



FREE Heuristics

What are heuristics?

Jakob Nielsen of Useit.com made heuristic evaluations popular as a usability inspection method. You can read more about them here <http://www.useit.com/papers/heuristic/>

How are they useful to website development?

User interface is the “front end” of a website; the part the visitor sees first. Impressions count! There are dozens of functions, design elements and website goals scrambling to be included in a website. Heuristics are commonly accepted methods, factors, and elements. They can be used as guidelines or reminders. They’re used in conjunction with listening to your website visitors who will show or tell you what’s working well or not. You may also need to balance heuristics against your website’s business or functional goals. Usability oriented heuristics help to focus on user and customer satisfaction.

User Experience Heuristics

1. Content: The content provided on the homepage quickly introduces the website’s mission and objectives.
2. Authenticity: Pages that provide credibility are included, such as testimonials, portfolio, client lists, and company history.
3. Navigation: There is never a need to rely on the “Back” button to navigate forwards or backwards inside the website.
4. First-Time User: A path to follow is provided to first-time visitors that will direct them to hotspots, purchase tracks or other leading website objectives.
5. Distractions: Pages do not contain more than two banners per page, if any at all.

User Interface Heuristics

1. The font face is a readable size. This is too small for critical content.

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2. Templates are used to keep pages consistent and avoid “jiggling” when clicking from page to page. This includes consistent top margins and page widths.
3. The most used or needed components are placed at or near the top of the page where visitors can quickly locate and access them.
4. Long pages of content are broken into sections and a convenient “Top of Page” is provided at intervals.
5. Call to action links such as “Buy Now” or “Login” are in the form of beveled buttons to help trigger a human “push response”.

For more extensive reviews, try Site-Report.com’s various types of website evaluations.

