

USABILITY: EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT, AND SATISFYING

*We have made it our goal to make
our clients' applications user-friendly.*

RESEARCH

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR SERVICES
AND AREAS OF EXPERTISE

“USABILITY.”

The term usability is meant to denote the state of a functioning communication between application and user.

WHAT IS USABILITY?

Usability, just like aesthetics, counts as one of the characteristics of a product. For your website, usability is meant to be a mark of quality. “[Usability is] The extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use.”

This is the definition of usability according to ISO Norm “DIN EN ISO 9241-11”.

We speak of **effectiveness** when a product has a use and achieves a purpose. When does a website have a use? From the perspective of the end-user, we understand that a website has a use when the user can achieve his goals with the website. Is this enough? We go one step further and say: A website is only effective when both the user as well as the provider of the website can achieve their purposes through using the website.

Efficiency describes how well a user can pursue his goal when using the application. Efficiency is a direct measure of how much effort the user must put forth. For example, the time or number of mouse clicks for a certain action can be measured.

Satisfaction is a subjective impression from the user's perspective. It is often redefined as the “user experience.” This refers to how the user experiences the use of an application. Does he enjoy using the application? Is it fun to use the application, or, alternatively, is it frustrating?

OUR PHILOSOPHY AND VISION

Companies that wish to satisfy their customers are more successful in the long-term. We have made it our goal to make our clients' applications user-friendly. This is not only intended as a favor to the end-users, but primarily as a favor to the providers themselves – to you.

The negative effects of poorly functioning technology can be particularly great in the context of e-commerce applications such as online shops. If the shop does not work, the customers cannot buy anything. The actual extent of this problem has been described by the German weekly DIE ZEIT: "27 percent of all purchasing attempts in the Internet are broken off because the buyer could not find what he was looking for, even though the merchant had the item in stock. This was discovered by the American consulting firm Cymfony. The federal commission Digitale Wirtschaft (Digital Economy) reported that 40 percent of the buying processes are ended prematurely due to complicated ordering procedures or technical problems."

We want to implement usability in a holistic way. One cannot only ensure usability for its own good, as this would be a luxury and unaffordable. **Usability must offer a business-minded company some kind of use.** It is our goal to achieve a balance between investments in usability and business-management use.

We want to help companies to understand their customers as well as to better meet their customers' needs through the company website. For this reason, we create a balanced relationship between customer and company use. Both sides win in this situation: The user can satisfy his needs using the website, and the company acquires customers.

A SUCCESSFUL COMPANY THROUGH SATISFIED CUSTOMERS



OUR SERVICE PORTFOLIO

ANALYZING THE USABILITY OF THE EXISTING WEBSITE

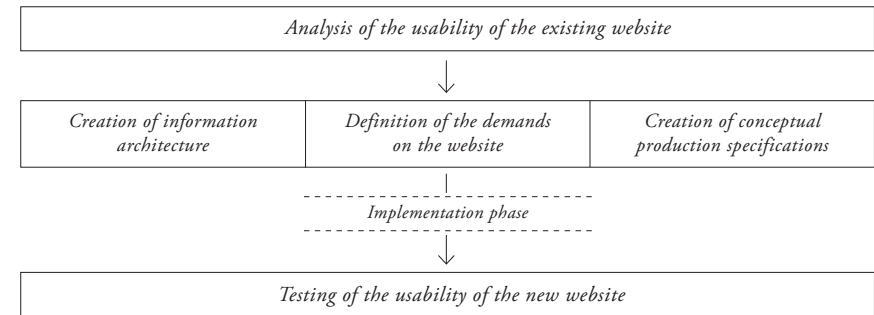
The first step is a usability analysis of the existing website. The result is a complete list of all usability problems, which must be removed before the relaunch of the website.

The analysis is a so-called guided inspection, which means that we will test the extent to which the website conforms to recognized guidelines set forth by usability research. The analysis is based upon a series of checklists and complemented by an open evaluation based upon heuristics. This helps to recognize problems that cannot be found with the help of the closed checklist approach.

DEFINING OF THE DEMANDS ON THE WEBSITE

The defining of target groups, of the demands of the target groups, and of the goals of the customers will be undertaken. It can thus be tested whether the website offers the expected business-management performance.

A website always pursues specified business-management goals. In order to ensure that these can be achieved, the demands on the website must be defined at the outset. First, the target groups must be defined and described so that the website can be designed appropriately for these target groups. Second, the demands of the users must be defined so that these can be served by the website. And third, the goals of the provider must be defined so that the business-management performance of the website during the running operation can be tested.



CREATION OF INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

The contents of the website are defined (e.g. through benchmarking), their distribution across the individual web pages is undertaken, and the contents are structured in a semantically sensible way.

The information architecture (IA) is the categorical framework for the website, or, more simply stated: The structure of the menu items. **About one-third of all use interruptions are caused by poor information architecture.** First, the contents that the website must contain are defined. For this, a benchmarking procedure (among other things) is executed; this means that the websites of the three most important competitors are analyzed. Second, it is defined how the content should be organized on the web page. And third, an information architecture oriented to the cognitive needs of the users is created.

CREATION OF CONCEPTUAL PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS

The results of the conceptual design are processed with special attention paid to usability aspects for the next steps in the project procedure (design and programming).

The creation of the production specifications includes the processing of the results of the conceptual design for the next steps in the project procedure (design as well as programming).

SOPHISTICATED SOLUTIONS THAT WORK.

