WEBSITE
BOOTCAMP
A better site with very little sweat

We'll
get started
shortly!

Audio Settings: to set speaker preferences.

Use the Q&A button to ask questions at any time.

Raise your hand if you have any problems.

Don't worry about taking notes, this is being recorded!

STREAMLINE

Audio Settings ⌃   💬   ✋   Q   Leave Meeting
                        Chat   Raise Hand   Q&A

This is us.

Sloane Dell'Orto

Mac Clemmens

Streamline: 3 years, 190 special district websites, 500+ local government agencies using our free compliance tools.

Digital Deployment: 14 years, 300+ websites for associations, nonprofits, and institutions.
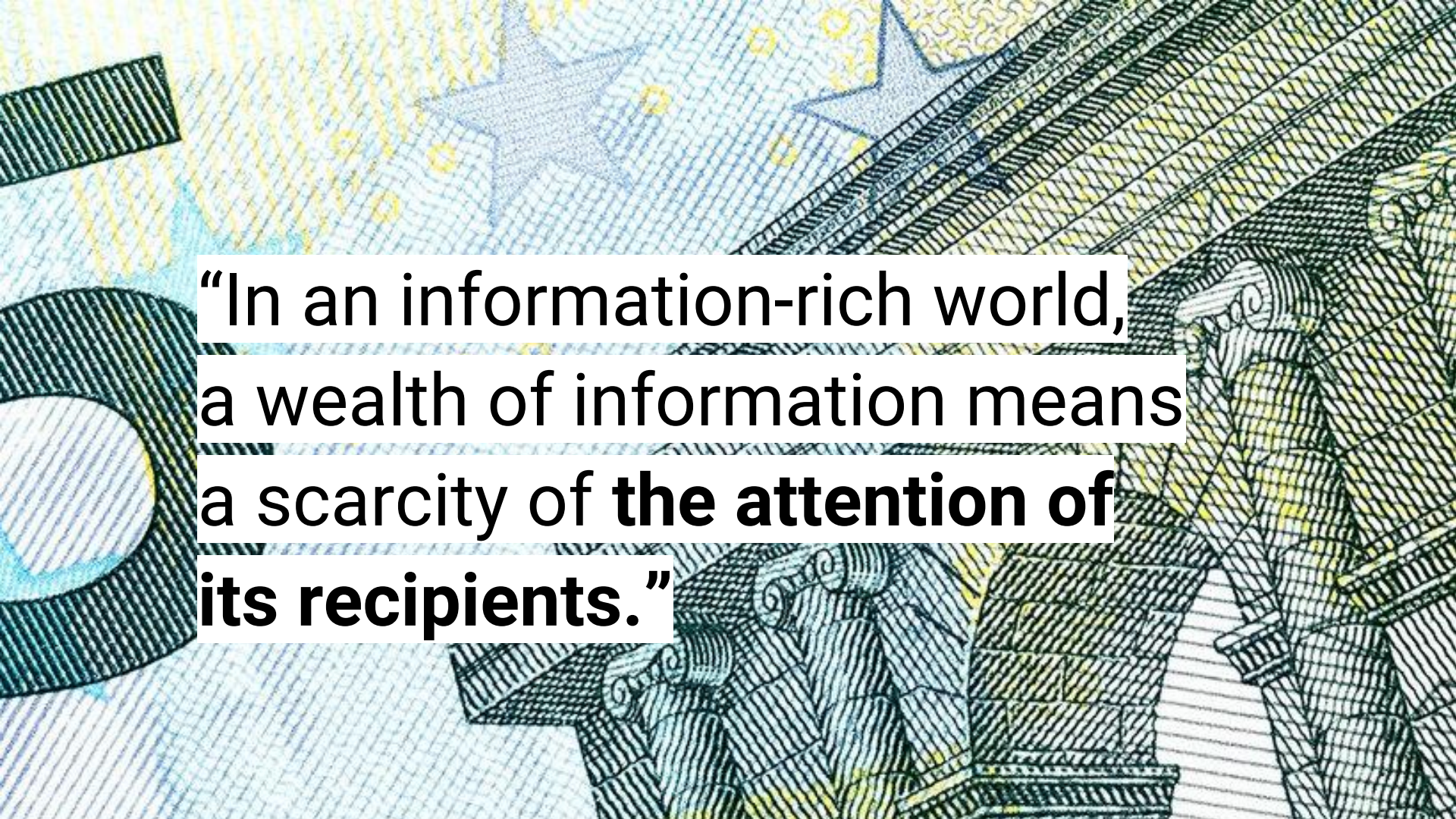
STREAMLINE

Week 4: Words

...

