

# Usability Testing Report

Mlive.com  
<http://www.mlive.com/>

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February 12, 2008

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tests were conducted of mlive.com to examine the usability of its navigation, architecture, and interactive features. All usability aspects were evaluated during the test.

The most significant findings of these tests were:

- **Global Navigation labels should clearly stand out from surrounding content.** A global navigation design that better attracts users' attention to the labels would allow users to more easily and quickly locate content.
- **The site should be tested more thoroughly on additional browsers besides Internet Explorer and with different browser privacy levels.** Users who visit the site with other browsers (such as Firefox) or with higher privacy settings should be able to use all site features. If using higher privacy settings with some features is not technically feasible, the site should alert the user.
- **User transactions, such as signing up for e-mail newsletters, uploading photos, and submitting event listings, should use a consistent process with clear instructions and confirmation.** These processes, which are important for updating the site and involving the users, often lack clear instructions or provide clear confirmation that a process has been completed.
- **Revised categorization and prominent definitions for newer web features such as forums and blogs should be provided.** More in-depth help and navigation of forums and blogs would increase user readership and participation, particularly among first-time users.
- **The relationship between affiliate newspaper content and mlive.com web-only content should be clarified.** The site should clearly indicate when a user must specify a particular newspaper or locality to locate specific information or perform a specific task. This would allow users to more quickly and efficiently navigate through the site. It would also allow the site to highlight specific newspaper editions when appropriate.

These are some of the main usability issues found with the site. This report discusses additional issues and provides recommendations for each. Although a number of tasks that users were asked to perform were very specific to one feature of the site (for example, uploading high school sports photos, searching for restaurants, or signing up for a travel email newsletter) many of the issues found with these features may be applicable to other parts of the site.

## **DESCRIPTION OF TEST**

*Dates of testing:* Feb. 1 – 3, 2008

*Testing location:* Home computers of facilitators

Number of users tested: 6

*Length of each test:* Approximately one hour

Platform tested on: Windows XP

*Browser tested on:* All users tested on Internet Explorer due to major navigation differences found in other browsers.

## **PRIORITY LEVELS**

Each issue found in the testing has been assigned one of these three priorities:

*High priority:* These issues significantly impact the ability of the user to navigate successfully and complete desired tasks. High priority-issues should be addressed as soon as possible.

*Medium priority:* These issues are widespread among users but do not severely impact the users' ability to successfully use the site. These issues should be addressed as resources become available after addressing the high-priority issues.

*Low priority:* These issues affect a small number of users or create minor inconveniences to users. These issues should be addressed only after high and medium priorities have been addressed, since they would only create minor improvements or affect a small number of site users.

## RECOMMENDED CHANGES

### Global Navigation

#### *High Priority:*

- **Use a different color for the global navigation than the color used for the Search/Site Index bar above it.** Users often did not notice labels on the global navigation, most likely because the global navigation is the same dark blue as the bar directly above it.

*See Appendix A: Graphics of Recommended Changes: Global Navigation for an example.*

- **Test the Global Navigation menus in Firefox and other browsers.** Global navigation dropdown menus did not appear in Firefox or Opera, so viewing mlive.com in one of these other browsers would be a vastly different experience than viewing with Internet Explorer. For this reason, all users tested the site with Internet Explorer, even though some only use Firefox.

#### *Medium Priority:*

- **Use a consistent color and layout scheme for Global Navigation throughout the site.** Currently, the global navigation has a different color and layout scheme in different sections of the site.

On the Home, Sports, Forums, Living, and Entertainment sections, the navigation appears with a dark blue background and combined Classifieds labels. In these sections, News is labeled News+Biz. A solid bar with the same dark blue color (containing Site Search) appears directly above it.

On the News, HS Sports, and Classifieds pages, the navigation appears with a lighter blue background and separate Classifieds sections. Search appears to the lower right of the navigation here.

