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Online Credibility Testing in Small Organizations: A Case Study of the Global Village Gifts Website

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ONLINE CREDIBILITY TESTING IN SMALL ORGANIZATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF THE GLOBAL VILLAGE GIFTS WEBSITE

by

Natalie Cheney Homan

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

HONORS IN UNIVERSITY STUDIES WITH DEPARTMENTAL HONORS

in

Professional and Technical Writing
in the Department of English

Approved:

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UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, UT

Fall 2014

Abstract

A visitor's perception of the credibility of a website and the organization behind it is a matter of great importance to any business. A theory known as prominence-interpretation theory suggests that users make credibility judgments through a two-step process: "1. The user notices something (Prominence), and 2. The user makes a judgment about it (Interpretation)" (Fogg, et al., 2003). With this theory as a basis for support, Heidi Everett (2012) developed a credibility test for small businesses to assess the credibility of their website through a focus group.

Global Village Gifts (GVG) is a not-for-profit fair trade store in Logan, UT. Using Everett's study (2012), I utilized a focus group to get feedback on the credibility of GVG's website. Using feedback from the focus group, I redesigned the website with changes to the color, text, and visual elements of the website. Through my research, I learned that a focus group allows a designer to focus on what users wanted to see, rather than using personal judgment to make all decisions regarding design and organization.

Acknowledgements

Author Biography

Natalie was raised in Virginia and moved to Utah with her family in 2008. In 2010, she came to USU as an English major, focusing her studies on digital publications. In addition to writing, she has developed skills in e-book production, photo manipulation, and web design. She has spent five semesters as a peer tutor in both the USU Writing Center and as a Writing Fellow. Natalie not only loves writing and design, she also has a passion for travel and languages. She was awarded a scholarship to study abroad in Spain from 2011-2012, where she mastered Spanish and learned to love exploring and trying new things. Natalie enjoys managing, editing, and creating compelling content and hopes to stand out in the field of technical communication with her focus on user-centered design.

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Literature Review

Introduction

A visitor's perception of the credibility of a website and the organization behind it is a matter of great importance to any business. There is a large amount of published literature documenting how users determine the credibility of a website. Many of the studies conducted in the last decade and a half have evaluated large organizations' websites, for the most part, those that present a risk, such as soliciting personal or financial information (Fogg et al. 2001, Fogg, 2003; Metzger, 2007). However, less energy has been devoted to studying how users react to small business websites that pose little or no risk. Perceived credibility of the organization behind a website is, however, equally important for both large and small organizations. While the literature specific to small business or non-profit organization credibility is scarce, there is much to be said about credibility theory in general that applies to websites smaller in scope than those studied.

Prominence-Interpretation Theory

Prominence-Interpretation Theory seeks to explain how people assess credibility online. BJ Fogg (2003) presents the idea of prominence-interpretation theory as a two-step process: "1. The user notices something (Prominence), and 2. The user makes a judgment about it (Interpretation)." Furthermore, "If one or the other does not happen, then there is no credibility assessment" (p. 722). Fogg explains that, once noticed, an element on a website, like a link, an image, or an ad, will affect the perceived credibility of the website based on the user's assumptions, knowledge, and the context of the situation. Elements that don't line up with cultural expectations, are broken or poorly displayed, or that hinder the user will lend negatively to the site's perceived credibility. On the other hand, elements that help the user meet their needs and fulfill expectations lend positive credibility to the site. (Fogg, 2003)

Website Credibility

Credibility differs from usability in that it looks at "believability" (Fogg et al., 2001, p. 61). In other words, it is based on users' perceptions and not on the product itself. While usability addresses the functionality of a website and certainly plays into its believability, credibility is just as important to the success of the website (Everett, 2013). Fogg et al. state that most researchers agree that credibility consists of at least two key elements, perceived trustworthiness and expertise (2001, p. 62). That is, a user will only find a site credible if they believe that the site is trustworthy and from a source that has authority on its subject matter.

