

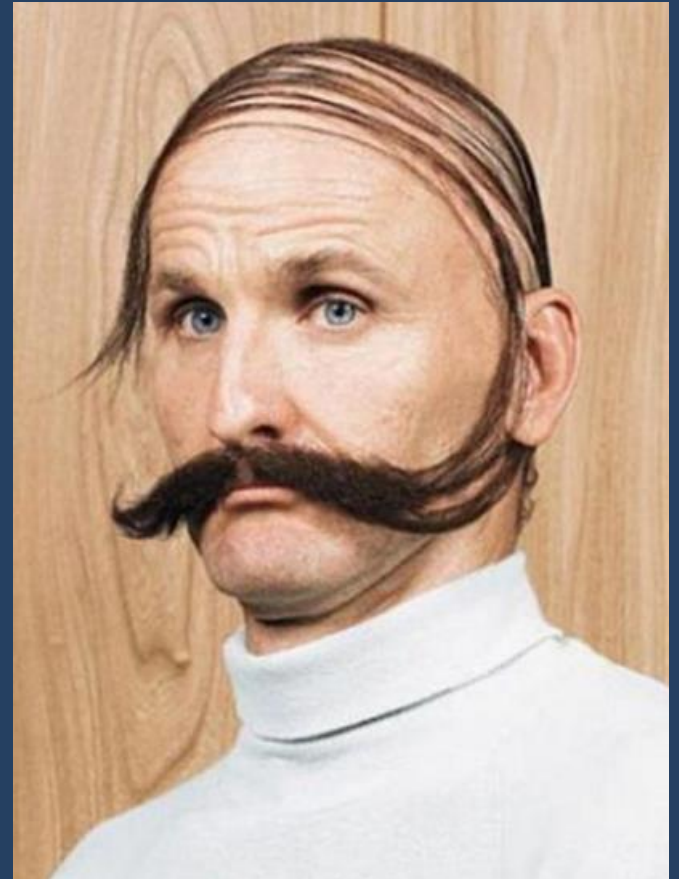
Needlessly wide

t a b l e s

A combover for data

View in slideshow mode

John Boykin
info@ApplegateLLC.com



We wouldn't think of larding up a screen with superfluous words just to fill up space

The Ming Dynasty ruled China from 1368 to 1644, and it was under its aegis, during the first half of the 15th century, that technological and design advances brought milky white and cobalt-blue porcelain to perfection.

The most internationally sought-after of all ceramics, Ming products became synonymous with the country that produced them, referred to in India and the Middle East as “chini” and in English as “china.”

But this artistic high point was just one of the many achievements of the Ming Dynasty between 1400 and 1450, as shown by “Ming: 50 years that changed China,” in the recently opened Sainsbury Exhibitions Gallery at the British Museum. The show runs from Sept. 18 until Jan. 5, 2015.

Five years in the planning, this dazzling show is curated by Professor Craig Clunas of Oxford University and Jessica Harrison-Hall of the British Museum.

With its population of around 85 million, 15th-century Ming China was by far the largest state on the globe. As Professor Clunas points out in the exhibition's exemplary catalog, everything about it was on a grand scale: “It had a greater land area, bigger cities (and more big cities), bigger armies, bigger ships, bigger palaces, bigger bells, more literate people, more religious professionals.”



We wouldn't think of stretching text to distortion to fill up space.

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We wouldn't think of stretching a photo to distortion to fill up space.



So why do we routinely fill up space with needlessly wide tables?

Your Meeting Credentials	
Dial-in Number:	 (712) 770-4010
International Dial-in Numbers:	View List
Access Code:	123-456
Online Meeting Link:	join.freeconferencecall.com/Rumpus1187



So why do we routinely fill up space with needlessly wide tables?

OCT
12 Gary Dale
Money sent

SEP
02 Backwoods Recording Studio
Money sent

AUG
24 Backwoods Recording Studio
Money sent

AUG
21 Backwoods Recording Studio
Money sent

- \$87.77

- \$200.96

- \$92.91

- \$41.46



Celebrity-Pics.net
Picture Parody by Phantazmo

So why do we routinely fill up space with needlessly wide tables?

Notification Preferences

Course Activities		
Due Date		📅 Weekly
Grading Policies		📅 Weekly
Course Content		
Files		
Announcement		✔ ASAP
Announcement Created By You		
Grading <input type="checkbox"/> Include scores when alerting about grade changes.		✔ ASAP
Invitation		✔ ASAP
Submission Comment		🕒 Daily

**Needlessly wide tables
&
combovers**

**are both ill-advised ways
of filling up space**

Gestalt principle of proximity

We perceive things close together



as more related than things far apart



In other words...

