

Top Website Best Practices

1. Focus on Tasks

- Know Your Top Customers**
- Make a Good First Impression**
- Place VIP Content Prominently**
- Get Training**
- Turn News into Actionable Content**
- Be Easy to Find Through URLs**

2. Make Your Content Effective

- Use Plain Language**
- Practice Basic Search Engine Optimization**
- Build Mobile Sites**

3. Comply with Section 508

4. Conduct “Discount” Usability Testing

1. Focus on Tasks

- Know Your Top Customers
- Make a Good First Impression
- Place VIP Content Prominently
- Get Training
- Turn News into Actionable Content
- Be Findable

1. Focus on Tasks: Know Your Top Customers

- Which are your Top Customers?



Analyze and understand your particular audience(s)

<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/usability/audience-analysis.shtml>

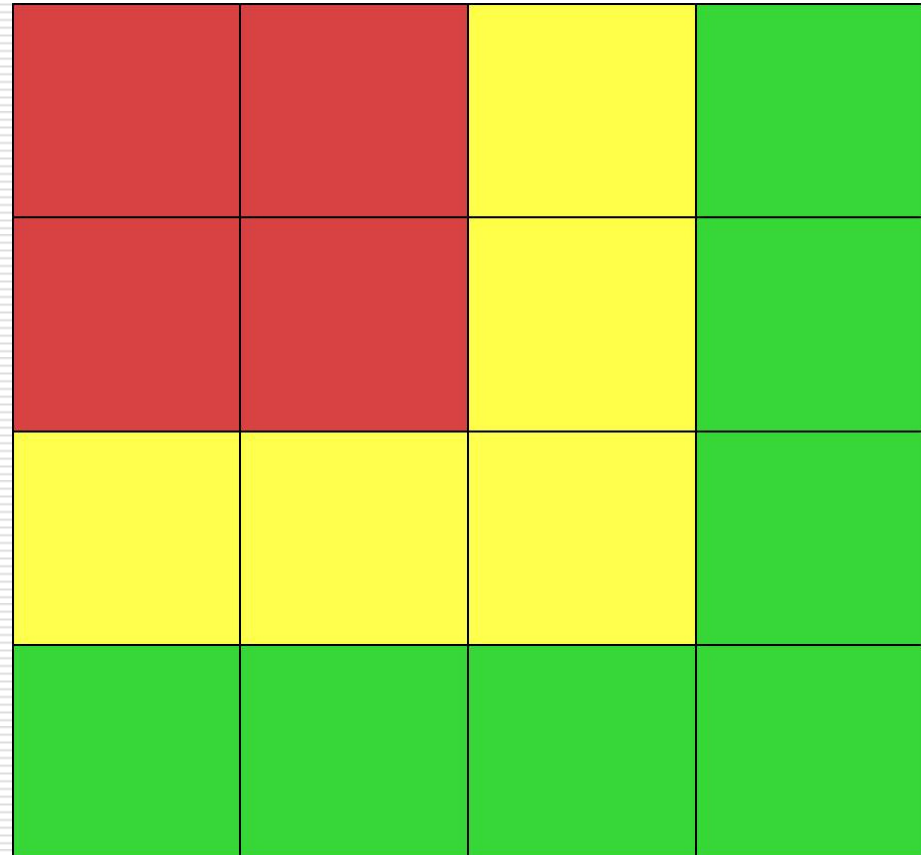
1. Focus on Tasks: Make a Good First Impression

- ❑ Can your customers identify top tasks on your website in 5 seconds? Do the [5-second test](#)
- ❑ *"First Click Success Results in 90% Task Success"*
Bailey & Wolfson, CHI 2009
(only 50% if the first click is incorrect)
- ❑ Initial emotional response – 1 sec.; subsequent intellectual response – 15 secs
(Lindgaard, Fernandes, Dudek, & Brown, Carleton University, Behaviour & Information Technology, 2006)

1. Focus on Tasks: Place VIP Content Prominently

On the screen

- Readers see content in **red zone** first; content in **green zone** last
- Put your most important content where readers see it first



Banner blindness stretches down the right hand side, especially if there is ANYTHING that is in a box or looks like possible advertising
– Dr. Kath Straub, usability.org

1. Focus on Tasks: Get Trained

- Related Web Manager University courses:
 - [Write Plainly: An Update on Plain Writing Principles and the New Law](#) **NEW!** Free webinar with Leslie O'Flahaven (Jan 12, 2011)
 - [Delivering Great Customer Service: Essentials for Government Web Managers](#) with Candi Harrison (Jan 25-26, 2011)
 - Card Sorting Demystified - Hands-on Techniques for Organizing Your Website **NEW!** with Cory Lebson (Jan 31, 2011)
 - Courses in Mobile, User Experience Essentials, Annual Conference, and First Fridays product testing

1. Focus on Tasks: Turn News into Actionable Content

- Turn news releases into actionable tasks

- Relocate agency news releases
 - Under a News tab
 - To a less prominent place on Homepage

1. Focus on Tasks: News into Actionable Content

The screenshot shows the EIA website homepage. At the top left is the EIA logo and the text "U.S. Energy Information Administration Independent Statistics and Analysis". A search bar is located at the top right. Below the header is a large banner for the "Annual Energy Outlook 2011 Early Release Overview AEO2011 Reference case". To the right of the banner is a "Features" section with links to "AEO2011 Early Release", "Latest U.S. Gasoline Prices", "Latest U.S. Diesel Prices", "Updated Country Brief", and "Careers at EIA". Below the banner are two main columns: "Energy Sources" and "Topics". The "Energy Sources" column includes links for Petroleum, Natural Gas, Electricity, Coal, and Renewable & Alternative Fuels. The "Topics" column includes links for Forecasts & Analysis, Environment, Households, Buildings & Industry, and International. To the right of these columns is a "Glossary" section with an "A - Z Topics" grid and a "Latest Data" section showing "Crude Futures Price" and "Retail Gasoline Price". Below that is a "Most Requested" section with a list of market updates, including "On-Highway Retail Diesel Prices" and "Gasoline and Diesel Fuel Update". A red callout box with the text "Look - content in action!" points to the "Most Requested" section.

eia U.S. Energy Information Administration
Independent Statistics and Analysis

Annual Energy Outlook 2011 Early Release Overview
AEO2011 Reference case

Features:

- [AEO2011 Early Release](#)
- [Latest U.S. Gasoline Prices](#)
- [Latest U.S. Diesel Prices](#)
- [Updated Country Brief](#)
- [Careers at EIA](#)

Energy Sources

- Petroleum**
Crude oil, gasoline, heating oil, diesel, propane, jet fuel, and other petroleum products...
- Natural Gas**
Exploration and reserves, storage, imports and exports, production, prices, sales...
- Electricity**
Sales, revenue and prices, power plants, fuel use, stocks, generation, trade, demand & emissions...
- Coal**
Reserves, production, prices, employment and productivity, distribution, stocks, imports and exports...
- Renewable & Alternative Fuels**
Includes hydropower, solar, wind, geothermal, biomass and ethanol

Topics

- Forecasts & Analysis**
Monthly and yearly energy forecasts, analysis of energy topics, financial analysis, Congressional reports...
- Environment**
Greenhouse gas data, voluntary reporting, electric power plant emissions...
- Households, Buildings & Industry**
Energy use in homes, commercial buildings, manufacturing and transportation...
- International**
Country energy information, detailed and overviews...

Glossary

A - Z Topics

Latest Data

- Crude Futures Price - 1/4/2011**
\$89.38 /bbl wk chg: -2.11 yr chg: +7.87
- Retail Gasoline Price - 1/3/2011**
\$3.070 /gal wk chg: +0.018 yr chg: +0.405

Most Requested

Latest Market Updates

- [On-Highway Retail Diesel Prices](#)
- [Gasoline and Diesel Fuel Update](#)
- [Natural Gas Storage Report](#)
- [This Week in Petroleum](#)
- [Weekly Petroleum Status Report](#)

Forecasts

- [Annual Energy Outlook](#)
- [Short-Term Energy Outlook](#)
- [International Energy Outlook](#)

State and Country Information

- [Country Energy Profiles](#)
- [State Energy Profiles](#)

Meet the Google guys!



[Sergey](#) [Brin](#)

Google News!

- [Google Primes for Mobile Search Surge](#)
- [Google launches iGoogle Artist Themes](#)
- [Google Lets AdWords Users Buy TV Ads](#)
- [Google Ads Street View To Driving Directions](#)
- [Google looking to map the abyss](#)

Top Task!

[Advanced Search](#)
[Preferences](#)
[Language Tools](#)

[Advertising Programs](#) - [Business Solutions](#) - [About Google](#) - [Go to Google Ireland](#)



New Improved Search

Google is delighted to announce the launch of our new improved search. It's now even easier to search on our website. [Read More](#)

WELCOME TO OUR WEBSITE!!



Use the form below and your advanced search will appear here

Find web pages that have...

all these words:

this exact wording or phrase: [tip](#)

one or more of these words: OR OR [tip](#)

But don't show pages that have...

any of these unwanted words: [tip](#)

Need more tools?

