Redesigning Craigslist

Part 1: Usability Redesign

The public website that we have chosen to redesign is craigslist: rhode island.
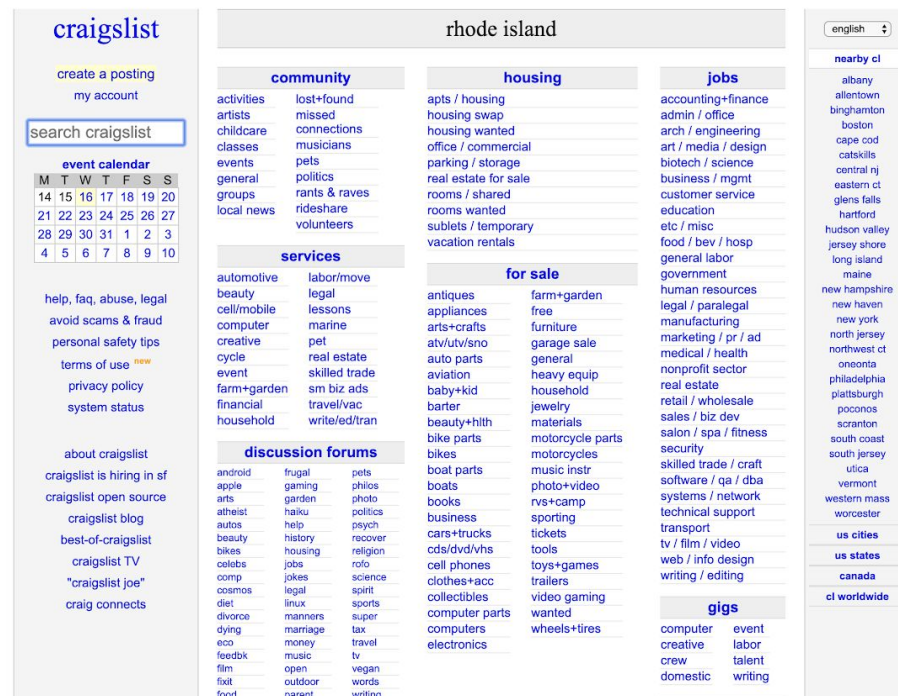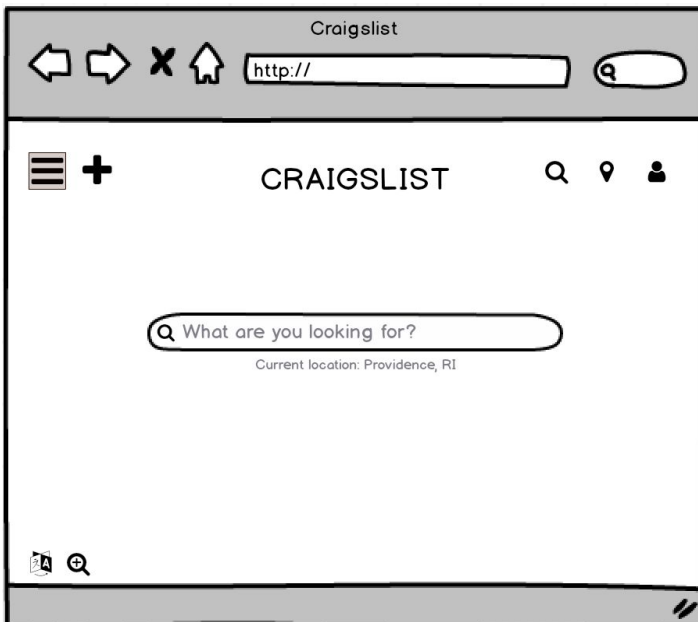

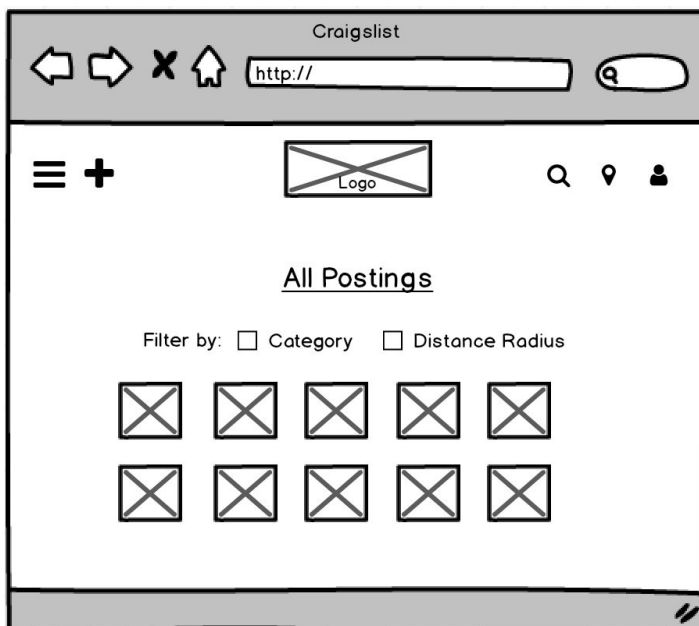*Figure 1:* Screenshot of Craigslist RI (https://providence.craigslist.org/) Home Page

