

Website: <https://www.bobbysbikehike.com/>

Task: A user would like to see if there is space available for a 2-3 hour bike tour in the city midafternoon on June 30th, for 1 adult and 2 children.

In this report, I conducted a heuristic evaluation of a Chicago bike tour company website: Bobby's Bike Hike. A heuristic evaluation is an inspection method where you apply qualitative guidelines to search for and explain issues with the site, and the guidelines are listed below:

1. Visibility of system status
2. Match between system and the real world
3. User control and freedom
4. Consistency and standards
5. Error prevention
6. Recognition rather than recall
7. Flexibility and efficiency of use
8. Aesthetic and minimalist design

The severity of each usability problem on a five-point scale can be seen below:

1. Don't agree that this is a usability problem
2. Cosmetic problem
3. Minor usability problem
4. Major usability problem; important to fix
5. Usability catastrophe; imperative to fix

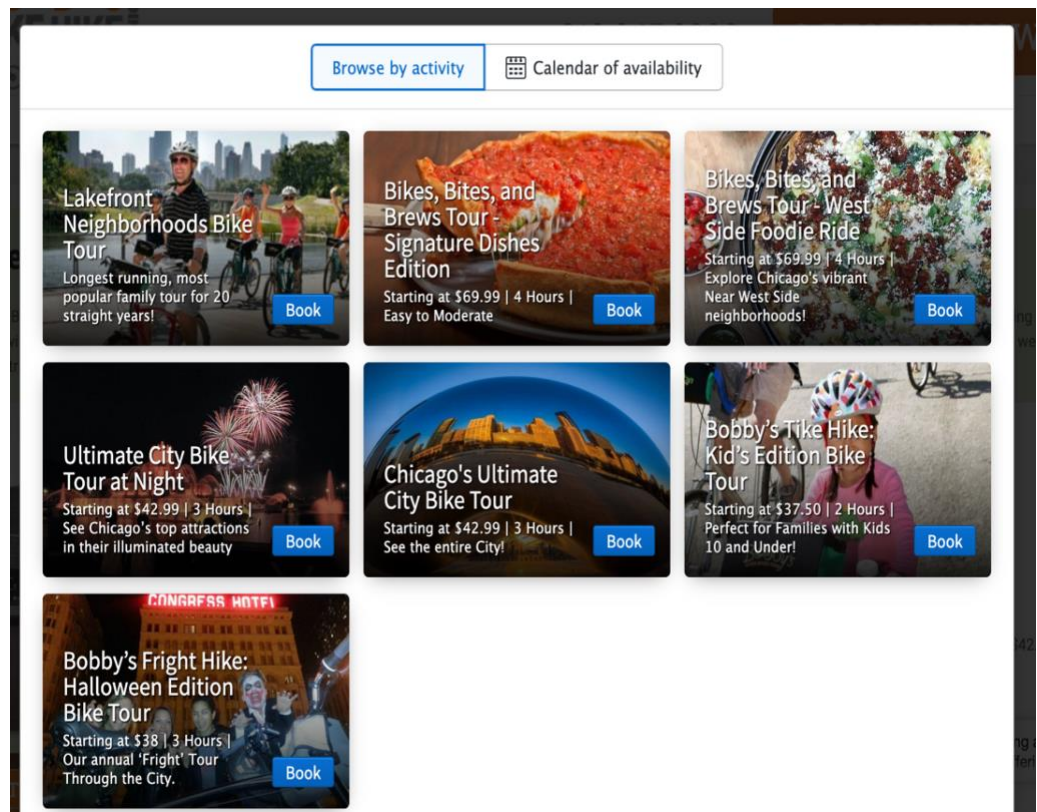
Issue 1: “Browse by Activity” tab images and texts overlap and hard to read.