In 2001, Fogg et al. published one of the earliest studies that investigated what specific elements make websites credible. His group of researchers conducted a study of 1441 participants in the United States and Finland through a questionnaire. They asked participants to rate 51 characteristics of websites according to how they affected the credibility of the site. The results of this study were very detailed, with multiple criteria on different scales being used to determine how that scale affected credibility. In short, Fogg et al. found that "the items in the 'Real-World Feel' scale have the largest impact on

increasing credibility, followed by items in the 'Ease of Use' scale. The 'Expertise,' 'Trustworthiness,' and 'Tailoring' scales also show positive effects." On the other hand, "items in two scales, 'Commercial Implications' and 'Amateurism,' decrease perceptions of Web credibility" (2001, p.65). This study by Fogg et al. has been built upon by more recent studies seeking to further our understanding of online credibility (Everett 2013; Long & Chiagouris 2006).

A 2007 study analyzed credibility research done throughout recent years and offered suggestions for how to apply that combined data to real life users (Metzger). The author referenced a few studies, one being Fogg et al.'s, that showed that users were most likely to base credibility on "site presentation [...] information on the page[...] the site operator's motives[...] and the source's reputation" (Metzger, 2007, p. 2083). She further emphasized the importance of visual appeal on a website: "Internet users as a group are not willing to exert a great deal of effort in assessing the credibility of the information they find online, and they place a premium on professional site design in their credibility appraisals." (2089) So, while website creators should of course put emphasis on "accuracy, authority, objectivity, currency, and coverage or scope" (p. 2079), their users will respond best if the visual elements of the site are seen as credible for the particular organization behind the site.

Another study was conducted on website credibility for the American Red Cross and American Cancer Society, both non-profit organizations (Long & Chiagouris, 2006). This study used 13 characteristics of Fogg et al. and added 4 of their own. While the study was professionally executed, the report did not offer new insights into credibility for non-profit organizations as opposed to other organizations. It compared two non-profits to each other, and so determining how a non-profit organization might be perceived differently than a for-profit website was not discussed. The study's results were very similar to those of Fogg et al.

Small Website Credibility Testing

An article most relevant to small business credibility was published by Heidi Everett in 2013. She used Fogg's (2003) Prominence Interpretation Theory to create a 6-step test that small businesses can utilize to gauge the credibility of their website. The process she presents is inexpensive and requires little or no professional training, making it realistic for most small businesses.

Everett starts by explaining that "small business Web sites that do not pose risk and do not offer e-commerce" are one sector of the Internet community that has been the focus of little research (119). Although these websites may not pose a risk to visitors, as do sites asking for personal or financial information, visitors will still make credibility judgments about these organizations based on their websites. A factor that negatively affects small businesses is their size, which usually correlates to less money to devote towards an extensive website. This often results in websites that are usable, but that don't have the ability to get visitors to trust the organization behind them. Another negative factor Everett states is that of motivation, for which both Fogg and Metzger have called for more research as far as it relates to credibility (2013, p. 121). If users are not highly motivated to stay on the site (as they might be if seeking important medical information or trying to find a

specific item to purchase), they will probably be more likely to leave the site if they find it not trustworthy or expert.

The steps for Everett's credibility test are these:

"Step 1. Identify and recruit focus group participants.[...]

Step 2. Determine online experiences and expectations of participants, particularly as they might relate to a specific business or organization.[...]

Step 3. Walk focus group participants through the Web site and note their responses to [...] questions [based on Prominence Interpretation Theory][...]

Step 4. Document responses.[...]

Step 5. Analyze participant comments to identify elements of the Web site that both positively and negatively influence the credibility judgments that visitors make.[...]

Step 6. Determine key improvements that can be made to the Web site." (p. 121-122)

Everett then gives a case study of carrying this test out and using it to improve the credibility of a boutique in a small college town. She shows how using Prominence-Interpretation theory to ask questions about elements helps focus group participants concentrate their attention on specific things they thought worked well or could be improved. The findings of the focus group led to an improved version of the site that was based on what focus group participants said they found credible.

Conclusion

Like usability, credibility is important for all websites, no matter their size or purpose. Credibility judgments are based on many things, but visual elements are one of the most important. By using Prominence-Interpretation Theory, any small business can create a test to assess credibility judgments users are making about its website and take steps to improve the site based on the users' feedback. These improvements can help attract and keep users on the site longer than they would if they did not find it credible.

Methods

Overview of GVG

Global Village Gifts (GVG) is a volunteer-run fair trade store that sells the handcrafted items of artisans from countries all over the world. Their first website was created by a volunteer who coded the pages in HTML. The store manager wanted to have a new website with a site builder that the volunteers could update without coding knowledge. GVG also wanted to have an ecommerce option so that they could start selling products online in the future. Since it is a non-profit organization, GVG has little money to devote to the hosting and maintenance of their website. GVG wanted to make many changes in the new site, both to make it work better for their needs and to reach out to a larger audience.

