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The Effect of Usability Research on the World Class Sports Website

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Advisor: Jason Reid - Assistant Professor, Pittsburg State University

Introduction

User Interface Design (UI) and User Experience Design (UX) have become important parts of integrating the human experience into the design of digital products and services we use every day. Usability Research is the foundation of these two areas. It enables the research for improvement of quality interaction between a user and a company (UX) to be put into action by designing, prototyping and iterating the user interface (UI) before development.

Purpose of the Study

This project is a study of the effect that usability research has on the development of a new website for World Class Sports. It implements changes to the site layout and design based on the insights revealed by usability testing; the act of observing one person at a time doing specific tasks, so that confusing or frustrating issues can be detected.

The Process

Students were divided into the categories of Participants and Observers. The Observers were responsible for administering the Usability Testing with the Participants. Usability testing began with a tour of the World Class Sports website homepage. Participants were allowed to scroll up and down but not click on any links at first. They were asked the following questions:

Questions

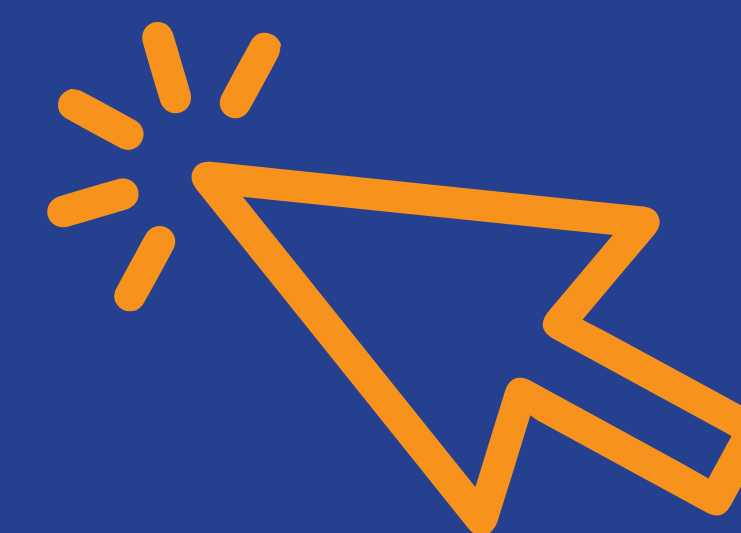
- ♦ What strikes you about the site?
- ♦ Whose site do you think it is?
- ♦ What can you do on the site?
- ♦ What is the site for?



Participants were then asked to think out loud as they performed several tasks. Observers took notes to record the usability issues Participants faced while performing the tasks below.

Tasks

- ♦ What would you click on first?
- ♦ Register for an eSOFT Account
- ♦ Book a Session in Topeka Kansas
- ♦ View the Pittsburg Kansas Schedule
- ♦ Register for an Event
- ♦ Purchase a Package in Pittsburg Kansas



From the answers collected, the Observers narrowed the usability and design problems into the top five issues to fix: Navigation, Graphics, Pages, Layout and Content. Observers then delegated tasks and rebuilt the site using WordPress, a free content management system used to build and maintain websites, with a focus on solving the top five issues.

Top 5 Issues

1. Navigation
2. Illegible Graphics
3. Confusing Layout
4. Illogical Pages
5. Missing Content

Results

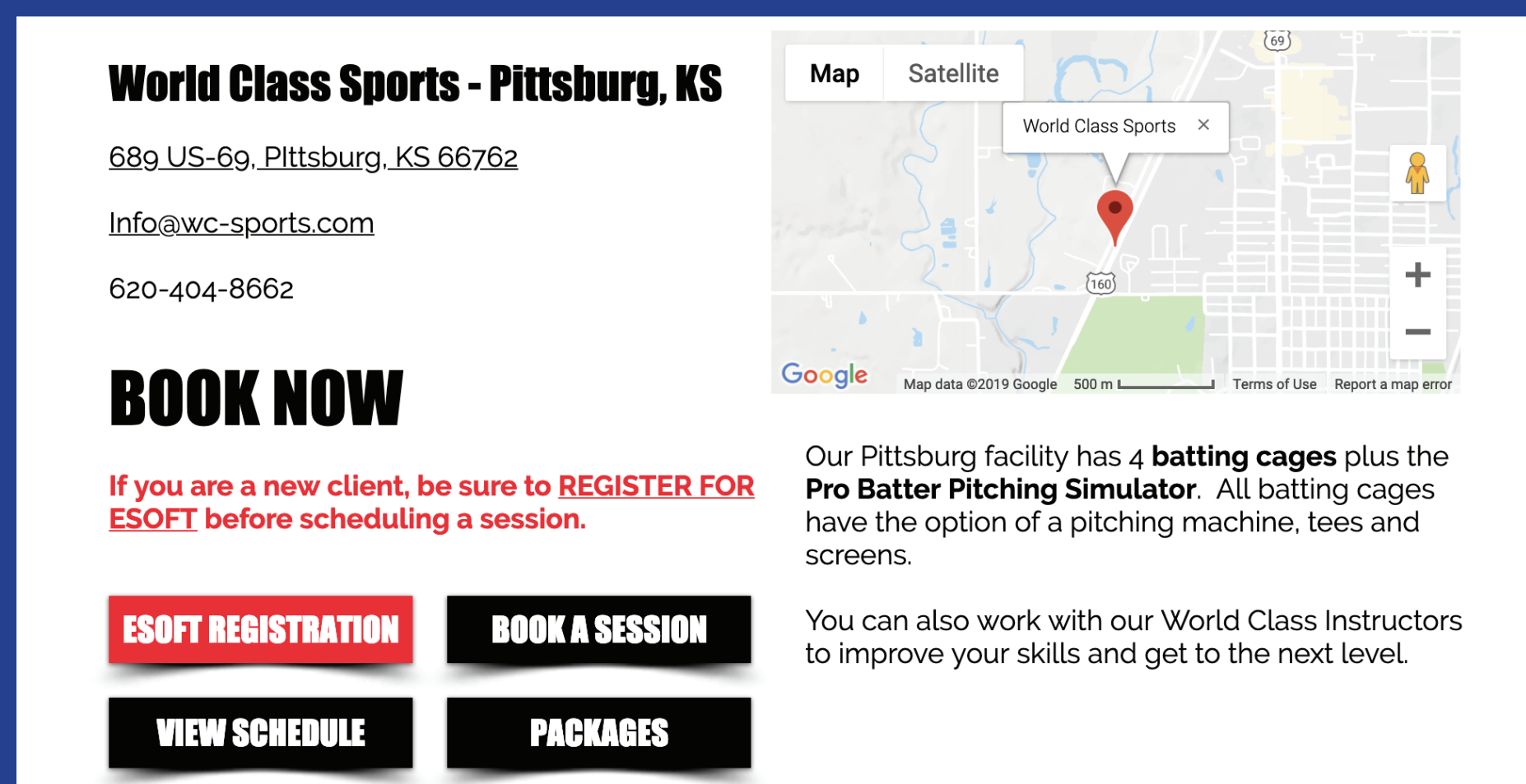
The results from the World Class Sports site redesign created a stronger more cohesive design. The top five issues were corrected resulting in easier navigation throughout the site, clean graphics and page layout, as well as direct, useful content.

BEFORE

Confusing Navigation



Confusing eSOFT Registration



Checkout the Full Sites!



Old Site



New Site

Difficult to Read Graphics



Simplified Graphics



AFTER

User Friendly Navigation



Simplified eSOFT Registration

