

Investment Fund Evaluation Report: Website Project

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SECTION ONE: OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The Client Satisfaction Research Project Report (2003) reported that “at least a third of clients have used the Internet and that more than a third of those who have not would be willing to use it”. Further, this report recommended that Saskatchewan Legal Aid “continue to provide, and promote the use of, a Website that offers relevant information to clients.” Correspondingly, the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission (SLAC) developed a project to design and develop a website that would meet the following objectives:

1. Improve access to public legal education and information;
2. Develop an enhanced website to increase access, visibility and awareness of legal aid;
3. Develop additional PLEI, materials regarding criminal law.

Evaluation Objectives

The objectives of the website evaluation discussed with Yelland Research and Evaluation Services (YRES) were to:

1. Develop a web-based survey designed to assess the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission’s website. The website survey was designed to assess the following aspects of the website:
 - a. Content;
 - b. Ease of navigation;
 - c. The “Telling Our Story” promotion; and
 - d. Basic demographic data.
2. Work with the SLAC webmaster to ensure the website survey is available to SLAC online and collect data during December 2005 and January 2006;
3. Analyze the data collected through the website survey and report the findings to the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission.

Project Methodology

The website evaluation collected data through a web-based survey tool accessible from the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission website. The original intention was to collect data during

December 2005 and January 2006. However, due to a low response rate, data was collected until March 23, 2006.

Analytic Approach

The numeric client satisfaction data was analyzed using Descriptive Statistics. The text data was analyzed by combining responses with similar themes into response categories. The frequency of these response categories is reported below.

Limitations of the Website Evaluation Findings

The website evaluation project was designed to collect and report on data from respondents who visited the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission website during December 2005 through March 23, 2006. As a result, this data is not generalizable beyond this particular evaluation and care must be taken when comparing this data with that from evaluations of websites for other Legal Aid jurisdictions.

The data collection period was extended but the number of responses was still very low. Low enough, in fact, to place a significant limitation on the validity of these responses. While these responses certainly illustrate the perceptions of the respondents, the low numbers severely limits how representative they may be of other website users who did not complete the survey. It will be very important to address the response rate in future iterations of the Website Survey. Currently, while the analysis may suggest certain ideas about the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission website, these should be considered as *possibilities* rather than evidence-based truths. The veracity of these claims can only be confirmed or refuted by collecting more data. The “truth” of this limited set of responses is that they may range anywhere from entirely incorrect to entirely correct or, as is quite likely, somewhere in between these two extremes.

SECTION TWO: PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Website Project Description, Website Survey Project Description and Implementation and Website Activity information discussed below is from discussions with, and documents provided by, The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission, the website developer and the webmaster. This data provides an overview of The Commission's need for an enhanced website, the purpose of the Website Survey project and data about the activity of the enhanced SLAC website during its first year of operation.

Website Project Description

The Client Satisfaction Research Project Report (2003) included several recommendations regarding the Commission website and PLEI material. The Commission recognised the existing website was "minimal, containing very brief information about services provided and office locations" (SLAC 2004). As a result, the Commission applied to the Investment Fund (Justice Canada) for funding to:

- 1) Develop an enhanced web site to increase Website, awareness and accessibility of legal aid services;
- 2) Develop additional public legal education and information written materials regarding criminal law. Where possible, supplement written material with audio and video formats. ... Many of legal aid's clients cannot read well. If the information was available in audio or video format, it may be more accessible (SLAC 2004).

Website Survey Project Description and Implementation

The Website Survey was an evaluation project designed to assess the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission's enhanced website. This evaluation included assessing the:

- a. Content;
- b. Ease of navigation;
- c. "Telling Our Story" promotion; and
- d. Basic demographic data.

The enhanced website was developed and became available to clients and staff –later than originally intended. The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission announced the launch of the new website March 16, 2005.

