



craigslist

PROJECT OVERVIEW



Project name: Modernizing Craigslist: An HCI-Based UX Case Study

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PROBLEM



Craigslist is a classified advertisements platform used for posting and browsing housing, jobs, products, and services. Despite its huge popularity, the current design is very outdated and suffers from significant usability issues, such as long blocks of text, poor visual hierarchy, and small touch targets on mobile devices. These problems make navigation and searching difficult and uncomfortable for users, especially newcomers. Therefore, we decided to **redesign the site to improve user experience, information clarity, and ease of use**, while maintaining the platform's core functionality.

B E F O R E

- **Outdated and unattractive interface :** The old design relies heavily on plain gray colors, giving the page a dull and old-fashioned look that does not attract users.
- **Weak visual hierarchy Important actions:** such as Log in and Create account are not visually distinguished, making it unclear which action the user should take first.
- **Unclear primary call-to-action:** (CTA) The login button is small and not highlighted, so users may hesitate or overlook the main action.
- **Poor use of space:** Large empty areas around the content make the page feel unbalanced and unprofessional.
- **Low usability:** The design does not guide the user effectively, which increases cognitive load and reduces engagement.

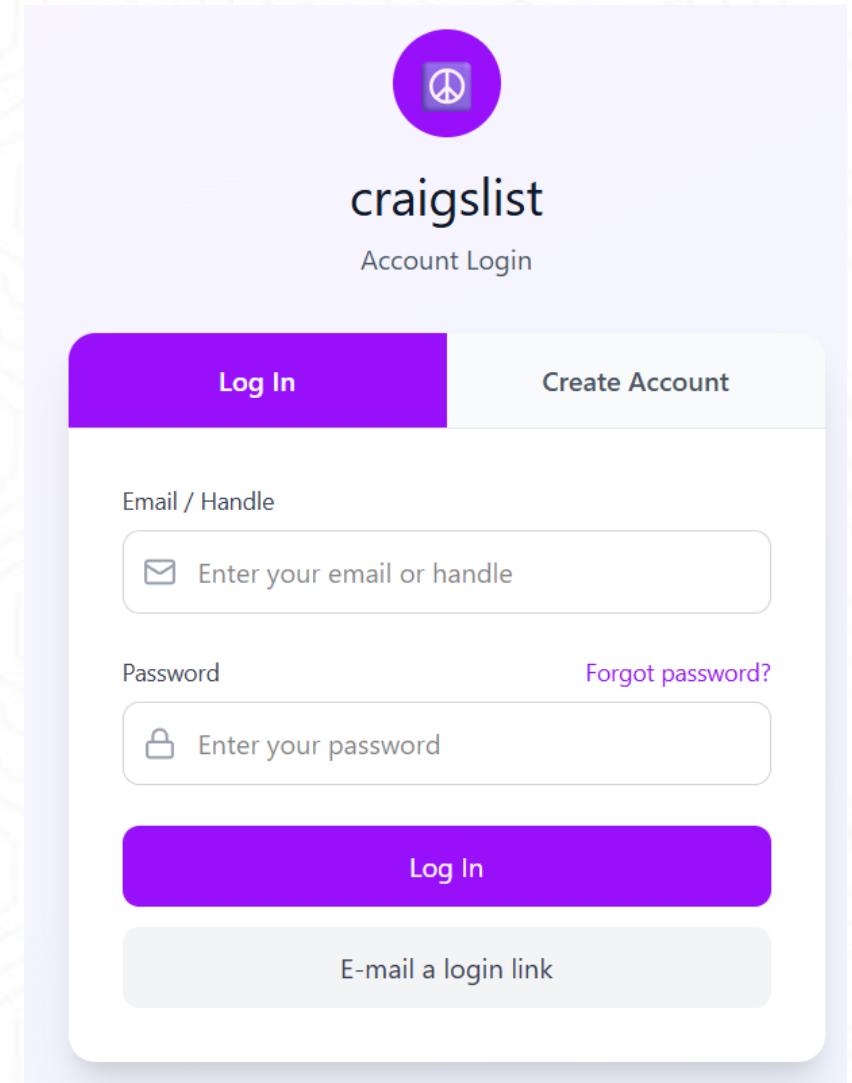
The screenshot shows a login form with a light gray background. At the top right is a red "Log in" button. Below it is a text input field labeled "Email / Handle". To the right of the input field is a blue "Forgot password?" link. Below the input field is a text input field labeled "Password". To the right of the password field is another blue "Forgot password?" link. At the bottom left is a gray "E-mail a login link" button, and at the bottom right is a red "Log in" button.

