Drawing on Quicksand

Think Responsively, Design Responsibly

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Drupal Nights
21 November, 2013

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About Me

+ Jason Pamental
  principal, co-founder of h+w design
+ Love to learn & share
+ Can be found @jpamental in most places
+ Post thoughts, work, instigations & pics on Instagr.am & hwdesignco.com
+ Fixed widths & Arial make me sad

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Why Are We Here?

- We're going to talk about the purpose of design
- We're going to talk about what we don't know, and what we do and can
- We're going to get past the 'now' and really *think* responsively
- A talk about why this is more than a fad, it's 'just design' (as it should be)

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What do we mean by ‘design’?

+ Design is fundamentally a commercial endeavor.
  To be successful it must:
  - communicate an idea
  - and influence behavior (to act on that idea)
+ Relies upon basic artistic principles, cognitive science & psychology to do so

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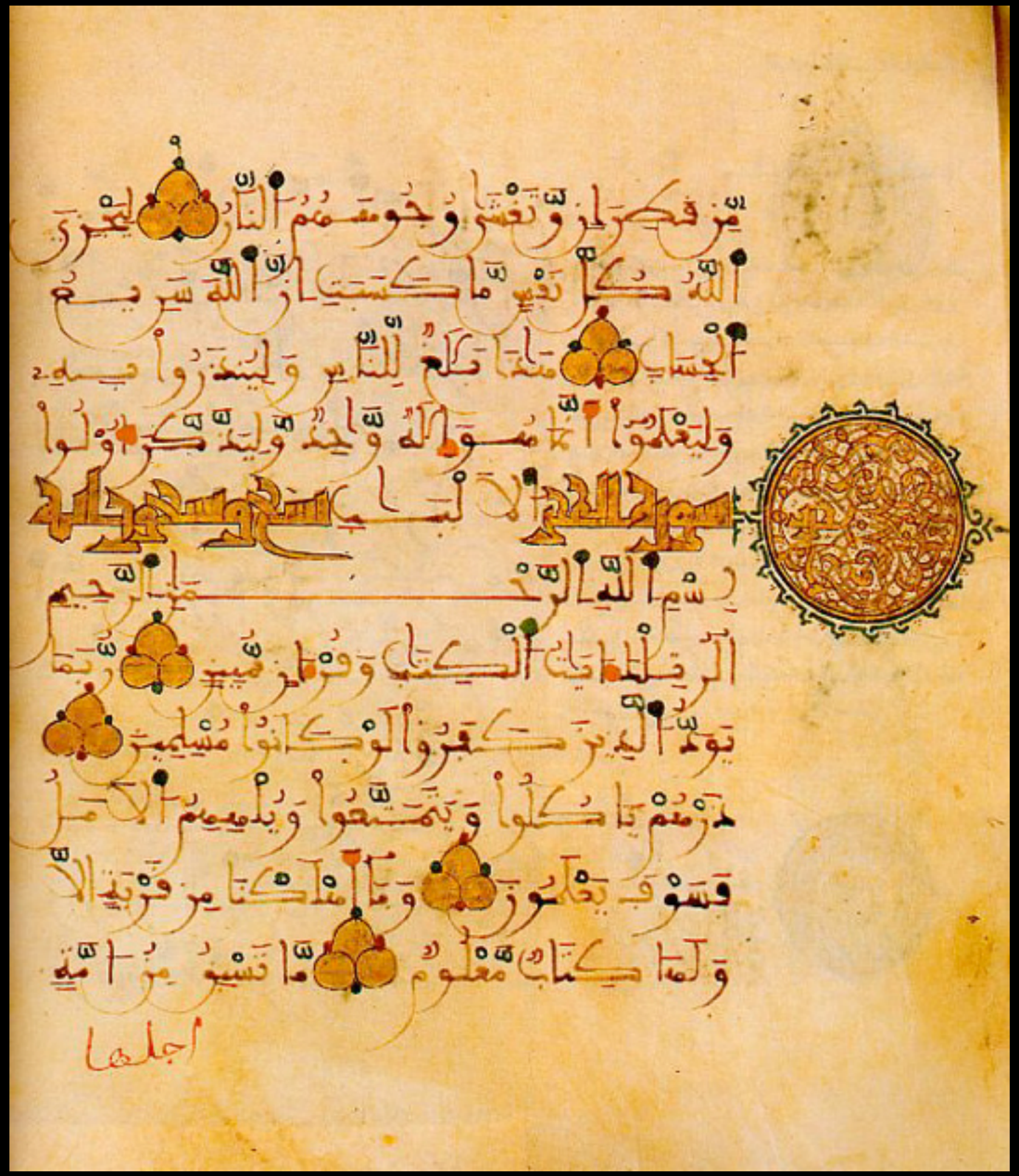
Big Game Travel Advertising