Craigslist is an advertisement/postings website that allows people to post job offerings and sell products as well as search for jobs or services/products. Though Craigslist hosts different Craigslist sites for different regions (Figure 1: Craigslist for Rhode Island), they all have the same general interface. Users can create accounts to post jobs and can also view postings pertaining to several categories as shown in the lists in Figure 1.
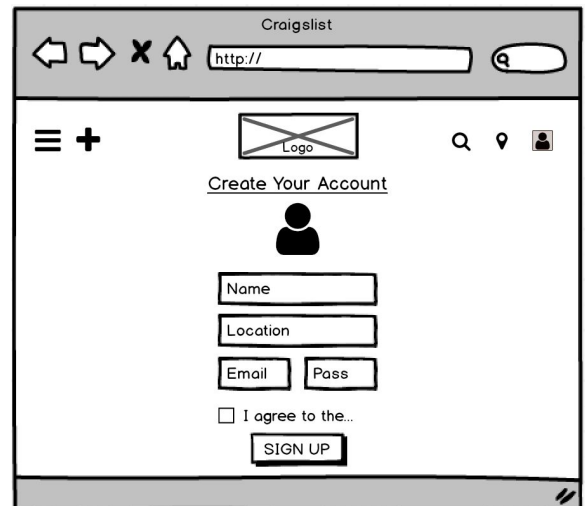
1) Home Page:

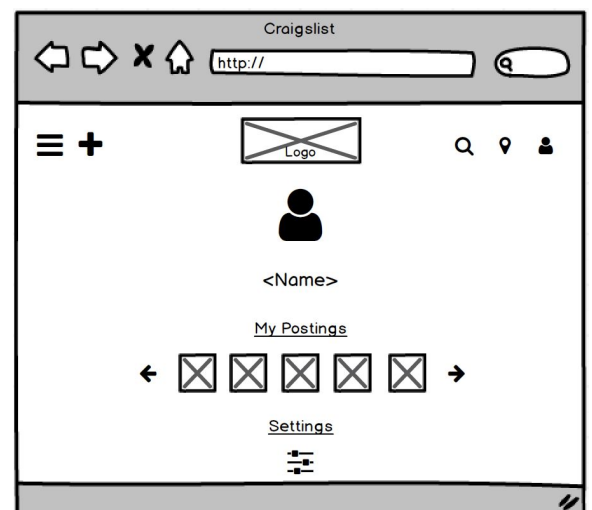CRAIGSLIST

Q What are you looking for?

Current location: Providence, RI

3) Create Your Account Page

Create Your Account

Name

Location

Email Pass

☐ I agree to the...

SIGN UP

2) All Postings Page:

Logo

All Postings

Filter by: ☐ Category   ☐ Distance Radius

4) My Profile Page:

Logo

<Name>

My Postings

← ⊠ ⊠ ⊠ ⊠ ⊠ →

Settings

5) Adding a Posting (Step 1) Page:

Logo

1. What type of posting is this?

☐ job/service offered
☐ job wanted
☐ gig offered
☐ housing offered
☐ housing wanted
☐ event/class   Next ➜
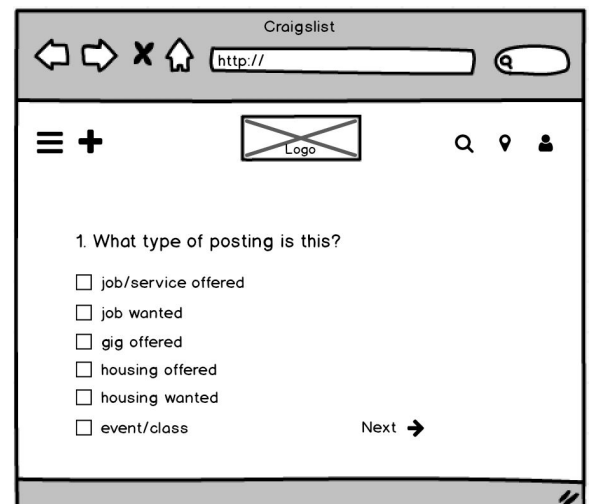
Navigational Flow Chart
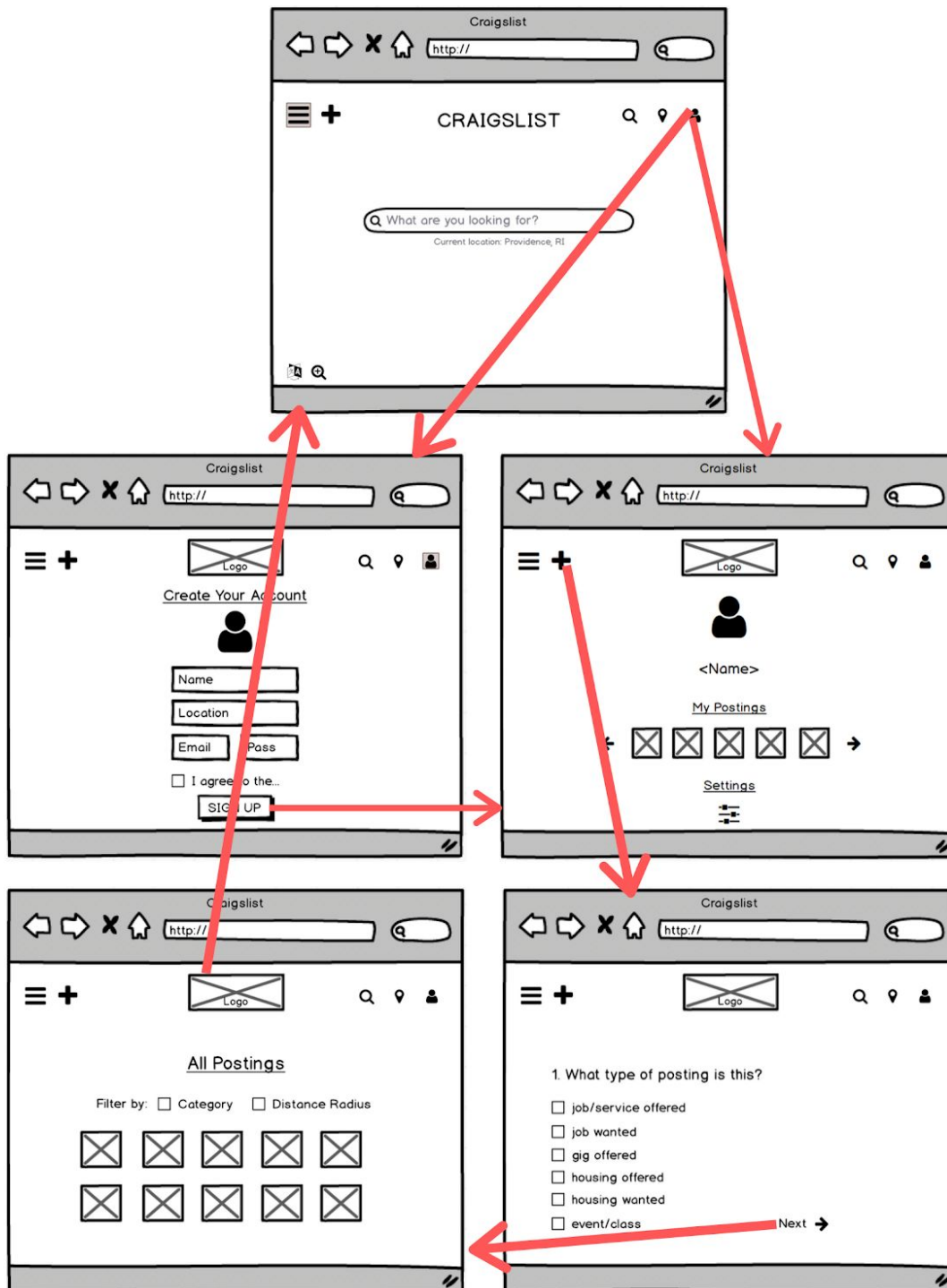
Using the criteria from usability.gov, the interface critique below was developed. XXX potential redesign elements to enhance user experience were identified in this process:

- simplifying the splash page to allow for effortless navigation,
- increasing the white space on the interface to improve user efficiency,
- implement simple animations so users can easily detect functionalities.

