

#09. Design: content and usability



University of Bergamo
Master Course in Project and
Management of Tourism Systems
Academic Year 2021-2022
IT for Tourism Services

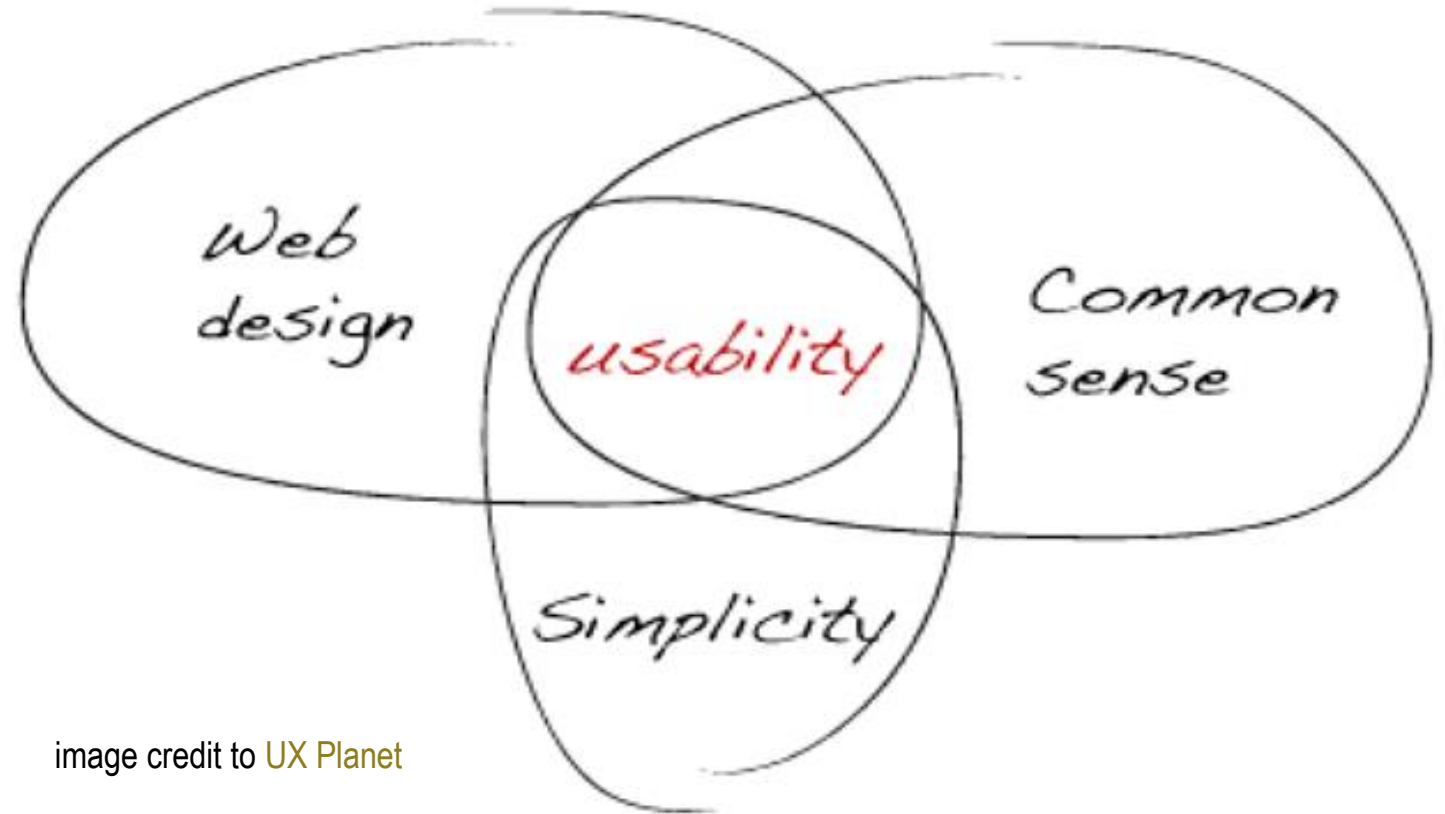


image credit to [UX Planet](#)

What are we talking about this time?



1. Design
2. Content: managers and users
3. Copyright
4. Creative Commons
5. Usability and navigation
6. Gamification and storytelling
7. VR vs. AR

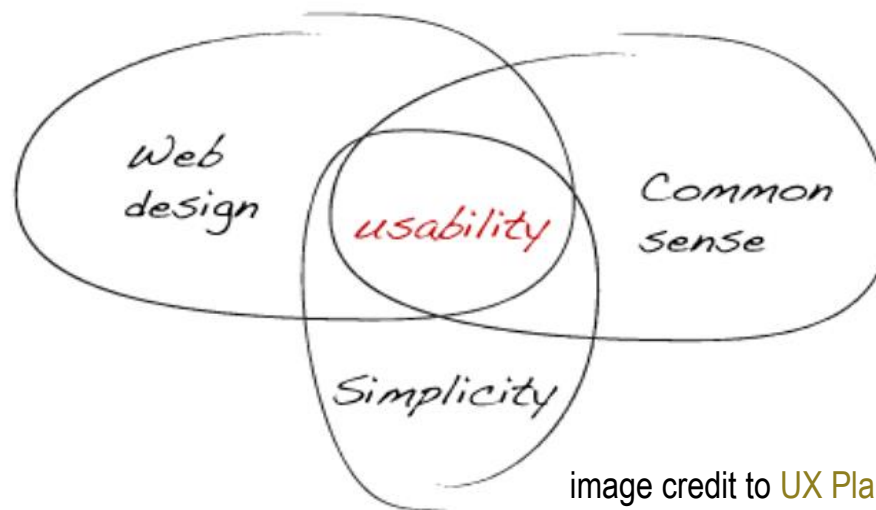
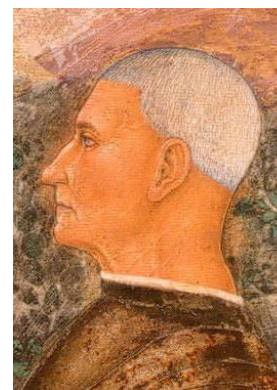
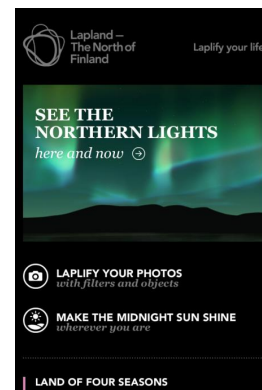
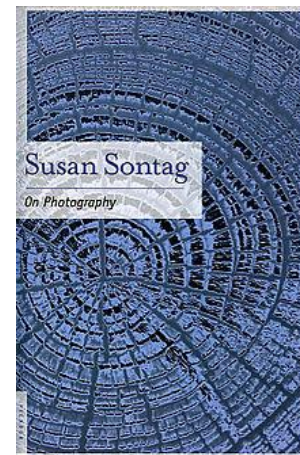


image credit to UX Planet





**“DESIGN IS A FUNNY WORD. SOME PEOPLE
THINK DESIGN MEANS HOW IT LOOKS. BUT OF
COURSE, IF YOU DIG DEEPER, IT’S REALLY HOW
IT WORKS.”**

STEVE JOBS

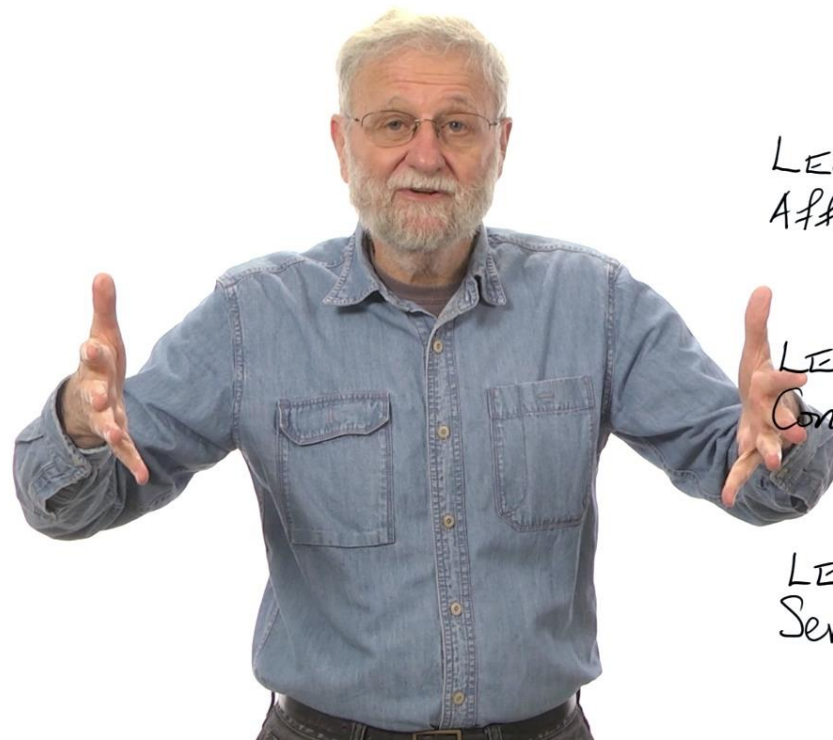
© Lifehack Quotes

Don Norman, again



“How it works”... Doesn't this sound a bit like our definition of **model**?