## Integration of Newspapers and Mlive.com Site

### *Medium Priority:*

- **Provide a list of cities covered by each newspaper.** Much of the site is categorized by the cities of the affiliate newspapers, although these newspapers may cover nearby cities as well. For example, there is no Ypsilanti newspaper affiliated with mlive.com, although the Ann Arbor News includes Ypsilanti news. A user who is unaware of this may have difficulty finding an Ypsilanti news story.
- **Filter content by newspaper/locality if a user selects a newspaper from the “Choose a Local Edition” menu at the top of the home page.** Users frequently selected one city’s newspaper hoping this would narrow down where to look. For example, when asked to find restaurants in Ann Arbor, some users immediately selected the Ann Arbor News. Users noted that selecting a local edition seemed to change little other than the newspaper logo appearing beneath the global navigation (the user still sees different city sections available).

### *Low Priority:*

- **Create a central directory of contacts for mlive.com and its affiliate newspapers.** Users were unsure of where to find contacts for newspapers (such as where to send a Letter to the Editor or how to submit an event listing) and sometimes selected “Send Feedback” at the bottom of the home page, which sends feedback to the mlive.com site only, not the newspapers. One page of contact information for mlive.com and newspapers would allow users to easily locate appropriate contacts.

Also, at least one newspaper (The Flint Journal) had different pages for staff contacts, which included much of the same information. Some users believed they had found the best way of sending a letter to the editor of The Flint Journal when they found a list of editors’ e-mails. However, for this purpose The Flint Journal offers an e-mail [letters@flintjournal.com](mailto:letters@flintjournal.com) and a form for submitting a letter, neither of which were found by most users.

## News

*Medium Priority:*

- **Add a “Send a Letter to the Editor” contact to each page which features newspaper Letters to the Editor.**

## Travel

*Low Priority:*

- **In the Travel section, rename “Travel Resources” to a more specific label, such as “Travel Guides”.** One user visited the Travel Resources page looking for a travel e-mail newsletter, only finding travel guides and directories.
- **Add “Travel Deals” to the Travel section of the global navigation.**

## Entertainment

*Medium Priority:*

- **On the Arts and Events page, make the “Submit a Listing” button more noticeable.** Users who successfully found this page did not see “Submit a Listing”.

## Classifieds

*Medium Priority:*

- **Allow the mlive.com user ID and password to be used when placing a classified ad.** This may not be feasible, however, since the classified ID may be linked to sensitive payment information.

## Search

### *High Priority:*

- **Alert users that cookies must be enabled to use Search.** If the browser is set to block all cookies, a user sees only a blank screen after searching. However, the user is notified that cookies are needed of this when logging into classifieds.

### *Medium Priority:*

- **Tweak the search results.** Keyword search was generally very helpful, and several users immediately completed their tasks by using Search. However, a few searches generated some unusual and confusing results, including:
  - A Search for “Thai restaurants” retrieved real estate listings in California and only four Thai restaurants (more were retrieved via the Restaurant Search).
  - A search for the “Running with Needles blog” resulted in the message “do you mean Running with Needles bloc?”

## E-mail Newsletters

### *Medium Priority:*

- **Provide one menu of all newsletters and a description of each.** Currently, multiple e-mail newsletter links are scattered throughout the site with no clear indication of what each is about. For example, the Travel home page includes “EMail updates” on the “Inside Travel” left sidebar and a “Newsletter” sidebar on the right. When asked to sign up for a newsletter on budget travel, some users signed up for “E-Mail Updates”, not realizing that there was another e-mail newsletter shown elsewhere (“Travel E-Deals”) more specifically targeted toward budget travel.
- **Standardize e-mail newsletter signup procedures.** Different e-mail newsletter links lead to very different signup screens asking for different information. For example, the Travel section home page includes at least two different e-mail subscriptions:
  - The “E-Mail Updates” link leads to a Feedburner.com screen which asks for an e-mail and requires the user to enter some text to prevent spam.
  - The “Travel E-Deals” link leads to a sample newsletter (which it states may be outdated) and asks the user to enter an e-mail at the top.
- **Provide clearer confirmation that the user has subscribed to an e-mail subscription.** When a user has subscribed to a newsletter, the subscription form reappears with the words “Select Newspapers” prominently bolded. The words “Thank you for your subscription” appear in smaller, lighter text at the top. Users often noticed the “Select Newsletters” first and were therefore unsure if they had completed the subscription process.
- **Remove newsletters from the section labeled “Advertising.”** Some users may be discouraged from subscribing to newsletters if there is a chance they will receive advertising. Each e-mail newsletter should include a clear description of the newsletter’s content (such as if it is information provided by mlive.com or by advertisers).

