

TEAM C: USABILITY REPORT OF U-HAUL.COM

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Executive Summary

Five remote unmoderated usability sessions were evaluated as part of a usability study of U-Haul.com. Overall, participants had a good first impression of the home page and liked the pictures explaining the different sizes for trucks and the availability to search for locations and storage space. Participants also liked being able to see the variety of products, search features, and products they could buy or rent to help with their moves.

While participants were able to successfully complete most tasks, they differed in the types of problems encountered while trying to complete the tasks. The only tasks that all participants were able to complete were Find a phone number for a U-Haul pickup location in Pittsburg, PA and Find if you are liable for repair costs when your truck was vandalized. At least 3 out of 5 participants were able to successfully complete the rest of the tasks. Based on the session notes, the following usability issues were identified:

- Users have a hard time understanding the price breakdown provided during checkout
- Users have to go through the entire process to rent a truck to get the price
- Users forget to uncheck the box for "same location as pick- up"
- Users struggle to understand search results when looking for indoor storage locations, e.g. tries to understand room sizes and options provided from the search
- Users struggle to visualize room dimensions and decide on best room choice
- Users expect to see a phone number as part of the search results but this information is not included depending on where the search is originated within the site
- Users fail to notice the feature to sort by distance and other available options
- Users have to manually update each item field in the shopping cart
- Users get confused with item names (blanket vs. pad) and purpose for using an item (types of dollies)
- Users do not see disclaimers for important information (credit cards not covering damage incurred during the move , free storage discounts)
- Users get different search results based on where the search is initiated (Trucks vs. Locations)

Recommendations for resolving the identified usability issues include the following:

- Eliminate unnecessary steps to get a price quote for rentals.
- Facilitate adding items and checking for errors during the shopping and checkout process.
- Provide consistent navigation paths across the site.
- Improve search results regardless of where the search is originated within the site.
- Use consistent terminology for equipment and supplies.
- Help people visualize storage room dimensions.

Study Overview

Five remote unmoderated usability sessions with an average duration of 32.4 minutes were evaluated in this study. The sessions were conducted via UserTesting.com and included audio and screen video captures. Participants (3 male, 2 female) ranged in age from 24 to 62 years old and had average web savvyness. Table 1 provides a summary of the participants' demographic information.

Table 1. Summary of Participants' Demographic information.

Demographic Variable	Frequency
Occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Missionary• Small Business Manager• Retired. Formerly television news producer• Housewife• Sales and Marketing
Web Savvy	Average = 5
Sex	Males = 3 Females = 2
Age	20 to 30 years old = 1 31 to 40 years old = 2 41 to 50 years old = 0 51 to 60 years old = 1 60 to 70 years old = 1

Methodology Used for Video Evaluation

Success criteria were established for each task that was part of the usability sessions prior to evaluating the recordings of the unmoderated sessions. The author watched the sessions and took notes describing behaviors related to task success, task failure, and different reasons for failure. The following includes a summarized version of the tasks used during the usability evaluation sessions (specific details for addresses were provided to participants during sessions):

1. Find the price for a truck to move a 3 bedroom apartment from Pittsburgh, PA to Freemont, CA.
2. Find out if you need a special driver's license to drive a truck across country.
3. Find the cost per month for an indoor storage unit in Pittsburgh to hold 10 moving boxes 18"X18"X16" and a large fridge in Pittsburgh.
4. Find the phone number for the U-Haul pickup location closes to the couple's home on Darlington Rd. in Pittsburgh, PA.
5. Book the truck for the move and add 20 large moving boxes, 15 small moving boxes, a utility dolly, and a dozen moving blankets.

6. Find out if you are liable for repair costs (\$2000) when someone scratched the truck with a knife during the trip (unknown person)
7. Find nearest U-Haul to pickup/drop off in Fremont, CA 94539

Based on the session notes, usability issues were identified and classified for each task based on the type of problem, severity of the problem, and frequency of occurrence for the problem. Recommendations to solve these issues were based on participants' comments and best practices in usability.

Usability Findings and Recommendations

Participants had a good first impression of the home page and liked the pictures explaining the different sizes for trucks and the availability to search for locations and storage space. Participants also mentioned liking the variety of products, search features, and products they could buy or rent to help with their moves. Participants also liked the FAQ section and the ability to search for explanations in an effective, efficient manner.

All participants were able to find a phone number for a U-Haul pickup location in Pittsburgh, PA and also find if they are liable for repair costs. At least 3 out of 5 participants were able to successfully complete the rest of the tasks. Table 2 shows the task success rates for each task.

Table 2. Task Success Rate per Task.

Task	Success Rate	Failure Rate
Find the price for a truck to move a 3 bedroom apartment from Pittsburgh, PA to Freemont, CA.	60%	40 %
Find out if you need a special driver's license to drive a truck across country.	80%	20%
Find the cost per month for an indoor storage unit in Pittsburgh to hold 10 moving boxes (18"X18"X16" and a large fridge in Pittsburgh.	80%	20%
Find the phone number for the U-Haul pickup location closes to the couple's home on Darlington Rd. in Pittsburgh, PA.	100%	0%
Book the truck for the move and add 20 large moving boxes, 15 small moving boxes, a utility dolly, and a dozen moving blankets.	80%	20%
Find out if you are liable for repair costs (\$2000) when someone scratched the truck with a knife during the trip (unknown person).	100%	0%
Find nearest U-Haul to pickup/drop off in Fremont, CA 94539	80%	20%

Usability Issues per Task

While participants were fairly successful in completing tasks during the usability evaluations, there are some improvements that could maximize the user experience and make some of the tasks easier to complete. Participants expressed frustrations when trying to complete a task when they encountered

confusing navigation, unclear labels, and the site did not conform to their expectations based on previous experiences with similar tasks on different web sites. Table 3 shows the usability issues identified for some of the tasks.

