

U-Haul Moderated Evaluation

31 May 2011

Team D

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1. Executive Summary

The purpose of the study was to identify any problems when using the U-Haul web site to rent a truck and indoor storage units.

Five videos of evaluations recorded from 25 to 28 March 2011 were reviewed to identify problems and rate their severity. Details of the tasks and participants are given in Annex A and B.

Participants generally found it easy to identify U-Haul locations and phone numbers, and found the help easy to navigate to obtain information on driving licenses. They liked the way the site remembered previously entered information, and warned them if they tried to rent two trucks.

Some problems were encountered that prevented participants from obtaining their intended results:

- One participant omitted to provide a different dropoff location on the first page, and this could not be corrected later.
- All participants had difficulty estimating what size of self-storage unit they would need to store boxes and a fridge. Some people wildly over-estimate the size needed.
- Information on truck insurance coverage was difficult to find and difficult to understand.
- Several participants had difficulty in ordering the intended additional rental items and supplies.
- The shopping cart is difficult to understand and edit.

Several participants who had rented a truck before stated that the truck had been too small, so selected a truck larger than suggested by the heading describing home size. It might be beneficial to review the appropriateness of the home size headings (for example using feedback from customers who have rented trucks).

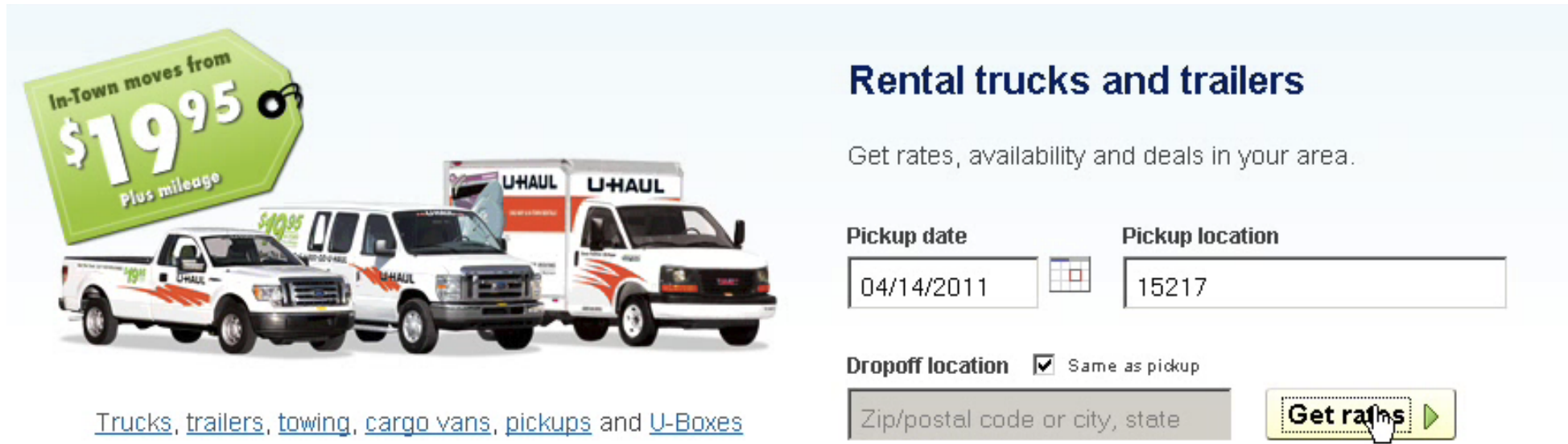
Participants encountered other difficulties that meant that it took them longer than necessary to find the appropriate items.

It is likely that U-Haul relies on confirming orders by phone to check that they are correct. Addressing the issues in this report would make it easier for customers to identify the appropriate items to purchase.

