



# McMenamin's

Usability Testing



# History & Business Objectives

- McMenamins is a hospitality and microbrewery chain of 50+ renovated historic properties located in Oregon and Washington.
- McMenamins offers a mix of pubs, historic hotels, movie theaters, restaurants, spas and other event for all friends and family to enjoy.
- McMenamins mission is to renovate historical places.



# Objectives & Scope

The goals of this research project:

1. To better understand the usability issues of the McMenamins site.
2. To discover ways to improve the user experience of the McMenamins site.
3. **To better our understanding of User Experience.**

# User Personas & Needs: The Users

## **Engaged Couples / Event Planner**

Venue and services

## **Hard Core Fan**

Repeat Offender

## **Young Traveler**

Unique/Fun experience

## **Young Families**

Happy kids and adults

## **The Local**

Nearby Entertainment

## **Mature Traveler**

Relaxing Experience

# User Personas & Needs: The Users

## **Cocktail/ Beer/ Wine Enthusiast**

Fancy booze!

## **The Foodie**

Nom, nom, nom!

## **The Indie Music Lover**

Looking for a show

## **Pet Guardian**

Fun for them and fido

**What do they all have in common?**

Looking for a unique experience!

# User Personas and Needs: The Participants

## Who did we actually get?

- 8 super students from ITC 298

## The Average Participant:

- 30 yrs old
  - 100% of participants above 21
- Familiar with McMenamin's
- Have not used the site
- Are heavy internet users



# User Personas and Needs: The Participants

## Average Participant is which User(s)?

- **Foodie:** Frequents bars / restaurants
- **Local:** 3 locations nearby
- **Young(ish) traveler:** not frequent travelers, possible constraints

## Possible other fit for user personas?

- **Beer enthusiast:** 2 users wrote beer related comments in posttest survey

# Usability Research Methods

Methods used by our team to evaluate the current McMEnamin's website:

1. Competitive Analysis
2. Card Sort
3. Heuristic Evaluation
4. Usability Testing



# Competitive Analysis

A thorough review of websites deemed to be competitors to the subject site, aimed at improving our understanding of the sites role among its competitors. Due to the broad offerings of McMenamins, we've reviewed the following sites:

- Provenance Hotels - [www.provenancehotels.com](http://www.provenancehotels.com)
- Kimpton Hotels - [www.kimptonhotels.com](http://www.kimptonhotels.com)
- Unique Inns - [www.uniqueinns.com](http://www.uniqueinns.com)
- Appalacian Brewing Company - [www.abcbrew.com](http://www.abcbrew.com)
- Elysian Brewing Company - [www.elysianbreing.com](http://www.elysianbreing.com)

# Competitive Analysis (continued)

Analysis of the competitor sites revealed which elements are most important in hospitality, winery, and brewery sites such as:

- Clear navigation
- Short intuitive paths
- Clear, real world, location and contact information
- A clear, trustworthy, and functional purchasing system

McMenamins, in spite of having a lot of content, did not have any of the elements above.

# Card Sorting

Research Method used to evaluate Information Architecture

Completing a Card Sorting Exercise improved our understanding of how information on the McMenemy's website should be grouped, organized and labeled.

Method:

- Optimal Sort Program focusing on 53 Hotel, Eat & Drink, and Event pages
- 13 participants from ITC 298 class

# Card Sorting (continued)

After reviewing the data, our recommendations included:

- Add a “Search by Amenity” and “Search by Location” for hotels
- Give Craft Beer, Wine and Spirits their own pages under “What We Brew” Gateway page
- Include a Shop Online tab in the main navigation

# Heuristic Evaluation

A cheap, simple review by a set of experts aimed at identifying Usability issues against a set of criteria called Heuristics:

- Is website simple to use
- Are users kept informed
- Are words and phrases familiar
- Is the site consistent
- Does the site make users remember things
- Does the website help to avoid mistakes and can they recover
- Is the help helpful
- Does the site grow with the user's expertise

McMenamin's site violated 7 out of the 10 Heuristics when booking a room and buying merchandise online.

# Usability Testing

Research method used to evaluate a website design by testing it on representative users.

Completing a Usability Test improved our understanding of the pitfalls, frustrations, and difficulties users have accomplishing simple tasks.