Popular Archeology, September 2011

Do this, don’t do that



Page from a manuscript from Al-Andalus, 12 century BC – Wikipedia

Here there be monsters

Map of the World by Abraham Ortelius – Wikipedia

Designer as Profession

AEG
perfekt in form und funktion

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Home > About AEG > History

The father of industral design

Peter Behrens was not only the father of German industrial design - he was also the founder of corporate identity. Working for AEG, Behrens was the first person to create logos, advertising material, and company publications with a consistent, unified design.

It may seem incredible today, but there was a time when industrial production was purely functional. Artistic merit and aesthetic sense were largely irrelevant in mass-produced goods; there was little harmony between form and function. At least, that was how it was until 1907, when a certain architect was appointed Artistic Consultant to AEG.

Allow us to introduce Professor Peter Behrens - a designer from Germany.

Professor Peter Behrens
1868-1940

Contact Us

If you have any questions on our products or about the AEG brand, please do not hesitate to contact us. Please click below for contact details.

» Click here

Words Divide, Images Unite

Ideas that Influence

+ Visual representations of ideas that influence behavior
  - Find food here
  - Don’t go there
  - Use this toilet, not that one
+ Dealt with known constraints of size, material & media
+ Along came the web

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But then we got lazy.

Lazy Is as Lazy Does

- For nearly 20 years we've tried to apply the same techniques to solve design challenges
- But we didn't consider that the medium is different
- *and so is its use*
- Technology has amplified the differences
- *and provided new solutions*

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What's so different about web design?

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You're dealing with the attention span of reading a billboard while trying to convey the depth of information in an annual report

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It’s not what we don’t know that’ll kill us

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It’s not what we don’t know that’ll kill us

It’s what we willfully ignore

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A Long Road to a Make-Believe Place

- We've propped up our vision of the world with tricks & misconceptions
- Responsive Design is not all about the 'entirely new'
- Responsive Design has just been the catalyst to break them down *(thanks Jeremy!)*

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Take Away The Make-Believe

+ 960px
+ ‘Pixel Perfect’
+ ‘This is a page’
+ ‘Of course we can match that color blue’

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Take Away What We Can't Know

+ Screen size
+ Device capabilities
+ Concurrent activities
+ Depth of focus
+ Purpose of visit

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Don’t seek the truth.
Just drop your opinions.

– Zen proverb (according to Google)

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Same Principles, Different Constraints

- For web design to be successful it must:
  - communicate an idea
  - and influence behavior (to act on that idea)
- Relies upon basic artistic principles, cognitive science & psychology to do so

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We still have artistic principles