	Original Interface	Redesigned Interface
Intuitive Design	- Left-hand sidebar remains unutilized - E.g. privacy policy, terms of use, about craigslist, faq - Accomplishing main task - Users immediately see expansive extent of available postings - Icon to return to home page	- Simple design guides user through desired flow of activity - Users immediately recognize interactive components "Undo" or "Return" function easily detectable/accessible
Ease of Learning	- Claustrophobic layout hinders quick navigation - Small font size limits readability - Granule category breakdowns make navigation difficult	- Simplified design focuses on and makes key functions clear - Spread out layout to highlight relevant search results
Efficiency of Use	- Extensive units of info reduces visibility of relevant info - Attribute details are not standardized - Depth of info varies significantly across items in the same category - No distinction between postings about users looking to sell/buy - Easy to accidentally select unwanted categories	- Minimalistic design cognitively walks user through desired task - Search bar prompts user to efficiently navigate listings - Eliminates unnecessary clutter to accelerate user interaction - Home page components are tailored to frequent user actions
Memorability	- Cluttered home page makes it difficult to navigate - User learnability doesn't increase after consecutive visits	- Visible interactivity improves recognition for future visits - Consistent and standardized design match goals of users with functions of interface

Part 3: Visual Redesign
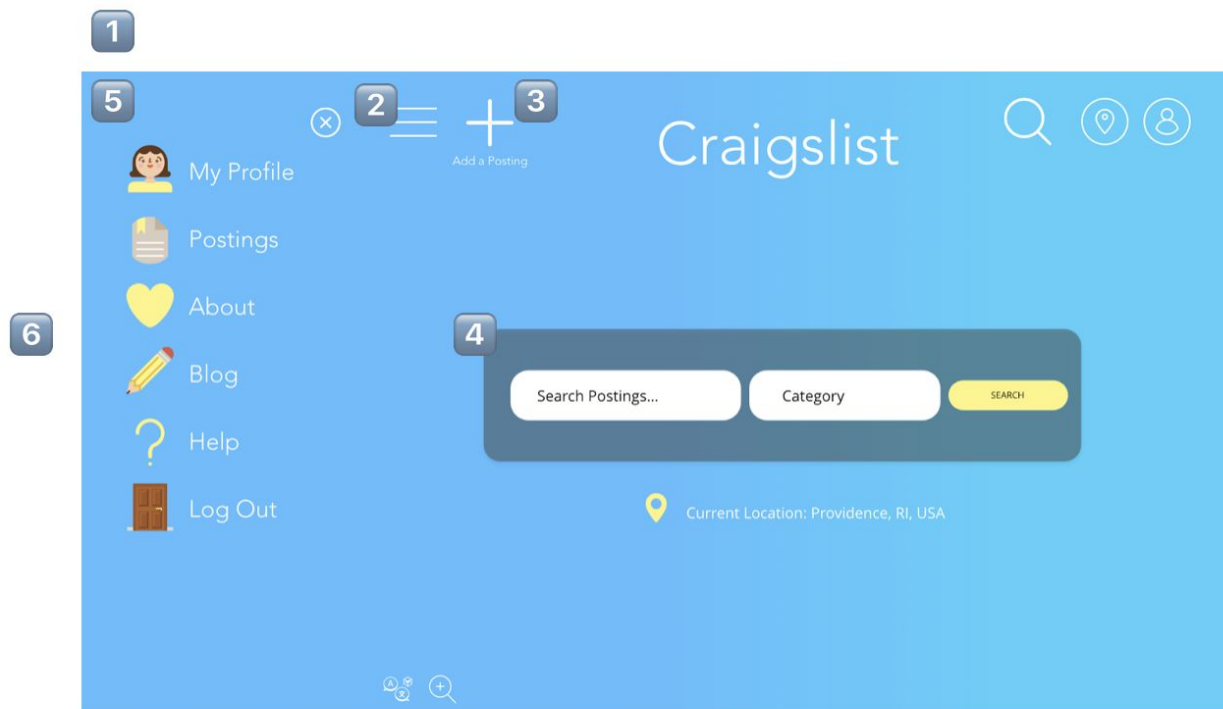
Home Page
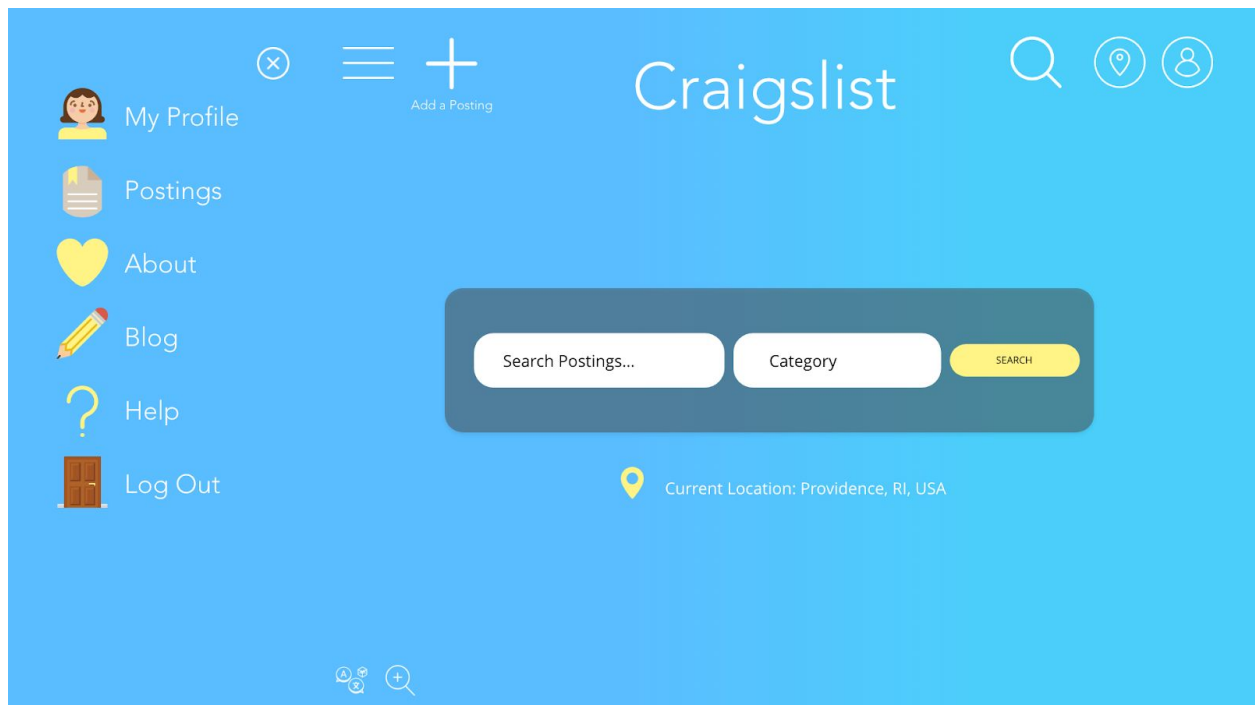
All Postings Page