Introduction to the study

Before creating a new website for Global Village Gifts, it made sense to first analyze the original website and determine how users felt about its elements. I used Everett's (2013) study as the basis for assessing the credibility of the original Global Village Gifts website. With the aid of a focus group I followed her 6-step process to solicit credibility assessments from focus group participants.

Participants

GVG wanted the participants of the focus group to be people who were unfamiliar with the organization. My recruitment strategy involved convenience sampling. I contacted women and men in Cache Valley over the age of 18 to participate in the study. Inclusion criteria were that the participant used the Internet and lived in Cache Valley. Exclusion criteria were being under 18 and not regularly using the Internet. I contacted potential participants in person and over the phone. Two men and six women accepted for a total of eight participants. Only two had visited the store before.

Pilot Study

In preparation for the focus group, I conducted a pilot focus group with a group of USU students. This allowed me to practice my protocol and work out any problems I might encounter with the final group. The group gave many suggestions that were repeated in the final focus group. After the pilot focus group, I recognized the importance of asking questions in a way that made me sound unbiased. I also recognized my need to allow appropriate silence and wait time after each question to allow participants sufficient time to respond. I applied these skills in the final study.

Protocol

These are the types of questions I asked for each page of the website:

- What are your first impressions of this page?
- What elements on this page stand out to you?
- What seems unnecessary or unclear?
- Is everything you expect to see on this page here?
- How does the information on this page affect your opinion of Global Village?

I followed these questions up with clarifying questions to get greater detail about participants' responses.

IRB Approval

This study was approved by the IRB. (See appendix for approval form)

Results

Overall Concerns

The main problem that participants had with the original website for GVG was that it did not catch their interest. Participants described their feelings in these words:

- "Boring."
- "It all blends together."
- "There's too much stuff on there that is just in writing."
- "[It's] difficult to navigate through."
- "There's nothing there to catch your interest. It's dull."

Another concern was that the site lacked passion or excitement.

- "It gets a little impersonal."
- "The name is really implicative of something exciting but I don't see what it is."
- "Needs more emotion."

While each page on the site had different elements that positively and negatively affected participants' credibility judgments, these global concerns were repeated throughout the entire site. The lack of attention-grabbing elements on the website made participants feel like GVG was a boring place. Many initially did not feel that this was a store they would like to visit.

Color

Comments on the color scheme of the site included:

- "They need a lot more color."
- "Brown is not inviting."
- "I like the idea of bright colors."

Focus group members overall did not like the red and brown color scheme of the original site. They felt that the color of the site should match the vibrant colors found in the products GVG sells. Color is often one of the first-noticed elements on a website, and group members wanted the color of the site to match what they would see inside the store. They felt color would make the site come alive.

Images

All eight participants felt that images were an extremely important element of the website. All images were viewed positively. On the *About Us* page, group members suggested adding images of volunteers to make the page more interesting. They also felt that a caption was needed for the picture of the outside of the store to make it more obvious what it was.

On the *What We Sell* page, visitors suggested clickable images for the categories, rather than just headings and bulleted lists.

On the *Artisans* page, one group member said, "if I saw a picture of that person making something, then I would be more emotionally attached to buying." Another agreed: "I would definitely want to see a picture because a picture is worth a thousand words."

Images were one of the most frequently mentioned elements on the site, and in every case, group members wanted more.

Banner and Logo
A focus group member noticed that the L and the I in "Village" ran together, making it appear that the word was misspelled. All agreed that this negatively impacted their view of the organization.

Home Page
When participants were asked for their first impressions of the homepage, the overall feeling was that it was boring. One participant said that there was too much text. Two other participants noted that the same font used over the entire home page made everything blend together. Another participant felt that it was difficult to navigate through the information presented.

The lack of elements that grab the visitor's attention made GVG's homepage less credible. Since viewers found it boring, they had no reason to think that the organization behind the website would be interesting enough to merit their business. When asked what they would do next after clicking on this webpage from Google, none of the participants wanted to stay on the homepage. One participant said she would click *What We Sell*. Another said she would return to Google after a few seconds. Two participants nodded to show agreement to this statement.

