

Peer Reviews

Peer Evaluation of VT Recreational Sports

Preface

Introduction

This introduction includes a link to the project, as well as information about the peer evaluators.

The following report is a peer evaluation of Kaitlyn Heath's final group project in Dr. Evia's Creating User Documentation course. The project was focused on creating a more accessible website for Virginia Tech faculty, staff, and students who wanted more information on recreational sports. The following is a link to their webhelp:

- <https://kheath17.github.io/recsports.DITA.final/index.html>

Group members evaluating their group project in this report include Stephanie Kapllani, Nicole Kurka, Saige McGovern, and Owen Forester.

Chapter 1

Summary

The following summary includes an overview of the project and what looked for in this evaluation.

This project on recreational sports was divided into the following tabs on their webhelp:

- A Welcome Section
- Group Exercise
- Personal Training
- Intramural Sports
- Employment Opportunities
- Other Opportunities

These tabs often included sub-sections that provided users with information on what they are about, what is being offered, prices, and how to pay or sign up for an activity. When compared to the official Virginia Tech recreational sports page, we feel the group succeeded in creating a website that was a less overwhelming than the official page and more user friendly.

The rest of this report will evaluate the successes and areas of improvement for this project in the following areas:

- **Usability**
 - Retrievability - Did the website function properly; did all the links work?
 - Organization - Was the website user friendly and easy to navigate? Were all the topics in the right place. Did the flow of information follow a logical sequence?
 - Visual Effectiveness - Were the visual elements helpful, appropriate, and consistent?
- **Quality of Content**
 - Clarity - Was the content easy to understand by being free of wordiness, ambiguity, and inconsistencies. Were the step-by-step instructions effective and easy to follow?
 - Style - Was the content free of any grammatical or stylistic errors?
 - Accuracy - Was the content written for its intended audience? Was the information accurate, current, meaningful, and informative?

Chapter

2

Usability

This section evaluates the project based off of how easy it was to use. The following areas include retriability, organization, and visual effectiveness.

- **Successes**

- All the information on the website was retrievable; there were no broken links. For the most part, the organization of the content was user friendly, and all the topics were in the right place. What was especially helpful was the side bar: it made way for easy navigation through sub-topics. Lastly, the overall design or theme of the website was attractive and not too distracting.

- **Areas of Improvement**

- The visuals were very good in that they were appropriate, but the website could have benefited from more of them. Two sections where more pictures were needed are the "Group Classes Offered" page and "Choosing a Sport to Play." It is a very long page of just text, which can be straining to the user's eyes and cause them to lose motivation or interest. Some sections could have also greatly benefited from table elements or visuals, such as areas where the costs for different memberships or activities were mentioned.
- Lastly, the organization in the "Jobs for Students" section was not as logical as other areas of the website. For example, a marketing position listed at the top of the page was separated by two different marketing positions listed at the bottom of the page. Consider organizing sections like this by theme. For example, the jobs could have been grouped together by position title, such as marketing positions, instructor positions, supervisors, etc. Another page that could have benefited from better organization was the "group classes offered" page. All the different type of group exercises were organized in alphabetical order which is good; however, most students don't know exactly what they're looking for. Consider possibly organizing this section in themes as well, such as classes falling under Cardio, Strength, Mind & Body, etc.

Chapter

3

Quality of Content

This section evaluates the content of the project in three areas: clarity, style, and accuracy.

- Successes
 - Task Orientation
 - Each of their tasks - easily located as their names begin with "How to..." - provides clear instructions that any student or other user could easily use. These tasks were focused and did not distract users with outside information.
 - Completeness/Accuracy
 - These steps were accurate in that if a user was to follow them exactly, they would accomplish exactly what the website promised. That, above everything, is most important when creating a manual, as it is why users even seek out the manual in the first place.
 - Audience
 - If there is anything we've learned in this class - it is to write for a specified audience! Each task was oriented towards the goals of the user, and each step was thoroughly detailed.
 - Information
 - There certainly is not a lack of information within this site! This group did a great job of including many topics and pages. Each tab had more than three pages for users to choose from, and this further proves that the truly considered the wide variety of people their content is tailored for. Also, all of the information on these pages was very focused and as a user, I would not feel over or underwhelmed by the amount of content.
- Areas of Improvement
 - Video
 - The video was quite good; however, it could have used some more attention in terms of its size. On the actual page, it wasn't very big. The only options were to watch a tiny version of the video or make it full screen. Working on sizing for the video could have been executed better.
 - Short Descriptions
 - With the short descriptions - there weren't many. Short descriptions are vital for users to quickly find what they need. Using these will affect the clarity of their work because users will be able to know immediately which section they need to click on to discover what it is they are looking for.
 - Wordiness

- While repetition can be a useful tool in some occasions, their use of repetition eventually got slightly annoying. For instance, on the "Group Exercise Memberships" page, the phrase, "For year-round access..." appeared in every bullet point. While I was reading this, I ended up just skipping to the end of the sentence to find the information I needed.
- Typos
 - Typos are a simple human error. There were only a couple that we noticed, such as the '>' located at the bottom of the "Intramural Sports at Virginia Tech" page.

Chapter

4

Recommendations

This section touches on the few recommendations for improvements we have for this group.

As discussed within the content quality section, there are only four ways in which we would improve this project.

First, a quick scan for typos by each of the members of their group would help ensure accuracy in each of their topics. Having multiple sets of eyes is an important asset when collaborating on projects, as each person will catch different errors making the final output as perfect as possible.

Second, the short descriptions, as discussed before, will take less than a minute to create, and tie your work together so that users can know exactly which page they need to access as soon as they arrive at your website. It is a very simple part of the code that makes a huge difference to your audience. This group did very well with their clarity and accessibility, but the short descriptions will only make it that much better.

Third, the video was helpful but slightly difficult to access. Making it appear larger on the page will help users who are using the video as a guide to see what the video is describing without making it full screen, so that they can follow along step by step by putting the windows next to each other on their monitor. This is minor, but will be very crucial to some users.

Finally, just the simple wordiness of some sections can be edited in a similar fashion as the typos. Having everyone in the group (that's four or five sets of eyes) read over it to decide what to cut out or leave in will make the outcome of the project sound much better to users, thus making their manual more respectable to a wider audience.

The only additional recommendations we have aside from what was already addressed until the content quality is that an occasional image to accompany a step might be helpful rather than just say "click the button that says 'next'" for example. On very busy pages, an image of the button they are supposed to click may help with clarity, but overall we don't believe users will struggle too hard to follow these directions without the images.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

This section includes a wrap-up of the evaluation, as well as an overall grade.

It is evident that the group worked very hard on the project. They succeeded in creating a user-friendly webpage on recreational sports - one that we think is a lot less overwhelming than the official VT Recreational Sports page. The project was free from any significant errors, and the content was accurate, current, and informative. Overall, the group managed to produce solid, professional work that will aid many students and other people interested in fitness at Virginia Tech in accessing the information they are searching for. Areas of improvement included minor editing mishaps and organizational issues, but nothing that would distract from the actual content of their final output.

We believe this project deserves the following grade: A.

