Simple Steps to Great Web Design
Introductions
my name is

Matthew Smith
I am the Principal at
SQUARED EYE
I am a Husband & I am a Father

Sunday, March 14, 2010
I am a Beerdiot (Beer Idiot)
I worship These Guys
Welcome to

Simple Steps to Great Web Design
Let's define some

**Definitions**
What is Web Design?
Web design is the skill of creating presentations of content (usually hypertext or hypermedia) that is delivered to an end-user through the World Wide Web, by way of a Web browser or other Web-enabled software like Internet television clients, microblogging clients and RSS readers.
Web design helps content *get stuff done* — on the web.
Great web design helps content get stuff done — on the web
Great web design helps content *get stuff done* — on the web with **Pleasure**
So, what are these

Simple Steps?
Everything starts with

Knowing the Brand
Everything starts with Knowing the Brand
Next you must

Know their Audience
Next you must

Know their **Audience**
Next you must

Know their Audience
and if you’re going to pursue great design, then

Know their Content

IA sketch by Mike Rohde
Know the Medium
Know the Medium
Helping content get stuff done:

Design Technique
VIVA LA REVOLUTION

The release of Firefox 3.5 concludes the adoption of the most anticipated feature in web design history.

With the most fundamental restriction of our trade lifted, the face of the web is forever changed. Within months, 95% of the browser market share will support the native display of custom fonts courtesy of @font-face. Good times.

USABILITY 101

I cry nerd tears every time I'm presented with drop-down menus to specify my date of birth or country of residence.

I struggle to make sense of how these usability nightmares can thrive in a medium where the demand for ease of use is nearly unparalleled. Am I missing something?

Twitter


I'm not sure why people are obsessing with the the Windows Phone 7 user interface. It's not very good.

Archive

There are 10 entries in the archive.
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Hierarchy
18 ways to beat the rising cost of living

YOU MAY BE FEELING STRETCHED THESE DAYS, and so you've resolved to cut back on a few luxuries. That may not be enough. Ironically, a lot of the stuff you don't need has been getting cheaper. It's the basics that are skyrocketing: gas, food and heating or cooling your home. Big-ticket necessities like health care and education keep ratcheting up. But you don't have to just live with today's bigger bills. By cutting out some waste and taking advantage of a few easy but overlooked deals, you can rein in your budget without feeling like a penny-pincher.

1. Conserve fuel—in any car. Underinflated tires can cut your mileage per gallon by 5%, says Jesse Toprak of Edmunds.com. Check your tires once a month. And lose the lead foot. Your engine can do the heavy work.

2. Take advantage of your credit card. If you pay in full each month, pick one, like Chase Freedom, that gives cash back on gas. Forget it if you can't carry a balance: Rewards cards usually charge higher rates. POTENTIAL SAVINGS Up to $200 a year

3. Get rid of the guzzler. Making your next car a hybrid could triple your mileage per gallon. If gas stays above $3.60, a Toyota Camry hybrid makes up for its premium over the standard model in a year and a half. Even if you don't go hybrid, choosing the most fuel-efficient vehicle in your

4. Learn stupid supermarket tricks. Stores use all kinds of marketing ploys to get you to buy more than you ever intended. "The supermarket is set up so that you will buy on impulse," says

5. Know when to stock up. You can get a weekly list of items going on sale at your local store, including sales that aren't advertised, at thegrocerygame.com. The service costs $1 for a four-week trial or $10 for an eight-week subscription. Buy in bulk when deep discounts are on. POTENTIAL SAVINGS More than $1,000 a year

6. A little home cooking. Putting a homemade meal on the table five to seven nights a week the way your mother did may seem daunting. In the new age of the Food Network and Williams-Sonoma, lots of moms and dads know how to whip up a mean saffron risotto for a Sunday night but never got the knack for the day-to-day basics. To bone up on your home ec, check out Mitchell Davis' Kitchen Sense and Mark Bittman's How to Cook Everything, which are loaded with recipes for quick and simple meals. If you plan
NEW WAYS TO SAVE ON DRUGS

It’s not just gasoline. Inflation is slamming drugs too, changing the way to find the best deals.

We’ve reached a dubious health milestone: More than half of insured Americans are now taking at least one "maintenance" drug for a chronic condition, according to a recent health industry report. Meanwhile, the price of brand-name medications rose 2½ times faster than the rate of inflation last year. Here’s the news you need to know to avoid the worst of the pain—no clandes—

DISCOUNTERS HAVE BECOME THE BEST INFLATION HEDGE
Wal-Mart, which in 2006 began selling 30-day supplies of generics for $4 a pop, just rolled out another plan perfect for people who take meds daily and have a high co-pay: a 90-day supply of any of about 350 generics for just $50 (or your co-pay, whichever is less). Competitors like Target and Kroger quickly matched the price cuts. Some disounters might offer drugs that others don’t, so visit their websites to see if your medicine