Results per page: ▼

Language: ▼

File type: ▼

Search within a site or domain:

(e.g. youtube.com, .edu)

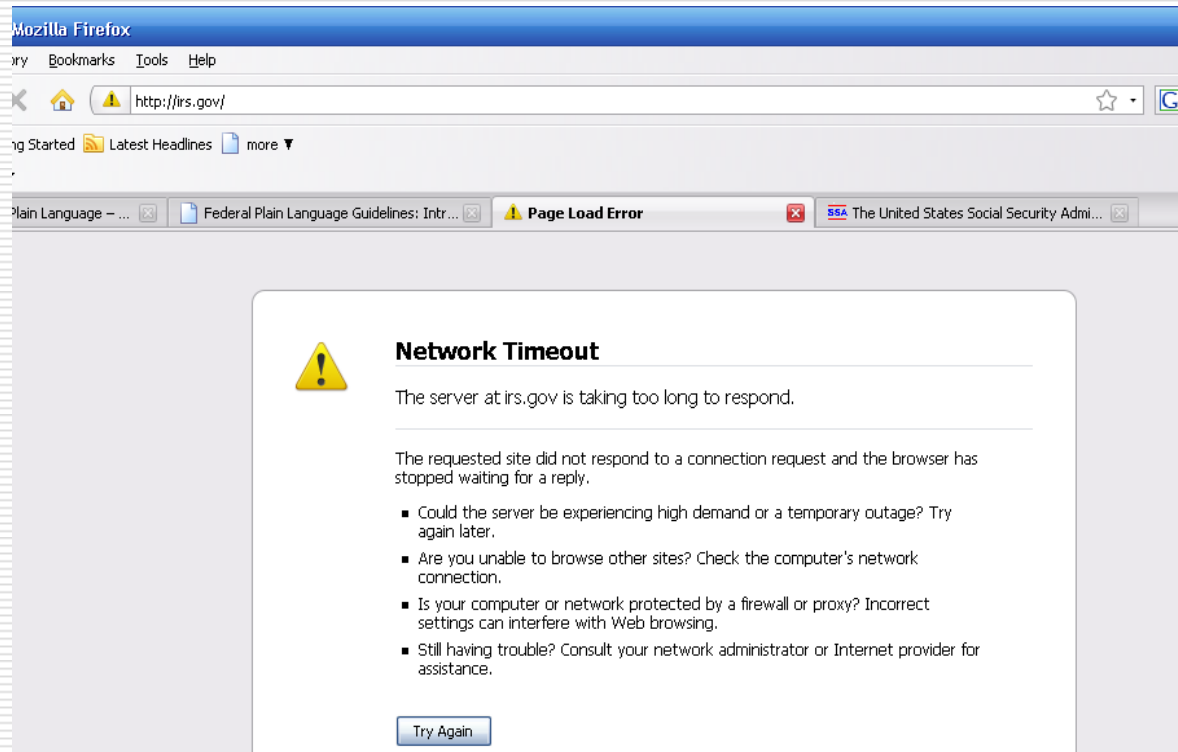
[+ Date, usage rights, numeric range, and more](#)

1. Focus on Tasks: Be Findable

Can your customers find your website by entering the URL *without* “www”?

1. Focus on Tasks: Be Findable

Oops - IRS.gov



1. Focus on Tasks: ROI of Unresolved URL

□ Return on Investment (ROI)

■ **Small # X large # = Large #**

■ Example: www.GobiernoUSA.gov

■ **15 seconds** X 68,000 (25% of customers) = 169,375 minutes = 282 hours X \$17.00/hr. = \$4,798 per month X 12 months

= \$57,576 per year

■ Versus **5 minutes** X \$1/minute (fully loaded GS-12 programmer cost)

= \$5.00 (one-time cost)

2. Make Your Content Effective

- Use Plain Language
- Practice Search Engine Optimization
- Launch Mobile Sites

2. Content: Use Plain Language

- ❑ Write task-oriented content
- ❑ Use “you” and other pronouns to refer to the reader
- ❑ Use the active voice
- ❑ Avoid acronyms and jargon
- ❑ Write for average readers - this helps busy, high-literacy people too
- ❑ [Plain Web Writing Tips](#)
- ❑ Test web pages with actual customers

3. Content: Use Plain Language

- Write for the Web
 - Avoid long paragraphs of text
 - Use headings, subheadings, bulleted and numbered lists to support skip-and-scan reading
 - Put the most important information first, followed by the details
 - Highlight action items
 - [Easy to Read NYC: Guidelines for Clear and Effective Communication](https://nyc.gov/easytoread) nyc.gov/easytoread

3. Content: Use Plain Language

- Never rewrite existing content; write anew
 1. Ask what your target customer needs to know in the form of questions
 2. Use that "roll of paper towel" of existing content as *source material* to write answers to the questions
 3. Throw away anything left over

- Credit: Ginny Redish's book, Letting Go of the Words: Writing Web Content That Works (page 95)

- Imagine that each word you write costs you, personally, \$5

2. Content: Use Plain Language

- ❑ *All* content is potentially web content: Encourage *everyone* at your agency to get [Plain Language training](#)
- ❑ Review [Plain Language Guidelines](#) – offer your comments by Jan 14, 2011
- ❑ Attend monthly PLAIN meetings (second Wednesday, 2:00-3:30 pm ET at Federal Register office, and by conference call), www.plainlanguage.gov
- ❑ Instructor-led online Writing for the Web course, coming to WMU in Spring 2011

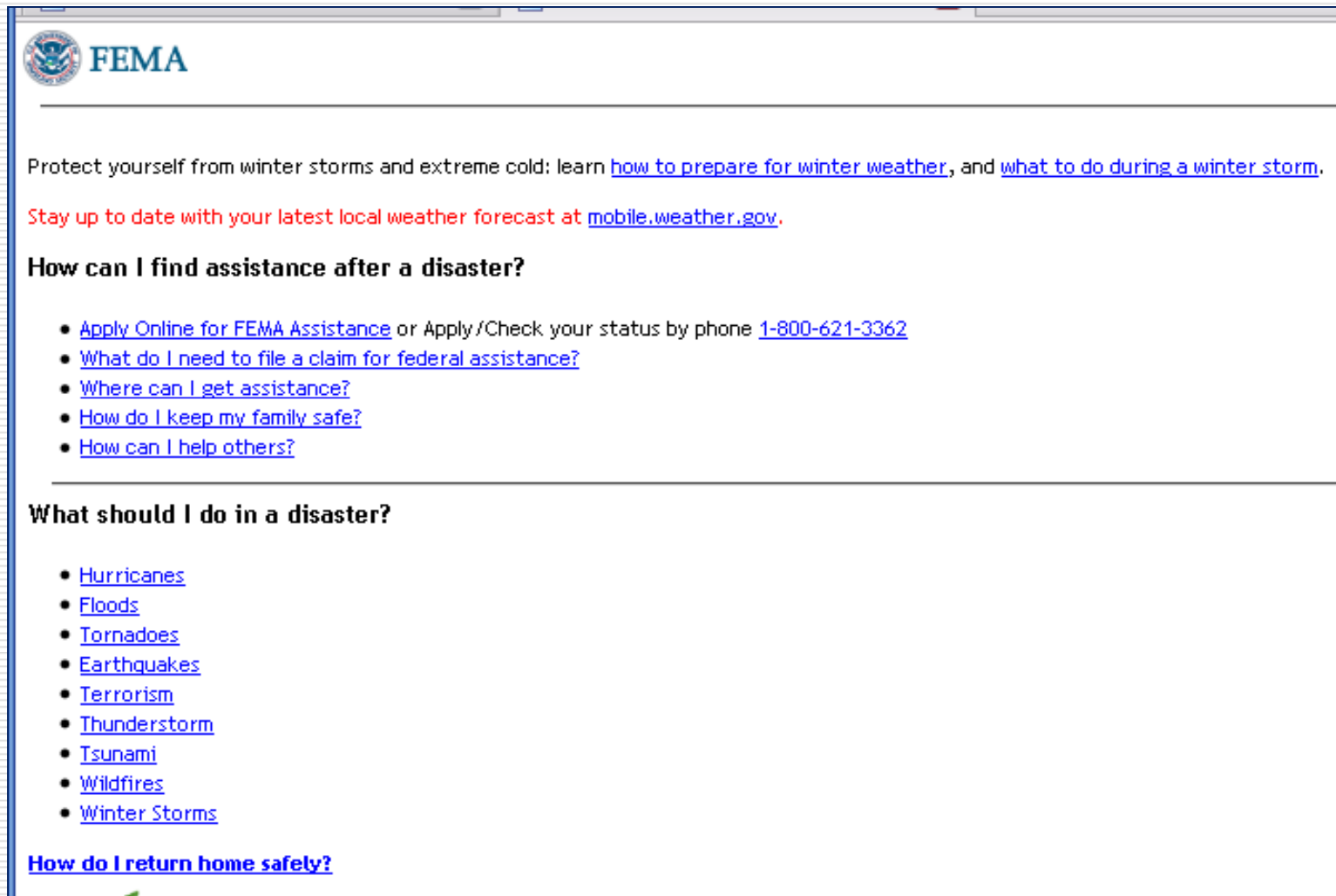
2. Content: Search Engine Optimization

- Analyze keywords entered into your search engine and from public search indexes
- Put keywords in title tags, page titles, headings, and subheadings, initial content
- Search engines put a higher value on content that's dispersed through *multiple* channels – blogs, podcasts, rss feeds, videos, mobile
- Search engines index content that's frequently updated


2. Content: Build Mobile Sites

- Designing for a matchbook cover: Keep it simple and task-focused
- According to Jakob Nielsen (Alertbox, Jan 4, 2011), 60% of the top intranets have mobile sites:
 - Known customers
 - Can design for agency-distributed devices
- Use m.fema.gov as a model (lots of usability testing, thanks to Cory Lebson)

2. Content: Build Mobile Sites



The screenshot shows a portion of the FEMA website. At the top left is the FEMA logo, which includes the United States seal and the text 'FEMA'. Below the logo, there is a horizontal line. The main content area contains several paragraphs and lists of links. The first paragraph discusses winter storms and provides links for preparation and during-storm actions. The second paragraph is a red link to a weather forecast. The third section is a bold heading 'How can I find assistance after a disaster?' followed by a bulleted list of links. The fourth section is another bold heading 'What should I do in a disaster?' followed by a bulleted list of disaster types. The final section is a bold heading 'How do I return home safely?'.