(I have no words!)

Attention is the new currency

"In an information-rich world, a wealth of information means a scarcity of **the attention of its recipients.**"

The problem is...

The problem is...
people don't actually read

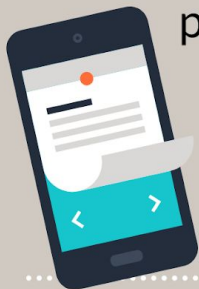The problem is... people don't actually read (especially online).

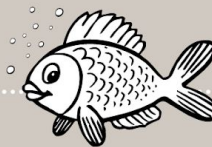# online attention

The average online attention span is **8 seconds**

Most people under prefer to read on screens **30**
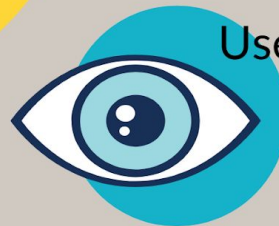(many people over 30 do not)

People don't read online, instead they scan or skim for content

59% of people will share an article without even reading it

Users read about **20%** of the text on a web page.

- 8 seconds to grab attention*
- 5x more people read the headline than body content
- People read 20% of the text

*That's 1 second less than the attention span of a goldfish, according to myth

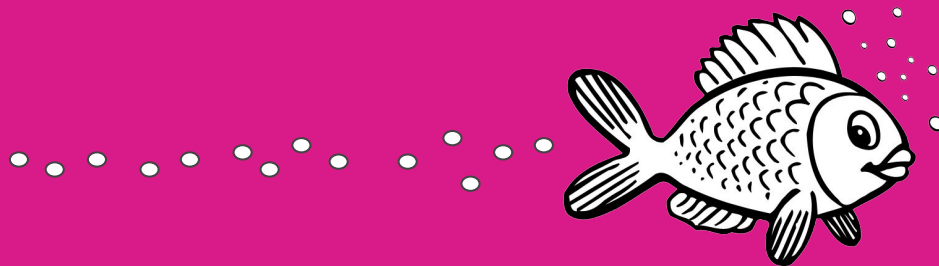Reading on screen is completely different from reading words printed in books or newspapers.

People do not read in a linear, down-the-page way. They scan to see what grabs their attention, then skim the content that specifically interests them.

Consequently, it is essential to make what you write **easy to scan and effortless to skim.**

—oxforddictionaries.com

TL;DR

Nearly 46,000 people shared this post, some quite earnestly:

Study: 70% of Facebook users only read the headline of science stories before commenting

By **SP Team** on March 5, 2018

NEW YORK, NY – A recent study showed that 70% of people actually never read more than the headline of a science article before commenting and sharing. Most simply see a headline they like and click share and make a comment.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nullam consectetur ipsum sit amet sem vestibulum eleifend. Donec sed metus nisi. Quisque ultricies nulla a risus facilisis vestibulum. Ut luctus feugiat nisi, eget molestie magna faucibus vitae. Morbi luctus orci eget semper fringilla. Proin vestibulum neque a ultrices aliquet. Fusce imperdiet purus in euismod accumsan. Suspendisse potenti. Nullam efficitur feugiat nibh, at pellentesque mauris. Suspendisse potenti. Maecenas efficitur urna velit, ut gravida enim vestibulum eu.

Have you experienced something like this?

You have a potentially contentious issue coming up for a vote.

You have a potentially contentious issue coming up for a vote.

You publish notice in the newspaper. You put the information on your website.

You have a potentially contentious issue coming up for a vote.

You publish notice in the newspaper. You put the information on your website.

You send out bill stuffers about the meeting.

You have a potentially contentious issue coming up for a vote.

You publish notice in the newspaper. You put the information on your website.

You send out bill stuffers about the meeting.

You even hire your 12 year old niece to post it to your district's social media page.

The day of the meeting comes up and the issue is up for a vote.

The day of the meeting comes up and the issue is up for a vote.

There are few community members in attendance, and virtually no drama.

