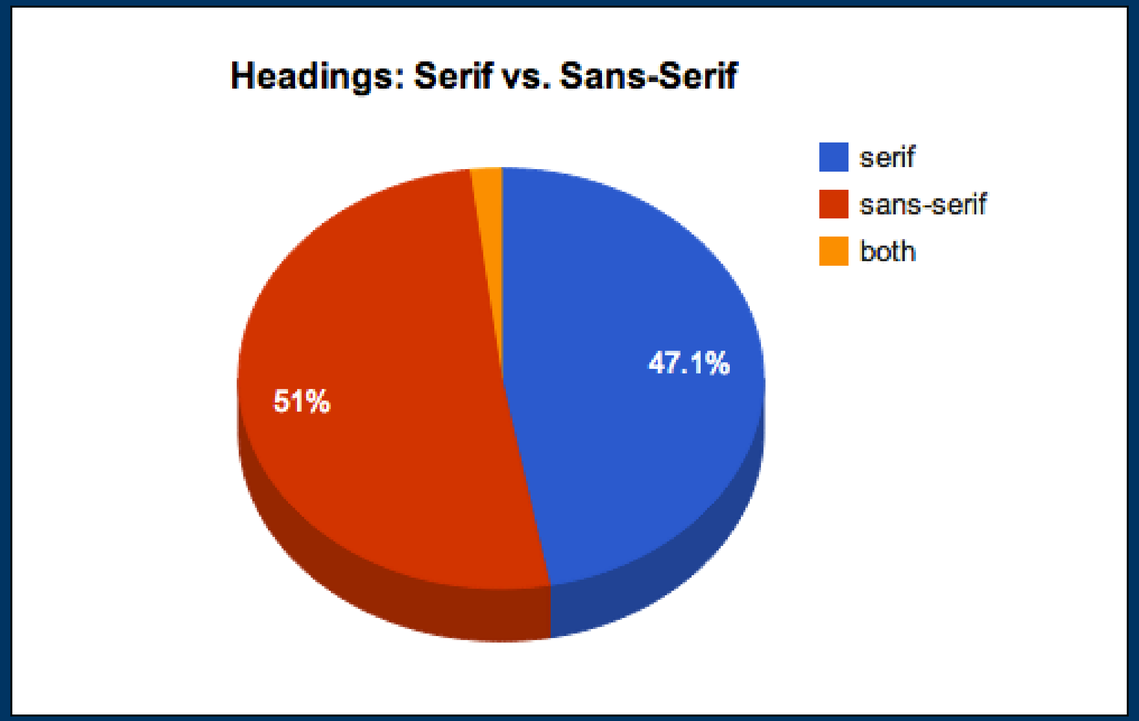
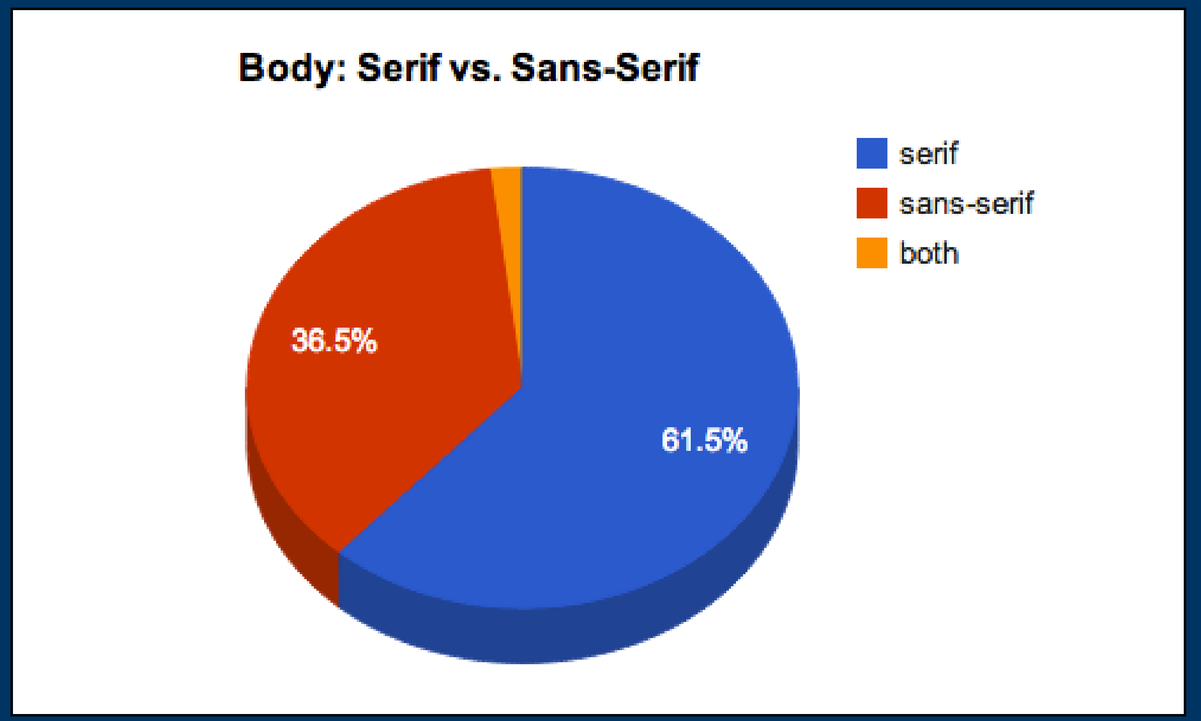