or

The screenshot shows an account creation form with a light gray background. At the top right is a red "Create account" button. Below it is a text input field labeled "Email". To the right of the input field is a blue "Account help" link. At the bottom right is a red "Create account" button.

A F T E R

- **Modern and visually appealing layout**, The new design uses a clean card-based layout with a consistent color palette, creating a modern and professional appearance.
- **Clear visual hierarchy:** Tabs for *Log In* and *Create Account* clearly separate user actions, allowing users to understand the flow at a glance.
- **Strong and visible CTA:** The primary *Log In* button is large, centered, and highlighted with a distinct color, guiding users to the main action.
- **Better content organization:** All elements are grouped inside a single card with proper spacing, improving readability and focus.
- **Improved usability:** Input icons, clear labels, and helpful placeholders reduce user effort and make the form easier to use.



UX IMPACT & RESULTS

- Reduced user confusion and cognitive load
- Faster decision-making and navigation
- More comfortable and intuitive interaction
- Higher likelihood of successful login Increased trust and user satisfaction

The screenshot shows the 'Account Login' page for Craigslist. At the top right, there are 'Log In' and 'Create Account' buttons. The 'Create Account' button is highlighted with a purple background. Below these are fields for 'Email' (placeholder: 'Enter your email') and 'Handle (Optional)' (placeholder: 'Choose a handle'). A note below the handle field states: 'A verification email will be sent to you after you create your account.' At the bottom left, there is a checkbox labeled 'I agree to the Terms of Service and Privacy Policy'. On the bottom right, there is a purple 'Create Account' button.

craigslist

Account Login

Log In Create Account

Email

✉ Enter your email

Handle (Optional)

👤 Choose a handle

A verification email will be sent to you after you create your account.

I agree to the [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Account help Create Account

