

Too much accessibility

GOOD INTENTIONS, BADLY IMPLEMENTED

A little anecdote...

Too much accessibility?

Many ways to improve accessibility:

- HTML attributes / elements
- Use of specific techniques
- Addition of helpful features
- etc

...but need to know **when** and **where** to apply them!

Too much accessibility!

Common mistakes:

- Not understanding user behaviour
- Not understanding need/reason
- Overzealous...“make it even more accessible”

Let's look at a few examples that bug me...

ALT text

WCAG 1.0, checkpoint 1.1 [P1]

“Provide a text equivalent for every non-text element”

HTML 4.01

“For user agents that cannot display images, forms, or applets, this attribute specifies **alternate** text.”

ALT text – the easy cases

Should already know when not to use ALT

- Bullet point images – “bullet” or “blue ball”
- Spacer graphics – “spacer”
- Purely decorative images

Still very much debated: what is “purely decorative”?

ALT text – being overexplicit

Information channels for: ▶ students ▶ staff

University of Salford

University of Salford
A Greater Manchester University

Logo, featuring the Salford lion, with the words 'University of Salford' forming a circle around it...

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Salford has the highest-rated research institute for the Built Environment in the UK.

The Sunday Times University Guide, 2006


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ALT text – being overexplicit

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Logo of the University of Salford - A Greater Manchester University

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ALT text – nothing more

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advanced search University A-Z

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ALT text – pitfalls

Unless the image **is** the content (e.g. design comparison of different company logos):

- ALT text is not for descriptions
- Irrelevant to prefix with “Logo...”, “Photograph...”, “Illustration...”

Mike Cherim: [The Alt and Accessibility](#)

TITLE attribute

WCAG 1.0, checkpoint 13.1 [P2]

“Clearly identify the target of each link”

“...content developers may further clarify the target of a link with an informative link title”

HTML 4.01

“This attribute offers **advisory** information about the element for which it is set.”

TITLE attribute – stating the obvious

You are in: [University home](#) ▶ [Study at Salford](#)



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A Greater Manchester University

search

[advanced search](#) [University A-Z](#)

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About the University

Study Link to: About the University



Here's a few reasons why studying at Salford could be the right choice for you:

- We're constantly enhancing our programmes and facilities to make sure we deliver **excellent value for money**
- We boost your job prospects by **preparing you for the world of work**. Whatever you study, you'll learn about genuine issues relevant to employers
- We're only **one and a half miles (three kilometres) from the heart of Manchester**, so you'll find big-city opportunity, diversity and fun right on your doorstep
- From day one **our support services will be there to help you** to find your feet

We are looking to the future. That's why we're **investing over £150 million in the University** - to ensure that we deliver the best.



TITLE attribute – stating the obvious

You are in: [University home](#) ▶ [Study at Salford](#)



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Study at Salford

Navigate to the Study at Salford section



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- We boost your job prospects by **preparing you for the world of work**. Whatever you study, you'll learn about genuine issues relevant to employers
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TITLE attribute – stating the obvious

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Study at Salford

Student experience

Undergraduate study

Student experience



programmes and facilities to make sure we deliver **excellent value for money**

- We boost your job prospects by **preparing you for the world of work**. Whatever you study, you'll learn about genuine issues relevant to employers
- We're only **one and a half miles (three kilometres)** from the heart of **Manchester**, so you'll find big-city opportunity, diversity and fun right on your doorstep
- From day one **our support services will be there to help you** to find your feet

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TITLE attribute – pitfalls

- “Link to...”, “Navigate to...” useless – browser/AT already identifies links
- Duplicating link text – dubious SEO practice?
- Can interfere with certain AT (screen readers, magnifiers) and confuse users (e.g. Cognitive disabilities)

Can be useful in certain situations (e.g. making links unique – but dependent on browser/AT)

Default text in forms

WCAG 1.0, checkpoint 10.4 [P3]

“Until user agents handle empty controls correctly, include default, place-holding characters in edit boxes and text areas.”

Default text in forms

You are in: [University home](#) ▶ [Visit the University](#) ▶ [Uni Tour](#) ▶ **Booking form**




University of Salford
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search

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Booking Form

What date do you wish to attend?