## High School Sports

### *Medium Priority:*

- **Cross-link the different sections to which users can upload photos.** The High School Sports section features different unrelated sections to upload photos. For example:
  - The section's home page features "Photo Galleries" in the "Multimedia" box. This links to a "High School Sports Photos" page which lists city, dates, and type of sport for which photo galleries are available. Several pages include a link "Send Us Your Photos" which uploads to the gallery.
  - Each High School's page (featured in the High School Home Pages box on the right side of each locality's sports page) features a subnavigation item "Photos" which includes a link for uploading that high school's photos to that page.

These two photo sections should be cross-linked. Users asked to upload a photo to the high school's page often incorrectly selected the "Send Us Your Photos" link which uploaded to the gallery section.

- **Add to the "Send Us Your Photos" submission form a link to the gallery page so that the user will know where their photos will appear.** Currently, this form says "check the galleries on Mondays for your photo". If the user does not know what the site's gallery section is, they will not know where their photo will appear.
- **Add a "Send Photos" link to the HS Sports home page.** Users had difficulty finding a place to upload photos because they had to search through sub-pages.
- **Add a list of schools (or a link to a list of schools) to the HS Sports home page.** This would allow users to more easily locate a specific school.

## Forums

### *High Priority:*

- **Prominently provide a definition of Forums with an “About Forums” link on the Forums menu.** Some users stated that they were unsure of exactly what a forum is or how a forum differs from a blog. Some users seemed unaware that forums are for readers to discuss topics among themselves, not for posting announcements or uploading photos to the newspaper’s site.
- **Cross-link the Classifieds and Forums sections.** Users often started with Classifieds when looking for non-paid user postings, such as event announcements or tickets to trade. After being unsuccessful in Classifieds, they were often unsure where to go next. These users would have been assisted by a link to Forums.
- **Alert users that some cookies must be enabled in order to post a new topic.** If the privacy level in Internet Explorer has been set to Block All Cookies or High, the user cannot log in to start a new topic (they are asked to enter user ID and password repeatedly).

### *Medium Priority:*

- **Change the Global Navigation label Forums to Community.** A Community label would highlight the interactive nature of this section (and the site). It would also allow the section to include other interactive features, such as a page on which users can post their event listings and upload their photos.
- **Add links to other sections of the site related to a forum.** For example, a forum about one high school’s sports could include a link to that high school’s page on the site. A forum about local bands could include a link to event listings.

## Newspaper Subscription

### *High Priority:*

- **Add subscription links to the top of the home page.** Some users did not scroll all the way to the bottom to find the subscription links.
- **Link the Subscribe icon (the picture of a newspaper) at the bottom of the home page to a page on which the user can purchase a subscription.** Currently, this icon jumps to the top of the home page. Because there are multiple papers which can be subscribed to, there may not be one central page on which to sign up for a subscription. If such a page cannot be created, then this icon should be removed or redesigned so that it is less likely to be confused with a link.

### *Medium Priority:*

- **Relabel e-mail subscription ads on the home page so that their “Subscribe” button says “Subscribe to E-Mail Newsletter”.** One user confused this with a subscribing to a newspaper.
- **On the newspaper subscription form, add a large mlive.com logo to the top left which links back to mlive.com home.** The only link back to mlive.com on these pages is the lower left “[newspaper name] on mlive.com”. Several users had to use Back or history to exit the subscription page.

