

COOPER HEWITT

User Test Evaluation



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum is a design museum located on the Upper East Side's Museum Mile in Manhattan. It is one of nineteen museums that fall under the wing of the Smithsonian Institution and one of the three Smithsonian facilities located in New York City. This report analyzes and suggests recommendations to improve the usability of the Cooper Hewitt's desktop website, specifically for the process of attracting visitors. The goal of this study was to increase the usability of three Cooper Hewitt website sections: the home page, events page, and the collections page. Through usability tests conducted on ten users, five recommendations were given to each of the usability problems identified in the aforementioned sections:

RECOMMENDATION 1: Place the admission & ticket information at the top to accommodate users' information needs

RECOMMENDATION 2: Reduce visual overload on the home page by replacing some images with colored blocks

RECOMMENDATION 3: Provide background information about the museum by adding 'About Us' section on the home page

RECOMMENDATION 4: Include an overview of the museum's events by adding a calendar at the top of the 'Events & Talks' page

RECOMMENDATION 5: Show more of the collection at once by directing the user straight to the search page

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INTRODUCTION

Cooper Hewitt is one of America's top design museums. Inclusive, innovative, and experimental, the museum's dynamic exhibitions, education programs, master's program, publications and online resources inspire, educate and empower people through design. The museum is currently embarking on redesigning its website, which serves as a digital representation of the museum to attract more visitors.

The goal of this project was to evaluate the usability of the website based on specific tasks, such as discovering information about the museum, discovering content that the museum creates, and navigating through the museum collections. We aimed to find out if the website successfully inspired users to visit the museum, and whether the website clearly communicated the mission and vision of the museum to the visitors.

METHODOLOGY

To evaluate Cooper Hewitt's website in regard to navigating the museum's collection and discovering information about their exhibitions and events, we conducted a user test with 10 participants. User testing is an experiment which involves users as experimental subjects in a controlled setting. Essentially, the tests are conducted to provide usability and design insights about an interface through behavioral observation of a user as they complete a set of tasks (Moran, 2019).

In a user test, a test moderator gives a participant a series of tasks that they must perform. During the test, the moderator observes each participant's actions, while also audio/video recording the test session. The participant is also asked to "think aloud" their thought process during each task. This allows participants to voice their feelings or thoughts about the product being tested. User testing is generally an observation-based method that provides qualitative analyses, but with the use of pre- and post-test questionnaires, quantitative results can also be helpful to provide an analysis of the product. After

conducting a set number of tests, the moderator uses the results of the user testing to determine how well the product performed and identify participants' pain points or issues.

Defining the Scope and Target Users

Cooper Hewitt's website was evaluated through a series of tasks determined by an evaluation team of five. Based on specific requests from the client, Cooper Hewitt's Digital Product Manager, the evaluators focused the scope of the study on gaining insights into how users were navigating the website as well as finding and understanding information about the museum and its offerings. After defining the goals of the user test, the evaluation team chose to test three key features of the museum's website—the home page, the events page, and the collections page.

In general, the target user profile for the study was characterized as museumgoers. Ten participants were recruited based on availability and perceived appropriateness for the purpose of the study. However, the evaluators made sure to recruit museumgoers from various backgrounds with a general interest in art/design and/or in visiting museums. Thus, participants consisted of parents, art and design students, and young professionals. All of them live in New York City. The pre-test questionnaire also revealed that more than half of the participants were familiar with the Cooper Hewitt while a third of them had visited the museum prior to the study.

User Tasks

All of the user tests were conducted in-person with the participant and at least one moderator in various settings. In addition, each test session was screen recorded using QuickTime and took about 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Moderators provided the test materials such as the pre- and post-questionnaires via Google Forms. Before beginning the test session, each participant read and signed a consent form. Throughout performing the given tasks, participants were asked to "think aloud" their thought process to provide qualitative data for the study. The series of tasks are as follows:

1. Take a few minutes to explore the homepage, letting us know anything you find interesting.

-
- a. {if not answered yet, ask:} What is your impression of the museum based on the homepage?
 - b. Are you more interested, less interested, or feel the same about visiting the museum after exploring the homepage?
2. A family member is visiting NYC from December 13-18 and bringing along their two children, ages 8 and 10. Find an event at Cooper Hewitt that they might be interested in attending and estimate how much it would cost.
 3. After visiting the museum, you became interested in exploring more of Cooper Hewitt's print collection. Use the website to find three posters made in the United States of America during the 1950s.

After completing the set of tasks, each participant filled out a post-test questionnaire in order for the evaluators to gain a deeper understanding of how the participants felt about the website directly after interacting with it. The analyses of the results from the user tests were then used to recommend usability improvements for Cooper Hewitt's website.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

From the results of the study, the evaluators discovered that a majority of the participants had a positive impression of the website due to its use of vivid colors and imagery. However, when it came to finding specific information on the website during the tasks, 8 out of 10 users found it rather difficult and unintuitive to navigate through the site. Some users mentioned, "[they] couldn't find what [they] needed easily, and there was a lot of text to go through" as well as "[t]here was a lot of content on one page, some of it could be distracting". Overall, after using the website, 70% of the users reported that their impressions of the museum were unaffected. Thus, the following section provides five main recommendations for improving Cooper Hewitt's website usability of the home page, the events page, and the collections page based on the navigation issues participants encountered and expressed during the study.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Place the admission & ticket information at the top to accommodate users' information needs

As users explored the website, most people would initially look for visiting information, admission and events. In order to create a more seamless experience for the users, the admission information should be prioritized and be placed along with the visiting information on the top half of the website, so that visitors can access the information right away upon visiting the site.

