

Report 2: Heuristic Usability Testing Report

Group J

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In this report, it describes the status and statistics of heuristic usability testing of the OurPlace website created by Group J. The process of heuristic usability testing is divided by 9 steps, which are visibility of system status, match between system and real world, users control and freedom, consistency and standards, error prevention, recognition rather than recall, flexibility and efficiency of use, aesthetic and minimal design and helping users recognise, diagnose and recover from errors. In addition, the process of the heuristic usability testing is realised by our team members and report is also done by us after the testing.

Visibility of system status

As shown on Figure 1, take the homepage of OurPlace website as an example, the language of our website is English, although the developers are not English background. The visible structure of the page is clear with the navigation on top, attractive picture in the middle and footer at the bottom. Users can click “Home” and the company logo to link to the homepage, click “Our places” to active a drop down menu with the choice of the places, click “About” and “Contact” to active the page to the bottom showing the information related, and click “Sign up” and “Sign in” link to the Sign up page and Sign in page.

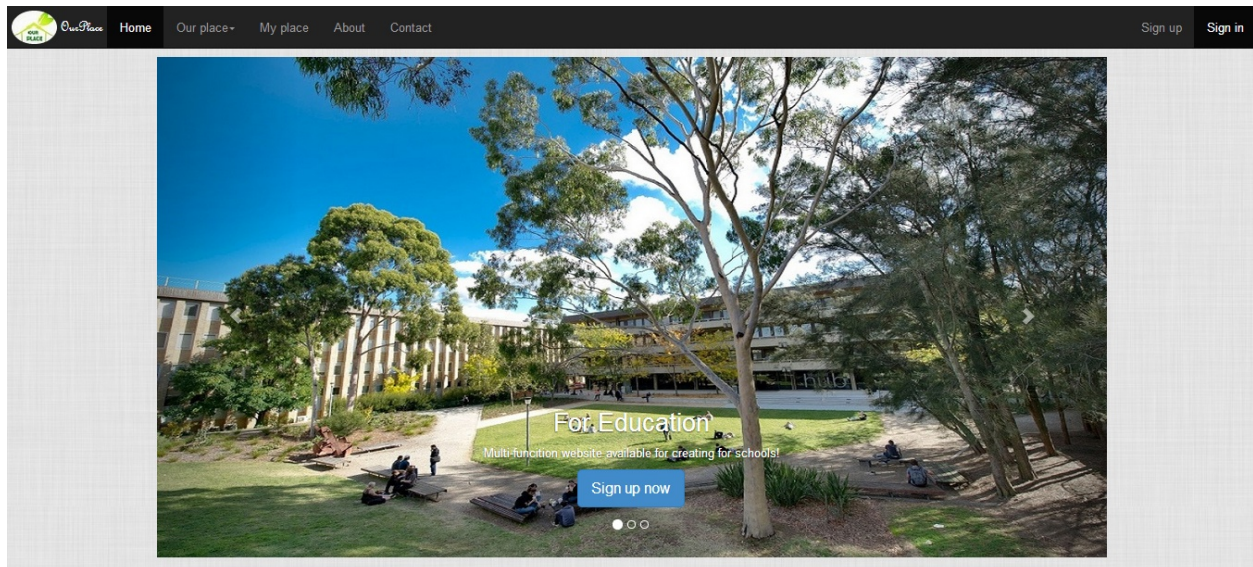


Figure 1

Match between system and real world

The basic hierarchy is shown on Figure 2, the function of the home page actual realise three functions, which are users' usage, admins' usage and creation of places. The menu on the homepage matches the system requirements with the actual functions.