### *Low Priority:*

- **Change the following on the newspaper subscription signup form:**
  - **Enter MI as the default state.** Most subscribers would be in Michigan so this would simplify the process.
  - **Change the form so that after entering the area code, it automatically advances to the phone number field.**

## Living

### *Medium Priority:*

- **Change the following on the Dining and Food section’s “Find a Restaurant or Bar” search screen:**
  - **Combine the Advanced Search and the main Restaurant Search.** Both offer nearly identical choices (in fact, the main Search includes one option “Any Type of Establishment” that the Advanced Search does not). The only additional search criteria in Advanced Search are price range and an option to enter a specific town. The formats are different (the main search uses drop-down menus, while Advanced Search uses check boxes) which may give the impression that the two searches are different, but either format could be used since both are straightforward.
  - **Prominently provide definitions of price ranges.** Users had to open Advanced Search to find what mlive.com considers an inexpensive restaurant.
  - **Provide a link to each restaurant’s web site.** Users commented that this would add to the value of the restaurant search.
  - **Integrate the keyword search with the restaurant search.** One user used keyword search to search for Thai restaurants in Ann Arbor, which retrieved four restaurants in different cities (the restaurant search resulted in several more restaurants, indicating some were not identified on the keyword search).
  - **Re-label the “Find A Business” search box on the restaurant page to “Find a Business on switchboard.com”.** Some users repeatedly used this box to search for restaurants, as if it were another mlive.com Search, apparently not noticing that this box takes the user to switchboard.com, an advertising site. Switchboard.com provides more search features so users may not return to mlive.com.
  - **Add Restaurant Search to Living on the Global Navigation.** Some users did not use the restaurant search at all since they did not find this feature.
  - **Provide an option to sort restaurants by price range.**
  - **If the Advanced Search continues to be used, make the Advanced Search button more noticeable.**

## Blogs

### *High Priority:*

- **Prominently provide a definition of Blogs with an “About Blogs” link on the Blogs menu and the Blogs directory.** Some users stated that they were unsure of exactly what a blog is, noting it could be the same as a forum. Even when asked specifically to look for a blog, some users selected Forums from global navigation.
- **Redesign the blog directory.** The current blog list is long and incorrectly categorizes many blogs. For example, users had difficulty finding “Running with Scissors”, an arts and crafts blog, because it is located under the Entertainment category instead of a more appropriate category such as Hobbies.
- **Create a directory in which blog categories can be collapsed and expanded.** This would allow users to select a category before scrolling through titles. A blog could also be listed under multiple categories.
- **Provide an option to sort blogs alphabetically.** The only user who quickly found a specific blog on this list used the browser Find so that they would not have to read the list.

See ***Appendix A: Graphics of Recommended Changes: Blog Directory*** for an example.

- **Add Blogs to Global Navigation.** Users may look for this item since they have seen blogs on the Global Navigation of other sites.
- **Add Blogs to each Global Navigation label’s submenu.** Blogs is currently located only on the Living submenu, even though there are blogs for news, sports, and travel.

### *Medium Priority:*

- **In search results, include the name of the blog in which an article is located.** If a user enters the blog title in the keyword search, their search results will retrieve articles within the blog, but the articles may not show the blog name.
- **Replace the term “web blogs” on some sidebar menus with “blogs” in order to be consistent.** A few pages use the term web blogs (including the sidebar menu which includes “About Weblogs” and “More Weblogs”).

# Usability Testing Report

## APPENDIX A: GRAPHICS OF RECOMMENDED CHANGES

Mlive.com

<http://www.mlive.com/>

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February 12, 2008

# BLOGS

## FEATURED SPORTS BLOG

### Pistons Insider

A. Sherrod Blakely brings you the inside news on the Detroit Pistons.

- [Read the latest posts](#)
- [Subscribe to this blog](#) **RSS**



## FEATURED STATEWIDE BLOG

### The Viewfinder

Citizen Patriot photographers Erik Holladay and Dave Weatherwax tell stories visually.

