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| Web 220 Project |
| Due: April 8, 2013 |
| Jody Wat ( Group# 2) |

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# Mission Statement

This personal website will feature my client’s works in progress, tutorials and resources related to writing and web design, with the goal of inspiring young writers and digital artists to develop their craft while my client develops her own.

# Targeted Audience

The client’s friends and family, young writers and digital artists, mostly women, but men are encouraged. The targeted audience are female aged between 17 to 24 with interest in writing or web design. They are English speakers with post-secondary level of education, as well as geographically located in Canada and United States. Since most of the users are newbies who want to learn about writing or web design, they are unfamiliar with technical jargon used in those fields; it is realistic to use simple and easy to understand English for the web contents. They could be intermittent users who may have a broad knowledge of interface concepts, but uses a specific interface irregularly or may use a number of different interface systems. Therefore, the design for this website will be a little bit more sophisticated and challenging for the young users to explore the site.

# Requirement Gathering

The process begins with gathering general demographic information about the targeted users such as age, gender, educational level, language and geographical location. We should focus more on the female respondents as our targeted users are mostly women who are aged between 17 to 24 with interest in writing or web design. Instead of assuming that “everyone knows about X and Y”, we need to determine what level of domain knowledge the users have, for example, ask the users whether they know about certain terminology related to writing or web design. This will help to determine what terminology is more appropriate for the contents of the website.

User computing experience will have a great impact on the success of interaction with a website. The targeted users are expected to be the intermittent users, who may have a broad knowledge of interface concepts, but uses a specific interface irregularly or may use a number of different interface systems. Therefore, it may be appropriate to consider a more sophisticated design for this website, for example, use more frequently used metaphors and plug-ins to enhance the task performance of the website. We can ask questions such as software applications, the frequency of use and satisfaction of use to determine the level of user experience with computer.

The understanding of the user computing environment is important, as our goal is to make sure that the website appears appropriately in all computing environment. We need to gather information on what type of computer, monitor and operating system the targeted users would be using in general. This will help to design a website that can be successfully viewed by almost everyone in various computing environments.

Information on task analysis and content is also important to determine the success of a website. Task analysis is simply what the users want to achieve when they are visiting the site. Content is the information available on a website. A website can be usable and accessible if it offers the content that users want or else the users will not come to the site again. We should try to determine whether users are interested in certain contents to be included in a website.

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# Wireframe Design for Victoria Larsh’s Personal Website

# A Written Description of the Website

The ideas of designing this website came from both my client as well as the targeted users. My client and I have a thorough discussion on the mission statement, targeted audience and design concept at the early stage of this project, and based on this we clearly defined the mission statement and targeted user population of the website. The next phase is to collect data related to user demographic information, domain knowledge, computing environment and experience, and content preference from the targeted users by conducting a survey. Fortunately, the result indicated that there is no discrepancy between the client and user requirements. We can proceed to create a conceptual design plan for this website such as preparing a wireframe diagram to lay down the basic structure of the website, and a mock up for design of this website.

The theme for designing this website is that this is a place for sharing and relaxing, the visitors can hang around navigating the site for their own interest. From a user’s point of view, a broad and shallow hierarchy structure is more appropriate as one or two clicks can reach the destination. The navigation panel is located at the top left corner that is easily visible. It makes the user easy to see by using light color text on a dark color background. Moreover, we also incorporate the idea “Don’t make the users think” by using eye-catching images to act as a link to different web pages organized by topics.

To address the issues of technical and user diversity, all images will be created with medium resolution to reduce the time for loading web pages. We also include an “alt” tag for the graphics used and avoid using color alone to present information on the website.

# Task List

1. Please navigate through and look up the name of the owner in the home page?
2. What is the e-mail address of the owner from the contact page?
3. What is the title of the first article related to Tutorial in the blog?
4. What is the first resources information related to web design?
5. What is the caption of the first photo in the photo gallery?