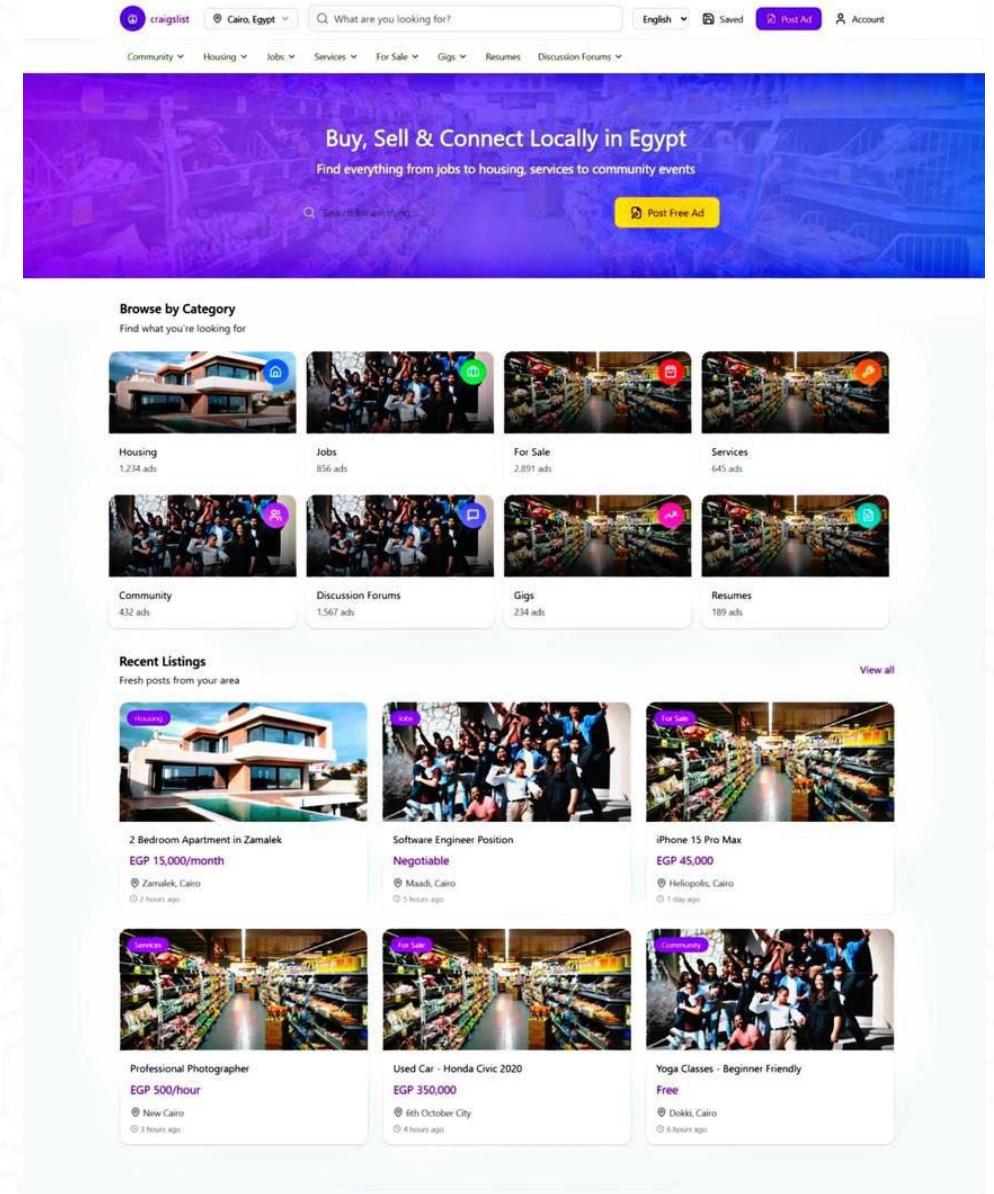
B E F O R E

- **High Cognitive Load:** The original design relied exclusively on text links, forcing users to read through dense lists to find a category.
- **Lack of Visual Hierarchy:** Every element had the same visual weight, making it difficult for the eye to know where to start.
- **Poor Trust Signals:** The outdated 90s aesthetic can lower user trust in a modern digital economy.
- **Zero Visual Context:** Users had to click into individual listings to see what a product actually looked like, increasing the "interaction cost."

The screenshot shows the original Craigslist website design. At the top, there's a navigation bar with icons for 'faves', 'post', and 'acct'. It also includes language selection ('english') and location ('middle east' with options for Beirut, Emirates, Haifa, Jerusalem, Pakistan, and Tel Aviv), as well as regional filters for Europe, US/CA, and CT Worldwide. The main header is 'craigslist' with a small globe icon. Below the header is a search bar labeled 'search craigslist'. A 'post an ad' button is visible. To the left, there's a 'community' sidebar with categories like activities, artists, childcare, classes, events, general groups, and local news. A 'housing' sidebar lists various rental types. A 'jobs' sidebar covers accounting/finance, admin/office, engineering, media/design, biotech/science, business/mgmt, customer service, education, food/bev/hosp, and general labor. A 'services' sidebar includes automotive, beauty, cell/mobile, computer, creative, cycle, event, farm/garden, financial, health/well, and household services. A 'for sale' sidebar lists items like antiques, legal, lessons, marine, pet, real estate, skilled trade, sm biz ads, travel/vac, write/ed/tran, and more. A 'discussion forums' sidebar lists topics such as apple, arts, atheist, autos, beauty, bikes, celebs, comp, cosmos, diet, divorce, dying, eco, feedbk, film, food, frugal, gaming, garden, haiku, help, history, housing, jobs, jokes, legal, manners, marriage, money, music, open, parent, philos, photo, politics, psych, recover, religion, rofo, science, spirit, sports, super, tax, travel, tv, vegan, wands, writing, and wheels/tires. At the bottom, there's a section for 'craiglist charitable' with a link to 'craig newmark philanthropies' and a row of colorful circular icons.