 **FEMA**

Protect yourself from winter storms and extreme cold: learn [how to prepare for winter weather](#), and [what to do during a winter storm](#).

Stay up to date with your latest local weather forecast at [mobile.weather.gov](#).

How can I find assistance after a disaster?

- [Apply Online for FEMA Assistance](#) or Apply/Check your status by phone [1-800-621-3362](#)
- [What do I need to file a claim for federal assistance?](#)
- [Where can I get assistance?](#)
- [How do I keep my family safe?](#)
- [How can I help others?](#)

What should I do in a disaster?

- [Hurricanes](#)
- [Floods](#)
- [Tornadoes](#)
- [Earthquakes](#)
- [Terrorism](#)
- [Thunderstorm](#)
- [Tsunami](#)
- [Wildfires](#)
- [Winter Storms](#)

[How do I return home safely?](#)

3. Comply with Section 508

- [Guidelines for Accessible and Usable Web Sites](#)
(Ginny Redish/NCI)

- Web accessibility basics (76% of failures)
 - Alt text for images
 - Appropriate use of Javascript
 - Errors in simple and complex tables
 - Use of features with inaccessible alternatives (such as CAPTCHA)

3. Comply with Section 508

- Plan for accessible design; don't retrofit

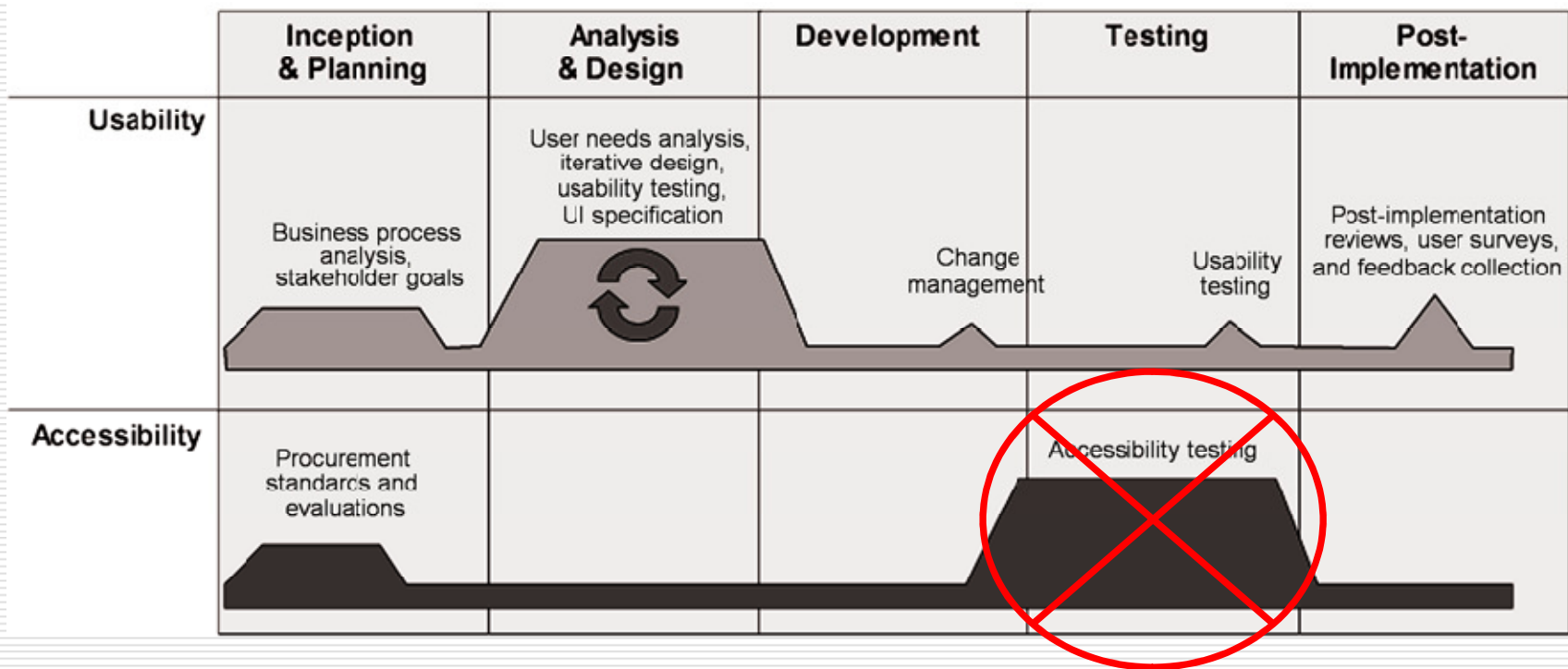
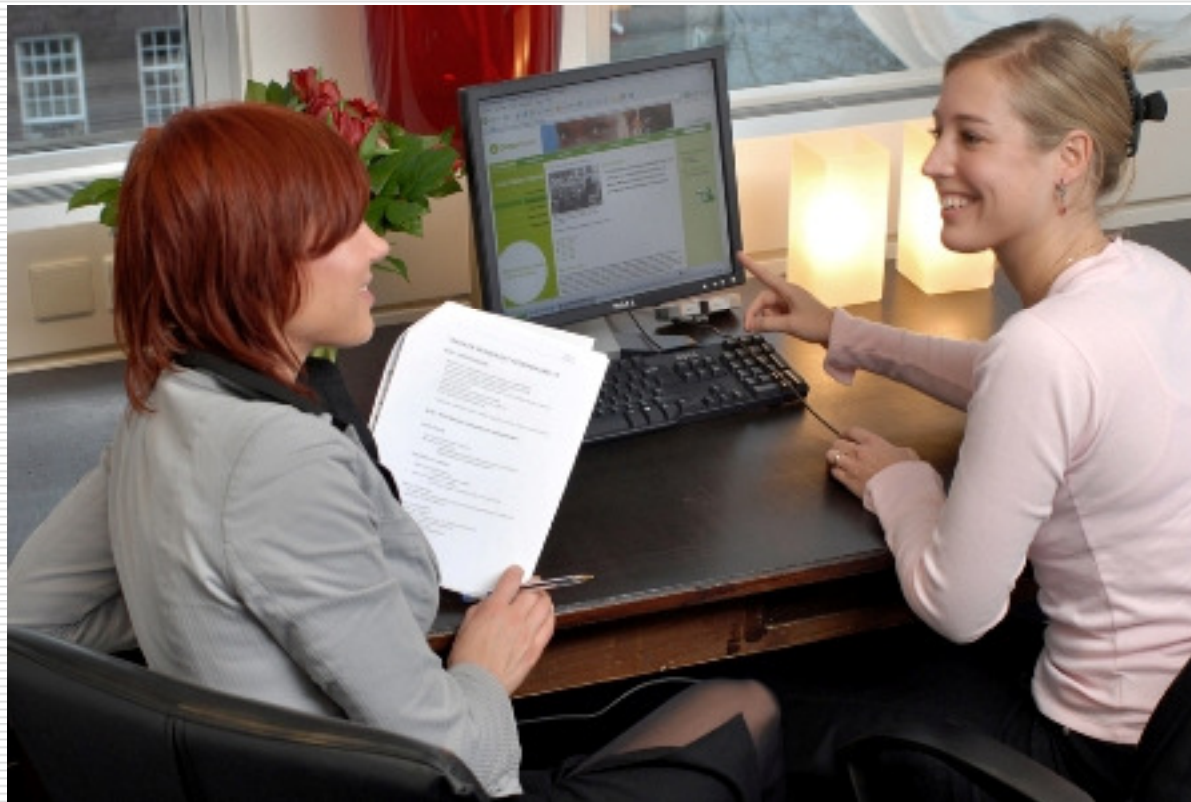


Figure used with permission. *Integrating Accessibility and User-Centered Design: A U.S. Government Agency Case Study*, Hoffman & Battle, Conf. on Human-computer Interaction, 2005

4. Conduct “Discount” Usability Testing

Need help?



What is First Fridays?