About Us
After viewing the homepage, participants were given a paper copy of the text on the *About Us* page and asked to read through it and note what stood out to them. Passages that talked about women, hand crafting, fair trade, and the store's being volunteer-based most interested participants. One participant commented that he liked the mission statement and how it explained the store's practice of fair trade. Four other participants nodded when he said that. The main problem participants had with the text on this page was that it "repeated over and over" and was too long.

One participant said that the text needed to be condensed. She said: "If you are looking for a gift you are not interested in all the fluff—you want to know is my money going to a good place, are these people reliable?" After her statement, one person said the "history" section

was least interesting and should be at the end. A couple others agreed that the text needed to be condensed.

One participant said that the text was passionate only where it talked about volunteers and further said that "there needs to be more of why what we do matters." The next participant agreed that it needed "more emotion."

Overall feelings about the text were that there were elements that made visitors interested in the store, but they were buried so deeply in the text that they were hard to find. They wanted the elements to be made more prominent by getting rid of what was less interesting and adding more emotion to what they did find interesting, and then restructuring to put the most interesting elements first.

What We Sell

The first thing participants reacted to on the *What We Sell* page were images of the store's products. The participants said they like the images and later in the discussion, all eight said that the images played a very important role in their desire to go to the store.

Another positively-viewed element on the page was the list of items the store often has in stock. One participant said the list helped him get a better idea of what he could find in the store, since their inventory changes often. He and another participant felt that it was difficult to navigate, however, and suggested combining the images with the product list so that visitors could see both together.

The third element the group discussed was prices, which were not present on the *What We Sell* page. One participant said that there should be a general range, but not item-specific pricing, because "You want to entice people rather than make them feel prohibited from buying if it was too spendy." Other participants suggested that each category have its own price range. They agreed that the price element should give them an idea without distracting them.

This page had the most positively-viewed elements on the site. Participants liked the prominent elements and only wanted to see them reorganized. They also wanted the element of price to be present, but not overly prominent so as not to distract.

Artisans

GVG's current *Artisans* page is mostly empty, but they have thought about the idea of adding biographies and photos of artisans whose work they sell. Participants in the focus group were very responsive to this idea. Some comments were:

- "I would be more emotionally attached to buying in order to help that particular artisan."
- "It makes it more personal."
- "I would think: 'I am helping the person.'"

Participants felt that both the photo and the biography information would be valuable to them as customers. One participant said: "I don't know anything about fair trade, so I'd want to see where they're coming from." Participants agreed that this element would

encourage them to go to the store, and seven responded that it would let them justify spending more than they normally would.

Participants liked the idea of a biography element because it would make GVG seem more credible as a business seeking to help impoverished artisans. If GVG is indeed helping actual people they can see and learn about, visitors to the website will be more likely to trust that they are a worthy organization and to go into the physical location and purchase something.

Volunteer and Contact Us

The group spent little time on the *Volunteer* and *Contact Us* pages, but their overall feelings were that they wanted more images: an image of the store to be prominent on the contact page and an image of volunteers on the Volunteer page. One participant wanted the name of a specific person to contact so that she would feel more comfortable volunteering. Participants felt that images of people and the store itself would make them more likely to offer their time to help or shop at the store.

Sidebar

Participants liked the information on the sidebar (calendar, newsletter, links to other resources), but some mentioned that there was a lot there. One participant didn't realize that the links were clickable. Another suggested that the calendar be on a different page. Someone else thought that a link to the *Contact Us* page should be added to the sidebar.

Solutions

Color

Based on the focus group conclusion that the website needed more color, the organization manager and I created a color scheme of greens and blues with an accent of orange. The manager felt that the colors matched their global mission perfectly. They chose a textured, dark blue background for the site, and the new header image, headings, and social media icons incorporate the more vibrant colors.

Original

New

Images

To support the text and give website visitors a better taste of what the store is like, GVG provided new images to add to the *About Us* and *Products* page. They also added a slideshow and images of popular products to the home page. The newly created *Artisans* pages also include images of artisans at work.

Original

New

Banner and Logo

GVG felt that their logo was a recognizable symbol of their organization and so did not want to change it. They did, however, want the main banner on the website to be a map of the world. I made the original logo smaller, changed its color to match the new color scheme, and altered the font to fix the appearance of a typo. I placed this new logo on a banner that included the countries of the world in the new color scheme. GVG also wanted to emphasize the uniqueness of their store within Utah. They added the phrase "Utah's only Fair Trade store" to the banner to make it prominent on every page.

