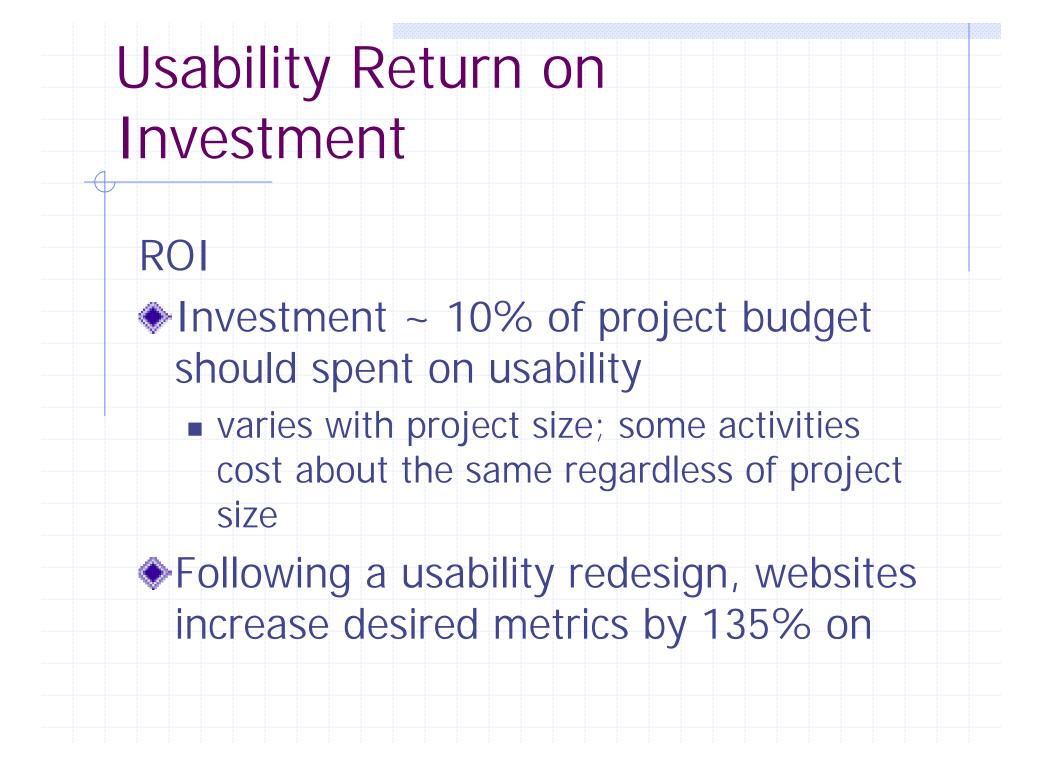
# Web Conference: Usability and Information Architecture Best Practices for Online Assistance Resources

#### Andy Bray, NEWMOA May 23, 2006

# 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 ROI (continued)

Sales / conversion rate100%Traffic / visitor count150%User performance / productivity161%Use of specific (target) features202%	Metric	Average Improvement Across Web Projects
User performance / productivity 161%	Sales / conversion rate	100%
	Traffic / visitor count	150%
Use of specific (target) features 202%	User performance / productivity	161%
<b>1</b>	Use of specific (target) features	202%