Severity codes


Rating	Rating code	Description
Critical problem	A	Causes frequent catastrophes. A catastrophe is a situation where the website “wins” over the test participant – that is, a situation where the test participant cannot solve a reasonable task or where the website annoys the test participant considerably.
Serious problem	B	Delays test participants in their use of the website for some minutes, but eventually allows them to continue. Causes occasional “catastrophes”.
Minor problem	C	Causes test participants to hesitate for some seconds.
Good idea	I	A suggestion from a test participant that could lead to a significant improvement of the user experience.
Positive finding	P	This approach is recommendable and should be preserved.
Bug	X	The website works in a way that's clearly not in accordance with the design specification. This includes spelling errors, dead links, scripting errors, etc.
Moderation error	Y	The cart was full before the user started
Results problem	Z	Problems that can prevent users from obtaining appropriate results.

2. Specifying the location



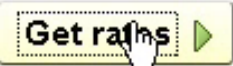
Rental trucks and trailers

Get rates, availability and deals in your area.

Pickup date 04/14/2011 

Pickup location 15217

Dropoff location ☒ Same as pickup

Zip/postal code or city, state 

Trucks, trailers, towing, cargo vans, pickups and U-Boxes

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
2.1	The entry box states “Zip/postal code or city, state”. Some participants were uncertain whether they could use a full address in order to get a closer location. “I can’t tell if they are looking for the actual address or just the zip code”.	Include the alternative “street address” in the instructions.	B, Z
2.2	Entry box instructions are erased when the user starts typing: “It is hard to figure out what it wants from me, because the instructions have been erased” (despite similar instructions in another box).	Consider placing the instructions above the box.	C
2.3	One participant did not uncheck the “Same as pickup” check box.	For some reason the Dropoff location was greyed-out (see screenshot), which contributed to the problem. Make “Same or pickup” more distinctive, and/or increase the font size to the same as “Dropoff location”.	B

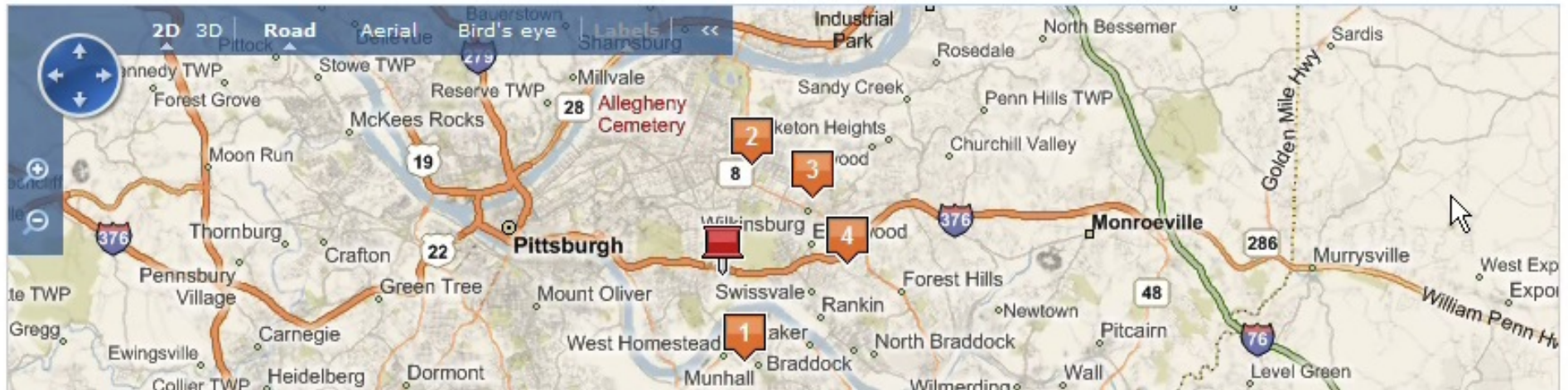
2.4	No confirmation is provided that the dropoff location is the same as the pickup, so this was not clear to the participant who selected it by mistake.	Provide clear confirmation on the next page when the dropoff location is the same as the pickup.	B
2.5	One participant who made typing errors was frustrated that they could not edit their entry: "It wipes everything out, so does not help you edit".	If possible, support editing in the entry field	C

