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Project Report
(Abridged Version)

Improving Website Usability for Forms and Supplies Customers

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Executive Summary

JJ Keller & Associates is the nation's leading supplier of safety and regulatory compliance solutions. Two of their top product lines are Forms and Supplies. The Forms Resource Center and the Supplies Resource Centers located on www.jjkeller.com are the top visited areas on JJ Keller's Online Catalog area of the site. In an effort to continuously improve www.jjkeller.com for customers and for the internal staff that updates the site, the company would like to investigate options to restructure/redesign the Forms and Supplies Resource Centers web pages.

The forms and supplies area of JJ Keller's website provides consistent revenue for their company, but their e-commerce experts feel it can be significantly improved. JJ Keller feels their website can deliver better service to their existing customers, as well as new customers who account for significant fraction of total sales.

In the initial meetings with JJ Keller's representatives, the project needs and expectations were discussed with the student team. The overall goal of this project was to analyze the usability of their forms and supplies resource centers, and perform a website comparative analysis. The company was interested in learning 1) low-level, tactical changes that can be implemented immediately, and 2) high-level, conceptual changes that involve website restructuring.

Throughout the fall 2006 semester, the UW Student team analyzed JJ Keller's website to provide usability improvement recommendations. The team chose two analysis methodologies:
1) usability testing and 2) website comparison. In turn, the team divided into two separate groups to focus on each section. After usability test execution and website comparison data compilation, the groups developed collaborative recommendations for improvement.

Before beginning the usability tests and website comparison, the student teams built their knowledge of JJ Keller's process, as well as the methodological framework to support each analysis. The usability group interviewed JJ Keller's Sales team to understand general customer needs. Further discussion provided background knowledge on usability testing. Examples of documents used are provided in Appendix A. With the help of JJ Keller's staff, the usability materials and logistics were prepared flawlessly, allowing the student team to not only provide a detailed analysis, but also foster usability testing administration skills.

The website comparison team used two analysis tools: 1) web evaluation, 2) task analysis. From the latter, the team also developed path navigation comparisons. Examples of all three are provided in Appendix B. For the website comparison, the UW student group analyzed nine of JJ Keller's competitors by ranking website aspects, such as functionality and design, and developing comparison measures. Both the task analysis and path navigation tools evaluated the number of clicks and pages that a user endures while searching for products on a competitor's website. Although the students used each tool to guide analysis, JJ Keller is encouraged to refine or modify these tools for their own use.

The UW student team combined their findings to create the final analysis and recommendations. When discussing the results with JJ Keller, the students submitted 19 strategic recommendations for consideration during future website design. If a finding could not be matched with a specific recommendation, the group referred to websites that successfully capture the deficiency.

The strategic findings and recommendations include:

1. **Multiple Entry Paths Confuse User**
    - *Funnel all traffic to a standardize Resource Center homepage*
2. **Pop-Ups Links are not Visible on Screen**
    - *Move links into visible screen*
3. **Category Tabs Not Apparent to User**
    - *Enlarge font and create static links*
4. **Unable to Sort by Product Code**
    - *Insert sort function*
5. **Yellow Bullets are Misleading**
    - *Insert hyperlinks*
6. **Inconsistency of Webpage Appearance**
    - *Consolidate views , reference www.gneil.com*
7. **Inability to View Enlarged Image**
    - *Fix view sample button in the product description page*
8. **Cluttered Product Layout**
    - *Put more information into the product description page*
9. **Customizable Products Not Apparent**
    - *Create special notification for customizable products on product table*
10. **Ineffective Use of Medium**
    - *Display images on table*
11. **No Recently Viewed Products Section**
    - *Reference competitor websites*
12. **No Ability to Add to Favorites**
    - *Reference competitor websites*
13. **Inability to Personalize Account**
    - *Emphasize personal accounts for customizable services*
14. **Viewing Larger Images**
    - *Insert hyperlink on image icon*
15. **Table Headings Hide When Scrolling**
    - *Create static links for table headings*
16. **Chronological Order of Articles Unapparent**
    - *Insert dates at the end of news articles*
17. **Lack of Information in Product Description Pages**
    - *Place corresponding table row inside product description page*
18. **PDF Files do Not Provide Necessary Information**
    - *If possible, attach information beneath PDF view*
19. **Category Links Provide Insufficient Information**
    - *Expand initial category links to introduce hidden content*

While some improvements in Website usability could be addressed immediately, others require significant design considerations. However, JJ Keller plans to consider each recommendation and incorporate them into the website's design and functionality where feasible.

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