



[www.uat.edu](http://www.uat.edu)  
Initial Project Report

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## 1. Introduction

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### 1.1 Purpose

The web application that I chose to optimize in the term of usability belongs to University of Advancing Technology, Tempe [ <http://www.uat.edu>]. The website opens with cluttered animation and no mention to the name of the university. Misplaced menus, inconsistent navigation scheme, tough to find search function, poor form design with no feedback on mistakes and small font size are one of the many other functionalities that the website lacks. I propose various design features to optimize the website.

### 1.2 Tasks Identified

Any new user to the website would first like to be sure that he/she is at the right place and it is the official website. Being sure, the user would like to know about various programs that are being offered by the university and the levels of the program. Once found out, the user may like to apply for a program and before beginning the application, it would like to have some details about the process and how long would it take to complete the application. The user could request info about the University. User might look for employment opportunity or login to the website portal.

## 2 Tasks to be improved

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### 2.1 Task #1

To verify the name and legality of the website.

- First time users generally reach websites through search engines [viz. Google, Bing etc], so the first intuition is to see the University's name and details to make sure that they have reached the right place. A professional look helps the user to be sure that they made no mistake.

### 2.2 Task #2

To look for available courses.

- Unknown to the courses provided or out of curiosity the user might want to check the list of available courses and the details of the program. The user might also be interested to know the level at which the course is available, the application process and deadlines, the faculty lists and the research activities going around the area of the course.

### 2.3 Task #3

To apply for a course, sign up or login for the website.

- The step followed by an interested user is the application process. The filling of forms, creating of ID to have a follow up on the process and the ability to use the ID to Login in a different interaction is what a user would expect.

### 2.4 Task #4

A different set of users would be there to look for employment opportunities at the university.

- Other than the academic side, people may visit the site looking for the employment opportunities available. They would like to look upon the job openings, job details and deadlines.

## 3 Goals of Improvement

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### 3.1 Task #1

#### 3.1.1 To verify the name and legality of the website.

The first goal of 'identification and verification of the website' could be satisfied by replacing the name of the university from the bottom part to the header region. The removal of cluttered animation from the top main region of the homepage would ensure a professional look and feel of a university's website and would reduce the perplexity of the user when they reach there.

### 3.2 Task #2

#### 3.2.1 To look for available courses.

The convoluted animation at the up front does not guide the first time user to the right courses they are looking for. The animations would be replaced by a proper menu with sub-menu that would guide the users to proper courses. The course pages would have minimal information regarding the course with identifiable links for application process and deadlines. The huge amount of information available on a single course page would be divided into a few more pages so that the pages do not contain redundant items.

### 3.3 Task #2

#### 3.3.1 To apply for the course, sign up or login to the website.

The apply now buttons would be placed at relevant environment (such as on the course page, with least amount of redundancy). The application page would dedicate maximum space to the form rather than other information. The form should carry the general design for 'required fields' and a proper message would be generated when the fields are missed or wrong information has been provided. Post application procedure, a proper user ID would be given to the user that would let him/her to login to the website and check their application progress. The Login button would be prominent on the homepage.

### 3.4 Task #2

#### 3.4.1 To look for employment opportunities at the university.

The Employment button would be made prominent and a part of the header menu to increase its visibility. The employment page would be consistent with the rest of the website and would not appear as venturing to a different organization. The Job Portal would contain job postings along with other employment details.

## **4 Improvements Expected**

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The major improvement would be the replacing of cluttered animation with proper menu items that provides general navigation scheme. The homepage would consist the important information about the university and important links at suitable positions. The login button, the search icon, the employment button and Application buttons would be placed at right places with proper emphasis.

## **5 Improvement with user experience**

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With the redesigned tasks, the new users would be able to verify the website without having to scroll down and would have a professional feeling about the institution. They would easily locate the information about various courses and would find convenience in using the search feature. They would be able to look for employment easily without having a feeling of moving to a different site. The overall experience would be enhanced and users would more likely revisit and suggest the website.