*but we must apply them **proportionally**, not **specifically***

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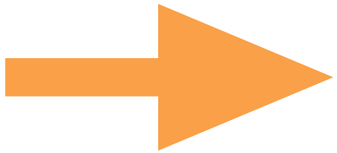
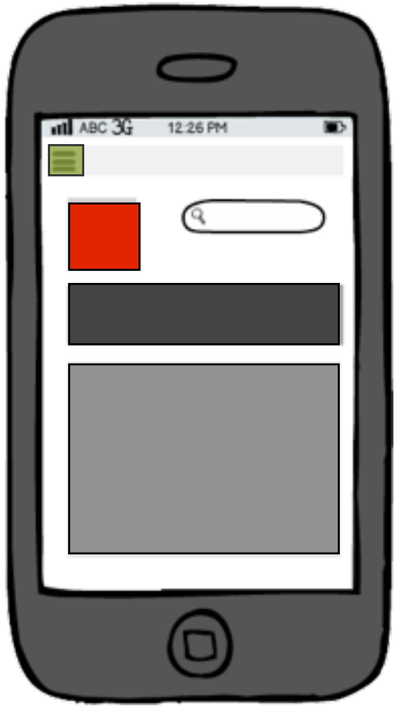
‘This’ is More Important Than ‘That’





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We still use our understanding of how people read & learn

*but we must factor in **distraction** and relative **scale***

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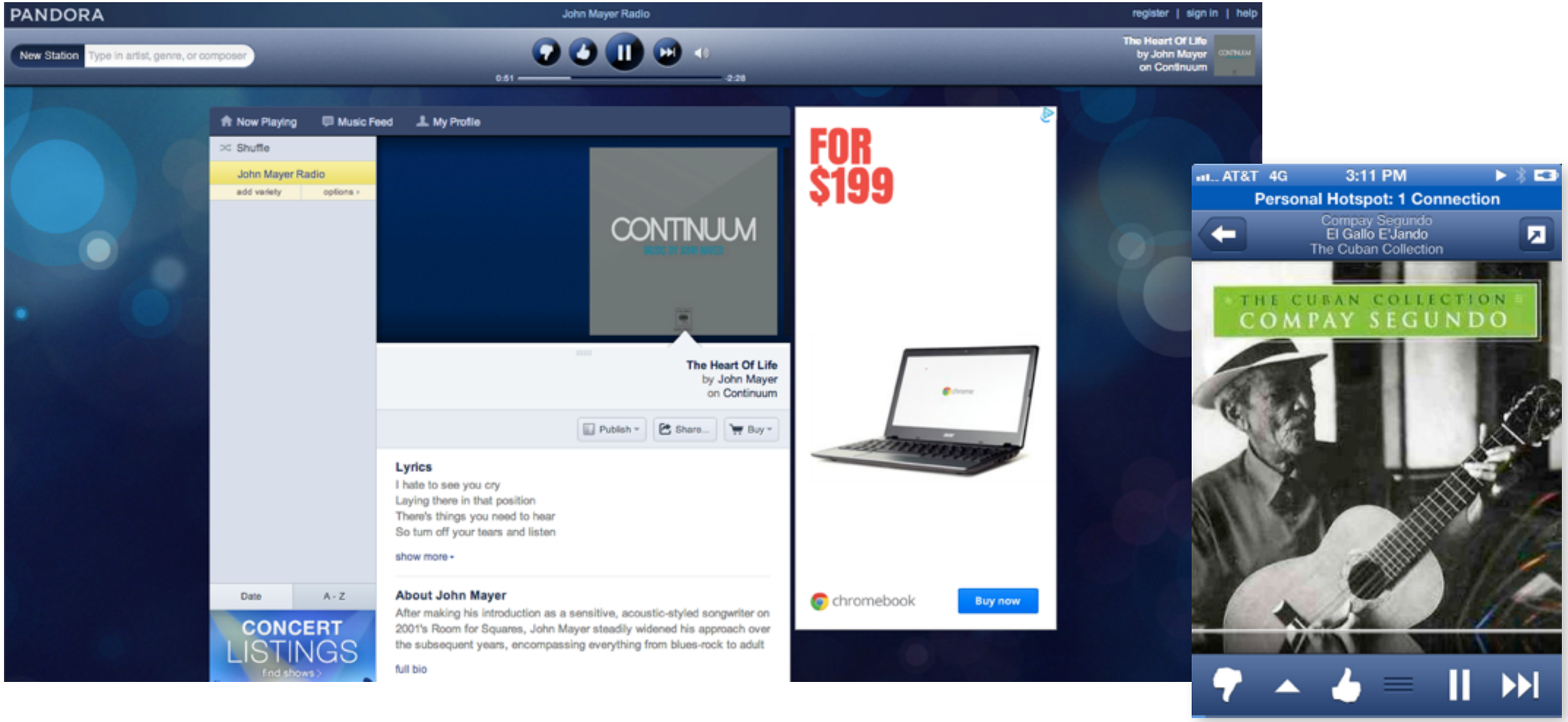
One Eye & One Thumb



