

Attention Spans Are Shorter!

**Do You Want Your Electronic
Business Documents Read?**

Mobile Business E-Document Design

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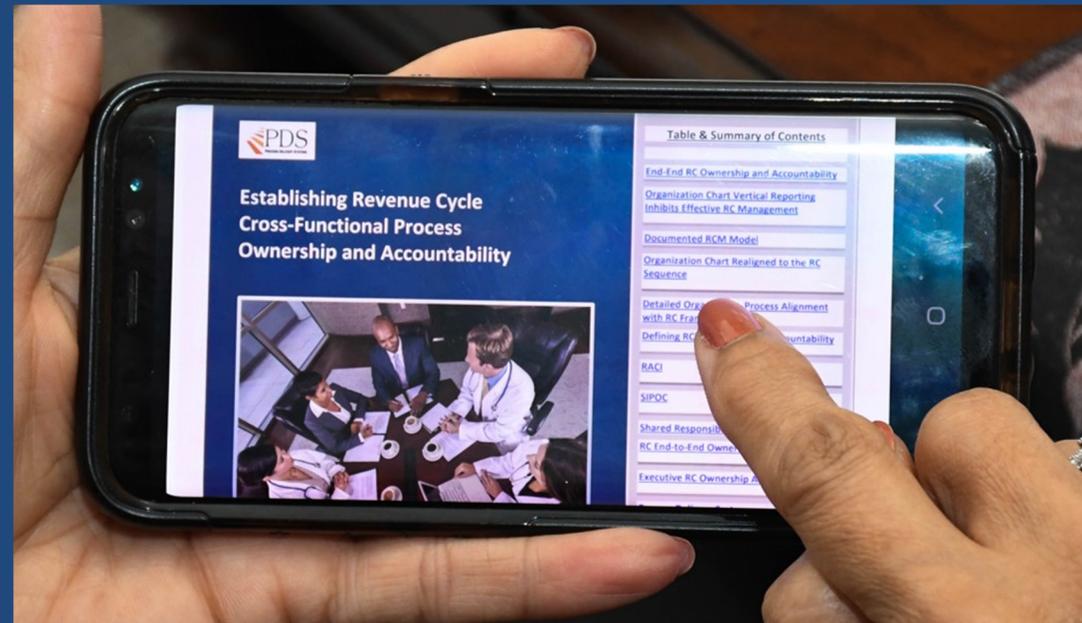


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Assignment – Eliminate Scrolling Through E-Documents

This document, “Mobile Business E-Document Design” illustrates the results of a client’s requirements, our research, and reviews from a host of business professionals.

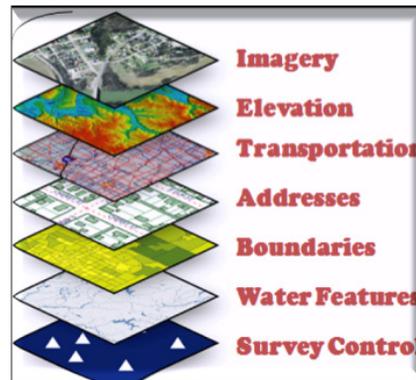
Our client is a government public-safety geographic information system (mapping and address data) quality assurance agency. Maps are geometrically defined in layers using points, lines, and polygons. Precise and timely public-safety grade data is required to produce maps that first-responders use to quickly get to correct locations of emergencies. This agency’s role is to ensure data accuracy for a large multi-county region.

They required an electronic document (e-document) design that would improve the team’s productivity by eliminating the extensive time spent scrolling through e-documents in search of desired content. We had to develop a solution that could be used by the client’s staff with existing software.

We developed a PDF model using Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat. We provided a prototype, a design guide, and training. This model enabled the agency to recapture a substantial amount of time from scrolling through documents and redirect that effort to more productive activities.

We’ve researched what companies are doing. This e-book illustrates the design. We’ve included some of their examples in this e-book.

Example GIS Mapping Layers



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Business E-Document Design for a Shorter Attention Span

Through our research with multiple tests, designs, and feedback, we found that electronic/digital business documents created for today's business reader requires a vastly different paradigm than that used for traditional document design. This applies to proposals, consulting reports, procedural, technical and marketing documents.