The Website Survey Project was implemented in December 2005 in order to collect data about the website users' (clients and staff) perceptions of the *enhanced* website. Due to a very limited response rate by website users, the original data collection period of December 2005 through January 2006 was extended to March 23, 2006. Even with this extension, after cleaning out the *test* and *incomplete responses*, the remaining number of responses was very low. As a result, we need to be cautious when considering the representativeness of these responses to other website users. It is entirely possible that these responses are representative of the perceptions of non-respondent users; however, the low number of responses makes it difficult to make such a suggestion with any degree of certainty. As mentioned above in the "Limitation" section, these claims can only be confirmed or refuted by collecting data from more users.

Website Activity

The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission website tracks two types of activity statistics – *visits/hits* and *unique visits/ unique hits*. According to Paschall (2006), "a *visit hit* is counted every time someone accesses a page. Therefore, if you access it 17 times as one person, it will count as 17". On the other hand, a *unique visit/hit* is counted when a computer from a different Internet Protocol (IP) address accesses a page. "This means that though you may access the same page 17 times, as long as it is from one IP address, it will count as 1 unique visit".

Table 2.1: Website Activity Statistics

	July 2005	August 2005	September 2005	October 2005	November 2005	December 2005	January 2006	February 2006	March 2006
General Website Activity									
General Overview									
Page Views	5608	5605	8193	7950	9558	8173	9481	8304	9342
Visitors	1757	1861	2712	3442	3342	3613	3851	3674	4157
Unique Visitors	1604	1698	2410	3156	2894	3263	3402	3301	3716
Unique Countries	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Unique Browsers	31	34	24	39	37	36	39	36	46
Page Views by Area									
Public Area	5546	5593	8167	7891	9536	8166	9372	8215	9196
Staff Area	10	13	15	59	22	7	109	89	148
Entire Site	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private Bar Lawyers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legal Director									
Discussion Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Telling our Story									
General Overview									
Page Views	*	*	0	32	367	334	123	139	208
Visitors	*	*	0	20	94	191	91	93	145
Unique Visitors	*	*	0	18	57	177	91	92	140
Unique Countries	*	*	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Unique Browsers	*	*	0	4	7	10	17	14	17

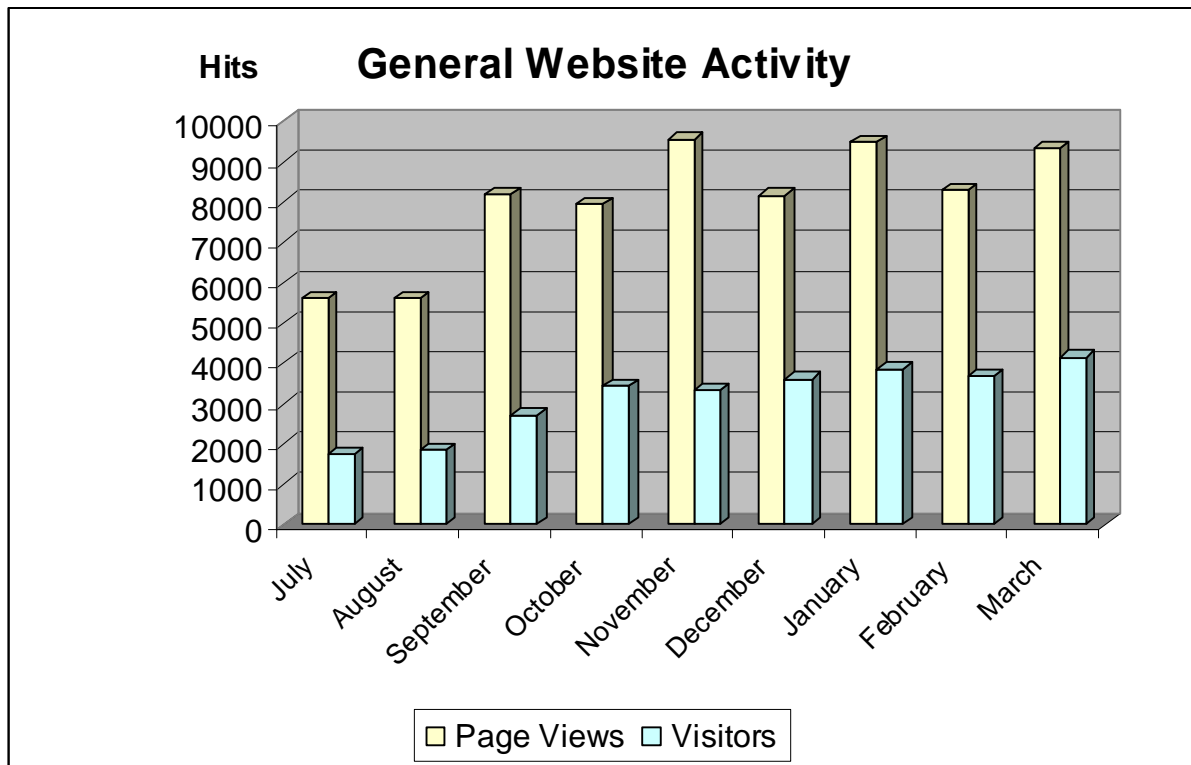
Correct interpretation of Table 2.1 requires keeping the following in mind:

- 1) General Overview activity data for July and August 2005 was not available,
- 2) The “Staff Area” became available in September 2005, and
- 3) The “Telling Our Story” campaign became available in October 2006.

Even with the missing data, Table 2.1 shows an increasing trend in both the number of pages viewed (*Page Views*) and *Visitors* to the SLAC website between July 2005 and March 2006.

As Chart 2.1 shows, the page views for the Public and Staff areas increased between July 2005 and March 2006.

Chart 2.1: Page Views by Area

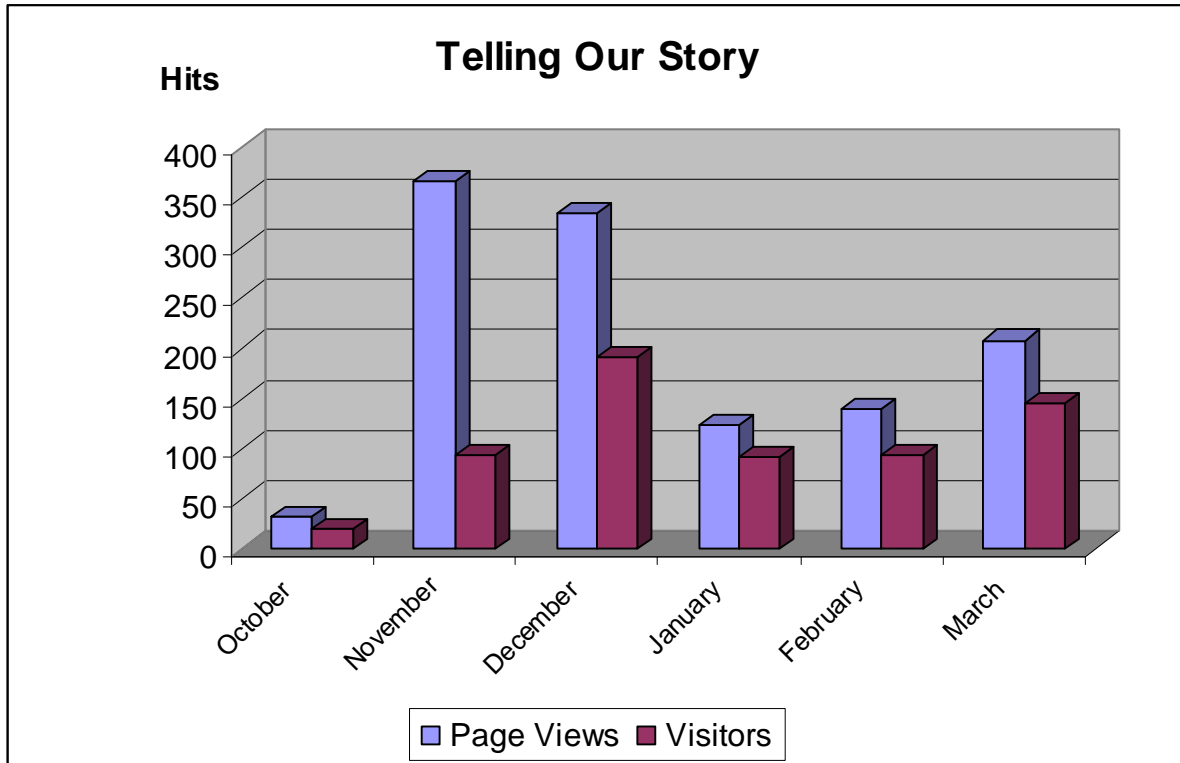


The “Telling Our Story” data in Chart 2.2 shows a significant initial number of page views in November and December followed by a drop in January. However, since January, the data shows a steady increase in both *Page Views* and *Visitor* hits. The disparity of the November/ December and January to March data could be the result of the “newness” or novelty of the Telling Our Story information in November and December. If this is true, the January to March 2006 data is likely a more accurate reflection of the typical activity for this part of the website. This initial

amount of interest may have been further exaggerated by the simultaneous radio campaign for the Telling Our Story information campaign.

Chart 2.2 also shows that the number of *Visitors* hits followed a similar pattern – likely for similar reasons.

Chart 2: Telling Our Story - Hits



SECTION THREE: DATA AND ANALYSIS

Document and Related Literature Review

The documents and literature reviewed for this evaluation consisted of:

- 1) The website itself;
- 2) A Summary of website activity statistics (March 16, 2005 to March 31, 2006);
- 3) Literature regarding website design and usability and heuristics for successful website development;
- 4) Revised PLEI materials.

Internal website data (activity statistics), the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission Application for the Investment Fund (Department of Justice Canada): Business Plan (June 2004) and other relevant information (such as websites for Legal Aid in other provinces) were used to:

- Ø Gain an understanding of the intent and breadth of the project; and
- Ø Guide the development of the issues to be addressed in the website survey tool.

Participant Observation

YRES personnel reviewed all pages of The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission website online at the end of March and April 2005. The website was reviewed (observed in action) in order to develop a clear understanding of the functionality of the website from the perspective of a client new to Legal Aid who accesses the website looking for information. This observation facilitated YRES personnel in developing a set of questions with which to review the website in greater detail.