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We still have to motivate people

*but must design for different **barriers** to **action***

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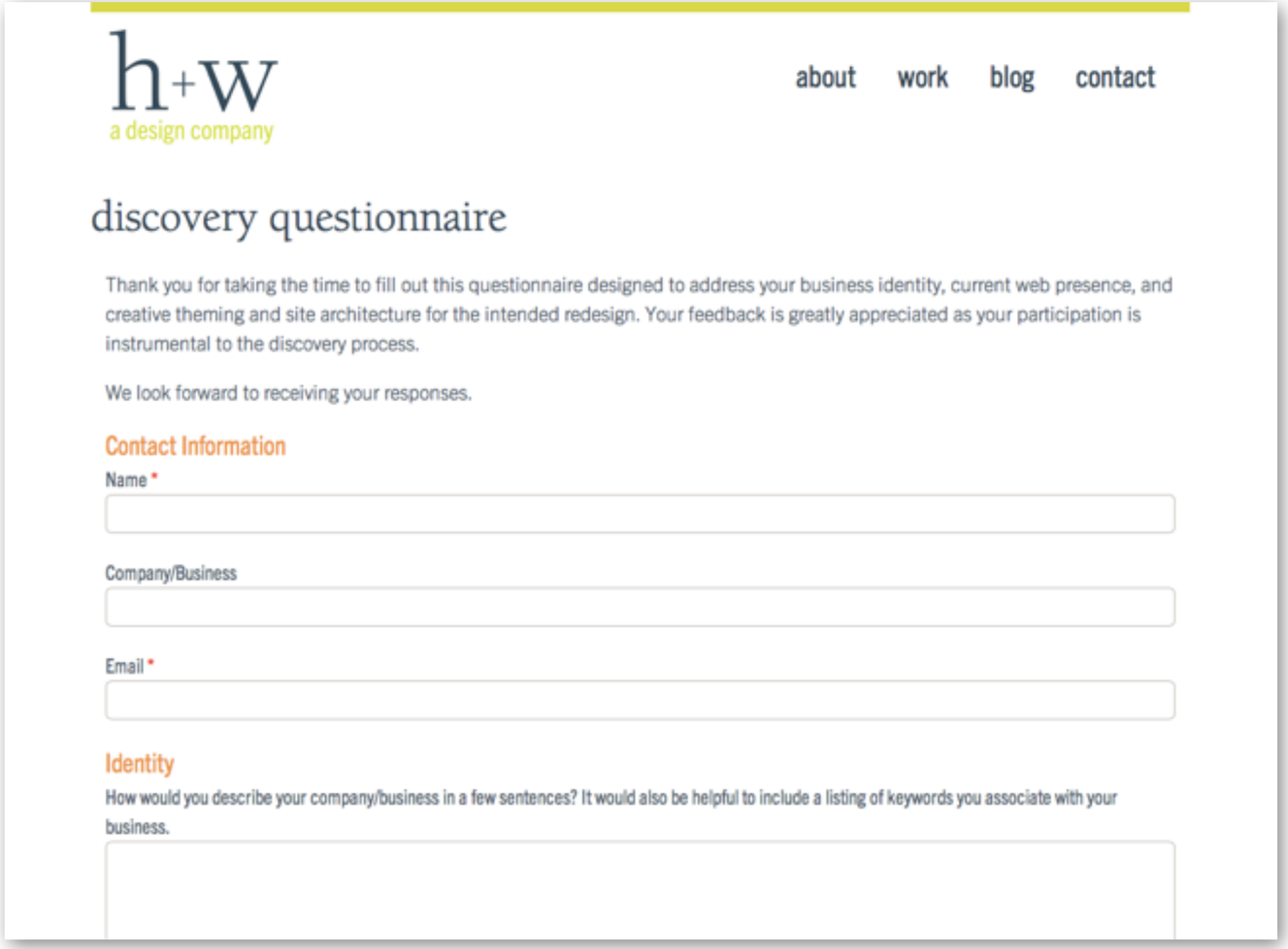
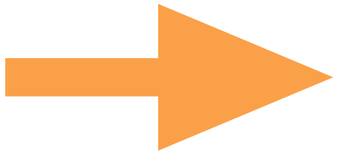
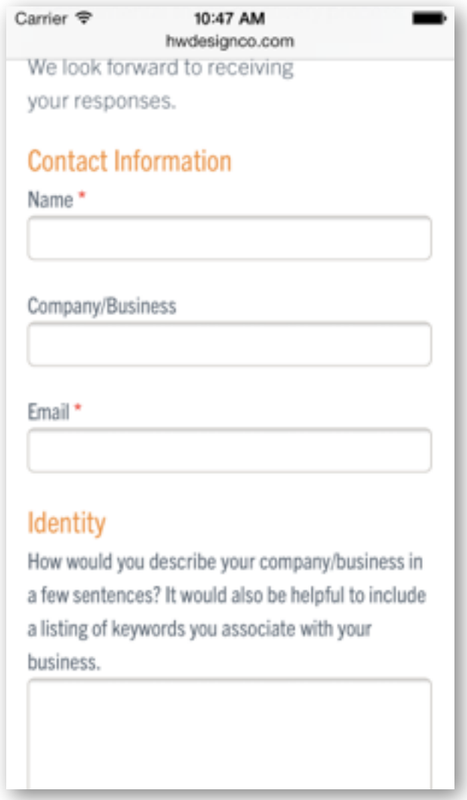
Because They *Can* Doesn't Mean They *Will*