# My Observation of Usability Test

I have invited one of my classmates to do the usability test for this new website before my final coding. Before the test, I selected an appropriate setting to perform the test as well as designed a task list for the user to perform during the test. In this case, I choose to observe the user while she is doing the test in a classroom setting. I will sit beside her observing and taking notes of her behaviour.

The user was asked to perform five tasks as specified in the task list. She was very fast to finish the first task that is finding the name of the owner in the home page. Then she navigated through different navigation bars and images to find the contact page using the mouse. Soon enough she clicked into the contact page and wrote down the e-mail address of the owner. She hesitated for a while when reading the task list for the title of the first article related to tutorial in the blog. She was relieved seeing the word “blog” on the task list then she immediately scrolled up to the navigation panel finding the right link to finish her task. Her reaction was fast when she read the word “resources” on the task list, she just scrolled up the navigation panel finding the link called “resources“ then clicked into it to find the title of the article. She hesitated quite a while to find the link for photo until she saw the word “photo” on the navigation bar. She clicked into the photo page to find the right answer.

Upon completion of her task list, she was requested to fill out the questionnaire for User Interaction Satisfaction (QUIS) that can be used to evaluate the user’s overall satisfaction of the website. She asked me about the format of the questionnaire that is unclear to her how to rate the scale for responses. After that, I asked her final thought about her experience with this new website and thanking her for participating.

# The Result of Usability Test

There are some rooms for improvement based on the result of usability test. First, we need to change the term “photo” to “gallery” on the navigation bar. The user hesitated because she related the word “photo” to “gallery” while searching for the link. It is very important to use familiar terms and interface metaphors for user-center web development. Second, the user gave suggestion to enlarge the font size on the navigation bar for a better presentation on the home page. Finally, we need to have a better design for the questionnaire used for usability testing, as Survey Monkey does not offer many choices for a free design.

# Evaluation

I have a great time dealing with my client, Victoria who throws me many of her ideas for what she exactly wants right from the start. She prefers to have a wood pattern background on her website. Victoria also shows me some benchmark websites and blogs that she uses frequently. These are very good references for me to find some good suggestions for the new site, as well as ideas of what not to do. She is pleased with my design while I am showing her a mock-up of her website for couple of times since I have made some minor changes on the fonts and the navigation links after actually coding the site. To understand more about what your client’s likes or dislikes will definitely help to smooth the process of web development.

Requirement gathering is also a key for success in web development. We should learn as much as possible about what users require, what they need and what they want in order to have a successful interaction experience. According to our survey conducted earlier, the result indicated that there is no discrepancy between the users and the client requirements for the content preference. We are very smooth in the process of deciding exactly what content will appear on the website.

For me, the most challenging part of developing this website is to tackle the issues of different browsers. I am somewhat shocked to realize that a font style can be an issue in web development. Unfortunately, it is because not all font styles are appeared appropriately in different browsers. That’s why I made a minor change on font style after I actually coded my website.

It is a very good experience doing this project to experiment what I have learnt from this course. Nothing is real not until you put it into practice. That is the way to learn, and you learn from what you are actually doing it in reality.

# The Review

I enjoyed working with Jody on this project as my client. Together, in the beginning I told her what I wanted for my personal website’s home page, and she delivered. We discussed our project goals and ideas of what we would like. Jody was very clear in what she wanted and chose her benchmark websites accordingly.

The benchmark websites that I provided for Jody were web pages that I had previously made for myself to give her an idea of what kind of things that I like. I think that she did well, as I had specifically requested wood as a background texture, and she created an excellent concept web page. I like the dual navigation that she created (metaphorical and regular left hand navigation), making the web page fun and easy to use while maintaining a clean appearance. I also particularly enjoyed the coffee cup and post-it note style images with thumb tacks. She included extra pages to test the links with a little bit of content.

My partner communicated well and often with me making this a great experience as a designer and client. I would love to do a similar project again, as this was excellent practice. I often learn best by doing, and I think it provides excellent real world experience. Overall, I feel better prepared for next semester’s project.