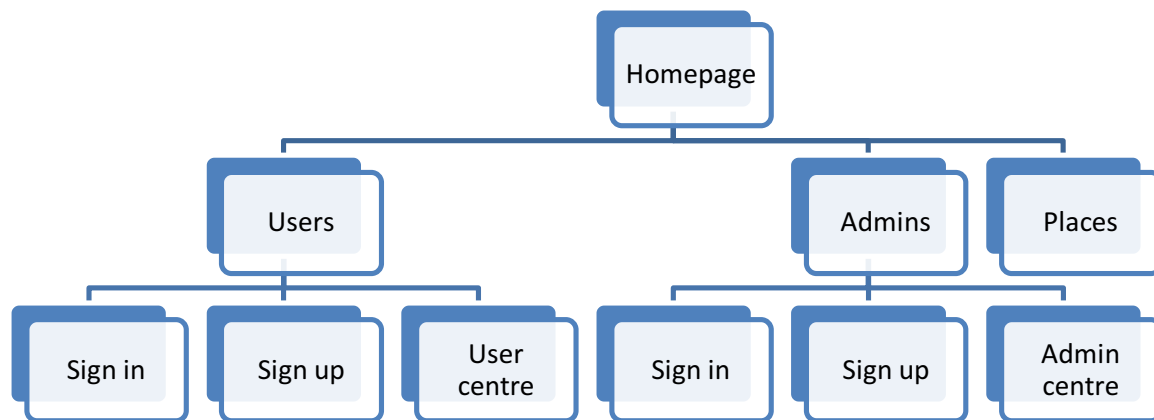


Figure 2

In addition, when we are testing our record of users and admins registration information, we use “phpMyAdmin” software to do the database checks. It can be seen from Figure 3, the sign up and sign in information of the users are fully, correctly, successfully and safely stored in our database.

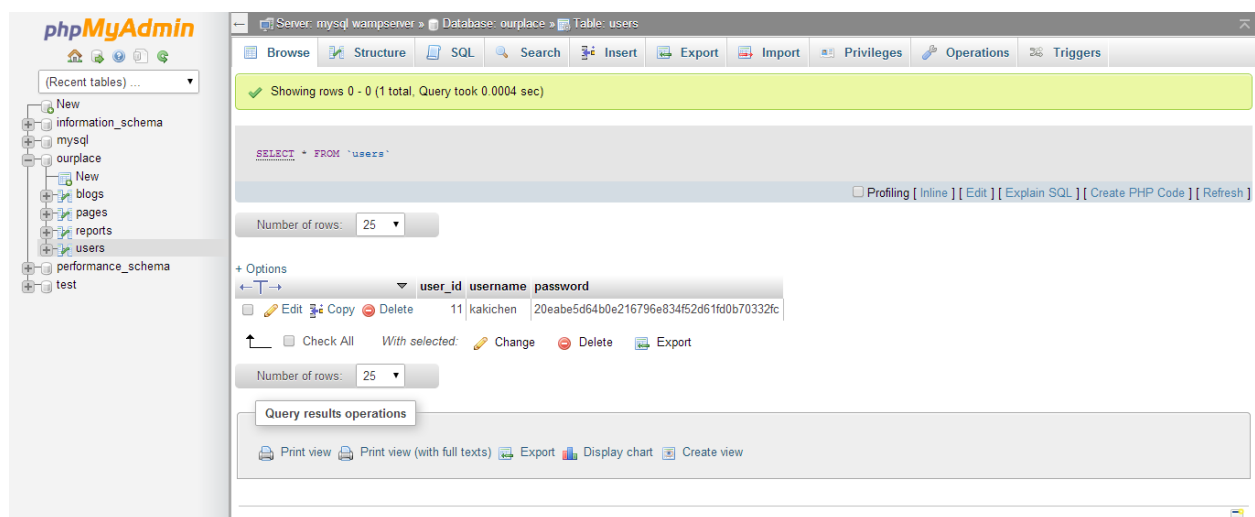


Figure 3

User control and freedom

The website of OurPlace has three template for users to choose when they are creating the places pages, which are Education, Business and Public template. The Figure 4 and 5 are Business and Public choices on the homepage by click right arrow on Education picture on Figure 1.



Figure 4



Figure 5

Furthermore, when designing users' input form of creating the place, users can also choose to input additional information for the place and they also have the freedom to choose the background colour of the page they create. The function realisation is shown on Figure 6 below, users can select background colour by the drop down menu with some colour choice in that. In addition, users can also modify the place pages which they have already created by click "Modify" link on the left hand side of the user centre page as showed on Figure 6.