- [Read the latest posts](#)
- [Subscribe to this blog](#) **RSS**



## BROWSE THE MLIVE BLOGS [About Blogs](#)

### BROWSE BY TOPIC

- ▼ News & Business
  - News
  - Business
- ▼ Sports
  - Pro Sports
  - College Sports
  - High School Sports
- Technology
- ▼ Lifestyle
  - Food
  - Hobbies
    - [Home and Garden](#)
    - [Running with Needles](#)
- Entertainment

### BROWSE BY NEWSPAPER

- Ann Arbor News
- Bay City Times
- Flint Journal
- Grand Rapids Press
- Jackson Citizen Patriot
- Kalamazoo Gazette
- Muskegon Chronicle
- Saginaw News

### BROWSE BY TITLE

- A - G
- H - P
- ▼ R - Z
  - [Red Wings Insider](#)
  - [Runners Finish Line](#)
  - [Running With Needles](#)
  - [Saginaw News Extra](#)
  - [Taking Notes](#)

Revised Blog Directory showing:

- Options to browse by topic, newspaper, or title
- Ability to collapse or expand categories
- A link to "About Blogs"



Everything Michigan

Choose A Local Edition of MLive.com

**SUBSCRIBE** --- **Subscribe for Home Delivery**

Find local news, businesses and more with our **NEW SITE SEARCH:**   [RSS FEEDS](#) | [SITE INDEX](#)

- [Home](#)
- [News](#)
- [Travel](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Community](#)
- [H.S. Sports](#)
- [Living](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Blogs](#)
- [Classifieds](#)



- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Forums Home</b>  | <b>Sports Forums</b>  |
| NewsTalk            | Lions                 |
| Ann Arbor           | Pistons               |
| Bay City            | Prep Sports           |
| Dearborn            | Red Wings             |
| Detroit             | Spartans              |
| Farmington          | Tigers                |
| Flint               | Wolverines            |
| Grand Rapids        | Fantasy Football      |
| Jackson             | Hunting & Fishing     |
| Kalamazoo           | Ticket Exchange       |
| Livonia             | <b>More Forums</b>    |
| Macomb County       | Autos                 |
| Muskegon            | Business              |
| Oakland County      | Casinos               |
| Pontiac             | Entertainment         |
| Saginaw             | Gardening             |
| Southfield          | Home Fix-It           |
| Troy                | Local Bands           |
| Warren              | Recreation            |
| Wayne County        | Travel                |
| Westland            | Parenting             |
| <b>About Forums</b> | <b>Reader Photos</b>  |
|                     | <b>Event Listings</b> |

**Obama on a roll; Clinton regroups**

Obama swept four weekend contests and looks to ride momentum Tuesday's primaries, where he is in polls. Clinton hopes to slow her in Texas, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Obama takes Maine, three other primaries Clinton replaces campaign manager Clinton leads with superdelegates McCain confronts conservative hurdle Maine results | [Talk here](#) | [More Elections](#)

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Paul L. Newby

**Bitter cold hits Michigan; 1 death reported**

Temperatures fell into the single digits statewide Sunday, accompanied by gale force winds and snow. Things heat up today, with temps expected in the mid teens, but 1 to 3 inches of snow is possible across the state overnight.

- [Ottawa County Officers respond to more than 100 crashes](#)

**MICHIGAN AP UPDATES**

- [Michigan gas prices down 7 cents 2/11/2008, 9:57 a.m. EST](#)
- [Michigan gas prices down 7 cents 2/11/2008, 9:57 a.m. EST](#)
- [Red Wings TV commentator Mickey](#)

Revised Home Page showing:

- Forums relabeled as Community
- About Forums, Reader Photos and Events Listings placed under Community
- Subscription icon moved to the top of the Home Page
- Color change for the Global Navigation

# Usability Testing Report

## APPENDIX B: USABILITY TESTING SCRIPT

Mlive.com

<http://www.mlive.com/>

Christine Boltz  
Sue Senn  
February 12, 2008

## Usability Testing Script

### Introducing the Test

- Today we will be testing the mlive.com website, which is a news and information site based on several regional Michigan newspapers. The reason for this testing is to identify strengths and weaknesses in the website design so improvements can be made.
- Remember that this is a test of the web site, not of you as a user.

