Objective
To locate and analyze the visual design of two (2) different multipage interfaces.

Documentation
Here is a screen shots to illustrate the [http://www.bananarepublic.com](http://www.bananarepublic.com) web site:

Web Site Analysis ([http://www.bananarepublic.com](http://www.bananarepublic.com))
- **Multipage**: Yes, it is a multipage design because it has several interactive pages (system/user).
- **Medium**: The medium is the commercial message. Banana Republic does a good use of advertisement for its targeted audience; for example, it offers customers the ability to sign up for free shipping on purchases of $100 or more. I did not encounter any untargeted advertising on this site.
- **Hybrid**: yes, it is hybrid because the input/output devices are separated (a keyboard and a mouse are used for the input).

Banana Republic’s description of the interface in terms of its layout:

- **Proximity**: the main navigation and sub-navigation is displayed as a group on the left side. No matter where you are, the links “store locator, access your info, terms of use, privacy policy, customer service, BR card, and the store’s 800 telephone number” are always grouped together at the bottom of the screen.
- **Alignment**: left alignment is always used on menus and submenus.
- **Repetition**: the layout consists of two fixed frames (the top and left frames) and a dynamic frame (the middle frame). I see a lot repetition since the top frame and
the left frame are always the same; web sites should show consistency and this site definitely does a great job in achieving this goal. I also see the use of repetition when displaying the links and 800-telephone number at the bottom of the middle frame. The Web page logo consistently appear on the left corner of each page and is use to take the user back to the home page.

- **Contrast**: nice contras of blue text and white background on most pages is found. I also see contrast of color on some pages (SHOES, ACCESSORIES, GEMELRY and GIFTS) they use accent colors at the bottom of these pages for special advertisements such as “free shipments” which I thing it is a very clever idea.

- **Text**: there seems to be only two or three text types but different type sizes are used to create the visual hierarchy. Text links are often underlined to make it easier for the user to identify what is clickable and what is not.

- **Color**: I love the site’s use of colors the site very efficiently uses just a little color through out the site. The white background of the changing frame produces a nice contrast with the light green color used in the background for the fixed frames. I am not a big fun of bright colors on Web sites except for kid’s sites so I definitely think the site’s colors selection is very appropriate.

- **Use of the Grid**: a three-panel layout has been effectible being used in this web page layout. The strip across the top which answers the question “Where am I?” the left side of the page addresses the question “Where can I go?” and finally the center of the page answers the question “What is here?”

In summary the Banana Republic Web page shows a well-planned architecture; its layout is very clean, not busy or overwhelming with just enough text and or graphics. The structure of each peace of content is well defined. The appropriate labeling of each component of the site contributes to its success. If I were asked to describe this site in two words I would use the words “simplicity” and “consistency”.

**Documentation**

Here is a representative pictures to illustrate a touch screen’s gift registry system.
Touch screen baby gift registry Analysis (Lullaby Club)

- **Multipage**: Yes, it is a multipage design because it has several interactive pages (system/user).
- **Medium**: The medium is the commercial message. The gift registry system uses some advertisement for its targeted audience; for example, upon registration, the user can select to have his/her gifts list online or not. No unsolicited advertisement was present.
- **Hybrid**: no, the interface is all contained within the display.

Touch screen’s baby gift registry’s description of the interface in terms of its layout:

- **Proximity**: most text fields were grouped together and the action buttons were consistently displayed at the bottom of the screen. Characters representing the keyboards and/or numeric pads were grouped together to mimic the actual objects.
- **Alignment**: most of the screens use center alignment.
- **Repetition**: the “Quit, Next and Go Back” buttons were always displayed at the bottom of the screen. Repetition of color patterns was also present on all the screens.
- **Contrast**: black text was contrasted with white background.
- **Text:** there seems to be only one text type and size use through out the system. Since the keyboard emulation did not show the “Caps Lock” key the system indiscriminately uses upper case letters.
- **Color:** I notice the system uses bright, patterned background color probably to minimize the visual effect of dirt and fingerprints. Same colors were use through out the system.
- **Use of the Grid:** absence of grid.

In summary the touch screen unit that I tested had some problems, it was apparently out of calibration. Sometimes I would press the buttons several times and receive no response, other times pressing the buttons caused the wrong event to appear. The worst part is that there were no error messages or any other type of indication that will indicate what the problem was and/or how to fix it. I was under the impression that touch screen systems were simple common sense designs and I still think they are if the unit is working properly. Unfortunately the system unit I tested had some problems and I am speculating the problem was with the touch screen not with the display.

**Conclusion**

Even thought the two interfaces that have been analyzed are completely unrelated there are some similarities such as: they are both computerized systems, they both involve machine/human interaction, both designs are based on the assumption that users share common knowledge, they are both commercial designs and probably the most important one is that both systems are trying to sell something to the user.

In terms of the layout design the possibilities for the Web based system are significantly superior. The touch screen system is mainly limited by its hardware and software capabilities. The Web interface was very successful at creating a visual hierarchy, which this is something the touch screen system did poorly. Both systems were successful at breaking pages into defined areas and they both did an excellent job at minimizing noise.

In general, the overall impression created in my mind before I even read the first line was “nice and easy to use”. I usually don’t like to shop on line and I don’t like busy sites that make me feel overwhelm but the Banana Republic site is probably the first site I ever seen that is so clean that it actually invites me to shop. Regarding the bad experience I had with the touch screen system I think it is OK to encounter here and there a machine that needs calibration.