

Usability Testing Report

annarbor.org

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
DESCRIPTION OF TEST.....	4
PRIORITY LEVELS.....	5
RECOMMENDED CHANGES	6
Global Navigation and Footer	6
Global Hero Sections	6
Search Results Pages (Events, Things To Do, Restaurants, Hotels).....	6
Submit Your Event.....	6
Employer Resources	6
Store Check Out Process.....	6
User's Guide Page.....	6

Executive Summary

A usability test was conducted for the annarbor.org website, in order to determine user experience issues and provide a prioritized series of recommendations for resolving those issues.

Some of the most critical user experience issues identified through this testing included:

- A lack of a page with crucial information for Destination Ann Arbor's target users, such as a dedicated Parking information page, that's easily accessible and readily available.
- The Search Bar seems to get lost underneath the main navigation, slowing the time it takes users to complete tasks.
- There is a lack of a dedicated page with essential information about the University Of Michigan, which is one of the main attractions in Ann Arbor; and should be easy to find to users; and contain information such as an address, phone numbers, and campus map, etc.
- The page name titles are hard to see, and users get confused about which page they are on, increasing the time that users take to complete tasks.
- The pages with search results, such as Hotels and Restaurants, have layouts that are hard to understand. The search results' filter functionality is hard to scan, and users take too long to use it because of its placement down on the page.
- Duplicate CTAs on the "Submit Your Event" page give the impression that there is more than one way to submit an event's information, and therefore creating confusion.
- External links to Job Posts seem out-of-date, and leave users confused, and with unfinished tasks.
- Users don't seem to notice that they can download a Visitor's Guide with one click, without having to fill out a form, slowing the time users take to find that information.
- The color palette of the website has caused eye strain for a few test users. Test users expressed difficulties reading and scanning through the website due to the bright green and yellow color.
- Multiple inconvenient forms were found throughout the website. Test users did not complete filling out the forms due to the length. The length of the form deemed as tedious and a few test users completed the task, however, did not finish the form.

This report provides recommended solutions to these high-priority issues. Additional medium-priority issues and a variety of lower-priority user experience concerns are also identified, with recommended courses of action indicated.

Description of Test

Dates of testing:	Sept 17 to Sept 24, 2020
Testing location:	Ann Arbor, Van Buren Township, MI; Chicago, IL
Number of users tested:	6
Length of each test:	One hour, more or less.
Platforms tested on:	6 users were tested on Mac OS.
Browsers tested on:	3 Mac users were tested on Safari (no choice was given to 2 users; choice was given to one user). The 3 other Mac users were tested on Opera.

Priority Levels

The issues identified through usability testing are grouped into three levels of priority:

High priority: These issues are likely to impact a large number of users significantly. They should be resolved as quickly as resources allow.

Medium priority: Issues at this priority level are also likely to affect a large number of users but generally are less disruptive to the user experience, relative to the high priority issues. If resources are available to address these issues, they should be addressed.

Low priority: Low priority issues typically impact a small subset of the overall user base, although they may impact a larger group. Regardless of the number of users affected, these issues carry only a minor negative impact. Low priority issues are generally easy to resolve. There is less time pressure to fix low priority issues, compared to medium priority issues and especially high priority issues.

Recommended Changes

Global Navigation and Footer

High Priority:

- **Add a dedicated Parking Information page and navigation label.** Users have trouble finding parking information. Including a second level navigation label in the drop-down menu under Plan is recommended. All tested users were unable to locate parking rates information and had to resort to twists and turns to find the information.
- **Simplify the Search Bar design and place it in the top-right corner of the site.** Users were unable to see/spot the search option functionality below the main navigation. Users complained that they had hoped to find it but did not notice it for a long time. Users also complained about the text size inside the search box and said that it seemed unnecessarily large. So, we recommend that the Search Bar be placed in the very top-right corner of the site, globally, and that its design be simplified. We recommend that the Search Bar design doesn't include asymmetrical shapes so that users can easily see it and instantly recognize its functionality in order to improve the user experience.
- **Add a page with information about the University Of Michigan.** We Recommend adding a second level item to the University of Michigan sub-nav drop-down that takes the user to a dedicated page, with information about the "basics" of the University of Michigan; information such as an address, phone numbers, campus map, etc.
- **Fix the "Meetings" drop-down navigation so that it opens directly below the label on hover over.** Users have trouble keeping the drop-down navigation open on hover. The drop-down menu pop-up should open directly below the roll-over label link.
- **Relocate the "About" and "Store" navigation to the global navigation.** The global navigation uses design principles like emphasis and negative space to demonstrate the visual hierarchy. Users' eyes are drawn toward the global navigation over the secondary navigation. The "About" section has many essential links like workforce, sponsorship, news, and contact information. When completing the task, the test users will look at the global navigation first and then the secondary navigation to find the information they need. Test users did not click the "Store" links when prompted to search for a souvenir, therefore, we advise relocating the "About" and "Store" tab to global navigation.
- **Group footer items into similar content to create a sense of organization.** Relevant information such as contact, links, services, social media should be categorized into columns for better organization. The current footer is grouped horizontally, which may be confusing for users to associate which link belongs to a category. Test users did not find the footer to be useful to find what they were searching for. Place each section under the header so that every element is easy to see and find.

Medium Priority:

- **The footer address should have a title that clearly states that the 315 W Huron St. address belongs to Destination Ann Arbor.** Users were unable to associate the logo to

the left with the address.

- **Add a suggested searches drop-down to the Search Bar.** Users would benefit from having a suggested searches drop-down list as the user types a search query. User 1, for example, had trouble spelling a search keyword; in which case, a suggested search keywords list, with links, would improve the user experience.
- **Improve visibility of top-right corner Navigation (Meetings, Sports Commission, About, Store).** After considering most main navigation items, a user seemed unable to see the top-right corner nav. Perhaps the user associated the all-caps text with being navigation links and ignored the sentence case links at the very top of the page. To solve this issue, we recommend changing the link color to a brighter blue and standardize the link style to all caps or all sentence case for all top-of-the-page navigation items.
- **Keep the same main navigation under The Sports Commission section of the site.** The Sports Commission tab takes the user to a different section of the site, where the main navigation changes, which is confusing to users. We recommend consolidating the site without having to create a separate version of the site for the Sports Commission section.
- **Add a CTA by the header.** We recommend a “Book Your Trip” CTA to induce the user's interactions and activities on the website. Test users mentioned the overall of the website is plain and needs to be more interactive to encourage them to want to visit Ann Arbor. Having a CTA improves the interactive element of the website and entices the

Low Priority:

- **Add a close button/icon to the COVID-19 notice.** Users find the COVID-19 note at the top of the page helpful. But once users see that information, or for returning users, there should be an option to close the notice, so that users can gain back that vertical space, to help declutter the page, and reduce cognitive overload.
- **Increase background to type contrast ratio in the Sign-up for eNews and Request Visitors Guide CTA section.** Users complained that there is a gigantic newsletter sign-up option at the bottom of the page. However, users complain that it's hardly visible, and suggest increasing background and type contrast to improve visibility.
- **Add more space between the Ann Arbor Sports logo and the Choose Ann Arbor label link.** In the Sports Commission section of the site, in the main navigation, there should be more space between the logo and the first label link, on that particular viewport width, seen in User 1's test video.
- **Increase the findability of the “Choose your language” CTA.** Ann Arbor is the home of the University of Michigan. The city attracts many international students and visitors. One test user vocalized that the language selection located on the footer should be close to the header to increase visibility. Accommodating to international visitors will offer a friendly interface for international users.

Global Hero Sections

High Priority:

- **Move the page name below the main navigation and above the hero image on all pages where there is a hero photograph.** Tested users seemed to have a hard time recognizing which page they landed on after clicking on a navigation label. Three users took the usability test on a laptop computer, with reduced vertical browser space. On all the pages that have a hero image, the page name appears "below the fold", and users seem to get lost.