This will also solve a problem that was mentioned by some users who found that information was not grouped together well. One user even said, "Why do I see similar information [repeated] throughout the homepage?". By placing all relevant information close together, such as the hours and admission information, it will make it easier for the users to plan their visit in one go, instead of having to scan through the entire page to seek the necessary information (**Figure 1.2**). The ticket block has been designed as a solid block of color, acting as one of the visual breathers on the page.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Reduce visual overload on the home page by replacing some images with colored blocks

The visual design of the Cooper Hewitt website successfully gave positive overall impressions of the museum. However, it was perceived to be overwhelming for some visitors due to the heavy usage of imagery and lack of white space (lack of relief), which led to their visual overload and confusion in identifying the different categories of the website. One user mentioned regarding the homepage, it "just needs more white space to separate things".

The minimum viable change to solve this problem would be to eliminate some images and replace them with colored blocks to emphasize the text and to avoid images from competing with the text. Also, this will add more contrast throughout the page, which will help highlight the various categories.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Provide background information about the museum by adding 'About Us' section on the home page

Many users appreciated the visiting information being clearly visible in the first view on the top right corner. However, for the users who had never visited the museum, they could not tell what the Cooper Hewitt was about or how it is different from other art museums in the city. They mentioned they would also like to see information regarding the museum's general background on the home page. One of the users was intrigued by the information at the very bottom of the page which described the exhibition as "Bauhaus, Artificial Intelligence, and so much more!". This type of exhibition content seemed unique and differentiated Cooper Hewitt from other museums.

To help users become familiar with Cooper Hewitt's mission, we recommend adding a block dedicated to providing general information about the museum and its specialties (such as the interactive pen experience) on the home page. This will help new users get a better grasp of Cooper Hewitt and how it's different from other museums. In addition, simply showing the institution's full name with "Smithsonian Design Museum" below the Cooper Hewitt logo at the top left can effectively communicate to first-time visitors both the background of the museum and the fact that it's specifically a design, not just art, museum.



Figure 1.1

COOPER HEWITT

Smithsonian Design Museum

YOUR ACCOUNT

VISIT

JOIN TODAY

WHAT'S ON

COLLECTIONS

CONNECT

[f](#)
[t](#)
[v](#)

EDUCATION


JOIN & SUPPORT

BLOG

SHOP

SEARCH

SHOP ONLINE




ABOUT US !

Bauhaus, Artificial Intelligence and so much more!

HOURS TODAY

10 AM-9 PM




2 E 91ST STREET
(BETWEEN 5TH & MADISON AVES.)
NEW YORK, NY


GET TICKETS !

Buy online and save

NATURE—COOPER HEWITT DESIGN TRIENNIAL




DROP IN ON DESIGN



MEMBERSHIP

Enjoy unlimited admission, museum discounts, and design events for an entire year

BARBARA MANDEL 1925-2019



<p>NEWSLETTER</p> <p>Retrieve Your Visit</p> <p>Account</p> <p>Account</p> <p>VISIT</p> <p>Plan Your Visit</p> <p>Buy Tickets</p> <p>Getting Here</p> <p>Tours</p> <p>FAQ</p> <p>Accessibility</p>	<p>WHAT'S ON</p> <p>Events & Talks</p> <p>Current Exhibitions</p> <p>Upcoming Exhibitions</p> <p>Interaction Lab</p> <p>Previous Exhibitions</p> <p>Traveling Exhibitions</p> <p>The Pen Experience</p>	<p>COLLECTIONS</p> <p>Explore the Collection</p> <p>Object of the Day</p> <p>Publications</p> <p>Research Library</p> <p>Videos & Recordings</p> <p>Conservation</p> <p>Study Centers</p>	<p>EDUCATION</p> <p>Family Programs</p> <p>School Programs</p> <p>Emerging Designers</p> <p>Professional Development</p> <p>Master's Program</p> <p>Educator Resources & Lesson Plans</p> <p>Design Camp</p> <p>National Design Week</p>	<p>JOIN & SUPPORT</p> <p>Membership</p> <p>Donate Today</p> <p>Corporate Support</p>
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CONTACT US

SPACE RENTALS

WELCOME TO COOPER HEWITT

CAREERS

PRESS

YEAR IN REVIEW

COOPER HEWITT LABS

DESIGN ACCESS

NATIONAL DESIGN AWARDS

OPEN SOURCE

COPYRIGHT

IMAGE LICENSING

PRIVACY

2 EAST 91ST STREET

NEW YORK NY 10128

212 649 8400

Figure 1.2

RECOMMENDATION 4: Include an overview of the museum’s events by adding a calendar at the top of the ‘Events & Talks’ page

The majority of users were able to find the ‘Events & Talks’ page and were pleasantly surprised by the variety of events that Cooper Hewitt provides. Users liked the filter at the top of the page because it provides clear categories that explain the variety of events they could search through. When interacting with the ‘Events & Talks’ page, users were able to find the dates for the events, but expressed a desire for a calendar. One user clicked on the ‘Events & Talks’ page and was somewhat disoriented since she was “expecting to see a calendar.” The same user commented on how much she liked the header image for the event, “Designing Illusions,” but thought the event’s page was, overall, “text heavy.” Another user voiced a similar sentiment, mentioning “There was a lot of content on one page, some of it could be distracting.” Regardless, the same participant said they would still use the website again to find events and exhibitions.

