

Two Girls + a Guy Usability Report

Usability testing is a crucial step in designing an effective web site. The goal of the Dance ATL web site is to effectively communicate with metro Atlanta's dance community, to generate enthusiasm about dance, to inform about dance performance, classes and venues and to establish Dance ATL as a leader in the dance community. In order for all these goals to be fulfilled we have to ensure that our site is user friendly so that it will facilitate these purposes. This test was given to three subjects. Overall feedback of the visual design was positive. Subjects immediately understood the purpose of the site and the message that was intended to be received. There was some confusion surrounding the task of where to go to be listed on the web site as a professional in the dance community. A solution to this would be to add a separate navigation link under the community to "get listed," or have a sub-link under contact.

This usability test provided our test subjects with specific tasks that our users might need to complete based on our scenarios and personas. There were three subjects total and we sat with the subjects in front of our web site prototype and read the tasks to the subjects. Their comments were recorded by us, and a general understanding of how the user experienced our website was collected by our team members. Some of the subjects were tested onsite at the Art Institute, others were tested at offsite locations. Two of the subjects were women professionals between the ages of 21-35, and the third was a male college student under the age of 25.

We asked questions such as their overall impression of each page and how they would go about completing each given task. General impressions of the visual design were good. Subjects indicated that they liked the simplicity of the design, that it felt welcoming and that they enjoyed the chosen imagery. All of them understood that the website was to expose Atlantans to the dance community. Each of the three subjects indicated that completing three of the four tasks was very easy and straightforward; however, there was confusion for each user about the task given that "You're a lighting designer and you want to send a general email asking how to get your services listed on the site." Two of the subjects thought that they would look under jobs and auditions, and the third subject did use contact but was unsure if this was correct, and was unclear as to who their contact comment was going to. A solution may be to change the navigation link from jobs and auditions to possibly job listings and auditions or add a "get posted" link under community. We could also add a link like this under the contact section.

One of our tasks was to find dance classes in Fulton County. Two girls and a Guy were only provided with a composite list of all classes by company or dance studio. It would be extremely helpful for the users to separate dance classes by county or area code so that someone looking for a class close to them can easily find what they are looking for, even if they are unfamiliar with the names of the studios. Also a search option by genre or location will elevate the user of time spent clicking through the list of classes. We feel finding dance classes was an essential task that was established at the beginning of the project, so having one large listing of all classes without breaking them up by type of dance, location, or day of the week might actually cause a user to be overwhelmed, frustrated, causing them to leave the site. Breaking down the list will be time consuming and will also require more work to update, but it will greatly increase the functionality of the Dance ATL website. This is something that Dance ATL should consider.

A further personal suggestion for the visual design is to add more elements to give it a professional edge. While the simple straight forward visual design was positively received by our subjects, there was mentioning that there could be a little more going on. Seeing as there is no real branding outside of the Logo it is important that we come up with creative solutions to building the Dance ATL brand. Also for the final design we will need to add photo credits for all posted images.

Again, the positive feedback was that each of our users understood the concept of our site, and it was easy for each of them to complete each task. The conflicts and recommendations will be taken into consideration in the final phase of production which is finalizing the completed functioning site and setting up the content management program Adobe Contribute for handoff on March 19, 2010.

Screen Shots of Problem Areas

- a. *View of Jobs and Auditions sub-navigation link found when hovering over the community link:*
This was the area of confusion for our users. They were under the impression that jobs and auditions would be the place to go to get posted as a lighting design specialist.