Wed 15 August 2007

First name

enter your first name...

enter your last name...

Address

enter your address...

Postcode

enter your postcode...

Telephone

enter your telephone number...



Default text in forms – pitfalls

- Outdated, as most “Until user agents...” checkpoints
- Usability issue – user has to first delete placeholder
- Not suitable to **replace** LABEL

JavaScript to show/remove default – if you must, prepopulate with JS as well

<http://www.splintered.co.uk/experiments/22>

FIELDSET and LEGEND

WCAG 1.0, checkpoint 12.3 [P2]

“Divide large blocks of information into more manageable groups where natural and appropriate.”

WCAG 1.0, checkpoint 12.4 [P2]

“Associate labels explicitly with their controls.”

FIELDSET and LEGEND

`<legend>` How did you find out about our CD-ROM?

`<label>` ☒ Website

`<label>` ☐ Radio

`<label>` ☐ Leaflet

`<label>` ☐ Other

FIELDSET and LEGEND

How did you find out about our CD-ROM?

Website	▼
Website	
Radio	
Leaflet	
Other	

FIELDSET and LEGEND – pitfalls

- Current AT reads out LEGEND in front of each LABEL (luckily not nested)
- Keep LEGEND short
- Ensure FIELDSET is actually grouping logically
- Don't use FIELDSET and LEGEND at all cost

ACCESSKEY attribute


WCAG 1.0, checkpoint 9.5 [P3]

“Provide keyboard shortcuts to important links [...], form controls, and groups of form controls.”

ACCESSKEY in action

Information channels for: [students](#) [staff](#)

Accesskey=1

 **University of Salford**
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LIMITLESS
POSSIBILITIES

Accesskey=4


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[more news](#) 

Accesskey=0 [help / accessibility](#)

ACCESSKEY – pitfalls

- Not **every** link, form control, etc. is important
- Only useful if users are able to see/remember them
- Only single character
- Can conflict with browser, AT, OS (and not just English versions)

UK Government Accesskey Standard – dubious, but a starting point

TABINDEX attribute

WCAG 1.0, checkpoint 9.4 [P3]

“Create a logical tab order through links, form controls, and objects.”

TABINDEX attribute in Wordpress...?

No comments

Name **Tabindex=1**

patrick h. lauke

Email **Tabindex=2**

redux@splintered.co.uk

Website **Tabindex=3**

http://www.splintered.co.uk

Your comment

Tabindex=4

Tabindex=5

Submit Comment

TABINDEX attribute – pitfalls

- Used to be helpful in table-based layout days – can now be handled via source order and CSS positioning
- TABINDEXed links/form controls always take precedence – can cause usability issue
- If visual and tab order are not matched: potential for confusion (also applicable to CSS)

Skip links

WCAG 1.0, checkpoint 13.6 [P3]

“Group related links, identify the group (for user agents), and, **until user agents do so**, provide a way to bypass the group.”

Skip links in action

You are in: [University home](#) ▶ [About the University](#) ▶ [The city of Manchester](#)



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[The city of Manchester](#)

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[Nightlife](#)

[The future of Salford](#)

[History of the University](#)

[£150 million investment](#)

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The city of Manchester

It's simple - Manchester is one of the most exciting cities in the UK. And with the University of Salford only one and a half miles from the city centre, you're right on the doorstep of big-city fun, diversity and opportunity.



With its lively cosmopolitan lifestyle and vibrant city centre, Manchester has a truly European feel. Add to this the tourist attractions, galleries, museums, superb shopping opportunities and striking Victorian architecture and you get a city that has something for everyone.

All of which means there's no better place to study. Over 70,000 students choose to live in Manchester, making it the biggest student population in Europe. They're attracted by a city that lives and breathes culture - from the celebrated music scene that revolutionised British culture to the creative hub of the city's [Northern Quarter](#).

It's the home of all things sporting too - from its two famous football clubs ([Manchester United](#) and [Manchester City](#)) to the fantastic sporting arenas built when the city hosted the 2002 Commonwealth games.

