

Usability Evaluation: User Testing

Craigslist

<https://washingtondc.craigslist.org/>

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1 Usability Study Methods

1.1 Procedures

I conducted remote moderated usability testing on 5 users. The pilot study was also moderated but conducted in person.

The testing environment was set up on zoom. The participants were sent consent forms before the Usability test that provided them with key information about the sessions being recorded, the approximate duration of the test and the tools that would be needed for it (zoom setup). At the start of the usability test, users were provided verbal instructions such as enabling the share screen and saying “completed” or “I give up” after attempting a task.

During the user test, I used 3 tools. I used Zoom to set up pre-scheduled meetings to interview participants and moderated through the share screen and record feature. I used the clock app on my phone to set up timers for the tasks. Google Docs was used to make notes/observations

Before the User testing, I used 2 tools to set up the interviews. Gmail was used to send the consent form to users. Google Calendar was used to send participants invites according to time slots.

1.2 Recruitment

Participants were recruited through word of mouth and the use of Social media(Instagram and WhatsApp). Due to time and resource constraints, participants were recruited through personal contacts or people whose contact information I already had access to. A ‘call to participate’ message was sent to known contacts asking for a 30-40 min available time slot and their familiarity level with the Craigslist website. Thus, the participant pool was selected through a purposive sampling method keeping in mind their computing/demographic backgrounds and knowledge of the Craigslist website.

1.3 Participants

1 Participant was included in pilot study and 5 participants were selected for the Usability study.

The participant for the pilot study was chosen from an HCI field to ensure I could get feedback on the task wordings and complexity of the tasks

The typical users as well as the participant pool included individuals aged 25-45, from a middle-class background, with basic computational skills mainly from the suburban regions of America, Canada and India. However, I also included participants that low as well as expert computing skills to gather more data. Participants from east Asian countries whose first language is not English were also taken to test out the user’s ability to understand short forms/ wordings of the website.

While I was able to find participants that have visited or used Craigslist before, I was unable to recruit regular users of Craigslist which could have given data regarding how a regular user efficiently navigated the website and what aspects made them regular users of Craigslist.

Additionally, I also kept in mind typical users with regards to common goals that users aim to use the sight for, for example, job seekers, students looking for part-time employment, people who move around and look to buy cheap furniture, cars etc.

Table 1: Participant Demographics

PID OR Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Education	Job	Technical Experience	Date of Eval
<i>Pilot:</i> Zed (Pseudonym)	25	Female	Masters in HCI	Graduate student	Expert	11/15/2023
<i>Main:</i> Dave	45	Male	MBA	Founder -HR Consultancy	Novice	11/18/2023
<i>Main:</i> Luffy (Pseudonym)	23	Male	Bachelors in Computer Science	software engineer	Expert	11/15/2023
<i>Main:</i> Robin (Pseudonym)	25	Female	Bachelors in American Culture	Graduate student	Expert	11/18/2023
<i>Main:</i> Boa (Pseudonym)	30	Female	Masters in Psychology	Psychologist	novice	11/18/2023
<i>Main:</i> Nami (Pseudonym)	28	Male	Masters in Data Science	Data Analyst	Expert	11/18/2023

2 Usability Study Tasks

2.1 Pilot Study

The initial tasks did not consist of any Scenarios. However, in the pilot study, I discovered the task flow felt disconnected and random as no context was given.

Ex, The first task was “Change the website location to Maryland College Park (20740)”.

It was later changed to “You recently moved to **Maryland, College Park (20740)** to study at the University of Maryland. Change the website Search location to your new location.”

Each task was modified to give some context and most tasks were continuous, essentially creating a story that would engage the participants more.

The 4th pilot task was “ Add **3 Toyota Corolla** cars under **6000** dollars to your favourites and compare them to find the **cheapest** one”.

It was split into two as the task was getting too complex. The task didn't explicitly say 'go to your favourites list' the participant did not go to the page and ended up comparing the prices on the search page itself. Thus the task was split into the following

- 1) The public transportation in the city is limited and you feel the need for a car to travel around the city. Find **TOYOTA COROLLA** cars to buy under the budget of **6000 dollars**.
- 2) Favourite **3** cars from the above list, go to your favourites list and find the car that is **cheapest**.

Contextual information was kept short and important details were highlighted in Bold to make it easier for users. The task “ find information on travel tips in the discussion forum “ was removed. It was initially added as the website gives a lot of importance to its discussion forum in the home page. However the pilot study revealed it was almost impossible to find any useful information in discussion forum and most posts contained inappropriate language or content that made the participant uncomfortable. The login details given to the User in task 7 were modified to (only if needed) as the website does not prompt users to login before posting an ad, until the very last step when a user attempts to publish the post.. I wanted to test out whether users instinctively felt the need to login first and did not want to suggest users to login during the task.

2.1 Usability Tasks

BUYING/BROWSING

1. You recently moved to **Maryland, College Park (20740)** to study at the University of Maryland. Change the website Search location to your new location.
2. Considering you recently moved, you are looking for an apartment to rent. Search for apartments under **1000** dollars in rent that are near campus.
3. Your cat also moved with you and he tends to dirty the sheets often. Filter your search further to find an apartment that allows **cats** and has a **laundry unit**.
4. The public transportation in the city is limited and you feel the need for a car to travel around the city. Find **TOYOTA COROLLA** cars to buy under the budget of **6000 dollars**.
5. Favourite **3** cars from the above list, go to your favourites list and find the car that is **cheapest**.
6. Now that you have chosen the car, find the **contact information** of the **seller** to make an offer.

SELLING

7. You want to sell your old iPhone on craigslist. Create an ad post on the website to sell your **iPhone 11** for **600 dollars**. (fill in only the required info)
[Login id- arora2727@gmail.com, Password- Usertesting124 (Only If needed)]

FAQ AND HELP

8. You want to sell more items on the website but are unsure what items are banned. Look for information in **HELP** on “**what kind of posts are prohibited**”.

JOBS

9. You are looking for a part-time job to support yourself. Find **part-time** jobs in the **retail sector** that pay at least **15 dollars** an hour.

EVENTS

10. You are looking for events nearby that will help you meet new people. Look for an event to attend on **26th November** that is **nearby**.

2.2 Task List Rationale

Tasks were chosen to keep in mind the main goals users have when using the Craigslist website. The main goal of users is to 1) browse/buy products or ads posted on the website, and successfully search and filter products to meet their requirements. 2) Post an ad to sell items. 3) Search for jobs/ employment. Keeping in mind these User goals, shorter tasks were compiled that essentially acted as steps towards completing a user goal. For eg, With the goal of buying products through the website, participants were given tasks that required them to search for a particular item. They were asked to favourite, and filter items and specific constraints for price, date, location etc were given in order to evaluate whether users can navigate, and browse the website effectively to find results that meet their needs. An additional task of finding information in the help section was given as the website can be daunting to new users. I wanted to inquire if users can independently seek additional information regarding the rules and workings of the website. Further, a task of finding events on a particular date was given as Craigslist has given a significant amount of screen space for the event calendar on the home page itself and I wanted to test out whether users found this feature useful. Overall, the task list aimed to test the overall functions and features of the website rather than deep diving into just one aspect (eg, buying a product). These tasks are important as they are some of the common/ popular tasks performed on the website and testing these out would give me data to possibly improve the user experience in turn helping attract more users.

