

Heuristic Evaluation for exploreReading

1. Problem

The website of Group 2 called "exploreReading" hosts everything recommended on what to do and where to go in Reading. With "exploreReading" the process of exploring is made easier.

2. Violations Found

Severity Ratings

0 - don't agree that this is a usability problem

1 - Cosmetic problem

2 - Minor usability problem

3 - Major usability problem; important to fix

4 - Usability catastrophe; imperative to fix

1. H1. Visibility of System Status / Severity 2

When a user wants to search for a place, it only shows random Reading attractions without making it more specific for the users. How can the user know what to search based on the activities they want?

Fix: Should categorize each attraction based on the activity a user can do in the specific area.

2. H1. Visibility of System Status/ Severity 2

On the first screen it is not clear what step of the process the user is at. Does not know how to use the website.

Fix: Describe the steps of how to find an attraction.

3. H1.Visibility of System Status/ Severity 2

Not sure what I will see in each attraction when I go there

Fix: Maybe add some activities you can do (example: Shops, Restaurants, etc.)

4. H2 Match Between System & Real World/ Severity 3

It is a prototype so a few changes might change in the future, but it is not clearly illustrated that when an attraction is selected the title of the attraction is written in the page

Fix: The attraction page should have the name of the specific attraction.

5. H2 Match Between System & Real World/ Severity 1

Not specified if the description below the pictures is the address or a description

Fix: Prefer to write a description of the specific attraction.

6. H2 Match Between System & Real World/ Severity 2

Be able to see what others think about the specific attraction, each user could write recommendations to do in the area.

Fix: Add a review section to rate and comment the attraction and experience.

7. H3 User control and freedom/ Severity 3

The user can only click on the specific attractions that appear on the screen. Might want to search for a specific attraction.

Fix: Add a search bar

8. H3 User control and freedom/Severity 2

Want to learn about the creators, description of the website

Fix: Add an "About us" button.

9. H3 User control and freedom/ Severity 3

Once an attraction is selected there is no way to go back as it takes you to a different page.

Fix: Add a home or back button that takes you to the homepage.

10. H3 User control and freedom/ Severity 2

Maybe the user wants to read more details about the specific attraction without taking them to a different page.

Fix: When an attraction is selected, it could show all the details of the attraction and add a button for the user to open Google Maps.

11. H3 User control and freedom /Severity 1

Why change page when selecting an attraction? User wants to read about several attractions and then decide where to go.

Fix: When an attraction is selected, maybe instead of taking you to another page, to appear as a pop-up window with an "x" on the upper right. A button for directions in the window to take you to Google Maps.

12. H5 Error Prevention/Severity 2

When a problem might be caused from Google Maps and it is not available a message should appear.

Fix: When the Google Maps have a problem, it should have the address of the attraction with the result of searching the address.

13. H5 Error Prevention/Severity 2

The user selects to see the Google Maps and it takes you to the actual website without any warning

Fix: Should warn the users that they will be taken to a different website

14. H5 Error Prevention/Severity 3

Location might be wrong

Fix: Check that the location is 100% correct

15. H6 Recognition Rather than Recall/Severity 2

The user wants to remember the attraction that is selected.

Fix: On Google Maps the attraction should be written on the pin so the user will not have to go back and see what attraction they were looking for.

16. H6 Recognition Rather than Recall/Severity 2

When a user revisits an attraction it does not show anything that says that the attraction is revisited.

Fix: When an attraction is revisited, it should notify the user.

17. H7 Flexibility of Use / Severity 2

For the users who want to go to the same place multiple times, a list of places that travelled and liked to be added, with the result of not having to look for a specific place again.

Fix: Add extra features.

18. H7 Flexibility and efficiency /Severity 1

For more efficiency, it would be great to see more images of a specific attraction by having more than one picture for each selection.

Fix: Add more pictures for each attraction.

19. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use / Severity 1

It would be more convenient to click the Google maps to make it a larger window.

Fix: Click on Google Maps to enlarge the map, and zoom out with a click anywhere outside the map.

20. H7 Flexibility and efficiency use/ Severity 2

A user cannot share the specific attraction with other users, which it would be an efficient usage between users

Fix: Add an option to share an attraction

21. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design /Severity 1

Not necessary to write Explore Reading as a logo and as a description.

