**Assignment 1 – Website Review**

**Website choice**

The website I chose for my assignment is the website for my former company, First Calgary Financial. When this new website launched, members would often call with questions and complaints, and as I often had to answer the phone I have some first hand knowledge on how it was received by users.

Link: <https://www.firstcalgary.com/>

**Goals of the site**

Most people would likely access the site for the following:

* Online banking
* Information about products offered, including loan/mortgage rates, etc.
* Branch hours, locations, contact information
* To book an appointment

**My first impression**

This is definitely a more modern website than what they used to have. I find it visually pleasing and I like the colour choices, the transparent navbar that sticks to the top of the page, and the updated fonts. They are trying to convey a friendly feeling with their design and I believe they achieved that. Upon first glance I like the design of the site. Once I started to navigate the site for my own use and heard what members had to say, I found there were a few issues.

**User experience/usability**

If you are using the website to access your online banking, especially for the first time and you are not technically savvy, you may have a bad experience.

To access the login you must click “member banking” on the home page and then one of the two “online banking” buttons on the next page, before you reach the login page. I used to get many complaints about this, because people did not understand what “member banking” meant and they started to get frustrated when they couldn’t find the login. I believe the login functionality gets too bogged down in fancy language and too many buttons. This happens in other areas of the site, too. They have at least made the “member banking” button a different colour from the others, giving you more of a clue to click on it, which may help. I believe this kind of functionality needs to be simpler, however, given how important it is.

As you navigate to some of the other sections this is done better. In the loans section, for example, they have a navbar at the top linking to other types of credit products so you don’t have to look around too much for these topics, which is convenient.

To summarize, I believe the website is useable for the most part, as the user will be able to accomplish whatever task they need to achieve on the site. However, I believe the overall user experience could end up being bad for some users as they may have a hard time figuring out how to complete their task. The site design can raise too many questions for the user.

**Content and information architecture**

I would argue that this website includes a bit too much content and could be organized better. I believe it could become confusing for the members because there are too many places to click and therefore too many ways of accessing the same information.

For example, when you are in the daily banking section there is a navbar at the top with specific topics like “new to town”, “business owner”, and so on. These links contain a lot of the same information as other sections of the site. Below that there is another navbar with daily banking products. The main content of the page includes more links to the same topics that are also in the navbar. I don’t necessarily think the layout is bad, but even I start to get confused about where I should click if all I want to do is find out what chequing accounts they have. I think a potential user may become overwhelmed with the amount of information and all of the different ways to get to it.

I noticed they included a search bar and it seems to work well for a simple search, so this may help users navigate through the large amount of content. I think it may have been more helpful if they cut down on the amount of information and did some research on what members will actually be looking for.

**Accessibility**

They seem to have done a good job on the site in terms of accessibility. When you inspect the html on a page they tend to use semantic tags like <main> and <strong> which will make the use of screen readers easier. I was a bit concerned about all of the “find out more” buttons they use throughout the site, as we learned that it is important to give your links descriptive names. However, I noticed that they actually give the title attributes of the links more descriptive names like “find out more about investing” which might work better with a screen reader, though I am not well versed in how screen readers work at this point.

They also have a link in the footer to a page about accessibility, where they mention that they tried to conform to W3C standards, and it seems like they accomplished this goal.

**Overall impressions of the site**

I like the new design of the site as it looks modern. Ultimately you can find what you are looking for and the goals of the site are accomplished. I believe they went a bit too far with the amount of content and the number of ways to access the content, and should have used simpler language to make navigating the site more intuitive for users at all levels.