Original

New

Home Page

Based on the focus group's conclusion that the homepage lacked images and engaging content, it was given completely new content to make it more appealing to both new and returning visitors. A slideshow with featured items is the most prominent object on the page. Below the slideshow, images of items that are always available link to the *Products* page.

Original

New

About Us Page

I rewrote the text on the *About Us* page according to the focus group's comments that it needed to be condensed and portray more emotion. GVG then made changes to address their mission better. We also reorganized the text to put the more engaging material first. GVG then added images of the store and of volunteers as focus group members suggested.

Original

New

What We Sell

Since GVG is not yet ready to start selling products online, I restructured the *Products* page to place a greater emphasis on images. I also made the images into links, so when a visitor clicks on the image, it will take him or her to the list of products in that category

Original

New

Artisans

GVG wrote content and found images to include artisans from over a dozen countries. They felt that this content helped visitors to the site connect personally with impoverished craftsmen around the world. GVG has not yet received permission to publish the photos that they have, and so this page has not been published online. They plan to add it once they have permission.

Volunteer

Although the focus group suggested including an image of volunteers on the *Volunteer With Us* page, GVG elected to put the image on the *About Us* page rather than on this page. They felt it would be more inspiring if it was located with the information about the service volunteers perform. The *Volunteer With Us* page only includes an application.

Newsletter

Focus group users liked that the newsletter signup was easy to access on the sidebar of the original site, but having it again on a page of its own seemed redundant. GVG wanted the sidebar to be easy to access, so we removed the newsletter page and placed a sign-up box in the sidebar.

Newsletter

Receive our e-newsletter.

Keep up to date with the latest information from Global Village Gifts on fair trade, as well as new inventory, in-store events, and special discounts.

Enter your e-mail.

Submit

CONTACT

globalvillagegiftslogan
@gmail.com

Newsletter Signup

email address

First Name   Last Name

Submit

Original   *New (in sidebar)*

Sidebar

The sidebar was changed to include social media icons, contact information, newsletter sign-up, and the fair trade federation logo. The list of links that was on the previous sidebar was moved to its own page called *Additional Links.* The dark brown of the original sidebar made it unnecessarily prominent, so the new sidebar color was changed to white so it would not call as much attention to itself.

CALENDAR

Fri. Apr 11, 2014
Gallery Walk 6pm-9pm

Tue. Apr 22, 2014
Earth Day

NEWSLETTER

Receive our e-newsletter.

Keep up to date with the latest information on fair trade, as well as new inventory and special discounts.

Enter your e-mail.

Submit

FAIR TRADE INFORMATION

Fair Trade Federation

Fair Trade Labelling Organizations

Fair Trade on Wikipedia

International Fair Trade Association

TransFair USA

World Fair Trade Day

OUR PARTNERS

Barefoot Books

Bright Hope International

Original

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 10th
Gallery Walk, 6pm

October 25th
New website launch

LOCATION

69 East 100 North
Logan, UT 84321

HOURS

Monday - Saturday
12 pm - 6 pm
Closed Sunday

CONTACT

globalvillagegiftslogan
@gmail.com

New

Conclusion

Using a focus group to assess credibility proved to be far more useful than I initially expected it would be. Although none of the participants was an experienced web designer, their opinions about what elements they found to be credible and what damaged GVG's credibility in their eyes aligned with many of the principles of good design. As people who would be likely to stumble upon this website, they proved to be the perfect group to assess credibility. I have since shown the finished website to multiple participants of the focus group, who have all responded positively to the new design.

Some of the ideas that I had on how to improve the site changed after the focus group. I originally felt that the *What We Sell* page should only have images, not lists of items. The focus group however, agreed that the text gave them information beyond what the images could offer; as a result I decided to highlight the images and keep the text in the new version. Additionally, I was able to take what the group had said and use it as evidence when GVG wasn't sure if they wanted to make some of the changes I had suggested, like keeping the *Artisans* page. The fact that real potential customers wanted certain content helped convince GVG that those were important elements that they needed to find or create.

The user is always most important when it come to design, but it can be difficult to know what the user expects from an organization. A focus group is an easy, inexpensive way that a small business can get input not only on a website, but other for forms of marketing and advertising material. A focus group allows a designer to get real feedback from real potential customers and to focus first and foremost on what the user needs.