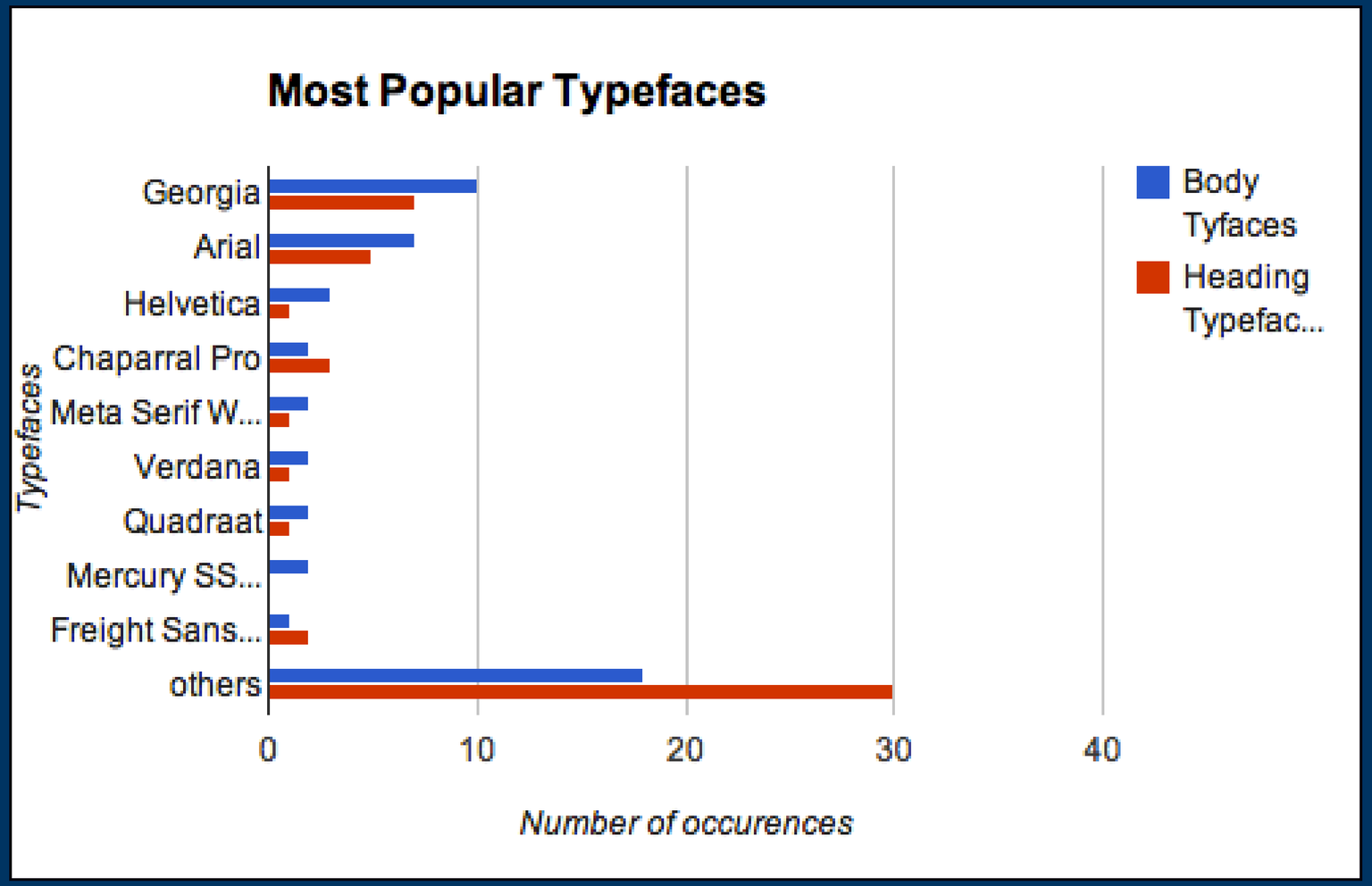
Web Typography