### 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)

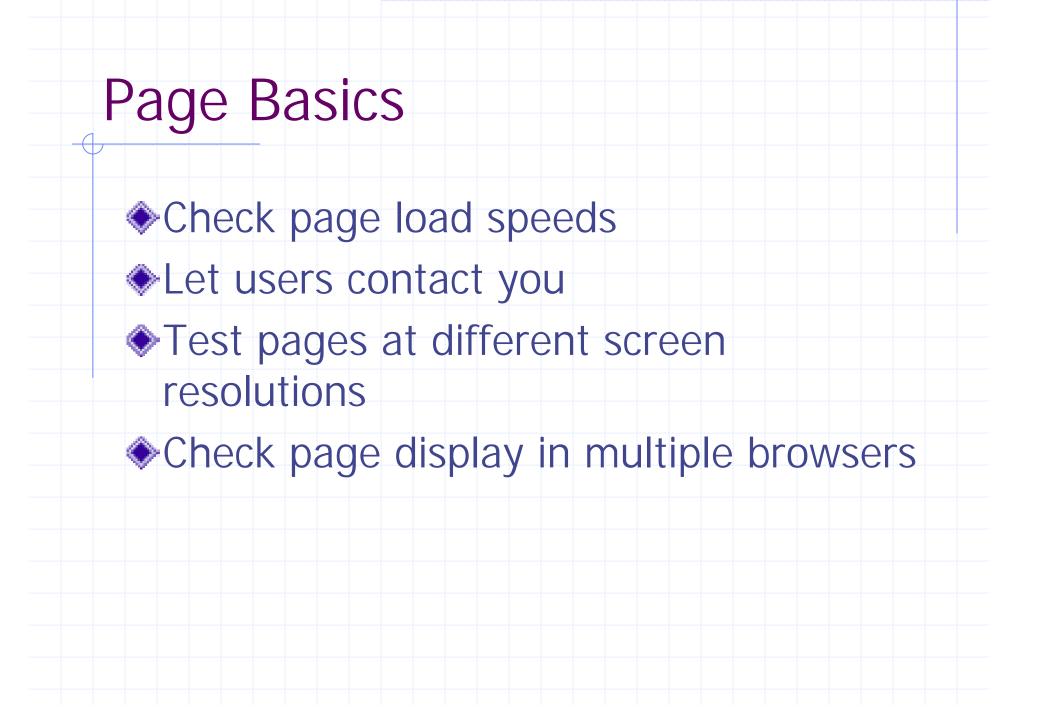
# **Usability Heuristics**

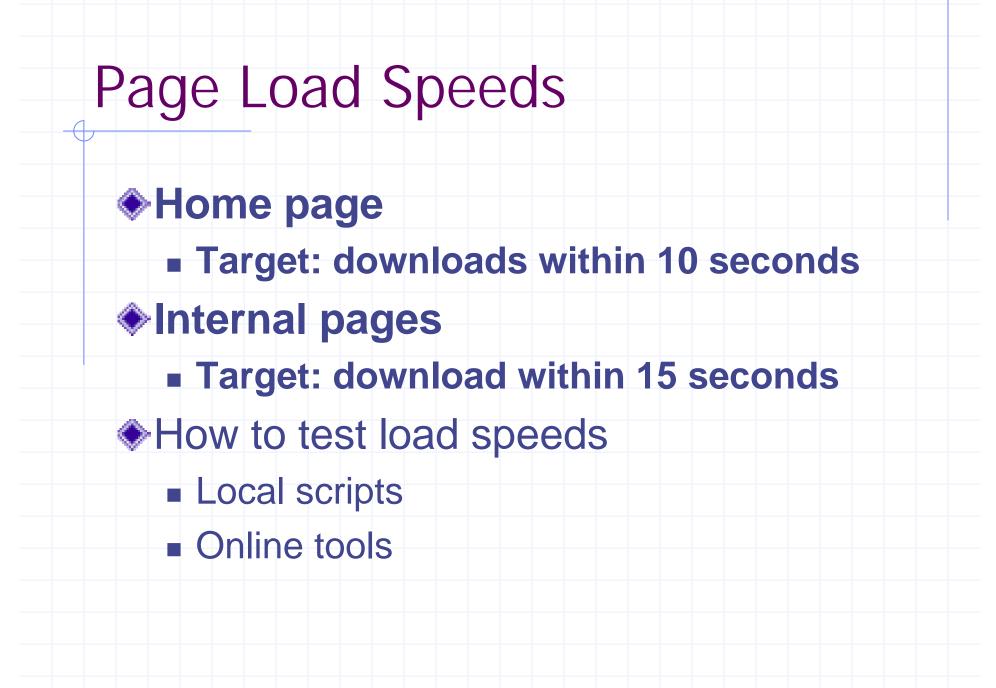
- Visibility of system status
   Match between system and the real world
- User control and freedom
- Consistency and standards
- Error prevention

