

‘Heuristic Analysis’*

Lewis & Rieman’s Exercise 4.3 (with additions)

Locate an on-line library catalog, either at a university or at your local public library. Use Nielsen and Molich’s heuristics to evaluate the interface.

⇒ Quoted
from Lewis &
Rieman

Get together with three or four other students and combine your analyses into a single list of problems with the interface. Assign priorities to the problems, so the designers of the system would be able to decide which things were most important to change.

Your answer should take a page or two, depending on the quality of the interface.

If you want to do more: Do a quick cognitive walkthrough of the same interface, using what you believe to be a representative task. In a half page or less, compare the kinds of things discovered by heuristic analysis to the kinds of things discovered by the walkthrough.

Resources

- *Heuristic Evaluation* at [useit.com](http://www.useit.com) by Jakob Nielsen
<http://www.useit.com/papers/heuristic/>
- *Software Usability Defect Log* from Constantine & Lockwood, Ltd.
<http://www.foruse.com/publications/templates/defectsoft.htm>
- *Heuristic Evaluation, A System Checklist* from the Society for Technical Communication’s Usability special interest group (SIG) website
<http://www.stcsig.org/usability/topics/articles/he-checklist.html>

A short critical review which compares Levi et al.’s study [1] with the earlier work on heuristics would enhance this assignment without being burdensome.

References

- [1] Michael D. Levi and Frederick G. Conrad, July 1996. A heuristic evaluation of a World Wide Web prototype. *interactions*, III(4):50 – 61. <http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/234813.234819>.
- [2] Clayton Lewis and John Rieman. Task-centered user interface design: A practical introduction. ©1993, 1994. Three versions available:
Plain text <ftp://ftp.cs.colorado.edu>;
PDF with index <http://users.cs.dal.ca/~jamie/TCUID/readme.html>; and
HTML <http://hcibib.org/tcuid/>.

*This is Exercise 4.3 from Lewis & Rieman’s text [2]