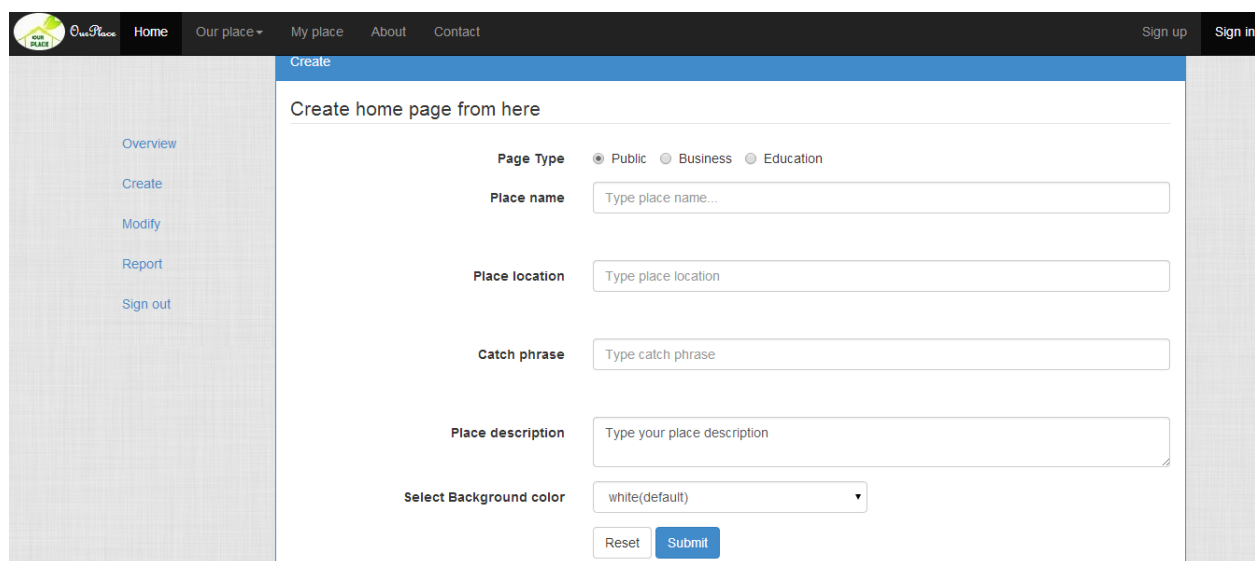


Figure 6

Consistency and standards

It can be got from Figure 7 and 8, which are the screen capture of Sign in and Sign up pages of the website respectively, that the method that the messages display, the colour usages, the method of data inputs and the format of navigations are very similar and consistent. The consistency is very important in website development as the basic standards of design is a remarkable sign for the users to remember and recognise the website.

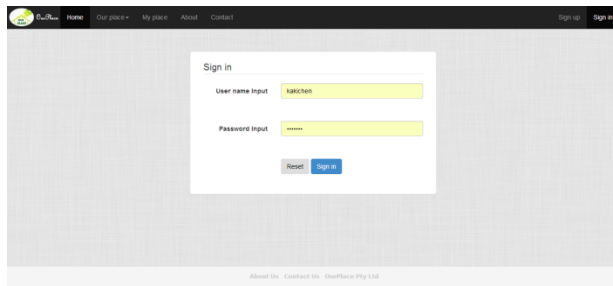


Figure 7

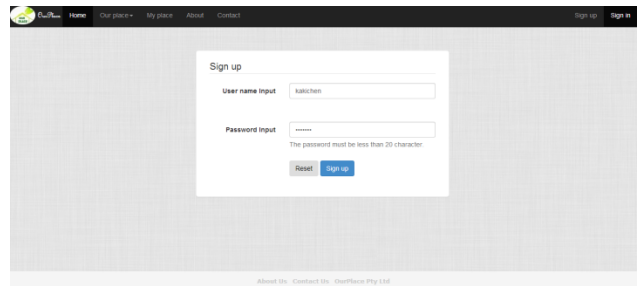


Figure 8

Error prevention

In the process of website development, the developers also create some error prevention method not only for the programming purpose but also for users to check the correctness of the information they input. As shown on the Figure 9 below, when users are doing sign in or sign up function, their username input must be more than 4 characters and password must be more than 6 characters. If the requirement doesn't match, the error message will display and remind users to enter correct input.

