Mark Bosco
Dr. Quigley
ENGCMP 600
4 April 2023

Skincare Guide Usability Study Report

Abstract

The abundance of misinformation online leads consumers to purchase poor skincare products and follow ineffective routines. This report analyzes the results of a usability study for a skincare guide designed to combat this misinformation. The guide provides unbiased introductory-level information to inform potential consumers of useful skincare products and important ingredients. Moving forward, skincare guide contributors should reference this report before any further additions to the website.

Introduction

My group created the skincare guide as a basic overview of important skincare products and procedures free of any misinformation or bias. The website covers three main product types: cleansers, serums, and moisturizers. Each page provides a set of product and ingredient recommendations tailored for oily, dry, and normal skin types. After users have found their optimal products, they may reference the skincare routine page to learn how and when to use each product type. The “Specific Issues” page lists the symptoms of several severe ailments alongside certain ingredients and products to consider or avoid. This page is not a replacement for proper medical diagnosis and only exists as an educational resource. The website’s template-based design allows contributors to easily add new product types or sections. My group decided to use a muted, pastel green color scheme to create a soothing and organic visual experience. We also included a dropdown menu in the navigation bar to provide users with an intuitive way to browse the website.

Process Description

Beginning

During the initial phase of our project, we encountered some challenges such as having three group members and the lack of a comprehensive project idea. My team leveraged the advantages of our small group dynamic to complete the initial product pitch with haste and minimal conflict. Inadequate communication and the unexpected addition of two new group members led to a flawed pitch presentation. However, this rough start did not deter our team. As a group we identified key issues with our presentation and brainstormed potential solutions. One major problem was the absence of an organized project outline for each team member to reference. The group agreed to address these issues at our first scrum.

Middle

We started our first scrum by drafting a project outline in a collaborative Google doc. The friendly and inclusive environment led everyone to confidently share their ideas. Eventually, we had to start refining the best concepts into one consistent, achievable project plan. My group tactfully made the necessary compromises to produce a unanimous and elegant website layout. We divided the work in a way that allowed everyone to contribute their unique skills and knowledge for an equal impact on the final product. I coded half of the website pages along with writing the home page and readme file. We used a Kanban board to track our progress and a group Google doc to share any written content. We made a public GitHub repository to maintain the website's code so we could all view and upload potential changes. My team utilized a text group chat as our primary mode of communication which allowed us to quickly talk to each other when needed. All team members participated in the chat, comfortably asking questions and receiving feedback on their work.

End

My group collaborated to produce high quality work in a timely manner. By sharing drafts of the website with my team, I was able to garner valuable feedback on any overlooked details. While my group was professional, we kept the mood light during scrums with jokes and positive reinforcement. I relished my time working with this group as we all collaborated harmoniously. As a team, we chose not to elect a leader since each member understood their assignment, role,

and proactively took initiative when necessary. Our final presentation was a significant improvement over the product pitch. For this presentation, everyone spoke about their respective project contributions with confidence. Despite a turbulent start, our project was a success. Each group member showcased their unique skills while learning or improving upon others.