MORE EMPLOYERS ARE INSISTING YOU USE MAIL ORDER
Some employers now require workers who fill the same script more than three months in a row (basically anyone on a daily regimen) to order 90-day supplies from an approved mail-order company—or receive a lower reimbursement than the pharmacy rate they’re used to. At Time Inc. (MONEY's parent), for example, your pharmacy co-pay rises by 25% after three months. So before you head to Wal-Mart, do

INSURERS ARE RAISING CO-PAYS ON BRAND-NAME DRUGS
Generics have always been cheaper than brand names, but it’s gotten even costlier to insist on, say, Prozac rather than fluoxetine. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, the average co-pay for a 30-day “nonpreferred” brand is now $43, up from $28 in 2001. The average generic co-pay is just $1, so ask your doctor to prescribe the generic equivalent if one exists (it does more than 75% of the
Contractors ‘divert Somalia aid’

Up to half the food aid in Somalia is routinely diverted to corrupt contractors and militiants, a leaked UN report says. Also, that man has a deer in his arms and is believed to have birthed it himself.

More from BBC News >>
Dayta for iPhone

Dayta is a wonderful data tracking application that allows you to track literally everything about you; from your weight, to how many glasses of water you've had today, or even your kill/death ratio in Call of Duty. Dayta can track it all.

Available on the App Store »

Features:

- Track and reflect on everything about you.
- Export data through email, along with a nice CSV file.
- Create folders to organize your data.
- Wipe a data log once you’re done tracking a piece of data.
- Consolidate data daily (automatically add values within a day together, useful for tracking glasses of water).

"With Dayta, I can define the metrics that define me and track my personal development over time. It's great for _everything_, covering anything from my daily cappuccino consumption to the number of scientific papers I have published so far." - Leif Singer

"Great concept. Infinite uses. Love it!" - Dan Palmer

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Check out my other apps: Color Stream and Twizzle.
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Video introduction  Download the application

Apple iPhone  Touch, 3G, 3GS
Android  Droid, Nexus, myTouch
Blackberry  Bold, Curve, Storm
Palm  Pre Plus, Pixi Plus

Live on Gowalla

Michelle Schonfeld checked in at Austin Convention Center
Thomas Flores checked in at Liljeholmsgallerian
David Hornik checked in at Kaygetsu
Sandy Gaylor checked in at Russell Speeder’s Car Wash
Joel Smith checked in at ACC Ballroom C

Featured spots

CoHabitat Dallas, TX
Brush Square Park Austin, TX
AUS Austin-Bergstrom
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The easiest way to share places you go with friends.
Pleasure
preparing your plants for winter

After the busy summer it's had, your garden deserves a nap. Putting it to bed properly for the winter keeps soil and plants healthy and gives you a jump start on your spring workload. Follow these easy steps once the first frost hits.

- Remove and discard annual plants—flowers, herbs, and vegetables—and clip green-stemmed perennials back to just above the soil. If you don't, insects and disease can infest your garden, says Charlie Nardozzi, a senior horticulturist for the National Gardening Association.
- Do one last sweep for any remaining weeds, and spread any type of compost (available at garden centers) over your beds to insulate them from winter's freezing and thawing cycles.
- Remove and discard plants and the potting soil from containers. Then stash the empty pots inside a garage, a basement, or a shed so they won't crack during the winter cold. If you have perennials or evergreens in pots, move them to an unheated garage or shed.
- Drain and unhook garden hoses. Roll them and store indoors to extend their life span.
| Q. How do I know if I'm at high risk for developing breast cancer? | A. Anyone with an immediate family member who was diagnosed with breast cancer before the age of menopause or with multiple relatives suffering from the disease is at high risk; you should start getting mammograms at age 30 or younger, depending on your case. If you're not at high risk, begin at 40. Calculate your own chances by using the Breast Cancer Prevention tool, a short questionnaire at www.cancer.gov/bcrisktool.com. |
| Q. Do birth-control pills increase my risk? | A. Any links between the Pill and breast cancer appear to be weak. While estrogen exposure can potentially increase your risk, today's birth-control pills contain far less of the hormone than earlier versions. However, women who take oral contraceptives in their mid- to late 40s to help mitigate perimenopausal symptoms have not been studied, so if you fall into that group, you should weigh the risks and the benefits of the Pill with your doctor, says surgeon Susan Love. |
| Q. Should I do breast self-exams? | A. They certainly can't hurt, but experts disagree over the long-term merits of self-exams. Until five years ago, the American Cancer Society recommended doing one monthly. However, research has found that these exams don't actually decrease the cancer death rate, so they have been deemed optional. Nonetheless, it's good to familiarize yourself with your breasts so that you know which lumps are normal and which are new and different. |
| Q. How much do diet and exercise affect my chance of getting breast cancer? | A. A nutrient-rich diet and an aerobic exercise regimen won't keep breast cancer totally at bay, but studies have shown that both can help reduce the risk of breast cancer and its chance of recurrence in higher-risk women by a small degree, says Love. Conversely, some data have shown an association between alcohol consumption of one drink or more a day and an increased breast cancer risk in all women, not just those already at high risk. |
| Q. What's the difference between a screening mammogram and a diagnostic mammogram? | A. A screening mammogram scans both breasts for trouble spots, while a diagnostic test zeroes in on questionable areas detected during a screening exam. A radiologist isn't always present during a preliminary screening mammogram, which is why you often don't get results for two weeks, says Susan K. Boolbol, chief of breast surgery at Beth Israel Medical Center, in New York City. If this screening reveals a mass—or if your gynecologist or some other doctor feels a lump during a routine examination—you'll probably be sent directly for a diagnostic mammogram. In that case, a radiologist is often on-site to read your results immediately. |