- ❑ One morning a month
- ❑ Three customer participants
- ❑ Top tasks
- ❑ Observers taking notes

- ❑ Lunch debrief and identify ten most serious problems + **immediate fixes**
- ❑ One-page report and copy of test recording

Benefits of First Fridays

- ❑ Train and mentor
- ❑ Raise awareness
- ❑ Fix problems



4. Conduct Usability Testing

- ❑ Usability testing: *Most reliable way* to find user problems
“Comparing Ways of Finding and Reporting Usability Problems” Hvannberg & Law, *Interacting with Computers, 2005*
- ❑ Volunteer as a First Friday participant or observer; learn how to organize and facilitate; volunteer your website for First Fridays Testing: Contact Janelle.Thalls@gsa.gov
- ❑ First Fridays Program Testing page:
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/usability/first-fridays.shtml>

4. Conduct Usability Testing

- Study with the masters
 - Steve Krug, [Rocket Surgery Made Easy](#), one-day WMU course, April 20
 - Dana Chisnell, [Usability Testing in the Wild](#) (archived webinar)

- Keep current on the latest in web use and customer behavior
 - [UseIt.com](#)
 - [UIEtips.com](#)
 - [HFI UI Design Newsletter](#)

What We'll Cover

1:00–1:45 Overview of federal web requirements

1:45–2:05 Best practices

2:05–2:10 Test your knowledge

→ 2:10–2:15 **Follow-up resources**

2:15–2:30 Questions & answers

Where to Get Help

- ❑ Join Web Managers Forum
<http://forum.webcontent.gov>
- ❑ Visit [Webcontent.gov](http://webcontent.gov)...often!
- ❑ Get involved in a Sub-Council
- ❑ Use [Usability.gov](http://usability.gov) and *Usability Guidelines* book
- ❑ Attend other Web Manager University classes
- ❑ Participate in Monthly Forum Calls and New Media Talks
- ❑ Check out other agencies' web policies (EPA, Energy...):
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/governance/policies/governance_procedures.shtml



Summary of Resources

Federal Requirements

- ❑ A130: Major Implications for Federal Web Managers
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/documents/a130summary.pdf>
- ❑ A130 OMB Circular
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a130/a130trans4.html>
- ❑ E-Government Act of 2002
<http://www.archives.gov/about/laws/egov-act-section-207.html>
- ❑ Annual E-Gov Report to Congress
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg/reports/2006_egov_report.pdf
- ❑ OMB Policies
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/omb_policies.shtml
- ❑ Short checklist of requirements and best practices
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/checklist/short.pdf
- ❑ Long checklist of requirements and best practices
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/checklist/long.pdf
- ❑ Use Approved Domains
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/getting_started/naming/domains.shtml
- ❑ .gov Domain Registration
<http://www.dotgov.gov>

Summary of Resources

continued

- ❑ Content Inventories
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/laws_regs/priorities_reqs.shtml
- ❑ Linking Policy
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/omb_policies/linking.shtml
- ❑ Required Homepage links
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/managing_content/organizing/links/required_links.shtml
- ❑ Privacy Policy
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/policies/privacy.shtml>
- ❑ State of Minnesota Privacy Policy
<http://www.state.mn.us/portal/mn/jsp/content.do?programid=536903363&agency=NorthStar>
- ❑ Accessibility and Section 508 Resources (see Appendix)
- ❑ Manage Electronic Records
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/omb_policies/records.shtml
- ❑ Federal Multilingual Websites Committee
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/community/groups/fmwc.shtml>
- ❑ Web Managers Forum Strategic Plan
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/about/documents/strategic_plan.shtml

Summary of Resources

continued

- ❑ Critical Tasks 101
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/managing_content/focusing_critical_tasks.shtml#roadmap
- ❑ Federal Web Managers Council White Paper
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/documents/Federal_Web_Managers_WhitePaper.pdf
- ❑ Barriers and Solutions to Implementing Social Media in Government
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/documents/SocialMediaFed%20Govt_BarriersPotentialSolutions.pdf

Best Practices

- ❑ Usability Specialist Position Description
<http://www.usability.gov/templates/index.html#pd>
- ❑ Task Focused Templates and Resources
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/managing_content/task_focused_resources.shtml
- ❑ 5-Second Tests: Measuring Your Site's Content Pages, Christine Perfetti, User Interface Engineering, 2005
http://www.uie.com/articles/five_second_test/

Summary of Resources

continued

- ❑ Document Checklist for Plain Language
<http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/quickreference/checklist.cfm>
- ❑ Plain Language Training
http://www.plainlanguage.gov/resources/take_training/index.cfm
- ❑ Easy to Read NYC: Guidelines for Clear and Effective Communication
http://nyc.gov/html/adulted/html/plain/plain_language.shtml
- ❑ Search: Visible and Simple, Nielson, 2001
<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20010513.html>
- ❑ Research-Based Web Design and Usability Guidelines
<http://www.usability.gov/pdfs/guidelines.html>
- ❑ Use Common Content, Terminology and Placement
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/managing_content/organizing/common_content.shtml

Summary of Resources

continued

- ❑ Guidelines for Accessible and Usable Web, Theofanos and Reddish
<http://www.redish.net/content/papers/interactions.html>
- ❑ "Web Accessibility – The Power of Five"
<http://www.headstar.com/eablive/?p=183>
- ❑ Usability Requirements Toolkit (CISUR)
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/usability/cisur.shtml>
- ❑ Free e-Newsletters on Good Web Design:
UseIt: <http://www.useit.com/alertbox/subscribe.html>
UIEtips: <http://www.uie.com/uietips/>
HFI UI Design Newsletter: <http://humanfactors.com/downloads/subscribe.asp>

Appendix 1: Accessibility Resources

General Accessibility

- ❑ WebAIM: Introduction to Web Accessibility
<http://www.webaim.org/intro/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Articles
<http://www.webaim.org/articles/>
- ❑ Jim Thatcher: Web Accessibility: What Not to Do
<http://www.jimthatcher.com/whatnot.htm>
- ❑ 456 Berea Street: Accessibility Myths and Misconceptions
http://www.456bereastreet.com/archive/200505/accessibility_myths_and_misconceptions/

Learning about Section 508

- ❑ U.S. Access Board: Section 508 Standards
<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/standards.htm>
- ❑ U.S. Access Board: Interpreting Web-based Intranet and Internet Information and Applications Standards
<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/1194.22.htm>

Appendix 1: Accessibility Resources

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

- ❑ W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (W3C WAI): WCAG 1.0
- ❑ <http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/>
- ❑ W3C WAI: Checklist of Checkpoints for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0
- ❑ <http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/full-checklist.html>

Specific Disabilities

- ❑ Section508.gov: Assistive Technology (AT) Showcase
<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=87>
- ❑ WebAIM: Auditory Disabilities <http://www.webaim.org/articles/auditory/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Cognitive Disabilities
<http://www.webaim.org/articles/cognitive/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Motor Disabilities
<http://www.webaim.org/articles/motor/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Seizure Disorder (Neurological Disabilities)
<http://www.webaim.org/articles/seizure/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Visual Disabilities
<http://www.webaim.org/articles/visual/>
- ❑ Dive into Accessibility: Tips by Disability
http://diveintoaccessibility.org/by_disability.html
- ❑ Trace Center: Screen Magnification and the Web
http://www.doit.wisc.edu/accessibility/video/screen_magnification.asp

Appendix 1: Accessibility Resources

Accessibility Tips and Tools

- ❑ Accessify
- ❑ <http://www.accessify.com/>
- ❑ Colorblind Web Page Filter
- ❑ <http://colorfilter.wickline.org/?j=1;t=g>
- ❑ Trace Center: Photosensitive Epilepsy Analysis Tool (PEAT)
- ❑ <http://trace.wisc.edu/peat/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Resources
- ❑ <http://www.webaim.org/resources/>

Next Steps: What You Can Do Now

- Understand the requirements
- Figure out what you've already done (use checklists)
- Sort the rest into two piles:
 - Things you can do quickly—do them!
 - Things that may take awhile—start the process
- Focus on improvements with biggest impact:
 - Get your top task right—then work on others
 - Get rid of irrelevant content
 - Re-write top pages in plain language
 - Do SEO on top pages
- Be strategic and show leadership—be proactive, not reactive

Thank You

Questions?

HowTo.gov

The screenshot shows the HowTo.gov website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the HowTo.gov logo and the tagline "Helping agencies deliver a great customer experience". To the right of the logo is a search bar with a "Search" button. Below the navigation bar is a horizontal menu with the following items: HOME, WEB CONTENT, SOCIAL MEDIA, CONTACT CENTERS, TECH SOLUTIONS, COMMUNITIES, and CUSTOMER SERVICE. The main content area is divided into several sections. On the left, there is a section titled "What is HowTo.gov?" with a brief description of the site's purpose. To the right of this section is a photograph of three people looking at a laptop. Below the "What is HowTo.gov?" section are four main content categories, each with an icon and a brief description: "Web Content" (icon of a laptop and documents), "Social Media" (icon of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn), "Contact Centers" (icon of a telephone and a computer monitor), and "Tech Solutions" (icon of a smartphone, a server, and a cloud). On the right side of the page, there are three sections: "TRAINING" with a list of training events, "CONVERSATIONS" with a list of tweets from GSA, and "NEWS" with a list of news items.

HowTo.gov Helping agencies deliver a great customer experience

A - Z Index Contact Us About Us Site Policies

Search

HOME WEB CONTENT SOCIAL MEDIA CONTACT CENTERS TECH SOLUTIONS COMMUNITIES CUSTOMER SERVICE

What is HowTo.gov?

HowTo.gov is a resource for government workers to find and share guidance, best practices, new ideas, common challenges, lessons learned, and successes – all toward the goal of improving customer service across the federal government. [Learn more about HowTo.gov.](#)

Web Content

Federal web requirements, content management, usability, analytics, accessibility, web writing, search...