### Procedure

- This entire session should take about an hour.
- During the hour we'll be working through several tasks on the website.
- During each task I'll be observing you and taking notes.
- As you work through the tasks, I would like you to "think aloud". This means saying any thoughts or reactions that come to mind as you work. However, don't feel that you need to elaborate or explain what you're saying—we'll have an opportunity to discuss it when you've completed each task. If you remain silent for a while, I may occasionally prompt you to start speaking again.
- If you encounter problems or difficulties, those are exactly the problems with the design that we are trying to identify and improve. When this happens, I can't give you any help, because we're interested in how you would solve those problems on your own.
- After each task, I'll have you answer a series of questions about the experience.
- At the end of the study, I'll ask you to fill out a summary questionnaire and then we can talk about any remaining questions or concerns you have.

### Voluntary Participation & Anonymity

- I also want to remind you that participation in this study is voluntary and anonymous.
- You may choose to skip any of the questions in this study or quit the entire session at any time.

Do you have any questions?

# Usability Testing Report

## APPENDIX C: USABILITY TEST TASKS

Mlive.com

<http://www.mlive.com/>

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February 12, 2008

## Usability Testing Tasks

mlive.com

*If a user login is required for any of these tasks, please use the following:*

Username: **userzyx**

Password: **testing**

1. Subscribe to the Ann Arbor News for home delivery.
2. Locate a page on which users can post event tickets that they wish to trade.
3. Find some Thai restaurants in Ann Arbor at which the average dinner for two is less than \$25.
4. Open the article featured at the top of the home page and note the reader discussion that follows. Add your own response to this discussion.
5. Sign up to get e-mails about budget travel information.
6. Find a recent article about an Ypsilanti art class that made artwork with packing tape.
7. Locate the "Running With Needles" arts and crafts blog.
8. Upload your own photos of Ann Arbor's Huron High School girls basketball team.
9. Send a letter to the editor of the Flint Journal.
10. Post an announcement about an upcoming singing group concert.

# Usability Testing Report

## APPENDIX D: TASK QUESTIONNAIRES

Mlive.com

<http://www.mlive.com/>

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February 12, 2008

## Summary of Task Questionnaires

Completed by user after each task had been tested

### 1. **Subscribe to the Ann Arbor News for home delivery.**

#### User #1

- How hard was the task: **2**
- How quick was the task: **6**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **4**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Broken search**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Uncluttered site layout**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Fix Search**
- Additional comments: **No**

#### User #2

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **1**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Nothing, but have used other sites like this before so know that subscription info is often at bottom of the page**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Follows conventions of other sites**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Box at top to subscribe**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #3

- How hard was the task: **3**
- How quick was the task: **4**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **3**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Figuring out how to get to the Ann Arbor News**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Subscribe button**

- What could be changed to make the task easier: Home page should have a “subscribe” button
- Additional comments: It would be helpful to have a “Subscribe to Member Newspapers” label

#### User #4

- How hard was the task: 1
- How quick was the task: 4
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 1
- What was difficult in doing this task: n/a
- What was helpful in doing this task: n/a
- What could be changed to make the task easier: n/a
- Additional comments: n/a

#### User #5

- How hard was the task: 2
- How quick was the task: 2
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 1
- What was difficult in doing this task: Not very much
- What was helpful in doing this task: Easy to find.
- What could be changed to make the task easier: n/a
- Additional comments: n/a

#### User #6

- How hard was the task: 3
- How quick was the task: 4
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 1
- What was difficult in doing this task: Subscribe button on the home page didn't work
- What was helpful in doing this task: The "search" on the site for the Ann Arbor News
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Fix "subscribe" button

- Additional comments: n/a

2. **Locate a page on which users can post event tickets that they wish to trade.**

