SGET 700: Tools for the Development of Instruction

Beta/Usability Testing

TERMS

Beta Testing - Testing of a web site or application using a limited audience under actual usage conditions in order to identify potential problems with the site. This type of test is used primarily to identify problems or mistakes in the site.

Usability Testing – Testing of a web site or application in order to gage whether the interface is easy to understand and use. This type of test is used to understand how users will relate to and use the site.

The test you will be giving is primarily a usability test although you should make note of and fix any technical problems that users may experience when the site.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN TESTING:

- ☒ Make sure that all of the functions work / Click on all of the links to be sure that they are working properly.

- ☒ Identify what browser / platform the beta tester will be using.
  (Ex: Internet Explorer 8 on a Windows pc.)

- ☒ Determine the protocol you will use to conduct the test including directions and what, if any, feedback will be given to the testers during the test.

  Keep in mind: if a website is not easy to understand, navigate or obtain the desired outcome, people leave (Nielsen, 2011). The first line of understanding is that if users cannot use the site, they cannot learn from the site.

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DIRECTIONS:

To conduct a user test, identify your audience and select 3 or more people to review your work. For purposes of this test, the three people should not be from the same demographic group (i.e. – don't use three students from your class.)

- You may observe or sit with them during the usability testing process, but limit your directions; the point here is to determine if they can use the site effectively. If you need to prompt them to find things on the site, perhaps the navigation would benefit from some redesign.

    - If your site is intended to be used with a teacher present all the time, then give the testing "students" the directions you would expect to give when implementing the piece. For example, if you are doing a webquest, you would anticipate that there would be some introduction by a teacher at the onset of the piece.

    - If your site is intended to be an online piece of learning with minimal teacher intervention, then direct your users to the page where you have posted written directions.

- As you observe your testers, avoid correcting their steps. If it isn't obvious to them, then you will have learned something useful from this usability test.

- If you are present during the test, observe the user's behavior during the test. Do they appear confused or frustrated at any point? Do they make mistakes in following navigation or appear to need to search to find the appropriate links? Make note of any questions you may have and question the user about these observations after the user has completed the form.

- Keep in mind that testing will yield a range of results;

    - Most testers will be able to provide you with valuable feedback;

    - Some testers will offer suggestions that may be inappropriate. For example, a student may say that the site should have games, when, in fact, you don't think it should.

    - Some tests may offer suggestions that you find you like but would warrant a complete revamp of the content or the site. This is a judgment call. While parts may be easily implemented, keep in mind that you will probably do some major revisions over time. For now, it is enough to note that you might try that feature in the future.

    Nielsen, J. (2011, March 5). Usability 101: introduction to usability. Retrieved from http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20030825.html

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USER TESTING FORM

Score your answers on a scale of 1 – 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. Write in comments where you feel you need to explain.

Name: _____*MJ Barrigan*_____   You are a: Student (Friend) Teacher Other
(Circle One)

Score	Topic
5	**How easy is it to navigate from page to page?**
5	**What seems to be the purpose here?** The purpose is to present a series of lessons on the causes and the conflicts of the Civil War. Including important people, women, and soldiers lives.
5	**Did you get lost / confused? If so, where?** no
5	**What is the best thing that you like about this site?** I love how visually appealing it is. It has some really nice graphics, and the videos were fun.
4	**What is something you would recommend changing on this site?** I would like to see more actual "work" perfomed by the students. Old fashioned maybe, but something the kids can take home to their parents daily would be nice.
5	**If you had to recommend one thing about this site, what would it be?** I really love how easy it was to understand and the language was very on grade level
NA	**Comments:**