Heuristic violated: Aesthetic and minimalist design

Rating: 2 – Cosmetic Problem

Description:

When trying to browse by activity, the options had visuals on it, however the visuals made the text very hard to see. The book button on the bottom right was visible, but in certain menu options, such as the Foodie Ride option, the visibility of the text is limited as it blends with the visuals. This can cause difficulty for some people when they are looking at this menu. A better way to do this would be to either separate the picture and the text, or to adjust the opacity of the image. This is not a big problem, however can make the site harder to navigate and makes the site not as accessible as it can be.



Issue 2: Calendar Content Overload, hard to navigate and too much redundant information.

Heuristic violated: Aesthetic and minimalist design

Rating: 5 – Usability Catastrophe

Description:

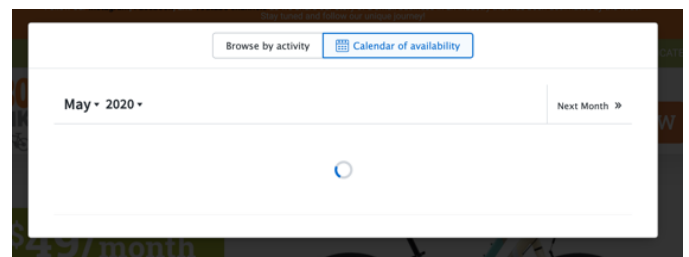
In this calendar option, it can be seen that it is way too text heavy and can confuse users. The colors are also not very different from each other (blue and grey) which makes the calendar very hard to read. It contains too much information that is not relevant. For example, if a user is looking for a specific date, the user does not need to know what activities are available for the entire month. Also, if the user is looking to book on July 30th, since the calendar is so information heavy, the user would have to scroll all the way down to the last week of June, which adds more work on the user's side. The calendar needs to be greatly simplified. An example of how to do this would be to not have to add the full details of the activities, or to have a “view specific date” option, or to just get rid of this option completely and let the user browse through the site by activity first, and then showing the calendar for availability. If the calendar were to be the same, it has to go straight to the specific date the user is looking for. Users might get impatient or might even quit the website completely as they might get frustrated due to the difficulty of using the site. This is a big issue as this issue pours over to the next, which will be analyzed below.



Issue 3: Calendar Loading Time too slow.

Heuristic violated: Visibility of system status

Rating: 3 – Minor usability problem

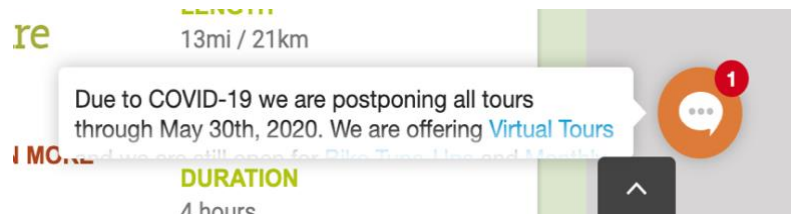


Description: Due to the calendar being so information dense as seen in issue number 2, the loading time for the calendar takes quite a while (much longer than how their other pages/features load). This does show that the calendar is loading, however could be avoided completely if the calendar's information was trimmed and be made simpler and easier to navigate. This might make it much slower for people with an internet connection that is not as strong, thus impacting its accessibility.

Issue 4: Presence of Virtual Chat Assistant and difficulty to exit out or get rid of the message.