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Appendix

Focus Group Transcript

Facilitator: Are you more likely to look for a gift in a physical location or online if you don't know what to buy already?

Participant 1: I am more likely to look online first cause I can look at reviews and see if people like the product.

Participant 2: Stores for people and online for me.

Participant 3: I buy online if it's books, but as far as gifts go, I would rather go to a location to touch and feel things to know what I am getting

Participant 5: store

Participant 8: store

Participant 6:store

Participant 7: both

Participant 4: ideas online but buy it at a store

Facilitator: We're going to go to the website now, and I want to hear your first impressions.

Participant 3: There's too much stuff on there that is just in writing

Participant 8: All the same font, it all blends together

Facilitator: Other thoughts? Maybe some adjectives? How do you feel...

Participant 1: Boring

Participant 3: Two tone color and the same font.

Participant 2: That's what I was going to say, boring.

Participant 4: It's kind of difficult to navigate (three other people nod)

Facilitator: Is there anything that stands out or isn't boring?

Participant 3: The word Village is misspelled. The L and I run together. (nods)

Facilitator: If this was your first introduction to Global Village gifts, if you just happened upon this website, what would you do next if you came here from googling gifts?

Participant 4: Probably go to "What We Sell" to find what they have.

Participant 6: The name is really implicative of something exciting but I don't see what it is, so I would go to "What We Have."

Participant 1: I would go back to Google. (two nods)

Participant 3: Me too, unless fair trade caught my eye because it is something that I like.

Facilitator: Is that prominent?

Participant 3: No (two others shake heads no)

Facilitator: Read through the text and mark what stands out.

Participant 3: 10,000 villages, intercultural, hand crafted items, helps people in developing regions, telling stories, soul support.

Facilitator: So, many of the things about fair trade? (3 nods)

Participant 6: I thought it was really interesting the last paragraph when it talks about women and how women are involved. (two nods)

Participant 4: The part that stuck out to me that it was volunteer- based (3 nods), how they explained that and fair trade. (1 nod)

Participant 2: I like the mission statement and thought the volunteers could have been included in the mission statement. I like the explanation of how they practice fair trade. (4 nods) The "History" has too much info.

Facilitator: What was unnecessary or unclear?

Participant 1: Stuff that was repeated over and over again. (3 nods) A lot of parts under "How We Practice fair trade" and "history" could be combined. There's too much.

Facilitator: How would you organize it?

Participant 4: I think the business hours are in an awkward place. It should probably be at the end

Participant 7: I would move the business hours to the home page. I like the mission statement at the top.

Participant 1: It needs to be condensed (2 nods). If you are looking for a gift you are not interested in all the fluff- you want to know is my money going to a good place, are these people reliable? Reading all of this might turn some people away.

Participant 3: That's true. Maybe provide just basic information and have links to certain things with a condensed text, maybe put a picture in each spot to show where to go.

Participant 7: Move the history section to the end, because it was the least interesting (all nod)

Participant 8: I like the idea of pictures, but maybe of volunteers.

Participant 2: The picture of the house didn't say anything to me.

Participant 4: I didn't know it was the store. (2 nods)

Participant 8: There's no sign.

Participant 1: Maybe put a something underneath, like a caption. (3 nods)

Participant 6: For me it gets a little impersonal at some parts. (nod) When it got down to the volunteer part I felt passion for what they do, but I didn't see that in the rest of it. Condense certain things, but there needs to be more of why what we do matters.

Participant 3: Yeah, even lifeblood was a little cliché. More emotion.

Participant 7: Where it talks about how volunteers serve and goes to the next section, it needs a transition.

Participant 3: Or maybe could be on a different page.

Participant 3: The part about the cooperatives seemed just tacked on to the end. It should be on a different page.

Facilitator: Now on the "What We Sell" page, what elements appeal to you?

Participant 3: The images are good. Does the slide show play as you look at it? Can you make it just play as you go? Some people might not click on it to make it go. The thus doesn't apply there. The purchase isn't relevant.

Participant 4: I like the categories so you can see what there actually is. I think it would be helpful if there were a link to each of the categories to see examples of each to see a picture, or slides or something. So you could click on cookbooks, and it'd show a picture.

Participant 3: Stationery is misspelled.

Facilitator: What could be done to make this page more appealing?
Participant 8: Could you somehow put a price range under the pictures?