3 Results

- The duration of study sessions: “Usability evaluation took between 35 mins and 52 mins. (~44 minutes on average).”
- Summaries of the overall Tasks:
 - Task 1 (changing location) took between 34 seconds and 2 mins 6 seconds. (~1 min 12 seconds on average).
 - Task 2 (find apartments under 1000 dollars) took between 24 seconds and 2 mins 40 seconds. (~27.3 seconds on average).
 - Task 3 (filter apartments by cats allowed and laundry unit) took between 23 seconds and 39 seconds. (~29.2 secs on average).
 - Task 4 (find a TOYOTA COROLLA car under 6000\$) took between 48 seconds and 2 mins 41 seconds. (~1 min 33 seconds on average).

- Task 5 (find the lowest car price from favourites) took between 40 seconds and 1 min 53 seconds. (~1 min 13 seconds on average).
 - Task 6 (find contact information of seller) took between 22 seconds and 2 min 7 seconds. (~1 min 10 seconds on average).
 - Task 7 (post ad for selling iPhone 11) took between 2 mins 13 seconds and 4 min 40 seconds. (~3 mins on average).
 - Task 8 (finding info in help seconds) took between 1 min 30 seconds and 2 min 41 seconds. (~2 mins 15 seconds on average).
 - Task 9 (finding a part-time job with 15\$ pay) took between 32 seconds and 1 min 12 seconds. (~55 seconds on average).
 - Task 10 (finding an event on 29 Nov nearby) took between 1 min 2 seconds and 4 min 23 seconds. (~2 mins 4seconds on average).
- Summaries of overall participant behaviours:
 - 4 out of 6 participants used (Ctrl+F) to find specific information on the home page as they could not read it all.
 - Most participants were not able to identify where the Home button was.
 - 3 participants struggled with understanding abbreviations on the website. (Participant Luffy couldn't understand w/d stood for washer/dryer. Participant Robin misunderstood city abbreviations as document formats)
 - All participants were confused when searching in the help section of the website as the website redirected users to Duck-Duck-Go and the first link brought them back to the website.
 - 2/6 participants did not know that they had to click 'Apply' to apply filters to their search.
 - Participants were taken aback as they were unable to navigate to the previous step when posting an ad. This led the participants to be more cautious when filling out the ad information.
 - 4/6 participants struggled with Task 1 (changing location) as they were unable to identify that location written at the top of the website was a hyperlink.
 - 2/6 participants struggled with Task 5 (lowest price from favourites) as some of the ads they had favourited did not have prices mentioned.
 - All participants struggled with Task 6 (contact info) as they could not identify that the "Reply" button needed to be clicked to show contact info. 1 participant panicked when they tried to copy the number and it auto-dialled.
 - In Task 7 (posting an ad), all participants did not realise that they had to be logged in to successfully post an ad as the website did not prompt the user to log in until the last step when they attempted to publish the post.

- Notable Outliers:
 - Everyone struggled with Task 1 which took over 1 minute to complete, except participants Nami and Luffy, as they had previously used the website and knew where to click to change the location, taking 34 and 47 seconds respectively.
 - Participant Dave finished Task 3 in only 23 seconds. This is because the participant knew they had to click “Apply” to apply the filters to their search. This instinct could mainly be attributed to the fact that they had more experience with older static websites.

- Performance of each user:
 - Luffy: This participant has a technical background and was able to identify faults and issues on the website while completing their tasks. The participant was frustrated by having to go back to the home page if they clicked the wrong category, button and was more cautious in the following tasks to read carefully and ensure they were clicking the right option.
 - Dave: This participant knows basic software tools but is not well-versed with shortcuts and quick navigation thus taking the most time when completing tasks. Further, the participant did the tasks most genuinely and in a realistic manner. For example, When choosing a car, they did not just find the first option but selected a car they would actually like to buy in real life, Further, the participant was the only one to not put the minimum price as zero. “I would not buy a car under \$2000 as it could be a scam.”
 - Nami: This participant has used craigslist before and was thus, quicker at most tasks than others. When attempting Task 7, the participant filled out all the information instead of only filling out the required fields as they could not identify which fields were optional.
 - Boa: This user does not have a technical background and was overwhelmed when performing the tasks. The participant was unsure of the steps they were taking when performing a task and kept asking whether they were on the right path.
 - Robin: Although this participant has a technical background, they struggled with understanding abbreviations and wording of categories as English is not their first language. For example, they confused city abbreviations for document formats (doc- District of Columbia) and were unsure of which category to click to search for apartments. (Apt/Housing, Housing wanted and Housing swap)

- Provide the task and time performance for every user on every task in the tables below:

Table 2: Task Time

PID OR Pseudonym	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Task 6	Task 7	Task 8	Task 9	Task 10
[Zed]	1 min 4 secs	1 min 17 secs	18 secs	2 mins 34 secs	20 secs	24 secs	2 mins 24 secs	58 secs	36 secs	1 min 40 secs
Luffy	34s	36s	25	1 min 11 secs	1 min 6 secs	1 min 16 secs	2 mins 40 secs	1 min 30 secs	1 min 12 secs	1 min 25 sis
Dave	1 min 21s	2 min 40 secs	23s	2 mins 41s	1 min 53 secs	55 secs	4 mins 40 secs	2 mins 32 secs	1 min 8 secs	4 min 23 secs
Robin	2 min 6 secs	36 secs	33 secs	48 secs	1 min 5 secs	-	2 min 46 secs	2 min 41 secs	51 secs	1 min 51 secs
Nami	47 secs	24 secs	26 secs	1 min 3 secs	40 secs	22 Secs	2 mins 40 secs	1 min 58 secs	32 secs	1 min 2 secs
Boa	1 min 15s	1 min 2 secs	39 secs	2 mins	1 min 21 secs	2 mins 7 secs	2 mins 13 secs	2 mins 33 secs	52 secs	1 min 39 secs

Table3: Task Performance

PID OR Pseudonym	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5	Task 6	Task 7	Task 8	Task 9	Task 10
[Zed]	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Luffy	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2
Robin	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1
Dave	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Nami	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Boa	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1