*It is our goal to achieve a balance between investments
in usability and business-management use.*

ADDITIONAL SERVICES FROM THE AREA OF CONCEPTUAL DESIGN & USABILITY

02.1 / SEO-ANALYSIS

With an analysis of the "Search Engine Optimization," it can be discovered whether your website conforms to the requirements ensuring it is well-represented in the results pages of search engines.

A website can only be successful if it is used. The way taken by a user to a website leads in most cases over a search engine. With an SEO analysis, we can determine whether your website conforms to the requirements necessary to be listed at the top of the results pages of the important search engines. Both onsite and offsite criteria are tested and presented in detail in a final report. The result is a list of suggestions for improvement intended to optimize the website in terms of search engine performance. Please note our brochure on the topic of "Search Engine Optimization (SEO)."

02.2 / ADD-ON CONSULTING

Suggestions are developed in a creative process regarding which add-ons can give your website a higher use value. In addition, a benchmark test is executed to get an impression of the most important products of the competition.

A positive user experience does not only mean that the existing functions can be used without any problems (usability), but also that the website even offers usable functions (utility). We develop suggestions in a creative process regarding which add-ons can give your website a higher use value. To do this, we will consider the results of the analysis of the competition in order to better judge the performance of your competitors' websites. This results in a list of possible add-ons, their concrete uses, and an estimate of the time and effort needed for implementation.

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR SERVICES AND AREAS OF EXPERTISE		
SEO-Analysis	Cognitive Walkthrough	Guided Inspection
Add-on consulting	User-Test	User survey

USER SURVEY

With an online survey, the users are directly addressed and asked to judge your website. This can result in valuable data allowing a relaunch aimed at a specified target-group.

To understand what users really want, it is best to ask them. With an online survey, we can determine which problems the users have when using your website, which functions they find successful, and which functions are missing. The survey is created using a powerful online-survey software program and analyzed in detail by us. The outcome is not only an analysis of the results but also a list of actionable options derived from these results, as well as an estimate of the time and effort needed for the implementation of the newly located optimization potentials.

GUIDED INSPECTION (SOPHISTICATED VERSION)

The guided inspection is a form of the expert-based usability-analysis, during which your website is tested for conformity with recognized guidelines put forth by usability research.

The analysis is based upon a series of checklists and complemented by an open evaluation based upon heuristics. This helps to recognize problems that cannot be found with the help of the closed checklist approach. The “sophisticated version” of the guided inspection includes a detailed testing of more than 150 usability guidelines as well as a heuristic evaluation led by three experts. This leads to the discovery of up to 90% of all existing usability problems.

COGNITIVE WALKTHROUGH

The cognitive walkthrough is a form of the expert-based usability-analysis.

This is the testing of a specified process on a website, i.e. a booking, an order, a contact initiation, etc. The process is played out step-by-step and meticulously analyzed by three experts. Up to 80% of all usability problems can be found this way.

USER TEST (WITH MORAE 2.0)

With a user test, all of a website's usability problems can be completely uncovered. The service includes the complete test battery, from the recruiting of participants to the execution of the test to the analysis of the results.

Studies comparing methods show that it is impossible for an expert-based analysis procedure to uncover all usability problems. Numerous additional mistakes can only be found if one observes real users during their use of the site. With a user test, it is possible to recognize an existing problem as well as to determine possible, non-specific characteristics such as ease of use. We take care of the entire test battery, from the recruiting of the participants to the execution of the test to the analysis of the results. The test is executed with the help of the software program Morae 2.0, which includes not only mouse- and click-tracking but also a video- and sound analysis of the test participants.



THE NEXT WEBSITE IS ONLY A MOUSE CLICK AWAY

Good usability ensures that an online application can be correctly used. If an application has good usability, the users can achieve their goals quickly and completely and are satisfied.

THE COMPANY

//SEIBERT/MEDIA consists of three areas of expertise: Consulting, Design, and Technologies. We have been developing intranets, extranet systems and web portals as well as classic Internet sites since 1996. Starting in 2005, our design department designs high-quality media representation for companies along with communicative concepts for both web and print mediums. Consulting in the area of online marketing and usability rounds off our service portfolio.

//SEIBERT/MEDIA/CONSULTING – Profitability through strategic far-sightedness. Communication is a goal-directed process which follows specific intents and purposes. Clear, strategic thinking and the binding commitment of precise plans for the implementation of goals are the basic requirements for the success of a project.

Our consultants have a distinct know-how in the area of Business Process Engineering, which enables them to oversee all the areas of project planning, from process analysis to the shaping of the business procedures to the definition of an appropriate web strategy.

The Usability Department is part of //SEIBERT/MEDIA GmbH's consulting area of expertise.

//SEIBERT/MEDIA/DESIGN – Companies are like personalities. Every company leaves behind – through its image, its language, and its behavior – an impression within its environment. A company that would like to be attractive to its customers, business partners, and employees needs competent and professional consulting to achieve this.

The service portfolio of our Design Department includes the areas of Corporate Design, Web Design, and Print. Our artistic and creative work is marked by passion and ambition. This combination always leads to high-quality solutions. We build our conceptual design on the thought model "Companies are like personalities." If you would like to know more about your company, just ask us.

//SEIBERT/MEDIA/TECHNOLOGIES – Performance through variety. The Technology Department is the center of expertise for individual application development, web programming, system integration, and professional hosting solutions by //SEIBERT/MEDIA GmbH. We plan, realize, and operate professional web software for our customers. To accomplish this, we utilize competent programmers and system administrators who have accumulated much know-how over the years. We pride ourselves on our customers' high demands on quality. Since 1996, we have been investing our knowledge into web development and hosting to serve our customers completely.

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OUR SERVICES IN THE AREA OF USABILITY:

ANALYSIS, TESTING, CONSULTING.