Social Media

Terms of Service agreements, new media, policies, video, social networks, blogs, challenges & contests...

Contact Centers

Managing customer service...

Tech Solutions

Cloud computing, mobile, data center...

TRAINING

Jan 6 [Meeting Federal Web Requirements](#)

Jan 23-26 [Delivering Great Customer Service](#)

Feb 23 [Proven Strategies for Readable Content: The Content Manager's Playbook](#)

[view all training »](#)

CONVERSATIONS

GSA [GovNewMedia](#) O'Reilly on what lies ahead for Gov 2.0 [j.mp/gbrqbm](#)

GSA [GovNewMedia](#) HOW TO: Use Social Media to Create Better Customer Experiences [j.mp/hbM3Z4](#)

GSA [GovNewMedia](#) RT @JohnFMoore RT @MIsif: Worth a read: RSS Is Dying, and You Should Be Very Worried [bit.ly/gLbUaI](#)

[View all tweets](#)

NEWS

- Guidance on Plain Writing Act
- 2011 Annual Conference early- bird

Contact Information

Center for Customer Service Excellence(GSA)

Sheila Campbell

Director

sheila.campbell@gsa.gov

202-208-5588

Nicole Burton

User Experience Evangelist

nicole.burton@gsa.gov

202-219-0820

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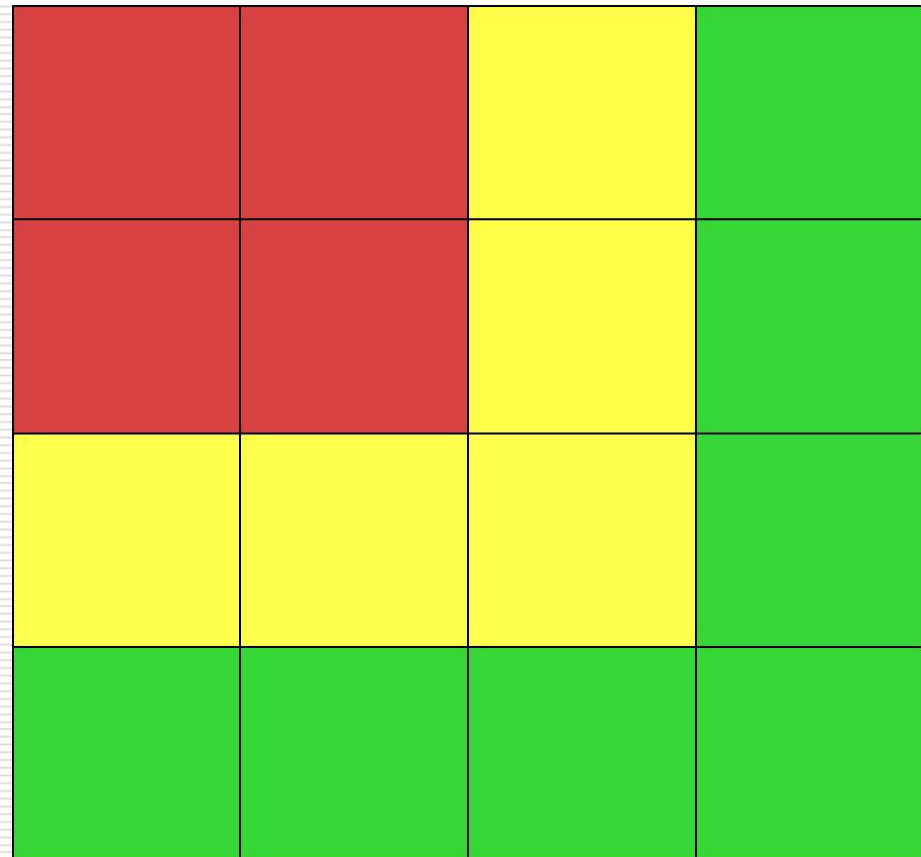
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 - [Delivering Great Customer Service: Essentials for Government Web Managers](#) with Candi Harrison (Jan 25-26, 2011)
 - Card Sorting Demystified - Hands-on Techniques for Organizing Your Website **NEW!** with Cory Lebson (Jan 31, 2011)
 - Courses in Mobile, User Experience Essentials, Annual Conference, and First Fridays product testing

1. Focus on Tasks: Turn News into Actionable Content

- Turn news releases into actionable tasks

- Relocate agency news releases
 - Under a News tab
 - To a less prominent place on Homepage

1. Focus on Tasks: News into Actionable Content

The screenshot shows the EIA website homepage. At the top left is the EIA logo and the text "U.S. Energy Information Administration Independent Statistics and Analysis". A search bar is at the top right. Below the header is a large banner for the "Annual Energy Outlook 2011 Early Release Overview AEO2011 Reference case". To the right of the banner is a "Features" section with links to "AEO2011 Early Release", "Latest U.S. Gasoline Prices", "Latest U.S. Diesel Prices", "Updated Country Brief", and "Careers at EIA". Below the banner are two columns of "Energy Sources" and "Topics". The "Energy Sources" column includes links for Petroleum, Natural Gas, Electricity, Coal, and Renewable & Alternative Fuels. The "Topics" column includes links for Forecasts & Analysis, Environment, Households, Buildings & Industry, and International. To the right of these columns is a "Glossary" section with an "A - Z Topics" grid and a "Latest Data" section showing "Crude Futures Price" and "Retail Gasoline Price". Below that is a "Most Requested" section with a list of links, including "On-Highway Retail Diesel Prices" and "Gasoline and Diesel Fuel Update". A red callout box with the text "Look - content in action!" points to the "Most Requested" section.

eia U.S. Energy Information Administration
Independent Statistics and Analysis

Annual Energy Outlook 2011 Early Release Overview
AEO2011 Reference case

Features:

- [AEO2011 Early Release](#)
- [Latest U.S. Gasoline Prices](#)
- [Latest U.S. Diesel Prices](#)
- [Updated Country Brief](#)
- [Careers at EIA](#)

Energy Sources

- Petroleum**
Crude oil, gasoline, heating oil, diesel, propane, jet fuel, and other petroleum products...
- Natural Gas**
Exploration and reserves, storage, imports and exports, production, prices, sales...
- Electricity**
Sales, revenue and prices, power plants, fuel use, stocks, generation, trade, demand & emissions...
- Coal**
Reserves, production, prices, employment and productivity, distribution, stocks, imports and exports...
- Renewable & Alternative Fuels**
Includes hydropower, solar, wind, geothermal, biomass and ethanol

Topics

- Forecasts & Analysis**
Monthly and yearly energy forecasts, analysis of energy topics, financial analysis, Congressional reports...
- Environment**
Greenhouse gas data, voluntary reporting, electric power plant emissions...
- Households, Buildings & Industry**
Energy use in homes, commercial buildings, manufacturing and transportation...
- International**
Country energy information, detailed and overviews...

Glossary

A - Z Topics

Latest Data

- Crude Futures Price - 1/4/2011**
\$89.38 /bbl wk chg: -2.11 yr chg: +7.87
- Retail Gasoline Price - 1/3/2011**
\$3.070 /gal wk chg: +0.018 yr chg: +0.405

Most Requested

Latest Market Updates

- [On-Highway Retail Diesel Prices](#)
- [Gasoline and Diesel Fuel Update](#)
- [Natural Gas Storage Report](#)
- [This Week in Petroleum](#)
- [Weekly Petroleum Status Report](#)

Forecasts

- [Annual Energy Outlook](#)
- [Short-Term Energy Outlook](#)
- [International Energy Outlook](#)

State and Country Information

- [Country Energy Profiles](#)
- [State Energy Profiles](#)

Meet the Google guys!



[Sergey](#) [Brin](#)

Google News!

- [Google Primes for Mobile Search Surge](#)
- [Google launches iGoogle Artist Themes](#)
- [Google Lets AdWords Users Buy TV Ads](#)
- [Google Ads Street View To Driving Directions](#)
- [Google looking to map the abyss](#)

Top Task!

[Advanced Search](#)
[Preferences](#)
[Language Tools](#)

[Advertising Programs](#) - [Business Solutions](#) - [About Google](#) - [Go to Google Ireland](#)



New Improved Search

Google is delighted to announce the launch of our new improved search. It's now even easier to search on our website. [Read More](#)

WELCOME TO OUR WEBSITE!!



Use the form below and your advanced search will appear here

Find web pages that have...

all these words:

this exact wording or phrase: [tip](#)

one or more of these words: OR OR [tip](#)

But don't show pages that have...

any of these unwanted words: [tip](#)

Need more tools?