3. Specifying the location for a truck

Select your preferred pickup location

Your address

Update map



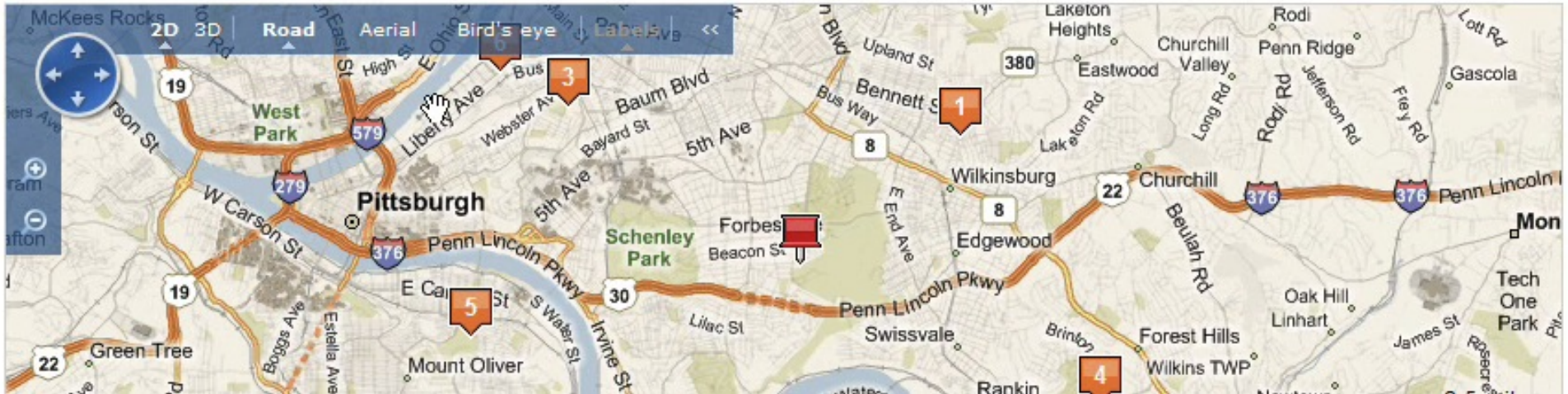
Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
3.1	In the screen above, the prompt “Your address” in the entry box led one participant to assume that they had to enter their address in the box.	Include the previously specified address in the entry box.	B

4. Specifying the location for self-storage

Self-storage Pittsburgh PA 15217


Darlington Rd., PA 15217

Find locations




Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
4.1	The heading "Self-storage Pittsburgh PA 15217" accompanied by showing the entered address "Darlington Rd., PA 15217" is ambiguous, and led one participant to zoom the map to check: "I am not sure whether the pin is pointing to Darlington Road or not".	Change the heading to include the actual address specified.	B

5. Closest location

<div style="background-color: #f4a460; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; display: inline-block;">1</div>		<p>U-Haul at Washington Blvd</p> <p>1052 Washington Blvd N Of Penn Av Pittsburgh, PA 15206 809</p>	<p>Hours</p> <p>Mon-Thur: 8 am - 6 pm Fri: 7 am - 8 pm Sat: 7 am - 7 pm Sun: 9 am - 5 pm</p>	<p>Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Free towing inspection ✓ Propane pay at pump ✓ 24 hour dropoff 	<p>\$1,165.00</p> <div style="background-color: #f4a460; color: black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Continue ▶</div>
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Closest location with a 14' truck on 4/14/2011