We recommend adding a calendar to the top of the ‘Events & Talk’ page, ideally beneath the sort and filter options. The ‘Events & Talks’ page will still list all of the events being held at Cooper Hewitt, but with a calendar above. This will allow users to browse events by the day they occur, which is often a top priority when planning a visit. The calendar would provide a simplified overview that highlights the main purpose of the events page, which is to inform users of all the happenings at Cooper Hewitt.

Figure 2 shows what the loaded page could look like when a user clicks the link, ‘Events & Talks’ (<https://www.cooperhewitt.org/events>). **Figure 3** shows what the page could look like when a user clicks a specific day from the calendar. When a user clicks on an event, the description for that specific day should display below the calendar, replacing the list of “All Events”. Both figures show the calendar on top with each event listed on the day it occurs.

WHAT'S ON

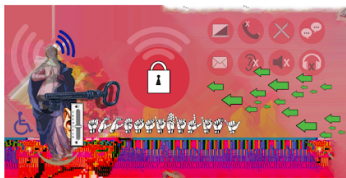
GREAT EVENTS FOR ALL AGES.

SORT BY:
LATEST

FILTER BY:
ALL EVENTS

DECEMBER						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Bodystorming Access	10	11	12	13	Designing Illusions
15	16	17	18	19	20	Drop In On Design
22	Drop In On Design	Drop In On Design	25	Drop In On Design	Drop In On Design	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

ALL EVENTS



12/09 MONDAY

BODYSTORMING ACCESS

Mon. December 9, 2019
6:30pm to 9:00pm

Figure 2

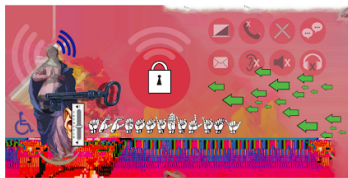
WHAT'S ON

GREAT EVENTS FOR ALL AGES.

SORT BY:  **LATEST**
FILTER BY:  **ALL EVENTS**

DECEMBER						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 Bodystorming Access	10	11	12	13	14 Designing Illusions
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 Drop In On Design
22	23 Drop In On Design	24 Drop In On Design	25	26 Drop In On Design	27 Drop In On Design	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

12/09 MONDAY



BODYSTORMING ACCESS

Mon. December 9, 2019
6:30pm to 9:00pm

A workshop hosted by Cooper Hewitt's Interaction Lab exploring the body and knowledge-building in museums. [View full event details here.](#)

Figure 3

RECOMMENDATION 5: Show more of the collection at once by directing the user straight to the search page

Part of the issue with Cooper Hewitt's collection feature was that participants did not feel inspired enough to actually want to explore the museum's collection. The [current landing page](#) (shown in **Figure 4**) displays images of three objects from Cooper Hewitt's collection and a paragraph full of orange-colored links describing playful features of the collection. Right from the start, the search through Cooper Hewitt's collection did not seem enjoyable for participants. The landing page did not draw them in or inspire them to want to explore Cooper Hewitt's diverse collection. Referring to the orange hyperlinks on the page, one participant found it distracting and difficult to make sense of what the links linked to. In fact, longstanding usability research has shown that "people do not read websites in detail. Instead, they scan for keywords, headings, and links that seem related to their information need" (Burns, 2019). Poor linking can also hurt a website's usability (Nielsen Norman Group, 2014). In this case, the landing page had too many hyperlinks. As a result, 8 out of 10 participants completely ignored the paragraph of text and hyperlinks. They either went to the search bar at the top of the page or clicked the 'Explore the Collection' drop-down menu.

To draw users in and to make the collections feature more appealing for them, it is important to show rather than tell. We recommend that when users click on "Explore the Collection" in the navigation bar on the homepage, they should be taken to a dynamic and colorful page of images, showing the museum's robust collection (shown in **Figure 5**). The endless scroll feature will allow users to explore more of the museum's collection freely—without having to rely on hyperlinks and the search bar to find what they are looking for.

In addition, it is worth mentioning that participants had difficulty navigating through the collection using the filters. Overall, users experienced confusion and frustration when trying to choose a filter category. They noticed inconsistencies in results and were unclear on whether or not they were getting closer to task completion. For example, when trying to complete Task 3, users were not able to filter by a specific year or were confused as to why there were two separate filter categories for "united" and "states." In regard to clicking on a filter, one participant saw the search results and said, "Omg, this is a lot of information I

didn't ask for!" Although we recommend keeping the filters on the new "Explore the Collection" landing page since it helps users narrow down their search, the filter categories need to be made appropriate, predictable and relevant for users (Nielsen Norman Group, 2014).

