

# User Interface Design and the Value of Keeping it Simple, Stupid

by  
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I've really enjoyed using my iPhone for web access, basic communications, and social media such as Google+, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The user interfaces and resulting user experience for many such smartphone apps tend to be simpler and more straightforward than the web versions.



Increasingly I find myself actually *preferring* the smartphone experience over the web experience. I was reminded of this most aggressively by a recent trip to the web version of Huffington Post for an article titled [Book Movies: 7 Novels That Should Be Adapted](#) by an unnamed author.



This Huffington Post web user interface is an absolute mess. I'm not just referring to the brain-dead slideshow used to cycle through the list of movie paragraphs and cover page images that are the topic of the article. Just look at the flotilla of links crowded like barnacles around the page, all yelling "pick me! pick me!" like Shrek's Donkey. Some are to other pages of content, some are to social ranking and rating services, some to commenting and relationship building services. Thank goodness they don't blink or jump up and down. That would be intolerable.

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<sup>1</sup> Copyright (c) 2012 by Dennis D. McDonald, Ph.D. If you liked this article maybe you'll also like [Ten Questions re: Does Your Tech Company Web Site Suck?](#) Dennis is a Washington DC area consultant specializing in collaborative project management and new technology adoption. His clients have included the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the US Environmental Protection Agency, the National Library of Medicine, the National Academy of Engineering, and the World Bank Group. Contact Dennis via email at [ddmcd@yahoo.com](mailto:ddmcd@yahoo.com) or by phone at 703-402-7382. The online version of this article is located [here](#).

I'm sure there's research somewhere that says this is the way to make a page "sticky." By offering a plethora of disjointed and overlapping links and references, some to other pages, some to "social" commenting and content creation opportunities, you increase the likelihood a user will become ensnared, more likely to stay, and more likely to come back.

No thanks. I'll go elsewhere. I'm no interface design expert, but my time and patience are limited. If you have good content, please don't hide it in the weeds!