Fix: Maybe remove explore Reading and add the logo in the middle of the website.

22. H8 Aesthetic and minimalist design/ Severity 1

The website opens and it just shows attraction for Reading without any introduction homepage.

Fix: Make a more interesting homepage

23. H9 Help Users Recognize, diagnose and recover from errors/Severity 2

If a search bar is going to be added in the future the user have to be more specific with the searches.

Fix: When a user searches for something not available, should notify them with a box "Not Found".

24. H9 Help Users Recognize, diagnose and recover from errors/Severity 3

A confusion in the system might happen with the locations of each attraction

Fix: Should link each attraction with the location.

25. H10 Help and documentation/Severity 2

The attraction pictures are clickable, but a user who is not familiar with the website should be instructed.

Fix: Explain what the pictures will show when there are selected.

26. H10 Help and documentation/Severity 2

Users might want to learn how to use the website

Fix: Create a guide to start

3. Summary of Violations

Category	#Viol. (Sev. 0)	#Viol. (Sev. 1)	#Viol. (Sev. 2)	#Viol. (Sev. 3)	#Viol. (Sev. 4)	#Viol. (Total)
H1: Visibility of Status	0	0	3	0	0	3
H2: Match Sys & World	0	1	1	1	0	3
H3: User Control	0	1	2	2	0	5
H4: Consistency	0	0	0	0	0	0
H5: Error Prevention	0	0	2	1	0	3
H6: Recognition Not Recall	0	0	2	0	0	2
H7: Efficiency of Use	0	2	2	0	0	4
H8: Minimalist Design	0	2	0	0	0	2
H9: Help Users with Errors	0	0	1	1	0	2
H10: Documentation	0	0	2	0	0	2
Total Violations by Severity	0	6	15	5	0	26

4. Summary Recommendations

Overall, the website has a very interesting interface and easy for the user to navigate and explore. Furthermore, in the website there were no glaring issues, only a few details have been noticed.

In General, the Nielsen's heuristics have been applied to the user interface, with the result of categorizing each violation. Moreover, slight improvements must be made on the design of the website as it is too simple without any aesthetic design. Specifically, the website could be made more appealing to the eye but also some functionalities should be added as there are no buttons to explore the website.

Additionally, a search button should be useful to find specific locations in Reading as many people are familiar with the name of the locations but want to learn more details. By taking into consideration the details of each attraction, it would be necessary to add any activities that are available in the specific area.

An important change is to categorize each attraction with the result of becoming easier for the users to use it.

There was almost zero error checking and preventions that might become an issue when navigating. The only thing that it will definitely added but it is important to be mentioned, is that the Google maps location should be directly linked with the specific attractions.

By taking everything into consideration, the website will be very useful for people who are new in Reading and more specifically students that want to see the attractions and what Reading offers as a town in general. With the suggested recommendations, the website might become better and improved in general

10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design

H1. Visibility of system status

The system should always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within reasonable time.

H2. Match between system and the real world

The system should speak the users' language, with words, phrases and concepts familiar to the user, rather than system-oriented terms. Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order.

H3. User control and freedom

Users often choose system functions by mistake and will need a clearly marked "emergency exit" to leave the unwanted state without having to go through an extended dialogue. Support undo and redo.

H4. Consistency and standards

Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing.

H5. Error prevention

Even better than good error messages is a careful design which prevents a problem from occurring in the first place. Either eliminate error-prone conditions or check for them and present users with a confirmation option before they commit to the action.

H6. Recognition rather than recall

Minimize the user's memory load by making objects, actions, and options visible. The user should not have to remember information from one part of the dialogue to another. Instructions for use of the system should be visible or easily retrievable whenever appropriate.

H7. Flexibility and efficiency of use

Accelerators — unseen by the novice user — may often speed up the interaction for the expert user such that the system can cater to both inexperienced and experienced users. Allow users to tailor frequent actions.

H8. Aesthetic and minimalist design

Dialogues should not contain information which is irrelevant or rarely needed. Every extra unit of information in a dialogue competes with the relevant units of information and diminishes their relative visibility.

H9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

Error messages should be expressed in plain language (no codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution.

H10. Help and documentation

Even though it is better if the system can be used without documentation, it may be necessary to provide help and documentation. Any such information should be easy to search, focused on the user's task, list concrete steps to be carried out, and not be too large.