

Redesign Glossary of Terms

Heuristic Evaluation

A heuristic evaluation is an expert critique that tests a web site against a formal or informal set of design guidelines. (Morville & Rosenfeld, 2007, p. 240)

Two specialists in Human Computer Interaction from the Center for Digital Scholarship and Research did a heuristic evaluation of LibraryWeb in 2009.

Heuristics

A set of recognized usability principles (see Nielsen)

Information architecture

1. The structural design of shared information environments.
2. The combination of organization, labeling, search, and navigation systems within web sites and intranets.
3. The art and science of shaping information products and experiences to support usability and findability.
4. An emerging discipline and community of practice focused on bringing principles of design and architecture to the digital landscape. (Morville & Rosenfeld, 2007, p. 4)

Navigation

The site-wide navigation system determines how users will browse or move through a website, helping them understand where they are and where they can go within a site. There are local navigation systems that do this for a portion of a website. (Morville & Rosenfeld, 2007, p. 50)

Redesign

Can be as simple as changes to the color scheme of a site or as complex as re-architecting, changing the navigation systems, and completely redoing the layout(s) and color scheme(s) of a website. We are doing a full-scale redesign, involving the information architecture, navigation, and “look and feel” of LibraryWeb.

Responsive Design (also Responsive Web Design, RWD)

Responsive design, according to Wikipedia, “is an approach to web design in which a site is crafted to provide an optimal viewing experience—easy reading and navigation with a minimum of resizing, panning, and scrolling—across a wide range of devices.” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Responsive_web_design, accessed 11 October 2012.) The practice consists of a mix of flexible grids and layouts, images and an intelligent use of CSS [Cascading Style Sheets]media queries. As the user switches from their laptop to iPad to mobile phone, the website should automatically switch to accommodate for resolution, image size and scripting abilities. In other words, the website should have the technology to

automatically *respond*, proportionally and elegantly, to the user's preferences. It also prioritizes what mobile users need most, be it the page content, navigation, or images, and gives that prioritized content prominence in mobile displays.

(Partly adapted from

<http://coding.smashingmagazine.com/2011/01/12/guidelines-for-responsive-web-design/>)

Usability

Usability relates to ease of use. It starts with a belief in designing to meet user needs and to focus on creating an excellent user experience, making sure a site or interface works well and that the people who use it can do so quickly and easily to accomplish their own tasks.

User-centered design

An approach to design that grounds the process in information about the people who will use the product and grounds the web site or product by specifying the context of use, specifying requirements, creating design solutions, and evaluating the design by doing usability testing with actual users.

UX (User Experience)

Describes the overall experience and satisfaction a user has when using a product or system.

UXD (User Experience Design)

The judicious application of certain user-centered design practices, a highly contextual design mentality, and use of certain methods and techniques that are applied through process management to produce cohesive, predictable, and desirable effects in a user persona based on a specific target audience and its habits and characteristics.

Sources:

Morville & Rosenfeld

Nielsen

<http://uxdesign.com/ux-defined>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User_experience

http://www.upassoc.org/usability_resources/about_usability/what_is_ucd.html

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User-centered_design

http://www.upassoc.org/usability_resources/about_usability/definitions_of_usability.html

http://www.upassoc.org/usability_resources/about_usability/definitions.html

http://www.usability.gov/methods/design_site/define.html