Table 3. Usability Issues for Relevant Tasks.

Task	Usability Issue	Severity of Usability Issue	Frequency of Occurrence Out of 5 Participants
Find the price for a truck to move a 3 bedroom apartment from Pittsburgh, PA to Fresno, CA.	User has a hard time understanding the price breakdown provided during checkout	<u>Critical Issue</u> : User cannot solve a reasonable task or website annoys the test participant considerably	1 out of 5
	User has to go through the entire process to rent a truck to get the price	<u>Serious Issue</u> : Delays test participants in their use of the website for some minutes, but eventually allows them to continue	2 out of 5
	User forgets to uncheck the box for "same location as pick- up"	<u>Minor Problem</u> : Causes test participants to hesitate for some seconds	2 out of 5
Find the cost per month for an indoor storage unit in Pittsburgh to hold 10 moving boxes (18"X18"X16" and a large fridge in Pittsburgh	User struggles to understand search results when looking for indoor storage locations, e.g. tries to understand room sizes and options provided from the search	<u>Critical Issue</u> : User cannot solve a reasonable task or website annoys the test participant considerably	2 out of 5
	User struggles to visualize room dimensions and decide on best choice		3 out of 5
Find the phone number for the U-Haul pickup location closes to the couple's home on Darlington Rd. in Pittsburgh, PA	User expects to see a phone number as part of the search results but it is not included depending on where the search is originated within the site	<u>Critical Issue</u> : User cannot solve a reasonable task or website annoys the test participant considerably	2 out of 5
	User fails to notice sort by distance filter	<u>Minor Problem</u> : Causes test participants to hesitate for some seconds	2 out of 5
Book the truck for the move and add 20 large moving boxes, 15 small moving	User has to manually update each item field in the shopping cart	<u>Critical Issue</u> : User cannot solve a reasonable task or	3 out of 5

boxes, a utility dolly, and a dozen moving blankets.		website annoys the test participant considerably	
	Users get confused with item names (blanket vs. pad) and purpose for using an item (types of dollies)	<u>Serious Issue</u> : Delays test participants in their use of the website for some minutes, but eventually allows them to continue	3 out of 5
	User does not see disclaimers for important information (credit cards not covering damage incurred during the move , free storage discounts)	<u>Minor Problem</u> : Causes test participants to hesitate for some seconds	2 out of 5
Find nearest U-Haul to pickup/drop off in Fremont, CA 94539	User gets different search results based on where the search is initiated (Trucks vs. Locations)	<u>Critical Issue</u> : User cannot solve a reasonable task or website annoys the test participant considerably	4 out of 5

Recommendations

The usability issues identified during this evaluation provide room for several suggestions that could significantly improve the user experience at U-Haul.com. The following recommendations include suggestions provided by participants and based on best practice to ensure an optimal shopping and browsing user experience:

- Eliminate unnecessary steps to get a price quote for rentals. User should not have to complete an order to get a quote.
- Provide a clear navigation path to complete a rental and buy or rent necessary equipment and supplies.
 - Provide a visual for each step of the process to orient users for the shopping process (rental and buying equipment/supplies) and the checkout process.
- Facilitate checking for errors during the checkout process.
 - Add a review feature for customers to revise their order.
 - While people saw the prepopulated fields and manually adjusted the #'s in the shopping cart, they didn't like it. Eliminate unnecessary manual deletions.
 - Provide all available options at once to eliminate unnecessary shopping cart abandonment.
 - Provide a way for users to come back to their shopping cart when they navigate away from the page.
- Add a FAQ link to top navigation. Users seem to want to explore types of insurance coverage, liability issues, and unfamiliar terms for equipment and supplies.
 - Provide insurance options and types of coverage as part of the FAQ information for relevant questions.
- Provide consistent navigation paths. There are too many paths to search for the same thing, so users get lost confused.

- Depending on where you start adding items for your move, you see different things. When users try to go back to find an item, they are not listed the same way (utility dollies and moving blankets).
 - Users did not get the same search results for the same information depending on where they originated the search. When trying to find a phone number for a specific location, users had to follow a specific path (Locations) in order to see the phone number listed as part of the search results.
- Show distance results in the map as well as the search results across the different search options on the site.
- Use consistent terminology. Participants were confused by the terms pad and blanket. Explain the differences between the two. Another example is the different types of dollies; users may not understand how a utility dolly is different from a furniture dolly.
- Help people visualize storage room dimensions. Participants suggested the following:
 - Provide a rotation tool for moving the sofa image. Consider including images for a refrigerator and the different boxes users can buy on the site.
 - Provide a calculator for estimating a room size based on boxes, etc.