A F T E R

- **Visual-First Discovery:** Introduced Category Cards with high-quality imagery and iconography. This allows for "Scanning" instead of "Reading."
- **"Modern Navigation:** Consolidated the cluttered sidebar into a clean, intuitive Header with dropdown menus (Community, Housing, Jobs, etc.).
- **Hero Search Experience:** Implemented a prominent search bar and a clear Call-to-Action (Post Free Ad) to drive user conversion immediately.
- **Dynamic Previews:** Added a "Recent Listings" section with clear pricing (EGP), locations, and timestamps, providing an Amazon-like browsing experience.



UX IMPACT & RESULTS

□ Improved Findability:

Users can identify categories up to 40% faster using visual cues compared to text-only links.

□ Enhanced Credibility:

A modern, clean UI (User Interface) fosters professional trust, essential for high-value transactions like real estate and jobs.

□ Reduced Friction:

By displaying the price and location directly on the home page cards, users make more informed decisions before clicking.

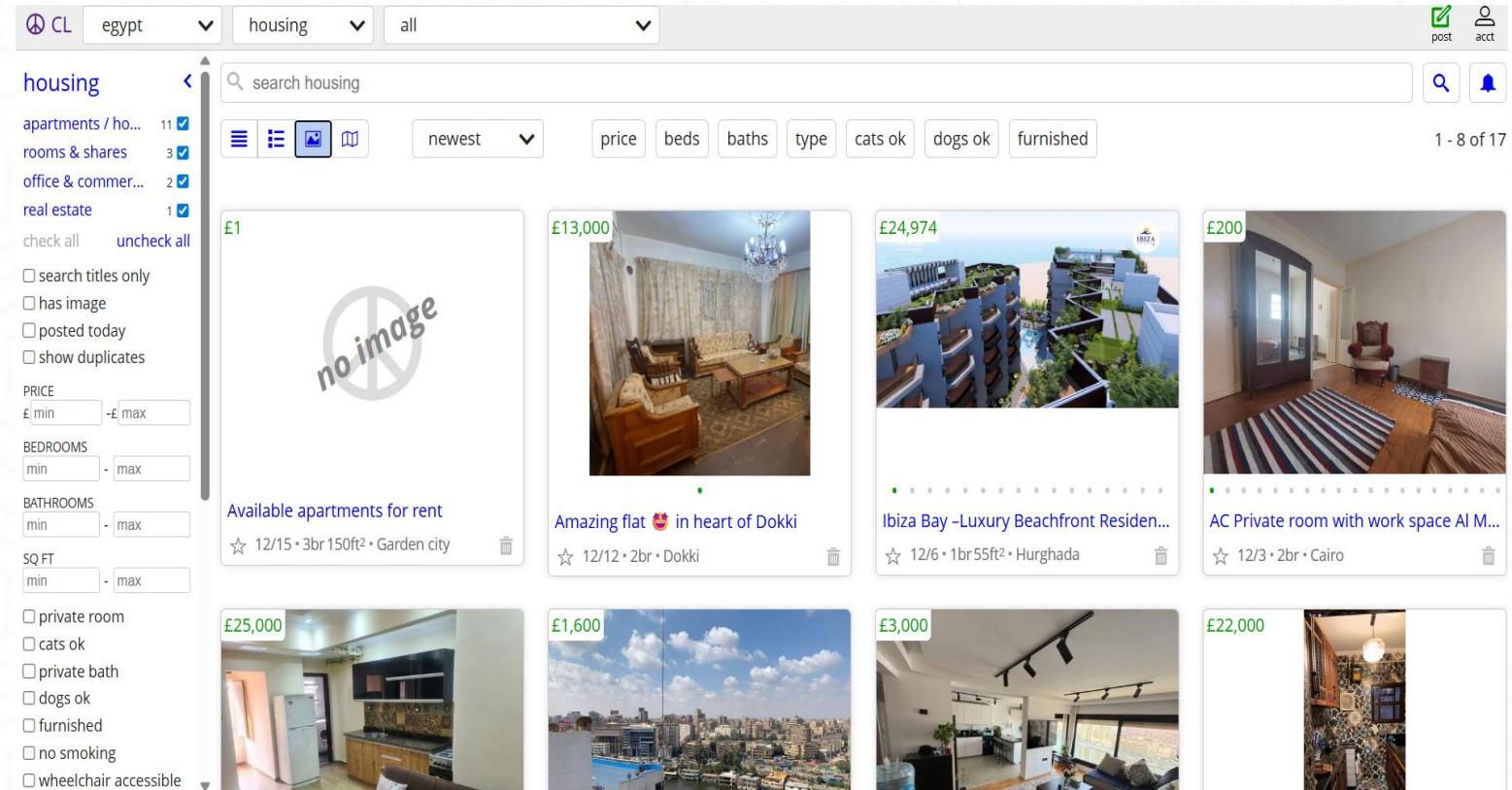
□ Mobile-Ready Layout:

The card-based system creates a responsive-friendly foundation that translates seamlessly to mobile devices.

The screenshot shows the Craigslist homepage for Cairo, Egypt. The top navigation bar includes links for Community, Housing, Jobs, Services, For Sale, Gigs, Resumes, and Discussion Forums. A search bar at the top right allows users to search for anything. Below the header, there's a banner with the text "Buy, Sell & Connect Locally in Egypt" and "Find everything from jobs to housing, services to community events". A "Post Free Ad" button is also visible. The main content area features a "Browse by Category" section with thumbnails for Housing (1,234 ads), Jobs (856 ads), For Sale (2,891 ads), Services (645 ads), Community (432 ads), Discussion Forums (1,567 ads), Gigs (234 ads), and Resumes (189 ads). Below this, a "Recent Listings" section displays cards for a 2-bedroom apartment in Zamalek, a software engineer position, an iPhone 15 Pro Max, a professional photographer, a used car, and yoga classes. Each card includes a thumbnail image, the listing title, price, location, and a timestamp.

B E F O R E

- **Low Price Visibility:** Prices were hidden in small, low-contrast text over images.
- **Information Density:** Core specs (beds, baths, sqft) were crammed in a single line, making it hard to scan.
- **Cluttered Filtering:** The sidebar used tiny checkboxes and tight spacing, leading to a frustrating filtering experience.



A F T E R

- Icon-Based Specs:** Introduced clear icons for beds, baths, and square footage to provide instant data recognition.
- High-Contrast Pricing:** Moved prices to a bold blue badge for maximum visibility.
- Visual Hierarchy:** Implemented a "Featured" badge system to highlight premium listings effectively.
- Modern Filter UI:** Redesigned the sidebar with better spacing, search functionality, and clearer

The screenshot shows the Craigslist mobile application interface for the 'Housing' category in Cairo, Egypt. The top navigation bar includes links for Community, Housing, Jobs, Services, For Sale, Gigs, Resumes, and Discussion Forums. The main content area displays a grid of eight real estate listings, each with a small image, price badge, listing title, location, and size. A sidebar on the left contains a 'Filters' section with a search bar and a list of housing type options. At the bottom, there are navigation buttons for page navigation.