<div style="background-color: #90ee90; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; display: inline-block;">1</div>		<p>U-Haul at Washington Blvd</p> <p>1052 Washington Blvd N Of Penn Av</p>	<p>Select your pickup time:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Morning</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Afternoon</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Evening</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/> 8:00 AM</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/> 12:00 PM</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="radio"/> 5:00 PM</td> </tr> </table>	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	<input type="radio"/> 8:00 AM	<input type="radio"/> 12:00 PM	<input type="radio"/> 5:00 PM	<p>\$19.95 plus \$0.79/mile</p> <div style="background-color: #f4a460; color: black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Continue ▶</div>
Morning	Afternoon	Evening								
<input type="radio"/> 8:00 AM	<input type="radio"/> 12:00 PM	<input type="radio"/> 5:00 PM								

U-Haul locations in or near Fremont, CA 94539

[Show map of locations](#)

Sort by: Distance ▼

<div style="background-color: #f4a460; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; display: inline-block;">1</div>		<p><u>Fil Am Auto Repair Milpitas</u></p> <p>(U-Haul Neighborhood Dealer)</p> <p>135 Minnis Cir (Behind Police Sta)</p>	<p>Hours</p> <p>Mon-Fri: 10 am - 4 pm Sat: 9 am - 4 pm Sun: Closed</p>	<p>Services</p> <p>Trucks: Get rates Trailers: Get rates Moving supplies: View inventory</p>
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Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
5.1	Participants were concerned about the distance of the facility from their address. In the first screen above, there is no indication. The second screen shows the closest location ("I like the fact it tells me which one is the closest"). But even for the third screen: "It is sorted by distance, but it would be nice to see how many miles it was from your address".	Consistently give an indication of distance, preferably showing the number of miles.	B
5.2	One participant wondered why no map was shown in the third screenshot (and did not notice the small link).	Consider showing the map by default (and/or increasing the visibility of the link).	C

6. Selecting a truck

14' truck



Apartment up to 2 bedrooms

\$1,165.00

- Inside dimensions: 14'6" x 7'8" x 7'2" (LxWxH)
- Door opening: 7'3" x 6'5" (WxH)
- Deck height: 2'10"

Continue ►

17' truck



Home up to 2 bedrooms


\$1,213.00

- Inside dimensions: 16'9" x 7'8" x 7'2" (LxWxH)
- Door opening: 7'3" x 6'5" (WxH)
- Deck height: 2'10"

Continue ►

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
6.1	Several participants who had rented a truck before stated that the truck had been too small, so selected a truck larger than suggested by the heading describing home size.	Review the appropriateness of the home size headings (possible using feedback from customers who have rented trucks).	Z

7. Selecting self-storage



5' x 5' x 8'


1st floor interior

Miscellaneous storage (Up to 2 rooms)


\$0.00

per month

Move-in date



Add to cart ►



5' x 5' x 4'


1st floor interior

Miscellaneous storage (Up to 2 rooms)

\$0.00

per month

Move-in date



Add to cart ►

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
7.1	All participants had difficulty estimating what size of self-storage unit they would need to store boxes and a fridge. Some people wildly over-estimate the size needed.	Consider providing a link to a page: "Calculating the size of self-storage unit you require" with support for common scenarios.	Z
7.2	Very few participants appeared to be aware of the significance of the difference between interior, exterior, first floor, second floor and climate-controlled units.	Consider providing brief bullet points outlining the differences at the top of the page.	Z
7.3	One participant skipped over a location because she did not realize that larger outdoor units were followed by smaller indoor units.	Provide a prominent contents list.	Z
7.4	Under some conditions, the rate per month is not shown (as above). The participant who encountered this found it annoying.	It is not clear whether this is a feature or a bug, but it should be corrected.	C

7.5	There is no support for price comparison between different locations, and one participant said that they would search elsewhere.	Consider providing price comparison.	Z
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8. Insurance

Truck rental coverage

- ☒ **Safemove®**

Covers damage and theft of U-Haul trucks, damage to your belongings and includes medical/life protection for you and your passenger. *Up to \$80,000 in potential benefits.*