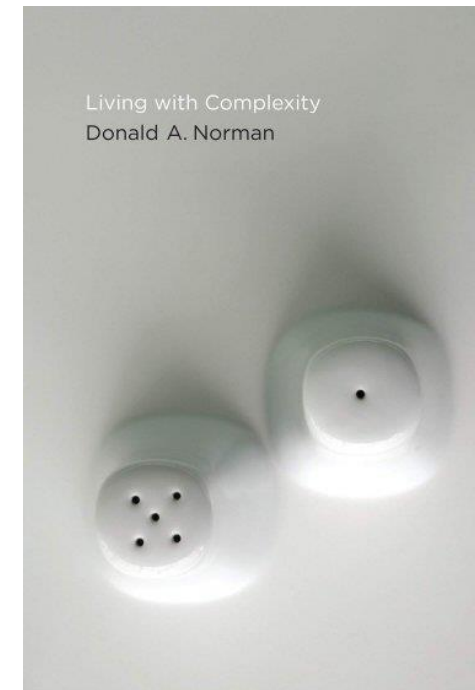
“A conceptual model is **the underlying belief structure** held by a person about **how something works.**” – Donald A. Norman, “Living with Complexity”, 2011



LESSON 1
Affordances & Signifiers

LESSON 2
Conceptual Models

LESSON 3
Seven Stages of Action



“How it works”

The word “design” is currently referred to appearance. For instance, here’s how a Design Museum in Milan is published on the Web.

It is most important, instead, underline that every “design object” has resulted from an industrial process, where “how it works” is the core.

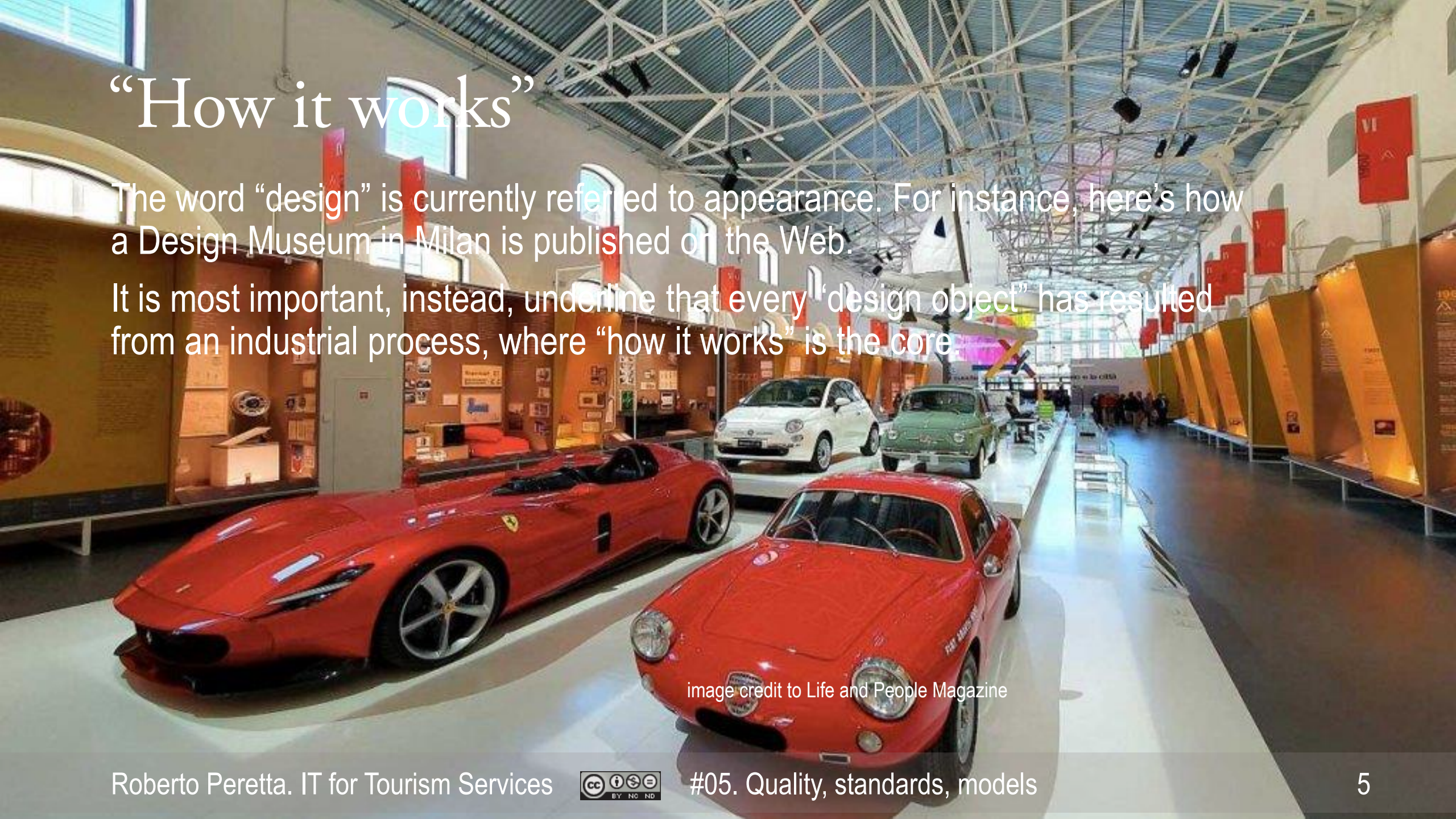


image credit to Life and People Magazine

Design in practice

Suppose we are part of a DMO (Destination Management Organization) or at least work for a DMO, as hopefully you will.

When we **build** our destination's web presence – the website, the app, any digital communication product – we may run the risk of producing something that **appeals** to us but was in fact **not** really **designed**.

We may be producing something that is **not** really **meant to perform its task**, but only to appeal, like – as Don Norman's example goes – Starck's Alessi juicer.

So, how do we design our content?



Content is what we show of our entity



image credit to Fraser Clements. Courtesy of Tourism New Zealand

Content



Designing **tourism content** may be regarded as something easy: just read a guidebook or a brochure, re-write or edit the text, and publish...

Wrong. The managers of a **tourism entity** should think of a number of additional questions as far as their web **content** is concerned. Among these questions are

- the managers' own **tasks**, on a short term as well as on a medium term
- their **stakeholders' needs**, which may vary in **time**
- their **operators' needs** (webmasters, content producers, social media managers)
- their **users' needs**, which vary in time and according to market segments
- time – mainly intended as tourism **seasons** and events' span

Which content should be published, to satisfy these different needs?

Content & managers



Our lectures already took us to the point of evaluating quality. So, we might ask ourselves how can we evaluate the **quality** of the **content** of the web presence of a tourism entity.

For instance, could the entity's **managers** feel happy about the content they're publishing in their websites and their social presence?

Please consider that the managers' **satisfaction** depends on their **tasks**... Which **tasks** have they undertaken?

Can we, as evaluators, find **sources** about the tasks they have undertaken?



image credit to [Hugh Riley](#)

Content & users



Another question we may ask ourselves when evaluating the **quality of content** published by a tourism entity is about the **users' satisfaction**.

This question should be answered by **interviewing** users and analysing **in time** how tourists behave on the spot.

But when we lack these opportunities, what can we do to evaluate the quality of the content?

Well, we can **pretend to be** tourists ourselves... and pretend to belong to other segments than ours: families with kids, impaired people, visiting groups...



Information needs



Other likely questions deal with specific content topics. Admittedly, answers here can depend on [personal judgment](#). Yet, a reasonable balance can be kept.

Questions like these may concern:

1. Information itself. Is [text](#) content clear and sufficient?
2. Media. Is [multimedia](#) content clear and sufficient?
3. Links. Does the website provide useful [external links](#)?



image credit to [The Ohio State University Pressbooks](#)

Emotions and appeal



An approach to content based on descriptions of **attractions** may, however, not be enough.






