

SEARCH

THE WEB CNN.com

SEARCH

Powered by YAHOO! search

- Home Page
- World
- U.S.
- Weather
- Business at CNNMoney
- Sports at SI.com
- Politics
- Law
- Technology**
- Science & Space
- Health
- Entertainment
- Travel
- Education
- Special Reports
- Video
- Autos with Edmunds.com



- SERVICES**
- CNN Pipeline
 - E-mail Newsletters
 - Your E-mail Alerts
 - Podcasts **POD**
 - RSS **XML**
 - CNNtoGO
 - Contact Us

SEARCH

WEB CNN.com

SEARCH Powered by YAHOO! search

TECHNOLOGY

Web sites judged in a blink

Wednesday, January 18, 2006; Posted: 2:01 a.m. EST (07:01 GMT)

TORONTO, Ontario (Reuters) -- Internet users can give Web sites a thumbs up or thumbs down in less than the blink of an eye, according to a study by Canadian researchers.



In just a brief one-twentieth of a second -- less than half the time it takes to blink -- people make aesthetic judgments that influence the rest of their experience with an Internet site.

The study was published in the latest issue of the Behaviour and Information Technology journal. The author said the findings had powerful implications for the field of Web site design.

"It really is just a physiological response," Gitte Lindgaard told Reuters on Tuesday. "So Web designers have to make sure they're not offending users visually."

"If the first impression is negative, you'll probably drive people off."

In the study, researchers discovered that people could rate the visual appeal of sites after seeing them for just one-twentieth of a second. These judgments were not random, the researchers found -- sites that were flashed up twice were given similar ratings both times.

They also matched the responses given by subjects who were shown the sites for longer.

But the results did not show how to win a positive reaction from users, said Lindgaard, a psychology professor at Carleton University in Ottawa. "When we looked at the Web sites that we tested, there is really nothing there that tells us what leads to dislike or to like."

And while further research may offer more clues, she said the vagaries of personal taste would always be a limiting factor.

"If design were reducible to a set of principles, wouldn't we find an awful lot of similar houses, gardens, cars, rooms?" said Lindgaard. "You'd have no variety."

Copyright 2006 Reuters. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

Search Jobs MORE OPTIONS

Enter Keywords

Enter City

careerbuilder.com

CNNMoney.com



Website users judge the value of a site in only 1/20th of a second!!!

Qwest DSL Provider: DSL for \$19.99/Month

In AZ, CO, IA, ID, MN, MT, ND, NE, NM, OR, SD, UT, WA and WY. High-speed... www.qwest.com

Technology Essentials

- [Laptop Computers](#)
- [Personal Computers](#)
- [Biotechnology](#)



Business insights

Market reports

Financial advice

All in one place

YOUR E-MAIL ALERTS

Technology (general)

Internet

or [Create Your Own](#)

[Manage Alerts](#) | [What Is This?](#)

CNNMoney.com