User #1

- How hard was the task: 4
- How quick was the task: 5
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 5
- What was difficult in doing this task: Forums not apparent on main page, other communication mechanism (classifieds) made me choose different paths
- What was helpful in doing this task: Site index
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Link forums and classifieds as both ways to communicate on site, fix broken stuff
- Additional comments: No

User #2

- How hard was the task: 1
- How quick was the task: 3
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 2
- What was difficult in doing this task: Nothing
- What was helpful in doing this task: Ticket exchange is a commonly understood term
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Nothing
- Additional comments:

User #3

- How hard was the task: 2
- How quick was the task: 2
- How obvious were the steps in this task: n/a
- What was difficult in doing this task: Nothing
- What was helpful in doing this task: Keyword search

- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Nothing**
- Additional comments: **None**

#### User #4

- How hard was the task: **7**
- How quick was the task: **7**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **7**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Finding instructions on how to use the forum. I had to create a new acct.**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **n/a**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Part of the problem is I've never used a "forum" and sites to post comments. It might be obvious to someone with more experience, but the novice is in over one's head.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #5

- How hard was the task: **4**
- How quick was the task: **4**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **4**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Figuring out the categories**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Classifieds are easily located**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **More clear categories in the classifieds.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #6

- How hard was the task: **6**
- How quick was the task: **6**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **2**
- What was difficult in doing this task:
- **The user name and password did not work (see notes below)**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Nothing**

- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Nothing. The task seemed pretty straight forward provided I was going to create an account myself.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

**3. Find a Thai restaurant in Ann Arbor in which the average dinner for two is less than \$25.**

User #1

- How hard was the task: **2**
- How quick was the task: **3**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **3**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Definitions of price ranges**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Category search (always good)**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Key of terms and/or link**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

User #2

- How hard was the task: **5**
- How quick was the task: **4**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **2**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Restaurants on list did not always have enough info**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Nothing because it used a routine search**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Add an option to sort the restaurants by price range.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

User #3

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **2**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **2**

- What was difficult in doing this task: **Advanced Search needs to pop out and should not be light blue.**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **List of choices to select, price definition (once found).**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Text color**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #4

- How hard was the task: **5**
- How quick was the task: **7**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **7**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Searching for the right criteria.**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **I got lucky and found the advanced search.**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Search.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #5

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **3**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **I didn't see the price range line right away. It's tucked in with the other information.**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Finding the site was quick.**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Perhaps links to the restaurant websites for more accurate pricing.**
- Additional comments:

#### User #6

- How hard was the task: **2**
- How quick was the task: **3**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Nothing**

- What was helpful in doing this task: **Nothing**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Include the price as part of the original search.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

**4. Open an article featured at the top of the homepage and note the reader discussion that follows. Add your own response to this discussion.**

User #1

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **3**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Broken pictures**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Being standard and obvious**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Not much**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

User #2

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **4**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **2**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Nothing**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Follows conventions of other web sites**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Nothing**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

User #3

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **3**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Nothing**

- What was helpful in doing this task: **Steps were evident**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Nothing**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

User #4

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **1**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **None**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **None**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **None**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

User #5

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **1**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **n/a**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Very easy to find.**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **n/a**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

User #6

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **4**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Nothing**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Nothing**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Nothing**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

## 5. Sign up to get e-mails about budget travel sent to you.

### User #1

- How hard was the task: 6
- How quick was the task: 6
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 6
- What was difficult in doing this task: A plethora of different “deal”, “budget”, “email updates,” without much of any explanation, plus no “resources”
- What was helpful in doing this task: Nothing
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Put one page with all such update travel stuff in Resources with explanations
- Additional comments: Seemed sleazy, other sites and advertising stuff overpowered sites’ own brand and operation.