This point has become particularly clear after **Pine and Gilmore** have published their studies on the role of experience and **emotion** in customers' satisfaction.

As a consequence, stating the quality of the content of the web presence of a tourism entity must also involve considering

- the communication of **events** like concerts, exhibitions, fairs and the like – which attract tourists emotionally – and
- the way in which attractions are communicated: is it “**warm**” or “**cold**”?

Events



| <i>Music and Festivals</i> | <i>Exhibitions</i> | <i>Theatre and Dance</i> | |
|--|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| 19.01.2016 DUO XL The indispensable tuba player Sérgio Carolino and the unmistakable pianist and composer Telmo Marques between them form Duo XL, through which the close personal... | 30.01.2016 Manuel de Oliveira, Jorge Pardo e Carles Benavent x | 30.01.2016 ORELHA NEGRA DJs Cruzfader, Fred, João Gomes, Sam The Kid and Francisco Rebelo have been working on their latest songs in the studio and preparing this show without revealin... | 18.02.2016 Carla Pires With a remarkable stage presence, Carla Pires has an innate talent for captivating an audience. Her concerts are intense, the result of great talent and the ent... |
| | | | More  |

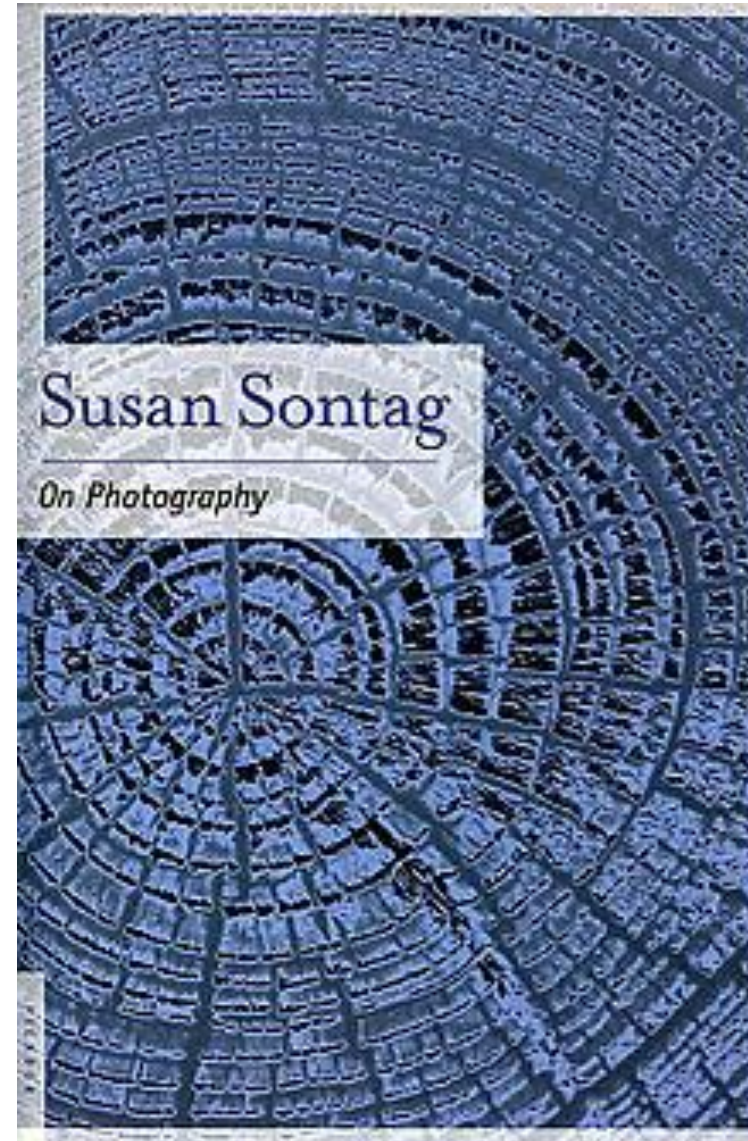
“Warm” or “cold” that their communication may be, the availability of information on scheduled events is certainly crucial for the quality of the content.

Pictures

As for **media content**, a fundamental role is played by pictures. Are they relevant? Do they emotion? Do they inform?

As early as in 1977 in her “On Photography” Susan Sontag pointed out that

“Photography has become one of the principal devices for **experiencing** something, for giving an **appearance** of participation.”

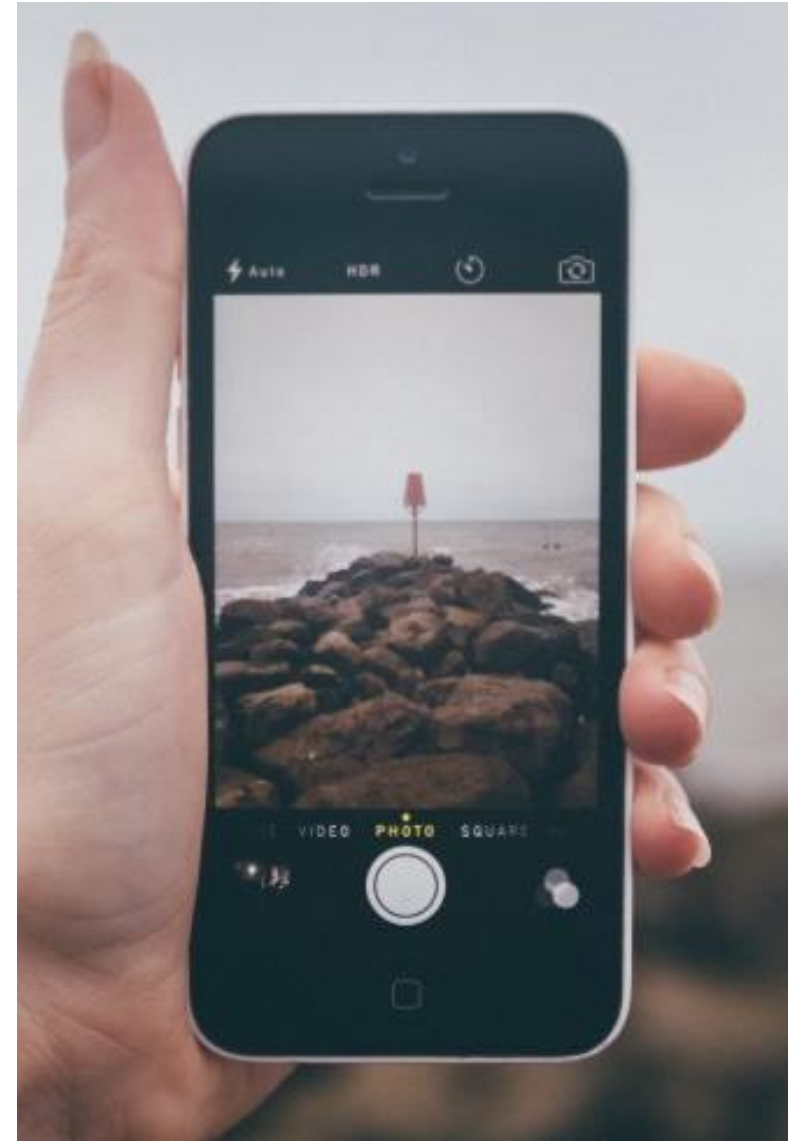


Mass pictures

The number of pictures produced has **increased** exponentially since smartphones have incorporated a reasonably good **camera**.

Technologies have made taking pictures very **simple**. **Problems** like shutter speed, exposure or depth of field are now solved **automatically** or exponentially simplified.

Since **Flick'r** was launched in 2004, **sharing** pictures has become everybody's custom.



Moving images



Moving images have also become extremely popular, but producing quality moving images is much more complicated than producing pictures.

Sharing videos – typically on [YouTube](#), a community created in 2005 and acquired by Google in 2006 – is obviously [easy](#), but the [quality level](#) socially [required](#) today is much [higher](#) than for pictures.

Let's consider a typical software [interface](#) to produce a video...



