

The visual editor: IBM Makes It Easier To Browse Web Sites On Mobile Devices (w/ Video)

October 26 2009



IBM Researchers are making Web sites more readable on the small screens of mobile devices. IBM computer scientists borrowed technology that the company originally developed for the visually impaired. Employing arrows and drag-and-drop capabilities, IBM's visual editor proof-of-concept simplifies the process of presenting content in the correct order.

IBM researchers have created technology, initially developed for visually-impaired users, that makes it simpler for Webmasters to make their Web sites more readable on the small screens of mobile devices, reducing burdensome scrolling through out-of-order text and graphics.

The Web has turned consumers into do-it-yourself travel agents, data entry clerks and librarians. With the rise of blogs and social media, they have also been turned into syndicated columnists. As such, many have

also been forced to become amateur Webmasters, faced with the challenge of cramming content into a format readable on [mobile devices](#), including cellphones -- an increasingly common way to access the Internet.

To help Webmasters of all skill levels, IBM researchers in Tokyo have developed a visual editor technology that enables Webmasters to arrange their Web site content reading flow in a logically-ordered sequence -- without changing the existing content -- that can be easily read on the small screens of mobile devices. The editing tool can also improve the browsing experience for visually impaired Web surfers who use voice browsers to read [Web content](#).

The visual editor uses smoothly connecting arrows to show in what order voice browsers would present content. To edit the reading flow, Webmasters need only drag, drop and re-arrange the arrows. This is an improvement over more cumbersome methods, such as using voice browsers to check reading flow line by line, and requiring Webmasters to copy and paste large amounts of content to a memopad to check reading flow.

In addition to Web pages, the tool can be applied to electronic presentations, PDF documents and Flash content to improve their contextual reading flow.

Global mobile subscriptions are expected to reach 4.6 billion by the end of the year, according to the International Telecommunication Union. IBM Research is making a five-year, US \$100 million investment to advance mobile services and capabilities for businesses and consumers worldwide. Through this effort, IBM is aiming to drive new intelligence into the underpinnings of the mobile Web to create new efficiencies in business operations and people's daily lives.

More information: For more information about IBM's mobile Web initiative, please visit www.ibm.com/press/us/en/presskit/24254.wss

Source: IBM

Citation: The visual editor: IBM Makes It Easier To Browse Web Sites On Mobile Devices (w/ Video) (2009, October 26) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-10-visual-editor-ibm-easier-browse.html>

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