



Usability Test Plan

For: The Association of Washington Cities

URL: www.awcnet.org

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ITC 298 - UX Research Methods

Overview

This document provides an inquiry into the Usability Test Plan our team will perform on the (awcnet.org) website. From this test plan our team hopes to gain a better understanding of how an average user interacts with the site.

After performing the other research methodologies, it became apparent that the AWC website had some considerable issues in terms of usability. The Website Competitive Analysis gave our team insight into how the design and functionality of other analogous sites compared with that of AWC. The Heuristics Review was an important research method because it provided a broad analysis of usability issues; it allowed our team to begin narrowing down the field of issues, and start focusing on ones we felt were most severe. The Card Sort delineated various dilemmas with the Information Architecture of the AWC website; it provided our team with excellent data and allowed us to formulate a better navigation system.

With all the information gathered from the previous methodologies, our team needs to find out if the recommendations deduced from our findings, coincides with the user experience on the AWC website. We will be conducting a usability test of the website interface. Down below is a detailed outline of the different aspects and processes incorporated within this test.

Research Questions

We plan on answering the following questions with our usability study:

- How easy is it to find a full time job in Engineering through Job Search
- Finding a legislative bill about the Cannabis Patient Act
- Creating a new user profile

Target Audience

We will be focusing our questions to the students of ITC 298 and User Design Studies at Seattle Central College. Our participants come from a diverse background and knowledge base that will contribute to the overall goals of the study.

Methods

Our testing method involves testing individual participants. There will be 4 to 8 tests completed depending on time, with each of our 4 team members testing one participant, and if time allows, another participant on a second day of testing. The test involves a moderator guiding participants through a set of tasks. The participant will be encouraged to think aloud while following through with the task (referred to as the “think-aloud protocol” and their responses and actions will be noted.

There are essentially four steps to the test:

1. The moderator will greet the participant and assign them to a testing station (a computer that has been set up for the test to be recorded). The moderator will try to establish rapport with the participant. The moderator will provide the participant with a short questionnaire to be filled out and inform them of confidentiality. The participant will also to read and sign a consent form.
2. The moderator will briefly introduce the test, as well as, what the purpose and expectations are. The moderator will inform the participant that the test will be recorded and assure the participant that the website is being judged, not them. Furthermore, the moderator will encourage the participant to think aloud while completing the tasks.

3. The moderator will start the test, asking the participant a short series of questions. The participant will open [awcnet.org] on a web browser. While the participant is performing the tasks the moderator will guide the user through the tasks without showing them how to complete them. If the participant has any questions during the test, the moderator will attempt to have the participant to discover the answer themselves, using the technique of answering the question with a question. The moderator will also take notes while the participant performs the tasks recording their comments and actions. The testing environment will also be recorded through the use of Google Hangout.
4. When all of the tasks have been completed, and after a short debrief, the participant will be handed a post-test questionnaire to fill out. The post-test questionnaire will cover the participant's general experience with the tasks, their thoughts on the usability of the website, and any observations they may want to call out, noting any specific issues. The test will be over at the completion of the questionnaire and the participant will be thanked for their time and participation.

Logistics

The usability test will take place at Seattle Central College, in room 3151. Participants will sit at a computer and work through the tasks laid out in this plan. Each individual session will be recorded using Google Hangouts. While the participant is working through the task, a test moderator will stand close by to observe and take notes.

Task List

Each participant will be asked to complete three different tasks and complete a posttest questionnaire. A test moderator will read these tasks aloud to the participant, then closely observe and take notes as they work through the given task.

Task	Description	Required Steps	Task Goal	Est. Time
Job Search	Starting from the home page, find the AWC JobNet page and search for all available jobs that match the following criteria: in-state, engineering, and full-time.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the homepage, click on the JobNet button located in the right sidebar 2. On the JobNet page, choose "Start Job Search" 3. On the page drop down menus choose the following: Region: In-State Job Category: Engineering Employment Type: Full-Time 4. Select the "Search Jobs" button to view results 	View list of available jobs that follow search criteria.	4 minutes
Bill Info	Starting from the home page, find the overview of a recently passed Senate bill titled, The Cannabis Patient Protection Act.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the homepage, click the "Data & Resources" tab on the main menu. 2. Under the headline, "Resources by topic", click on Marijuana legalization. 3. From the list of articles, click "A summary of Senate Bill 5052, The Cannabis Patient Protection Act." 	View a PDF version of Senate Bill 5052, "The Cannabis Patient Protection Act."	3 minutes
New User Profile	Starting from the home page, create a new user profile.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From the homepage, click the Login button in the top-right utility menu. 2. Under "New User?" headline, click the "new user profile here" link 3. Fill in all required fields found on the page, denoted with an asterisk 4. Click the Submit button 5. From the login page, enter your chosen username and password 6. Click the Login button 	Name should appear in top right corner of screen, indicating a successful login.	5 minutes

Data Collecting

There are five sources from which data will be collected:

1. Think-aloud protocol - written documentation of the participant's speech during the tasks.
2. Observation - live observation and written documentation of the participant's body language, facial expressions, and behavior during task completion.
3. Recording - through the use of Google Hangouts, a video record of the test environment, of the participant's interaction with the website and audio of the participant's voice.
4. Pre-test questionnaire - written information about the participant.
5. Post-test questionnaire - written information using Likert and rating scales to rate the tasks and website's usability.

There will be several metrics that moderators will be on the lookout for during the test and from reviewing the recorded video, notes, and data. These metrics include:

1. Was the task completed successfully? - Task success rate (number and percentage of completed tasks).
2. Critical issues - the participant deviates from the given task and is not able to complete it.
3. Non-critical issues - issues which may pose problems for the participant in completing the task but ultimately does not prevent them from completing it.

Other quantitative data to be evaluated:

1. Time required to complete each task.
2. The number of clicks to complete a task
3. The system usability scale task scores (from the post-test questionnaire).

Other qualitative data to be evaluated:

1. Live observation and written documentation of the participants behavior, body language and facial expressions.
2. Live observation, written documentation and audio recording of the participant's tone and comments during the tasks.
3. Post-task debrief questions.

4. Post-test questionnaire questions regarding the participant's opinions of the website's usability and appearance

Reporting

After all of participants have been tested and the data collected, a formal analysis and evaluation of the data will be performed by the test team and a written report will be completed. This Usability Test Report will describe the reasons for conducting the test, the methods and procedures that were followed, and will document all usability issues observed during the usability tests and evaluation of the data. Furthermore, it will contain a list of recommendations for improvement of these usability issues. The final report will be passed along to the Usability Research Methods class instructor and the client - Association of Washington Cities.