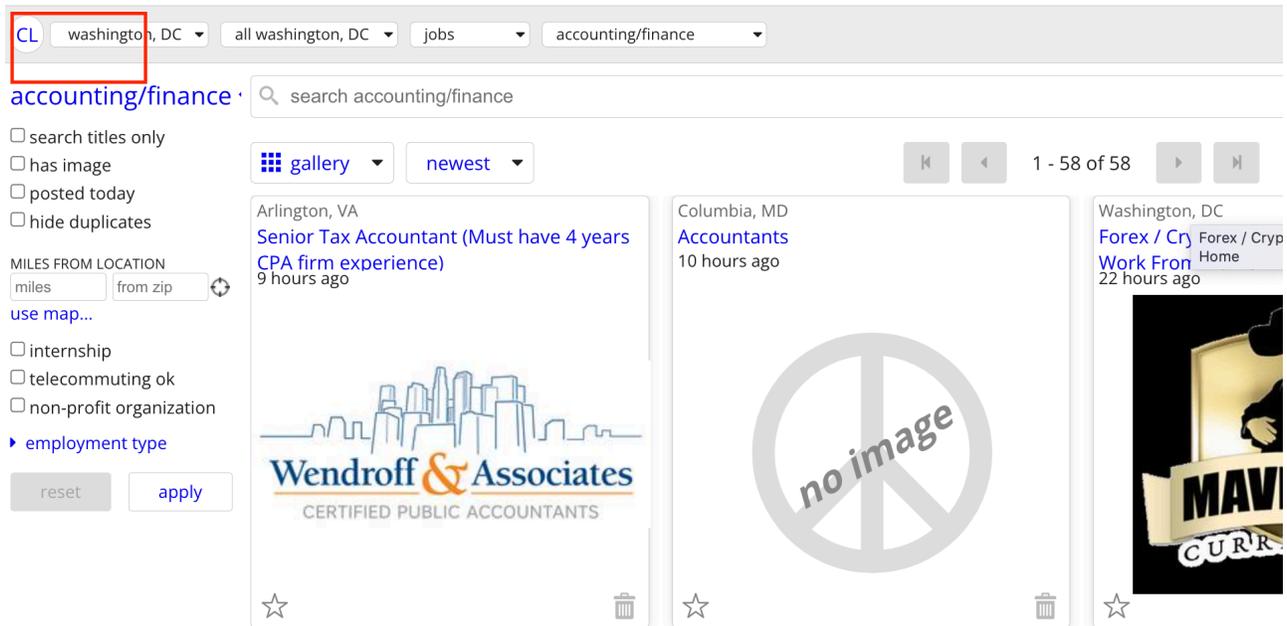
1 = Successfully Completed Task; 2 = Attempted, but did not Complete Task or unsuccessful

4 Discussion

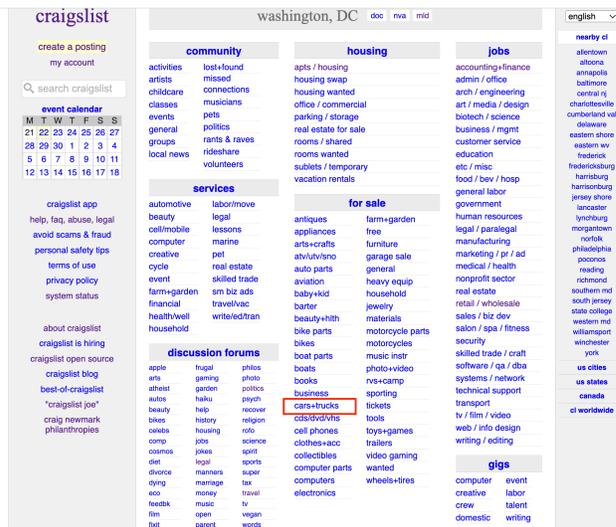
4.1 Problems

NAVIGATION:

1. The CL logo is not identifiable as a home button, users did not know to return to the home page.
2. To browse different categories, users had to keep returning to the home page which cause frustration.

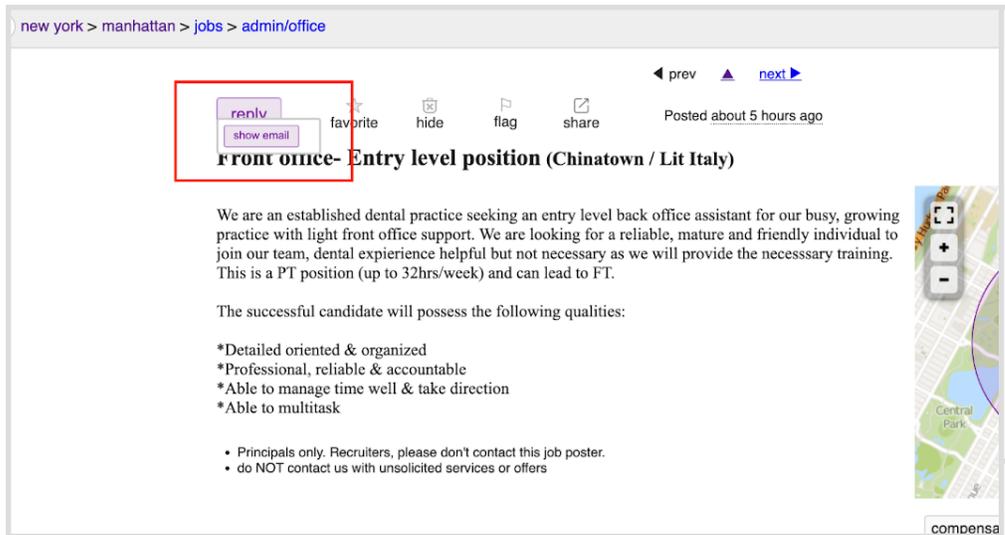


3. Difficult to find a specific category due to information overload.



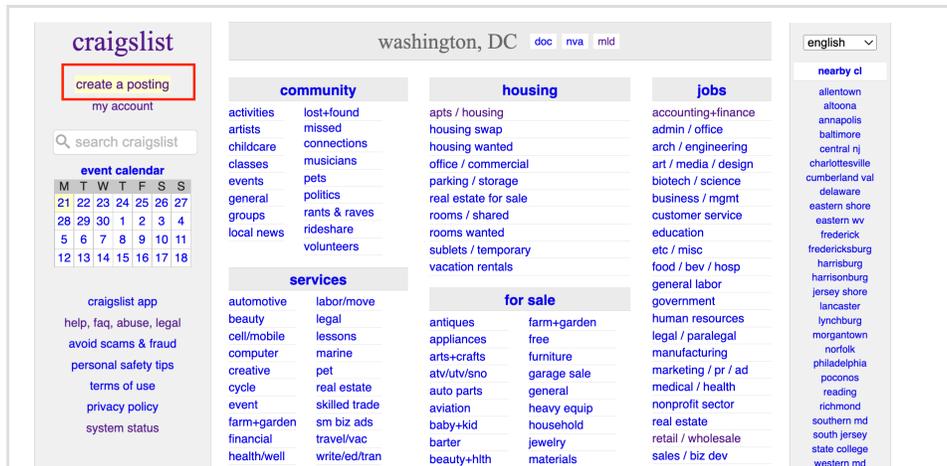
FILTERS:

3. Users couldn't instinctively tell the location-changing button was clickable, and the abbreviated city names confused users.
4. The reply button leads you to another button that says show contact information. If you click on the contact number it auto-dials.



POSTING:

- The “create a post” button on the home page was hard to spot by the participants



- When creating a post, information is not highlighted as required*, which led to unsuccessful attempts at posting as the required fields were not filled.
- No back button to reverse a step when posting an ad, which led to user panicking when they made an error.
- Although there is a ‘continue’ button, it confused users as once an option is selected, it takes you to the next page automatically.

CL washington, DC

choose the location that fits best:

- district of columbia
- northern virginia
- maryland

please note: your posting will also appear on the main **washington, DC** site.

continue

- 9. Did not prompt users to sign in before creating a post until they attempted to publish the post, thus leading to wasted effort/ time for the user.