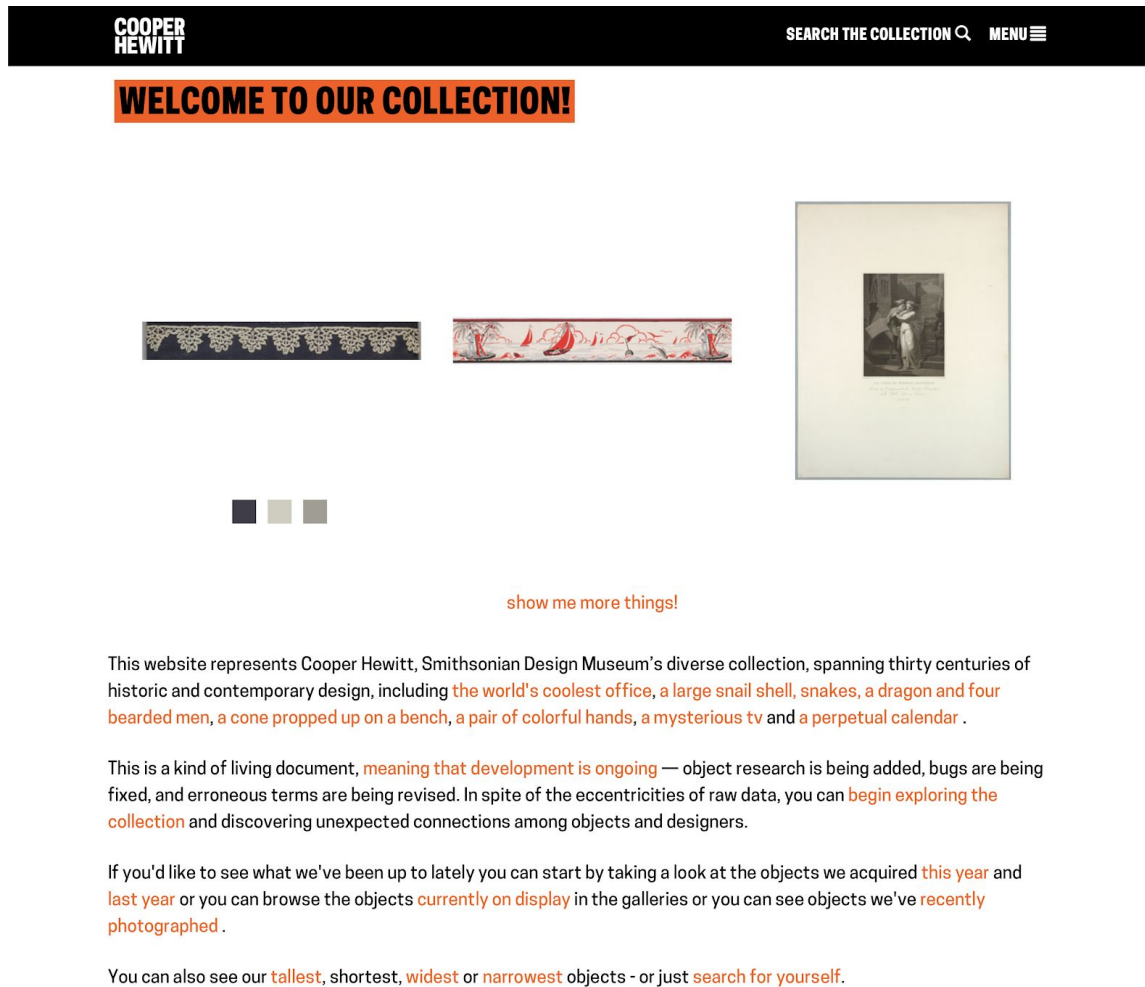


Figure 4

WELCOME TO OUR COLLECTION!

This website represents Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum's diverse collection, spanning thirty centuries of historic and contemporary design, including the world's coolest office, a large snail shell, snakes, a dragon and four bearded men, a cone propped up on a bench, a pair of colorful hands, a mysterious tv and a perpetual calendar .



UP 3 Chair, 1967 polyurethane foam fabric. Gift of the Estate of Frederick N. Bubbish, 1991-94-4. This object was made by Cassira and Buswell Italia (C & B). This object is part of the Product Design and Decorative Arts collection. There are 2 images of this object.



AIDS awareness Pin, ca. 1992 profit-for-glass crystals on leather. Gift of Duane Granoff, 1999-61-4. This object is part of the Product Design and Decorative Arts collection. There are 2 images of this object.



Poster, Big Red, 1991 paper. Gift of Melissa Ruch and Susan Strotz, 1995-62-1. This object is part of the Drawings, Prints, and Graphic Design collection.

Search **start**

SORT BY

- Relevance
- Accession Number
- Date Last Photographed
- Year Acquired
- On Display
- Decade
- Image Complexity (Bots)
- Width
- Height
- Depth
- Longest Side Length
- Shortest Side Length

IMAGE AVAILABILITY

- With Images (61,352 results)
- Without Images (13,016 results)
- Doesn't Matter (64,368 results)

IMAGE RIGHTS

- Indeterminate or Under Copyright (42,642 results)
- No Known Copyright (21,726 results)
- Doesn't Matter

RESULT CATEGORY

Object (64,368 results)

DISPLAY STATUS

- In Storage (64,253 results)
- On Display (115 results)

GEOGRAPHY

- france (16,924 results)
- united (11,894 results)
- states (9,034 results)
- italy (8,309 results)
- germany (3,296 results)
- kingdom (2,820 results)
- japan (2,125 results)
- netherlands (1,516 results)
- austria (305 results)
- switzerland (208 results)

MUSEUM DEPARTMENT

- Drawings, Prints, and Graphic Design (56,096 results)
- Textiles (4,774 results)
- Wallcoverings (1,882 results)
- Product Design and Decorative Arts (1,356 results)
- Digital (3 results)

MEDIA

- cotton (1,342 results)
- silk (805 results)
- lithograph on paper (613 results)
- offset lithograph on paper (419 results)
- machine-printed (402 results)
- brush and gouache on paper (350 results)
- etching on off-white laid paper (247 results)
- engraving on paper (236 results)
- offset lithograph on white wove paper (219 results)

TYPES

- Print (42,468 results)
- Bound print (5,037 results)
- Poster (3,376 results)
- Drawing (2,704 results)
- Textile (1,619 results)
- Sidewall (924 results)
- Fragment (602 results)
- Print from atlas (434 results)
- Playing card (368 results)
- Sample (362 results)

WIDTH (CM)



Chromolithograph Print, Advertising poster for red wine, 1880s-1910 ink on paper. Gift of Harvey Smith, 1947-69-37. This object is part of the Drawings, Prints, and Graphic Design collection.



