What We’ll Cover

- Why is usability important?
- The basics, but still worth mentioning
- Site navigation – don’t make me think
- Feedback methods
- Evaluating usability
Usability Return on Investment

ROI

Investment ~ 10% of project budget should spent on usability

- varies with project size; some activities cost about the same regardless of project size

Following a usability redesign, websites increase desired metrics by 135% on
Usability ROI (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Average Improvement Across Web Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales / conversion rate</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic / visitor count</td>
<td>150%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User performance / productivity</td>
<td>161%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of specific (target) features</td>
<td>202%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Heuristics

adjective
- enabling a person to discover or learn something for themselves.
- proceeding to a solution by trial and error or by rules that are only loosely defined.

noun
- the study and use of heuristic techniques.
- a heuristic process or method.

(source: askoxford.com)
Usability Heuristics

- Visibility of system status
- Match between system and the real world
- User control and freedom
- Consistency and standards
- Error prevention
Usability Heuristics (continued)

- Recognition rather than recall
- Flexibility and efficiency of use
- Aesthetic and minimalist design
- Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors
- Help and documentation
Page Basics

- Check page load speeds
- Let users contact you
- Test pages at different screen resolutions
- Check page display in multiple browsers
Page Load Speeds

- **Home page**
  - Target: downloads within 10 seconds

- **Internal pages**
  - Target: download within 15 seconds

- **How to test load speeds**
  - Local scripts
  - Online tools
Test for Different Screen Resolution

- **800x600**
  - ~ 14% of users
  - ~ 98% of all users at or above
  - Good minimum target

- **1024x768**
  - ~ 60% of users

- **1280x1024**
  - ~ 25%
Test for Different Browsers

- Explorer
- Netscape
- Firefox
- AOL
- WebTV
- Opera
Site Navigation

- Clear and simple navigation
- Basics – general rules to live by
- Navigation Dos and DON’Ts
Clear and Simple Navigation

A good navigation system should answer three questions:

- Where am I?
- Where have I been?
- Where can I go?

(Jakob Nielsen)
Navigation Basics

- Be consistent
- Use appropriate text for links
- Use CSS to emphasize links
  - “well, that’s nice to look at, but…”
- Always include text links
  - accessibility
Navigation Basics (continued)

- Text-based site map
- Include a home page link in main navigation
- Link logo to home page
- Include a site search box
- Custom error pages
Navigation DOs

DOs

- Keep site navigation consistent throughout
- Separate global navigation from local navigation
- Brand site throughout
- Link to HOME
- Support know item searching and browsing
Navigation DON'Ts

DON'Ts

- Excessive text links
- Inconsistent page design or navigation scheme
- Disabling the browser’s navigational features
- Orphans pages
- Multiple navigational devices
Clear and Lean Content

Less is more
- Writing for the web
- Pages are scanned, not read

Don’t save the best for last
- Put the most important information above the fold

Every item on a page competes equally with the most important items
Feedback Methods

- User satisfaction surveys
- Rate this resource
- Allow visitors to report broken links
- “Contact Us”/feedback on every page
  - Forms – keep them simple
Evaluating Usability

- Methods for evaluating usability
- Usability testing misconceptions
- Low-cost usability testing
Methods for Evaluating Usability

- Usability inspection
- Peer walk-through
- Heuristic inspection
Usability Testing
Misconceptions

- Focus groups are not usability tests
  - Usability tests are trying, not brainstorming
- Don’t have the expertise
- Don’t have the testing facilities
- Testing is expensive
Low-cost Usability Testing

Who
What
Where
When
How
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