

Website Evaluation for Sample Organisation

www.sampleorganisation.com.au

**Website home page
screen grab**



Visit our website to learn more about our credentials, range of services and to download free tip sheets and checklists.

www.unitedfocus.com.au

This website evaluation has been undertaken by United Focus Pty Ltd for Sample Organisation.

United Focus provides independent advice, workshops and resources on website planning, usability and evaluation. We help organisations plan and manage their use of the Internet.

What do we mean by being independent?

We do not build, develop or design websites. We do not sell any software solutions nor are we associated with any web developers or Internet solution providers. We stop at providing advice and educating. So we have no financial interest in the recommendations made in this report. We do, of course, have a professional interest in providing you with the best possible advice within the parameters of this report.

What are our credentials?

United Focus has been evaluating websites and providing advice on how to make websites more effective since 1995. In 2003, we developed the www.e-businessguide.gov.au website and the "getting started" booklet for the Australian Government and we continue to edit them for the Government. The Director, Steven Smith has written a book on websites, delivered workshops attended by hundreds of organisations all around Australia and overseas.



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Disclaimer

The information contained in this report has been assembled in good faith and use of this information is at your sole risk. United Focus Pty Ltd accepts no responsibility for any loss arising from decisions based on the information contained in this report. United Focus Pty Ltd does not sponsor, endorse or necessarily approve of the contents of websites or other material referred to in this report.

Executive Summary

This WebCollie report has been compiled by United Focus based on information provided by Mr John Citizen of Sample Organisation.

Below is a summary of our findings for each of the seven sections covered by this evaluation.

Category	Comment	Score / 10
Look and feel	The site's look and feel is clean and makes it easy for users to absorb the contents. However, the predominant use of grey gives the site a subdued, even dull, appearance.	8
Content	The site has a minimum amount of content. It is recommended that more information be presented to provide users with a complete picture of your products, services and culture.	6
Navigation	While the site clearly indicates what section of the site the user is in, navigating through some sections of the site could be frustrating for users.	8
Functionality and interactivity	The existing level of functionality is appropriate for the content and depth of the site. However, if you were to broaden the content you may want to consider offering a greater level of functionality and interactivity for users, eg a newsletter.	8
Marketing focus	The site could have a greater emphasis on marketing your services, experience, successes and latest activities.	6
Speed and access	The site is fast, using both broadband and dial-up connections.	8
Promotion	While the site ranked highly in popular search engines when searching by organisation-specific keywords, service-specific keywords ranked poorly.	7
		72%

This WebCollie rating of 72% suggests that your site is 'very good'.

Throughout this report you will find many suggestions for improvement related to each of the seven areas above.



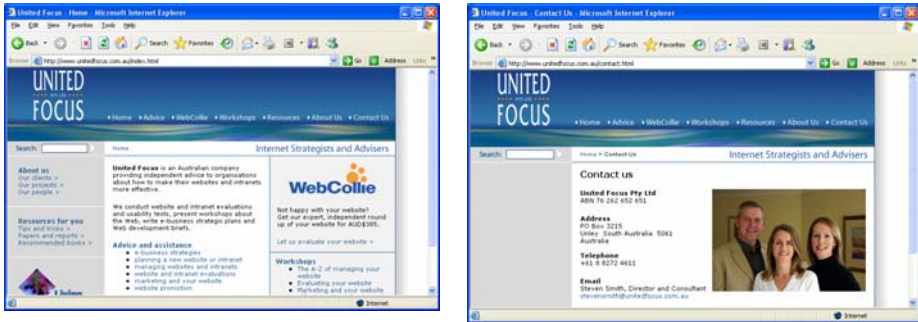
What your site looks like to others

One of the difficulties for designers of web pages is that they cannot be sure at what screen resolution the user has his or her monitor set.