Print, Design for "Vivo in Tipo" Poster on Red Ground, 2008 digital print on paper. Gift of Philippe Apollid, 2014-34-21. This object is part of the Drawings, Prints, and Graphic Design collection. There are 2 images of this object.



Poster, Wrango Austral Red Wine, ca. 1920s offset lithograph on paper. Gift of Wm. E. McKeigh, Kuffler, 1963-39-68. This object is part of the Drawings, Prints, and Graphic Design collection. There are 2 images of this object.



Poster, The Comforter: Red Cross, ca. 1917 1980-32-1181. This object is part of the Drawings, Prints, and Graphic Design collection.



Poster, Hollywood Legend and Reality, 1966 lithograph on wove paper, 1986-72-3. This object is part of the Drawings, Prints, and Graphic Design collection. There are 2 images of this object.



Poster, Statesboro Arena. Gift of Globe Poster Printing Corporation, 1997-61-1. This object is part of the Drawings, Prints, and Graphic Design collection.

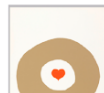


Figure 5

CONCLUSION

After evaluating the website with ten diverse users, it is clear that the aesthetic and modernity of Cooper Hewitt's website are appreciated by both first-time and regular visitors. These visual design features set the Cooper Hewitt website apart from other museum sites. Our recommendations build on the visual strength of the website and provide areas for potential revisions based on how their usability tested. The majority of users mentioned that they visit museum websites to find information regarding operating hours, cost, and current exhibitions (see the last question of Appendix B). *Recommendations 1 through 3* prioritize these issues by reorganizing the home page to immediately highlight these factors for web visitors. Our team also had users complete tasks that evaluated how they would interact with other parts of the website, specifically events and the collection. *Recommendations 4 and 5* cover the 'Events & Talks' and 'Explore the Collection' pages by providing specific improvements requested by users themselves (i.e. a calendar and streamlined Collections browsing). Each recommendation has been created with the goal of condensing and organizing the Cooper Hewitt website for optimal usability.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Cooper Hewitt Usability Study: Participant Consent Form

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the usability of the Cooper Hewitt website. The study is part of the Usability Theory and Practice graduate level class, under the supervision of Professor Craig MacDonald.

Procedure:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following:

- I will complete two brief questionnaires; pre-test and post-test questionnaires.
- I will be given tasks using the Cooper Hewitt website. While completing these tasks, I will be asked to "think aloud" to verbalize my thought process. The tasks are:
 1. Take a few minutes to explore the homepage, letting us know anything you find interesting.
 2. A family member is visiting NYC from December 13-18 and bringing along their two children, ages 8 and 10. Find an event at Cooper Hewitt that they might be interested in attending and estimate how much it would cost.
 3. After visiting the museum, you became interested in exploring more of Cooper Hewitt's print collection. Use the website to find three posters made in the United States of America during the 1950s.
- Members of the Pratt UX Team will observe and take notes. In addition, the session will be captured on video for future review.
- The session will last no longer than 30 minutes.

Benefits/Risks to Participant:

The participant will learn about the potential uses of <https://www.cooperhewitt.org> and will help contribute to the body of knowledge in usability research. There is no risk to the participant.

Voluntary Nature of the Study/Confidentiality:

You are voluntarily taking part in this study. At any point, you are welcome to tell the moderator that you would like to discontinue your participation in the study. You may also ask the moderator any questions at any time during the study. Your name and personal information is completely confidential and will only be accessible to the members of the project team.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have any questions after the study is complete, you may contact any of the research members:

Nicole Tominaga: ntominag@pratt.edu

Mikiko Tokuhira: mtokuhir@pratt.edu

Olaide Ajomagberin: oajomag3@pratt.edu

Sunayana Kesari: skesari@pratt.edu

Richa Kulkarni: rkulkar4@pratt.edu

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked any questions I had regarding the experimental procedure and they have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent to participate in this study.

Signature of Participant: _____

Name of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: Moderator Script

Session Introduction

Hi, my name is [name], and this is [second moderator's name]. Thank you for agreeing to take part in our study. We are part of a 5-member team of usability design students. Today, we are doing a user study of the website cooperhewitt.org. Your feedback will give us valuable information which will be used to evaluate the usability design of the Cooper Hewitt website.

Before we begin, I would like for you to read and sign our consent form. If you have any questions about it, please feel free to ask. Thank you.

During this session, I will be reading from a script to make sure that my instructions to all participants in the study are the same. We will spend the next 30 minutes using this laptop [or computer] in front of you to conduct our study. The study is split into three parts: a pre-test questionnaire, a series of three tasks to be completed on the Cooper Hewitt website, and a post-test questionnaire. During this session, we will use QuickTime to record sound and a video of your mouse moving on the screen, to help us get a sense of your process in completing the tasks. We won't be sharing the recording outside the evaluation team, but we will use the recording to review and analyse our findings for the group report. Are you comfortable with that? [if not, do not open QuickTime or record]

While you are completing the tasks, I will be asking you to "think aloud." If you can freely verbalize your thoughts as they occur, it'll help us understand what works or doesn't work on this site. I would also like to emphasize at this time that we are not testing you—we are testing the website. There is no penalty for making mistakes or decisions to stop the session. In regards to evaluating the website, your contribution to the study would be very enlightening for us. All that we ask of your participation is that you give honest responses and detailed feedback about your experience with the website today.