Traditional electronic business document design follows the reading model or reading space for 8.5 by 11 documents. The platforms and reading styles have changed.

Today's business reader is mobile, multi-tasking, and reading-impatient.

Technology enables the delivery of huge volumes of information to readers from differing paths so much so that reading habits have changed. It is reported that the attention span of an Internet user has decreased from 12 seconds to 8, just below that of a goldfish. Today's audience scans first to see how much time and effort they will allocate to read a digital document. Multi-tasking also competes for attention span.

Mobile technologies enable the audience to read business documents just about any time and from anywhere. More business documents are read on mobile phones. The scrolling thumb-role starts around 3-4 seconds if the reader is unfamiliar with the document. For our evaluation, the ultimate pass/fail for every design was that it had to work as well on a mobile phone as it did on a desktop, laptop, or tablet.



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Today's digital business documents require improved designs that accommodate shortened attention spans, scan then read, and win more attention in a multi-tasking environment.

We've captured and analyzed the navigation functions of thousands of PDF-based electronic documents from industry, government, professional associations, businesses etc.



As you would guess, we found a huge number of business documents on the commercial side with extensive graphical designs. We also found that, for business documents, illustrations that were just enhanced document artistry gained little to no attention from the reader. Artistry may indicate the document's and company's quality but only matters for a split second. In some cases, artistry was more confusing. We also interviewed a good number of professionals. Document navigation frustration was the major hurdle in just about all interviews. We use the term hurdle because it's clear that navigation is the major factor that determines if the document gets read.

Navigation and access on mobile phones trumped other issues to overcome!

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E-Document Navigation Issues

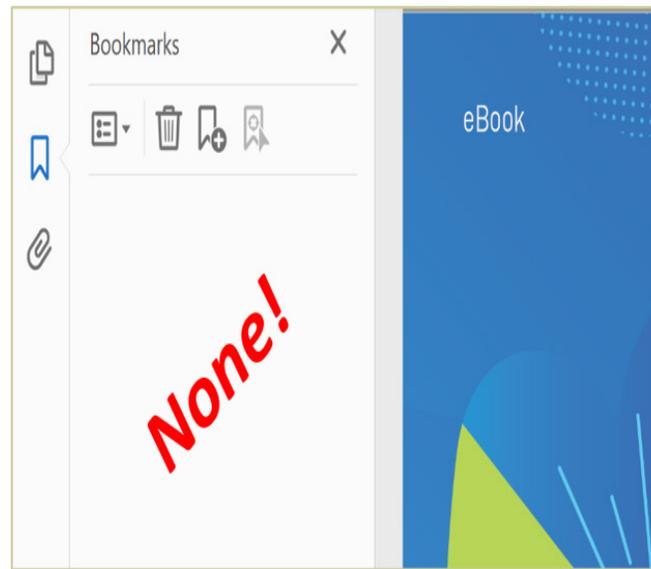
Our first hurdle was to improve navigation to and through e-document content. We focused on how easily we could determine what was in the document and then get to chapters, subchapters, back to the table of contents, and to the cover page.

Our testing involved having audiences open documents on their choice of device. We did not let them know what we were testing for. We would email the document of focus to the them. Mobile phones were the most used. The issues that surfaced were used to create our initial design and to make improvements. The eye-opener was the document model components we were all trained on decades ago doesn't apply in the mobile environment.

Issues

We've literally gone through 10s of thousands of documents. Navigation issues include:

- No table of contents or use of bookmarks
- Table of content with no hyperlinks
- Hyperlinked table of contents or bookmarks that tell you nothing about the content. For example:
 - Chapter 1
 - Chapter 2
- Table of content on something other than page 2 (saw one with the table of contents on page 45)



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Observed Reader Experience

- The first page of a document is extremely short-lived; long enough for the reader to scan the title. Artistry is of little consequence, but professionalism must be maintained. The reader will quickly thumb to the second page expecting to see the table of contents.
- If the table of contents is not on page 2 or if it does but doesn't have links to the chapters, subchapters, etc. the reader will quickly start scrolling. Their frustration starts here. With no obvious navigation assistance, chances of losing the reader's attention starts and ratchets up quickly, especially with longer documents.
- If the table of contents is on the second page and has links, the reader will tap a link to get to a topic. If that topic is not of interest or if the reader wants to see other topics, they will have to scroll to get back to the table of contents. Again, a small degree of frustration will start. With no other obvious navigation assistance, depending on the document length, chances of losing the reader's attention increases. In many cases, the reader closes the document planning to read it when they have more time.
- As stated previously, table of contents (hyperlinked) and bookmarks with chapters labeled, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, tells the reader nothing.