We recommend moving the page name above the hero section's image and below the main navigation, to help users make an instant connection between the link they just clicked on and the page that they are on.

Search Results Pages (Events, Things To Do, Restaurants, Hotels)

High Priority:

- **Increase results' Filter visibility in the search results section.** Users had a hard time noticing the left-side search results filter in the results pages. Removing the yellow background to increase type to background contrast and improve the filters' visibility is recommended; so that users can complete tasks and find refined results faster.
- **Move Search Results list items and search filters to the top of the page.** The layout of the Events, Things To Do, Restaurants, and Hotels pages is unusual and doesn't follow the standard page layout users have learned to expect from a search results page. The page information text paragraph should be placed either on a subpage or underneath the results section, not above it, so that users better understand the purpose of the page; and take advantage of the functionality of the results as they would on an e-commerce site.

Submit Your Event

High Priority:

- **Remove the first Submit My Event CTA button.** The "Submit My Event" CTA below the Submit Your Event title and paragraph is confusing to users, as it seems to be a different way to submit an event other than filling out the form. The Submit My Event CTA button should be placed only once below the form, not twice, in order to avoid user confusion.
- **Redesign the recurrence drop-down menus underneath the "Submit your event" CTA.** Test users expressed frustration and confusion about the usability of the interactive drop-down form. There are several drop-down menus where users select the day/weeks/months/ custom date where their event will reoccur. This section is not user-friendly; the options in one menu change when users select another menu on the same page. Users get very confused when options vary in each section. Creating a single calendar for the users to input the dates where their events reoccurs will ease the

confusion and usability.

Employer Resources

Medium Priority:

- **Simplify Job Posting Language.** A test user doesn't make a connection between hospitality positions and a restaurant position. Writing a different headline/title that is more descriptive and simplified, or that includes the definition of Hospitality; is recommended to avoid user confusion.
- **Revise external links and keep them up-to-date.** A user noticed that the page where they had landed, outside of the annarbor.org site, shows a different job position than what they expected based on what they had clicked on. So, keeping up-to-date information and making sure that all links navigate the user to where they expected should be reviewed periodically.

Store Check Out Process

High Priority:

- **Notify users that they are leaving the site upon clicking the Store label link.** Users seemed confused about where they were after clicking the Store label link. They recognize they are outside of the annarbor.org site — and may not complete a purchase based on whether their trust remains intact or not. To avoid confusion and to keep the same level of user trust, it would be ideal that the Store functionality remains a part of the overall site; and it is included, under the same umbrella of the annarbor.org website, with the same UI Design. Or, if that's not a possibility, perhaps adding a notice/warning stating that they will be leaving the site would help users be aware of what is happening.

User's Guide Page

High Priority:

- **Make the Download a copy of the 2020 Visitors Guide CTA, a Button.** Users do not seem to acknowledge that a User Guide Download is available. We recommend making the Download a copy of the 2020 Visitors Guide CTA a button, large enough to be seen and distinguishable so that users can easily see it, use that functionality — and get to what they are looking for faster.

Also, making a distinction of what the difference is between the available download and what users get after filling out the form would help avoid user confusion.

Design Elements

High Priority:

- **Optimize the color contrast.** Test users had difficulties while scanning and reading the contents. Complaints include the yellow background/red font in some pages and the bright green caused eye strain. The human eye prefers color combinations that are natural and dark texts over a light background. Combinations like black text over white or slightly yellow background alleviate eye strain. We recommend reducing the use of bright colors on a white background and decreasing the overall brightness of the colors.

Forms

High Priority:

- **Break the forms into selections.** Test users expressed dissatisfaction when prompted to fill the forms because of the length. Long forms look “intimidating” and require a lot of effort for the users. To reduce the length of the forms, we advise to break the form into smaller sections and reduce the perceived length of the form by using horizontal labels or placeholders. Aligning labels horizontally can reduce the perceived length of the form and increase the rate users complete and submit the form.