

CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 641 – AMENDED TO INDICATE PUBLICATION IS A REPRINT

February 12, 2007

TO: Printing/Publishing Officials and Web Representatives of the Federal Government

SUBJECT: Rider Requisitions for reprints of the *Research-Based Web Design and Usability Guidelines*

The U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) is now accepting Rider Orders for reprints of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and U.S. General Services Administration publication, *Research-Based Web Design and Usability Guidelines*. This book will be printed in color and is expected to be available in April 2007—see page two of this notice for a more detailed description about the book.

Please forward this notice to colleagues at your Agency or Department who work in the areas of Web communications, management, design, and development.

The estimated Rider Rate for this publication is between \$6 - \$10 per copy, which applies to single destination, local delivery. Mailing charges, if incurred, will be added to your account. Requisitions should be forwarded to Agency Publishing Services, Requisition Section, Stop CSA, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20401, by **February 26, 2007**. Please be sure to indicate GPO Jacket No. 332-881 on your requisition. Field or regional activities should coordinate their requirements with their Washington, DC, area headquarters' printing officers before submitting any paperwork.

If you have any questions, please contact your GPO Agency Publishing Specialist or call Agency Publishing Services, Team 1 on 202-512-0319.

Sincerely,  
JIM BRADLEY  
Managing Director, Customer Services

Enclosure

# Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Updated 2006 book provides latest research-based guidance for building best-in-class Web sites

Although recent findings show the public increasingly interacting with government Web sites, a common problem is that people can't find what they're looking for. In other words, the sites lack usability. The *Research-Based Web Design and Usability Guidelines* aid in correcting this problem by providing the latest Web design guidance from the research and forms of evidence.

This unique publication has been updated from its earlier version to include over 40 new or updated research guidelines, bringing the total to 209. Primary audiences for the book are: Web managers, designers, and all staff involved in the creation of Web sites. Topics in the book include: home page design, page and site navigation, graphics and images, effective Web content writing, and search. A new section on usability testing guidance has been added.

Experts from across government, industry, and academia have reviewed and contributed to the development of the *Guidelines*. And, since their introduction in 2003, the *Guidelines* have been widely used by government, private, and academic institutions to improve Web design.



Each guideline offers:

- A brief statement of the guideline.
- Comments that further explain the research/supporting information.
- Technical and/or research reports supporting the guideline.
- A score indicating the 'Strength of Evidence' that supports the guideline. These scores range from 'Strong Research Support,' indicating that there is at least one formal, rigorous study with contextual validity and agreement among experts to 'Weak Research,' indicating limited evidence and disagreement among experts.
- A score indicating the 'Relative Importance' of the guideline to the overall success of a Web site. These scores range from 1-5 and are intended to help guide you in prioritizing the implementation of these guidelines.
- One or more graphic example of the guideline in practice.

72

## 8:1 Eliminate Horizontal Scrolling

Relative Importance: 32500  
Strength of Evidence: 32500

**Guideline:** Use an appropriate page layout to eliminate the need for users to scroll horizontally.

**Comments:** Horizontal scrolling is a slow and tedious way to view an entire screen. Common page layouts including fluid and left-justified may require some users to scroll horizontally if their monitor resolution or size is smaller than that used by designers.

**Sources:** Bernard and Larsen, 2001; Lynch and Horton, 2002; Nilsen and Tahir, 2002; Spyridakis, 2000; Williams, 2000.

**Example:**

640 x 400  
Note the scroll bar

800 x 600  
Note the scroll bar

These Web pages require users to scroll horizontally

Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines

Book Specs: Soft cover, Size - 6.5 x 9.5 inches, 294 pages, 4 color

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