Amazon Usability Evaluation

<u>Process to Find Instructions:</u>

Steps we took to locate Amazon's instructions for filing a complaint about a partner company (without using search):

1. Sign in
2. Scroll to bottom → click **Help**
3. Scroll down → click **Identify & Report Scams**
4. Select **How do I report a scam or a security issue?**
5. On Help & Customer Service page → click **Report Suspicious Activity**

Instructions found (taken from website):

- Log into your Amazon account
- Go to the product page
- Select **Report an issue with this product or seller**
- Select **This product or content is illegal, unsafe or suspicious** or **I have an issue with a Seller**.
- Follow prompts and select **Submit**.

<u>Ratings by Usability Principles:</u>

- Learnability / Understandability – 5/10
  - <u>Positive:</u> Steps are retraceable if you simply go to the previous page using the "Back" option. Website creates new tabs which make it possible to go back more easily.
  - <u>Negative:</u> Instructions are buried under several menus. The Help page to **Identify & Report Scams** only shows four topics at first, forcing users to "dig" for the full list. New users would likely get lost or give up.
  - <u>Negative:</u> Users need to be signed in to their accounts to follow the steps.
  - <u>Negative:</u> No breadcrumbs, which means users can't easily see where they are in the hierarchy.
- Flexibility / Compliance – 7/10
  - <u>Positive:</u> Site works the same across browsers. Pages load quickly. Multiple methods exist to contact Amazon (chat, help docs, seller forms).

- - Negative: Mobile site requires a different process, which reduces consistency.
- **Efficiency – 4/10**
  - Positive: Fast page loads, no traffic issues.
  - Negative: Too many steps, with long text-only lists that slow navigation. Without the search bar, the task feels time-consuming and clunky.
- **Memorability – 3/10**
  - Positive: The first step (going to **Help**) is simple.
  - Negative: The deeper path is very forgettable. There are too many similar-sounding categories ("**Report a scam**" vs. "**Report Suspicious Activity**"). Even after doing the process once, it's hard to remember the correct order later.
- **Errors / Robustness – 4/10**
  - Positive: Users can easily recover from misclicks by going to the previous page, although misclicks might be frequent since the topics listed seem similar and have no pictures or logos attached.
  - Negative: The "**‹ All Help Topics**" link helps you backtrack one level, but there's no clear history of where you've been.
  - Negative: Trial and error is unavoidable since you have to click into a problem just to see if the sublist has the right topic.
- **Satisfaction / Attractiveness – 6/10**
  - Positive: Initial Help page is visually nice with icons/logos. Clean design at the surface level.
  - Negative: Once you go deeper, pages become long walls of bold text links. Lists within lists feel overwhelming and unattractive.

Final Evaluation: 5/10
Overall, Amazon's usability in this task was moderate at best. While the site is stable, consistent, and fast, the Help system is buried under layers of menus, and the reliance on text-only lists makes navigation frustrating. The fact that you must be signed in is another barrier. Without the search bar, finding complaint instructions feels like trial and error. You can't see all the subtopics right away under each category. Instead, you have to click into a random problem first to unlock the full list. That makes retracing steps possible, but clunky and confusing.