Tasks:

- Book a hotel room at The Anderson School
- Purchase a \$50 gift card at the Online Store
- Find the pub closest to Seattle Central College

# Usability Testing - Booking a Hotel Room

## Major Usability Issues:

1. Events Calendar unrelated to hotel room booking
2. Can't see rooms prior to starting reservation process

Anderson School

Now Open

Like 12K

18607 Bothell Way NE  
Bothell, WA 98011  
Local: (425) 398-0122  
Fax: (425) 219-4365  
Contact Us

Anderson School

Lodging

Restaurants & Bars

Movies, Music & Events

Rooms Room Names Lodging Packages Pet-Friendly Book Now!

Rooms

All guestrooms at the Anderson School include king or queen beds with private bathroom, television, free Wi-Fi and telephone. Overnight guests receive complimentary use of the swimming pool.

Make your reservations [online](#)

Events Calendar

@ McMenamins Ruby says...

Prev March 2016 Next

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Book a room now

Music & Events Movies

View All

Ian McFeron  
Friday, March 25  
Anderson School

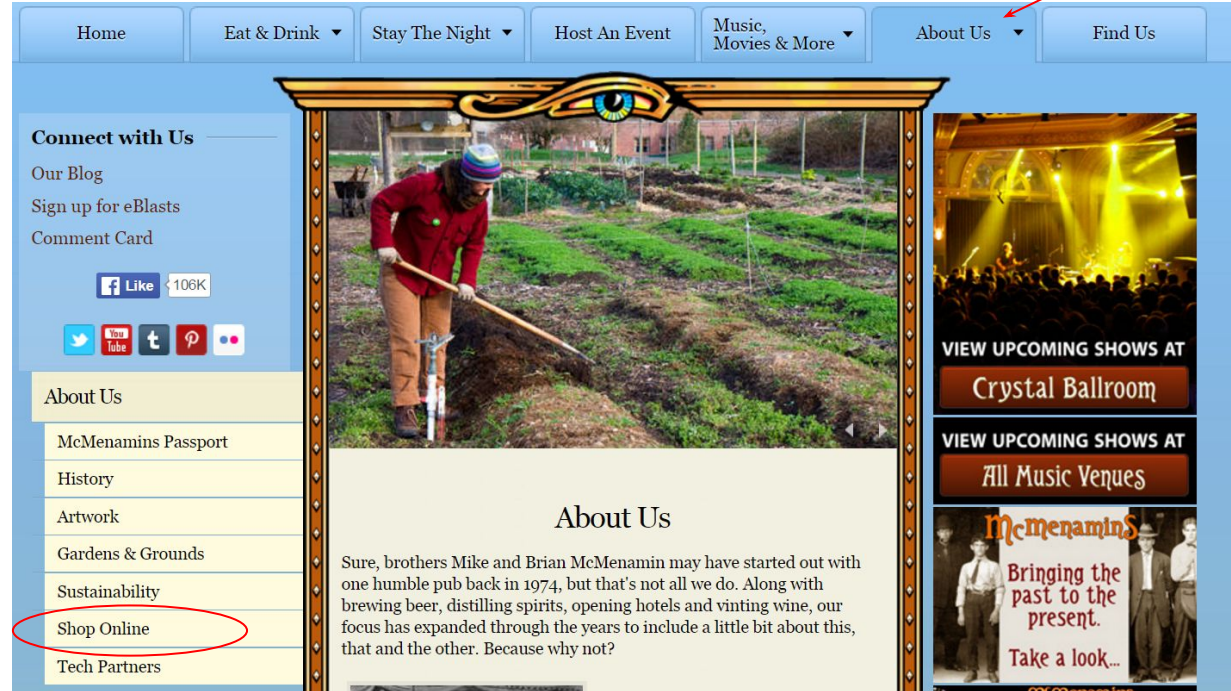
Details

No room photos

# Usability Testing - Purchasing Gear Online

## Major Usability Issue:

1. Difficult to find the Online Store



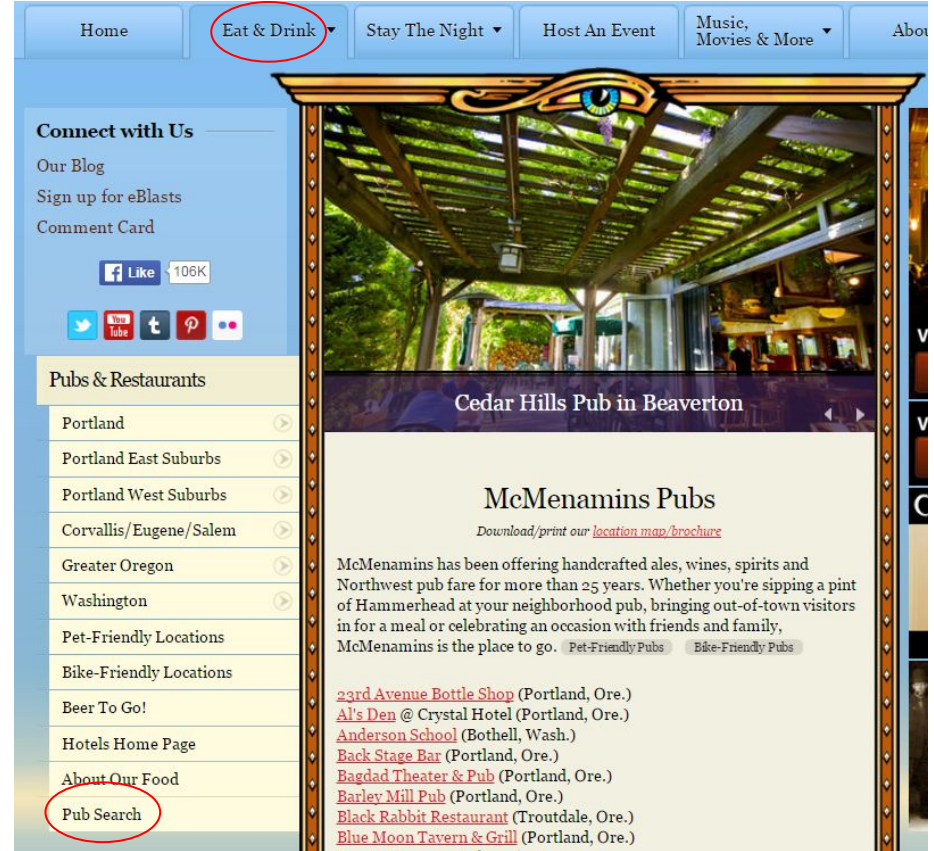
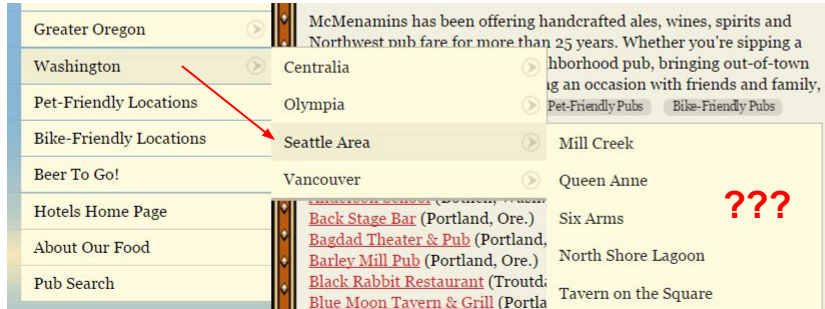
The screenshot shows the McMenemy's website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Home, Eat & Drink, Stay The Night, Host An Event, Music, Movies & More, About Us, and Find Us. A red arrow points to the 'About Us' link. On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with the following items: Connect with Us, Our Blog, Sign up for eBlasts, Comment Card, a Facebook Like button (106K), and social media icons for Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, Pinterest, and Instagram. Below these are more menu items: About Us, McMenamins Passport, History, Artwork, Gardens & Grounds, Sustainability, Shop Online (circled in red), and Tech Partners. The main content area features a large image of a person working in a garden, with the heading 'About Us' and a paragraph of text. On the right side, there are promotional banners for 'VIEW UPCOMING SHOWS AT Crystal Ballroom' and 'VIEW UPCOMING SHOWS AT All Music Venues', along with a 'McMenamins' logo and the tagline 'Bringing the past to the present. Take a look...'



# Usability Testing - Find a Pub near SCC

## Major Usability Issues:

1. Pub Search feature at the bottom of the sidebar
2. No mapped locations if you select Washington



# Conclusions

Through testing we have seen that [mcmenamins.com](https://mcmenamins.com) is a site with a number of user experience problems. Most of those problems were immediately self-evident. Others weren't realized until basic tasks were analyzed.

We discovered that while analyzing a site, it is important to:

- Maintain empirical objectivity
- Express situations using reference-based comparison
- Rely on results from testing, not your own opinions.
- Understand how users want to use a site, not how you want them to use it.

# Conclusions

A website's user experience can be improved by:

- Researching competitors to discover standards that should be met in the industry and opportunities to make improvements over the competition.
- Accommodating user needs by making the features and content they want available.
- Preventing users from being confused by using proper labeling based on typical expectations and heuristic standards.
- Testing the sites common tasks using impartial users.