Results per page: ▼

Language: ▼

File type: ▼

Search within a site or domain:

(e.g. youtube.com, .edu)

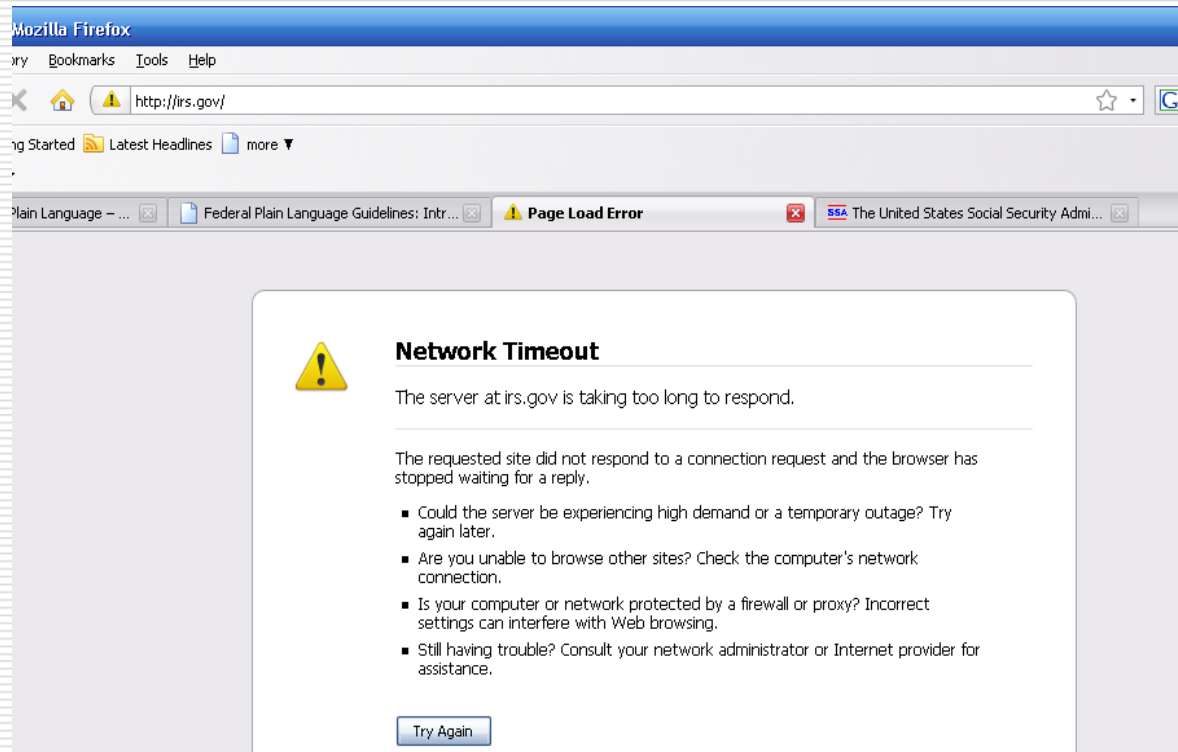
[+](#) [Date](#), [usage rights](#), [numeric range](#), and [more](#)

1. Focus on Tasks: Be Findable

Can your customers find your website by entering the URL *without* "www"?

1. Focus on Tasks: Be Findable

Oops - IRS.gov



1. Focus on Tasks: ROI of Unresolved URL

□ Return on Investment (ROI)

■ **Small # X large # = Large #**

■ Example: www.GobiernoUSA.gov

■ **15 seconds** X 68,000 (25% of customers) = 169,375
minutes = 282 hours X \$17.00/hr. = \$4,798 per month X
12 months

= \$57,576 per year

■ Versus **5 minutes** X \$1/minute (fully loaded GS-12
programmer cost)

= \$5.00 (one-time cost)

2. Make Your Content Effective

- Use Plain Language
- Practice Search Engine Optimization
- Launch Mobile Sites

2. Content: Use Plain Language

- ❑ Write task-oriented content
- ❑ Use “you” and other pronouns to refer to the reader
- ❑ Use the active voice
- ❑ Avoid acronyms and jargon
- ❑ Write for average readers - this helps busy, high-literacy people too
- ❑ [Plain Web Writing Tips](#)
- ❑ Test web pages with actual customers

3. Content: Use Plain Language

- Write for the Web
 - Avoid long paragraphs of text
 - Use headings, subheadings, bulleted and numbered lists to support skip-and-scan reading
 - Put the most important information first, followed by the details
 - Highlight action items
 - [Easy to Read NYC: Guidelines for Clear and Effective Communication](https://nyc.gov/easytoread) nyc.gov/easytoread

3. Content: Use Plain Language

- Never rewrite existing content; write anew
 1. Ask what your target customer needs to know in the form of questions
 2. Use that "roll of paper towel" of existing content as *source material* to write answers to the questions
 3. Throw away anything left over

- Credit: Ginny Redish's book, Letting Go of the Words: Writing Web Content That Works (page 95)

- Imagine that each word you write costs you, personally, \$5

2. Content: Use Plain Language

- ❑ *All* content is potentially web content: Encourage *everyone* at your agency to get [Plain Language training](#)
- ❑ Review [Plain Language Guidelines](#) – offer your comments by Jan 14, 2011
- ❑ Attend monthly PLAIN meetings (second Wednesday, 2:00-3:30 pm ET at Federal Register office, and by conference call), www.plainlanguage.gov
- ❑ Instructor-led online Writing for the Web course, coming to WMU in Spring 2011

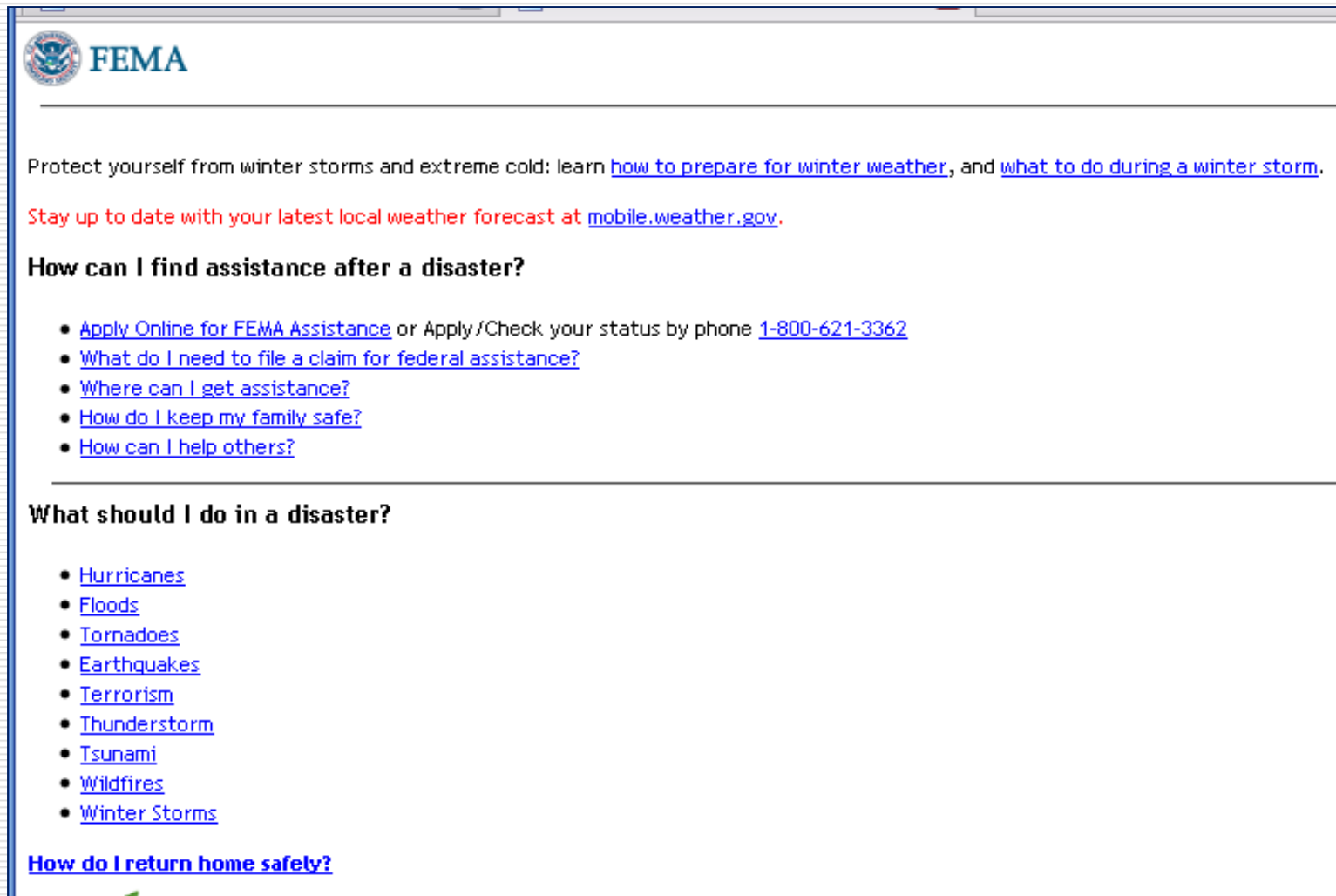
2. Content: Search Engine Optimization

- Analyze keywords entered into your search engine and from public search indexes
- Put keywords in title tags, page titles, headings, and subheadings, initial content
- Search engines put a higher value on content that's dispersed through *multiple* channels – blogs, podcasts, rss feeds, videos, mobile
- Search engines index content that's frequently updated


2. Content: Build Mobile Sites

- Designing for a matchbook cover: Keep it simple and task-focused
- According to Jakob Nielsen (Alertbox, Jan 4, 2011), 60% of the top intranets have mobile sites:
 - Known customers
 - Can design for agency-distributed devices
- Use m.fema.gov as a model (lots of usability testing, thanks to Cory Lebson)

2. Content: Build Mobile Sites



The screenshot shows a portion of the FEMA website. At the top left is the FEMA logo, which includes the United States seal and the text 'FEMA'. Below the logo, there is a horizontal line. The main content area contains several paragraphs and lists of links. The first paragraph discusses winter storms and provides links for preparation and during-storm actions. The second paragraph is a red link to a weather forecast. The third section is a bold heading 'How can I find assistance after a disaster?' followed by a bulleted list of links. The fourth section is another bold heading 'What should I do in a disaster?' followed by a bulleted list of links. The final section is a bold heading 'How do I return home safely?'.

