

# WRSPC Website Re-Design: Proposed Research Plan

Julia Purza & Amanda Demmer

## BACKGROUND

The *Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council* has identified a need for their website to be assessed and redesigned so that it is more user-friendly, accessible, and visually appealing. Two primary concerns have been identified: 1) The website and navigation menu have an abundance of information, and 2) Users are not spending enough time on the website to learn about the resources available to them.

We want to keep users engaged within the website so that they spend more exploring it. To do this, the website needs to be easy to navigate and visually appealing. It is predicted that these issues will be emphasized along with other issues that may be uncovered when user testing is conducted. This research explores the central question: *How might we improve the overall usability of the WRSPC website?*

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

### Objectives

1. Create a more user-friendly website (functional, accessible, and visually appealing).
2. Improve website navigation so it is more efficient and less overwhelming.
3. Get users to spend more time on the website than they currently are to learn information that can benefit them.

### Questions

1. What do people think about the website and how do they navigate when looking for information?
2. How can we improve the design of the website to make it more user-friendly?
3. Are there any other issues within the website that need to be addressed?

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Various methods will be used, including primary and secondary research with both qualitative and quantitative data.

### Primary Research

Primary research will be conducted through user testing. Two main methods will be utilized, with a third optional research method if it is deemed necessary for additional information after analyzing data from the first two methods.

## Unmoderated Remote Usability Testing (URUT)

Participants will explore the website in their own environment without a moderator present. The tasks will be assigned to them through an online platform that is mutually agreed upon. They will then submit their responses through an agreed platform, such as a survey. This method will measure how satisfied the user is with the functionality of the *WRSPC* website. This provides **quantitative** data which will reveal more around whether users are satisfied or unsatisfied with the website interface.

### *Sampling and Recruitment*

The target sample size will be 10-20 participants. Our target sample is the public of Waterloo Region and surrounding areas that may access our website. We hope to have a research sample that includes a diverse range of ages, genders, and experiences to reflect the population who may utilize our website.

Participants for this method will be recruited through the *WRSPC* website, social media, and mail campaign using a recruitment poster.

### *Data Analysis*

The cross-tabulation method can be utilized to measure the quantitative data from the URUT method. In our case, this would involve taking the survey results and creating a table where we record all the issues uncovered during the sessions. We would then write down how many times this issue came up. This allows us to see which issues users encountered the most, meaning those are the biggest issues.

For qualitative data collected through open-ended survey questions, thematic analysis would be conducted to find shared themes across the sentiments participants provided. These themes could then be similarly counted and tallied to learn which themes were most common.

## Contextual Inquiry

This method involves observing people in their natural context and asking them questions to fill in the gaps of the observation. It provides information about the context of use, which is website usability and navigation in our case. The moderator observes how the user performs certain tasks while having them describe what they are doing through their interaction with the website. The moderator will listen, take notes, assign tasks, and ask questions. This is similar to unmoderated remote usability testing (URUT), but more interactive and provides **qualitative** data which uncovers user mental models so we can see how the user interprets the website and navigates within it in real-time.

### *Sampling and Recruitment*

The target sample size will be 3-5 participants. Our sampling population will be members of the *WRSPC* Advisory Committee and/or Board, and we will

hope to engage 2-3 participants who are well-versed on our website and 2-3 who are less familiar with it.

Recruitment for this method will be done over email. The WRSPC Program Coordinator will contact Advisory Committee and Board members to ask for their participation.

### *Data Analysis*

A thematic analysis is an effective way to analyze the qualitative data from contextual inquiry sessions. The data is broken down and analyzed to identify major themes. The best way to do this is by tagging individual points and observations with colors or codes, in order to find the major themes.

### *Card Sorting (Optional)*

This is a research technique for discovering how users understand and categorize information. Participants organize topics in the form of sticky notes under the preassigned categories that make sense to them. Because this will be remote, Miro is the ideal platform. In our case, the categories will be the main menu items within the website's navigation and the topics will be the sub menu items. The topics will be scattered, and participants will sort them under which category they think they best go under. This provides **qualitative** data and allows us to see how the user thinks the website's navigation menu should be set up and how it would make most sense.

### *Sampling and Recruitment*

The target sample size for this method would be 15 participants. Sampling criteria and recruitment methods would be decided upon if/when it becomes evident that this method is necessary and will be chosen to fill in the gaps the previous methods have left (if any).

### *Data Analysis*

The most effective data analysis method for card sorting would be to create a spreadsheet with the collected data. We would take a photo after each card sorting session so the data is recorded. Using this data, enter how many times a specific topic (sub menu item) was placed under a category (main menu item). This can be done by assigning a color to each topic item. We could then take these colors and count how many times they were assigned to a certain category; numbers would give us a better idea of the actual results. This method allow us to see which sub menu items make the most sense under which main menu item, based on the participants.

## Secondary Research

### Statistical Review

A review of *WRSPC*'s Google Analytics would be conducted to collect quantitative data such as website visitor demographics (gender, age, interests) to help determine who the users are. We will be looking at all visitors, including the most common ones, to help us create a persona which will represent the users that visit the *WRSPC* website. Personas are helpful so we can understand the users and what they need from the website, as well as their frustrations.

### Heuristic Evaluation

A Heuristic Evaluation would be completed to help identify usability problems within the website. It involves studying the website and judging its compliance based on usability principles such as system feedback when there are issues, user control and freedom, consistency, error prevention, efficiency of use, aesthetics, and more.

## WORKPLAN

The timeline of this project is from May 25, 2021 - June 30, 2021 (a period of 9 weeks)

Week	Task
<b>1: May 25-28</b>	Finalize research plan
	Design recruitment and consent for primary research methods
	Complete data collection for secondary research methods
<b>2: Jun 1-4</b>	Create data collection tools for primary research methods
	Begin recruitment for primary research methods
<b>3 &amp; 4: Jun 8-18</b>	Data collection occurs
<b>5: Jun 22-25</b>	Analyze data, create workplan for web re-design
<b>6-9: Jun 25- Jul 30</b>	Website re-design occurs

## CONCLUSION

We hope that through research and user testing, we can identify exactly what the main issues with the *WRSPC* website are so we can begin redesigning. We want to create a website that is user-friendly and easy to navigate, especially for people who are in distress and need quick information and resources on suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.