Listing	Type	Price	Location	Size
2 Bedroom Apartment in Zamalek	apartments / housing	EGP 15,000/month	Zamalek, Cairo	1500 sqft
Luxury Villa with Garden	rooms & shares	EGP 3,500,000	New Cairo	3500 sqft
Modern Studio in Maadi	office & commercial	EGP 8,000/month	Maadi, Cairo	600 sqft
Office Space in Dokki	real estate for sale	EGP 25,000/month	Dokki, Cairo	2000 sqft
Furnished 3BR Apartment	parking / storage	EGP 20,000/month	Heliopolis, Cairo	1800 sqft
Private Room in Shared Apartment	sublets / temporary	EGP 3,500/month	6th October City	400 sqft
Commercial Space Near Downtown	vacation rentals	EGP 40,000/month	Downtown, Cairo	1200 sqft
Beachfront Vacation Rental	housing swap	EGP 12,000/week	North Coast	1100 sqft

UX IMPACT & RESULTS

❑ Faster Decision Making:

Organized data allow users to compare properties in seconds.

❑ Enhanced Usability:

Larger interactive elements (buttons/filters) reduce user error and improve the touch experience.

❑ Professional Trust:

The clean, card-based layout elevates the platform from a "bulletin board" to a "modern marketplace".

The screenshot shows a mobile application interface for Craigslist. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Community, Housing, Jobs, Services, For Sale, Gigs, Resumes, and Discussion Forums. The location is set to Cairo, Egypt. Below the navigation is a search bar with the placeholder "What are you looking for?". To the right of the search bar are buttons for English, Saved, Post Ad, and Account. The main content area shows a search results page for "Housing" in Cairo, Egypt, with the sorting option "Newest first". There are eight results displayed in a grid format, each showing a thumbnail image of the property, its price (e.g., EGP 15,000/month, EGP 3,500,000), and a brief description. The properties include a 2-bedroom apartment in Zamalek, a luxury villa with a garden in New Cairo, a modern studio in Maadi, an office space in Dokki, a furnished 3BR apartment in Heliopolis, a private room in a shared apartment in 6th October City, a commercial space near downtown in Cairo, and a beachfront vacation rental in North Coast. Each listing includes a date (e.g., 12/15, 12/14, 12/13, 12/12, 12/11, 12/10, 12/9, 12/8) and a "Featured" badge. At the bottom of the screen, there are navigation buttons for "Previous", "1", "2", "3", and "Next".

B E F O R E

— previous

search craigslist

event calendar

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10

help, faq, abuse, legal
avoid scams & fraud
personal safety tips

about craigslist
best-of-craigslist
what's new
system status

craigslist charitable

music instruments

community

activities	lost+found
artists	missed
childcare	connections
classes	musicians
events	pets
general	politics
groups	rants & raves
local news	rideshare
	volunteers

housing

apts / housing
housing swap
housing wanted
office / commercial
parking / storage
real estate for sale
rooms / shared
rooms wanted
sublets / temporary
vacation rentals

jobs

accounting+finance
admin / office
arch / engineering
art / media / design
biotech / science
business / mgmt
customer service
education
etc / misc
food / bev / hosp
general labor
government
human resources
legal / paralegal
manufacturing
marketing / pr / ad
medical / health
nonprofit sector
real estate
retail / wholesale
sales / biz dev
salon / spa / fitness
security
skilled trade / craft
software / qa / dba
systems / network
technical support
transport
tv / film / video
web / info design
writing / editing