 **FEMA**

Protect yourself from winter storms and extreme cold: learn [how to prepare for winter weather](#), and [what to do during a winter storm](#).

Stay up to date with your latest local weather forecast at [mobile.weather.gov](#).

How can I find assistance after a disaster?

- [Apply Online for FEMA Assistance](#) or Apply/Check your status by phone [1-800-621-3362](#)
- [What do I need to file a claim for federal assistance?](#)
- [Where can I get assistance?](#)
- [How do I keep my family safe?](#)
- [How can I help others?](#)

What should I do in a disaster?

- [Hurricanes](#)
- [Floods](#)
- [Tornadoes](#)
- [Earthquakes](#)
- [Terrorism](#)
- [Thunderstorm](#)
- [Tsunami](#)
- [Wildfires](#)
- [Winter Storms](#)

[How do I return home safely?](#)

3. Comply with Section 508

- [Guidelines for Accessible and Usable Web Sites](#)
(Ginny Redish/NCI)

- Web accessibility basics (76% of failures)
 - Alt text for images
 - Appropriate use of Javascript
 - Errors in simple and complex tables
 - Use of features with inaccessible alternatives (such as CAPTCHA)

3. Comply with Section 508

- Plan for accessible design; don't retrofit

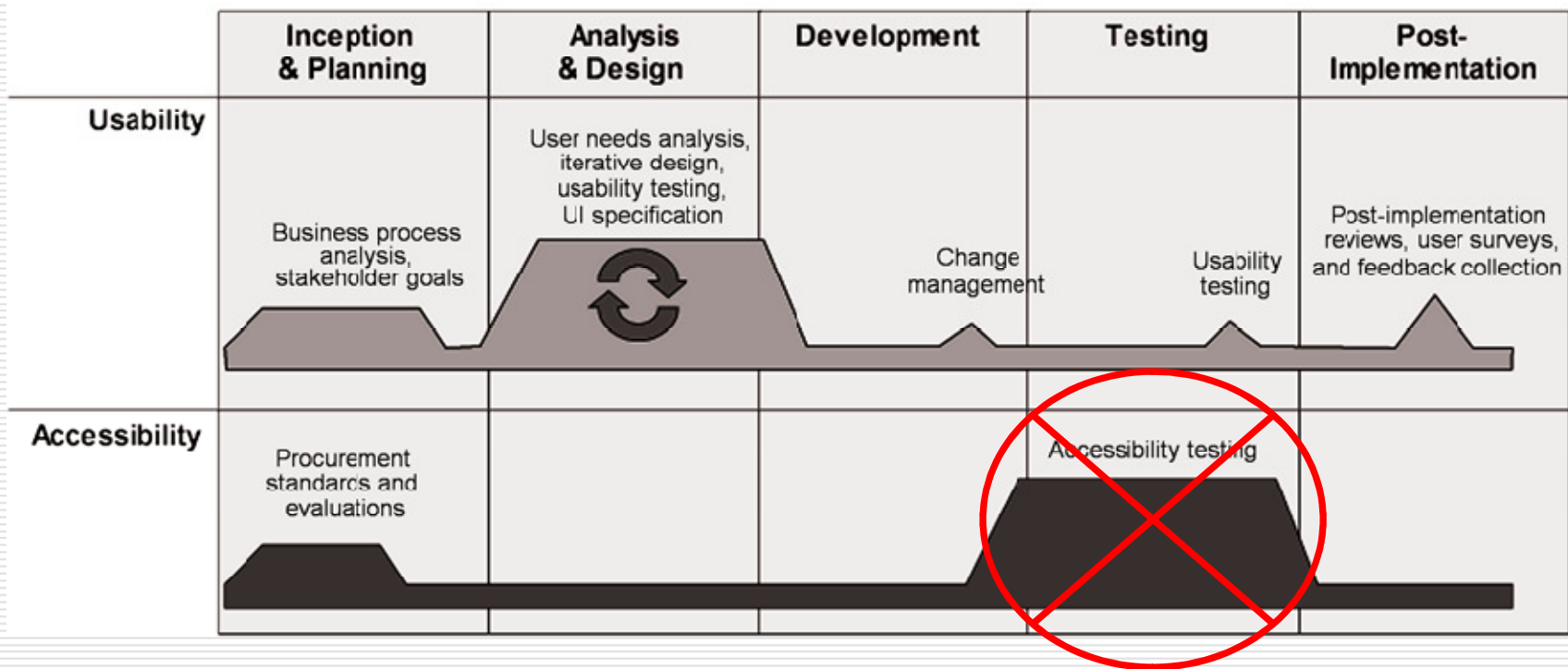
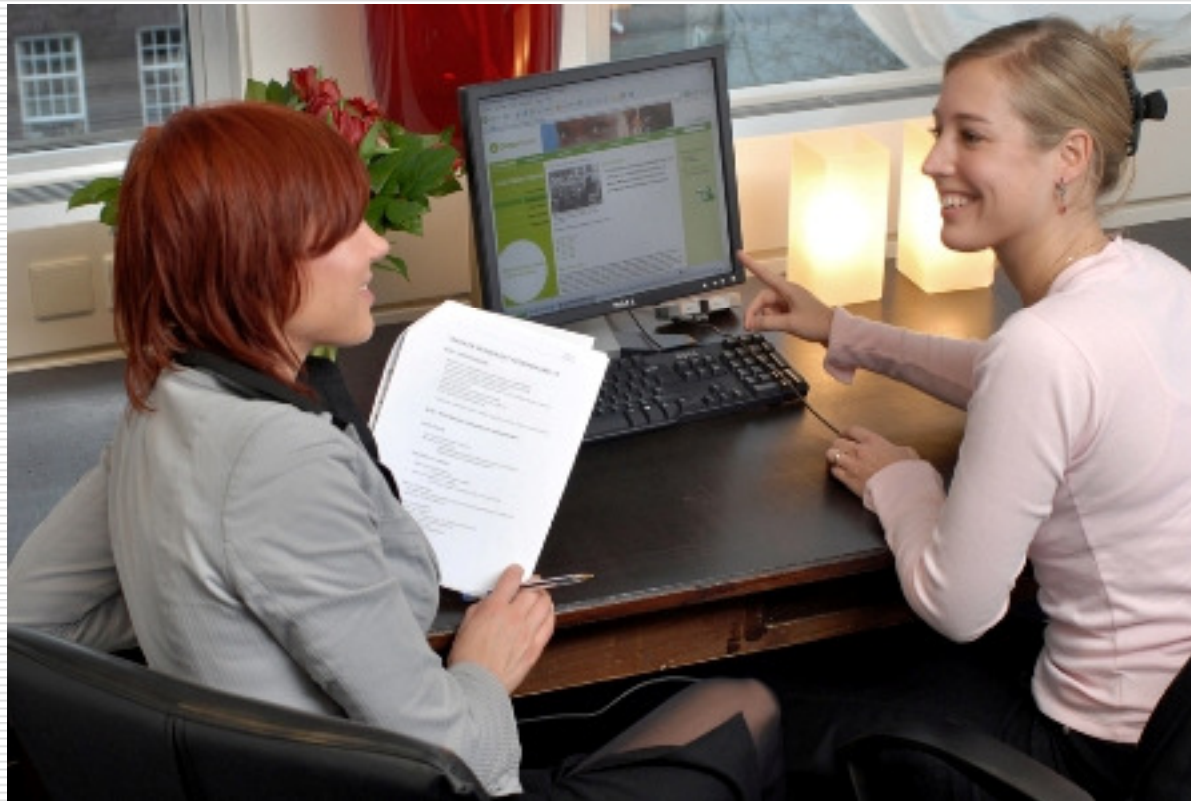


Figure used with permission. *Integrating Accessibility and User-Centered Design: A U.S. Government Agency Case Study*, Hoffman & Battle, Conf. on Human-computer Interaction, 2005

4. Conduct “Discount” Usability Testing

Need help?



What is First Fridays?

