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"Don't Make me Think" Book Review

I's pretty clear that when Steve Krug wrote this book, he did so with the intent of breaking down good design choices and decisions one can make in the realm of web design. In every chapter, Krug discusses new tactics and things to keep in mind when designing an interface and in the broader picture of web usability.

Krug's first main point revolves around universal principles to follow when designing for the web. From designing a site based on that fact that humans inherently scan rather than read, to simply removing needless words (or "happy talk" as Krug sometimes refers to it), the first section of the book discusses basic guidelines that anyone should always follow when web designing.

Krug's second point is focused on the theory of navigation design and the importance of homepage organization. In this section, he breaks down how navigation actually works through a series of pictures and charts and highlights important ideas to consider when trying to design effective site navigational flow. He then moves own and lays out the architecture of a home page and talks about a myriad of significant things to keep in mind in its design such as taglines, hierarchy, and keeping sight of a website's "Big Picture". Krug never misses an opportunity to lay out as much relevant information as possible and it does help that he includes imaging to further explain his points.

Krug's next major point focuses on the user themselves and the process of usability testing. He first elaborates on who the user actually is, asserting that "all web users are unique, and all web use is basically idiosyncratic". Because of this Krug gives tips to his readers on the correct way to phrase questioning to help find their user/user base for a particular site. Krug then moves on to the actual process of usability testing on an actual site. He lays out the entire process and while the whole thing is quite extensive, he outlines clear steps for one to be successful in usability testing.

Krug's final point attacks usability in a broader way by first focusing on the revolution of mobile devices and understanding how the rules of design change for this new web environment. He also discusses the roles and principles of "goodwill" and accessibility in web design and the value they can bring to any web product if implemented correctly in their design.

Throughout the entirety of the book, Krug makes sweeping assertions on the nature of web design. When making his specific points, Krug uses a variety of different types of evidence to back up his findings, all of which I found enlightening and convincing. For instance, in Chapter Two, the broad point Krug makes is that we as humans, scan content and don't make optimal choices. Rather we satisfice in our decision making and find "the first reasonable option". Krug supports this claim by citing another book about decision-making and applies its assertions to support his own web designing techniques. To cite another example, when Krug discusses usability testing in Chapter Nine, he covers the entirety of the usability testing process from start to finish. Some of the most effective evidence shown here wasn't some extra

research or examples, but his actual breakdown of the entire process. There was never a point in Krug's explanations that I questioned the validity of what he was saying, and his points were always cogent and often derived from his own experience.

I felt that *Don't Make Me Think* was very well written. While Krug does give his audience a lot to think about, and it would take me looking back at the text a few more times to completely absorb everything he said, he puts to together a fascinating and illuminating discussion throughout his book. Every chapter, I learned some kind of valuable lesson or insight to that I plan to keep in mind when working on future projects.

Prior reading this book, I knew on the surface that there was a lot about Web/UI design beneath the aesthetic surface that I was still ignorant about. But Krug's writings really opened my eyes to the vast and intricate nature of usability and this book has continued to show me that I still have a long way to go towards understanding this career path I have chosen. But if anything, reading it has only made me more driven and hungry for knowledge to help me be successful in my professional future.