Response Rate

The Website Survey received a total of fifteen (15) responses from respondents who could be at a variety of different stages in their relationship with Legal Aid, ranging from new cases, to cases in progress, to clients who were concluding their cases and no attempt was made to determine or differentiate responses based on the clients' status at this point. Further classification of respondents may be considered in future iterations of the Website Survey.

Survey Data

Section One: General Perceptions

Section One includes questions about the respondents' general perceptions of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission website, such as the respondents' perception of the availability of the desired information, the depth of the information found, and questions that asked respondents to identify the information they were looking for when they accessed the website.

- Ø 100% of the respondents reported the information they desired was available.
- Ø 86.6% of the respondents reported the information found *Probably* or *Definitely* answered their question.
- Ø Question 3 shows the information the respondent was looking for: most respondents reported they were looking for information about the Commissions itself, about Legal Aid services or information about access to Legal Aid services.

Q1: Availability of Desired Information

Availability of Desired Information			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Yes	15	100.0%	
No	0	0.0%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Q2: Depth of Information

Depth of Information			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Definitely	8	53.3%	
Probably	5	33.3%	
Definitely Not	1	6.7%	
Not Sure	1	6.7%	
Probably Not	0	0.0%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Q3: Desired Information

Desired Information			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Information about the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission	11	73.3%	
Information about Saskatchewan Legal Aid services	6	40.0%	
Access to Legal aid services	6	40.0%	
Information about the "Telling Our Story" campaign	5	33.3%	
Legal information	3	20.0%	
Information about Legal Aid publications	3	20.0%	
Legal advice	0	0.0%	
Other	1	6.7%	
Totals	15	n/a	

Section Two: Telling Our Story

Section Two data shows that the “Telling Our Story” information appears to be interesting, valuable and important.