Working with moving images



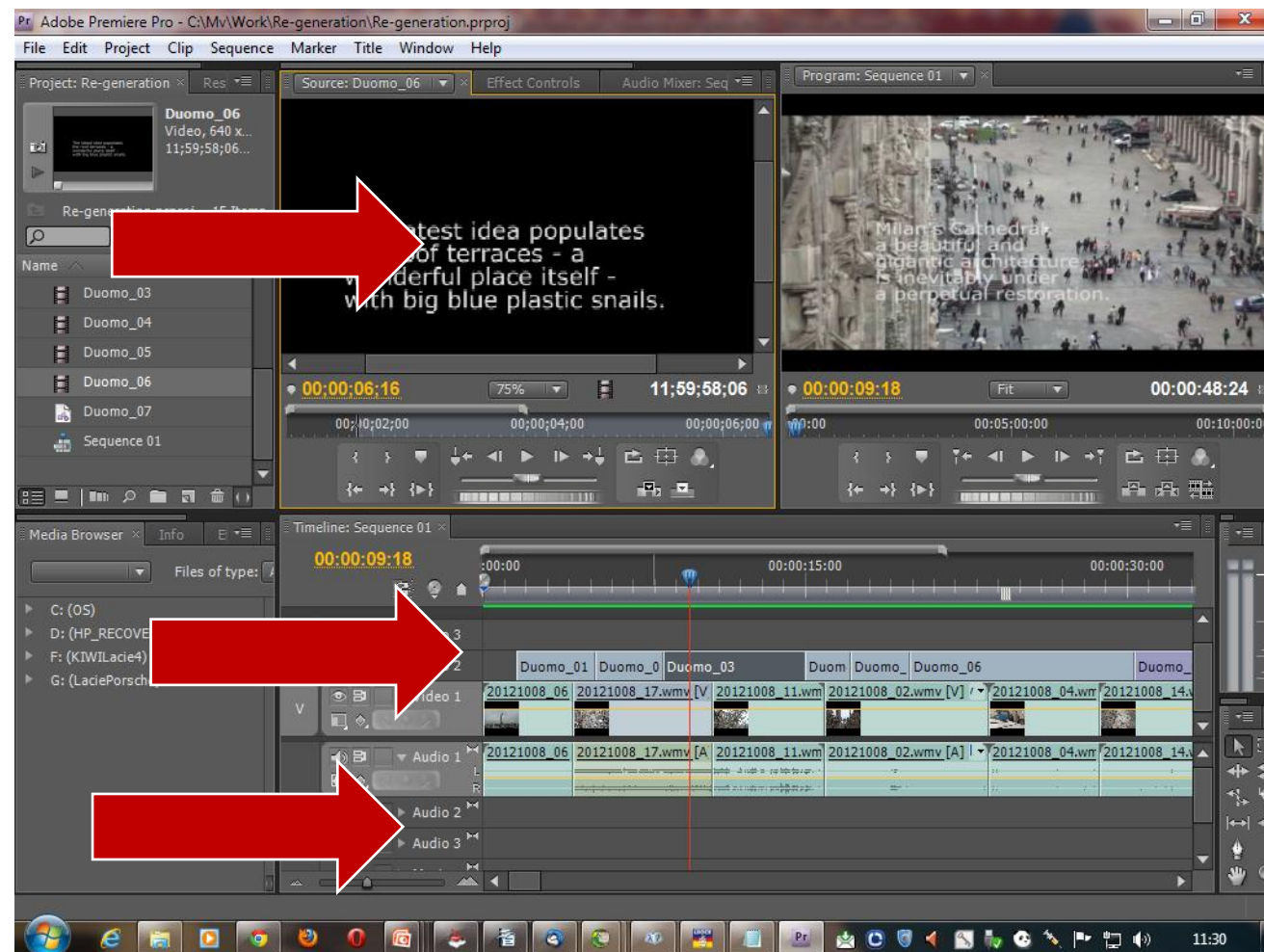
We do not only have to shoot a video.

We also must edit it,

- provide titles,
- very frequently also subtitles,
- and a soundtrack.

(Examples from Adobe Premiere)

These operations are not all always needed. Nearly always...



Downloadable material



Another content option concerns digital “gifts”.

Downloadable material is in fact a useful plus to attract the users’ **attention** and provide them with **information** – which can be interactive and even **gamified**.

Downloading is itself a bit of a game...

Download our free PDF travel guide

[Download Now!](#)

Get the guide in your language

 English  Deutsch

Powered by [ArrivalGuides](#)

Copyright



Another crucial question – strictly connected with **content** – is a **legal** one.

Does the official website declare the involved copyrights?

As you may know, copyright concerns the **intellectual property** of a product (a song, a poem, a piece of software, a new type of wash basin...) that someone has created.

In a word – if we've written a best seller, we wouldn't be happy if someone reprints it, and earn money from the copies sold...

Copyright & Open Source



According to international laws, we **cannot** take a picture from someone else's website, and **publish** it on our website. Why? Because that picture is not ours, while our website is! (BTW, this is the reason why pictures in these presentations, which are not world renowned logos or are not the property of your lecturer, carry a declaration of their source.)

Interestingly enough, it has been suggested that the **property** of a **pen you bought** differs from the property of a **poem** you wrote. A poem is significant inasmuch as it is **shared**. (BTW, this may be seen as the basis of the **open source** model.)

Creative Commons



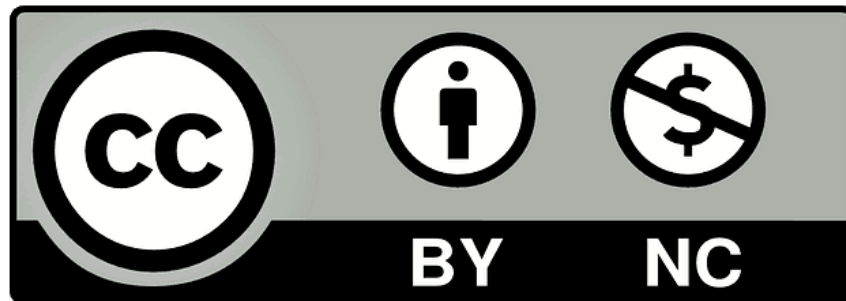
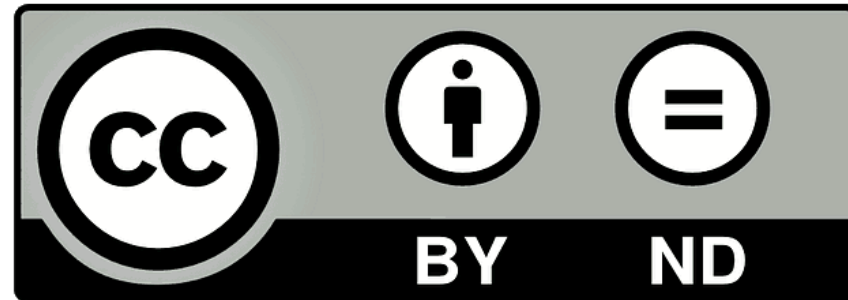
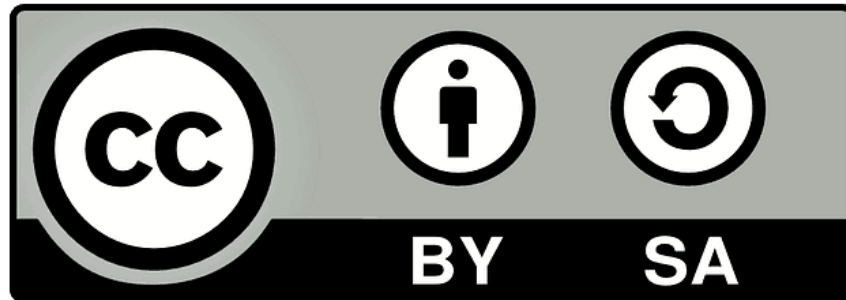
In a shared world like the Web, copyright has always been a problem.

A sort of “right to copy” has always been perceived as assured on the Web – think of Wikipedia, from which you can copy whatever you want.

The most serious attempt to contribute a solution to this problem has been run by **Creative Commons**.

The infrastructure provided by Creative Commons consists of a set of copyright licenses and tools that create a balance inside the traditional “All Rights Reserved” setting that copyright law creates.

