

Bill Wolff

Writing for Electronic Communities, Spring 2008

Usability Project: Background Analysis

Draft of Audience Analysis, Web Site Analysis, Scenarios, and Tasks

The Background Analysis portion of a usability test is when we gain a critical understanding of the intended and unintended user, the test subjects, the section of the web site we are working on, prioritize the usability issues we find, and begin to speculate as to the kinds of scenarios and questions we are going to ask. The more detailed and thorough our analysis, the more effective it will be. There are 6 parts to this portion of the assignment (5 of which will make up significant portions of the Test Plan):

Get Started with Zoho Project

Set up and learn to use the basic features of your group's Zoho Project page. Ensure that all group members have access (and add Bill as a user, too, username: wolffw). Add all due dates to the calendar (called milestones). Play with the different features and get comfortable with it.

Audience Analysis

Here you will complete an analysis of both who you think the intended audience of your portion of the web site as well as the unintended audience of the site.

Test Subject Analysis

In this section you will describe the anticipated test subject in some detail. Participants will be Rowan University undergraduates with a variety of internet skills. Speculate as to their familiarity with your section of the site and the Rowan site overall.

Web Site Analysis

In this section you will analyze your section of the web site across 3 dimensions:

- text comprehension (including a readability analysis using TxReadability);
- site navigation
- ease and speed of finding important information.

To help guide your analysis, see Neilson and Loranger chapters 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10. We will not be testing the web site's search abilities. This section should include a table containing readability results of 3 – 5 pages, as well as 3 – 5 screen shots that meaningfully illustrate certain usability concerns.

Prioritizing Usability Concerns

In this section, rank the top 5 usability issues you have found and justify your rankings. To help guide your rankings, use Neilson and Loranger, Chapter 4.

Scenarios and Tasks

In this section, create scenarios and tasks for 2 of the 4 that you will be asking test subjects to complete. Scenarios are essential to usability tests as they give the user a reason to actually complete the task. For each scenario and associated task describe: exactly what you are testing

with that task (comprehension, navigation, finding ease, etc.); and the best “answer” to that task. Use the resources at usability.gov to aid in the construction of scenarios and tasks.

Assignment Specifics and Due Dates

Draft due: 14 Feb by classtime in open area folder and clearly marked on Zoho

Final Due: 28 Feb (as part of final Test Plan)

Word document, 5 – 7 pages of text (not including tables and screen shots), single-spaced, Times New Roman font size 12, 1 inch margins all around. Break sections into subheadings using **Arial, bold, font size 12**. Include page numbers in the top right. No title page needed. Use memo format:

To: Bill Wolff

From: Group # (and list names)

Date: 14 February 2008

Re: Background Analysis