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Responsive Design Can Help

- But we must know the '**how**' to design for the '**why**'
- Speaking of 'why' – what about apps or mobile-only?
  - The site **should** still **be responsive**
  - Apps may still be appropriate, but 'mobile-only' is like an **extra pinky toe**
- If people get there through **search**, your site must **work** when they get there

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In Case You Weren't Convinced

- On Mashable: Over **17%** of all **traffic** on the web is from mobile devices
- More Critical: nearly **40%** of **time** spent on the web is on a mobile device
- It's **2x** more likely that users will spend **4x** more time on your site than using IE8
- And they're doing so from the **couch**, the **car**, the **office**...

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Be Responsible to Users & Clients

+ Design for **meaning**, **hierarchy** & **understanding**
+ *not for fixed relationships & proportions*
+ Your work will have **greater impact** & **longevity**
+ *even when 'one more thing' launches next year*
+ Taking the **first step** is important, but **push farther**

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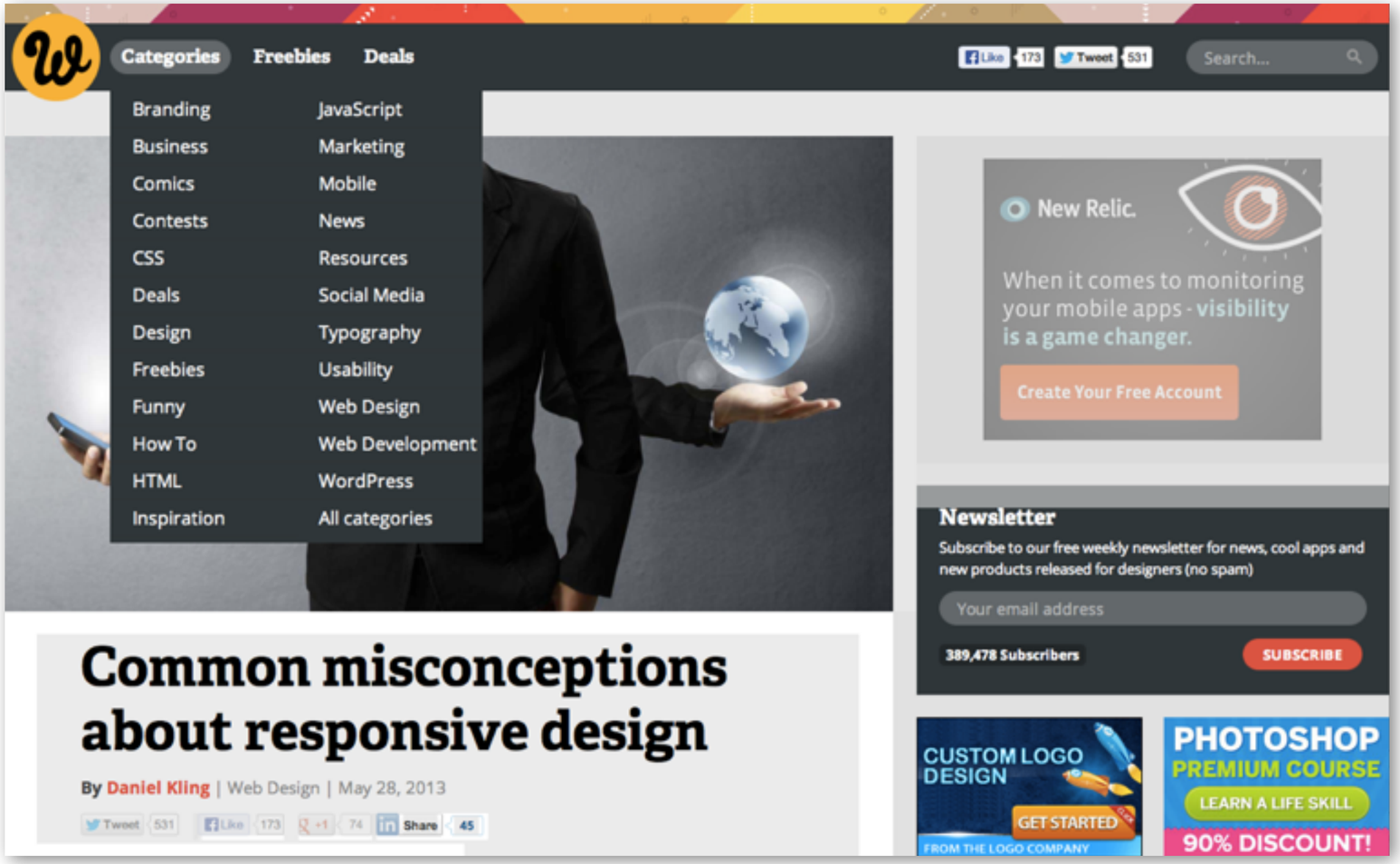
Navigation