Do you have any questions before we start the study?

Pre-test Questionnaire

Before we start the tasks, I would like for you to fill out this questionnaire so we can get some basic information about your background, your familiarity of Cooper Hewitt and experience using museum websites.

[wait until participant completes form and hits 'Submit'; make sure responses are recorded]

Introduction to Tasks

Thank you. From here, we have three scenario-based tasks prepared for you to complete. Again, I want to remind you that we are not testing you during this process—we are testing the website. There is no wrong action or answer. Also, we are not the designers of the website, so please feel free to be honest in your feedback. We are really interested in your reactions to it, so please remember to think out loud as you navigate the website. Do you have any questions before we start?

Task 1

Take a few minutes to explore the homepage, letting us know anything you find interesting.

[if not answered yet, ask] What is your impression of the museum based on the homepage?

Are you more interested, less interested, or feel the same about visiting the museum after exploring the homepage?

[Give participant time to express thoughts and answers- record important observations/information]

Thank you for your feedback. If you are ready, we can move on to Task 2!

Task 2

A family member is visiting NYC from December 13-18 and bringing along their two children, ages 8 and 10. Find an event at Cooper Hewitt that they might be interested in attending and estimate how much it would cost.

[Give participant time to perform the task, express thoughts and answers- record important observations/information]

All done? Let's move on to Task 3!

Task 3

After visiting the museum, you became interested in exploring more of Cooper Hewitt's print collection. Use the website to find three posters made in the United States of America during the 1950s.

[Give participant time to perform the task, express thoughts and answers- record important observations/information]

Post-Test Questionnaire

You're almost done! Now please fill out the post-test questionnaire. What are your final thoughts about your experience with the Cooper Hewitt website?

[wait until participant completes form and hits 'Submit'; make sure responses are recorded]

Debrief

Thank you so much for participating in our study! We appreciate your time and feedback. All the information you provided will be anonymous and confidential. We will take the screen recording and review and analyze it with our other user test results to create our usability evaluation report of the Cooper Hewitt website.

Do you have any further questions or final thoughts for me?

Thank you again for your participation today! [Farewell]

Appendix C: Pre-Test Questionnaire

(Responses have been copied and pasted exactly as input by the participant.)

All ten participants were of age 18 or over and currently live in New York City.

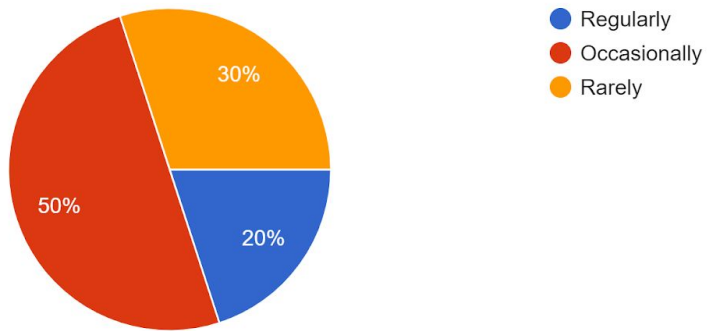
18+



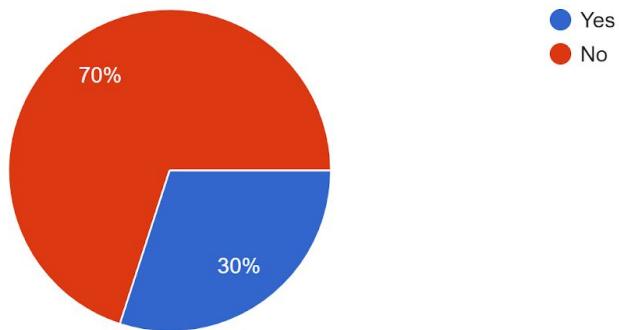
What is your occupation?

Participant 1	student
Participant 2	Product Development Manager- Soft Home Industry
Participant 3	Student
Participant 4	Student
Participant 5	Policy Analyst
Participant 6	Advertising
Participant 7	digital marketing specialist
Participant 8	Architect
Participant 9	Senior Programs Coordinator
Participant 10	Non-profit fundraising (Development)

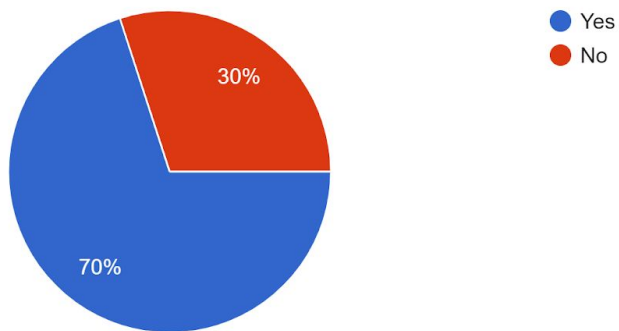
How often do you visit museums?



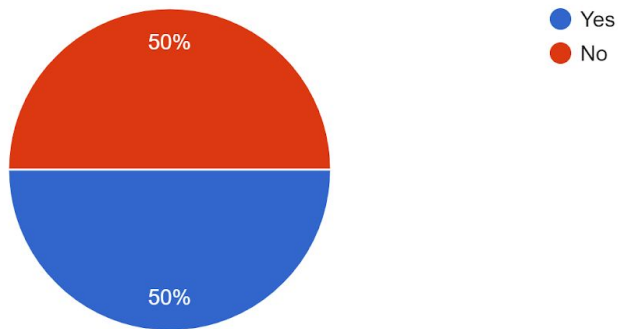
Have you ever visited the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum?