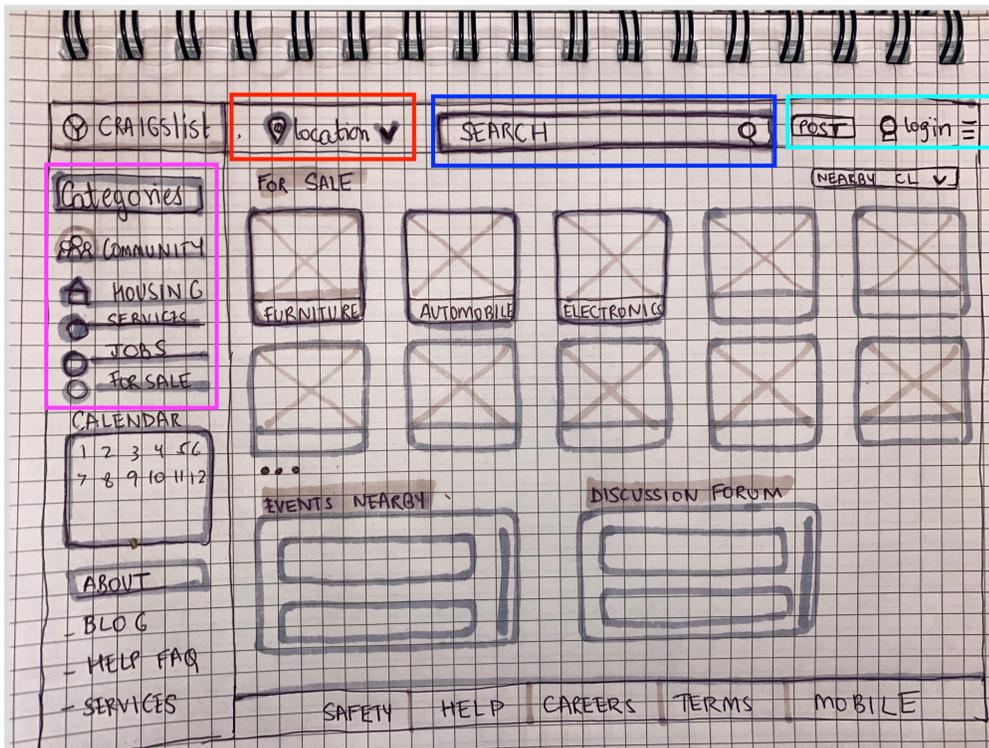
Important - Further action is required to complete your request!
You should receive an email shortly, with a link to log in to your craigslist account and publish your posting.

Email sent to: rayna.arora2727@gmail.com

The link will expire in 30 minutes.
If you don't receive this email, please [log in or sign up to continue](#), or [consult our help pages](#).
Your email provider might misfile this mail as spam. **Check your spam folders.**

4.2 Improvements

1. The layout of the website could be improved by -
 1. Having a side menu bar that is present across all web pages. This menu bar includes the main categories that were listed on the home page. This will ensure users can switch between categories without going back to the home page.
 2. The navigation bar at the top should have all the essential features such as a search bar, location drop-down menu, Post an ad, Login button and a craigslist logo that will navigate back to the home page.
 3. The subcategories could be displayed as cards with images as well as a label on the card to avoid information overload.



2. This is an example of how the navigation bar would look. The “create a post” button should be distinguishable so users can easily locate this button.



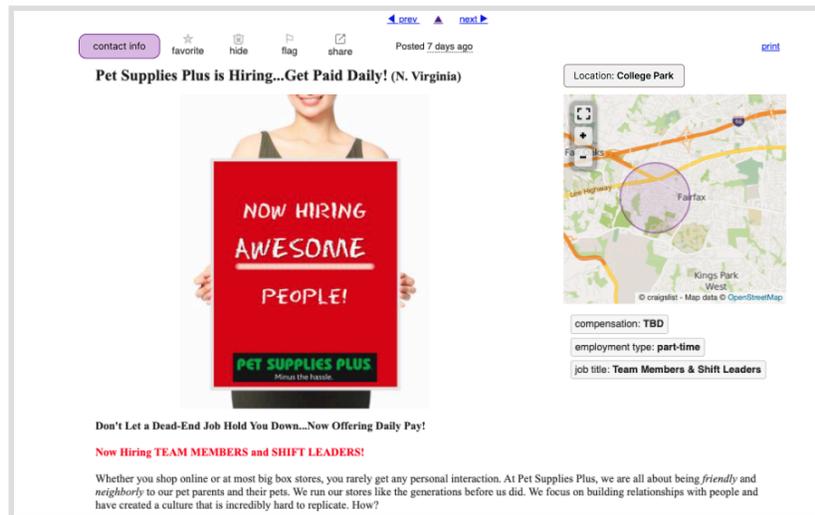
3. Highlighting the fields that are required with a different colour and an asterisk (*). This will help prevent errors.

A screenshot of a web form with several input fields. The fields for 'posting title*', 'description*', 'price', 'city or neighborhood', and 'postal code' are highlighted with a green border. The 'price' field includes a '\$' symbol. Below these fields is a 'posting details' section with sub-fields for 'make / manufacturer', 'condition', 'model name / number', and 'language of posting'. The 'language of posting' is set to 'english'. There are also three checkboxes: 'cryptocurrency ok', 'delivery available', and 'include "more ads by this user" link'.

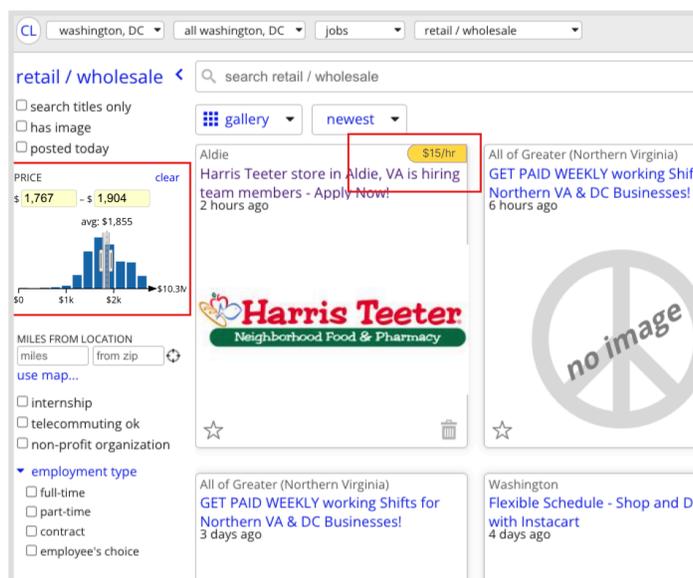
4. When creating a post, having “Next” and “Previous” buttons to allow users to go back and forth will allow users to rectify any errors or change information without having to start all over. Indicating which step of the process we are in will improve user experience by informing the users of their progress.

A screenshot of a web page titled 'washington, DC'. It features a section titled 'choose the location that fits best:' with three radio button options: 'district of columbia', 'northern virginia', and 'maryland'. Below this is a 'please note:' section stating 'your posting will also appear on the main washington, DC site.' At the bottom, there is a navigation bar with a 'Previous' button, a series of numbers from 1 to 10, and a 'Next' button.

5. The “reply” button on an ad is changed to “contact info” to avoid confusion as the website does not let you reply to posts but only provides contact information. The saturation of the button is increased so users can easily locate the button.
6. A label is added above the map to indicate the area/location of the seller so users don’t have to open the map to figure out the location.



7. When applying for jobs, there should be a filter to select the pay range.
8. Each job posting should indicate the pay on the card similar to how the ‘for sale’ category has price listed on the card.



