National Treasury Website

UX Methods Used

- User Interviews
- Think-Aloud Protocol
- Contextual Inquiry
- Report Writing

Tools Used

- JAWS Screen Reader

Problem

Is your website 508 compliant? This means that all electronic information technology developed or used by the federal government must be accessible to people with disabilities.

Therefore, 508 Compliance must be taken seriously at the Federal Reserve Bank. All government websites must be accessible to the disabled which includes visually impaired people.

Solution

With my team, I went to the Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired in San Francisco to conduct usability testing.

You are not your user! Going out in the field is the best way to improve your products.

Research

We used JAWS screen reader to check for initial flaws in the National Treasury Website. There were a few problems such as links that were not accessible using the the screen reader controls. We travelled to the Lighthouse for the Visually impaired and got to know more about our users. I created tasks for the users to complete using the website. Tasks included searching for monetary reports in the database and using a CAPCTCHA to submit a question to the help desk. HTML structure needs to be correct in order for JAWS Screen Reader to read the elements on the page. Because of this knowledge of HTML was important for this project. For example, pictures were being displayed on the website but there were no alt tags that specified what the picture was of. By simply adding alt tags, pictures can be noted to visually impaired users which helps with navigation of the site and puzzles such as CAPTCHAS that ask for the user to pick all the pictures of the sandwiches (Seen in next page).
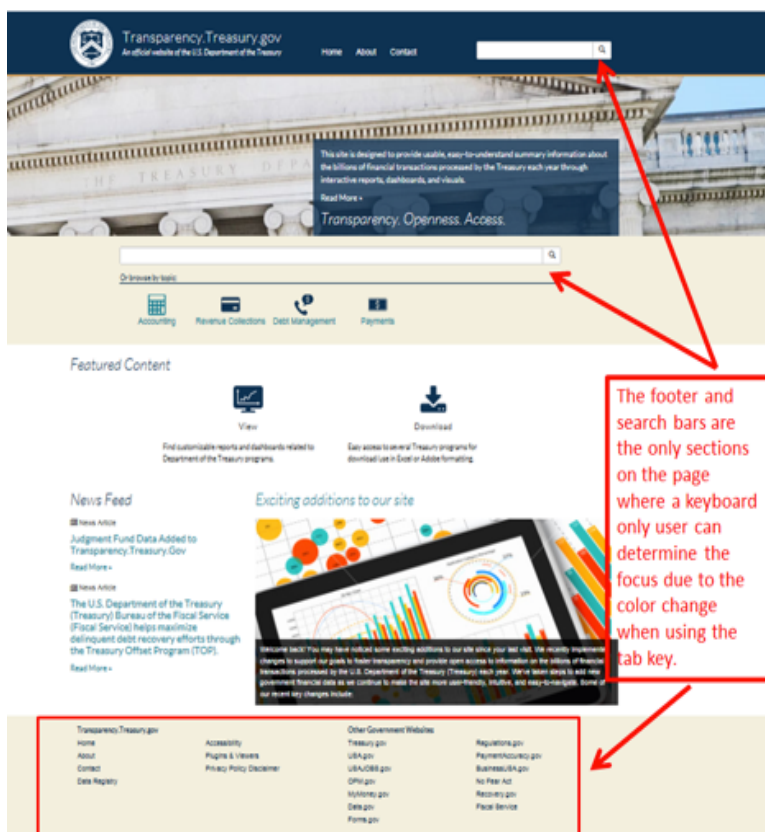
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We recorded our observations and after completing several usability testing sessions, we created a report listing the faults in section 508 and web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG 2.0) requirements.
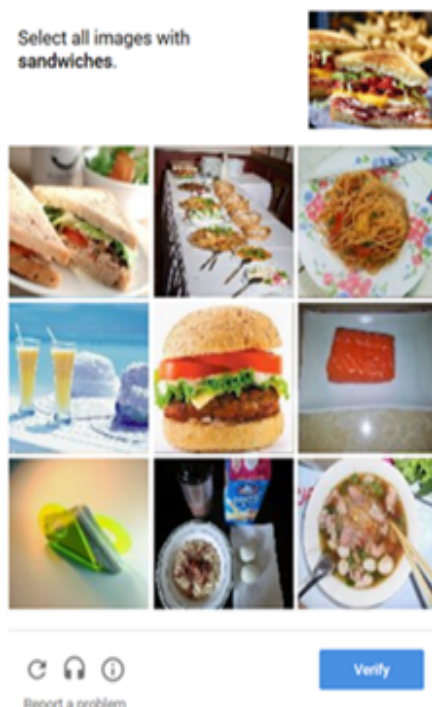

Our user completing a task on the National Treasury Website as we take notes.

Our report consisted of accessibility problems that did not pass section 508 and WCAG 2.0 requirements. The problems were explained and suggestions were made on how to fix the problem. Here is an excerpt of our report:

The footer and search bars are the only sections on the page where a keyboard only user can determine the focus due to the color change when using the tab key.

There are no ALT tags for the images so JAWS does not describe each image, but rather reads the instructions for the challenge when clicking on every image.