Have you ever heard of the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum before this study?



Have you ever visited the website for the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum?



Have you ever visited a museum website before? If so, what museum websites have you visited and for what purpose?

Participant 1	Brooklyn museum, MET, MOMA
Participant 2	Not visited any museum website.
Participant 3	I haven't visited museum websites before
Participant 4	The Met, New Museum, check out tickets, time, exhibitions, memberships
Participant 5	The Guggenheim
Participant 6	The Met, MoMA, The Whitney, The Frick, Brooklyn Museum, Cooper Hewitt, Isabella Gardner Museum, Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of Natural History. For: ticket information, operating hours, exhibit information
Participant 7	yes, to see current exhibits
Participant 8	No
Participant 9	yes, Moma, Whitney, Chicago art institute
Participant 10	Met Museum, MoMA, Smithsonian museum, Natural History Museum, many others to see admission info, hours, current exhibits, etc

Appendix D: Post-Test Questionnaire

(Responses have been copied and pasted exactly as input by the participant.)

1. Number of Participants

10

2. What is one word you would use to describe your experience navigating the Cooper Hewitt website?

Participant 1	looks nice, but unintuitive
Participant 2	Satisfactory
Participant 3	It was an overall easy except the last part of searching collections
Participant 4	time consuming (the navigation is not super clear, and it took a while to find the information needed. Didn't even realize the search bar at the very top. especially navigating through the collections was difficult
Participant 5	roundabout
Participant 6	lengthy
Participant 7	difficult
Participant 8	Decent but not intuitive
Participant 9	difficult
Participant 10	Slow to load

3. What did you enjoy about the website?

Participant 1	colors is lively, unlike regular museums. It shows that there are interesting things going on. The use of images give a good idea of what's going on. Just needs more white space to separate things.
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Participant 2	Looking at the events
Participant 3	I enjoyed the part of finding the information of admission and telling what was interesting.
Participant 4	playful. didn't know that they had archive collections, so in the future she might come back to use their resources as reference
Participant 5	I enjoyed the colors/ design of the website. It also seemed "legit"
Participant 6	how modern it looked, eye catching colors
Participant 7	the exhibits and collections
Participant 8	modern graphics on the homepage
Participant 9	the visual representation
Participant 10	nice pictures

4. What did you find frustrating about the website?

Participant 1	information architecture is unclear. online shop is not the first thing I want to see. want to see get tickets in the beginning. the organization of the information could be better. the filters of the collection could be improved, such as adding the years.
Participant 2	Couldn't find any event options for the dates my family is visiting
Participant 3	Searching things from the collections was very frustrating. Firstly the time you select "see more" on images in collections, different images just get uploaded but you don't even understand that if you are not paying attention.
Participant 4	all the color blocks underneath all the posters (don't understand what it means, and when she clicks on the colors, it takes her to a different page that doesn't really makes sense. A lot of information is displayed in a block of paragraphs, and the information is not very well displayed, especially in the collections page. Content itself of the collections is cool, but the information should be displayed more visually, not in a paragraph.

Participant 5	There was a lot of content on one page, some of it could be distracting
Participant 6	I couldn't find what i needed to easily, and there was a lot of text
Participant 7	searching the collection was difficult. Event details were hard to understand
Participant 8	finding things in the collections
Participant 9	the search option and filter
Participant 10	slow to load

5. How does this website compare to other museum websites you've visited (Better, About the same or Worse)? What parts, specifically?

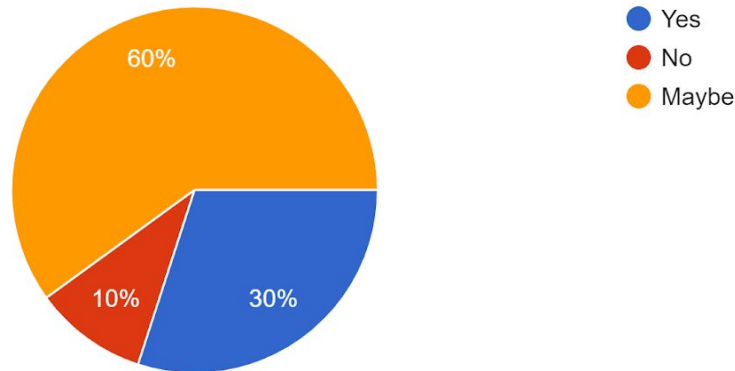
Participant 1	I like the brooklyn museum website, as it has lots of whitespace and is relaxing on the eyes. On their website I am immediately greeted by the events, and clear CTA (purchase tickets) with the hours information.
Participant 2	Did not attract me in first glance to visit the museum
Participant 3	I haven't visited websites of other museums.
Participant 4	worse or about the same. Really likes how the visiting information is in the first view, but the collection was a pain to use.
Participant 5	The content crowding on this website was a bit overwhelming. I like that other museum sites have been more simple or "clean" and not too many buttons to click.
Participant 6	About the same - but some parts were better and some were worse. better were the graphics, colors, and look and feel of the site. worse was the lengthy text and confusing filters and difficulty in navigating the site when it came to finding something specific (3 prints from the 1950s in the US). For general information it was clear, however I would have preferred the ticket and exhibit information to be at the top rather than at the bottom.
Participant 7	worse, difficult to navigate. home page images were crowded. Information was not segmented properly.
Participant 8	there is too much of text which doesn't highlight the main points that the user would be interested in