- Of the various potential improvements, I would prioritize the following 3 improvements as essential for Craigslist:
 1. Redesign of the navigation bar for the website.
 2. Adding a left menu bar with categories
 3. Improving the 'post an ad' workflow
- **Navigation bar:** Redesigning this is important as it contains the most essential features that a user should not have to look for. The search bar, and location drop. Down menu, posting an ad, and login button should be included in the Navigation bar so that users can easily perform these key actions without always having to navigate to the home page, thus increasing ease of use, and efficiency and improving user experience. It is also important to make the buttons prominent and well-spaced so that users don't have to put much effort to look for it.
- **Left Menu Bar:** Adding a left menu bar with expandable 'categories' and supporting features like 'events calendar' is essential as it will help users browse ads from different categories with a single click without having to navigate back to the home page. This will improve website navigation and increase engagement on posts. For example, a person moving to a new town will want to look for a house, furniture, car etc will be browsing ads from multiple categories. Their navigation will become easier when they can switch categories using a left menu bar in contrast to the older design which required the user to go back to the home page to switch categories.
- **Improving the 'post an ad' workflow:** Creating an ad to sell an item is a multi-step process. There is no way for users to navigate to the previous step without restarting the process. Thus, the addition of the 'next' and 'previous' buttons throughout the process gives users the control to go back and forth to change any information. This makes the process more forgiving and helps users to avoid errors. I think this needs to be an urgent improvement as in my user test I noticed users proceeding with the steps rather than starting over even though they were aware of incorrect information. Since most of the ads/ content is user-generated, if we can prevent these errors, we can help ensure that each post has authentic information.

5 Methodological Reflection

5.1 Comparison: Expert Review & Usability Testing

Both tests helped me discover problems relating to the UI of the website that affected the ability of users to navigate the website. For example, Under the Minimal design heuristic, I identified that the website lacked the use of colour/icons/ visual hierarchy on the home page which caused information overload to users. The usability test further substantiated this claim as at least 2 used shortcuts such as (Cntrl+F) to search for words on the website as there was too much text on the home page. Users also struggled to find categories on the home page as they got lost among the 50+ other categories present.

5.2 Contrast: Expert Review vs. Usability Testing

While the findings did not conflict with one another, I discovered that the problems identified varied. The heuristic review helped cover the overall website broadly and Neilsons' heuristics helped me identify more problems related to the UI design of the website, for example, lack of consistency in font sizes or location of search bar across different pages. While the Usability testing helped me focus on the minute details that affect the usability of the website, for eg some search filters auto-applied when clicked on, but for some, you were required to select the filter and press the 'apply filters' button. The problem was only identified as I watched a participant struggle with a particular task.

5.3 Lessons Learned: Expert Review vs. Usability Testing

I felt both were effective in inspecting the usability of a website. The expert heuristic review allowed me to understand the key elements that one should keep in mind when designing an interface and act as a guide to improving the website. The Usability testing allowed me to see through the lens of users of various computing backgrounds, which allowed me to spot errors that someone from the field might have missed. It also allowed me to understand the various navigational paths users take that I instinctively would not have taken.

EXPERT HEURISTIC EVALUATION

1) What interface did you choose to evaluate? Why did you choose to evaluate it? What are specific aspects of the interface that you hope to learn more about?

I chose to evaluate Craigslist because the website is amongst the most popular online platforms for posting classified ads and it attracts users from nearly 70 countries, receiving more than 250 million visits per month. The website offers more than 80 million classified ad postings and may be accessed in 14 different languages. Craigslist posts over 1 million jobs each month in various categories such as accounting, marketing, software, etc. Considering its extensive use, a heuristic evaluation of the popular platform could help find areas of improvement, in turn benefitting users. Although the platform is a success, its website is outdated and inconsistent with current websites which results in a lack of appeal to new users.

Although the text-based design seems straightforward, it makes it difficult for users to navigate the website. Additionally, it is tough to utilize due to the limited account features and restricted comparison of advertisement posts. I wanted to particularly learn about whether the lack of modern UI elements like buttons, icons and use of color hinders task efficiency for users.

Website link : <https://newyork.craigslist.org/>

2) Who would be the typical users for this type of interface? Please discuss their age, computing experience, computing environment, job responsibility, and education level.

The United States ranks first in terms of traffic to Craigslist, followed by Canada, the United Kingdom, Mexico, and India. With a gender mix of 63% male and 37% female, the bulk of website visitors are aged 25 to 40. Contrary to rural populations, urban and suburban residents are observed to use the online classified advertising platform more frequently. Individuals with low-mid computing experience are also typical users due to the straightforward layout. Users within low- mid income brackets visit the website more frequently as the platform is popular for buying and selling second hand goods. Young individuals who are moving to a new city, seeking new employment, shopping for inexpensive things, or looking for roommates find the website particularly useful. Job seekers.

3) Briefly describe some common tasks a user would perform using the interface including the task goals. Indicate which tasks you will be exploring with the evaluations.

Common tasks that people perform on Craigslist include 1) creating and posting an ad to sell a product/provide a service. 2) browsing categories, searching and filtering within the website with the goal of buying a specific product they need. Popular categories are furniture, electronics,

automobiles and parts, jewelry, video games, etc 3) searching for jobs in various fields like accounting, customer care, software, marketing as well as part-time, one time gigs. 4) Finding contact information and reaching out to the ad host with the goal of buying a particular product, providing a service or applying to a job posting. 5) The users also visit discussion forums to host discussions, seek answers, reply to posts on various topics and community-related events with a goal of socializing, seeking help and providing knowledge.

The tasks i chose to evaluate were:

1. Logging in to User account
2. Creating a post
3. Searching, filtering for an apartment on sale
4. Looking for Job employment in a particular industry (accounting)

The reason I chose these tasks was as they would broadly cover tasks a typical user might want to achieve, allowing me to broadly inspect the websites through the lens of a job seeker, ad host, and a customer and determine common usability problems faced.

4)Which set of heuristics did you use for the heuristic evaluation, and why did you choose those?

I chose Nielsen's 10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design for the heuristic evaluation. I found these heuristics were an effective guide for evaluating the Craigslist website with rules that were broad enough to inspect the overall interface. The 'consistency and standards' heuristic guided me to holistically inspect the UI across screens and devices as well as compare the UI with current industry standards. Additionally they were specific enough to help me spot minute errors, for example, the 'help and documentation' heuristic allowed me to spot errors in the FAQ and about pages that i might have overlooked at a first glance.

5) Heuristic evaluation using Nielsen's 10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design

#1: Visibility of system status

Problems identified:

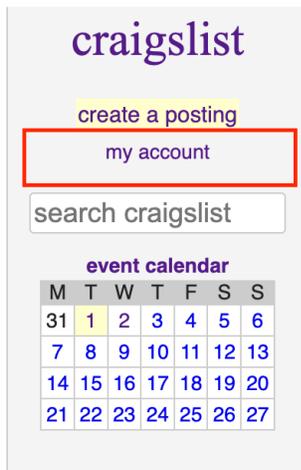


Fig 1

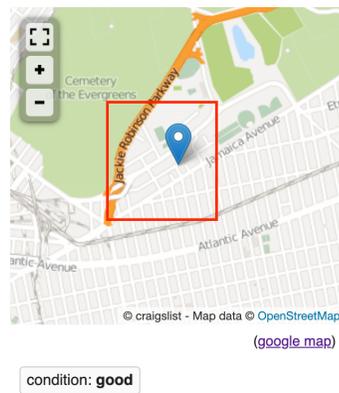


Fig 2



Fig 3

1. The home page does not display whether the user is logged in to their account.
2. Status of how many listings under each category is not clear.
3. Does not let you know when the 'hide post' action is complete. User has to manually track the total hidden posts count increase.
4. Status of Item sold/ unavailable is not displayed leading to broken links or sold posts which could cause frustration to users .
5. Does Not inform users of the wait time after posting an ad.
6. Although it shows post location, it doesn't tell about distance from the Users location which the user would have to do manually on another app.

