USDA
Government Website Navigation Redesign

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About The Project

The USDA website has seen a decline in user traffic, prompting a redesign of the website. Using Google Analytics, I collected vital information about the users' experience with the website. The data revealed a consistent issue the website's design contains many inefficiencies, leading to frustrated users and poor user engagement.

Tools

Figma, Adobe Series, Miro, Google Docs

The Problem

The navigation on the USDA website presents challenges for novice users in the agriculture domain, resulting in reduced traffic and increased customer support requests for basic queries. The difficulty in navigating the website drives users away.

The Solution

A redesigned navigation system that aligns with USDA website and mobile app will efficiently improve the user experience, enabling users to find the information they need more quickly and easily. This will result in increased engagement and longer session durations as users navigate the site with greater ease and satisfaction.

Design Process

Research

To gather insights about the user experience with the USDA website, I conducted five user interviews using the Guerilla testing method, with participants between the ages of 25 and 65. Through the interviews, I discovered several pain points that hinder user interaction with the website, including difficulty with the site and information overload. Users also noted inconsistencies and displeasure terms on the site, hindering their ability to find relevant information.

Heuristic Evaluation of the USDA Website

Content of the Web Page

- Most text headings are too vague
- Clear terminology, information is present. Links are relatively easy to find
- Search bar is on top. Topic menu is on top. Topic menu should be highlighted.

Navigation/Efficiency of Web Page

- Not very consistent way to return home. Icon home button does not work
- Too many clicks required to find information. Too many pages unnecessary
- Easy to identify information, easy to follow breadcrumbs
- There is no login or account set up
- Contact information is easy to find on bottom of page
- Website loads quickly, but a lot of links to different sights. Some of which do not seem necessary

Appearance of Web Page

- The primary grid / purpose of the web page is relatively clear
- It has a medium simple design with a good percentage of white space.
- The colors are somewhat bright and distract from the main content.
- The images are scattered and not a purpose to present the agriculture sector.

Persona

Nora is a 33 year old woman who wishes to become an expert in plant breeding and to find organic foods for her kids.

- Her main difficulties are having a busy school-age, and not having enough time to search child friendly organic foods or to become an expert on plant breeding.
- Her goal is to learn more about plant breeding and keep her kids from food-borne illnesses.

Priority Matrix

Most Important to the Government website

- Users doubt on the "Topic" button easily
- The "Home" button doesn't take you back to the original home page

Most Important to the User

- Easy to find information on plants
- There is a lot of information on nutrition plans for children
- Difficult to find and Recent Illness information
- A lot of information on each topic page
- Plant breeding should be organized better.

Heuristic Evaluation

1. Visibility of System Status
Problem: some basic difficulties with the website page
Task: Find a page for the website versus a separate link
Issue: The sign up takes the user to a different website
Recommendation: Make a part of the website and thank the user for signing up when completed. Then have it disappear and bring back to the main page

2. Match between system and the real world
Problem: The website doesnt cover agriculture with most of its pictures. Terms are much that and no gross
Task: To change the color palette in order to come that this is a site about agriculture

3. User Control and Freedom
Problem: The website does not have a proper home button.
Task: Create a home button that will work no matter where you are on the website
Issue: There are a lot of links on the webpage
Recommendation: Website logo is changed to be the home button when click on.

4. Consistency and Standard
Problem: Website repeats its provision 3 times on homepage, some pictures are not relevant to what is mentioned in descriptions
Task: Create one provision button and change pictures
Issue: Already repeats on home page

5. Error Prevention
Problem: It may seem decent work to take you back to starting point if you click on the wrong item.
Task: Great home button
Issue: The user can get lost quickly

6. Recognition rather than Recall
Problem: No issues found

7. Flexibility and efficiency of use
Problem: No Issues Found

8. Aesthetic and Minimalist Design
Problem: Input buttons is to large, information overload
Problem2: Subscribe button is to small
Problem3: Blog pictures are to large and to many
Problem 4: To much writing when clicking on anything. No one wants to read someone
Task: Reduce Topics buttons with subcategories
Task2: Make the subscribe button more eye catching
Task3: Turn blog pictures into a fixed point but at a center
Task4: Less words and more links to articles if they want to read through them
Issues: The user can get lost quickly and feel overwhelmed, giving up to quickly

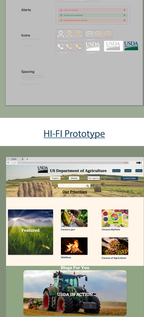
9. Help users Recognize, diagnose and recover from errors
Problem: No issues found

10. Help and Documentation
Problem: hard to find help
Task: Create a tutorial on hover or as overlay so that if they change focus until they can easily click out of it without closing the whole page.

Card Sorting

Navigation Wireframes

Website Style Tile



Hi-Fi Prototype

Conclusion

After several rounds of updates to the website navigation, the finalized prototype demonstrates improvements in ease of navigation and overall user experience. I conducted numerous user tests and surveys to identify pain points and address user concerns. By making multiple iterations and incorporating user feedback, I was able to fine-tune the navigation and simplify the end result.