Serif vs San Serif

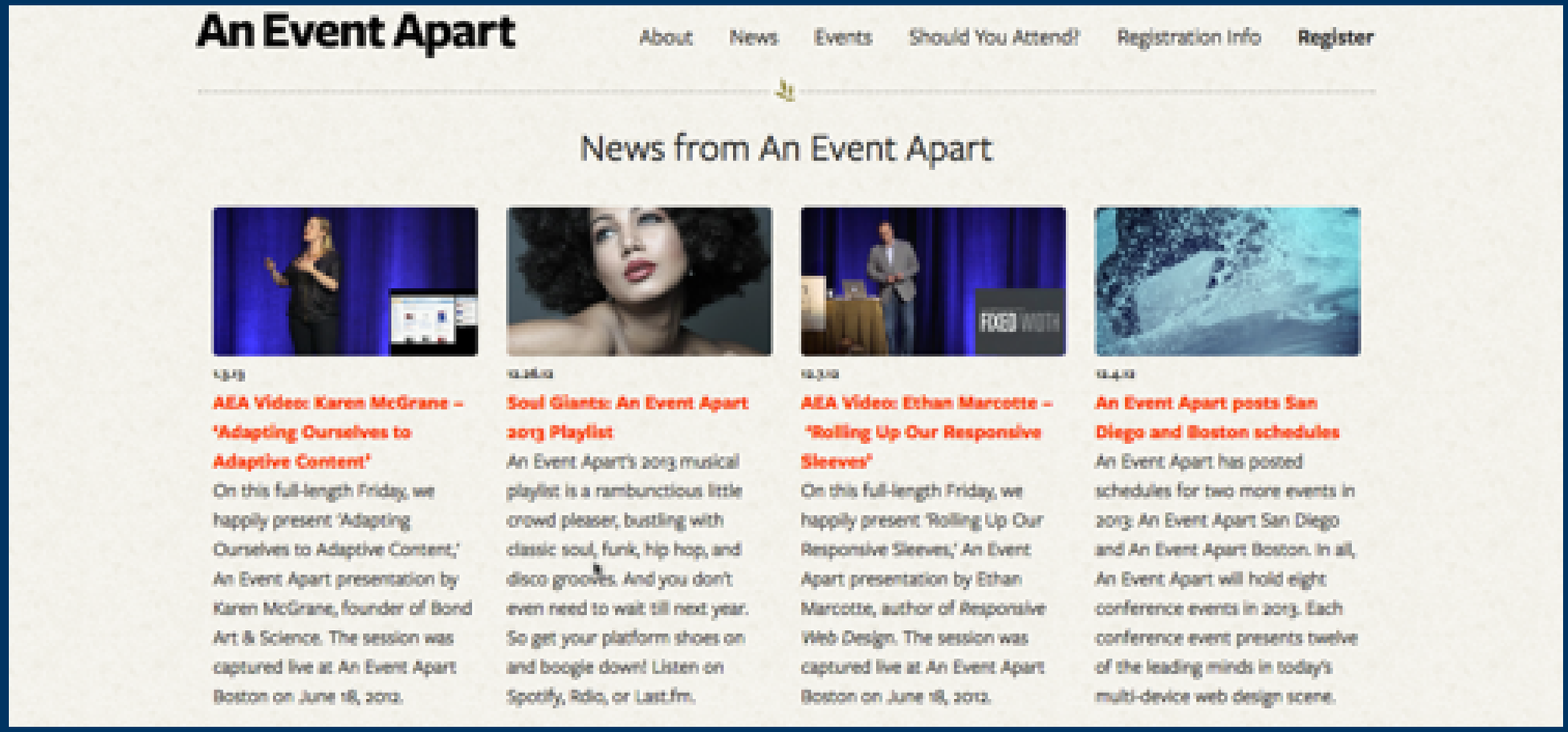




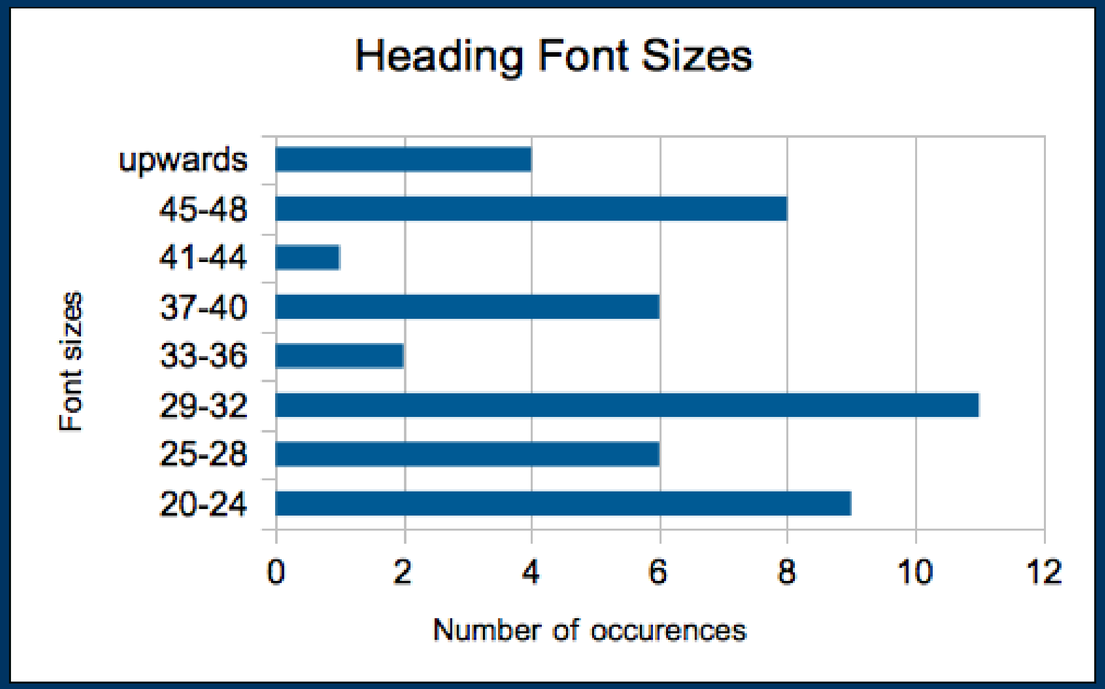
Typefaces

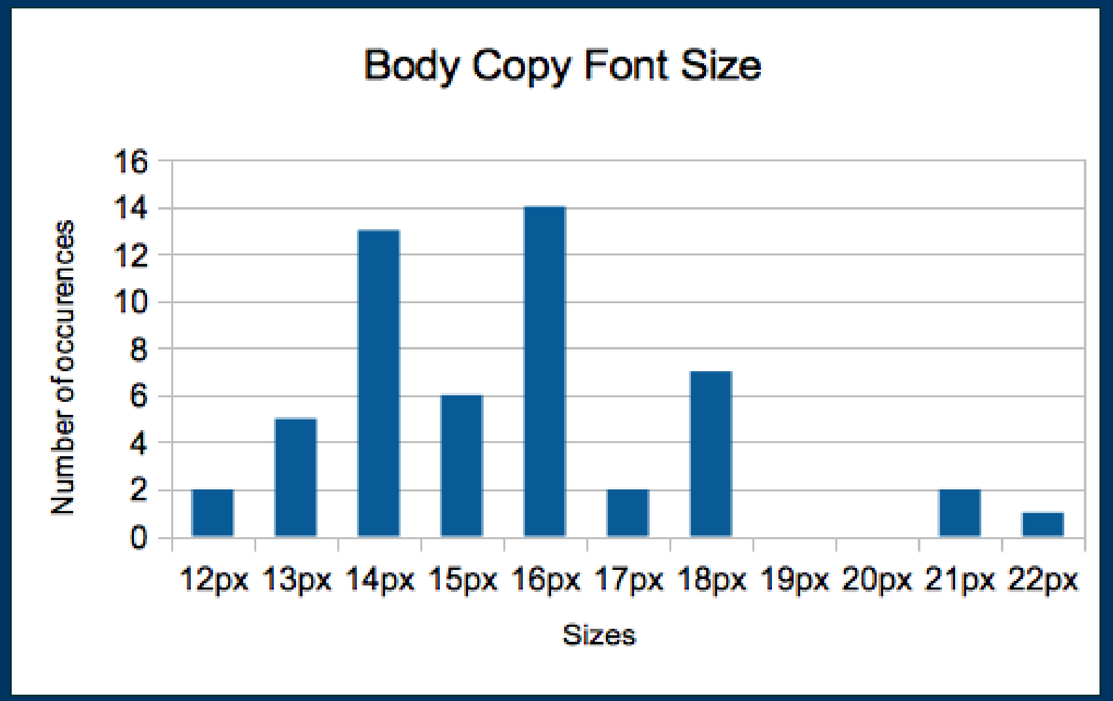

Most Popular Typefaces
Georgia
Arial
Helvetica
Chaparral Pro
Meta Serif W...
Verdana
Quadraat
Mercury SS...
Freight Sans...
others
Typefaces
0
10
20
30
40
Number of occurences
Body Tyfaces
Heading Typefac...