Participant 9	worse
Participant 10	harder to search the collection

6. In what scenario could you imagine yourself using the Cooper Hewitt website again, if at all?

Participant 1	To look up exhibitions that I've heard through word of mouth. To look up info such as who's the artist, and what kind of artwork, and the date.
Participant 2	To bring my 10year old for some design workshop
Participant 3	Maybe finding more information about their upcoming exhibits
Participant 4	look for more references for future design in the collections and research purposes.
Participant 5	To find an event or a schedule for an exhibition.
Participant 6	To see what the current or upcoming exhibit would be or to double check ticket prices or operating hours.
Participant 7	i will, just to see future exhibits
Participant 8	maybe finding interesting interactive exhibits to go to
Participant 9	yes if I wanted to go visit to see times and prices, what is on
Participant 10	to check admission info

7. Would you refer the Cooper Hewitt museum to a friend after viewing this website?



8. Did using this website change your impression of Cooper Hewitt?

Participant 1	not really
Participant 2	Not much
Participant 3	No
Participant 4	Didn't know much about Cooper Hewitt before, so not so much. It seems like a fun museum that she may or may not visit in the future, but will definitely comeback to use the website for references.
Participant 5	Not really
Participant 6	Yes - i did not know i could look up specific pieces of art and formats on the site. its a great feature if the navigation is updated to be easier to use/read.
Participant 7	Yes, negatively
Participant 8	Maybe I would like to take my kids
Participant 9	n/a
Participant 10	yes

9. Are there any recommendations/comments you have about changes you can make about the website?

Participant 1	improve on the information architecture - information could be organized in a more meaningful way
Participant 2	Home Page need to be more attractive with more workshop related photos.
Participant 3	Better hierarchy of navigation, More focus on current exhibits and their features, More legible type.
Participant 4	keep the images for workshop consistent (some show people, and some don't) make collections more visually appealing and don't make her search for the information. the filtering in the collection for "United" and "states" was confusing Search the collection page has so many blank space. It could be used to display some interesting work instead.
Participant 5	less is more. I would like for there to be less options to click and less content. I think the site could be more concise as a way to still get their information out. They could also group more tabs.
Participant 6	move general information to the top of the homepage ensure events when filtered are accurate or potentially use a more visually friendly design in the search bar page, create pre-populated categories to help users narrow down what they're looking for.
Participant 7	Needs a complete overhaul, simplifying the navigation process
Participant 8	Make the collections page easy to interact with
Participant 9	don't have something open in a new tab (example being the workshops). create filters and a better search option
Participant 10	list admission prices separately from having to select a date on the calendar. Explain that you can get tickets in person and online.

10. You're almost done! Please score the following 10 items with one of the four responses that range from a scale of 1 to 4 (1 being strongly disagree and 4 being strongly agree).

SYSTEM USABILITY SCALE	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I think that I would like to use this website frequently.	10%	60%	30%	0%

I found the website unnecessarily complex.	0%	30%	60%	10%
I thought the website was easy to use.	0%	50%	50%	0%
I think that I would need the support of a technical person to be able to use this website.	60%	40%	0%	0%
I found the various functions on this website were well integrated.	20%	60%	20%	0%
I thought there was too much inconsistency in this website.	10%	10%	70%	10%
I would imagine that most people would learn to use this website very quickly.	10%	50%	40%	0%
I found the website very cumbersome to use.	10%	30%	60%	0%
I felt very confident using the website.	0%	60%	40%	0%
I needed to learn a lot of things before I could get going with this website.	20%	60%	20%	0%

Appendix E: User Test Insights

Task 1

Insight	Number of participants who gave this feedback
Admission, tickets, and exhibitions are the most important information users look for when visiting a museum website.	8
Online shop is not the first thing users are looking for when visiting a museum website, but the image used seems to be a favorite among users because it shows fun design and stands out amongst the other photos of people and museum shots.	4
Providing pictures on the website helps users decide if the museum is worth seeing in person - even photos of the museum exterior. Good photos, vivid imagery, bold fonts, and eye-catching colors were well loved by the majority of users.	6
After the initial impression, the homepage feels cluttered and lacks hierarchy. Lack of white space, all-caps wording, and excessive listing of events confuses desktop users. Users cannot differentiate between types of events and are confused why they are shown separately. (Participant 6: "What is Drop In On Design?", "Who is Barbara Mandel and why is she on the home page?")	8
Terminology is unclear. (Participant 1: "Is 'What's On' the same as events and exhibitions? Is 'Education' the same as 'Workshops?")	2

Task 2

Insight	Number of participants who gave this feedback
Exhibitions page is packed with information. Column orientation and heavy descriptions are not standard to other exhibition pages that users are familiar with.	2

Users expected to see a visual calendar on the primary events page.	2
Limitations or criteria (i.e. requirements for age, registration, cost, etc.) for event attendance are unclear or hard to find. Event times and dates need to be differentiated more clearly, especially if they are not all free or for all ages.	4

Task 3

Insight	Number of participants who gave this feedback
Difficult to find what year artworks are made. Captions are not clear and there is no filter for year; only a sort function that can be time consuming.	6
"Explore the Collections" landing page (https://collection.cooperhewitt.org/) is text heavy and difficult to read.	4
"Search for yourself" landing page seems unfinished. Users were expecting to see parts of the collection or filters to search by. Some even expected curatorial categories (e.g. "Like the Met website, they have curated categories like Renaissance Art or European Art."). Not straightforward.	3
Users who did not pay close attention did not realize when links finished loading. For example, Participant 10 could not easily differentiate when certain filters applied to the search results. Participant 8 could not tell what clicking "show me more things!" accomplished because she was expecting the link to lead to a new page.	2