The day of the meeting comes up and the issue is up for a vote.

There are few community members in attendance, and virtually no drama.

The vote passes, and you wipe your forehead, sure you can put the worries behind you ...

... and 3 weeks later this guy shows up

... angry that he wasn't informed in advance

What to do?

Know what works.

What grade should you target when writing content?

Answer: 7th/8th grade

Myth #3: free is good, especially if you can get your nephew to build it!

There's a saying in the software industry: free as in beer, or free as in puppy? In the first case, there's no obligation–you can say thanks, and drink the beer (or not). In the second, you've adopted something that comes with quite a bit of effort (and probably expense) over time. You can think about your website this way as well.

And about that nephew. Whatever you do, don't let your nephew build your website…even for free.

Text Readability Consensus Calculator

Purpose: Our Text Readability Consensus Calculator uses 7 popular readability formulas to calculate the average grade level, reading age, and text difficulty of your sample text.

Your Results:

Your text: There is a saying in the software industry: free a ...(show all text)

Flesch Reading Ease score: 70.5 (text scale)
Flesch Reading Ease scored your text: fairly easy to read.

Gunning Fog: 10.7 (text scale)
Gunning Fog scored your text: hard to read.

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level: 8
Grade level: Eighth Grade.

The Coleman-Liau Index: 8
Grade level: Eighth grade

The SMOG Index: 7.3
Grade level: Seventh Grade

Automated Readability Index: 8.1
Grade level: 12-14 yrs. old (Seventh and Eighth graders)

Linsear Write Formula : 10.8
Grade level: Eleventh Grade.

Readability Consensus
Based on 8 readability formulas, we have scored your text:
Grade level: 8 – Reading level: fairly easy to read
Reader's age: 12-14 years old (7th and 8th graders)

Don't get fancy, don't use jargon; keep your content as clear and concise as possible. Don't make people work to understand.

- Use the 'nut graf' or compelling intro to create a curiosity gap
- Break content up

The nut graf / intro in action

State officials are developing new water-use regulations for retail water agencies in response to legislation signed by Gov. Jerry Brown in May 2018. Senate Bill 606 and Assembly Bill 1668 were intended to help California better prepare for and respond to droughts and climate change by directing state agencies to adopt water efficiency rules. *(Why do I care about bill numbers? Moving on…)*

A prominent report about new water conservation regulations passed in May 2018 said there was a statewide mandate not to take a shower and do laundry on the same day, and that each person would be limited to using a certain amount of water indoors. *(Wait, what? Do I have to choose between a shower and doing laundry?)*

Make long content easy to consume

- Text width: 10-15 words per line
- Break it up: headings, icons, quotes
- Scrolling: no longer taboo*

*but 5% still won't scroll

Make long content easy to consume
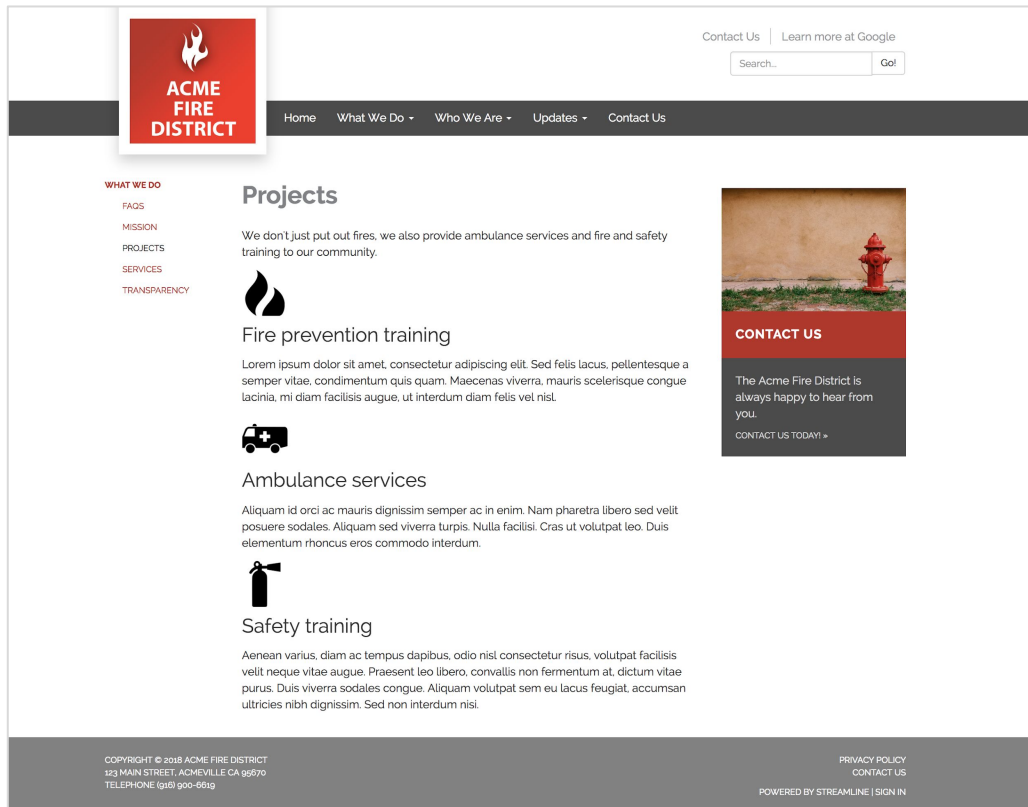
One thing we've been focused on over the last year is fully developing out the relationships we have with our public employers. We have been doing work with our actuaries, doing WebEx presentations on how they can pay down unfunded actuarial liability.