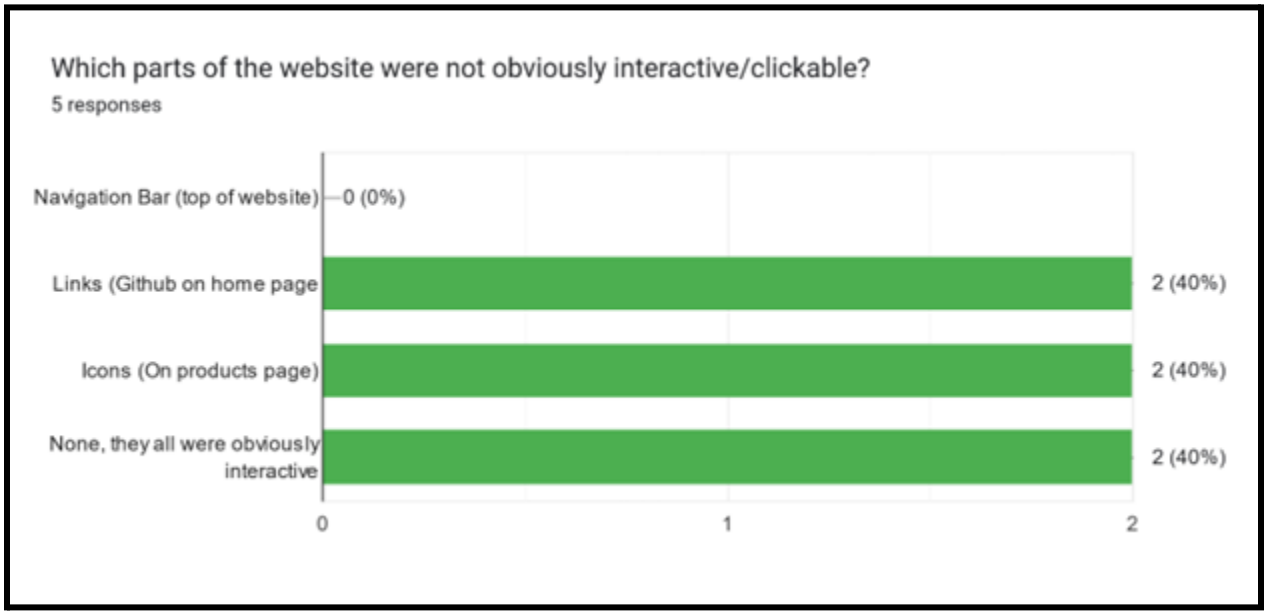
Usability Study Description

The usability study includes eight mandatory and two optional questions. The first questions ask users how they feel about interacting with and navigating the website. The next three questions gather feedback on the layout of the website and the ratio of text to images. The following two questions prompt users for their opinion on the website's visual design. The final questions ask participants to judge the usefulness of the written content.

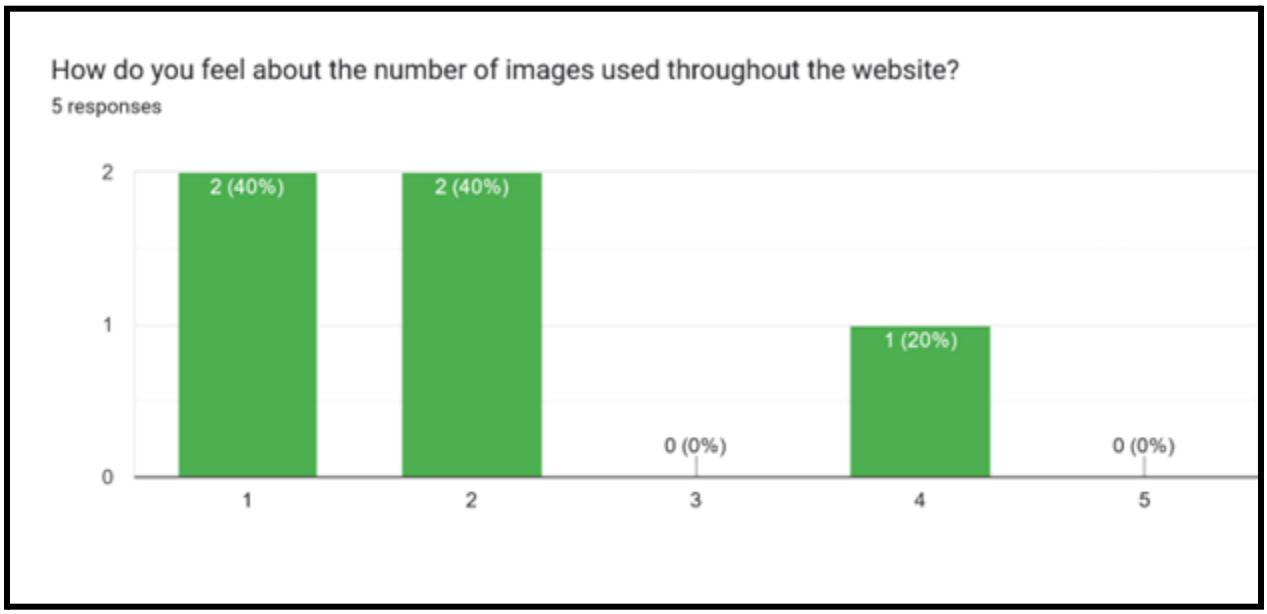
To ensure a high response rate, written responses are only required on the two optional questions. These questions are posed sparingly to collect any creative suggestions from participants. The other eight questions take on a variety of forms: multiple choice, linear scale, checkboxes, multiple choice grid. The diversity in question format keeps the participants engaged while also revealing which formats yield the most useful results.