- ❑ One morning a month
- ❑ Three customer participants
- ❑ Top tasks
- ❑ Observers taking notes

- ❑ Lunch debrief and identify ten most serious problems + **immediate fixes**
- ❑ One-page report and copy of test recording

Benefits of First Fridays

- ❑ Train and mentor
- ❑ Raise awareness
- ❑ Fix problems



4. Conduct Usability Testing

- ❑ Usability testing: *Most reliable way* to find user problems
“Comparing Ways of Finding and Reporting Usability Problems” Hvannberg & Law, *Interacting with Computers, 2005*
- ❑ Volunteer as a First Friday participant or observer; learn how to organize and facilitate; volunteer your website for First Fridays Testing: Contact Janelle.Thalls@gsa.gov
- ❑ First Fridays Program Testing page:
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/usability/first-fridays.shtml>

4. Conduct Usability Testing

- Study with the masters
 - Steve Krug, [Rocket Surgery Made Easy](#), one-day WMU course, April 20
 - Dana Chisnell, [Usability Testing in the Wild](#) (archived webinar)

- Keep current on the latest in web use and customer behavior
 - [UseIt.com](#)
 - [UIEtips.com](#)
 - [HFI UI Design Newsletter](#)

What We'll Cover

1:00–1:45 Overview of federal web requirements

1:45–2:05 Best practices

2:05–2:10 Test your knowledge

→ 2:10–2:15 **Follow-up resources**

2:15–2:30 Questions & answers

Where to Get Help

- ❑ Join Web Managers Forum
<http://forum.webcontent.gov>
- ❑ Visit [Webcontent.gov](http://webcontent.gov)...often!
- ❑ Get involved in a Sub-Council
- ❑ Use Usability.gov and *Usability Guidelines* book
- ❑ Attend other Web Manager University classes
- ❑ Participate in Monthly Forum Calls and New Media Talks
- ❑ Check out other agencies' web policies (EPA, Energy...):
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/governance/policies/governance_procedures.shtml



Summary of Resources

Federal Requirements

- ❑ A130: Major Implications for Federal Web Managers
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/documents/a130summary.pdf>
- ❑ A130 OMB Circular
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a130/a130trans4.html>
- ❑ E-Government Act of 2002
<http://www.archives.gov/about/laws/egov-act-section-207.html>
- ❑ Annual E-Gov Report to Congress
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg/reports/2006_egov_report.pdf
- ❑ OMB Policies
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/omb_policies.shtml
- ❑ Short checklist of requirements and best practices
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/checklist/short.pdf
- ❑ Long checklist of requirements and best practices
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/checklist/long.pdf
- ❑ Use Approved Domains
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/getting_started/naming/domains.shtml
- ❑ .gov Domain Registration
<http://www.dotgov.gov>

Summary of Resources

continued

- ❑ Content Inventories
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/laws_regs/priorities_reqs.shtml
- ❑ Linking Policy
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/omb_policies/linking.shtml
- ❑ Required Homepage links
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/managing_content/organizing/links/required_links.shtml
- ❑ Privacy Policy
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/policies/privacy.shtml>
- ❑ State of Minnesota Privacy Policy
<http://www.state.mn.us/portal/mn/jsp/content.do?programid=536903363&agency=NorthStar>
- ❑ Accessibility and Section 508 Resources (see Appendix)
- ❑ Manage Electronic Records
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/omb_policies/records.shtml
- ❑ Federal Multilingual Websites Committee
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/community/groups/fmwc.shtml>
- ❑ Web Managers Forum Strategic Plan
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/about/documents/strategic_plan.shtml

Summary of Resources

continued

- ❑ Critical Tasks 101
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/managing_content/focusing_critical_tasks.shtml#roadmap
- ❑ Federal Web Managers Council White Paper
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/documents/Federal_Web_Managers_WhitePaper.pdf
- ❑ Barriers and Solutions to Implementing Social Media in Government
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/documents/SocialMediaFed%20Govt_BarriersPotentialSolutions.pdf

Best Practices

- ❑ Usability Specialist Position Description
<http://www.usability.gov/templates/index.html#pd>
- ❑ Task Focused Templates and Resources
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/managing_content/task_focused_resources.shtml
- ❑ 5-Second Tests: Measuring Your Site's Content Pages, Christine Perfetti, User Interface Engineering, 2005
http://www.uie.com/articles/five_second_test/

Summary of Resources

continued

- ❑ Document Checklist for Plain Language
<http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/quickreference/checklist.cfm>
- ❑ Plain Language Training
http://www.plainlanguage.gov/resources/take_training/index.cfm
- ❑ Easy to Read NYC: Guidelines for Clear and Effective Communication
http://nyc.gov/html/adulted/html/plain/plain_language.shtml
- ❑ Search: Visible and Simple, Nielson, 2001
<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20010513.html>
- ❑ Research-Based Web Design and Usability Guidelines
<http://www.usability.gov/pdfs/guidelines.html>
- ❑ Use Common Content, Terminology and Placement
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/managing_content/organizing/common_content.shtml

Summary of Resources

continued

- ❑ Guidelines for Accessible and Usable Web, Theofanos and Reddish
<http://www.redish.net/content/papers/interactions.html>
- ❑ "Web Accessibility – The Power of Five"
<http://www.headstar.com/eablive/?p=183>
- ❑ Usability Requirements Toolkit (CISUR)
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/usability/cisur.shtml>
- ❑ Free e-Newsletters on Good Web Design:
UseIt: <http://www.useit.com/alertbox/subscribe.html>
UIEtips: <http://www.uie.com/uietips/>
HFI UI Design Newsletter: <http://humanfactors.com/downloads/subscribe.asp>

Appendix 1: Accessibility Resources

General Accessibility

- ❑ WebAIM: Introduction to Web Accessibility
<http://www.webaim.org/intro/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Articles
<http://www.webaim.org/articles/>
- ❑ Jim Thatcher: Web Accessibility: What Not to Do
<http://www.jimthatcher.com/whatnot.htm>
- ❑ 456 Berea Street: Accessibility Myths and Misconceptions
http://www.456bereastreet.com/archive/200505/accessibility_myths_and_misconceptions/

Learning about Section 508

- ❑ U.S. Access Board: Section 508 Standards
<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/standards.htm>
- ❑ U.S. Access Board: Interpreting Web-based Intranet and Internet Information and Applications Standards
<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/1194.22.htm>

Appendix 1: Accessibility Resources

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

- ❑ W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (W3C WAI): WCAG 1.0
- ❑ <http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/>
- ❑ W3C WAI: Checklist of Checkpoints for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0
- ❑ <http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/full-checklist.html>

Specific Disabilities

- ❑ Section508.gov: Assistive Technology (AT) Showcase
<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=87>
- ❑ WebAIM: Auditory Disabilities <http://www.webaim.org/articles/auditory/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Cognitive Disabilities
<http://www.webaim.org/articles/cognitive/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Motor Disabilities
<http://www.webaim.org/articles/motor/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Seizure Disorder (Neurological Disabilities)
<http://www.webaim.org/articles/seizure/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Visual Disabilities
<http://www.webaim.org/articles/visual/>
- ❑ Dive into Accessibility: Tips by Disability
http://diveintoaccessibility.org/by_disability.html
- ❑ Trace Center: Screen Magnification and the Web
http://www.doit.wisc.edu/accessibility/video/screen_magnification.asp

Appendix 1: Accessibility Resources

Accessibility Tips and Tools

- ❑ Accessify
- ❑ <http://www.accessify.com/>
- ❑ Colorblind Web Page Filter
- ❑ <http://colorfilter.wickline.org/?j=1;t=g>
- ❑ Trace Center: Photosensitive Epilepsy Analysis Tool (PEAT)
- ❑ <http://trace.wisc.edu/peat/>
- ❑ WebAIM: Resources
- ❑ <http://www.webaim.org/resources/>

Next Steps: What You Can Do Now

- Understand the requirements
- Figure out what you've already done (use checklists)
- Sort the rest into two piles:
 - Things you can do quickly—do them!
 - Things that may take awhile—start the process
- Focus on improvements with biggest impact:
 - Get your top task right—then work on others
 - Get rid of irrelevant content
 - Re-write top pages in plain language
 - Do SEO on top pages
- Be strategic and show leadership—be proactive, not reactive

Thank You

Questions?

HowTo.gov

HowTo.gov Helping agencies deliver a great customer experience

A - Z Index Contact Us About Us Site Policies

HOME WEB CONTENT SOCIAL MEDIA CONTACT CENTERS TECH SOLUTIONS COMMUNITIES CUSTOMER SERVICE

What is HowTo.gov?

HowTo.gov is a resource for government workers to find and share guidance, best practices, new ideas, common challenges, lessons learned, and successes – all toward the goal of improving customer service across the federal government. [Learn more about HowTo.gov.](#)

Web Content

Federal web requirements, content management, usability, analytics, accessibility, web writing, search...

Social Media

Terms of Service agreements, new media, policies, video, social networks, blogs, challenges & contests...

Contact Centers

Maximize customer self-service

Tech Solutions

Cloud computing, mobile, user data, search

TRAINING

- Jan 6 [Meeting Federal Web Requirements](#)
- Jan 23-26 [Delivering Great Customer Service](#)
- Feb 23 [Proven Strategies for Readable Content: The Content Manager's Playbook](#)

[view all training »](#)

CONVERSATIONS

- GSA [GovNewMedia](#) O'Reilly on what lies ahead for Gov 2.0 [j.mp/gbrqbm](#)
- GSA [GovNewMedia](#) HOW TO: Use Social Media to Create Better Customer Experiences [j.mp/hbM3Z4](#)
- GSA [GovNewMedia](#) RT @JohnFMoore RT @MIsif: Worth a read: RSS Is Dying, and You Should Be Very Worried [bit.ly/gLbUaI](#)

[View all tweets](#)

NEWS

- Guidance on Plain Writing Act
- 2011 Annual Conference early-bird

Contact Information

Center for Customer Service Excellence(GSA)

Sheila Campbell

Director

sheila.campbell@gsa.gov

202-208-5588

Nicole Burton

User Experience Evangelist

nicole.burton@gsa.gov

202-219-0820