- Ø 100% of the respondents saw the “Telling Our Story” information.
- Ø These respondents were almost evenly split as to whether this information was *Very* or *Somewhat* interesting.
- Ø Two-thirds of the respondents felt this information was *Somewhat* valuable
- Ø 60% of these respondents felt the “Telling Our Story” information was important to them.

Q4: Have you seen the "Telling Our Story" information on the website?

Have you seen the "Telling Our Story" information on the website?			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Yes	15	100.0%	
No	0	0.0%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Q5: How interesting is the Telling Our Story information to you?

How interesting is the Telling Our Story information to you?			
	Counts	Percents	0 Percents 100
Somewhat	8	53.3%	
Very	7	46.7%	
Not at all	0	0.0%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Q6: How valuable is the Telling Our Story information to you?

How valuable is the Telling Our Story information to you?			
	Counts	Percents	0 Percents 100
Somewhat	10	66.7%	
Very	4	26.7%	
Not at all	1	6.7%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Q7: How important is the Telling Our Story to you?

How important is the Telling Our Story to you?			
	Counts	Percents	0 Percents 100
Somewhat	9	60.0%	
Very	4	26.7%	
Not at all	2	13.3%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Section Three: Site Navigation and Ratings

Section Three includes data about respondents’ perceptions of the ease of the website navigation, ratings of the content usefulness and look, the likelihood of respondents returning to the site, how often they visit the site, if they would recommend this site to others, and their suggestions for improving the website.

- Ø 80% of the respondents found the site easy to navigate
- Ø 78.5% found it easy to find the information they were looking for.
- Ø 93.4% rated the content as *Very* or *Somewhat* useful.
- Ø 80% rated the graphics and look as *Excellent* or *Very Good*.
- Ø 93.3% stated they *Probably* or *Definitely* would return.
- Ø While the responses were split over a number of options, slightly more respondents reported they visited the site *Once a week* than any other option.
- Ø 93.3% reported they would recommend the site to others.
- Ø As indicated in Q15 below, only 1 respondent provided a suggestion about how to improve the website.

This data suggests that the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission website is favourably regarded, at least, by the respondents who completed the website survey.

Q8: How easy is it to find you way around in this site

How easy is it to find you way around in this site			
	Counts	Percents	
Easy	8	53.3%	
Very Easy	4	26.7%	
Average	3	20.0%	
Hard	0	0.0%	
Very Hard	0	0.0%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Q9: How easy is it to find the information you want

How easy is it to find the information you want				
	Counts	Percents	0	100
Easy	8	57.1%		
Very Easy	3	21.4%		
Average	3	21.4%		
Hard	0	0.0%		
Very Hard	0	0.0%		
Totals	14	100.0%		

Q10: Content Usefulness rating

Content Usefulness rating				
	Counts	Percents	0	100
Very useful	7	46.7%		
Somewhat useful	7	46.7%		
Neither useful or useless	1	6.7%		
Somewhat useless	0	0.0%		
Very useless	0	0.0%		
Totals	15	100.0%		

Q11: Overall, rating re: graphics and look

Overall, rating re: graphics and look				
	Counts	Percents	0	100
Very Good	7	46.7%		
Excellent	5	33.3%		
Good	3	20.0%		
Fair	0	0.0%		
Poor	0	0.0%		
Totals	15	100.0%		

Q12: Likelihood of Returning to the site

Likelihood of Returning to site			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Probably	8	53.3%	
Definitely	6	40.0%	
Not Sure	1	6.7%	
Probably Not	0	0.0%	
Definitely Not	0	0.0%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Q13: How often do you visit the site?