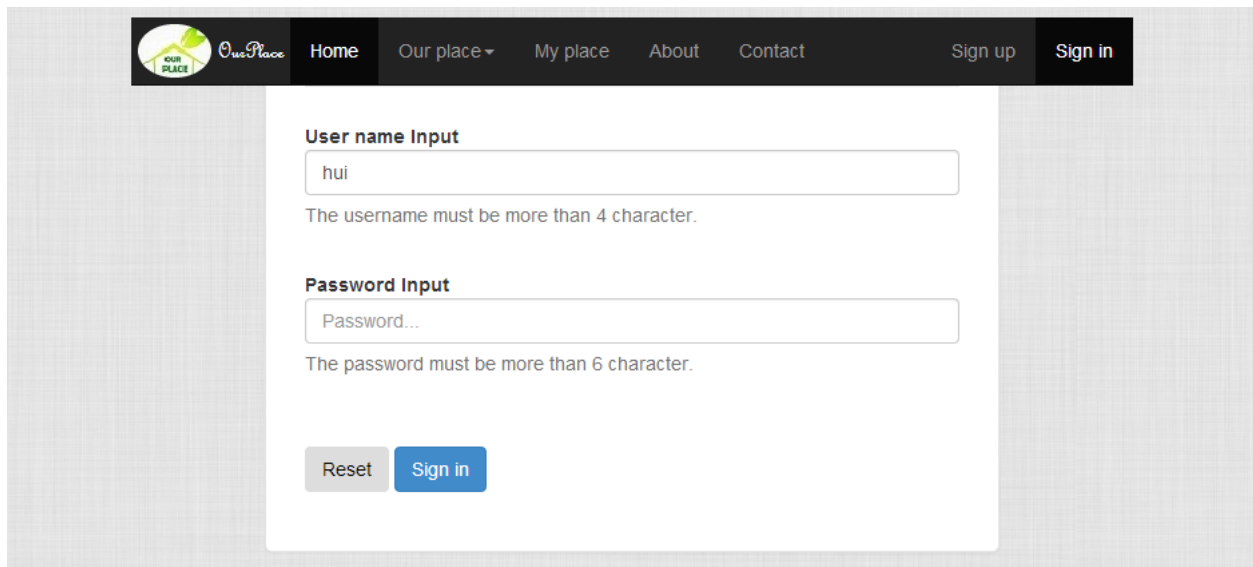


Figure 9

Recognition rather than recall

Take "contact us" page as an example, when users click "Contact" in the navigation on the homepage on Figure 1, the system will not load another "Contact" page, instead, the system will display the contact information at the bottom of homepage as shown on Figure 10. By recognition rather than recall, it minimizes user's memory load.

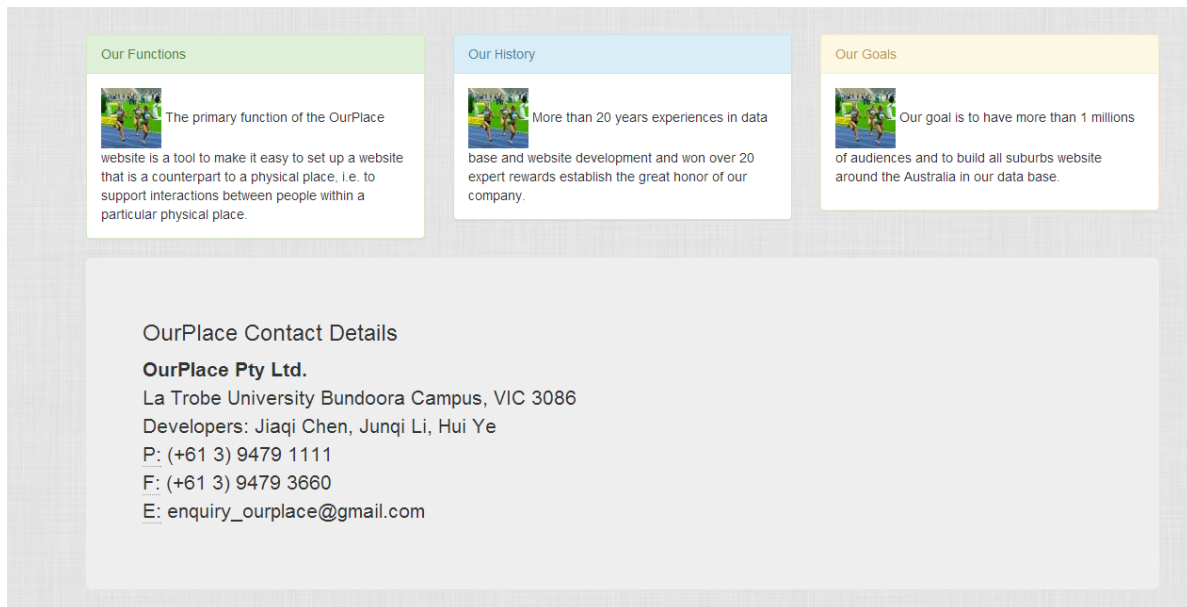


Figure 10

Flexibility and efficiency of use

In the process of testing, it is confirmed that the OurPlace website can run and fully functional on multiple browsers, which includes FireFox, Google Chrome and IE browser. Moreover, the website can also run on mobile device such as Samsung smart phones and apple iPhone 5 and 5s.

According to the test online (<http://tools.pingdom.com/fpt/>), the loading speed of OurPlace homepage is 5.57 seconds as shown on Figure 11. Although the homepage is equipped with 3 full size photos, the speed is still reasonable as we don't put any text graphics in order to save time of transmission in the process of development.