Distance weakens relation & requires effort to associate

Tables are odd beasts

In tables, no item means anything except in relation to some other item

- Date + amount + label
- Label + value

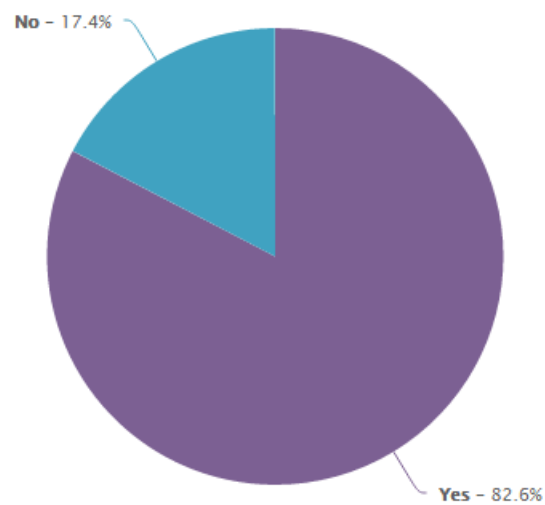
Needlessly wide tables disrupt relations: Bad for accessibility

Yes	
Proposition Number	1
Funding Water Quality, Supply, Treatment, Storage	
Yes Votes	3,388,499
Yes %	66.8%
No Votes	1,686,450
No %	33.2%
Yes	
Proposition Number	2
State Budget Stabilization Account	
Yes Votes	3,432,204
Yes %	68.7%
No Votes	1,561,972
No %	31.3%
No	
Proposition Number	45
Healthcare Insurance Rate Changes	
Yes Votes	2,037,696
Yes %	40.2%
No Votes	3,033,644
No %	59.8%

Needlessly wide tables disrupt relations: Bad for accessibility

Proposition Number	
	Year
Yes Votes	
Yes %	
No Votes	
No %	

Needlessly wide tables are everywhere



Yes	82.6%		638
No	17.4%		134
Total			772

Needlessly wide tables are everywhere



Needlessly wide tables are everywhere

— SPECIFICATIONS

Type	Tablet
Processor	Qualcomm® Snapdragon™ 600 1.7 GHz Quad-Core Processor
Dimensions	216.8 mm (H) x 126.5 mm (W) x 8.3 mm (D)
Weight	338 g
Display	8.3" Full HD IPS Display, 1920 x 1200 pixels, 273 ppi
Touch Screen	Yes
Battery Capacity	4,600 mAh Li-Polymer
Total Internal Memory	2 GB RAM, 16 GB eMMC Memory
MicroSD® Memory Slot	Support up to 64 GB*
	* MicroSD® cards sold separately

Needlessly wide tables are everywhere

DINE IN	
1 TORT SOUP CKN	5.29
NO ONION & CILANTRO	
ONION & CILANTRO	
NO CHEESE	
1 MEDIUM DRINK	1.99
CASH	7.90
FOOD	5.29
BEVERAGE	1.99
TAX	0.60
PAYMENT	7.88
Change Due	0.02
<hr/>	
82.00 855	