Site Visitations			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Once a week	3	21.4%	
Two or more times a week	2	14.3%	
Two or more times a month	2	14.3%	
Once a month	2	14.3%	
Less than once a month	2	14.3%	
Two or more times a day	1	7.1%	
Once a day	1	7.1%	
Don't know	1	7.1%	
Totals	14	100.0%	

Q14: Would you recommend the site to others?

Recommend			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Yes	14	93.3%	
No	1	6.7%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Q15: Do you have any suggestions about how we can make this site more useful to you?

Do you have any suggestions about how we can make this site more useful to you?			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
make sure it is linked to other websites like the court website	1	100.0%	
Totals	1	100.0%	

Section Four: Demographic Information

Section Four includes the demographic data collected in the website survey. As shown below, the average respondent was a full-time employed Caucasian female who was not a client but rather an employee of Legal Aid in Saskatchewan or another province.

Q16: What is your gender?

Gender			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Female	12	80.0%	
Male	3	20.0%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Q17: What is your employment status?

Employment Status			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Employed full-time	11	78.6%	
Employed part-time	3	21.4%	
Unemployed	0	0.0%	
Student	0	0.0%	
Senior	0	0.0%	
Totals	14	n/a	

Q18: What is your client status?

Client Status			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Not a client	13	86.7%	
Former client	1	6.7%	
Possible future client	1	6.7%	
Current client	0	0.0%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Q19: Where are you employed?

Employment			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Legal Aid employee - Saskatchewan	8	53.3%	
Legal aid employee - another province/ territory	2	13.3%	
Community group	1	6.7%	
Government employee	1	6.7%	
Lawyer	1	6.7%	
Media	0	0.0%	
Social worker	0	0.0%	
Advocate	0	0.0%	
Educator	0	0.0%	
Other	2	13.3%	
Totals	15	n/a	

Q20: What is your status regarding Ancestry or Disability?

Ancestry/Disabled			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Caucasian	10	66.7%	
Would rather not answer	4	26.7%	
Visible Minority	1	6.7%	
First Nations	0	0.0%	
Métis	0	0.0%	
Inuit	0	0.0%	
Disabled	0	0.0%	
Other	0	0.0%	
Totals	15	100.0%	

Section Five: Final Comments

Only three respondents provided any additional comments. All three comments reflected the respondents' satisfaction with the website. These comments further support the data above, which shows that website survey respondents were satisfied with the information, organization, and look of the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission website.

Q21: Do you have any additional comments about this web site?

Do you have any additional comments about this web site?			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
Great site. Your TOS campaign is wonderful. Well done.	1	33.3%	
looks great and is well organized	1	33.3%	
very professional site - lots of information	1	33.3%	
Totals	3	100.0%	

SECTION FOUR: RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

Due to the very limited response to the website survey there is very little information from which to make recommendations. The key recommendation is:

- 1) YRES recommends the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission ensure that the website activity data are collected and recorded monthly. This will ensure that the data used in future analysis is as accurate as possible and that future evaluations will therefore have a strong basis of activity statistics for analysis. Steps to consider include the following.
 - 1) Collect data monthly by preparing activity reports at month end.
 - 2) Archive the collected data in paper and electronic form, if possible, store a backup offsite.
 - 3) Discuss options for automatic report generation and/ or backup of website activity data with the website developer, webmaster, and web host. Automating this data collection will help to reduce the impact of this recommendation on the workload of the internal resources charged with managing the website.
 - 4) If monthly data collection is not possible, data should be collected quarterly at a minimum.
- 2) Given the generally favourable response to the website in its current configuration, changes to the *look and feel* should be considered very carefully in order to ensure that the potential visitor's experience is not negatively impacted. Where this is not possible, the impact should be minimized at the very least.

For example, it is possible that even routine updating of the content could change a visitor's experience with how they find or access information and given the potential for a visitor to be accessing the site in a state of "high anxiety" any change that makes the information *feel* harder to find could be perceived as negative.