Recommendations:

1. The 'my account' button should be placed on the top left or right of the home page. The button should also indicate if the user is logged in or not. If logged in, it should display a user icon along with the username of the account. When not logged in, the button should read "Sign-up/Login", instead of my account.

- When an ad has found a client/customer, it should indicate if the product/service is available/unavailable or be removed completely.

#2: Match between system and the real world

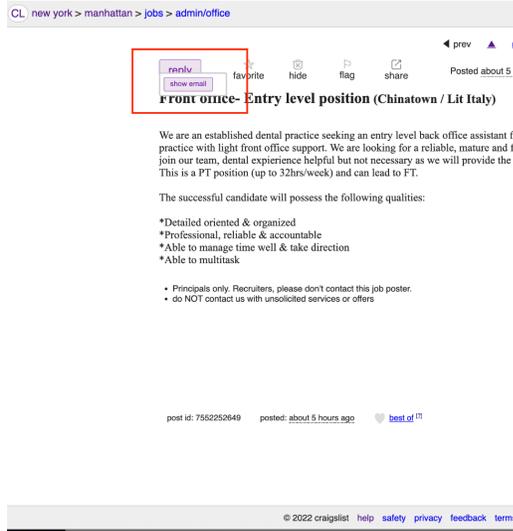


Fig 1

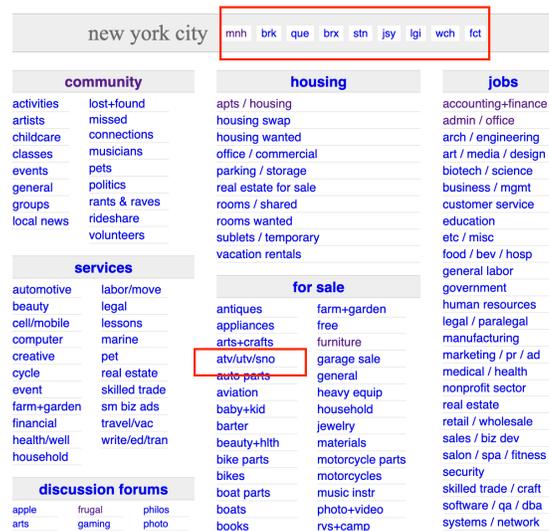


Fig 2

- Unrealistic names and uncommon abbreviations used in category headings which may cause confusion to users.
- Uncommon abbreviations for city locations
- Although a calendar is present on the homescreen, it is unclear what it is used for.
- The reply button when applying for jobs does not let you reply but gives you an option for viewing the email address for the job poster, thus confusing the users with what they associate with 'reply'.

Recommendations:

- Instead of having many abbreviations for city names/districts squeezed into the top bar, a drop down menu with the names of the cities written in full would help clear up any confusion the users may have.
- The 'Event Calendar' should indicate what purpose it serves. It could have a heading that reads 'View Posting from date of preference' so that users know that the calendar helps filter ads from the dates they chose.

#3: User control and freedom

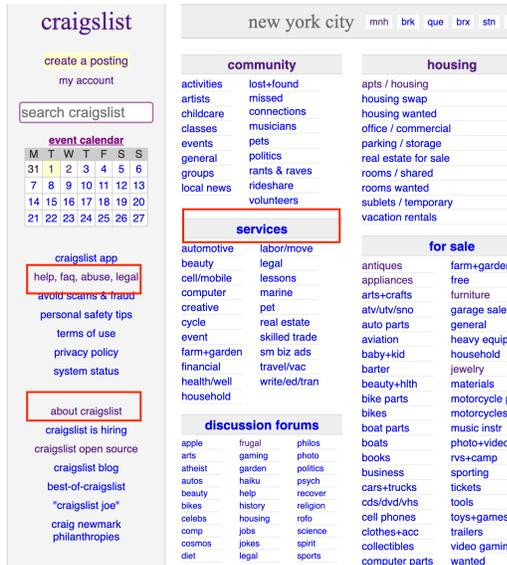


Fig 1

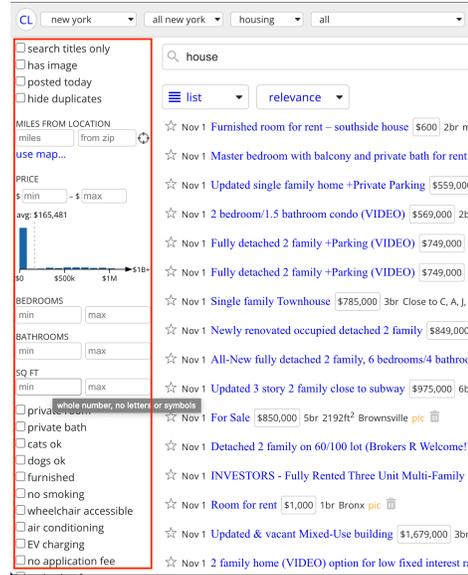


Fig 2

1. The help and about section are lost within the home page and not easy to find
2. Long list of filters means user has to put a lot of effort to choose filter searchers efficiently
3. No login button on home page making it hard to switch or create accounts
4. The users should have the freedom to hide the sub-categories they do not wish to view.

Recommendations:

1. There should be sub-categories in the filters section so that users do not need to scroll endlessly to search for the filter they want. Collapsible drop down menus for the sub-filters would help shorten the filter list.
2. Allwing users to hide and expand subcategories using drop down menus would reduce information clutter on the home page.