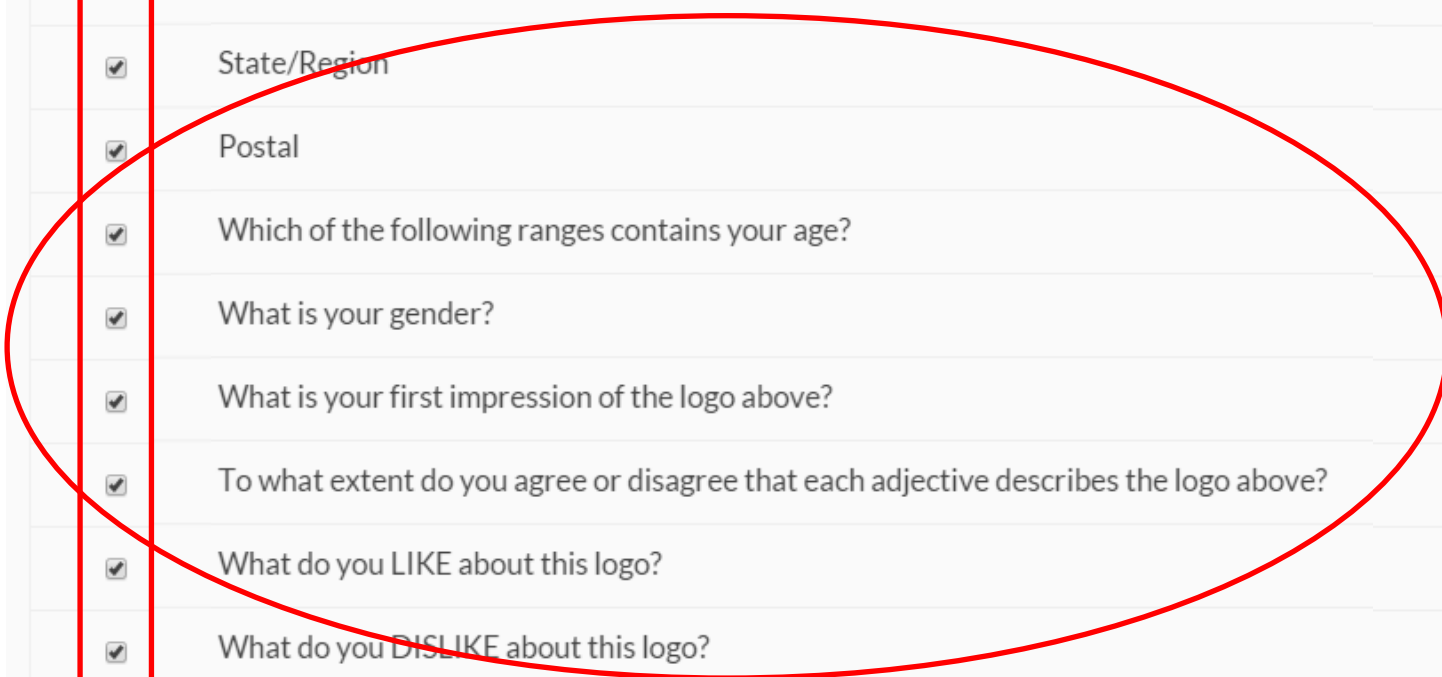
Needlessly wide tables are everywhere

Odometer	10
Oil change, engine	73, 74
Oil change, rear axle	84
Oil change, transmission	82
Oil filter	73
Oil pressure	11, 13
On call	117
Paint touch-up	100
Parking brake	19
Parking lights	15
Polishing	99
Power steering fluid	84
Power train	113
P-position lock	56, 58, 61, 107
Radios	25–36
Radio antenna mast	35
Rear axle oil	84
Rear foglight	15
Rear seat (wagon)	49
Rear view mirrors	47
Rear window demister	18
Reasons for distortion	34
Refueling	48
Reporting safety defects	37
Road assistance	117
Rustproofing	99
Rust protection	99

**Reconsidering needlessly
wide**

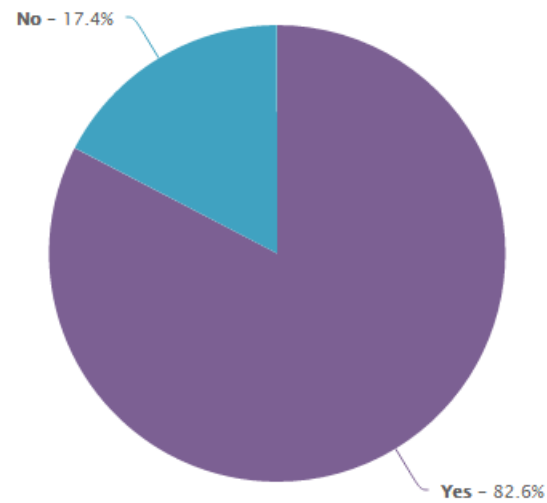
t a b l e s

Typical pattern:
Left elements same width
Right elements same width
Middle elements varied widths