Further, updates to the content may eventually require changing how the information is accessed and while this new "logic" may seem perfectly reasonable to those making the change, visitor's may simply experience the change as an irritant because now they have to do something different to access the information they want. Some basic questions to consider when changing the website include:

- 1) What value is the change?
 - 2) To whom is the change valuable?
 - 3) To whom and when should the information be accessible?
 - 4) Does the change make it more difficult for users, in particular those with minimal skills or a slower internet connection?
- 3) Finally, it would be useful for those within The Commission either responsible for updating or maintaining the website or liaising with external contractor's for these tasks to understand some basic information about how to improve website usability. The information provided in Appendices 1 and 2 can be considered a useful starting point for understanding website usability when considering changes to the website or possibly even for analyzing activity data in future evaluations.

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APPENDIX 1: SEVEN POINT USABILITY CHECKLIST

The following information is from Richard Waller's Website Evaluation: Seven Point Checklist.

1. Good First Impression

1.1 Simple address URL

- . A domain name simple enough to tell a person at the bus stop

1.2 See title immediately

- . see something almost immediately
- . show the selling message now
- . show objective or Unique Selling Proposition

1.3 See substantial text content in eight seconds

- . avoid using images for text

1.4 Attractive

- . make each visit a pleasurable experience

2. Friendly Image

2.1 Show key info above the fold

- . only 30% of visitors will scroll down the page

2.2 Easy to read

- . avoid lines of text too long for easy reading
- . ensure contrast between text and background
- . appropriate fonts and sizes

2.3 Images are useful

- . Images should contribute to the content and not be just decoration

2.4 Images to have ALT= and be sized (to set alternative text for images)

- . in case the visitor has his images turned off
- . or the internet is slow
- . explain what this picture supposed to tell
- . images must be sized for speed of loading and avoid juddering (vibration) of the page

2.5 640-display friendly (ensures the screen will be visible on most displays visitors will use)

- . horizontal scrolling is a no-no
- . must contract elegantly for visitors with small browser windows
- . or computers with small displays
- . or visitors who have opted for larger fonts
- . ensure frames allow enough space for meaningful text

2.6 Printer friendly

- . 640-friendly applies here too.
- . mixed text light-on-dark on same page as dark-on-light will not print
- . if printing is important, use tables so that page breaks will occur correctly
- . avoid frames unless absolutely appropriate as they are difficult to print

2.7 Technically Sound

- . works with IE and with Netscape
- . avoid spelling mistakes, poor punctuation, and poor grammar

- . no broken or missing links
- . no 'under-construction' pages

3. Easy Navigation

3.1 Clear structure

- . ensure the site has structure
- . minimise number of links on the homepage, 10 is the max.
- . too many links will confuse the first time visitor
- . links to key pages are above the fold
- . useful content within three clicks of the homepage

3.2 Clear text links

- . additional text links at the bottom of each page
- . links should look like links

3.3 Consistent

- . navigation should be consistent throughout the site
- . clear description of where the link goes to
- . avoid drop-down or clever pop-up menus
- . if links are JavaScript then alternatives provided
- . external links should show URL
- . and should tell what will be found there

3.4 Search Tool and Sitemap

- . provide a sitemap and a website search tool if more than 7 pages

4. Useful Content

4.1 Clear Objective

- . what is the website trying to sell me
- . how will it make money for the owner

4.2 Clear target audience

- . who will want to look at this site
- . what age group
- . appropriate tone for the target audience

4.3 Clear target area

- . what geographic area are we talking about

4.4 Quality content

- . there is some meat in there
- . Educational, Entertaining, or Expedient way of presenting the product
- . something which will encourage visitors to come back
- . a source of reference information or useful links

4.5 Good Organisation of content

4.6 Regularly updated

- . it must be current
- . no out of date items

4.7 Useful links

- . links to useful information add credibility

5. Appropriate for Audience

5.1 Appropriate style and tone

5.2 Access for disabled

- . if appropriate, according to Bobby rules

5.3 Easy order-processing

- . E-Commerce sites to obey accepted rules
- . provide clear security for On-Line Payment

6. Clear Contact Information

6.1 Branding on every page

- . consistent headings to give brand image
- . consistent layout of pages for each topic
- . show domain name URL to reinforce image

6.2 Contact Email on every page

6.3 Name, address, phone

- . why have a website if it is difficult for your visitors to contact you?