Our goal with the new and improved Craigslist was to make it a simple, minimalist design with high contrast and bold colors. We completely changed the color palette from a boring white and faint purple to a bright blue gradient with white text color and light yellow accents. (The light yellow accents are carried consistently throughout the site on the side menu icons.) This high contrast between the blue and white enables the website to be accessible to all users, including the visually impaired. We also include a translate button (to potentially translate text on page) at the bottom left of the Home page as well as a zoom button for accessibility.

The navigation flow of the original Craigslist interface is very convoluted and confusing - for example, it is not obvious where the user can add a posting or even create an account. The redesigned Craigslist improves readability by improving alignment and reducing the number of elements on the interface. In addition, we center-aligned the primary features, such as the main search field so that it is obvious to the user what the main purpose of the site is. For the All Postings page, we used a grid to display several of the most recent postings as well as functionality for the user to filter the postings by category or distance radius. The user is also able to see what type of posting each posting is: either a job or service/product.

We allowed for "breathing space" by consolidating the menu in a sidebar responds and appears as a user clicks on the hamburger menu in the top left corner of the webpage. Further, an intuitive and efficient design is attained through the renewed interface that emphasizes the primary feature of Craigslist – to search for postings. Users can easily achieve their goal with the feature readily available and prominent in the very center of the Home screen and in the top right of each page (denoted by the universal search symbol of a magnifying glass).

Part 4: Responsive Redesign

1. The home page and text size dynamically scales to different sizes and web page orientations. The text on the home page is overall a smaller font for smaller screen sizes, and vice versa. (Checked by writing @media screen size = 540px in home.css) .

2. When the hamburger side menu is opened, the spacing between elements in the header also decreases, and elements in the header shift right and closer to each other with smaller screen sizes (such as a tablet or small phone in portrait mode).

3. The spacing between the header elements (plus symbol ("Add a Posting"), Craigslist logo, animated search icon, location pin, profile icon) changes with screen size.

4. Main search form on the home page collapses using flex-direction: row and wrap for elements in the form. Search button wraps to the next line as user shrinks screen.

5. When the side menu is opened, the page listings in the side menu appear along with a close button to collapse the menu. To make the menu the frontmost item on the page and stand out on smaller screens, the main search bar on the home page is slightly overlapped by the menu. The page options in the side menu wrap to the next line for smaller screen sizes since there is less space for the side menu in smaller screens.

6. We used icons from https://www.flaticon.com/ for our prototype/responsive redesign.

Annotated Mockup