



# Web Page Viewing Issues

When viewing web pages on screen, different people will have a different experience based upon a range of factors. Our web pages, unless otherwise specified, are designed to fit within a set minimum width to allow the website to be fully visible on a screen resolution of 1024 pixels (px) wide. You will find below a summary of some of the differences that may be experienced by different users.

## Diagnosing Display Issues

When reporting or investigating a web page display issue it is important to know the following details:

1. The operating system running on the computer. For example "Windows 7" or Mac OS X.
2. The type AND version of the browser. For example Internet Explorer 8.0 or Firefox 7.0. You can usually find version details under the About 'browser name' menu. Under Windows this is usually found under the "Help" menu. On a Mac this can usually be found under the "browser name" menu.
3. The URL or web address of the problem page.

Where possible it is always advantageous to take a screen shot, including the address bar, of a problem page for sending to our team.

## Operating System

An operating system (OS or O/S) is the main programme that runs on a computer and is provides the main interface for a user. Operating systems include Microsoft Windows (XP, Vista, Windows 7, etc.), MAC OS X (Cheetah, Snow Leopard, Lion, etc.), Linux-based variants and those found on mobile devices.

Web browsers use certain standard elements from the computers operating system such as text boxes, drop down boxes, scrollbars and mouse-cursors. Whilst it is possible to simply style some elements to change their look, some will maintain their appearance dictated by the operating system. These differences are often minimal but need to be taken into account when viewing screen-shots or viewing a site.

In some circumstances it may be possible to replace such web page elements with others that, on the face of it, perform the same function but do not use the set operating system's elements . However, to do so requires some additional code, usually in Javascript, to make this function. Whilst not common, Javascript may be disabled by the user or the functionality may not be available on the users browser or O/S. In addition, using non-standard interface elements may cause issues to users with accessibility issues who are used to a certain way of working. It is best practice to use the system default elements wherever possible.

## Screen Resolution / Screen Size

The screen resolution (sometimes referred to as "Display Resolution") of a screen is the number of pixels that will be displayed in each dimension. A pixel is the smallest "dot" that can be displayed. The screen resolution is usually displayed in the format **width x height**. When we build web page we design them to fit within the width of a resolution of 1024 x 768, with enough spare width to cater for the standard scroll bars in most O/S. This is usually around the width of 960px.

As is common with most web pages overall height is generally not restricted allowing users to scroll to access all the information. Sometimes it is requested to keep certain content near the top of the screen "above the fold". "The fold" refers to the point at which the user has to scroll down to view the content - that not immediately visible when the page loads. The difficulty here is that "the fold" will be in a different place for each user depending on the user's screen resolution, web browser, and the number of toolbar or add-ons they have on display within the web browser. It is not uncommon for a user to have 150px to 200px worth of height taken up with browser toolbars and add-ons. On top of this they will also have elements from their O/S such as the Windows or Mac task bars taking up valuable screen height. The end result, on a 1024 x 768 resolution for example, could be a vertical display area of around 550px for "above the fold" web content which would also need to include the standard website branding and navigation. This also assumes the browser is open to the full size available. Websites with an eye on "above the fold" often assume that much less space is available. Indeed, many mobile devices will have a very limited height display. As web pages become more content-rich and the variety of viewing devices increases, "the fold" is becoming less of a concern as maybe it once was.

## Web Browser Version

A web browser is a programme that allows a user to view and navigate around web page. There is a wide range of different programme to choose from. Examples include Internet Explorer (IE), Firefox, Google Chrome, Opera, Safari, Avant, and many others. Web browsers have been around for many years and some people use versions of the software that were released a number of years ago and may not be able to display the latest visual enhancement or run the latest technologies. Often cited examples are IE versions 6 and 7. IE6 was released in 2001 and IE7 was released in 2006. Most web design companies no longer try and support IE6 ten-year-old technology is incredibly outdated and support for IE7 is dwindling. IE is currently in version 9 and version 10 is, at the time of writing, in Beta testing stage.

Different web browsers sometimes interpret web page coding in different ways. However we

take a number of steps to restrict these to a minimum.

We test our websites in the latest versions of all major browser to make sure that they display and function correctly. In addition, we always try to ensure that web pages function well and look presentable in IE7 and other older browsers but some more recent display enhancements and technologies may not display.

We no longer build for, or test websites in IE6 unless specifically requested. There would be an additional charge for this service.

## **Zoom Level & Text Size**

Modern browsers allow the user to "zoom in" (or zoom out) their view of the web page to enable them to see things in more detail or, conversely, gain a wider perspective of the information on the page. Sizes of page elements will obviously be different depending on the zoom level selected. We design our pages with a normal or 100% zoom level in mind.

It is also possible for most browsers to "zoom [the] text only" or change the overall font size. This attempts to make the text bigger or smaller but without changing the size of anything else on the page - including the size of the page elements containing the text. This may cause appearance issues, such as text breaking out of the layout or strange word-wrapping issues. Whilst we usually build our web pages to allow the text-zoom functionality to work for accessibility reasons, they are designed to be viewed at 100% / normal text-zoom level. In certain circumstances the font size may be fixed, owing to design restrictions, and will ignore any user initiated text-zoom.