

Login.gov Account Page

Usability Testing Report

This document is a report from the findings based off of a usability test that was performed in July 2020 for a new account management layout for secure.login.gov

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## Executive Summary

The purpose of this usability test was to gather **End User** feedback on three designs for the secure.login.gov “Your Account” page to determine which design, or aspects of each design, allowed users to quickly understand the context of the pages, navigate the layout, and understand how to change information on the page. While participants of the study liked aspects of all three designs, they found it easiest to use the design with the side nav. Participants did not mind the visual style of the current account page, but found the user experience difficult to navigate.

Other high level takeaways include a need to educate our End Users about login.gov and different authentication methods and that content which is clear to our End Users who work in the federal government may not be understood by our users in the general public.

## Method

Login.gov conducted a series of nine unmoderated usability testing sessions and three moderated usability testing sessions throughout the course of this study. End Users completed a series of predetermined tasks. Unmoderated usability tests were conducted where participants walked through activity prompts and answered questions to help us answer our initial assumptions about our design ideas.

Moderated usability tests were conducted over a video call and participants were asked activity prompts and questions directly. This method allowed us to quickly capture feedback directly from users.

### Participant criteria

Below is the specific participant criteria used for recruiting for this study. We recruited potential login.gov End Users who had a diversity of incomes and equal split of genders. We chose to select age ranges from those who visited the account page the most 25-35, 35-45 and 60-65+. We supplemented our unmoderated usability tests of people without experience with login.gov with moderated tests of people who had a login.gov account to see if there would be a difference in their experiences.

Participant breakdown

* 12 participants.
* 5 female participants, 7 male participants.
* Located in the United States.
* Using a desktop computer

Moderated

* Had a login.gov account

Unmoderated

* 3 with income between $20-39k
* 3 with income between $40-59k
* 3 with income between $60-79k
* 3 age 60-65+
* 3 age 25-35
* 3 age 35-45
* No login.gov account

**Potential limitations**

* Limitations on the recruitment pool of End Users with login.gov account. Each were male, computer software SMEs and had prior experience with user research
* Limitations on the recruitment pool of participants from usertesting.com include an inability to specify racial diversity and that because people sign up to be testers with the platform they have experience with usability testing and may not be reflective of the range of diversity and ability of our actual End Users.

## Results

Usability testing revealed key insights that were then divided into categories and subcategories, [see Mural synthesis for raw results](https://app.mural.co/t/gsa6/m/gsa6/1595886264217/ee76424976dda45c04d621f010d1059567f8c0d0). A summary of key categories is below.

### Insights about the visual look and experience of navigating each design.

**Design Z (Current layout)**

[6 participants] Half of the research participants liked the simplicity of our current design.

* User liked this best because it was just a simple, unadorned layout that would have everything that they would need to do.
* “kinda nice having it all on one; all your information on one page. I’m seeing your account, email, looks like I have some options to update; some authentication options.”
* “it doesn't require like a lot of trying to figure out where things are”

[5 participants] 42% of participants felt there was too much content on the page

* “I'd say it's slightly overwhelming. Just how all of this information, Just an initial view. It just seems like a lot to process. ...These should be under different categories.”
* “wow, kind of a lot going on.”
* “[design z] was okay, but it was a little tedious going through all of them [scroll through all the content]”

**Design Y**

[5 participants] 42% of the participants felt it was hard to navigate but [6 participants] 50% liked the visual design.

* “looks like a modern website. I mean it's still basic, but it's less basic than [design x]. I like the that it takes up more space on the screen, looks more official.”
* “So there's links up here. So there's nothing else on this page. You would. I was kind of expecting it more to be on this page.”
* “So initial impressions is, this page is not nearly as that anywhere near as easily accessible as [designx]. Um. For certain things, you may not even know how to get to it.”
* “UX is a little confusing, don’t see a way to immediately get back to the home. I would assume that I could click login.gov and maybe go to that home screen again.”

**Design X**

[6 participants] 50% felt that the side navigation makes it easy to know where things are located and quick to take action.

* “The one that I like the best was by far [design x] where the sidebar allowed for a very quick navigation to any section or subsection, regardless of which page you are on. I think it was the most efficient and it looks to me as the cleanest implementation of how the design should be laid out.”
* “The way it's broken up with the menu on the side helps me to understand that these actions pertain to the bolded heading.”
* “On the navigational left hand side, there are some keywords you could use if you quickly wanted to add a phone number, add email add security key. You could click on, then go right to the page.”