\$105.00

Most popular
- ☐ **Super Safemove®**

Covers everything Safemove does, plus you receive \$1,000,000 in liability coverage for damage you cause to other vehicles or property if you are in an accident. *Up to \$1,000,000 in potential benefits.*

\$203.00
-
- ☐ **Immediately reimburse U-Haul for damage.**
- The rental truck you have selected has an approximate value of: \$27,012 USD.
- Credit cards and most auto insurance policies do not cover damage to rental trucks.**

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
8.1	The information in the screen above only hints at the substantial differences between the policies. Information on insurance coverage was very difficult to find, and the information describing the policies is difficult to understand. One participant commented “I would not trust myself with the site for everything I wanted for an insurance policy.”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give a better indication of the differences between the policies on the “Truck rental coverage” page. 2. Provide a table comparing the features of the policies. 3. Provide a clear link to the table on the “Truck rental coverage” screen. <p>Providing this information would likely lead to a greater uptake of the Super Safemove policy by customers who need it.</p>	B, Z

9. Additional rental items

Additional rental items

Save time and prevent damage to your belongings by renting dollies and furniture pads. **Any selected items will be with your equipment at the time of pick up.**



Utility Dolly
\$10.00 each

2



Appliance Dolly
\$12.00 each

0



Furniture Dolly
\$10.00 each

1



Furniture Pads
\$10.00 per dozen

3 dozen

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
9.1	<p>The additional rental items are added to the cart by default if not deleted. One participant (who at that point did not have specific instructions) appreciated the defaults: “It is nice that it came up with that recommended”.</p> <p>But several participants objected to the preset levels: “It is a little annoying that they are set to these automatic levels.” Another omitted to delete the pads, and concluded: “It added into Additional rentals, 2 Dozen Furniture pads, but I don’t remember having those. I think you just have to go with it, it is part of the deal.”</p>	Consider adding buttons to set and clear the defaults.	C
9.2	Two participants could not find a utility dolly to rent (one had previously seen it on the “Additional rental items” page). The participants did not realize that this can be done from the Cart.	Consider providing a menu item “Recommended additional rental items”.	B, Z

10. Recommended supplies

Customers who rented a 14' truck needed:

☐ Shipped to your door ☒ Pick up at U-Haul at Washington Blvd

<input type="text" value="10"/>	Small Moving Box	\$1.70 each	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Enviro-Bubble® Large Bubble	\$19.95 each
<input type="text" value="10"/>	Medium Box	\$2.35 each	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Wrapping Paper	\$8.80 each
<input type="text" value="5"/>	Large Box	\$3.00 each	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Box / Packaging Paper Tape 55 yard roll	\$3.85 each
<input type="text" value="3"/>	Extra Large Box	\$3.75 each	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Box Markers With Knife	\$2.79 each
<input type="text" value="1"/>	Shorty Wardrobe® Box	\$7.95 each	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Quilted Pads	\$14.95 each

Total: \$143.84

Add to cart ►

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
10.1	Several participants found adjusting the default numbers tedious. "It is none of their business how I move. The fact that they are going thru and making me delete everything is really a pain." "This is kind of annoying because there is no way to clear it all out." "Every time I refresh the page it puts it [the defaults] all back. [If I made a mistake] I would not pay for this and I would make a stink."	Consider adding buttons to set and clear the defaults.	B

10.2	One participant returned to the cart to add additional supplies, but as the last addition to the cart had been self-storage, did not receive the recommended supplies display. (This situation is unlikely to occur very often.) He had difficulty finding the supplies in the menus.	Consider providing a menu item “Recommended additional supplies”.	B
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11. Shopping cart page

Customers who rented a 14' truck needed:

<input type="text" value="14"/>	Small Moving Box	\$1.70 each	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Packing Paper (10lb. pack)	\$8.80 each
<input type="text" value="20"/>	Medium Moving Box	\$2.07 each	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Box / Packaging Paper Tape (55 yard roll)	\$3.85 each
<input type="text" value="8"/>	Large Moving Box	\$3.00 each	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Box Markers With Knife	\$2.79 each
<input type="text" value="2"/>	Shorty Wardrobe® Box	\$7.95 each	<input type="text" value="4"/>	Furniture Pad	\$7.95 each
<input type="text" value="1"/>	Enviro-Bubble® Small Bubble (150' x 12")	\$19.95 each	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Mattress Bag (Queen)	\$3.95 each

Total: \$180.09

Add to cart ►

[Damage coverage](#)

\$105.00

Safemove®

(Due in store)

[Additional rentals](#)

\$20.00

1 Utility Dolly

(Due in store)

1 Dozen Furniture Pads

[Environmental Fee](#)

\$5.00

(Due in store)




Due today: \$0.00

All rates are in US dollars and do not include sales tax or shipping unless otherwise noted.

Check out ►

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
11.1	Two participants who looked quickly at this page assumed that the total on the left was already in the cart. "So I guess that when I was looking at the Total price, it was just the accessories. That was a little bit confusing to me."	Consider changing the text on the left, for example to: "Total of items to be added".	B

12. Shopping cart

Rental equipment		
	14' truck	\$1,165.00 (Due in store)
Pick up 6/1/2011 Compass Self Storage		
Drop off 6/7/2011 Denver, CO		
	Damage coverage None selected	\$0.00 (Due in store)
	Additional rentals 1 Utility Dolly 1 Dozen Furniture Pads	\$20.00 (Due in store)
	Environmental Fee	\$5.00 (Due in store)
Due today: \$0.00		
Moving supplies (Shipped to you)		
	Small Moving Box <input type="text" value="15"/>	\$25.50
	Large Moving Box <input type="text" value="20"/>	\$51.20
Apply gift card or discount code		
Due today: \$76.70		

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
12.1	A participant did not realize that Additional rental items could be deleted by clicking this heading in the cart. "You can't tell here whether you can wipe that away".	Consider showing the trash can against each item of Rental equipment, for visual consistency with Moving supplies.	B, Z
12.2	Participants did not realize that they could click on links in the cart to modify it.	Consider adding an explanation such as "Click on items to modify the cart"	B
12.3	Some participants had trouble understanding the different parts of the shopping cart, and its relationship to the Recommended supplies. One participant purchased furniture pads as well as renting them. "What is the relationship between Due today and Total price?" "I am a little surprised this was not itemized, this is where I lost it, I could not see what I had gotten."	Possible improvements include: 1. Increase font size of the two heading: "Rental equipment" and "Moving Supplies". 2. Add a total at the bottom of Rental equipment" (as well as Due today: \$0.00). 3. Clarify the distinction with headings such as: "Equipment to rent" and "Supplies to purchase". 4. itemize Additional rentals and make them more prominent.	B

13. Moving blankets

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
13.1	Participants had been asked to find moving blankets. One searched the web site, which returned furniture pads and quilted pads, with no further explanation. “I don’t know whether a furniture pad is the same as a moving blanket.” Another participant commented: “Quilted pads. I don’t know whether those are different from furniture pads or not.”	As “moving blankets” appears to be a common concept, the relationship to furniture pads should be clarified.	B, Z

14. Order summary

Order summary

- You are reserving a **14' truck** on Thursday, April 14, 2011. A local U-Haul representative will contact you by 6pm on Wednesday, April 13, 2011 to schedule you at the most convenient location with available equipment.




Order summary

- You are reserving a **14' truck** on Wednesday, June 01, 2011. Your preferred pickup location is **Compass Self Storage**. A local U-Haul representative will contact you by 6pm on Tuesday, May 31, 2011 to schedule you at the most convenient location with available equipment.
 - Your **moving supplies** will be shipped to your home.
-

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
14.1	Why does a local U-Haul representative need to call? (This appears to be a version of the standard message in screenshot 2.)	If the truck may not actually be available at the booked location, consider explaining this in advance.	Z
14.2	One participant was concerned that they had not provided the dropoff location. "I don't know why it didn't ask me where in Denver I would like to drop off."	Consider explaining when and how the dropoff location is to be provided.	B, Z


15. Bugs and inconsistencies



[Trucks](#), [trailers](#), [towing](#), [cargo vans](#), [pickups](#) and [U-Boxes](#)

Rental trucks and trailers


Get rates, availability and deals in your area.

