waste their time figuring out whether the category is what they're looking for. For example, you may use "begin" or "start" instead of "inauguration" or "commencement". Remember: We don't READ pages. We SCAN them.

Use conventions instead of sentences

As a rule, conventions only become conventions if they work. Well-applied conventions make it easier for users to go from page to page without wasting much effort figuring out how things work.

"There's a reassuring sense of familiarity, for instance, in seeing a list of links to the sections of a site on a colored background down the left side of the page, even if it's sometimes accompanied by a tedious sense of déjà vu." (Krug, p.35)

Easy to print out

Most training websites don't offer full text courses but give users links of abstracts and references. If there is no assigned textbook, a learner shall print out the related information as a reference. Learners also wish to print out some courses' instructions or syllabi for reference. Surely they may use the print function of the browser, but it could save them more time if we offer a print-friendly edition, and a print out function button.

Search engine

People prefer to search things by using keyword rather than seeking the items out themselves. In addition, using a search engine to find out a specific object may save more time than use a classified index. Since our learners have less time to browse the Internet than young students, implementing a useful and powerful search engine is necessary.

Dilemma: Whether to use real audio/video or streaming media? More and more websites add real-time video or audio to show their contents and technology. It's good for presenting a speech or a documentary film, but it usually takes quite some time downloading this content. Most users are still working with 56K model for dial-up to the Internet. It's essential that we use the lowest technological denominator when designing the web page for all users. In addition, users may also wish to print out a text vision for reference.

A corporate training website may offer video and audio, but should limit the application to content that required multimedia demonstration. The company may need to consider about the adoption of streaming media, that save end-users' time downloading, the toll

is then on the corporate side in the expense arising with the implementation.

Feedback: questions, homework and comments

An educational website should offer a venue for users to communicate with their peers, teachers, trainers or directors and to reflect their comments, suggestions to the Webmaster. It is also essential that contact information like names, titles and departments of the those in charge of the course and related online applications are posted online as well.

In this essay we have focus on the designing aspects of a corporate training web page, raising seven points that needs to be paid attention. In sum, the visitors' characteristics and motivations are distinct from that of usual web browsing. They are voluntary visitors seeking particular instructional information. Visual attraction is secondary to easy and clear navigational structure. Designers must take into consideration the lowest technological denominator in implementing fancy visual and multimedia editions that may take long to download.

References

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