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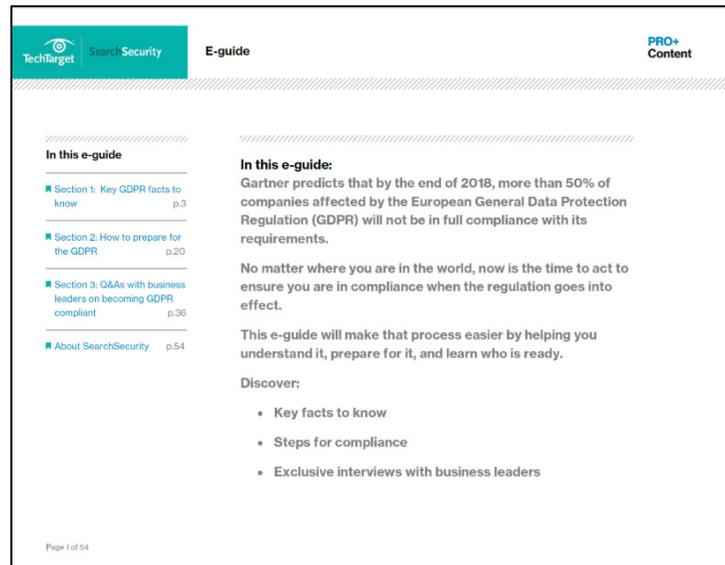
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E-Document Navigation Solution

Our goal was to create a table of contents for every page but not the size of a normal table of contents. We found a workable model based on an e-book produced by TechTarget. TechTarget's model has great bookmarks but some mobile devices don't utilize bookmarks without additional software. The TechTarget design provided a mini table of contents to major chapter pages. The mini table of contents was placed on page 2 and every subsequent page.

We used that as our target design. We researched Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat functional capabilities and found that this combination enabled us to create the mini table of contents, or hyperlink table as we call it, that could be placed on every page.

There is still a need for a master table of contents. We placed the hyperlink table on every page except the master table of contents. We also placed the hyperlink table on the cover page. This tells the reader immediately what's in the document when it's opened. We learned to place a link in the hyperlink table to the master table of contents and a hyperlink to the document cover page. The hyperlink table on the right side of this page illustrates the design.



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Additional Mobile E-Document Improvements

We recommend using landscape page orientation and, if possible, limit the document size to 8.5 by 11 inches. Landscape orientation enables wider reading space, displays longer sentences, and allows more room for the hyperlink table on the left or right side of each page. Again, it is highly likely that the reader is using a mobile phone and will turn the phone horizontally because of more reading space.



Use a larger typeface for the body or text. We prefer to use a sans serif typeface. We're using 14 point and Calibri. Make good use of whitespace. Don't go overboard on whitespace to the point where the concept presented is fractured. Use headings and sub-headings. Use bookmarks with chapter and subchapter labels that describe the content. The chapter and subchapter labels should be a larger

typeface than the body. They can also be a different color with enhancements like underlining.

Make sensible use of images and graphics. Remember, a picture is worth a thousand, maybe 10,000 words.

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Mobile Business E-Document Design Benefits

So, we call this a mobile business e-document design. The design improves e-document navigation and readability for today's business environment where the reading audience has shorter attention spans and are more than likely to be multi-tasking. Where does it apply? In business documents like:

- Proposals, and marketing collateral
 - Gain the competitive advantage. Quickly convey the value your solution brings to your client's needs. Demonstrate the respect your organization places on your client's time. Help your client to clearly and quickly understand the value you offer over your competition.
- Policies, regulatory content
 - Quickly understand what performance is acceptable
- Technical documentation, and standard operating procedures
 - These are read to get work done. The faster the reader gets to and understands the procedures the more productive they can be.
 - Improves the ability of the organization to reallocate time spent and cost scrolling through e-documents to more productive activities.