Creative Commons licenses



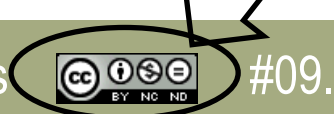
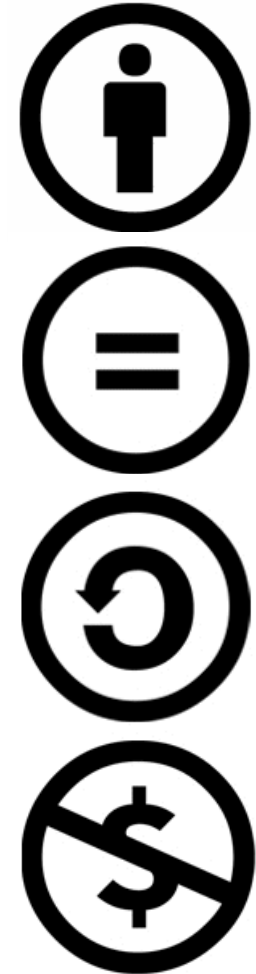
Creative Commons in short



In short, if we adopt Creative Commons, we can decide whether

- we allow a **free reproduction** of our product (picture, video, text) by someone else, provided that the original **creator is mentioned**
- we allow a free reproduction as above, but **do not allow** our product to be **transformed**, edited, adapted etc.
- we allow a free reproduction as above, and also **allow** our product be **transformed**, edited, adapted etc.
- we allow a free reproduction as above, but do not allow it to be **resold** anyway

By the way, these presentations adopt a Creative Commons licence



Monopolies



More generally speaking – beyond the content question – we might observe that the Web, despite its open-source origins and a persistent open-source approach, is currently run by de facto monopolies like

- **Google** for search engines and web maps
- **Facebook** (Instagram and WhatsApp included) for social networking
- **Apple** for stylish mobility, graphic art, and music
- **Microsoft** for operating systems

... though this is a harsh simplification, as the cases of **iOS** and **Android** show.

Think, on the other hand, of how important are for all of us some de-facto-monopoly open-source initiatives like **Wikipedia**.

Bottlenecks



For professionals like us, it is particularly important to acknowledge that the Web is **not** a completely free world, and always keep in touch with what will be going on
Bottlenecks have been – and are still – always possible.

Think for instance of

- other sorts of monopolies like **telecoms** and their fares, or of
- the effective availability of **wi-fi** hot spots, or of
- government **censorship** in nondemocratic countries.

Web servers – as you certainly know – can be managed in order to stop some websites from being reachable by users in a specific territory...
and, on the other hand, **social sharing** is a legal problem, too.

Sharing



The most common action we perform on the Web every day is **sharing**, that is putting our **UGC** (or User-Generated Content) in someone else's database.

- When we post on **Facebook**, we put **our own creation** in some of Mark Zuckerberg's databases and **present** it to him.
- When we post comments on entities published by **Google Maps** we put **our own creation** in some of Larry Page's or Sergey Brin's databases and **present** it to them.
- When we comment on **TripAdvisor**, we put **our own creation** in some of the Liberty Media Corporation's databases and **present** it to them.
- When we post on **YouTube** we put **our own creation** in some of Larry Page's or Sergey Brin's databases and **present** it to them.

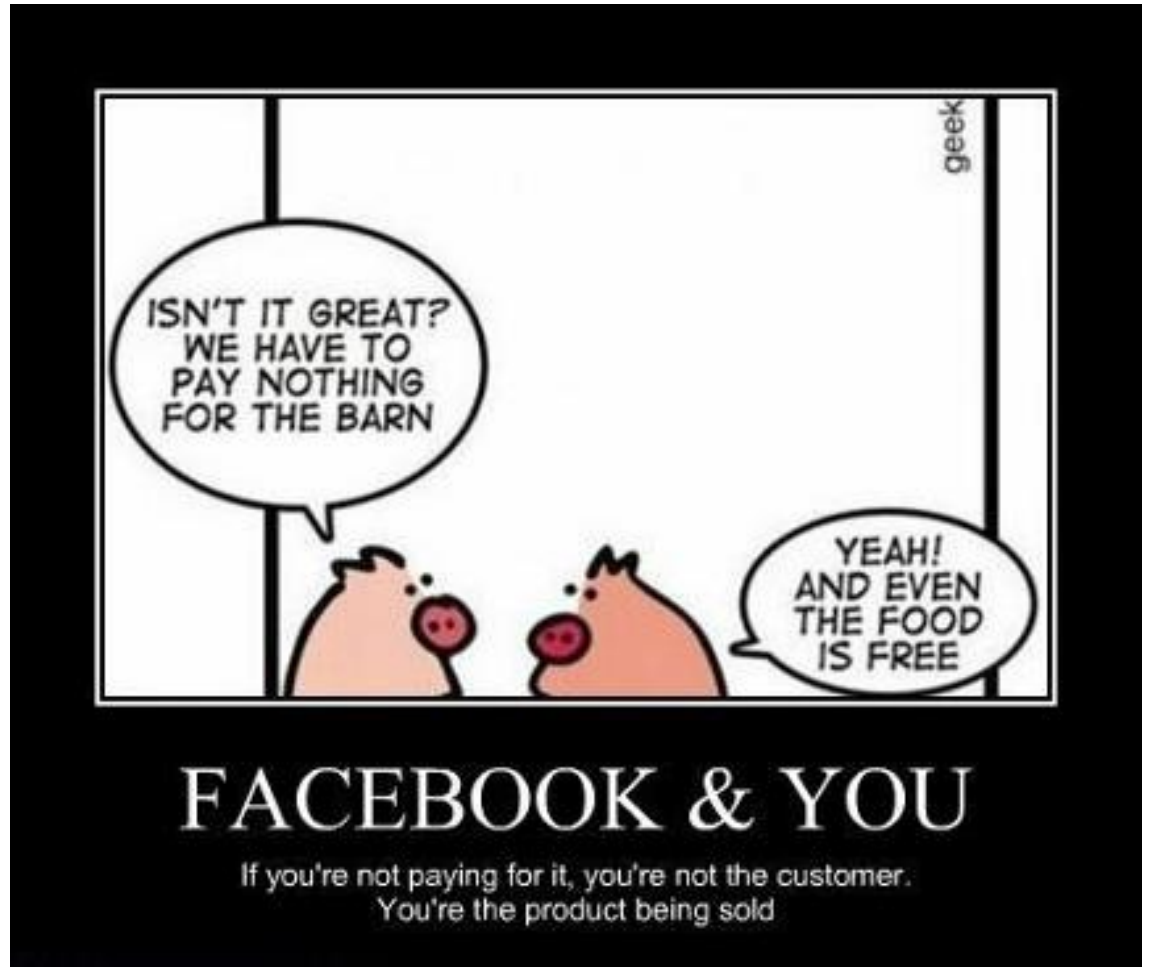
“You’re the product”



Evgenij Morozov, a writer and researcher from Belarus who studies political and social implications of technology, reportedly said as early as in 2012 that

“If you are not paying for it, you’re not the customer; you’re the product being sold”

Source: MediaLaws



Our presents



We accept to make these presents – and accept to give our copyrights away – because sharing is certainly useful and easy.

Nonetheless, we have to be well aware of what we do.



Usability?



According to Wikipedia, usability is “the extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a specified context of use.”

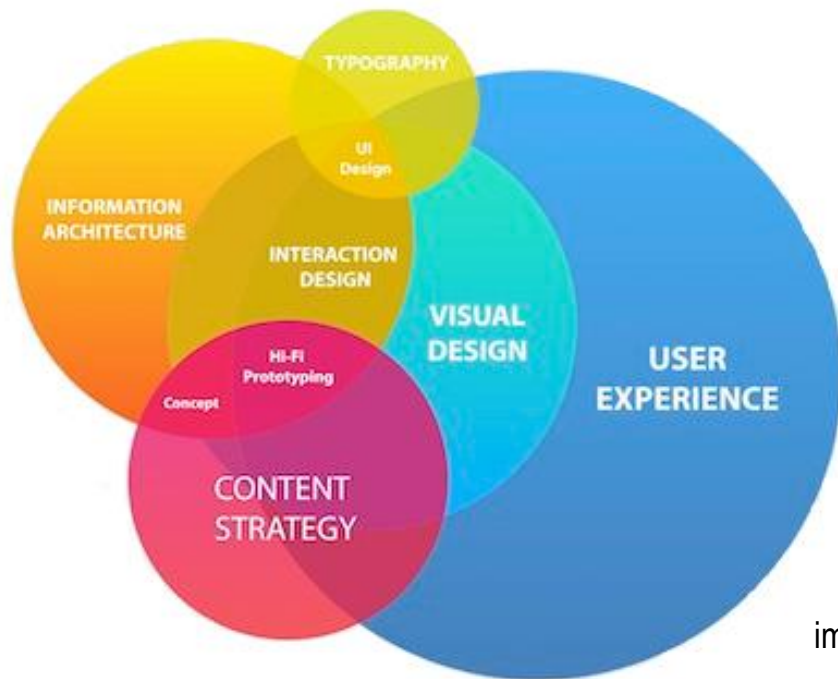


image credit to iwos.com



Usability!