[4 participants] 33% of participants thought the duplicate ways to access content from the side nav and main page makes it easy to change your information on the site.

* “Using multiple options to get to the same place and minimize the amount of clicking I need to do so making it as user friendly as possible.”
* “I guess (it's easy to change your email because) there's an email in multiple places.”
* “For most activities that are important ones there's two ways to do it.”

### Opportunities for helpful features

**[Feature Idea] Email as an account identifier**

[6 participants] Seeing email immediately allows people to understand they are in their account. This is a convention that people were expecting. 50% commented on it when it was present in a design and its absence when it was not present.

* “If I see a sign out to see, like ‘Hi Betsy’ or name signifier of some sort, (its an indication of) what am I signing out of.”
* “Expected to see the user name in upper right to know that it was their account.”
* “[Email at the top of the screen] tells me who I am.”
* “‘welcome Betsy Ross’ - cute!” [likes the welcome to the account page]

**[Feature idea] Educational banner**

[6 participants] The educational content on top of the page was helpful for people who did not understand what login.gov was.

* [Sees this second - “login.gov allows you to…” banner.] “That’s nice because I didn't really realize login.gov was a thing, just knew I had the same login details for two sites.”
* “I like how it has more of an explanation of what is at the top.”
* [Initial Impressions] “clean design, banner explains what it is.”
* [#designx] “top graphic makes the page more user friendly.”
* “I can click on the ‘learn more’ link which is really nice.” [link from banner to more content]

[2 participants ]2 participants felt that while they didn’t find the banner helpful, it was not distracting.

* [Banner on interior page “]With a lot of (banners) I go like this [scrolls down] really quick just because that's what the internet has taught me to do. But I get it, and it's not detracting. I like that you can dismiss it.”
* “Not a fan of the big banner, but likes that it’s closeable.”

**[Feature/Content idea] Help Text**

[4 participants] 33% of people expressed an interest and expectation of help content to guide them understand what keywords and actions on the page.

* “Adding something to walk people through what all these things are, I think it'd be helpful.”
* “If I land on this page, I expected that I need to do something here, like ‘Please confirm…’ (I’m) only seeing email address and password, not the rest of my profile.”
* [Authentication page] “I almost would wanna see ...something that shows me ‘My Phone is not really secure’ and pushes me to choose more secure options.”
* “Potentially (add) some help text associated… if I didn’t know as much. (about the content)”
* “Seeing ‘forget all browser.’ Not really seeing why I should do that.”
* “The one thing I like about [design y] is that it gives a description. That is nice. I do wish, you know, [design x and design z had that as well] because I don't know what these things are, you know "security key" so I'd be nice to have a definition.”
* [Interested in Tooltips] “What is required?”

### Improving the Information Architecture

**[IA idea] Location of Phone information**

[9 participants] Most people expected the Account profile to have phone number information instead of on the Authentication Page. There is an opportunity to add phone numbers to account details and as well as the Authentication page so people can find it when they are looking for it to add contact info or a 2FA.

* “It would definitely not be clear to me that I would come [to the authentication page] to change the phone number. SMS will probably be a little bit more clear. Like, that's the method. Phone number is a particular device, but not the method of authentication.”
* “I feel like I'd want to see my phone numbers as part of my profile and then authentication methods right see like SMS right and I could pick that phone number and add it.”
* “I would think ‘phone number’ would be part of the account, even though it is an authentication method, it would also be in my account. So that was a little confusing.”
* “You're missing phone information entirely. I couldn't find it.”

[Content idea] **Confusion with “Applications” section title**

[7 participants] 58% of Participants were confused about what “Benefits & Services” or “Applications” meant. “Connected accounts” might be a clearer way to explain the linked accounts to other government website services.

* [One person equated their Login profile with their USAJOBS profile and that “application” was a job application.] “‘Revoke Consent’” - it would withdraw my application from consideration.”
* “Add new” [on the Benefits and Services page] needs context.] “Adding another benefit and service doesn’t mean anything, because I don’t know what they are.”
* “[Benefits and services] just seems to be a weird way to word it when it's just listing when you access a website.”
* “Did not understand what [Benefits & Services] really meant. Connected Accounts might be better.”
* “I'm still not sure what they mean by applications and these government websites. I'm just assuming it's the websites, you use the log in that go to sign in to and make an account with, But I don't know why it's called applications. “
* “And now we have these applications. I was confused….So these must be like apps that I've already logged in to have it stored.”

