Centre for Career Education Usability Study
www.uwindsor.ca/cce

Introduction

The Centre for Career Education (CCE) website has recently been part of a usability study to test the effectiveness, efficiency and ease of use of the site. The testing began the week of March 20th, and took place in Assumption University room 119. The participants were selected from the typical target audience which include, employers who work with the CCE and current student who are may or may not be affiliated with the CCE. For this study we had 16 participants, which include 4 employers, 9 students who work with the CCE and 3 regular students. For this study, participants were monitored using the Morae software which records audio, video, screen captures, key capture and mouse clicks. The participants were asked to verbalize their thoughts as they completed up to 7 tasks on the website. These tasks were designed to highlight the key goals of the website and to determine how effective they are. There was two sets of questions one for students and the other for employers. Based on the questions asked the goals are as follows:

All participants should find
- The CCE Website
- The Student or Employer page
- The VIP information
- The Upcoming events

Students should also be able to find
- VIP requirements
- Online job postings
- Resume Help
- How to contact a co-op coordinator
- How to book an appointment with a co-op coordinator
- Career testing services

Employers should also be able to
- Find VIP post a job form
- Complete a post a job form
- Find the co-op employer's evaluation form
- Find how to support students on campus

Based on the information collected from the participants, each goal is given a score out of two. The participant receives a two if they completed the task perfectly, a one if they completed the task but had problems completing it, or a zero if they did not complete it at all. The rest of this report illustrates the results of the study.

Positive

- Most information was found without a problem. Almost all of the tasks had over 60% success rate.
- Many users enjoyed the website. They liked the added pictures and level of professionalism of the site.
- The site map is well done and for the very confused users who found it and used it they were satisfied.
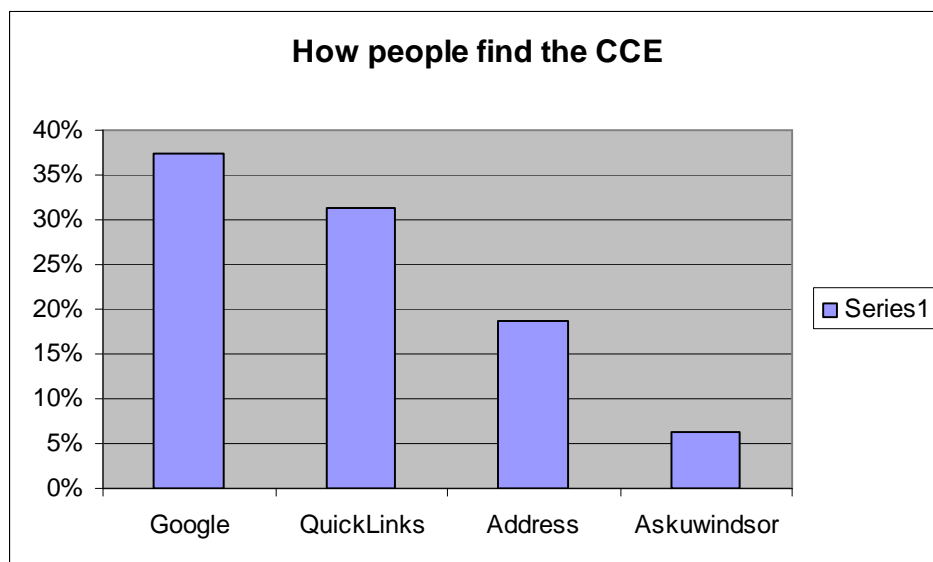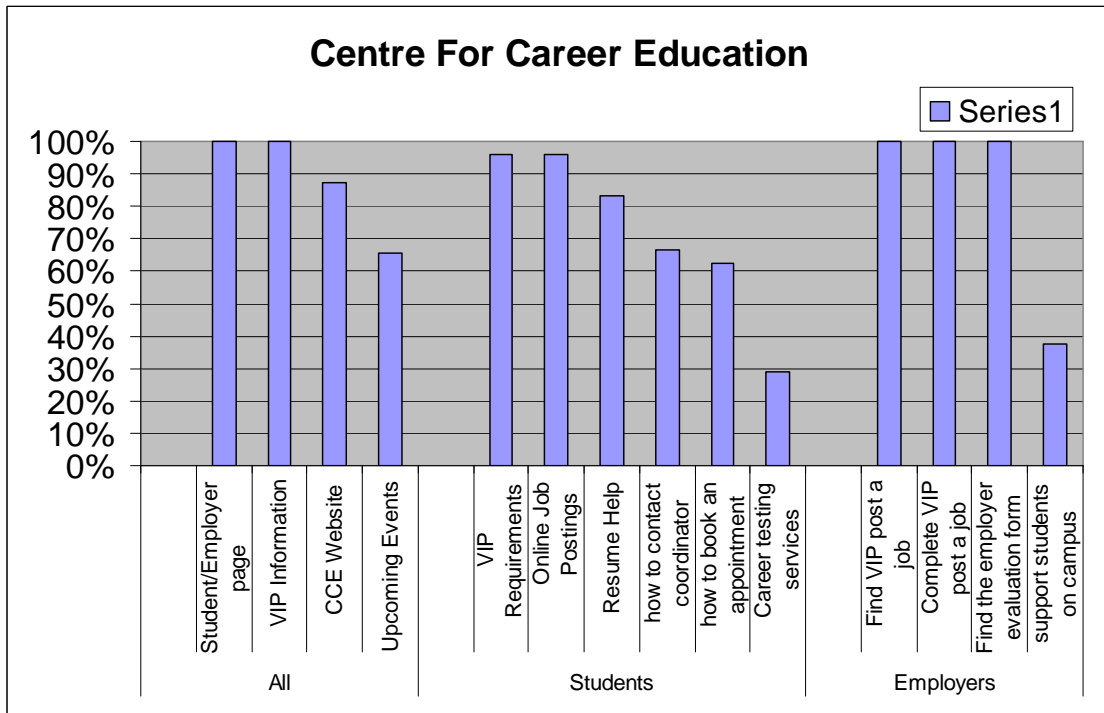
Negative

