

Site Usability Evaluation

<http://www.iu.edu>

- HOME
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Nielsen's Heuristics

- Visibility
- Match/Language
- User Control
- Consistency
- Error Prevention
- Recognition
- Flexibility
- Aesthetics
- Error Recovery
- Help

"Beauty and brains, pleasure and usability - they should go hand in hand." -- Donald Norman

HOME

Often overlooked, usability is a consideration essential to website design. There is rarely a case when a website does not involve any users. If users cannot efficiently navigate a site, therefore, then it does not adequately serve its purpose. By conducting a simple usability inspection using Nielsen's 10 Heuristics when creating a website, one can provide good navigation and site design which will make it easier for users to find what they are looking for. The user is not necessarily the creator and what the user wants overall is ease of use and results. A few tests can make all the difference and keep people coming back.

To demonstrate the applications of Nielsen's 10 Heuristics, we will be exploring the information architecture of the Indiana University's main website (www.iu.edu). IU.edu is the portal to many IU-affiliated websites such as IU Bloomington, IU Northwest, and others. Whether it's to apply for admission or to find information about the latest sports event, many users come to this site for different reasons. However, upon close examination we have concluded that IU.edu has not complied with many recognized usability principles and needs to be redesigned. IU.edu does not adequately meet the needs of many users nor does it provide efficiency and ease of use. To find more information about the problems identified in this evaluation of IU.edu, please browse through the site using the navigation on the left side.



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KAREN YEUNG



I am currently an undergraduate student at the University of California, San Diego. I am majoring in Cognitive Science and Visual Arts Studio. My interests include: cooking, making art, and learning about things that I know that I do not know. If I did not have to worry about life, money, and family I would probably travel the world to search for places that rivals my hometown, San Diego.

JADE KWAN



My name is Jade Kwan and I am currently an undergraduate student pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Cognitive Science: Human Computer Interaction with a minor in Interdisciplinary Computing in the Arts. I love to travel around the world, learn new languages, and indulge in the many forms of design (graphic, industrial, architectural, interior, automobile, photography, and web).

AN YU

Hello! My name is An Yu and I'm currently an undergraduate student studying Cognitive Science (Human Computer Interaction specialization) at UC San Diego. I'm very interested in web design/development/management and online business -- would love to start my own company some day!

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CONTACT

Feel free to contact us for any questions, comments, or feedback!

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"The most common user action on a Web site is to flee." -- Edward Tufte, Information Design Guru

VISIBILITY

The user does know where they are and where they can go next. The website indicates what link the user clicked on in the left panel to get to the current page that they are on. This is shown in the form of a red banner at the top of the page. If you click on "About IU" on the left navigation bar, for instance, the red banner will change and say "About IU". The .html address is also consistent in reflecting this change. Links become underlined when the mouse cursor rolls over it. If the user wants to know where they can go next the user can just look at the left navigation bar to see what relates to the page they are currently on. A flaw about this site is that it does not show a status on every page. By not having this feature users constantly re-click links to make certain that they are on the page they want to be.

IU.edu supports a large number of links that is heavily labeled and hard to read. While navigating the website users would need to recall from their memory where they are and where they have been to proceed. There are no breadcrumbs feature or indication that shows user where they are on the website. If there was, it would help lead them back. Sometimes, retracing one's steps is not an easy task. Each page is branded by the text, "Indiana University". This text is located at the top of every page but the way it appears may vary. For instance, the homepage displays "Indiana University" with red lettering and white background while the text on the "Emergency Preparedness" displays it the other way with a different font. The IU logo is only seen on certain pages such as "Emergency Preparedness" and "Economic Development". There is also no branding message that summarizes what IU is all about. For example, ucsd.edu branding message communicates to their users that their focus is on "Local Impact, National Influence, and Global Reach". By not having one, this leaves users wondering what the university is about.



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Home | Prospective Students | Alumni & Donors | Economic Development



About IU

Indiana University has eight campuses: the original campus in Bloomington, which is a residential campus; an urban campus Center, and six regional campuses in the Indiana cities of Gary, South Bend, Fort Wayne, Kokomo, Richmond, and New Albany.

- Facts and Statistics
- Partners in Research
- Community Connections
- Economic Impact
- Jobs @ IU
- Publications and Annual Reports
- Tours and Photos
- About IU Home

IU has:

Left navigation panel reveals similar links under 'About IU' category.

eight campuses

including more than 258,000 living in Indiana

million

including faculty and professional and support staff

institutes

million

for the quality of its academic programs and attracts students from all over the world

students, offering educational, cultural, and financial benefits to the state.

For more information, see the [IU Chronology](#).



Visibility

CLOSE X

iu.edu supports a large number of links that is heavily loaded and hard to read. While navigating the website users would need to recall from their memory where they are and where they have been to proceed. There are no breadcrumbs feature or indication that shows user where they are on the website. If there was, it would help lead them back. Sometimes, retracing one's steps is not an easy task. Each page is branded by the text, "Indiana University". The text is located at the top of every page but the way it appears may vary. For instance, the homepage displays "Indiana University" with red lettering and white background while the text on the "Emergency Preparedness" displays it the other way with a different font. The IU logo is only seen on certain pages such as "Emergency Preparedness" and "Economic Development". There is also no branding message that summarizes what IU is all about. For example, ucal.edu branding message communicates to their users that their focus is on "Local Impact, National Influence, and Global Reach". By not having one, this leaves users wondering what the university is about.

