

Assignment 12.1: Summarize Usability Test Results

While doing user testing over the last two weeks I found a few common themes among my users. Most responses to the site were positive and felt the site will be fun and useful when complete, but there are a few areas that need attention to make it something they would share or continue to return to. Right now it's set up in favor of the first time user and tries to guide users through a story. During testing, I was asking users to hunt down sections without context and almost everyone had trouble. Although the site is not intended to be used heavily in as a tool, my most important take away from this round of testing is that I must implement better global navigation.

Users felt that overall it was hard to find specific pages and that the side "dot" navigation just wouldn't cut it for the return user. Many times users moved around looking for pages only to end up feeling disoriented and a bit lost. One user, John, also felt at times the navigation that was in place ended up feeling it was really constrained. When he wanted to go "back" there was no clear button to move back, but there was always a button to move forward. Furthermore, the user John felt that the scrolling behavior needed to include a left and right direction, not just up and down.

Most users loved the "Estimate Your Needs" page, but equally felt it needed more explanation to be useful. Although this may have to do with them not receiving the proper context in the testing, this tip of reaction should be planned for. It feels as though most users expected more prompts and perhaps even tooltip-like popups. Most users seemed to ignore the "i" and felt it would not have been sufficient to answer their questions because they would have simply skipped the page if they were confused.

Another section that repeatedly saw people being confused was the "Corporate Consolidation." Two users felt the information wasn't clear what it was telling them, and most of them felt the knobs and inputs were not clearly marked. Adding some more indicator "arrows" throughout the interface seemed to be the common suggestion for users.

Throughout the site there are areas I observed adding interactivity might help users get results faster. For example, on the "Rural Population Goes Urban" page, three users clicked directly on the timeline dates before they dragged the slider instead. Almost all my users clicked the dark boxes on the "Estimate Your Needs" page for adding items, then they ended up clicking the inner "+" icon. Adding in the expected behaviors to areas such as these will make the entire design feel more responsive and intelligent. Angela and Greg both became confused when adding a person to the "Estimate Your Needs" page because the default information was already filled out. Allowing the users to see an empty line first would help them understand that it needs to be filled in by them.

As stated in the beginning, most users felt the site had potential they just wished it was easier to find their way around quickly. With a few minor tweaks to interactive elements and a more major overhaul of the global navigation scheme, users will be able to use this site and will most likely spend more time exploring.