And if you fancy getting away from city's busy atmosphere, then the Victorian parks are the perfect place for lazy summer picnics and walks. There're also



Skip links in action

[Skip to the content](#)



Skip to the content


[advanced search](#) [University A-Z](#)

University home


About the University

- What makes Salford special?
- The city of Manchester
 - Entertainment
 - Culture
 - Sport
 - Shopping
 - Nightlife
- The future of Salford
- History of the University
- £150 million investment

Corporate information (who's who) 

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It's simple - **Manchester is one of the most exciting cities in the UK.** And with the University of Salford only one and a half miles from the city centre, you're right on the doorstep of big-city fun, diversity and opportunity.



CLICK TO ENLARGE


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limitless possibilities





explore limitless possibilities 


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 fees and bursaries


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 course finder

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 international students

Making learning flexible

Salford offers over 200 part-time learning 

Skip links – more than one, and invisible...

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Disability Rights Commission

We want a society where all disabled people can participate fully as equal citizens

Change text size: [A](#) [A](#) [A](#) | Colour: ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ | [More Access Options](#)

Browse by subject: [GO](#) Search: [GO](#)

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Live Discussion
Friday 10 August, 12.30pm
Commander Rod Jarman
Metropolitan Police Service

[Live discussion with Commander Rod Jarman](#)

Commander Rod Jarman of the Metropolitan Police Service is Lead for the Safer Neighbourhoods Programme. His responsibilities include Stop and Search, young people and volunteers. He is also the Association of Chief Police Officers' lead for mental health and disability. He will be answering your questions on Friday 10 August at 12.30pm. Submit your questions now.

[Submit your questions NOW](#)

News and Features

[Read our new guide to help people with learning disabilities get involved in a](#)

How can we help you?

Individuals

- [Am I being discriminated against?](#)

Ask DRC

Most Popular Question:
[What counts as a disability according to the law?](#)


Information in your language


Skip links – more than one, and invisible...


[Email bulletin](#) | [Useful links](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Site map](#) | [Contact us](#)


```
<div class="skipnavigation"><a href="default.aspx#skipglobalnav" class="hide">Skip Global Navigation</a>, <a href="default.aspx#skipsectionnav" accesskey="s" class="hide">Jump to main content</a></div>
```

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Live Discussion Live discussion with Commander Rod Jarman

Friday
Comm
Metrop
Service

Submit

News and

```
<a name="skipglobalnav"></a>
<div id="maincontent">
  <div class="skipnavigation"><a
href="default.aspx#skipsectionnav" class="hide">Skip
Section Navigation</a></div>
```

Individuals

- [Am I being discriminated against?](#)

