

Usability Guidelines — IAP 2004

1/16/2004

Assign each guideline a problem severity rating as follows:

1 = severe, (showstopper)

2 = serious problem (high priority fix; user can make a significant error);

3 = non-critical (causes moderate confusion or irritation)

4 = minor inconsistencies, aesthetic issues

n/p = no problem

Guideline	Rating	Comments
1. Information architecture Site components are distinct from each other and in a clear hierarchy of importance, from the audience perspective.	1 2 3 4 n/p	
2. Design/layout Design and layout of site elements is straightforward and concise. Site is easily scannable for message and organization. Avoid: Welcome to our site! Here you'll find... (if applicable) Paragraphs are brief. Pages are not too dense.	1 2 3 4 n/p	
3. Navigation Major areas of the site, including the home page, are directly accessible from each site page. Site requires little or no instruction for use.	1 2 3 4 n/p	
4. Links Link labels clearly indicate the content they represent. Example: Avoid "click here"; use a more descriptive label, such as "More about guidelines". Links are easy to spot.	1 2 3 4 n/p	
5. Terminology Site content is clear for all major audience groups. (if applicable) Language is simple and consistent, without jargon or unexplained acronyms.	1 2 3 4 n/p	
6. User control Pages display quickly.	1 2 3 4 n/p	

Usability Guidelines IAP 2004 (continued)

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Guideline	Rating	Comments
7. Error prevention and correction Users rely on recognition, not memory, for successful use of the site. Error messages are easy to notice and provide a suggested remedy.	1 2 3 4 n/p	
8. Text size and color contrast Text is easy to read online and in print. White text on a colored background will print as white text on a white background: most printers default to not printing background colors. Colors combinations are not too jarringly different or too similar.	1 2 3 4 n/p	
9. HTML specifications HTML is compliant with version 4.0 standards, so that it displays properly in most browsers. Use the HTML validator at: http://validator.w3.org/ .	1 2 3 4 n/p	
10. DOCTYPE statement DOCTYPE statement is the first line of the HTML code for every page, preceding the HTML tag. Example: <!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "- //W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/html4/loose.d td">	1 2 3 4 n/p	

More information

- Web publishing at MIT: <http://web.mit.edu/is/topics/webpublishing/index.html>
- MIT Web Accessibility Guidelines: <http://web.mit.edu/atic/www/sw/developweb.html>
- Usability Guidelines: <http://web.mit.edu/is/usability/usability-guidelines.html>

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