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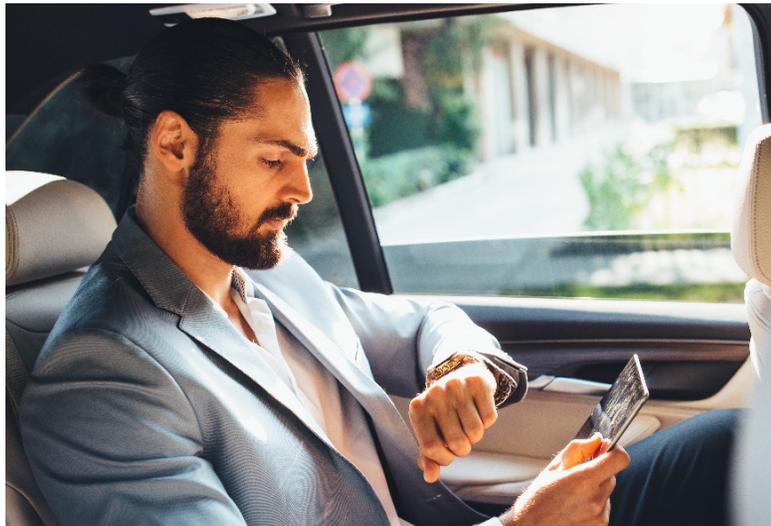
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Self-Check Questions

When you're producing your business e-documents, keep your reader in mind. Writing and documentation is a task that requires a good amount of effort. Take a look from your reader's perspective. Don't let pride of authorship take your focus off your audience. Ask yourself a few questions like:

- How much competition is there to capture the attention of your audience?
- Is it likely that your audience will read your e-documents on a mobile phone?
- Do the layouts of your e-documents quickly convey the contents?
- Do the designs of your e-documents enable the audience to quickly and effortlessly get to desired information?
- When a reader opens and gets into one of your e-documents, can they navigate quickly to other sections or do they have to scroll and search a lot?
- Do you think they will spend a lot of time scrolling through your e-documents, especially if there are other e-documents competing for their attention?
- Will excessive scrolling reduce their desire to read your e-documents?



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Examples of Improved Business E-Documents

HEALTHCO Information Systems – Improving Clinic Profits Through Revenue Cycle Management:

<https://www.quatrishealthco.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/HealthCo-Revenue-Cycle-Management-eBook.pdf>



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Dassault Systems: DIGITALIZATION AND CONTINUITY

<https://discover.3ds.com/sites/default/files/2018-07/ebook-digitalization-continuity-dassault-systemes.pdf>



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Change Healthcare: Twenty-First Century Systems for Twenty-First Century Healthcare - Guidance on Payer Core System Project Strategy and Execution

https://hceg.org/wp-content/uploads/AF18_Whitepaper_ChangeHealthcareConsulting.pdf





- Introduction
- Table of Contents
- Modernizing your Core Systems
- Four Pillars of Success
- Guidelines for Project Ownership
- Developing an Effective Training Program
- Strategy for Process Redesign
- Five Rules for Requirements Gathering
- Optimizing System Integration
- Don't Forget the Testing

Twenty-First Century Systems for Twenty-First Century Healthcare:

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Process Delivery Systems: RCM Accountability and Ownership:

https://processdeliversystems.com/ebooks/PDS_RCM_Process_Ownership_Accountability.pdf



Establishing Revenue Cycle Cross-Functional Process Ownership and Accountability



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About Process Delivery Systems

Process Delivery Systems (PDS) is a process consulting firm that defines and delivers processes and their associated resources in a visually intuitive manner. Our goal is to eliminate confusion from complex processes.

We deliver processes and associated resources in customized web frameworks called Process Resource Centers (PRCs). PRCs operationalize static content by incorporating visual design and links to resources where they are needed in process execution. PRCs' visual elegance and content rich design delivers revenue cycle management resources in a manner that is visually and operationally consumable to all stakeholders.

We provide:

- Team workshops
- Research and review of policies, industry standards, and internal practices
- Shared Responsibility Mapping
- Process Resource Center design, development, and implementation

Our e-book design – this e-book illustrates a design that accommodates the expectations of today's reading audience. We provide the following:

- Customized prototype of an organization's desired document
- A customized e-book design guide for the document created
- Training for the organization's document production team
- Supplemental writing and document production resources as necessary

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