Web usability can be technically and informatically measured. In a nutshell, however, design problems about usability deal with situations where website's visitors

- cannot find what they are looking for
- feel uncertain: “what should I do?”
- stop and get lost
- feel like losing control
- feel exploited



image credit to [Just Thoughts](#)

Not only web usability



Usability does not refer to web interfaces only, of course.

Don Norman provides an interesting case of **lacking usability**, a problem that are people to solve.



Taking a train in Busto Arsizio



An urbanist designed an unusable patch of greenery. People hurrying towards the railway station invariably walk through it. A new passage is born. Social design...

A step in Milan tells the story

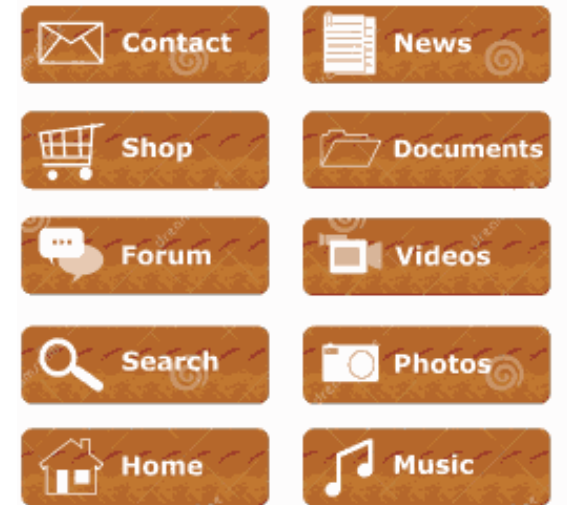


The City of Milan designed a wrong patch of greenery. The Milanese walked through it. The City accepted, and built a passage. But the step still reveals the original mistake.

Navigation



According to Wikipedia, web navigation refers to “the process of navigating a network of information resources in the World Wide Web, which is organized as a hypertext or hypermedia. The user interface that is used to do so is called a web **browser**. A central theme in web design is the development of a **web navigation interface** that maximizes **usability**.”



The first condition to be checked while evaluating the quality of any web navigation is whether a **menu** is always available in every page of the website, and always in the same position.

However, other conditions may also – or rather should – be considered.

image credit to [Dreamstime](#)

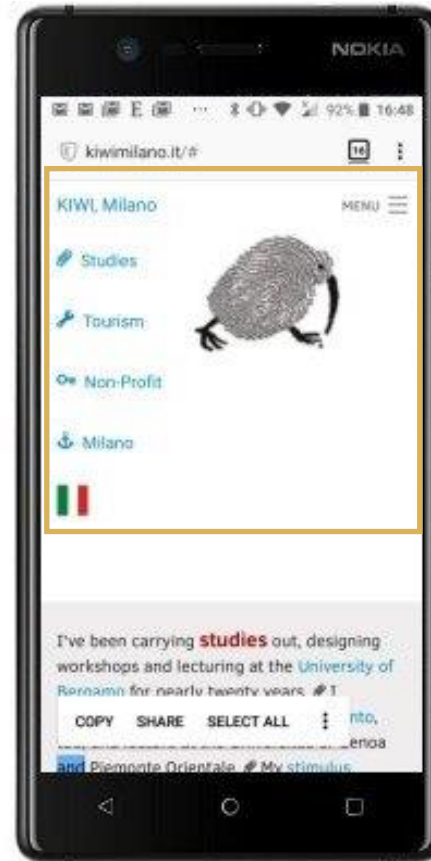
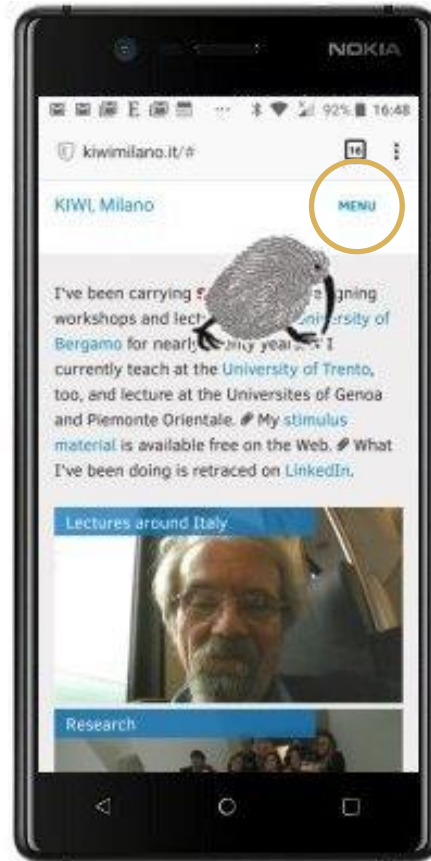
Mobile menu usability



Navigation usability is particularly crucial in smartphones.

The **menu** must be **openable**, and **reachable** when **scrolling** down.

(In this example the logo scrolls, too.)



Breadcrumbs



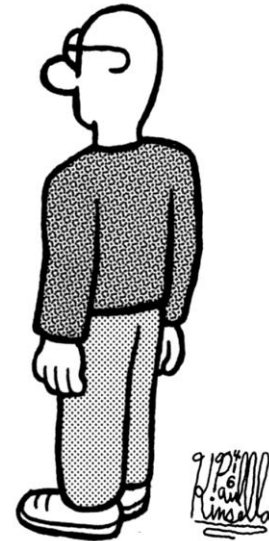
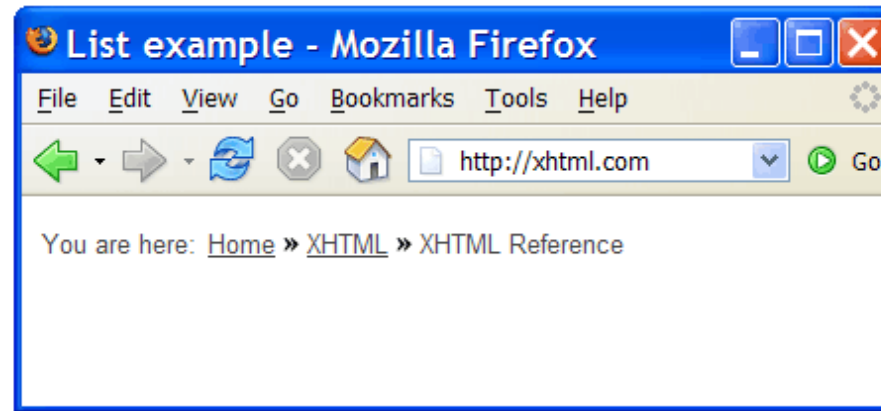
If you remember a previous slide in this presentation, you know that a situation to be avoided is making your web visitor feel lost while visiting your website.

A widely used solution are **breadcrumbs**.

The term comes from the **trail** of breadcrumbs left by Hänsel and Gretel in the popular fairy tale.



image credit to [SEO Werkz](#)



Kiwi breadcrumbs



100% PURE NEW ZEALAND

Italy | Sign In | Sign up | Your Trip | Search

Destinations | Things to do | Facts about New Zealand | Getting here | Getting around | Accommodation