Information in your language

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Skip links – pitfalls

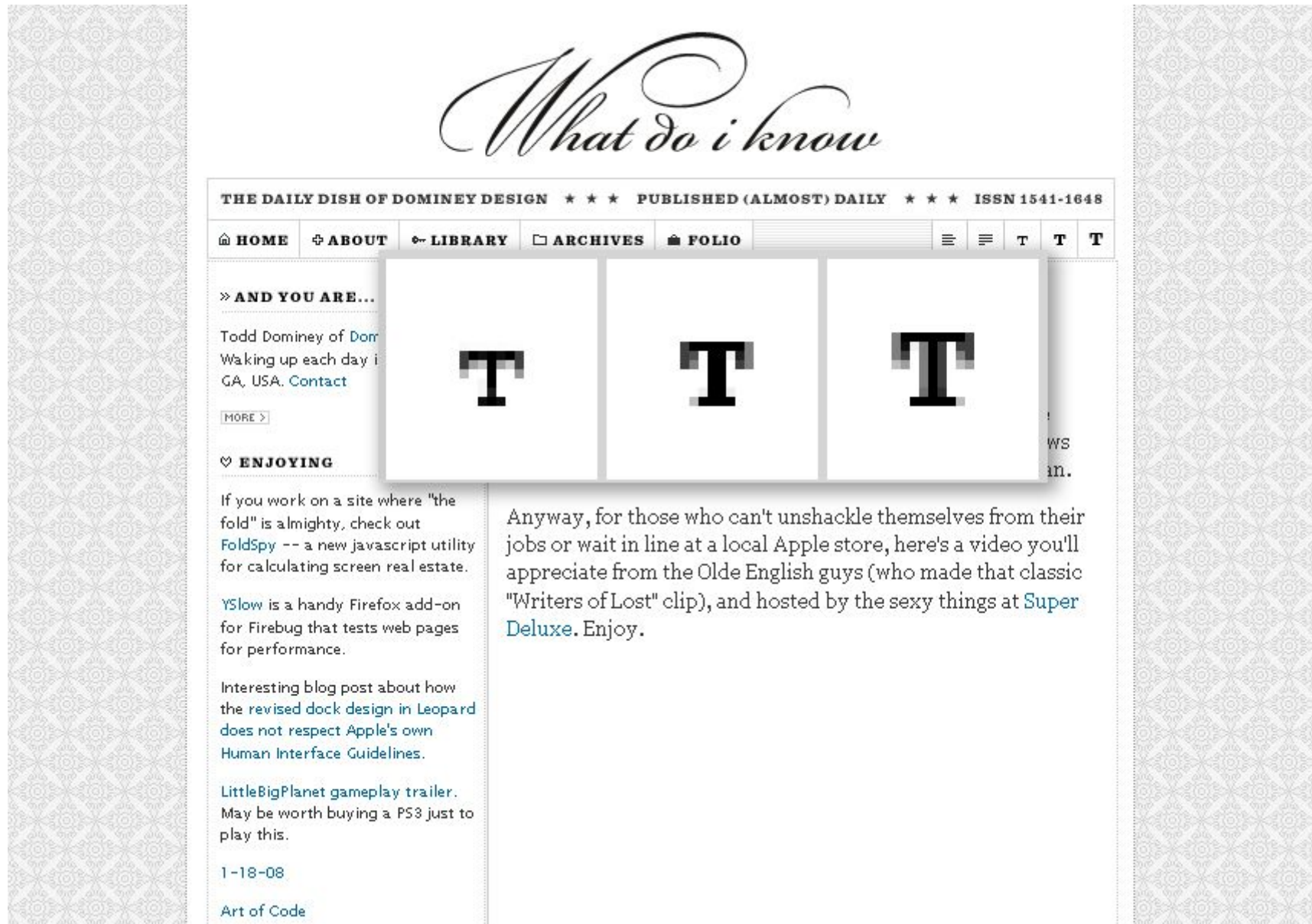
- Some browsers/AT already offer far better navigation mechanisms
- Nonetheless, sighted keyboard users can benefit
- Don't keep them hidden: either always visible, or visible (in predictable location) on keyboard focus
- More than one...don't go skip link crazy

How about “Back to top” links?

Text size widgets and co.

A bit of a personal bug bear of mine...

Text size widgets – browser functionality?







Text size widgets – browser functionality?

[Email bulletin](#) | [Useful links](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Site map](#) | [Contact us](#)



Change text size: **A A A** equal citizens
Change text size: **A A A** | Colour: ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐ | [More Access Options](#)

Browse by subject: Search:

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Most Popular Question:
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Information in your language

Text size widgets – browser functionality?








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School of the Built Environment

Zoom Text:    [Change Colour Scheme](#)    

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What about

Zoom Text:   

Key Facts

Why the Built Environment?

The Built Environment industries are the largest in the UK. They provide a tenth of the UK's gross domestic product and employ 1.4 million people. Built Environment projects (including construction and property) involve great people working in effective teams.


[Read more](#)

Why choose the School of the Built Environment?

- UK's premier school for the Built Environment
- A C* (DEF) research-led school and the UK's largest research