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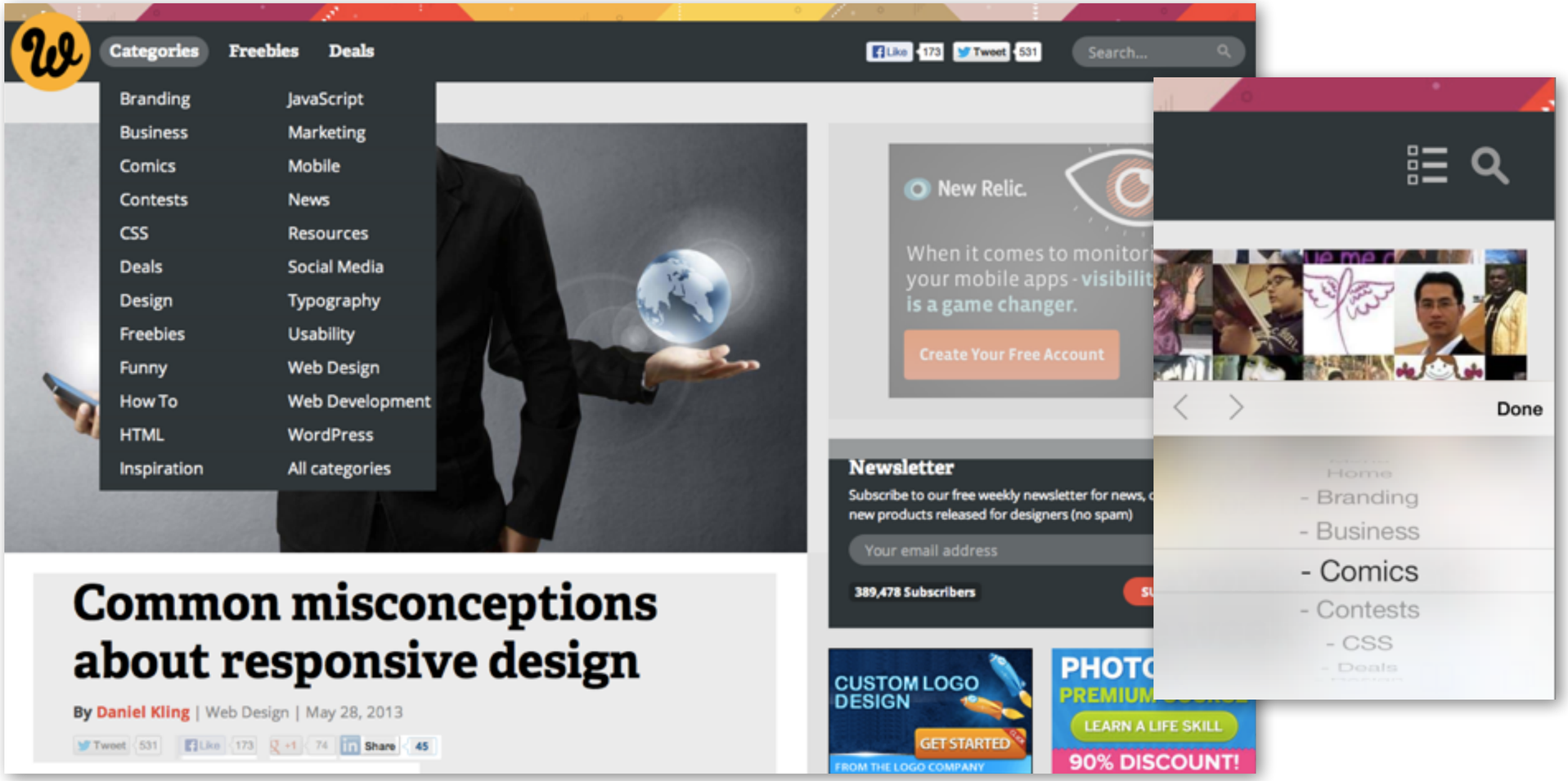