- The wording of the questions caused problems.
    o Students don't know what "Career Testing Services" is and therefore don't know what they are looking for or where they should look.
    o Employers didn't understand the purpose of advertising on campus and so again they didn't know what to look for. Some ended up finding the job fair.
- "Below the fold" information. There are some pages where the very important information is below the scroll line. *"Below the fold" is a term used for information that cannot be seen at first glance, such as the stories on the bottom half of the newspaper.*
- Some important links blend in to the background too much
- When clicking though the user can sometimes jump between Student and Employers page, causing confusion and making it hard for the user to get back to their original page.

Interesting

- People seem divided on the opinion of the flash. Some like it, some hate it, many skipped it. 81% of participants found the flash introduction first.
- One of the web developers in the CCE website participated in the study as a student. Though he is very close to the project and his answers maybe skewed they were still included in the results. (He even missed a question)
- The most popular way to find the CCE website are through the Google search, which isn't bad because it works but I would like to see the QuickLinks and navigation used more.
- When students were asked to find and book an appointment many didn't want to use the website saying they would prefer to just show up at the office.
- Some participants were expecting a calendar or better presentation not just more links when they were finding the upcoming events.

Frequency Charts

The following charts demonstrate the frequency of which the goals were achieved. Again each participant was given a mark out of 2 for each goal. The first chart illustrates the ability to complete the goals. The second chart demonstrates how the users were able to find the CCE website from the University of Windsor main page.

Centre For Career Education

Series1

Category		
All	Students	Employers

How people find the CCE

Series1

Google, QuickLinks, Address, Askuwindsor

Recommendations

- Career Testing Services
    - This should be at least a link under "Find a Job…" because this is where people are expecting it.
- Employer advertising
    - Could be a problem with the question or it could be something that just isn't of value to your employers. If this is something that should be a value to the employers the method of delivery needs to be evaluated.
- Upcoming events
    - The system that is in place is fine, but not what is expected. Even on the workshop listings.
- VIP information
    - Posting a job to VIP link is below the fold and not missed but it takes longer to find because it doesn't stand out. Put it at the top or add some sort of graphic. If the user already knows what VIP is then they won't want to read it again. And if they don't know the information is there as well.
- VIP post a job form
    - Academic Qualifications
        - A participant has requested for more information to be added here about our programs so that the employer doesn't have to spend time looking up what is included. Use links with pop up windows so the user doesn't lose the information they have already typed in.
    - Old job description
        - Is there a way for them to check it before it is posted when the employer wants to use an old job description?
    - No format checking
        - Input validation. The form includes no format checking for dates, phone numbers, and postal codes.
- Co-op Evaluations
    - It didn't take long for the employers to find the information, however getting back to the main page (as many wanted to) was difficult.
- Co-op appointments
    - Include all co-op advisors and encourage students to use it more if this service is to be used more often.
- Overall
    - The site is a large and while navigation is very good, it might be worth looking into adding "breadcrumbs" to the top of the page so the user knows where they are at all times.

Next Steps

As is customary with the first usability study we recommend that you take into consideration our recommendations and make changes to your website based on them. Once you are happy with the changes we will perform a follow up study to test the effectiveness of the changes.