→ Contact Us

News

 **Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)**
Accreditation - June 2007

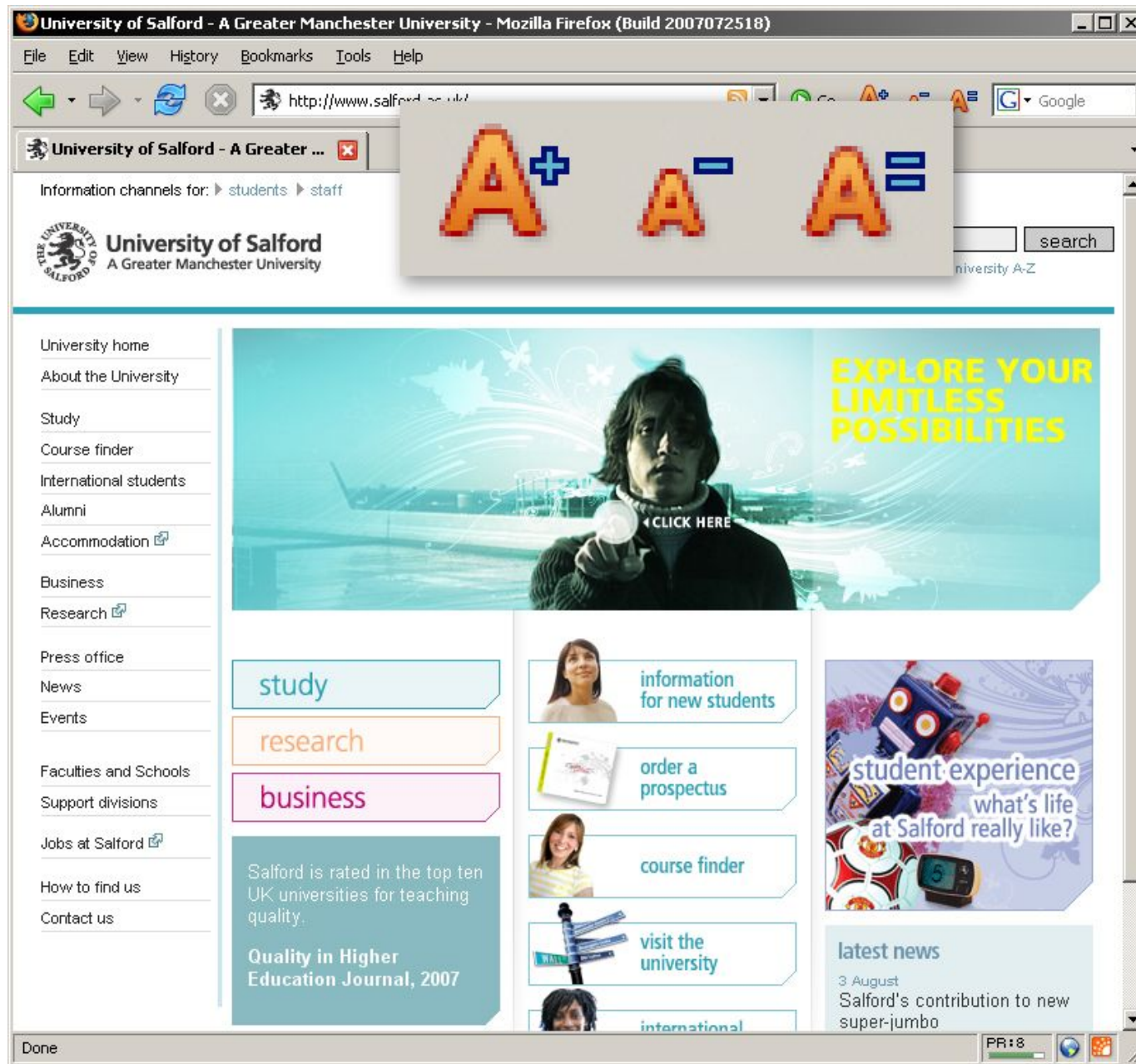
The School of the Built Environment is pleased to announce that the MSc Project Management in Construction programme, BSc (Hons) Architectural Design and Technology and BSc (Hons)