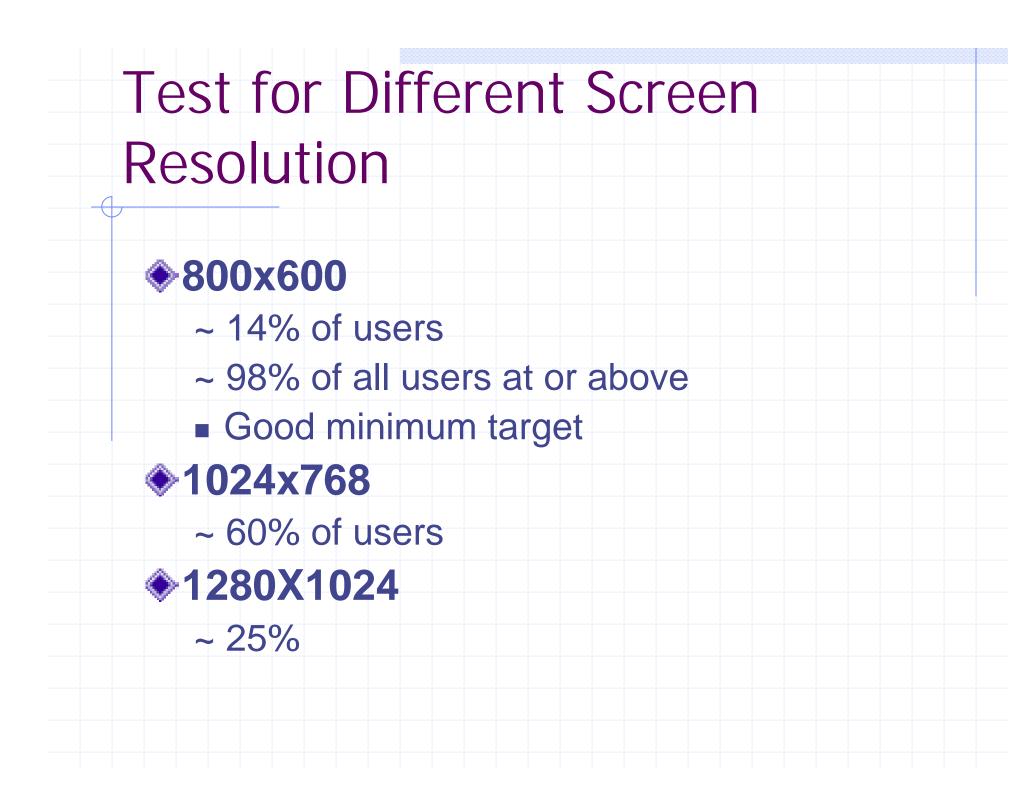
Usability Heuristics (continued)

