



Student Enrollment

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Introduction

The Student Enrollment application was built to replicate that of a real-world application. Our hope was to be a source of inspiration to many new programmers who are just starting out.

A usability test is intended to determine the extent an interface facilitates a user's ability to complete routine tasks. Typically, the test is conducted with a group of potential users either in a usability lab, remotely (using e-meeting software and telephone connection), or on-site with portable equipment. Users are asked to complete a series of routine tasks. Sessions are recorded and analyzed to identify potential areas for improvement to the web site.

For this test we had a student from the class test our application. They were given a student desktop computer with all the basic functions and a working browser. We had also tasked an employee to sit with the tester and give instruction where was needed. The tester was told beforehand to think out loud their thoughts and to ask questions whenever one should arise.

Executive Summary

The test took place at the Iowa Western Community College building. We had one volunteer from the class who would decide to be our tester. The goal for this test was to give us the insight we needed to successfully create the tools for students

The tester was able to use our service with ease and with little problems. They achieved all what was asked of and gave us the feedback we needed. The problems found were very minimal but could easily be overlooked without consideration. These problems included:

- Unclear home button
- Out of sight navigation
- Lack of reason
- Error in plain sight

While we hoped for an 100% of usability, we are thankful to gain the valuable information we had gained through this test exercise. Though, besides that one error, the application ran perfectly and as intended. This puts us at our goal of being 95% error free and safe to use.

Methodology

Sessions

The tester was a volunteer from the list of students also attending that class. We had hoped for someone with prior knowledge about PHP but sadly we were unsuccessfully in finding a person with those qualities. Before the test began we had our employee explain to the tester on what they were going to be tasked with and how to conduct themselves through the exercise. The





exercise had lasted an expected length of 15mins. Afterwards, we asked the participant to give us their thoughts on the program and its 'usability'.

Participants

The participant was one student from the class that had volunteered to test our application. They did have knowledge of the basics of web building and design but no scripting experience.

We were indeed shocked to see that even without a scripting background, our tester was very informative. These included things we would had never thought about before.

Evaluation Tasks/Scenarios

These tasks were created by yours truly to hopefully give us the information we desired. The tasks included:

- Signing up for the application
- Test links
- Login to the application
- Enroll in a premade class
- Create a class of their own
- Enroll into the new class
- Change their account's information
- Change their class's information
- Remove themselves from classes
- Delete classes
- Log off

Results

Task Completion Success Rate

We had one of our most dedicated employee sit down with this participant to answer all questions and record the accomplishments. The success rate for this test was an unbelievable 100%. The tester was able to complete all our tasks, and do exactly what was asked.

Task Ratings

After the completion of each task, participants rated the ease or difficult of completing the task for three factors:

- It was easy to find my way to this information from the homepage.
- As I was searching for this information, I was able to keep track of where I was in the website.
- I was able to accurately predict which section of the website contained this information.





The 5-point rating scale ranged from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Agree ratings are the agree and strongly agree ratings combined with a mean agreement rating of > 4.0 considered as the user agrees that the information was easy to find, that they could keep track of their location and predict the section to find the information.

Ease in Finding Information

The participant agreed with us that everything was very easy to find (mean agreement rating = 4.7). The only thing they had a problem with was navigating back to the student list. The tasks that had been given were very small and were generally in plain sight. However, we found that it was easy to mistake our Home (the student page) with the student list page.

Keeping Track of Location in Site

Other than the navigation problem stated before, the participant had no problems here (strongly agree = 5).

Test 1 – Mean Task Ratings & Percent Agree

Task	Ease – Finding Info	Location in Site	Overall
1 – Signup	5 (100%)	5 (100%)	5
2 – Login	5 (100%)	5 (100%)	5
3 – Enroll	5 (100%)	5 (100%)	5
4 – Create	5 (100%)	5 (100%)	5
5 – Change info	5 (100%)	5 (100%)	5
6 – Log off	5 (100%)	5 (100%)	5

**Percent Agree (%) = Agree & Strongly Agree Responses combined*

Overall Metrics

The participant in this test strongly agreed that our website being very simply design made it easy and fun to use.

Post-Task Overall Questionnaire

4.6.2 Likes, Dislikes, Participant Recommendations

Upon completion of the tasks, participants provided feedback for what they liked most and least about the website, and recommendations for improving the website.

Liked Most

The following comments capture what the participants liked most:

Being able to create their own classes.

Liked Least





The following comments capture what the participants liked the least:

Signing up for the service.

Recommendations for Improvement

The student list's link location.

Recommendations

The recommendations section provides recommended changes and justifications driven by the participant success rate, behaviors, and comments. Each recommendation includes a severity rating. The following recommendations will improve the overall ease of use and address the areas where participants experienced problems or found the interface/information architecture unclear.

Conclusion

Overall this was a stupendous test that gave us lots of information we can use later. As said before, we were utterly shocked how much we learn from someone who didn't know the subject in the least. We did not receive our 100% rate on usability that we hoped to achieve; however, we are very satisfied with the results of this testing exercise. Things that would have never been thought about before, have now come to light and we're working to make fixes to these problems. For this, our company just wants to say how gracious we are for the participant who volunteered to conduct our test.

Implementing the recommendations and continuing to work with users (i.e., real lay persons) will ensure a continued user-centered website.

