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Basic rules on Web Design

In every design there are basic rules to consider. For a web design, here are a few of the rules which you can take or break for your projects.

1 > Viewers do not want to scroll horizontally.

As a personal experience, I find it really annoying to have to scroll the page to the right just to be able to read the whole content of the page. People should not be put to the task of having to pick their mouse and move the web page over to the right so as to see what's hiding over there.

It's easier to scroll down a page than to scroll horizontally. One designer suggests checking out your web pages at resolutions of 640 x 480, 800 x 600, and 1024 x 768 to avoid scrolling the page to your right. It doesn't matter that the majority of monitors nowadays come preset at 800 x 600. You never know when one of your audiences would have a monitor with the lowest denominator, and then have that potential client go to a competitor just because he or she also hates scrolling to the right.

2 > Have more than three screenfuls of information... not.

Having to scroll horizontally for the rest of the information is annoying, but it is also not fun either to have to scroll down the page forever just to be able to get the whole information.

The rule: one web page shouldn't require a viewer to page down more than three screens. Of it is more than that then you better go back to the drawing board and re-design your screens.

But you should also consider that people will definitely scroll if the content is king. As one designer puts it, "You just need to balance content and nuisance factor with having to click through on links."

3 > One web page should weigh in at no more than 50k.

If all of us would be able to obey the rules what a wonderful world this would be. But we should also be considerate of the fact that there are gray areas. Nothing is quite cut and dried. It would be lovely to have a web page that doesn't take so long to download. It only takes about seven seconds to make a good first impression on the web.

However, there are times when you really need to put those large graphics and images. This is especially true for photographers. They need to have large pictures and photos in their pages to be able to convince viewers of their capabilities. Just a word of advice: do not bloat your web pages unnecessarily. It is still better to have viewers tinkering on your site than to have them go to another just because it takes a hundred years to download your pages.

4 > Do not force your viewers to download plug-ins.

This is another thing that bugs me aside from the scrolling horizontally. And that is to download a plug-in so that I'll be able to view whatever it is I would like to view.

True, plug-ins can give that extra "wow!" to your interactive website. But always remember that not everybody has plug-ins although we're in the advanced technology age. To accommodate every one of your potential clients, think about creating an HTML alternative.