

Evaluating a website requires a lot of comparison and analysis. So that is exactly what my team and I did. We evaluated <http://www.crutchfield.com/>. In a UX/UI course, we learned many skills that were applicable to this specific type of task. Of course, we also learned about different types of usability errors that websites can have. We specifically followed Nielsen's 10 usability heuristics to measure and evaluate this particular website. We recorded any errors that we found that we thought could be better improved. Thus allowing us to gain knowledge on how to improve any website that we would design and build in the future.

Individual:

We all have different opinions and likes. So for the beginning of this project, we each decided to do our own investigation of this website. Working separately at first allows each of us to find simple and easy errors. Starting from the landing page, we tried finding errors that were basic. I first started from the landing page and noticed a couple of errors that would really confuse a customer.

For example, I recorded rough descriptions of each of the 10 Usability Heuristics based on Nielsen's.

1. Visibility of system status
 - In the support section, the "call me" and "live chat" are unavailable but the website says the phone number is available 24/7.
 - A product says temporarily unavailable but when you click on the product, the site allows you to add the product to your cart.
2. Match between system and the real world
 - When you click on a product and want to read the features, the site uses complex terminology that most users are not able to understand.
6. Recognition rather than recall
 - After you press checkout, there is no information that tells a user what he/she bought. The user has to either go back a page or fill out all of the information to review his/her order.
7. Flexibility and efficiency of use
 - There is a button that allows you to immediately go back up to the top of the page, but this is only available for the showing of products. When you click on a certain product and you want to see details, it becomes one long page with no way to speed up interaction.

What I learned from this is to make sure even small details are designed correctly. The best way to do this is to run many different scenarios that can cover all aspects of a website. This type of individual work allows each of us to find errors that we personally don't like or don't think works well. Later in the group work, we can then compare and analyze all the different types of errors and reach a conclusion on how wide of a spectrum each heuristic can cover.

Group:

After individual work, it was time to get together to find errors that weren't so easy to find. That required us to go deep into different layers and experiment. We roleplayed as customers and tried to find usability errors that we, as a customer, wouldn't like. As a group, we combined each of our skills to find deeper errors. This greatly helped us evaluate the website because it allows us to run more scenarios and find better, more complex errors. We recorded multiple errors for each heuristic allowing us to get a better sense of different errors that fall under the same category.

Example 1: Although this might be more of a bug, it still affects users. They get confused as to what is exactly going on. They might add a product again and noticed that now they either have multiple or none.

Visibility of system status

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

Example 1:

Adding to Cart

✓ Added to Cart

When adding an item to a cart, the website gives two status bars that conflict with each other. One message says that the item has been "Added to Cart", but the message right above it says "Adding to Cart" alongside a blue loading effect. This is confusing to the user because they may be confused whether or not the item has been added to the cart, or if they still need to wait for it to be added.

Example 2: This is one heuristic that in my personal opinion, is one of the most important. Having a website that is consistent allows clear understanding on the customer's part. As a customer, I don't know if the first product is also offering the same "Outlet Savings" that the latter three are. As a customer, this will make me want to buy anything because of the lack of consistency that this website can potentially have in the future.

Consistency and standards

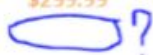
Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing.

Example 1:



Polk Audio DSW PRO
440w1
Powered subwoofer

Scratch & Dent:
\$299.99



Sony HDR-AS100V/W
Splashproof action video
camera with optional Live
View remote capability

Scratch & Dent:
\$229.00

\$70.99 Outlet Savings
\$299.99



Helix SPXL1000
Competition Series mono
subwoofer amplifier —
1750 watts RMS x 1 at 1
ohm

Open Box:
\$799.99

\$200.00 Outlet Savings
\$999.99



Pioneer AVH-
X6700DVD
DVD receiver

Scratch & Dent:
\$359.99

\$90.00 Outlet Savings
\$449.99

This is an example of the outlet portion of the website. Of the four items shown, there are three with have the "Outlet Savings" description. If an item is under the "Outlet" portion of the website then a user should expect that there is some description that says how much they will save by purchasing the item.