#4: Consistency and standards

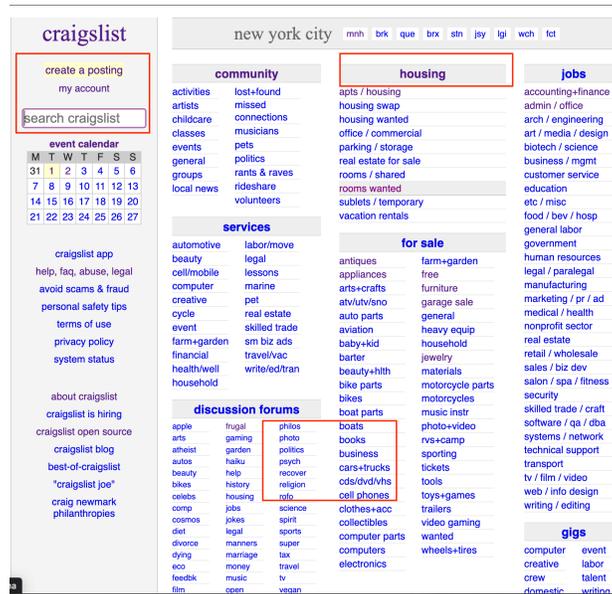


Fig 1

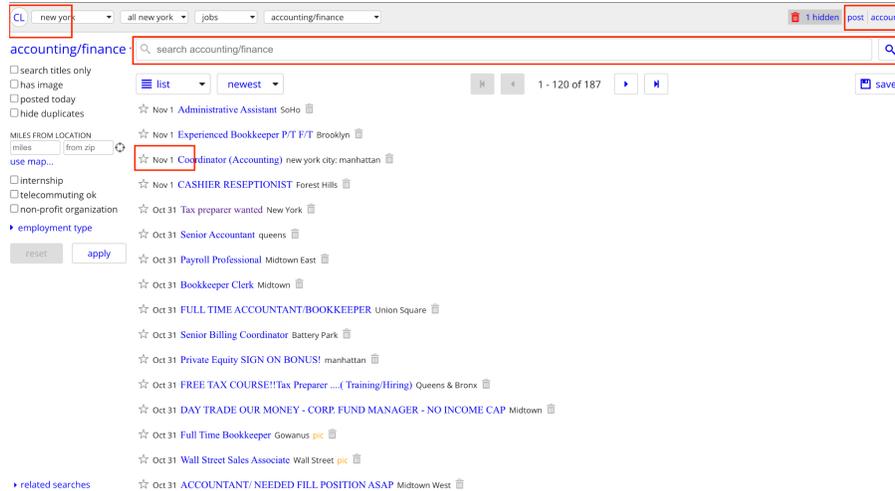


Fig 2

1. All links are hyperlinks (blue/purple text with underlining) and is not consistent with modern interfaces.
2. Main craigslist page does not have a login button, only regional ones do.
3. Inconsistent when switching screens.eg. The position of the users profile changes in the search page.

4. Low external consistency as no use of icons, small search bar on the left of the page instead of center.
5. Not consistent across different devices.
6. Forces users to learn page layout as it is inconsistent with modern web interfaces.
7. Help section not consistent across pages
8. Discrepancy when searching jobs in different locations

Recommendations:

1. Use standard icons to easy recognition for users
2. Creating hierarchy within categories and sub categories using Font sized and weight/
3. Show recommended listings according to previous searches.
4. The website should be made responsive so that there is consistency across all devices.
5. Using standard icons for users, homepage, postings could make it consistent with other websites.
6. The search bar is located at the top left which is inconsistent with many other websites that users are used to. Rather, the search bar should be placed at the center of the screen.

#5: Error prevention

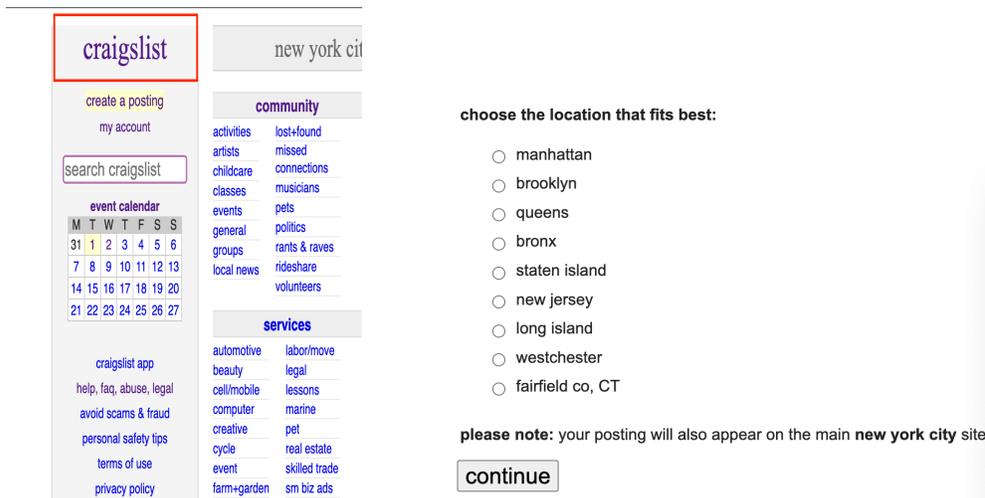


Fig 1

Fig 2

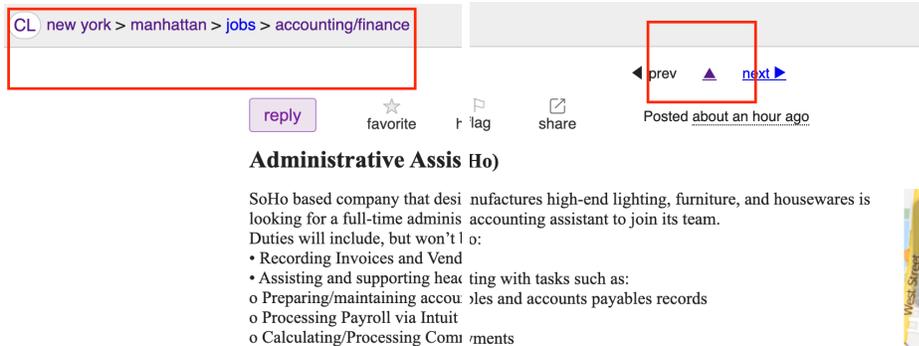


Fig 3

Fig 4

1. Clicking on the craigslist button leads to choosing a location page, which could be misleading.
2. When creating a posting, multiple choices are given and upon selection of a choice, the site automatically takes you to the next page, not giving users a chance to go over a choice and prevent an error.
3. When looking at a particular posting, 3 links (CL, state, City) all take you bak to the homepage which could cause eros when a use performs a particular task.

Recommendations:

1. Instead of having the city, category and listing displayed in the top right in the order they were clicked, these could be filters in a filter panel on the left and the right panel could reflect the listings according to the filters chosen by the user.
2. Each hyperlink should lead you to the appropriate webpage.
3. Buttons should have a label to indicate their function and prevent users from misinterpreting.
4. When a user wants to search for accounting jobs in Manhattan, NY, the, instead of taking the user to a new page when opening a post, it could open

#6: Recognition rather than recall

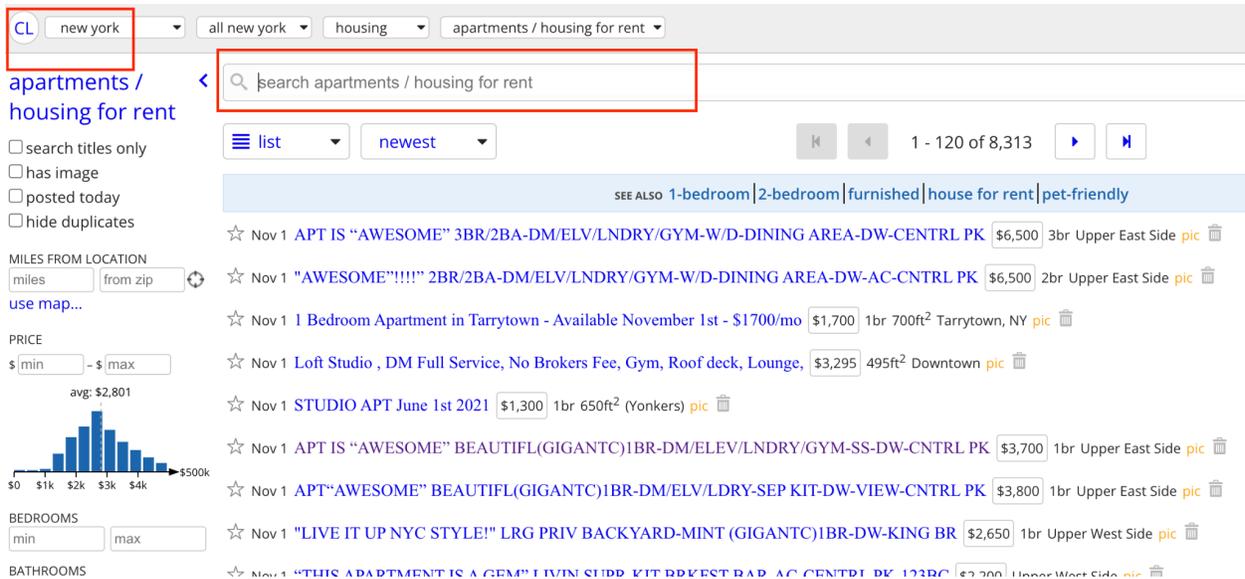


Fig 1

1. Homepage is recall dependent, lacking icons for recognition make it hard to choose categories.
2. The CL icon does not function as a recognizable home page icon.
3. The craigslist icon on the home page leads to choosing locations which requires the users to remember it each time.
4. Does not show previous searches, only saved searches, forcing users to remember previous actions.