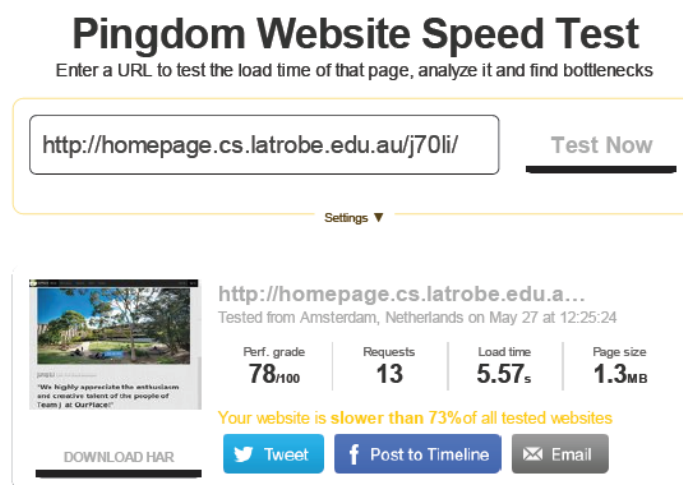


Figure 11

Aesthetic and minimal design

The design of OurPlace website is clear as each page only contains exactly one topic and each function is easy to find either on top of the page or the left hand side navigations. The testing information is also commented in the published version.

Helping users recognise, diagnose and recover from errors

As stated on the error prevention part, the error messages will display when users do wrong and the messages will explain why the action performed by users cannot perform so that the messages can help users recover from the errors. If other problems occur, users can also report problems to the developers by the link to “Report Problems” page as shown on Figure 12 so that they can improve the website.

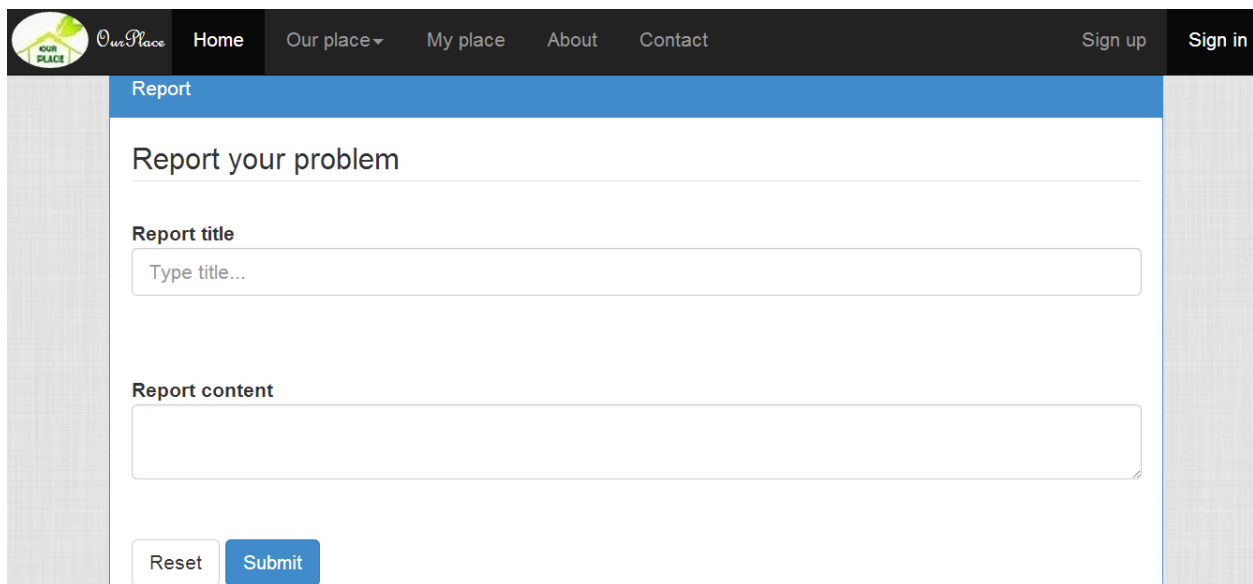
The image shows a web browser window displaying the 'Report your problem' form on the 'OurPlace' website. The website's header is dark grey with a logo on the left and navigation links: 'Home', 'Our place', 'My place', 'About', 'Contact', 'Sign up', and 'Sign in'. The form itself has a blue header bar with the word 'Report'. Below this, the title 'Report your problem' is followed by a horizontal line. There are two main input sections: 'Report title' with a text box containing the placeholder 'Type title...', and 'Report content' with a larger text area. At the bottom of the form are two buttons: 'Reset' and 'Submit'.

Figure 12

Conclusion

To conclude, the website is fully functioned and error prevented. The website provides clear instruction of realising each function and the heuristic usability test of the website works smoothly.