

SAMPLE HEURISTIC EVALUATION FOR 680NEWS.COM

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Many usability experts use the Jakob Nielsen list of heuristics as the industry standard when making usability recommendations. These guidelines are used in this document as a benchmark against which the 680 News site is compared.

The approach used to prepare this report is to evaluate the 680 News site based on the ten heuristics as identified by usability expert, Jakob Nielsen (www.useit.com).

This report will:

- Document all usability issues by referencing them against the list of heuristics.
- Provide recommendations for each specific issue.

1. Visibility of system status (System Visibility)

- The system should always keep users informed about what is going on, though appropriate feedback within reasonable time.

2. Match between system and the real world (System vs. Real World)

- The system should speak to the users' language, with words, phrases and concepts familiar to the user, rather than system-oriented terms. Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order.

3. User control

- Users often choose system functions by mistake and will need a clearly marked “emergency exit” to leave the unwanted state without having to go through an extended dialogue. Support undo and redo.

4. Consistency and standards

- Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing. Follow platform conventions.

5. Error Prevention (Error Prevention)

- Even better than good error messages is a careful design that presents a problem from occurring in the first place.

6. Recognition rather than recall (Recognition)

- Make objects, actions, and options visible. The user should not have to remember information from one part of the dialogue to another. Instructions for use of the system should be visible or easily retrievable whenever appropriate.

7. Flexibility and efficiency of use (Flexibility)

- Accelerators – unseen by the novice user – may often speed up the interaction for the expert user such that the system can cater to both inexperienced and experienced users. Allow users to tailor frequent activities.

8. Aesthetic and minimalist design (Design)

- Dialogues should not contain information that is not relevant or rarely needed. Every extra unit of information in a dialogue competes with the relevant units of information and diminishes their relative visibility.

9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors (Recover from Errors)

- Error messages should be expressed in plain language (no codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution.

10. Help and documentation (Help)

- Even though it is better if the system can be used without documentation, it may be necessary to provide help and documentation. Any such information should be easy to search, focused on the user's task, list of concrete steps to be carried out, and not be too large.

Aesthetic & Minimalist Design

The biggest concern with the 680 News site is cluttered screens, particularly on the home page.

Key issues include:

- The home page scrolls for several screens in a 1200 x 800 Resolution
- It is difficult to tell the difference between advertisements and content in some cases
- There are several large advertisements on the Home page. Although they are a source of revenue, they lose their impact in a cluttered page

Home Page Observations

Firefox File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Window Help Sat 9:19
680News - Breaking News Headlines: Toronto, Canada, World, Business, Sports, Entertainment News, Weather & Traffic Reports
www.680news.com

680News ALL NEWS RADIO

STARTING FROM **\$8.49**
A MONTH, GET STARTED TODAY! ORDER NOW

LISTEN 680News **LIVE**

WATCH CityNews Channel **LIVE**

Insider Club Register

USERNAME: PASSWORD: **LOGIN**

Search:

More on the Insider Club Forgot Your Password

HOME LISTEN NEWS TRAFFIC WEATHER Business Sports Entertainment Contests & Insider Club Inside 680 Mobile

HOT TOPICS Wallenda Greece election 2012 MMVAs Father's Day Weekend road closures City Hall Health Cottage country traffic

Top Stories

Local » 16 Jun, 2012 4

Busy weekend for events; several road closures to watch out for

TORONTO, Ont. - A reminder to anyone trying to get around the city this weekend, there are a number of road closures in effect from Friday to Sunday for several events being held around the city.

Related Content

- Justin Bieber, Nelly Furtado to perform at 2012 MMVAs
- Father's Day on Sunday; suggestions for dad's special day

TRAFFIC WEATHER

THE WE DON'T NEED A BIG EVENT Event SUBARU Confidence in Motion

TORONTO Jun 16 9:18 AM Camera 79
DVP and Three Valley(S of York Mills)
All Cameras and Manage Favorites

Aesthetic and Minimalistic Design

Issue: The mixing together of page elements and advertisement above the navigation is hard to read

Recommendation: Keep the first row and redistribute the other items within the page. For example the Insiders club could be a link to a sign in or pop-up

Match Between the System and the Real World

Issue: The items in the top navigation are not ideal for learnability and scanning. There is also repetition of elements (Listen and Insiders Club)

Recommendation: Group like items together and creating a visual separation for items that don't go together (see Appendix A)

Home Page Observations (cont)

More Headlines

- Local » 16 Jun, 2012 0
World Naked Bike Ride streaks into Toronto Saturday
- Local » 16 Jun, 2012 0
Veteran Durham police officer arrested, suspended after drug trafficking investigation
- Local » 16 Jun, 2012 1
Twelve city-run pools now open on part-time basis
- Local » 15 Jun, 2012 8
Councillor Doug Ford says he'll seek PC nomination if McGuinty calls election
- National » 15 Jun, 2012 39
MPs wrap up voting marathon on Conservative budget bill
- National » 15 Jun, 2012 1
Michael Rafferty misses deadline to appeal conviction in Tori Stafford killing

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Today's Poll
Will you watch Nik Wallenda's tightrope walk across Niagara Falls tonight?