Rotorua
You are here Home > Destinations > North Island > Rotorua

Champagne Pool, Rotorua

Champagne Pool, Rotorua

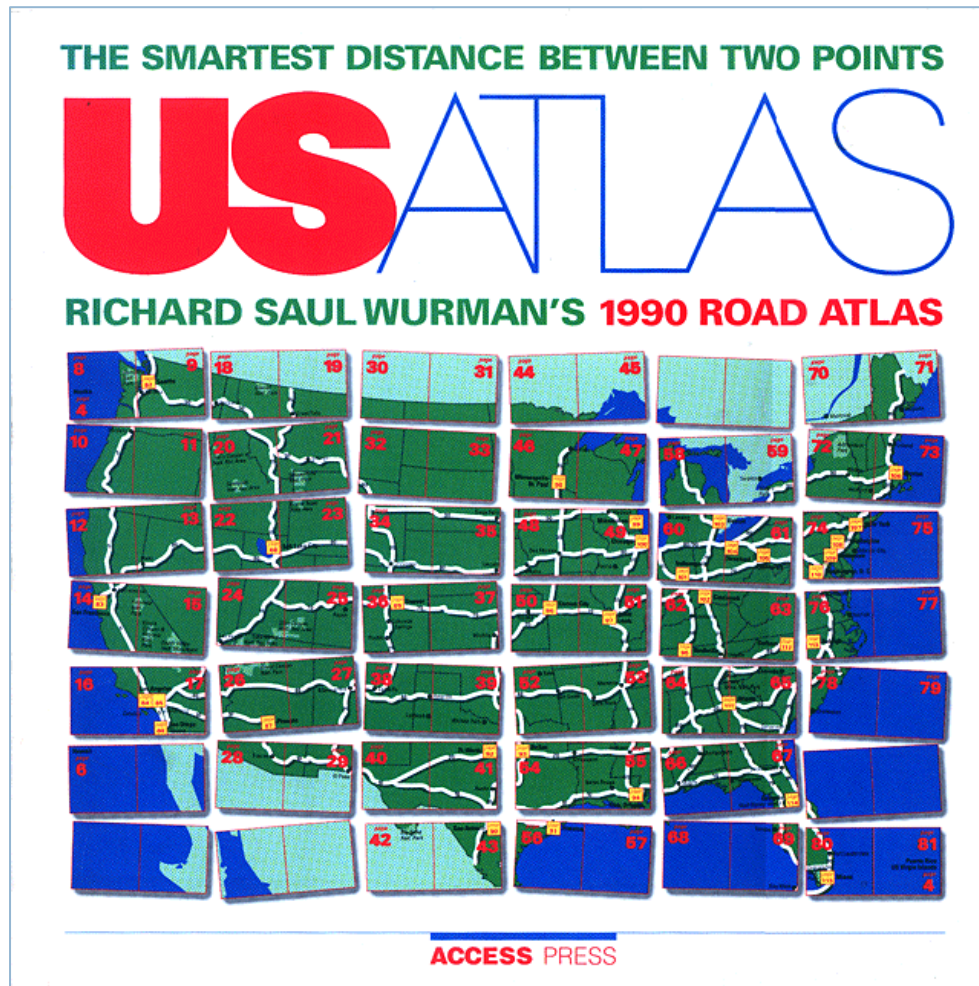
Rotorua
You are here Home > Destinations > North Island > Rotorua

Rotorua - the place of fascinating Māori culture, hot springs and boiling mud pools. No visit to New Zealand

In this section

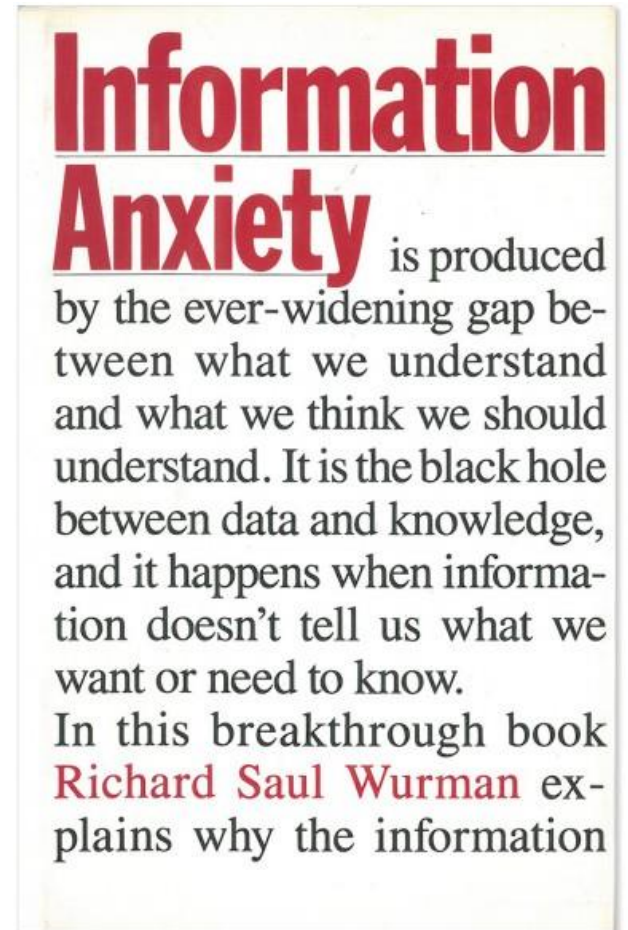
Pictures' **titles** are another usability solution. They appear when **mouses hover** over pictures. They help made the webpage usable when the browser is instructed not to visualize pictures.

Information architecture



Let's take it more broadly, for a second. If we want to be sure that the **information** we provide and its **interface** are **usable**, we must have properly **designed** them.

How does information **work**?



Graphic design



The **perception** users have of a website depends very much on the **look-and-feel** of its template.



Logos



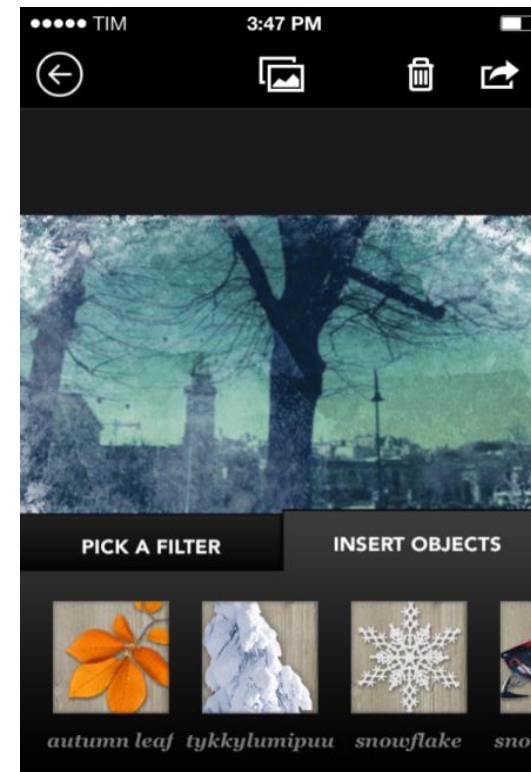
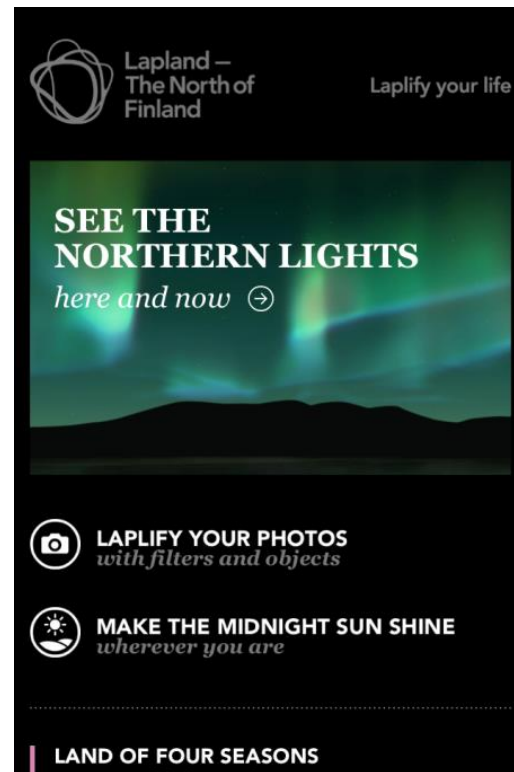
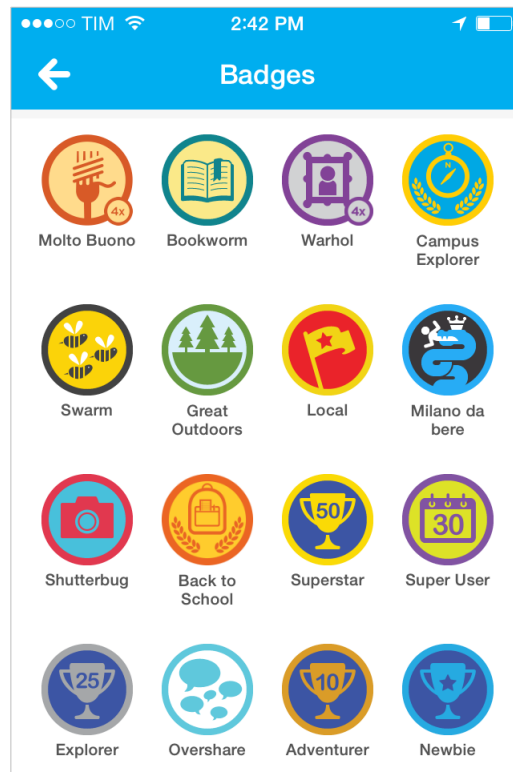
The **logo** of the tourism entity, as published on line, may be very relevant to its brand.
And a logo must be graphic! **Shapes**, not fonts...



