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ED P 595
Spring 2007

Website Usability

Overview

My research study focused on website usability for prospective students considering applying or have just applied to an academic program within a large university.

Research Questions

- How does the usability of an academic program website affect a person's ability to locate information?
- What factors do users consider when they access an academic program's website?
- What are the users perceived problems for the academic program website?

Literature Review

‘Know thy users, for they are not you!’ ”
(Krug, 2005, ¶ 6)

Designers can forget that they are not the consumers of the website. In order to understand the user, a designer should conduct research with actual users of the website.

Research Site & Sample

- Research Site:
 - Academic Program within Researchers University
- Research Sample:
 - 3 Prospective Students
 - 2 Staff
 - 4 Office Observations

Limitations

- Backyard research
 - My role as a web professional in the university
- Sample size
 - Increase from 3 to 10 participants

Site Usability Findings

- Question 1: Locate application meeting page
 - 2 out of 3 students had difficulty finding
- Question 2: Locate a map for the meeting
 - All students were able to find
- Question 3: Locate the interview signups
 - 0 out of 2 students were able to find but all had suggestions

Site Usability Discussion

- Adjust college homepage to improve the departments and programs section
- Select One program title instead of Four
- Review Office Site
- Minor adjustments to program map links
- Completed suggestions for Interview Signups