Facilitator: Here, the text says most items are $25 or less. Is that something that would be good to put up there?
Participant 1: M-Hm.
Participant 3: Their prices are really wide-ranging. I've been in Global Village and you can get things from $3 up to $300 dollars.
Participant 2: If I read that everything was $25 or less I would go buy that statue, but I know that it isn't $25 or less (laughs). Maybe each picture should have a price range.
Participant 3: You don't want to have too many prices just in the, maybe in the products' categories could have a price range, but not directly under the images, maybe. You want to entice people rather than make them feel prohibited from buying if it was too spendy.

Facilitator: So not too much to distract you visually, but enough to give you an idea? Is that what I'm hearing? (4 nods)
Facilitator: Participant 3 and Participant 4 mentioned images. On a scale from 1-10, 10 being a lot, 1 being not much, how important are images to your desire to go to the store? All: 10.

Facilitator: So, lots of images. (nods all around). Is this a good enough variety?
Participant 4: Can you search for specific things on this website? Because that might be something that is good.

Participant 7: I do like that they list a whole bunch of products, but the way its formatted makes the page really difficult to navigate through. So maybe a different format would be easier to use.
Participant 3: If you have books, just have it click books, and then you can open another page that lists everything.
Participant 5: Is that a category for the different countries that these things come from? That might be interesting. (2 nods)
Participant 3: That might go on that first page. There might be a link to where things come from under "Why We Practice Fair Trade."

Facilitator: In the future, Global Village is debating whether or not to include an image and bio of an artisan. How would that information affect your impression of Global Village?
Participant 3: It would affect me greatly, because I have a folklore background, so if I saw a picture of that person making something, then I would be more emotionally attached to buying in order to help that particular artisan.
Participant 7: It's a great idea. I don't know anything about fair trade, so I'd want to see where they're coming from (5 nods)
Participant 1: It would be cool to have a bio, and with the items say who made it. It makes it more personal. Has a way to connect with the person. (4 nods)

Participant 2: I think pictures and a bio because then you can tell other people about the products that you have bought, and they would be more interested and buy the same thing, or at least go look around. It makes you feel closer to the artist if you can see them and you know something about them.

Facilitator: So this would encourage you to go to the store?

Participant 2: Yes. (4 nods)

Participant 4: It would let me justify spending more than I would because I would think: "I am helping the person." (6 nod)

Participant 3: It would also lead nicely into the "Volunteer" page.

Participant 7: I would definitely want to see a picture because a picture is worth a thousand words.

Facilitator: Is everything you expect to see on a "Contact Us" page here?

Participant 3: is there a specific person that we could contact? I don't ever want to volunteer for something unless I can talk to a specific person, or at least refer to a specific person. Is there a manager or someone we could contact?

Participant 4: Is there a picture of the shop so if we are going out there we can recognize it?

Participant 3: Is it possible to put a cameo of one of the volunteers on the "volunteer" page? (2 nods)

Participant 8: I was a little confused about their hours and when they are opening. But then I saw that the other page it said something different. They need to get their hours consistent. I'm mostly confused by their holiday hours. It's different here then there.

Participant 3: Gosh, it would be hard to put together a website!

Facilitator: How important is the information on the sidebar to you?

Participant 3: If it appears on every page, there is so much on the main page that I blanked that out.

Facilitator: What do you expect on a sidebar?

Participant 4: I actually like the sidebar. It has the calendar. Links are good because I like links to find our more information. If you see a topic you're interested in you can click it.

Facilitator: Would you keep it on the sidebar?

Same: I guess it is kind of a lot.

Participant 7: I like that all that information is there, but I started to blank out or ignore it after a while. Maybe put the calendar on the home page. (2 nods)

Facilitator: What's most important on the sidebar?

Participant 3: Calendar of events maybe? And not have some thing. Could you do a different sidebar on each page?

Participant 2: Are all of those links? That's good to know.

Participant 1: I would put a link to "Contact Us" that leads to the contact page. If you're on a page and you want to get in touch with them... It's just nice. Other websites have that. You want to make it as easy as possible to contact you. It could be at the bottom, on the sidebar, just somewhere they can see it on every page. At least a phone number and address.

Participant 5: I would take the newsletter off the sidebar. I like everything else on the sidebar, but the newsletter has been bothering me. I like it on every page because then I will be able to find the place where it is again easily.

Participant 3: I agree. Having the newsletter on a different page would help it to not feel so cluttered If some of the links were on a different page and the text heavy page were different that would be better.