6.3 Name, Address, Telephone, Fax, Email all on the homepage

- . or if complex, very clear links to the contact page

7. Good for Search Engines

7.1 Good META statements (help search engines to reference the website)

- . useful and descriptive TITLES on all pages
- . correct METAs at least on the first (index) page

7.2 Clear text with keywords

- . text on the homepage shows key words

7.3 Clear text links

- . clear links to other pages

APPENDIX 2: IMPROVING THE USABILITY OF WEBSITES

The site should be available nearly all the time

It should have a low downtime level, and start loading quickly. A lot of visitors give up if they wait 10 seconds and nothing happens.

The site should be easily accessible to its potential users

This involves having a short and memorable URL (for easy typing), and a simple navigation structure. If the site has more than about 10 pages, it should have a search engine that works well.

Users should have at a pleasant experience when visiting the site

If they leave it feeling annoyed, they're unlikely to return.

When users find what they want, it should be up to date and accurate

Again, this is obvious - but you don't have to look very hard to find a web page that is years out of date. As for accuracy, this needs to match the purpose of the site.

Users should be able to find what they want quickly

This has several aspects: one is fast downloading of pages.

Evidence from psychological research shows that most people start thinking of something else after about 7 to 10 seconds, and that the ideal delay for effective feedback is about half a second. (Imagine trying to drive if you couldn't see the road for 10 seconds after you turned the wheel.) Combine this information with the download time for a 50K page, and you begin to understand the loss of potential due to large pages. On the other hand, a succession of pages that are very small is also annoying. Our research suggests that an ideal size is about 10K - around 3 printed pages for one web page without photos.

A related problem is having to search numerous pages when you're not exactly sure what you're looking for.

Pages should be readable when printed

A lot of people don't like to read from a computer screen. If a web page is more than a single screen, they prefer to print it, and read it on paper. Many websites make no allowance at all for printing - often they chop off the right-hand side of each page. With the 2003 and later versions of Mozilla and its mutations such as Firefox, this irritating problem is mostly fixed, by selecting "fit to page". But most people still use Internet Explorer, where the problem remains.

Web pages should look much the same on different browsers

Though Internet Explorer (IE) is by far the most popular browser, there are plenty of others - and even IE comes in numerous versions, for numerous operating systems. The annoying thing (for some site owners) is that they all present web pages slightly differently. It is not possible to satisfy all users: you have to decide what percentage of low-end users you will abandon, and what percentage of high-end users you won't make the most of. It depends on your target audience.

Pages with a lot of words should be easy to read on the screen

Many are appalling, with tiny print and flashing advertisements.

If a page is about one topic (as most are) it should convey one clear message

Some websites are designed as if space on computer screens is very expensive. These sites look like old-fashioned newspapers, with small print crammed into multiple columns. This may be based on the idea that users don't like to scroll down. Well, of course they don't like scrolling down then up again, to read text in columns. Often a multi-column layout confuses readers, and makes it harder for them to find what they want.

A site should be accessible to everybody

Though "accessibility" is often seen as catering for the disabled, it's much broader than that. How does your site work if a user has a mouse that's hard to control because it's full of fluff? All sorts of things can go wrong, and websites that try to be "cutting edge" are often unreadable by many potential visitors. Incorporate preventative measures for as many foreseeable problems as possible.

A website should invite feedback

What's the use of trying to communicate with people if you don't let them communicate back?