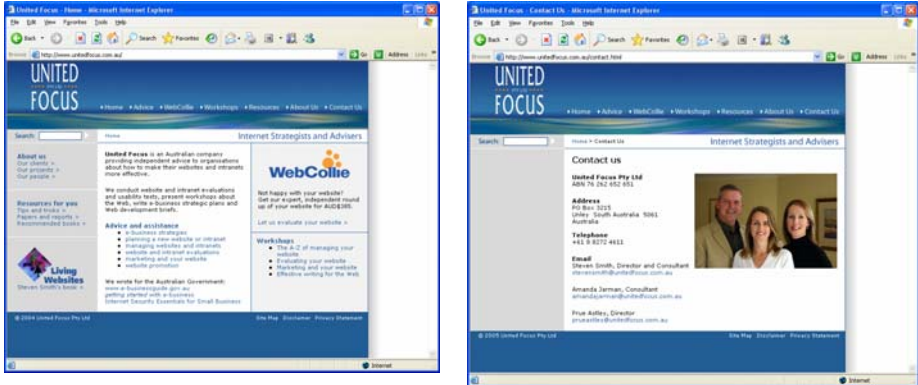
Perhaps five years ago a vast majority were set at 800 x 600 but in the past three years or so new monitors come out of the box already set at 1024 x 768 resolution – and high quality monitors even at 1240 x 1024. If a website is designed assuming most monitors are set at 1024 x 768 then those who still have it set at 800 x 600 will have to scroll down to see everything on every page. Scrolling is acceptable within a website, but should be avoided on the home page because not all users notice that they have to scroll down while others may simply not bother. Either scenario results in users not seeing all that you have to offer.

Here is what your home page and one other randomly selected page of your website looks like in the three common resolutions....

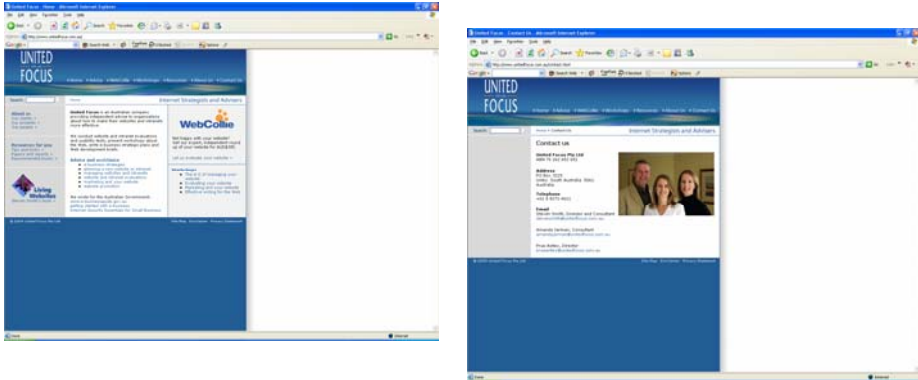
Monitor Resolution : 800w x 600h



Monitor Resolution : 1024w x 768h



Monitor Resolution : 1240w x 1024h





Groundhog Test

Try this test on one of your site's pages...

Imagine a user has popped-up in a page buried deep in your website via a search engine or hyperlink from another website. Could the user easily determine ...

- Who owns the site?
- What information, products or services are being offered?
- Where they are in the site?
- What other main sections there are?
- When this page was last updated?
- Where the search function and site map are located?
- How to get to the home page?

In all things, put yourself in the shoes of the user

What are they looking for?
 What is important to them?
 What would be a logical order of content for them? What section names will be meaningful to them? How do they like using and navigating websites?



Resource: www.useit.com
 Jacob Nielsen's website – considered to be one of the leading thinkers about web design and navigation

Navigation Rating
8/10

Navigation

Navigation refers to how the user moves through the site. If a site is difficult to navigate, the user will become frustrated and is more likely to exit the site quickly!

General impression: The site is relatively easy to navigate but could be improved by adding a home button to the navigation menu and by making the main navigation menu easier to read (removing the shadow feature). The most important content on the site as identified by you can be found easily from the home page.