Facilitator: What do you want to see on the homepage?

Participant 3: Why do we have to have Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and all that stuff on the first main page. It seems like people with websites put that stuff on the bottom so that they're not cluttering.

Participant 4: I agree. (2 nods) It's right in the middle and you don't know about it.

Participant 3: Lots of websites have it at the bottom and you can get it there.

Participant 2: I would do away with the whole page. Redesign it with the information on the contact page. It's repetitive. There's nothing there to catch your interest. It's dull. It needs color. (2 nods)

Participant 1: Needs merchandise.

Participant 8: It needs some pictures.

Participant 3: A more appealing picture.

Participant 3: The inside of the store looks really cool. The way they have things arranged in there is really neat. That's what I would like to see. A picture of that main room or something. Inside is much more interesting than outside.

Participant 7: I would like to see some product images, because looking at this I have no idea what they sell. If they're going to draw me in, maybe some pictures with links. I'd also like to see a fair trade stamp emphasized.

Participant 3: A logo or something of fair trade would be a cool idea. (everyone nods) People recognize logos.

Participant 7: I would also put the business hours on there. (4 nods)

Participant 8: They have shop hours, but it isn't very prominent.

Participant 3: It's buried in there.

Participant 1: They need to change the font. Most important stuff bigger. They need a lot more color.

Participant 3: Yes! (2 nods) Looking at the stuff they sell, there are so many vibrant colors. They could play on that and incorporate the vibrant colors to bring the web page. Bring this alive.

Participant 2: Most of the information is on the "About Us" page, that is why I would do away with that.

Participant 1: Where it says new specials and other info, I see the twitter links, but instead it could say look at the new inventory we have, or look at this new volunteer, or this new artisan. Stuff that people care about. It helps people mesh with the store better, like this is a cool happy place.

Participant 7: I like the idea of bright colors. The brown out of context makes the spot not very inviting. Lighter the color or switch the sidebar to white and then the inside to brown. The brown is not inviting. (2 nods)

Participant 6: Something that is moving like the pictures, something more engaging that is interesting.

Facilitator: I'm hearing that photos, fair trade, and hours are the most important. Should something else be on that list?
Participant 5: I would like to see them get rid of the lines, have more open space.

Facilitator: Other comments about anything on the website?
Participant 7: I would take advantage of space. They have a whole bunch of dead space on the sides.

Facilitator: How likely would you be to try and use this website on a mobile device?
Participant 4: It would be ok, but not like this. On a phone you have little space, so it would be hard with all the little text.
Participant 3: I don't use a mobile device but I know that some people function entirely on mobile devices.
Participant 7: It depends on the audience, I like Wal-Mart because it is cheap. I like Amazon on my phone. I don't know how often I would search this website on a phone.
Participant 3: There is a huge contingent of very people who are really interested in this kind of thing. They are tech savvy and would need to have a mobile aspect for people in their 20's and 30's. For them I think it would be important.
Participant 2: If I was to look on a phone I would like to see "what we sell" first.

IRB Approval Form

Institutional Review Board
USU Assurance: FWA#00003308

Exemption #2

Certificate of Exemption

FROM:

Melanie Domenech Rodriguez, IRB Chair

True M. Rubal, IRB Administrator

To: Rebecca Walton, Natalie Cheney
Date: April 07, 2014
Protocol #: 5862
Title: Website Credibility For Small Organizations: Redesigning A Website For The Fair Trade Store Global Village

The Institutional Review Board has determined that the above-referenced study is exempt from review under federal guidelines 45 CFR Part 46.101(b) category #2:

Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through the identifiers linked to the subjects: and (b) any disclosure of human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

This exemption is valid for three years from the date of this correspondence, after which the study will be closed. If the research will extend beyond three years, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to notify the IRB before the study's expiration date and submit a new application to continue the research. Research activities that continue beyond the expiration date without new certification of exempt status will be in violation of those federal guidelines which permit the exempt status.

As part of the IRB's quality assurance procedures, this research may be randomly selected for continuing review during the three year period of exemption. If so, you will receive a request for completion of a Protocol Status Report during the month of the anniversary date of this certification.

In all cases, it is your responsibility to notify the IRB prior to making any changes to the study by submitting an Amendment/Modification request. This will document whether or not the study still meets the requirements for exempt status under federal regulations.