Heuristic violated: User control and freedom, help and documentation

Rating: 3 - Minor Usability Problem



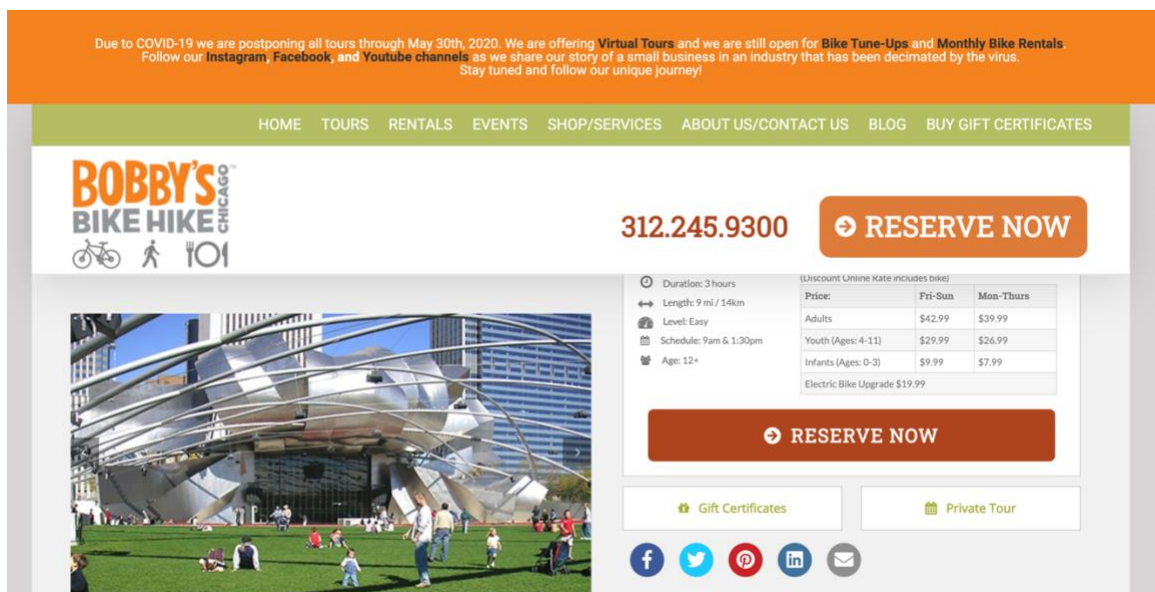
Description: Having a virtual chat assistant is good for help and documentation, however it does become an issue when there is no “close” or “x” button to exit or get rid of the virtual chat. It can be annoying for the users since it does block some content as they are scrolling through the site. A way to fix this is to have a close button instead of the user having to open the message box first to then click “X”, or to make the message automatically disappear after a certain amount of time being displayed. Multiple icons also stacked on top of each other which made it difficult to click sometimes, and this fix would be to position them a bit better.

Issue 5: Scrolling & Information Visibility and text/announcement sizing.

Heuristic violated: Aesthetic and minimalist design

Rating: Rating: 3 - Minor usability problem

Description: The update on the Covid situation seems too small and the colors make it not that easy to read. Also, the banner, if scrolling, sometimes blocks the full pricing list from being seen. Having 2 “reserve now” buttons is also redundant as they take up a lot of space and one is enough. How this could be fixed would be to get rid of the button, make the Covid situation update more readable by making the colors not clash and the font much larger. This is an aesthetic issue, however can really deter people from looking more into the site as it seems cluttered and disorganized. Misread information can also cause confusion for the user regarding things like opening hours and tour times and availability.



Issue 6: Add to Cart Price Issue, hard to interpret.

Heuristic violated: Match between system and real world, flexibility and efficiency of use

Rating: 4 - Major usability problem

Description:

When trying to look at the add on options, the menu is not at all intuitive. It does give options as to the quantity of extras the user would like to add, however, it all starts at 0 as it should, but with a \$0.00 price tag. This price tag then adjusts depending on the quantity of the add on the user wants. This is not efficient as the user will get confused as to how much each item costs. The trip insurance option is also very confusing as it is in terms of percentages, and not every user will understand what that means, thus causing a gap between the website display and the real world. When people usually talk about insurance, it usually amounts to dollars and so a percentage would be confusing. A way to fix this would be to have a price list for each add on to make it clear to the user what the additional costs would be. The percentage is also a bit confusing so using metrics in terms of dollar value or having more information to explain the insurance policy would be helpful. Another possibility would also be to redirect to the help section or virtual assistant if the user needs clarification on certain things. The drop down menu can also be changed to be a type in menu

Add-ons

0	Breath Easy Trip Insurance — 0% Reduces minimum 72-hour-notice cancellation window to 24 hours
0	Child Seats Ages 0-4
0	Child Tag-a-long Ages 5-7
0	Child Wagon — \$0.00 Seats: 2 / Max weight: 100lbs
0	Tandem Bikes — \$0.00
0	1 Bike Chicago Signature T-shirts — \$0.00
0	Bike Rental Extension — \$0.00 Rent a Comfort Hybrid after your tour until close!