» **Read related story and submit your comments**

Yes
 No

VOTE **VIEW RESULTS**

BBM™ Music
FREE FOR UP TO 30 DAYS
Download BBM™ Music
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Aesthetic and Minimalistic Design

Issue: The large ads crowd the page and create a great deal of scrolling.

Recommendation: Reduce advertisement sizes and look at ways to streamline the home page content.

Match to the System and the Real World

Issue: The Breaking News section looks like an advertisement as there is tendency to include ads within page elements instead of separating them.

Recommendation: Create a Breaking news alert link within the More Headlines.

Home Page Observations (cont)

Firefox File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Window Help Sat 9:20 A
680News – Breaking News Headlines: Toronto, Canada, World, Business, Sports, Entertainment News, Weather & Traffic Reports
680News – Breaking News Hea...
www.680news.com Yahoo

More on 680News Local Movie Reviews Video Blogs

More News

National News more

National » 16 Jun, 2012 0
Police look for man in armoured-car killings after mom pleads for his surrender

National » 16 Jun, 2012 5
Armoured-car murder suspect's mother pleads for her son's surrender

National » 16 Jun, 2012 2
Nik Wallenda makes history with tightrope walk over Niagara Falls

Sports News more

Sports » 16 Jun, 2012 0
Five-time winner Roger Federer beats Mikhail Youzhny 6-1, 6-4 to reach 7th Halle final

Sports » 16 Jun, 2012 0
Swedish cross-country great Nils 'Mora-Nisse' Karlsson dies at age 94, won Vasaloppet 9 times

Sports » 16 Jun, 2012 0
Croatia becomes 1st team charged by UEFA with racism at Euro 2012 over fan chants at Balotelli

World News more

World » 16 Jun, 2012 0
Polish police on high alert for hooligan violence before decisive Euro 2012 games

World » 16 Jun, 2012 0
Saudi Crown Prince Nayef, hard-liner who cracked down on al-Qaida in kingdom, has died

World » 16 Jun, 2012 0
Prince Philip back at Queen's side at military ceremony honouring her birthday

Business News more

Business » 15 Jun, 2012 5
BC Ferries reports \$16.5 million net loss after vehicle traffic hits 13 year low

Business » 15 Jun, 2012 0
Burger King in joint venture to open 1,000 stores in China, marking biggest ever expansion

Business » 15 Jun, 2012 0
Facebook's stock ends Friday on a high note, closes up for the week for the first time

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- Wallenda makes history with walk across Niagara Falls
- Armoured-car murder suspect's mother pleads for her son's surrender
- Nik Wallenda makes history with tightrope walk over Niagara Falls
- Person of interest now murder suspect in armoured car shootings
- Crowds begin jockeying for good spots to watch Nik Wallenda's Niagara...

Your News and Photos

Submit your news tips or photos for consideration. We'll credit you on the site we use your photo.

You can submit by:

- Email news680@rogers.com
- SMS

Aesthetic and Minimalistic Design

Issue: Social Media elements are an important way to build community and encourage users to return, yet this is buried deep within a crowded page

Recommendation: Move this content to below the navigation.

Aesthetic and Minimalistic Design

Issue: There is an overwhelming amount of content on this page and it may not be necessary to have this content on the page

Recommendation: Remove this section as it can be linked to via the top navigation.

Home Page Observations (cont)

Firefox File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Window Help Sat 9:20 AM Glen

680News - Breaking News Headlines: Toronto, Canada, World, Business, Sports, Entertainment News, Weather & Traffic Reports

www.680news.com

Submit your news tips or photos for consideration. We'll credit you on the site if we use your photo.

You can submit by:

- Email news680@rogers.com
- SMS
- Submitting via the form below:

* required field

* Full Name:

* Email:

* Your Tip:

Photo Upload (Optional): **BROWSE**

Accepted file formats: jpeg, gif, eps, psd, mpeg, avi. Max file size: 4 MB

Please key in: **reastH** **capital**

Enter the words above:

Match Between System and the Real World

Issue: The Podcast looks like an advertisement

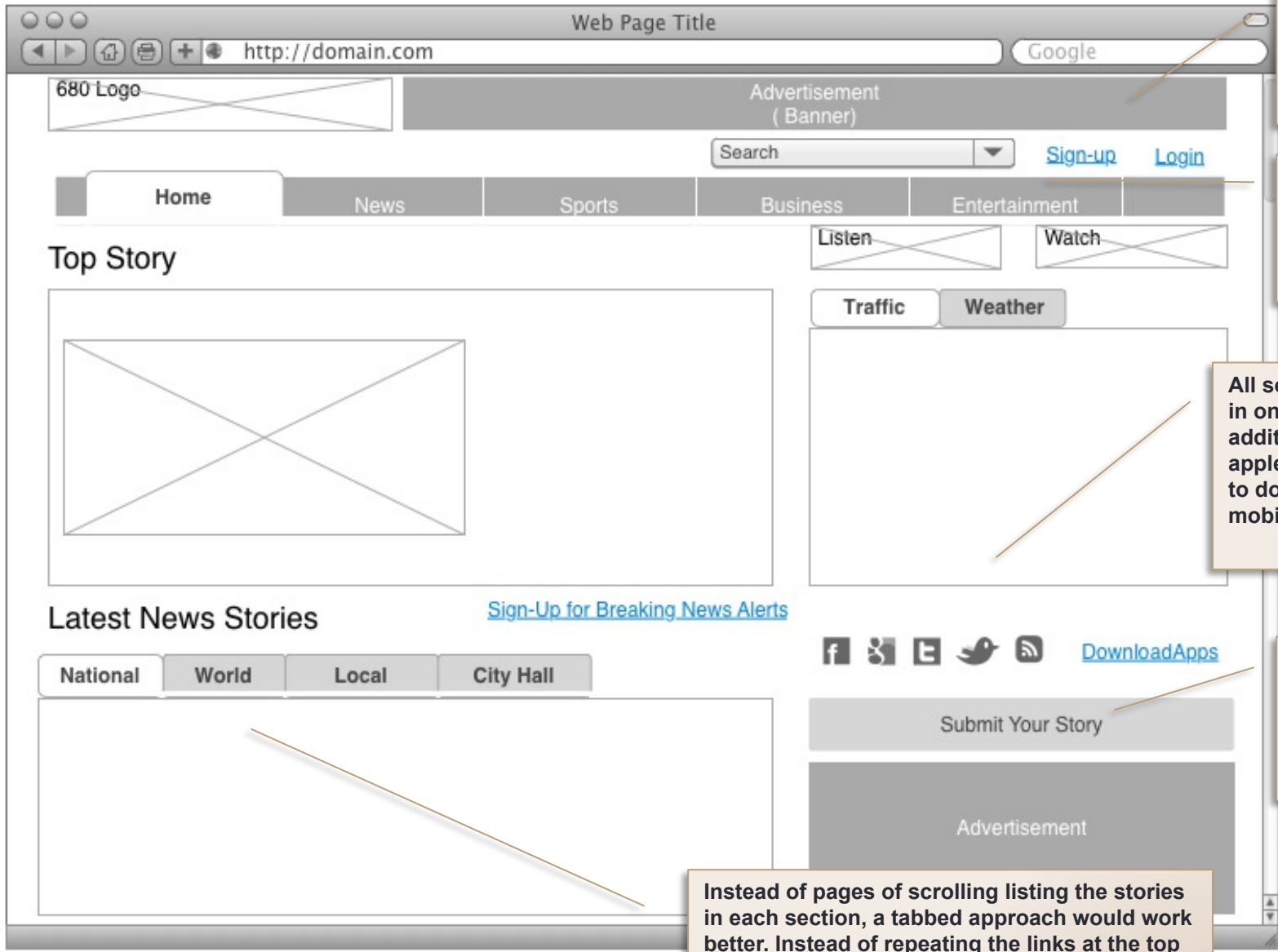
Recommendation: Put podcast link with the other social media links

Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

Issue: While the error recovery is quite good on this page it is hard to see the whole **Submit Your Own Story** section on one screen. If the user makes an error in one of the top fields they do not see it.

Recommendation: Reduce this section to a link and consider loading it as a pop-up or a new page.

Heuristic Recommendations



Reduce Banner clutter by providing link to sign up on another page

The main navigation has been cleaned up to focus on the main areas of interest

All social media links in one spot. In addition a link to the applets page for users to download the mobile or tablet apps

Submit your Story was taking up too much space. Instead a button will launch a pop-up

Instead of pages of scrolling listing the stories in each section, a tabbed approach would work better. Instead of repeating the links at the top this would be more of a "Breaking News" area. In addition a sign-up has been added for the Breaking News Alert.

Heuristic Scorecard

Heuristic	Score
1. Visibility of system status	5
2. Match between system and the real world	3
3. User control	6
4. Consistency and standards	7
5. Error Prevention	7
6. Recognition rather than recall	3
7. Flexibility and efficiency of use	5
8. Aesthetic and minimalist design	2
9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors	4
10. Help and documentation	4