Two of the three linear scale questions provide five options with a clear neutral choice. When dealing with an amount of content, a balanced option grants valuable feedback. The other linear scale question inquires about content's usefulness while giving only four choices which forces the participants to provide negative or positive feedback. A neutral response for this specific question would prove meaningless.

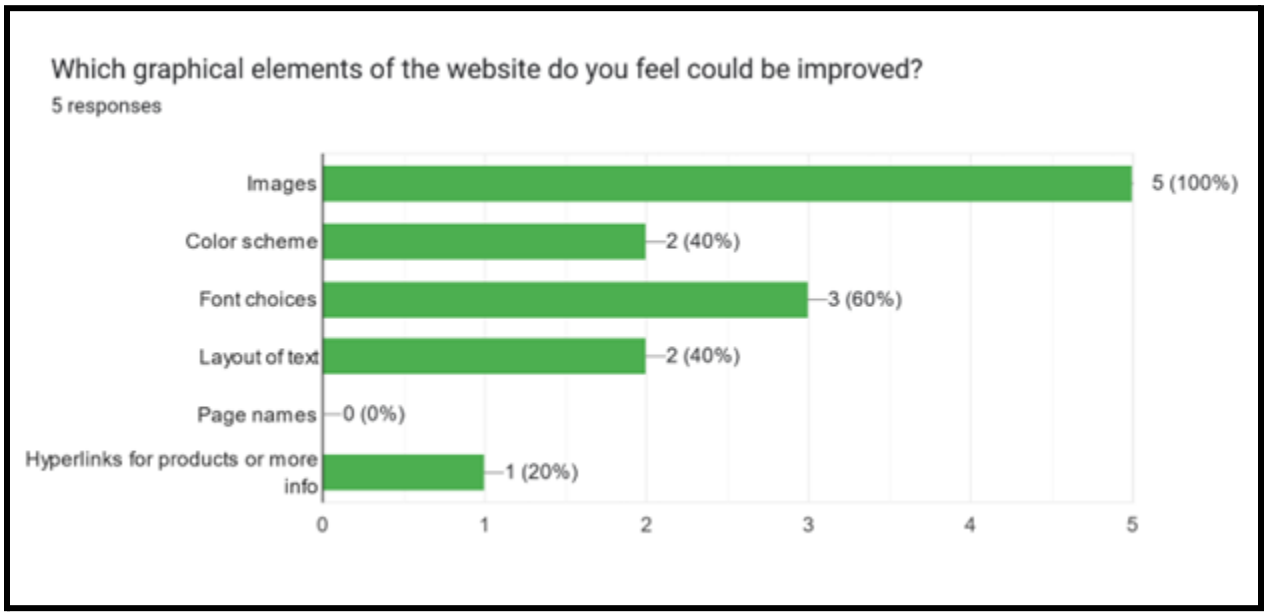
Results and Recommendations



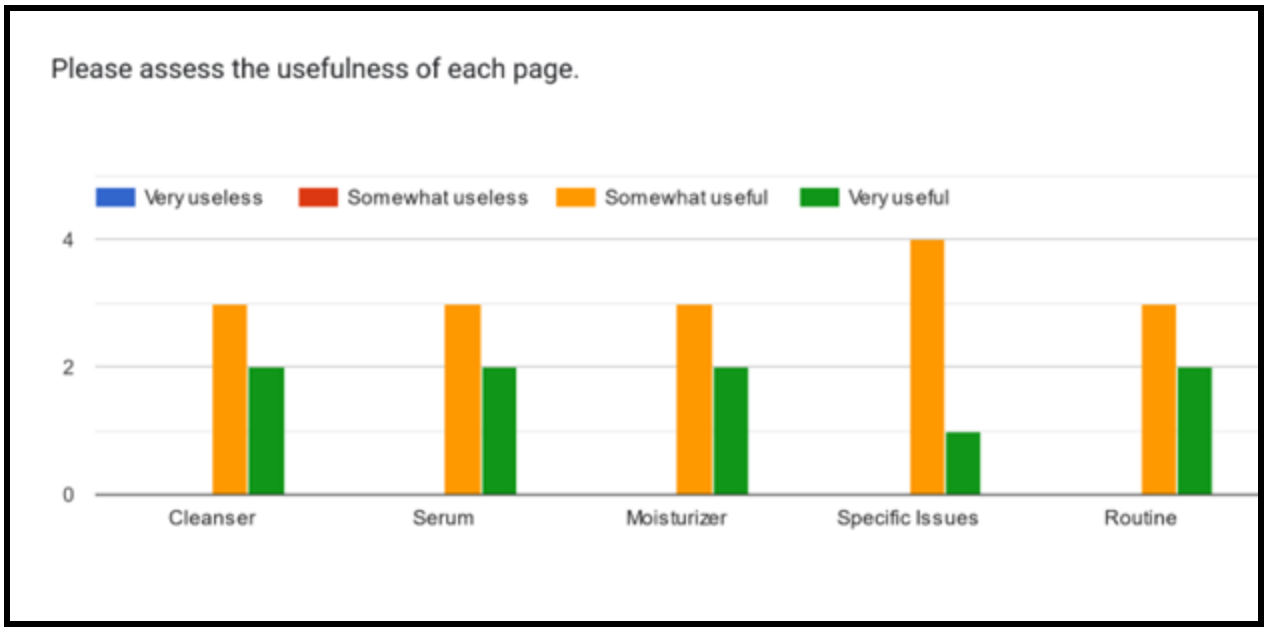
The results of the survey were mostly positive, but a few key issues stood out. While the website was easy to navigate, some users struggled to recognize the GitHub link and product icons as interactive elements. To improve their readability, we can add additional visual effects, such as an underline when hovering over links and a drop shadow to distinguish icons from the background.



The majority of users believed that each page featured a balanced amount of information, however, a few thought the website would benefit from less textual content. Regarding images, all participants except one, believed the website would benefit from more visual assets. Despite the mixed opinions, all users found the website layout consistent and easily skimmable. This series of questions reveals that the ratio of text to images needs adjusting, while the website's layout should remain unchanged.



When asked about the website's graphical aspects, all participants stated that we must improve the quality and relevance of the images. Additionally, users felt that the color scheme, font selection, and text organization also require further refinement. While these elements can be quickly tweaked in the HTML code, identifying visual assets that appeal to a broad audience poses a challenge. A follow-up survey could gather feedback on potential visual options. Some users also provided written feedback suggesting the inclusion of images and links for recommended products and skin issues.



All participants found the website's textual content at least somewhat useful, with the majority reporting the information as very useful. The users identified the "Specific Issues" section as the least valuable out of the five main pages. Since this page describes niche skin ailments and their treatment, it may have limited relevance for general users. We should consider expanding the page's content to provide more universal value. To obtain a better understanding of the issue, we could include further questions about this page in a follow-up survey. One participant recommended adding a section on sun protection which could be a suitable addition to the "Specific Issues" page.

Appendix

A: Skincare Guide Website

B: GitHub Project Repository

C: Usability Survey Questions