

Usability Audit Report Group-4

Audit Goals:

To evaluate user interaction with Craigslist, focusing on navigation efficiency, task completion rates, areas of confusion and potential safety concerns during typical user tasks such as posting items for sale and searching for specific products.

Methodology

Participants:

- Three participants with varying familiarity levels with Craigslist were recruited:
 - A frequent user
 - A first-time user
 - An occasional user with intermediate technical proficiency

Steps Taken:

1. Initial User Observation:

Participants were asked to perform basic tasks such as posting an item for sale and searching for a product. Observations were made to capture their behaviors, areas of confusion, and errors.

2. Think-Aloud Protocol:

Participants articulated their thoughts and decision-making processes while interacting with the website, highlighting moments of confusion or frustration.

3. Feedback Gathering:

Post-task interviews were conducted to gather qualitative data about user experiences, perceptions, and frustrations.

4. Task Analysis:

Data collected was used to create specific task scenarios, measuring time taken, steps required, and error rates to identify the most problematic features.

Findings:

Task 1: Posting an Item for Sale

- Issues Identified:
 - Participants struggled to navigate the initial posting process due to unclear instructions and minimal visual cues.

- Confusion over subcategory selection led to prolonged task completion times.
 - Minimal guidance led to repeated backtracking during the posting process.
- Data:
 - Average completion time: 7 minutes, with frequent backtracking.
 - Key pain point: Inconsistent subcategory structure.

Task 2: Searching for a Used Bicycle

- Issues Identified:
 - Search functionality lacked filters for critical parameters like price range or item condition, leading to frustration.
 - The interface displayed search results in a text-heavy format, which participants found overwhelming.
- Data:
 - Average completion time: 5 minutes, with most participants scrolling extensively to locate relevant listings.
 - Key pain point: Overwhelming and unorganized search results.

Task 3: Reporting a Fraudulent Ad

- Issues Identified:
 - Difficulty locating the reporting option due to inconsistent placement and terminology.
 - Vague instructions on how to proceed once the option was found.
- Completion Time:
 - Average time: 8 minutes, with some participants unable to complete the task without external guidance.
 - Key pain point: Inadequate visibility and clarity of safety features.

Participant Feedback

- Frequent User:

"I know my way around, but I often get frustrated with how much scrolling and manual effort it takes to find what I need."
- First-Time User:

"The design feels overwhelming. I didn't know where to start, and there was no help available when I got stuck."
- Intermediate User:

"It's functional, but not intuitive. The lack of filters is a major issue for searching."

FEEDBACK

User 1: First-time user but confident in website navigation ability

Task 1: **Posting an Item for Sale**

- Initially clicked on “post an add” but quickly realized it was not the right step and went back
- Found very similar looking but smaller “post” icon on the page and was able to complete the rest of the steps.
- It took quite a while to complete the steps as user did not have all the details of the product they wished to post for sale on hand besides that they did the task easily.

Task 2: **Searching for a Used Bicycle**

- User had no problem with this as they just searched “used bicycle” using the search engine
- When asked to include some filters to arrive at a specific type of bike, user also did those with ease but expected the filters to be applied in real-time like other modern websites. They later realized there was an apply button at the very bottom of the long filter menu. This was the first negative thing D explicitly pointed out excluding the website’s design.

Task 3: **Reporting a Fraudulent Ad**

- User had absolutely no idea on how to report fraudulent ads and after about 5 minutes of going through the website resorted to just flagging the posting believing that was the only option provided.

User 2: Occasional user

Task 1: **Posting an Item for Sale**

- Click on “post an ad”
- Picking a Category
 - “There are a lot of options available, not sure why a bunch of them have a \$5 note in the title”
- Creating the product description
 - “Seems like there’s a good spread of suggested information, this form looks super inconsistent though, there’s green text here and there and only some of the boxes have a suggested input.”
- Picking Images
 - “Oh, I was wondering where the image upload was when I was going through the description stuff.”

- Publishing a Draft
 - “It’s nice that it shows you the complete draft before posting it, but I almost thought that it was”
 - “Why couldn’t I just edit all that information in this view?”

Task 2 :**Searching for a Used Bicycle**

- Navigated to homepage by opening a new tab instead of clicking the “CL” link to the homepage
- Clicked on the “bikes” link under the “for sale” heading on the homepage
 - “This is how I bought my bike actually so I know this one”
- Applied filter for “wheel size” on the left side of the page
- Scrolled through the 127 results for a while, mainly relying on pictures and titles

Task 3 :**Reporting a Fraudulent Ad**

- Navigated to an ad
- Searched around the page and clicked on flag
- Clicked again and saw the information on a flag
 - “Wasn’t sure if this was for reporting or for saving for later but it looks like its for reporting”
- Navigated to homepage and found the “avoid scams” link on the left side menu
- Clicked on “reporting scams” link
 - “Yeah, it looks like the flag is their reporting system. It also says to report them to the proper authorities.”