Recommendations:

1. Using industry standard icons for home page to ease recognition.
2. Setting standard processes when searching across categories would free users from having to remember processes.
3. Maintaining the position of search bar, user profile and help section would free users from having to remember their position on each page.

#7: Flexibility and efficiency of use

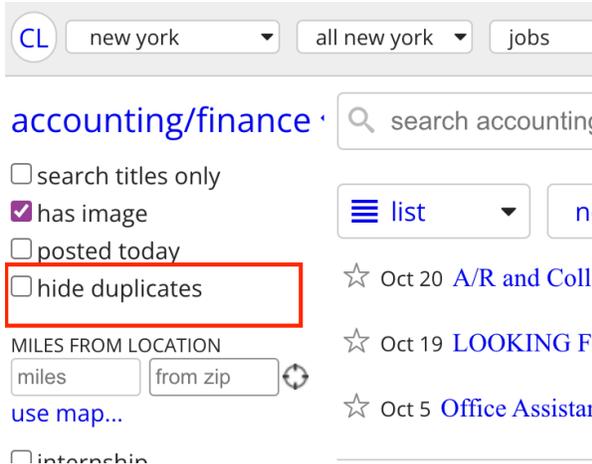


Fig 1

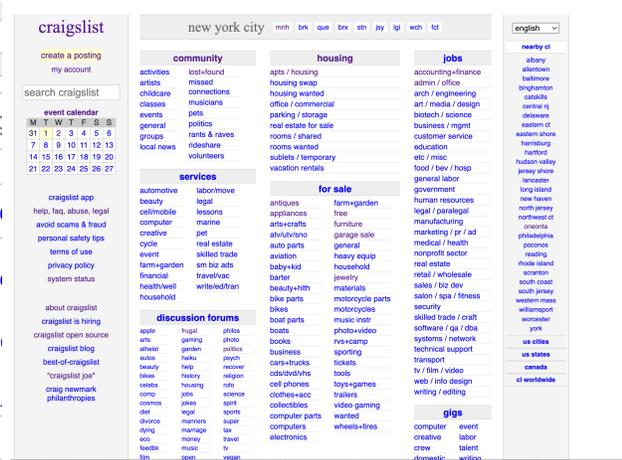


Fig 2

1. Information overload as there are lots of subcategories. Can get to where you want in one click, but it's a lot to read before the user figures out where to click.
2. Contact information is not visible in ads. 3 separate clicks are required to view a dialogue
3. Job applicants are unable upload resumes once to Craigslist and quickly apply to several jobs.
4. It's ambiguous what header the category you want is under nor what the actual name is (e.g. speakers vs. audio vs home electronics) which causes users to open wrong categories thus reducing efficiency.
- 5.
6. Users have to take an extra step to 'hide' duplicate posts
7. Users have to scroll through 100 searches per page which decreases efficiency. there is no option to customize how many posts a user wants to view per page.

Recommendations:

1. Include a navigation bar on top to reduce time performing common tasks.
2. Personalized feed for saved searches that allows users to login and see ads directly based on their goal.
3. Appropriate hyperlinks could be added that allows users to directly contact sellers/employers

#8: Aesthetic and minimalist design



1. Aesthetic and minimal design
2. No clear hierarchy between headings and subheadings
3. The home page has too many links, making it hard for users to find the desired category.
4. In the left navigation bar, there is an Events Calendar although it is not clear what events are listed. As a result, users will not make full use of the calendar.
5. Cluttered, causing cognitive overload
6. No distinguishing features or separators
7. Lack of color scheme/ buttons/icons

Recommendations:

1. Using colors to establish brand identity and easy recognition & easy navigation
2. Use of buttons, icons, drop down menus to de clutter home page and improve navigation.
3. In the left navigation bar, the “help faqs abuse legal” button should be a) separated into individual buttons and b) moved to the bottom with the rest of what is currently the system status section.
4. Category headings should be aligned either towards the top of the page or on the left side so users can more easily find what they are looking for and not interspersed throughout the home page

#9: Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

w york

choose the location that fits best:

- manhattan
- brooklyn
- queens
- bronx
- staten island
- new jersey
- long island
- westchester
- fairfield co, CT

please note: your posting will also appear on the main **new york city** site.

-
1. When creating a posting, there is no back button to go to the previous step which prevents users from correcting a mistake, eg fixing a wrong location for a post.
 2. The choosing locations page, does not have any exit or back button leading to a dead end.
 3. There is apparently a minimum description length, but even after getting an error message the site didn't specify how long the description needed to be for the post to get through

Recommendations:

- Provide dialogue boxes to further describe the purpose of buttons
- provide appropriate back buttons to allow users to undo.
- re confirm important actions when publishing a post, for example, confirm location to prevent users from making errors.

#10: Help and documentation

Q: What if I get a "Default Mail Client Not Properly Installed" message?

A: Use one of the other options displayed by the "Reply" button

Q: How do craigslist 2-way relay email addresses work?

A: Replies to live posts are relayed to poster's email address. [Learn more.](#)

Q: I'm getting "message undeliverable" errors. What should I do?

A: Make sure (1) ad is still live, (2) address is correct, (3) no oversized attachments

Q: The reply button won't open.

A: We have received reports of the reply button not displaying a pop-up menu when clicked. Users have reported success in fixing this issue by taking either of these steps:

* Check the add-ons that are installed on your Internet browser. (An add-on is a browser extension, or a piece of software, that modifies the browsing experience.) You can view your browser's add-ons by navigating to the Tools or Preferences menu and clicking on Add-ons. You can disable any unfamiliar add-ons one by one until the button works.

* Check to see if you are navigating the web using 'Private Browsing'. This setting can be found in the Preferences menu of your Internet browser. Unchecking this and re-starting your web browser may resolve the issue.

How to reply to craigslist postings

1. Click "Reply."

2. A window with response options will appear.

- To use your default mail program, **click the blue response link at the top.**
- If you use one of the listed webmail services, **click the corresponding icon.**



1. Steps provided are wordy and would require extensive reading
2. No logical order & difficult to navigate
3. Searching within the help page takes you an external website

Recommendations

1. Include categories within help section to organise information better.
2. Include a Search bar for finding quick solutions.
3. Use of colour to better highlight next steps and buttons to be clicked etc.
4. About section should be easier to find from home page, eg placed at the bottom with an appropriate colour and a known icon.