**coming to terms: a breast-health glossary**

- **Calcification:** Calcium deposits that show up in breast tissue and are typically benign. Depending on how they appear in a mammogram, your doctor may order more testing to rule out cancer.
- **Cyst:** A fluid-filled sac that might feel especially painful just before your menstrual period. True cysts are benign and can be easily drained by your doctor. If the fluid shows any traces of blood, it will probably be further tested for cancerous cells.
- **Image-guided biopsy:** Using a mammogram, MRI, or ultrasound machine to pinpoint the exact location of a suspicious mass, your doctor inserts a needle...
Moving Pleasure
Yesterday I had a rough day. Right before leaving for a brutal session at the dentist (cleaning, a root canal... fun times...), I realized I have a fever. Naturally, this left me sick at home. Considering the outside temperature, one would think this is a good thing, but I had a lot of things to do. I tried making some chicken soup from my mom's special recipe, but that turned out pretty nasty. Temperature rising, I felt worse by the minute until my wife, Adva, offered me to take some NyQuil and head to bed.

Usually, I don't like taking medication. Unless it is absolutely necessary, I like letting my body heal on its own. Yesterday, though, was too much for me - I didn't want to be sick for New Year's and I had a lot of work piling up. Being sick seemed a little inappropriate. So I took two NyQuil pills in the evening. 15 minutes later I was knocked out on the couch, drooling on the pillows. My wife tells me it took her about 5 minutes to get me to wake up and go to bed. When I woke up this morning, I felt like I was on some kind of narcotics. I forgot how strong NyQuil is, which lead me to thinking - what's in these magical blue pills? My search yielded some interesting results:

**Acetaminophen** - One of the main ingredients. Basically this is a pain reliever and a fever reducer. When the ingredient breaks down in the body it changes form to Cannabinoid. That word sounds familiar right? It is the same compound found in Marijuana. Oh oh, snack attack!

**Dextromorphan HBr** - To make a long story short, this is a cough suppressant. It is also considered a painkiller five times as powerful as morphine (Damn!). In addition, this is the drug that makes you feel "dissociated", or detached from the environment or yourself. Needless to say, it is the psychedelic or hallucinogenic component in the drug.
Kontain is a destination for creatives to express and share their life and work through all forms of media. Kontain is the brain child of Fi CEO David Hugh Martin, who has been evolving the concept since 1999. Kontain's main goal was to be so easy your mom could use it, and of course look beautiful while doing so. As active members in a variety of social platforms, our belief was, while there are some tremendous experiences available today, there is serious room for improvement in the way we interact online. With Kontain, we tried to provide an easy and more aesthetically pleasing way to upload, manage and share media. With a large emphasis on aesthetics and ease of use, we were very humbled and honored to have been nominated for a webby, Best Visual Design - Function.
As a young designer I was always interested in the concept randomness and how it can produce well formed shapes. Kind of like clouds in the sky, or a pile of leaves on the ground. It seems like us designers have become control freaks in our work flows. Move this button a pixel up, make the kerning on this font a bit tighter. We tweak and tweak until everything is perfect. This is all good, but I had to break free of this strict environment. After all, not everything that we create as designers has to be so controlled. So after months of intense client project deadlines, I was in need of a personal outlet. One that could be as chaotic and uncontrolled as the clouds in the sky. One without any deadlines and stress. I created random shapes and captured the ones I liked the most. This was created in Cinema4d, and then was retouched in Photoshop.
Road Runner, part of Time Warner Cable, has been providing high speed internet for years along side high quality web services ranging from news portals, webmail clients and DVRs. Fi has helped out in all of these applications and more. As part of the Road Runner team I have touched all of these projects in one way or the other. The last project that went live was the Road Runner Stats section, which aimed to provide real time NFL stats. The projects was a big technical hurdle using Flex as the base of development.
A few Helpful Resources
Art & Visual Perception
The Psychology of the Creative Eye
by Rudolph Arnheim

Understanding Comics
by Scott McCloud