Issue 7: Learn More Option hard to find and hard to determine that it is a link.

Heuristic violated: Flexibility and efficiency of use

Rating: 3 – Minor Usability Problem

Description: If one were to want to learn more about this tour, it is not obvious that they should click on the “Learn more” button. The reserve now has a very clear button that signals to the user to click it, however the learn more one does not look like a button and is not underlined as well. This can cause confusion for the users and it is best to at least underline it so people can get the idea that the option can be clicked on and it will redirect the user to a more extensive page of the particular tour.



Chicago's Ultimate City Bike Tour

RESERVE NOW

LEARN MORE

9am & 1:30pm

HIGHLIGHTS: Chicago Lakefront Trail, Millennium Park & Cloud Gate (a.k.a. The Bean), Grant Park & the Buckingham Fountain, Chicago Theatre, Navy Pier, the Chicago Riverwalk, The Field Museum, Shedd Aq...

AGE

12+

DURATION

3 hours

LENGTH

9 mi / 14km

PRICE

Discount Online Rates at \$42.99

LEVEL

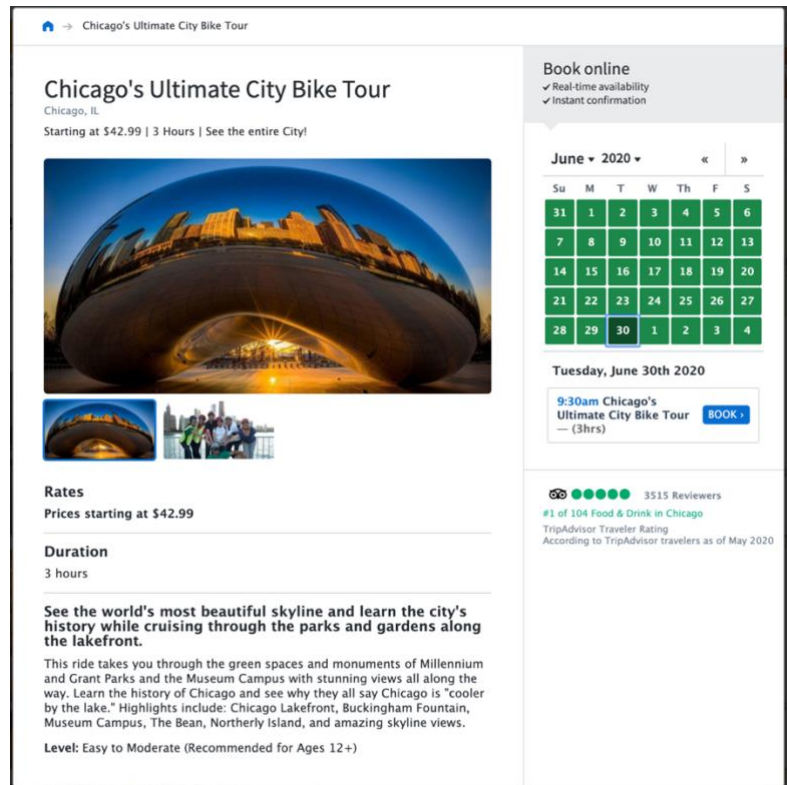
Easy

Issue 8: Pricing Information not comprehensive enough, inconsistent.