Color Contrast

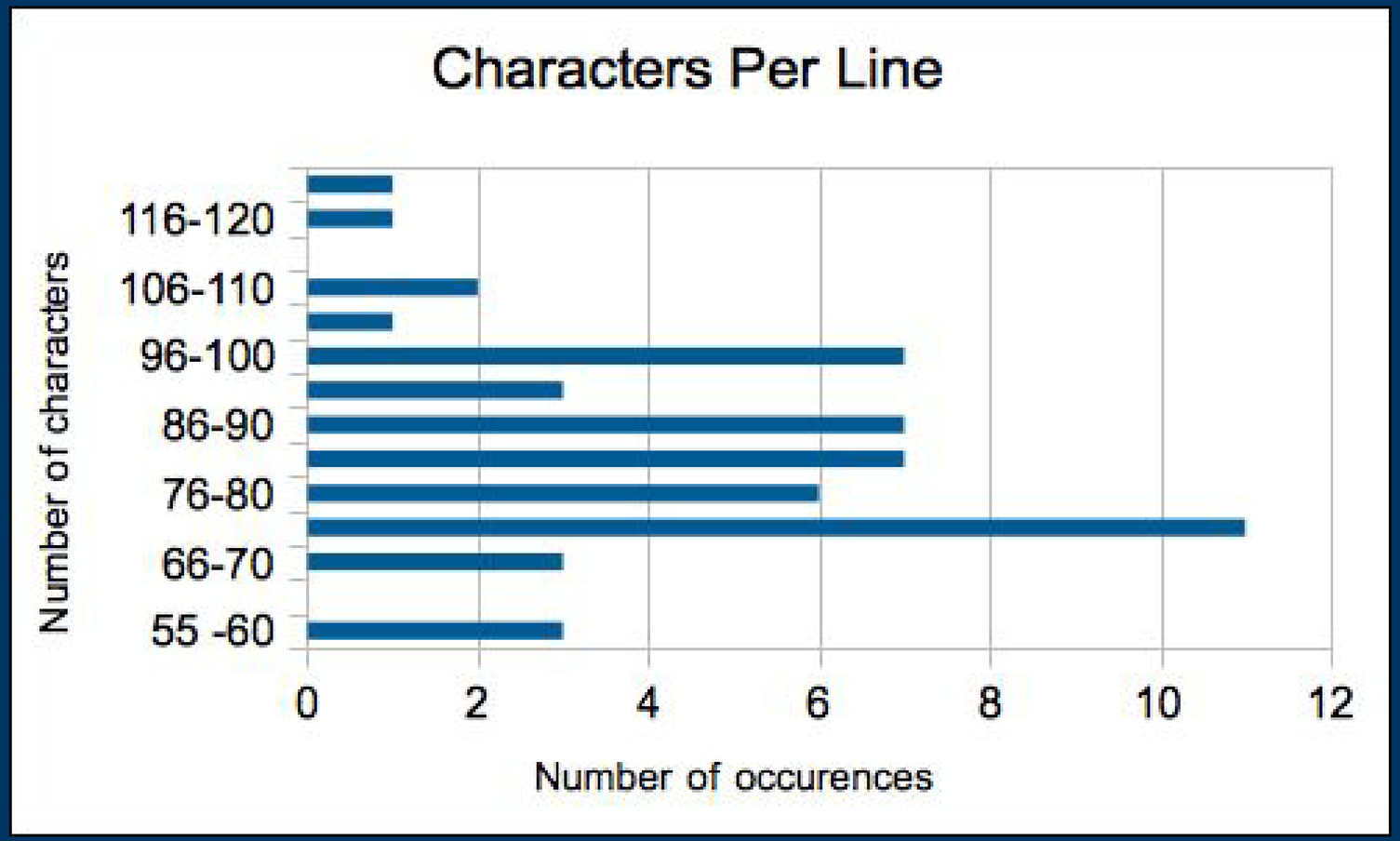


Font Sizes


Heading Font Sizes
upwards
45-48
41-44
37-40
33-36
29-32
25-28
20-24
Font sizes
0
2
4
6
8
10
12
Number of occurences


Body Copy Font Size
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
Number of occurences
12px
13px
14px
15px
16px
17px
18px
19px
20px
21px
22px
Sizes

Characters Per Line (Desktop)



Various Sizes on Different Displays

At a display width of 500 pixels:

- Average line height: 28 pixels
- Average font size of body: 15 pixels
- Average number of characters per line: 77

At a display width of 700 pixels:

- Average font size of headlines: 36 pixels
- Average font size of body: 15.6 pixels
- Average number of characters per line: 82.7

At a display width of 950 pixels:

- Average font size of headlines: 37.9 pixels
- Average font size of body: 16.1 pixels
- Average number of characters per line: 84.8

At a display width of 1600 pixels:

- Average font size of headlines: 40.7 pixels
- Average font size of body: 16.2 pixels
- Average number of characters per line: 86.8

Leading

- Spacing between lines needs to be 1.5 (or 150%, whichever ratio works for you).
- Spacing between paragraphs then needs to be 2.5 (or 250%).

Headline to Body Size Ratio

HEADLINE ÷ BODY COPY = 2.5

Desktop Fold vs Mobile Screen

According to the NNG, content that appears above the fold on a 30-inch desktop monitor equates to five swipes on a 4-inch mobile device. Granted, this data is a bit old as most smartphones are now between five and six inches:

Other Findings

- 45% of websites underline the links in body copy. The others do so only on hover or not at all.
- 71% of websites highlight links with color. The rest do not or only on hover.
- 99% of websites left-align text.
- No website uses hyphenation.
- 84% of websites use the same fonts in the print and standard style sheets.
- The loading weight of home pages averages around 1.346 MB. Article pages are marginally less, at around 1.146 MB.

Summary

- Serif fonts are more popular than sans-serifs for both headlines and body copy. There is, however, a trend to mix sans-serifs and serifs to contrasting effect.
- The most common fonts for headlines are Georgia, Arial and Chaparral Pro. But the majority of websites are individualized and use less common fonts.
- The most common fonts for body copy are Georgia, Arial and Helvetica. But, again, the majority of websites are individualized and use less common fonts.
- The most popular font size for headlines is between 29 and 32 pixels.
- The most popular font size for body copy is between 14 and 16 pixels.
- headline font size ÷ body copy font size = 2.4
- line height (pixels) ÷ body copy font size (pixels) = 1.47
- line length (pixels) ÷ line height (pixels) = 24.8
- space between paragraphs (pixels) ÷ line height (pixels) = 1.43
- The optimal number of characters per line is between 55 and 75, but 75 to 90 is more popular.
- Body text is left-aligned. Hyphenation is not used at line endings. And links are underlined and/or highlighted with bold or color, sometimes only on hover.