Criteria	Comment
Navigation devices – are they easy to find and easy to read?	<p>Good – the navigation menu appears prominently and consistently on the left side of the page throughout the site.</p> <p>Needs attention - the readability of the navigation buttons could be improved by removing the shadow effect on the text.</p> 
“You are here”	<p>Good – as each page contains a clear heading at the top of the page, users should know clearly where they are within the site.</p> <p>Needs attention - as the user scrolls their mouse over some of the navigation buttons, the xx logo changes. This navigation feature does not comply with Web navigation conventions and in addition, appears inconsistently which may confuse users.</p>  <p>We recommend that this feature be removed.</p>
History of pages visited	<p>Needs attention – there is no visual cue to indicate what pages have been viewed during a visit to the site. We recommend that a navigation tool be employed to indicate to users what sections of the site they have visited (for example – the colour of section headings alter once the user has visited them).</p>
Getting back to the Home page	<p>Needs attention – users must be able to return to your home page easily, therefore, the navigation menu needs to include a home button.</p> <p>In addition, the xx logo in the top left corner of the screen leads users to the <i>Contact Us</i> page. This does not comply with Web navigation conventions – if this logo is to be used as a navigation tool, it should lead users to the home page.</p>
How easy is it to find the information you believe is important (as relayed to us)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What we do: this content can be found on the pages <i>About Us</i> and <i>Services</i> which is easily accessible from the navigation menu. However, the content in these sections could be improved – see Section 7 Marketing Focus for more information. 2. Company background: again, this content can be found quite easily on the <i>About Us</i> page, however more detail needs to be provided. 3. Clients: easily accessible from the <i>Clients</i> navigation menu button. Again, this content needs attention (see Section 7 Marketing Focus for more information).
Site map	<p>Needs attention – the site does not provide users with a site map. A site map should be included on the site and be readily accessible from every page in the site.</p>

Accessibility checklist

- Build a text-only version of the website (containing no images, animations, roll-overs etc). This very fast site caters for many sight-impaired users.
- Ensure that your site complies with the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 which can be found at www.w3.org/TR/wcag2-req/
- Test your site for its level of accessibility using the Bobby website. This will give your site an accessibility rating that is recognized by the web community. It can be accessed at www.cast.org/bobby
- Try your site in text-only and audible models to appreciate how some of your users will experience it.

"Currently, the minimum goal for response times should therefore be to get pages to users in no more than 10 seconds, as that's the limit of people's ability to keep their attention focused while waiting."

Jakob Nielsen, Designing Web Usability (2000)

Speed & Access Rating
8/10

Speed and access

The design and technical solutions chosen for any website should seek to achieve a high level of accessibility as possible for as many in the target audience group as possible.

General impression: The splash page is slowing down the speed of the site. Although those users accessing the site via a broadband connection will find it relatively fast, users accessing the site using a dial-up connection will find it extremely slow. The splash page should be removed immediately.

While speed can be a potential barrier to use of the site, there are other factors that might cause some in the target audience to have a less than satisfactory experience with the site, such as:

- Sight impairment of varying degrees
- Colour blindness
- Hearing impairment
- Limited dexterity using the mouse

How fast is your site?

Website speed is one accessibility topic that almost anyone who has accessed the Internet is familiar with.



Website owners have some control over the speed of their website (speed is also dependent upon the speed of the user's computer, modem and Internet connection). Website owners have control over the speed and power of the Web server on which the website is hosted and its connection to the Internet, and the nature of the website's graphic design, content and functional elements.

We tested your website against the stopwatch for both normal dial-up modem access and fast Broadband access.

Note: the times below reflect the time it took for the About Us page to appear.

Access type	Access details	Result
Dial-up	Computer IBM ThinkPad R31 Modem - 56Kbps V.92	44.19 seconds
Broadband	Cable Modem 1Mbps - BigPond	1.79 seconds

Dial-up speed rating guide:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| less than 5 seconds | extremely fast |
| less than 10 seconds | fast |
| 10 to 15 seconds | satisfactory |
| 15 to 20 seconds | slow |
| more than 20 seconds | too slow |

Broadband is expected to be at least 10 to 20 times faster than the dial-up speed.