**[Feature idea] Expectations for “Account History” and “Devices” to be connected**

[6 participants] People expressed confusion about what was in “Devices” and “Account History” and equated the two sections.

* “Account history is the websites I've signed in ...using my login.gov? Its a little bit confusing ...Why have the device and activity separate? Shouldn't it be just one line for each situation?”
* Account History and Browser History these are different to IT, but not to the user. Notices that the IP address is the same in both sections. “There’s no need to duplicate that information.”
* [History page] - “an “events “click [link] in here, maybe that will show me the activity on that device?”

**[Feature idea] Deleting account**

[4 participants] 33% of Participants found it weird and uncomfortable that “Delete Account” was on main pages of designs. Consider making it accessible but less prominent.

* “I can also delete the entire account, although I'm not sure I would have this here. That seems a little risky. If somebody is having computer problems. I think I would hide this over on the side and just keep it here.”
* Each design had an obvious place to delete your account, which this user found weird.
* Remove "delete account" from [the main] section, but leave in the left navigation.

### Opportunities to educate our End Users

**Understanding what login.gov is**

[4 participants] It was unclear to 33% of participants what login.gov is.

* “I didn't really realize login.gov was a thing, just knew I had the same login details for two sites
* If the only purpose of login.gov is to help me get into accounts, from a single place…”
* “Maybe it's like lastpass? Which is, I guess, remembers my password and I can log into it every time if I want and log out of it. So it's kind of confusing.”
* “I can basically log into any government website using this account instead of having an individual account. This is an account like National Park Service websites or recreation, or healthcare, IRS.”

**Understanding Security Methods**

[5 participants] Some people are unsure what security options are like security keys, backup codes and PIV/CAC

* “I don't really know anything about the security keys cards, personal keys, but that the codes but seems like it's another layer of security.”
* “I don't know what ‘PIV CAC cards’ are. I have no idea ‘get back up codes’, not quite sure what that means. #content #confusion.”
* “The only thing that I don't understand are the security key, PIV/CAC cards...looking back because I don't know what those are.”

[3 participants] 25% of participants understand 2FA with their phone

* :I can edit my password. Here's my 2 factor. .... I can add a security key ... It's all right on the front page. Easy to see. Here's all your devices. I like "your account" ..Everything is right here. When you click sign in, here's your account and all your information”
* “I can add or edit my phone number for the 2 factor - Google [reading google authenticator on the page] Those apps [points to authentication apps]. I never use one, you can have an app [reading from page] or delete one that has permission again, same thing to do factor authorization on security key or these.. I don't know what these are.” [points to piv/cac and backup codes]
* “If I were using 2FA, and it was against a phone number or text, I would expect to see that indicated by the phone number.”

[4 participants] PIV/CAC is not understood outside of government. We should consider how where/how we message that for the general public.

* “I'm when I see [sign in with your government employee ID] I think, well what if I'm not a government employee” [interesting that this is what we call PIV/CAC here]
* “Someone who understand what piv cards or security key are they would be able to add things easily”
* “I don't know what these things are, you know "security key" so I'd be nice to have a definition.”
* #designx user does not know what a PIV/CAC is.

### Opportunities for further research

**Understanding login.gov content**

Below represents the way some usability test participants understood the words we use in our links and section heads. There is an opportunity to better understand what people think specific words mean and to add tooltips to offer more explanation of what we mean when we use them.

* [revoke consent]
  + “You can remove apps that you've given permission. I think... that you logged in using your login.gov account.”
* [remembered devices]
  + “You can.... basically, anything you're logged into you can log out of. So you would have to log back in.” [seems a little unsure about what this is about]
  + “So devices are devices I used to log in to login.gov. I'm guessing?”
  + “Devices (mean) who's been signing in.”

**Naming Devices**

Allow people to give devices nicknames or making it easier to understand which is a phone or desktop   
would make the Account History section easier to understand.

* “I think that for these ‘devices,’ if they were named that would be more handy.”

## Resources

[Account page Usability Testing Synthesis](https://app.mural.co/t/gsa6/m/gsa6/1595886264217/ee76424976dda45c04d621f010d1059567f8c0d0)

[Account page Research plan](https://docs.google.com/document/d/18Zsxg7ffiQXUG7JlIcQJGU5kF2R7k3w0BnP83l8Tglk/edit#)

[Initial design ideas from two Design Studio sessions](https://app.mural.co/t/gsa6/m/gsa6/1593706272895/3ddfc90306bedc45d34711cb87df2cc90aec6c6f)