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nytimes.com Analysis

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The website I chose to analyze in conjunction with Chapter 5 in “Multimedia Foundations” was that belonging to *The New York Times*. The website is made to serve as a sort of supplement to the printed version of the organization’s daily newspaper.

First and foremost, the website is aligned in the popular F-format. The readers’ eyes are first drawn to the headlines at the top of the page and then they are seamlessly led to the subsequent row of articles. The newspaper arranges the order so as to display what they perceive will be their most popular articles. This effort is enhanced by the use of visual hierarchy. The most important articles are not only physically located at the top of the page, but they are also displayed in a noticeably larger font size. This helps guide the readers’ eyes.

In addition to the F-format that the website utilizes, there is also a presence of the modular grid arrangement. The articles and multimedia formats are displayed in various rows and columns that differ in both size and shape. This helps visually differentiate one article from the next. Another method they enact to achieve this goal is that of chunking body copy. Very much as a newspaper is divided into sections, so is the website. There are different boxes reserved for the different sections of the newspaper. This helps engender a more authentic reading experience for the readers.

The website itself is a sort of mix of static and dynamic. It is dynamic in the sense that it updates each day, but is static in the sense that the format does not change on a day-to-day basis. It utilizes a fixed layout with ever-changing content.

As far as the functionality of the website is concerned, I think it succeeds in some aspects and fails in others. I think the aspect where the website most succeeds is in the emulation of a tangible newspaper. The layout is such that a reader can feel as if he/she is reading an authentic newspaper. There are headlines that have the ability to provide deeper information if pursued and the layout is separated by section. In this sense, the reading experience is authentic. However in creating this authentic experience, the newspaper gives up something in terms of aesthetics. While the site is functional, at first glance, it is very crowded. It is difficult to look at the homepage, see the oceans of text and not feel a bit overwhelmed. But yet again, this aspect also helps with the authentic reading experience.

All in all, I found nytimes.com to be a functional website that achieved its goal of providing an alternative means of obtaining information.