One thing we cannot do is focus on divestments. We need broad access to the markets to get close to our 7 percent return target, so these divestment ideas are not helpful. In the future, they might be fine ... But today these are the numbers that we have to live by. So the employers have been really helpful in staving divestment issues away. They need us to focus on returns. The governor and the Legislature also recently gave us $6 billion, which put the system into positive cash flow. That means we can invest every single asset in the market and we're not holding a level of liquidity that works against us. We're not going to get 7 percent out of holding cash.

One thing we cannot do is focus on divestments. We need broad access to the markets to get close to our 7 percent return target.

Make related content easy to scan

- Break related content into bite size teasers (readers scan, remember?)

- Don't go crazy with fonts and styling, and make section headings easy to identify

Using **too MANY** *typefaces* is confusing *and* LOOKS *messy* and CLUTTERED.

Press Releases

Rainbow Municipal Water District Reservoir Project Selected for Award

The Rainbow Municipal Water District's (RMWD) Morro Reservoir Rehabilitation Project (2010-2012), performed by Hilts Consulting Group of Yorba Linda, CA, was selected for the inaugural Fabricated Geomembrane Engineering Innovation Award in 2016. The award was presented by the Fabricated Geomembrane Institute at the University of Illinois at its annual membership meeting in Miami Beach, Florida…

READ MORE »

Rainbow MWD Welcomes New Board Members

In the November 2016 General Election, voters selected two new Board members for Rainbow Municipal Water District. Mr. C. Hayden Hamilton was elected to serve the constituents of the District's Division 2 which is in the western portion of the District. Mr. Michael Mack was elected to serve the constituents of the District's Division 5 which serves the northern portion of the District in the…

READ MORE »

State Water Resource Control Board Ends Mandatory Statewide Conservation Requirements

In response to a revised Executive Order from Governor Brown, the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) acted to end the statewide mandatory conservation requirements that were imposed in May 2015. Over the last year Rainbow Municipal Water District has worked diligently to educate the SWRCB on the extraordinary efforts by the residents of San Diego County not only to conserve…

DOWNLOAD PRESS RELEASE HERE »

Show, don't tell (... but also tell)

Website statistics

By Sloane Dell'Orto, September 24, 2018

Facts about online attention

Users read about **20%** of the text on an average web page.

59% of people will share an article without even reading it

Most people don't read online, they scan or skim for content they're looking for

The average attention span for online content is **8 seconds**

a goldfish has an attention span of 9 seconds

Most people under **30** prefer to read on screens

(many people over 30 do not)

Alt-text: graphic of facts about online attention

Page text: Interesting statistics about website attention: most people don't read online, they scan or skim for content • users only read about 20% of the text on an average webpage • most people under 30 prefer to read on screens ... etc

Takeaways

Write a great title

Put compelling content front and center

Break up long reads

Use images and graphics (don't forget backup text!)

―――

Questions?

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(916) 900-6619

Next week:
Finding content matters! Sitemap and content tips, searchable PDFs

STREAMLINE