Pickup date 

Pickup location


March 2011

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
27	28	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Get rates 

Inside Storage


Security does not just mean alarms, locks and cameras. It means security from the elements too. Inside self-storage offers twice the protection and increased peace of mind.





5' x 5' x 8'

1st floor interior
Miscellaneous storage (Up to 2 rooms)

\$0.00
per month


Move-in date 


Add to cart 



5' x 5' x 4'

\$0.00
per month

Move-in date 

Add to cart 

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Severity
15.1	The U-Haul site retains the contents of the cart for some time, which improves usability (unless someone attempts to make a different booking on the same computer that has been left with a full cart).		P
15.2	Unfortunately M3 started with a full cart, leading to some atypical problems (“I don’t know if it is really there [in the cart]. A lot of stuff seems to have popped up, I don’t know exactly how it came. I don’t know why that is there, I don’t think I picked it.”)	[For this type of site, usability moderators should always clear the cache prior to each participant.]	B, Y
15.3	On one occasion, the forward and back icons on the calendar took 20 seconds to appear (first screenshot).		X
15.4	On one occasion the Dropoff location box was greyed-out (see 2.3).		X
15.5	Provision of information for distance and closest location seems inconsistent (see 5.1).		X
15.6	On one occasion, the storage units were shown at \$0 per month. (second screenshot). “At this point I would go to another web site, or pick up the phone and call them.”		X

Annex A - Tasks

Scenario: Your friends Mike and Anna are about to move from Pittsburgh, PA to Denver, CO. They have an apartment in Pittsburgh consisting of a living room, a bedroom, a kitchen, and a bathroom. They want to find the cheapest service for the move to Colorado. They expect to make the move themselves with some help from a few friends.

They are planning to move out on April 14th and they expect the trip to take 3 days.

The couple plans to return to Pittsburgh after 2 years so they want to rent a self storage unit in Pittsburgh for the stuff they don't need in Denver.

Task 1: The couple needs a truck that is suitable for all the furniture and belongings in their 3 room apartment. Please find the total price the couple will have to pay for the truck. Note: They are moving on April 14th from Darlington Rd. in Pittsburgh, PA 15217 to Emerson St. in Denver, CO 80218

Task 2: Before you go any further, you want to check if Mike and Anna need a special driver's license to drive the truck across country. Where would you find that info?

Task 3: They also need an indoor storage unit in Pittsburgh that can hold 10 moving boxes (18" x 18" x 16") and a large fridge. Find the per month cost of the storage.

Task 4: You have a few questions that the U-Haul website hasn't answered. Please find the phone number for the U-Haul pickup location closest to the couple's home on Darlington Rd. in Pittsburgh, PA.

Task 5: The couple has decided to rent the truck. Please book the truck you found the pricing for earlier. In addition, please order 20 large moving boxes, 15 small moving boxes, a utility dolly, and a dozen moving blankets. Note: Please stop when you reach the "Billing Info" page. Do NOT submit the order.

Task 6: During the move, an unknown person scratched the truck in several places, probably with a knife. An auto body technician has estimated that the repair will cost \$2,000. Since you helped the couple book the truck, they called to find out if they are liable for repair costs. And if so, how much will it cost?

Task 7: You were impressed with U-Haul during your friends' move and you are considering U-Haul yourself. Find the nearest U-Haul pick-up/drop off to your home. Note: You live at 48105 Warm Springs Blvd., Fremont, CA 94539.

Annex B - Participants

[as specified]