The Mega Menu

It has been suggested that the main navigation for the site feature a "mega menu." This feature is a way of displaying a large number of links without occupying space on the page. The menu is initially hidden and is displayed on top of the page content after the user invokes it (usually by "hovering" over a button).

This is an enhanced version of dropdown navigation and is currently used by a large number of web sites. It is very flexible and can accommodate images as well as lists of links.

Examples
- http://www.whitehouse.gov/
- http://www.nationalgeographic.com/
- http://www.att.com/

Figure 10: Mega Menu Example

Technical Issues

The mega menu requires both JavaScript and css to work properly. Both JS and css can be disabled in the web browser, by the user. Additionally, the concept of a mega menu does not lend itself to mobile web browsers (which feature narrow screens and tend to ignore the "hover" state).

BROWSER TYPE	DEFAULT SETTINGS	JAVASCRIPT DISABLED	CSS DISABLED
Modern	Y	Y	N
Legacy	P	N	N
Mobile	N	N	N

[1]Requires JS bootstrapping

N – Not Supported
P – Partial Support[1]
Y – Supported

Solution

Treat the mega menu as an enhancement for modern browsers. Develop the navigation structure/content hierarchy of the web site assuming the Mega Menu will not be invoked. Additionally, have the buttons that trigger the mega menu take a visitor to a page containing the links from the menu.

More information: http://www.useit.com/alertbox/mega-dropdown-menus.html