Byron Home Website Usability Report

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Executive Summary

- Although Byron Home is more than ten years old, we have never tried to see if our website is useful for prospective clients.

- We performed a standard usability test with four people in our target demographic ranges. The participants were asked to complete seven tasks a typical user might perform on the website.

- The testing uncovered six issues. Two were judged critical, three were judged serious, and one was judged minor. The critical issues:
  - All participants expressed concern that the client reviews are short and not updated recently. This impacted their trust in us. We should solicit reviews from recent clients, then update and expand the "What Clients Say" page.
  - The participants wanted to call us instead of sending a form request. We should make our phone number more prominent on the header image.

- We have a useful website, but there are a few areas of concern.

Testing Goals

To determine:

- Can users can find our contact information?

- Is there information we should be providing but do not?

- Do users feel that we're trustworthy?

- Is it easy to find information on our website?

- Do seniors and their children browse the website differently?

- Is the appearance of our website appealing and appropriate?

Business Rationale

- Although we have been in business for over ten years, we have never analyzed whether our website serves our clients well or not.

- Over the past three weeks, we conducted a standard usability test for the Byron Home website with four participants in our target demographics (seniors looking to move and their children).

- I will report on the findings.

Tasks and Results

Task	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	Avg. time/task
Find name and phone number of employee	S	C	S	S	0:37
Find what Byron Home does (services)	S	S	S	S	0:22
Find out how ready you have to be for BH to help you	S	C	C	C	1:51
Find out if Byron Home can discuss your situation	C	C	S	S	1:01
Find out if there's a governing body over Byron Home	S	I	C	S	0:55
Find out if Byron Home can move you out of state	S	S	S	S	0:21
Find out if Byron Home can work with other helpers	S	S	S	C	0:32

- S = Success; C = Completed; I = Incomplete.
- A task was successful if it was completed in under 0:45, complete if it took longer than 0:45 but less than 3:00, and incomplete if it took more than 3:00.

- User 1: Female, over 60 years of age
- User 2: Female, under 60 years of age
- User 3: Male, under 60 years of age
- User 4: Female, under 60 years of age

Issues uncovered in Testing

- Users want to speak to an employee more than they want to browse the webpage. (Mentioned by 3/4)

- Users trust us through our client reviews, and are concerned by how few we have and how old they are. (Mentioned by 4/4)

- The length of the "About Byron Home" page intimidates users. (Mentioned by 3/4)

- Users can not tell how ready they need to be for Byron Home to help them. (Only 1/4 success)

- The name "Byron Home" does not give a good impression to some users. (Mentioned by 2/4)

- Users would like to see general pricing information. (Mentioned by 1/4)

Severity & Ranking of Issues

Critical

- Users trust us through our client reviews, and are concerned by how few we have and how old they are. (Mentioned by 4/4)
- Users want to speak to an employee more than they want to browse the webpage. (Mentioned by 3/4)

Serious

- Users can not tell how ready they need to be for Byron Home to help them. (Only 1/4 success)
- The name "Byron Home" does not give a good impression to some users. (Mentioned by 2/4)
- The length of the "About Byron Home" page intimidates users. (Mentioned by 3/4)

Minor

- Users would like to see general pricing information. (Mentioned by 1/4)

Recommendations for Improvement

- Solicit client reviews and update our "What Clients Say" page.

  Every user expressed concern about the lack of client reviews, which diminished their perception of Byron Home's trustworthiness. We should contact the people we have moved in the last year and ask them if they will submit a short review of their experiences for our website. The page should be updated to include 7-10 reviews.

- Redesign our header to make our phone number more prominent.

  Most of our users said they prefer to call and speak to an employee rather than use our contact form. Our header image includes our phone number (and other contact info) but it is not prominently featured. We should redesign the header to emphasize our name, phone number, and services ("We help seniors downsize their homes") since this is the information our potential clients are looking for.

Recommendations for Improvement

- Add a large heading to the homepage which reads, "We guide seniors through a move from start to finish."

  Most of our participants had trouble determining how ready they had to be before calling Byron Home to help. Instead of placing this information on a secondary page, we should add a large heading to the homepage that clearly states this. Our potential clients will see that we can help from the very beginning and the homepage will benefit from some additional variety.

- Start brainstorming new names for Byron Home.

  Two users expressed concern over our name. This is not the first time there has been confusion over our name. Although the Byron Home name is established, it seems misleading to many users. We should begin to think of possible names that have better connotations.

- Reduce the amount of information on the "About Byron Home" page.

  Although the "About Byron Home" page has a lot of good information, three participants expressed concern over the size of the page (900+ words). Someone who is looking for information on our website will be unlikely to read such a long page. The "About Byron Home" page needs to be condensed into the essential points so it does not intimidate users.

Next Steps

- Send notes to everyone we've moved in the last six months, asking for a short review of our services.

- Ask employees to think of possible new names for Byron Home.

- Contact our webmaster, and ask him about redesigning the header and changing the homepage.

- Condense the information on the "About Byron Home" page.

Testing Goals, reviewed

- Can users can find our contact information?

    Yes, and they look for our phone number. It should be prominent.

- Is there information we should be providing but do not?

    Perhaps some pricing information but we're doing a good job.

- Do users feel that we're trustworthy?

    Our users trust us through our client reviews, which need to be updated and expanded.

- Is it easy to find information on our website?

    There are some issues here, but other issues are more severe and pressing.

- Do seniors and their children browse the website differently?

    No, not from our testing.

- Is the appearance of our website appealing and appropriate?

    There are some issues here, but other issues are more severe and pressing.

Conclusion

- Our website has a lot of helpful information but needs a few changes.
- The changes will help our clients trust us more and use our website more easily.

- Questions? Please email them to clark.ty@husky.neu.edu.