Heuristic violated: Recognition rather than recall, consistency and standards

Rating: 3 – Minor usability problem

Description: For the full tour information, the page looks great as it shows some visuals, and a calendar on the right to look at availability. However, when looking at the price, it only says the pricing start point, and does not break it down into more specific details. It would be more beneficial to show the price breakdown depending on ages since that's what a lot of users will look for – the availability on a specific date, and the prices. For example, the prices are not consistent, as it varies depending on the sub-page. Users will understand it easier if it were differentiated in terms of ages, etc instead of just giving the starting price when the page should have the details for the tour times, availabilities, and of course the comprehensive price list. It would also be good to show that add-ons are available instead of putting it on another page further into the purchasing process.

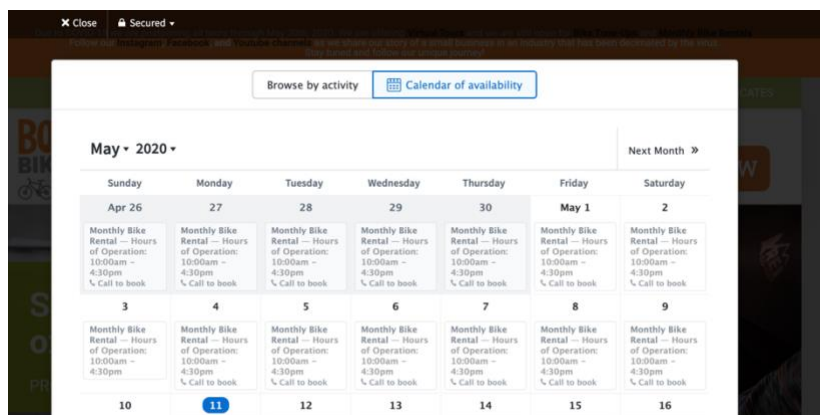


Issue 9: Default to Calendar of Availability which has too much information and requires scrolling.

Heuristic violated: Flexibility and efficiency of use

Rating: 3 - Minor usability problem

Description: When clicking “Reserve Now”, it defaults to the calendar of availability option instead of browse by activity option. Since the calendar is slow and is too full and dense, it is not be the best idea. The default should be set on browse by activity so users can have the opportunity to look through the tour options. If not, then the calendar should be simplified and then set as a default option.



Issue 10: Cancellation Policy Section hard to read and has non-cancellation related information.

Heuristic violated: Help and documentation, error prevention

Rating: Rating: 3 - Minor usability problem

Description: If a user were to just add to cart and save the booking for later, since the website is hard to navigate, they might end up in the checkout page as I did accidentally as well. When on the checkout page, the cancellation policy is listed on the left bottom side of the page in a very small box, and to read it, users have to do a lot of scrolling up and down. This makes it difficult for the user to navigate the cancellation area. Also, it contains the college student discount inside the box, however the college student discount is not a part of the cancellations policy. What should be done is that the cancellation box should be larger so users can see clearly the conditions, and the non-cancellation related things should be moved out of the box. Also, the Save+Return to cart option is supposed to go back to the cart, however, it ends up moving forward to the checkout page. This shows that there is a discrepancy between what the button says and where it redirects to. This makes it harder to understand what the next steps are and so makes the error prevention part much more confusing. The button should do what it is supposed to do to avoid confusion.

Cancellations

Reservation is fully refundable (minus a 10% processing fee on credit card purchases) if reservation is canceled at least three days (72 hours) prior to scheduled tour. No cancels within 72 hours. Service Fee for any

Cancellations

particular tour to go out. If we do not hit this threshold 2 hours before tour time we may contact you to reschedule or possibly cancel the tour with full refund.

College Students must present ID

Subtotal	\$79.96
Taxes & Fees	\$13.00
Total	\$92.96

Cancellations

Reservation is fully refundable (minus a 10% processing fee on credit card purchases) if reservation is canceled at least three days (72 hours) prior to scheduled tour. No cancels within 72 hours. Service Fee for any

Save + Return to cart >