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

Help and documentation







# Test for Different Browsers



# 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

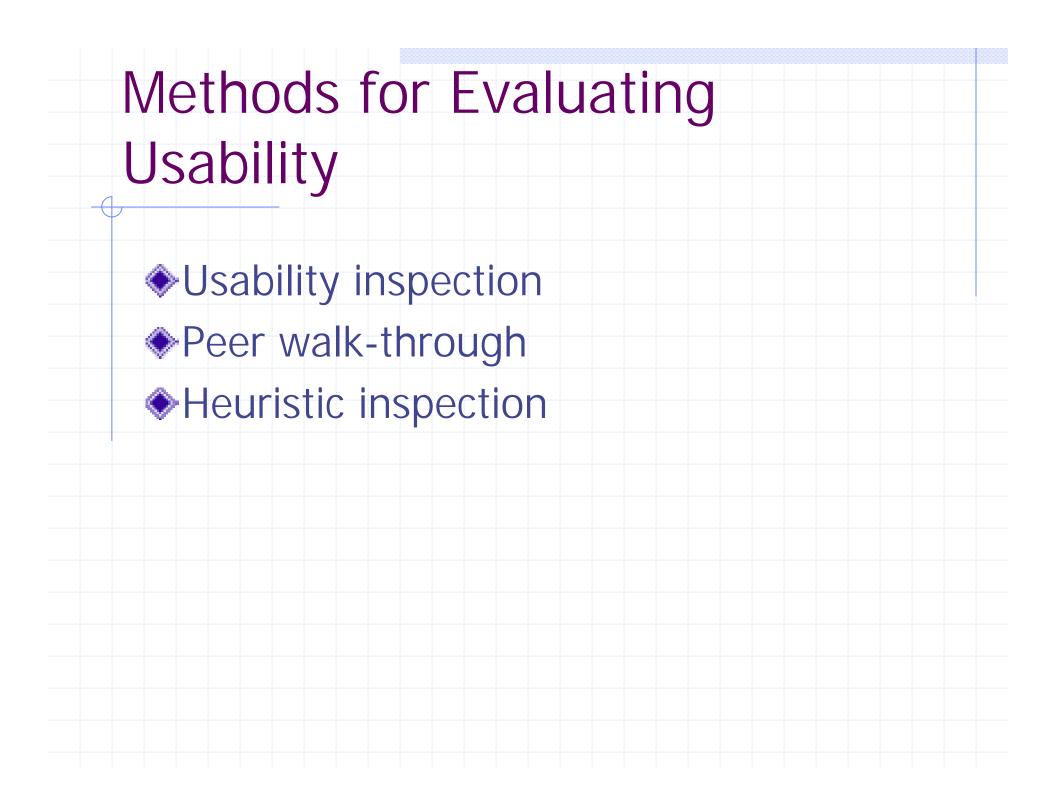
User satisfaction surveys
 Rate this resource
 Allow visitors to report broken links
 "Contact Us"/feedback on every page
 Forms – keep them simple

# **Evaluating Usability**

Methods for evaluating usability

Usability testing misconceptions

Low-cost usability testing

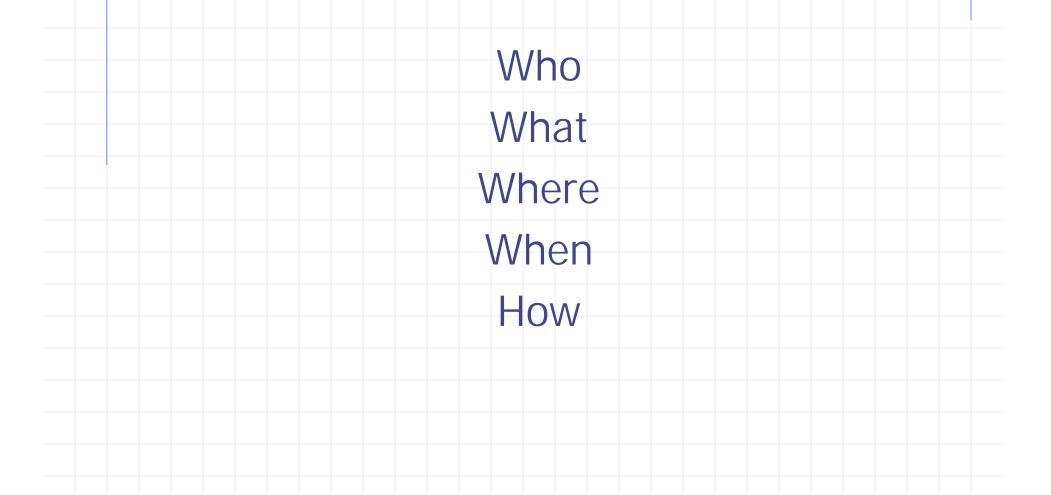


Usability Testing Misconceptions

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



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