

Reach the Mature Market: How Seniors Use Hospital Web Sites

Thank you for attending Geonetric's April 2008 Webinar. This takeaway document includes a list of resources to help you learn more about creating usable Web sites for older Americans.

We hope to see you in next month's presentation: **"Create an Effective Web Culture," presented at 2:00 p.m. Central Daylight Time, May 22, 2008.**



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Introduction

Internet usage among seniors is increasing, and researching health information tops the list of activities performed online by this demographic. With the aging baby boomer population, seniors' dependence on the Web to find health information is expected to increase. Geonetric compiled the following list to help you learn more about creating usable Web sites for older Americans.

From usability information, to statistics on aging and age-related Internet usage, to checklist and guidelines, this information will help you ensure your Web site meets the needs of the important senior audience. There is also information and resources to learn more about the steps organizations are taking to ensure seniors have access to training and education so they can better use the Internet.

Resources

Usability

User Interface Engineering (UIE): UIE is a leading research, training, and consulting firm that specializes in Web site and product usability. Visit their Web site at <http://www.uie.com> to read articles, reports and a blog on issues pertaining to creating usable Web sites that increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Jakob Nielsen: One of the foremost experts in Web site usability, Jacob Nielsen offers insightful information and articles on his Web site, <http://www.useit.com>.

Human Factors International: Information on designing for "mature" users can be found on the site from Human Factors International, a company focused on software usability. Learn more at <http://www.humanfactors.com/downloads/mar07.asp>.

Information on Aging

The National Institute on Aging: The Institute provides in-depth age-related research. Visit their Web site at <http://www.nia.nih.gov>.

Statistics:

U.S. Census: The U.S. Census and their Web site, <http://www.census.gov>, offer many important statistics that can help you create a compelling business case for usability issues.

Kaiser Family Foundation Survey: The Kaiser Family Foundation is a non-profit, private operating foundation that focuses on the major healthcare issues facing the U.S., with a growing role in global health. A national Kaiser Family Foundation survey of older Americans found that as the Internet becomes an increasingly important resource for informing decisions about health and healthcare options, less than a third (31%) of seniors (age 65 and older) have ever gone online, but more than two-thirds (70%) of the next generation of seniors (50-64 year-olds) have done so. Learn more about this interesting survey at: <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/entmedia011205pkg.cfm>

Pew Internet Project: Another place to find unbiased statistics is The Pew Internet & American Life Project. The Pew Internet Project is an initiative of the Pew Research Center, a nonprofit “fact tank” that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world. Pew Internet explores the impact of the internet on children, families, communities, the work place, schools, healthcare and civic/political life. The Project is nonpartisan and takes no position on policy issues. Learn more at: <http://www.pewinternet.org>.

We’ve highlighted some of the studies that discuss seniors’ Internet usage statistics:

- **Pew Internet Project: Online Health Search 2006**
http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/190/report_display.asp
- **Pew Internet Project: Generations Online**
http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/170/report_display.asp
- **Pew Internet Project: Demographics of online users**
http://www.pewinternet.org/trends/User_Demo_6.15.07.htm

Checklist

National Library of Medicine: The National Library of Medicine has created a checklist for making your site senior-friendly. The goal of this checklist is to provide research-based guidelines for Web site design that when properly implemented make Web sites more accessible to all adults, including senior citizens. Learn more at: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/checklist.pdf>.

Online Tutorials for Seniors

SeniorNet: SeniorNet, <http://www.seniornet.org>, offers online tutorials to help older adults find education for, and access to, computer technologies. Their goal is to provide these resources to seniors so they can benefit from the Internet’s ability to enhance their lives and enable them to share their knowledge and wisdom.

The City of Seattle: The City of Seattle’s Web site offers educational resources intended to make technology training for seniors easy and fun. Find out more at: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/tech/seniors/training>.