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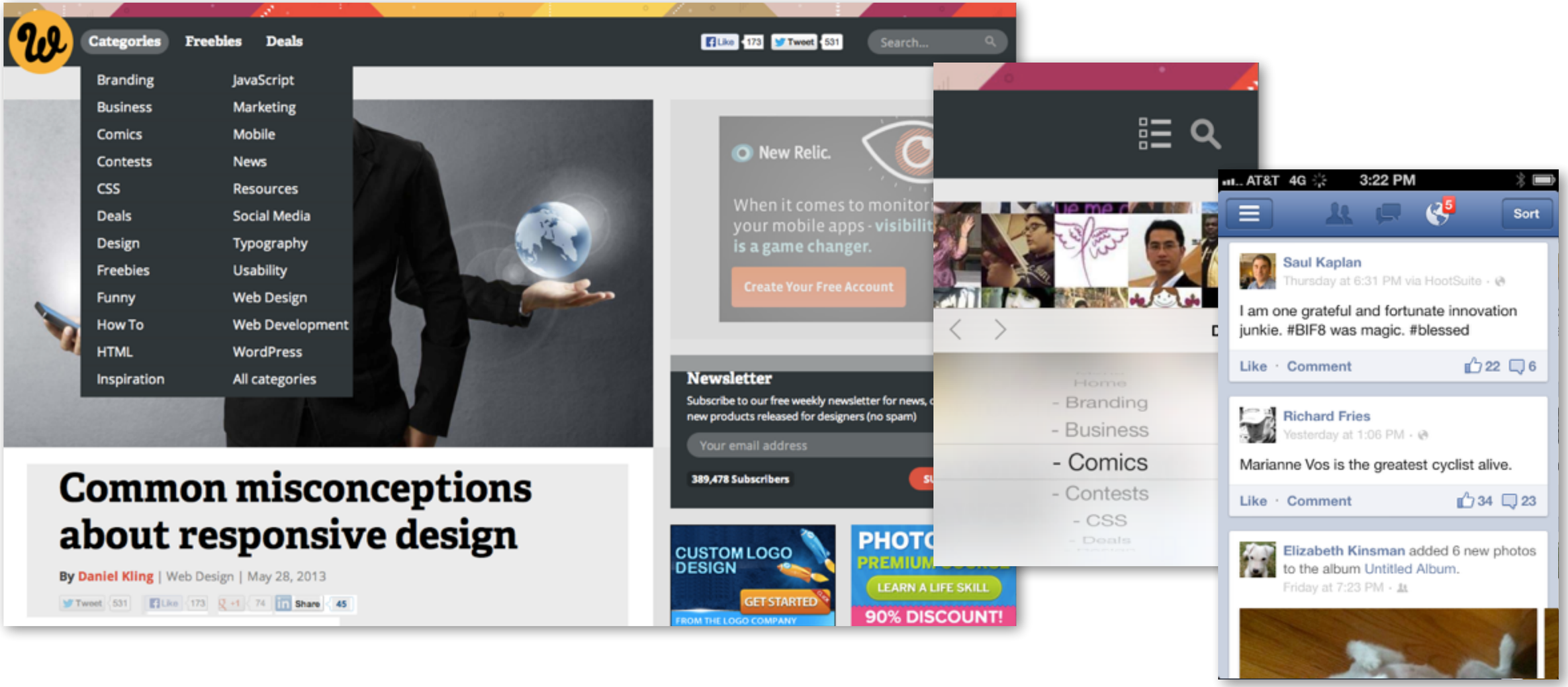

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Navigation

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Images

Responsive Images Community Group – http://responsiveimages.org

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Performance

"...sites may be visually arresting [...], a good many visitors will never stick around to see them. 74% of mobile web **users will leave a site if it takes longer than 5 seconds to load**. That means you have 5 seconds of someone's time to get them what they want, or they're gone."

~ Brad Frost, w/stats from digitalmall.us

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Designing for Mobile First: Speed & Clarity

+ LukeW: Design for **Mobile First** (2009)
+ It relates to **semantics**, **code structure** and **content**
+ But perhaps most critically: **clarity** & **focus**
+ If you don't need it **here**, why do we include it **there**? (hint: it's ok, as long as you actually have a reason)

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‘Responsive’ is Not a Line Item. It’s Design.

+ Take off your blinders
+ Let go of your opinions
+ Don’t just **look** at your sites on different devices
+ **See** how they work, how people **use** them and **where**
+ *Embrace the **chaos** & nurture the **order***
+ ***Think responsively. Be responsible.***

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Thank You!

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Slides here: http://bit.ly/jpfowd2013

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