Gamification



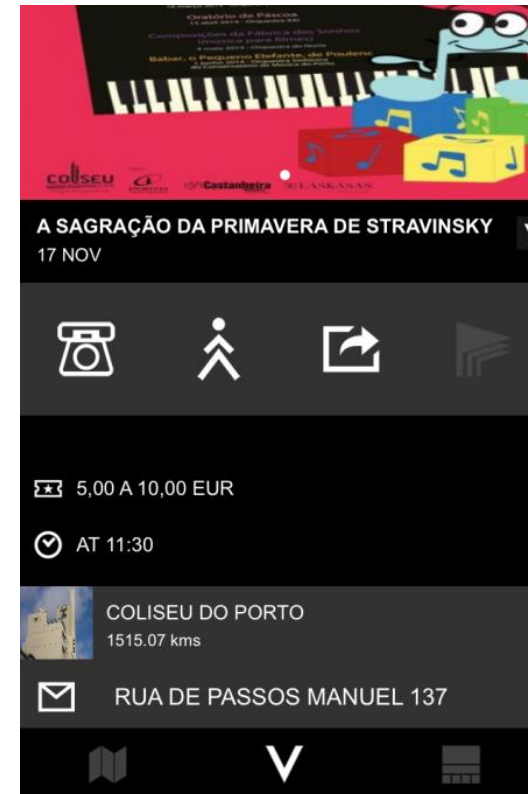
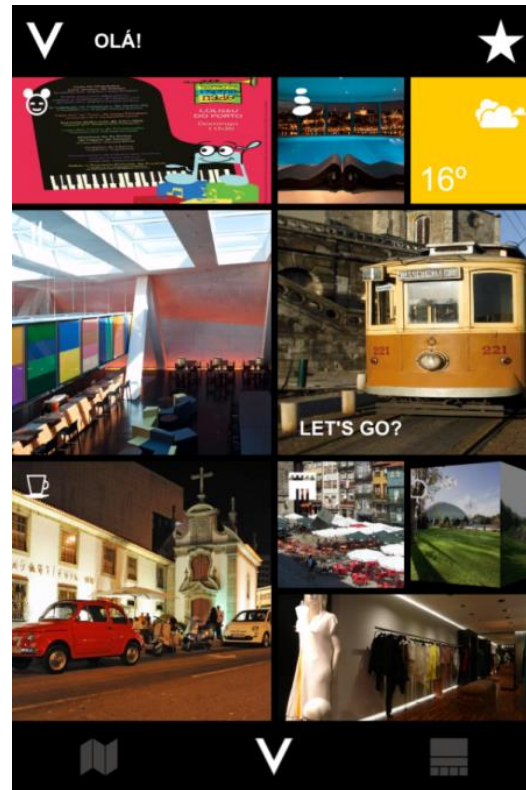
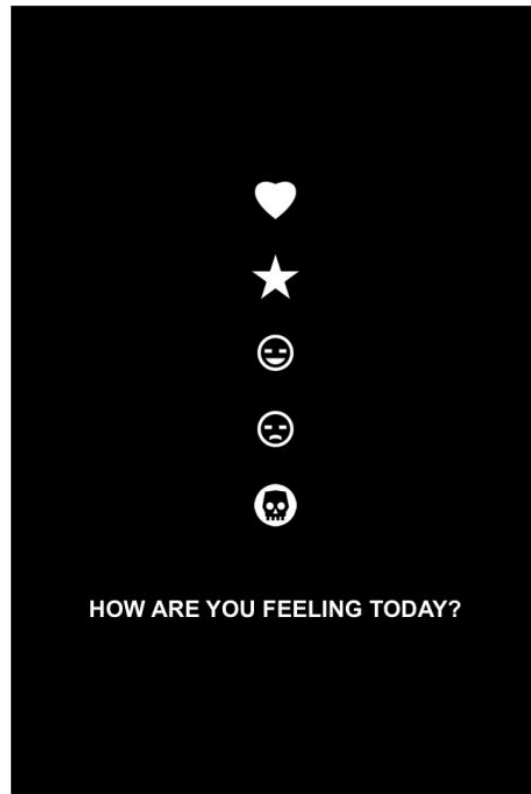
If we make people play, they're going to have fun – and are more likely to remember us in the future.



App gamification



An app made in Oporto advises according to the user's feeling.



Storytelling



If we tell a story, we're more likely to be listened by our audience, and we can well put into our story some recommendations to buy – or at least to visit.



Bartolomeo
Colleoni



Bergamo,
Colleoni Chapel



Malpaga,
Colleoni Castle

The story of Bartolomeo Colleoni can be told to introduce some POIs in Bergamo, and the town's history.

Augmented Reality (AR)



Augmented Reality (AR) is an interactive experience of a real-world environment where real objects – usually seen through a smartphone’s or a tablet’s camera – are “augmented” by computer-generated perceptual information.

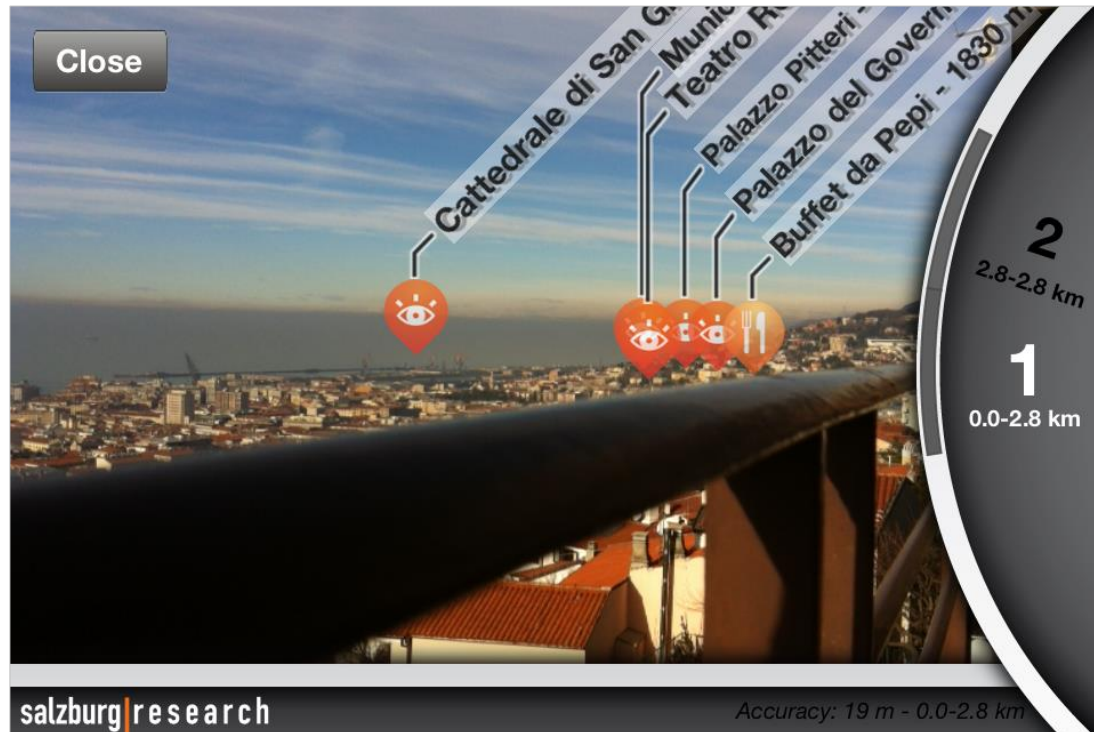
Its primary value is that it brings components of the digital world into a person’s perception of the real world, and does so through the integration of immersive sensations.



AR as gamification



TripWolf provides augmented reality, itself a sort of gamification. So do others.



Nokia AR in Bergamo



Augmented reality can be used to provide heritage interpretation. The example shows its association with geographic positioning.

AR and Wi-Fi



Note that this function is performed online only. Piazza Vecchia enjoys the Bergamo free Wi-Fi service.

Virtual Reality (VR)



To quote Wikipedia once again, “Virtual reality (VR) typically refers to computer technologies that use software to generate realistic images, sounds and other sensations that replicate a real environment (or create an imaginary setting), and simulate a user's physical presence in this environment, by enabling the user to interact with this space and any objects depicted therein using specialized display screens or projectors and other devices.”



VR and reality



image credit to Business in Vancouver



image credit to Karlskirche VR -Wien

VR for tourism

The Lord of the Rings, and the New Zealand Fiordland

Key points

1. Design is how things work
2. Never ask ourselves if we like our products
3. Never make our tourists uncomfortable
4. Information can/must be designed
5. Feel free to tell a story, but please check if it is true
6. Augmented reality adds to reality
7. Virtual is not so virtual, after all

image credit to Fraser Clements. Courtesy of Tourism New Zealand