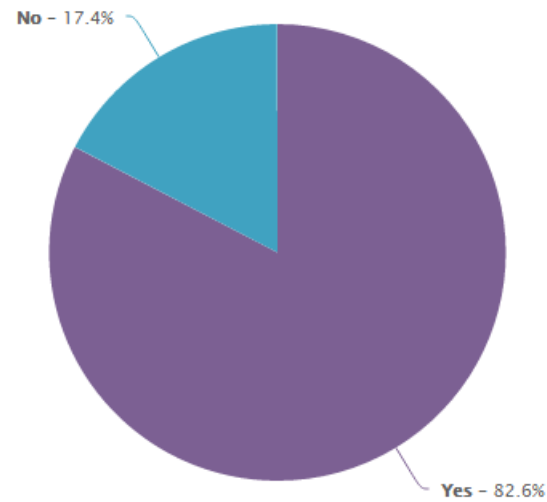
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Latitude	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Country	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	City	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State/Region	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Postal	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Which of the following ranges contains your age?	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	What is your gender?	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	What is your first impression of the logo above?	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	To what extent do you agree or disagree that each adjective describes the logo above?	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	What do you LIKE about this logo?	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	What do you DISLIKE about this logo?	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Based on this logo, what do you think is the name of this company?	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Based on this logo, how willing would you be to learn more about this company?	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Before you completed this survey, how familiar were you with the following companies?	↓ ×
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Redirect	↓ ×



Reconsidering needlessly wide tables



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Reconsidering needlessly wide tables

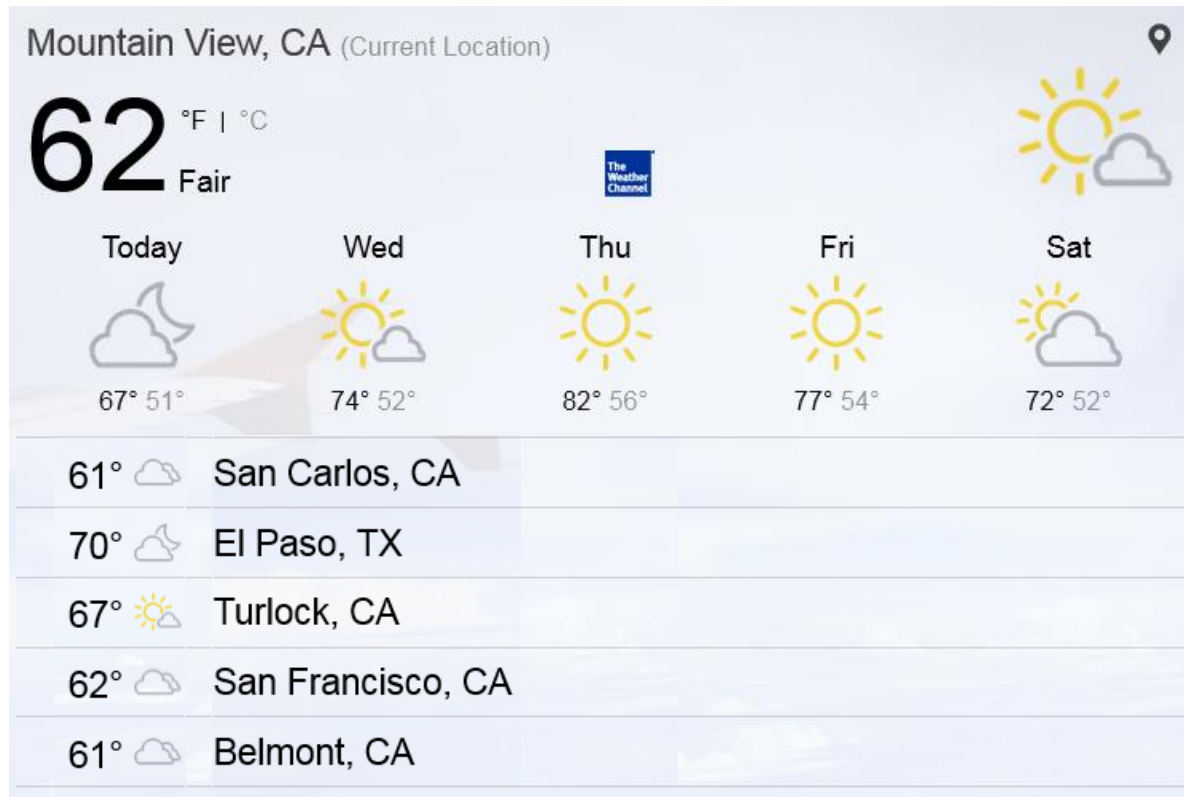


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Total			772

Reconsidering needlessly wide tables



Reconsidering needlessly wide tables



Entire width
is still
tappable for
mobile

A few guidelines for tables

Each column should be just wide enough to comfortably accommodate its actual contents + appropriate padding – even (especially) in responsive design

Columns should be no further apart than necessary to tell them apart

Columns whose contents vary the most in width should generally go in the rightmost position

Outlier-length content should wrap or be truncated

It is what it is. Let it be.

Account Balance

[view details](#)

Total lifetime sales

We Owe You

It is what it is. Let it be.