Text size widgets – pitfalls

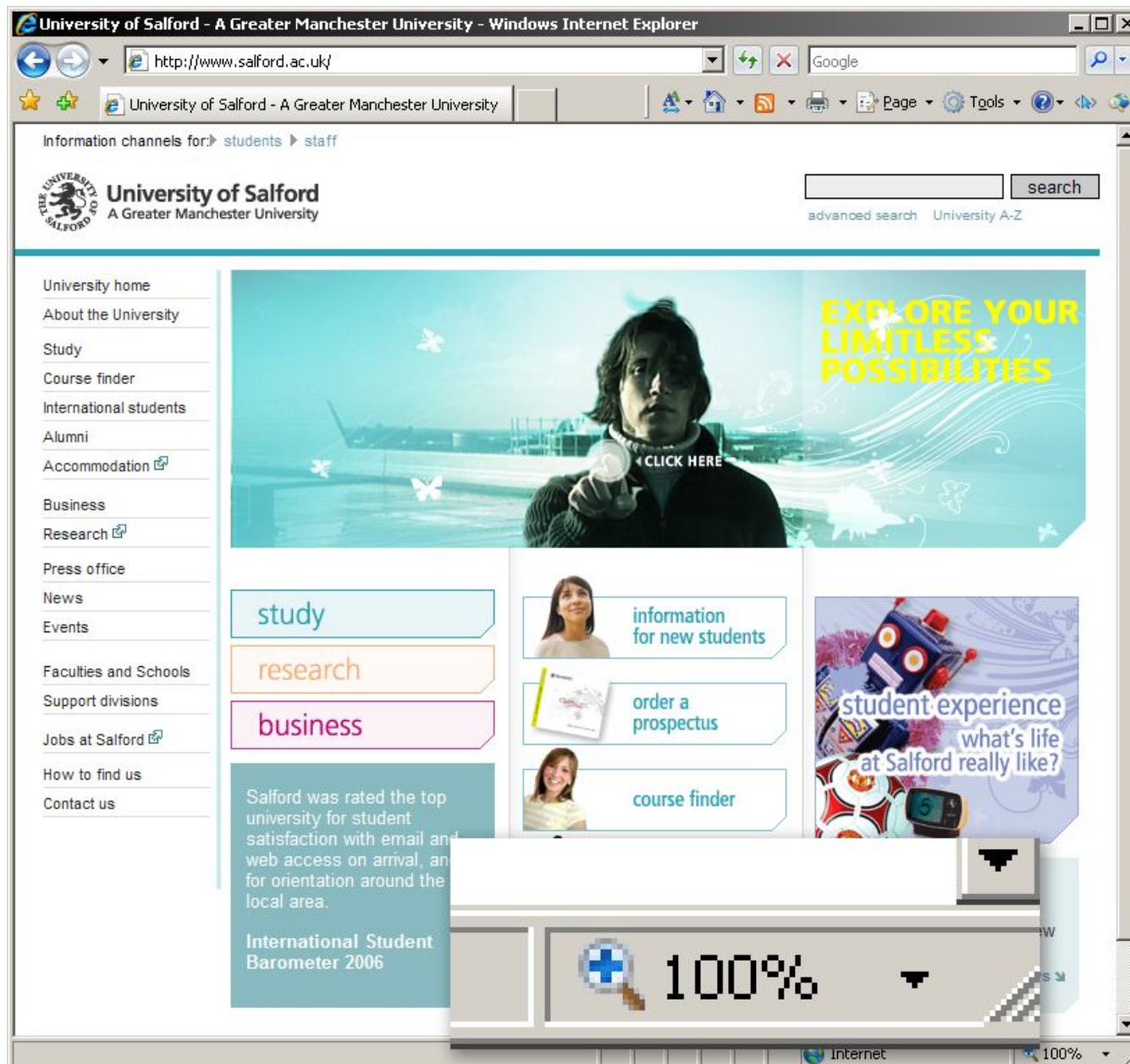
- Emulates browser behaviour (cfr. “print” and “bookmark this page” links)
- Usability concerns
- What happens when linking to external sites?
- Settings don’t carry across, even if other site has same widget (cookies domain specific)

But users don’t know they can already do this in their browser...

Text size widgets – soon obsolete?



Text size widgets – soon obsolete?



Text size widgets – gap filler?

- It's a “**usability gap**” (Alastair Campbell, Nomensa)
- Browsers should make options obvious, but most don't...yet

In the meantime: “give a man a fish...”