beirut
emirates
haifa
jerusalem
pakistan
tel aviv

europe

us/ca

cl worldwide

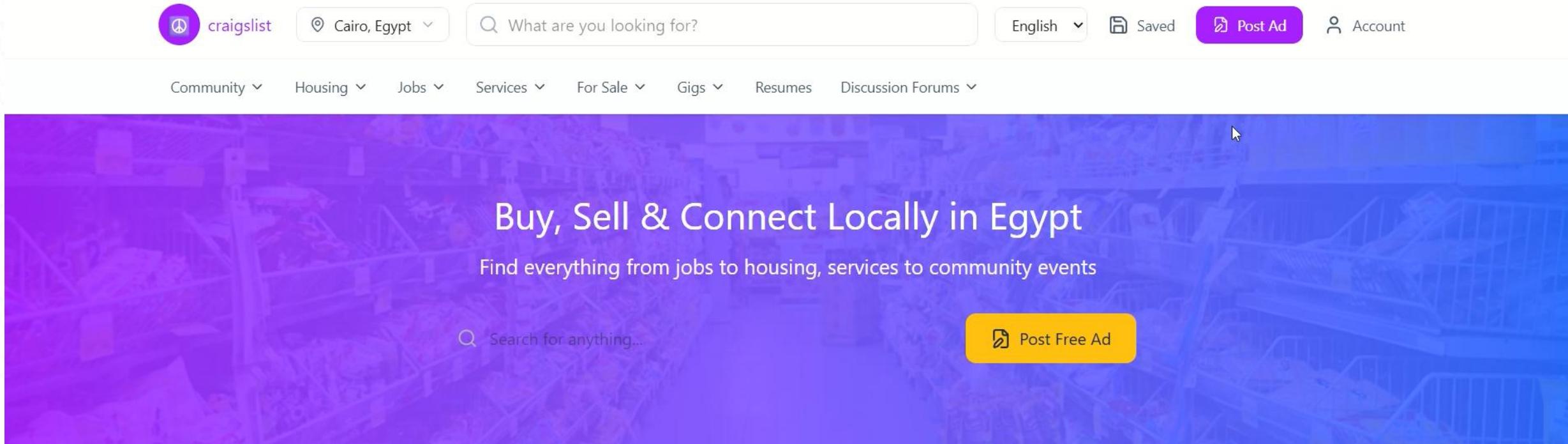
for sale

antiques	farm+garden
appliances	free
arts+crafts	furniture
atv/utv/sno	garage sale
auto parts	general
aviation	heavy equip
baby+kid	household
barter	jewelry
beauty+hlth	materials
bike parts	motorcycle
bikes	parts
boat parts	motorcycles
boats	music instr
books	photo+video
business	rvs+camp
cars+trucks	sporting
cds/dvd/vhs	tickets
cell phones	tools
clothes+acc	toys+games
cosmos	trailers

discussion forums

apple	frugal	philos
arts	gaming	photo
atheist	garden	politics
autos	haiku	psych
beauty	help	recover
bikes	history	religion
celebs	housing	rofo
comp	jobs	science
cosmos	jokes	spirit

A F T E R



The image shows the Craigslist homepage for Cairo, Egypt. The top navigation bar includes the Craigslist logo, location dropdown (Cairo, Egypt), search bar ('What are you looking for?'), language dropdown (English), saved items link, post ad button, and account link. Below the header are category links: Community, Housing, Jobs, Services, For Sale, Gigs, Resumes, and Discussion Forums. The main banner features a blue-toned background image of a construction site and the text 'Buy, Sell & Connect Locally in Egypt' followed by a subtitle 'Find everything from jobs to housing, services to community events'. It also includes a search bar and a 'Post Free Ad' button. The bottom section, titled 'Browse by Category', shows four categories with images: real estate (a modern house), people (a group of diverse individuals), services (a grocery store aisle), and goods (a warehouse or market stall). Each category has a circular icon with a white symbol (house, person, shopping bag, key) overlaid.

Browse by Category

Find what you're looking for





craigslist

THANKS