Text size widgets – teach them fishing instead

The image shows a screenshot of the BBC.co.uk homepage. A white rectangular widget with a blue border is overlaid on the left side of the page. The widget contains the text "Display Options" in a large, bold, blue font, and "Accessibility help" in a smaller, blue font below it. The background of the widget is white, and the text is centered. The BBC homepage itself is visible behind the widget, showing the navigation bar with links like Home, TV, Radio, Talk, Where I Live, and A-Z Index. There is also a search bar and a "Search" button. The main content area includes a "Summer of British Film" section, a "Today" section with a "News" sub-section, and a "Where I Live" section with a "Local weather" sub-section. The date "Monday 6th August 2007" is displayed in the top right corner of the main content area.

bbc.co.uk Home TV Radio Talk Where I Live A-Z Index Search

Display Options
Accessibility help

UK version | International version

Other people are searching for:

- tetris
- knights
- sierra leone

See what's popular and new

Summer of British Film

All summer long, the BBC will be celebrating the best of British film. This week's theme is romance and includes, arguably, the ultimate tearjerker - Brief Encounter.

- Get the lowdown on the season
- What's on? Films in the season
- Video: About the romance films
- Make your own mini movie

Today Monday 6th August 2007

News

- Disease experts probe farm flood
- BAA wins Heathrow protesters ban

News in 33 languages

Where I Live

London, Central

Change location

Local weather

Monday
max: 23°C
min: 12°C

Browse See full directory

Business & Money
Business News, Market Data, Your Money...

Children
CBBC, CBBC Search, CBeebies...

Entertainment
Comedy, Film, Teens...

Health
Healthy Living, Parenting, Relationships...

Sport
• England name Twenty20

Text size widgets – teach them fishing instead

bbc.co.uk Home TV Radio Talk Where I Live A-Z Index Search

Display Options Beta

[Accessibility help](#)

The Display Options tool is currently in a testing stage. Any options that you select will only change the appearance of the BBC iPlayer and the bbc.co.uk homepage. It does not yet make changes to other BBC web pages. You can learn more about this tool on the [Display Options Help page](#).

If you have any questions, comments or problems using the Display Options tool please contact us using our [feedback form](#)

1. Choose a predefined template

Preset

2. Adjust the individual Display Options

Layout

Remove Layout (linearise the text): ☐ yes ☒ no

Simplify graphics: ☐ yes ☒ no

[Help with layout](#)

Text

Text Size

Text Spacing

Font

[Help with text](#)

Colour

Colour Scheme

Highlight links in a different colour: ☐ yes ☒ no

[Help with colour](#)

Preview window

Big heading

The 'Display Options' have been designed to enable you to customise your view of our website.

The different options enable you to make the text more visible or help you find a more suitable colour scheme.

Different setting choices can be previewed in the panel at the bottom of the screen by pressing either of the 'Preview' buttons.

Once you are happy with any adjustments you have made, press the 'Save Display Options' button.



Text size widgets – teach them fishing instead

[bbc.co.uk](#)[Home](#)[TV](#)[Radio](#)[Talk](#)[Where I Live](#)[A-Z Index](#)[Search](#)

Monday
06 August 2007
BBC Homepage

*my web
my way*



What's My Web My Way?

Do you need help in making the web easier to use? This site explains the many ways you can change your browser, computer, keyboard and mouse settings to make the web more accessible for you.

[How this site works...](#)

[Change colours and background on this site](#) 

“The BBC website is easy to navigate and increases my independence as a disabled person.”
Darren, London

[More from our users...](#)

Accessibility News

- CBBC launches six accessible games online
- BBC Ouch's Access 2.0 Blog - debate the future of the accessible web...

[More news...](#)

Start here - choose your operating system:



■ **Windows**

Information for 95,98,2000, Me and XP versions



■ **Apple Mac**

Information for OS 8 & 9 and OS X versions



■ **Linux**

Information for KDE and Gnome desktops

Accessibility on bbc.co.uk

■ Accessibility Why the bbc.co.uk site supports accessibility	■ Standards Standards & policies used on bbc.co.uk
■ Case studies How our users make the web accessible	■ This site This site is a BBC partnership with AbilityNet

Conclusion?

- Understand how users operate your site
- Be aware of current browser/AT behaviour
- Don't just do it “for the sake of it”
- Text size widgets are evil, and Patrick hates them...

Thanks

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Slides (+ audio and transcript, eventually)

www.splintered.co.uk/documents/presentations/psf_accessibility_08.08.2007