### User #2

- How hard was the task: 2
- How quick was the task: 2
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 3
- What was difficult in doing this task: Figuring out whether or not had subscribed at the end.
- What was helpful in doing this task: Travel label in the top navigation.
- What could be changed to make the task easier: At the end, “Select Newsletter” is darker, so saw that first. “Thank you” should be bigger.
- Additional comments: n/a

### User #3

- How hard was the task: 1
- How quick was the task: 3
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 1
- What was difficult in doing this task: Nothing
- What was helpful in doing this task: E-mail listed on menu

- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Nothing**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #4

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **1**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **7**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Choosing the correct menu item under travel**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **n/a**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Rename Travel Home to Travel Resources to be more descriptive of what's available under each.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #5

- How hard was the task: **4**
- How quick was the task: **5**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **5**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Nothing under budget travel asked for an email.**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Online newsletter is easy to find**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Make it obvious on budget travel site that emails are available.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #6

- How hard was the task: **5**
- How quick was the task: **6**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **5**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Not being able to specify that I wanted to be notified about "budget travel" as opposed to other types.**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Nothing**

- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Have a link to get email on the "Budget Travel" page.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

**6. Find a recent article about an Ypsilanti Art class that made artwork with packing tape.**

User #1

- How hard was the task: **7**
- How quick was the task :**7**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Search was broken.**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Nothing.**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Fix search.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

User #2

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **4**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Spelling Ypsilanti.**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Search is easy to find.**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Nothing.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

User #3

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **2**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Nothing**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Search suggested correct spelling**

- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Help with entering search words**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #4

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **7**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **3**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Deciding what to put in search field.**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **I got lucky as I scanned News from Ypsilanti and found the article.**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **The search is too slow.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #5

- How hard was the task: **1**
- How quick was the task: **1**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **1**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Not easy to find specific story.**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Search bar**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **n/a**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #6

- How hard was the task: **2**
- How quick was the task: **2**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **4**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Nothing**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **The site's search engine**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Have an Ypsilanti section of the website.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

**7. Locate the "Running with Needles arts and crafts blog".**User #1

- How hard was the task: 1
- How quick was the task: 3
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 2
- What was difficult in doing this task: Big, disorganized blog list
- What was helpful in doing this task: Search in page.
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Organization of blog list.
- Additional comments: n/a

User #2

- How hard was the task: 3
- How quick was the task: 5
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 4
- What was difficult in doing this task: Finding a list of blogs.
- What was helpful in doing this task: Search window.
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Have a complete list of blogs. Not sure what convention is--if forums means blogs. Unsure of definition of blogs
- Additional comments: It said web log at one point, some users may not know that blog is the same as web log.

User #3

- How hard was the task: 7
- How quick was the task: 7
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 6
- What was difficult in doing this task: Could not find blog name on list.
- What was helpful in doing this task: Nothing
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Command on blog page to search for a specifically named blog.

- Additional comments: n/a

#### User #4

- How hard was the task: 4
- How quick was the task: 5
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 5
- What was difficult in doing this task:
- What was helpful in doing this task:
- What could be changed to make the task easier:
- Additional comments:

#### User #5

- How hard was the task: 7
- How quick was the task: 7
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 7
- What was difficult in doing this task: Couldn't find it.
- What was helpful in doing this task: The search bar helped a little, but not enough
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Maybe have lists of blogs so that users can find them.
- Additional comments: n/a

#### User #6

- How hard was the task: 3
- How quick was the task: 3
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 1
- What was difficult in doing this task: Nothing
- What was helpful in doing this task: Having "blogs" available from the "Living" Menu on the Home Page.
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Nothing
- Additional comments: n/a

8. **Upload your own photos of the Huron High School basketball team for mlive users to see.**

User #1

- How hard was the task: 5
- How quick was the task: 3
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 4
- What was difficult in doing this task: Forums broken, could not find galleries.
- What was helpful in doing this task: Nothing
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Link to Galleries and send photos together
- Additional comments: n/a

User #2

- How hard was the task: 4
- How quick was the task: 5
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 4
- What was difficult in doing this task: Finding "Send Photos" button because did not see it on page
- What was helpful in doing this task: "Send Photos", once found
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Have "Send Photos" with every category
- Additional comments: n/a

User #3

- How hard was the task: 7
- How quick was the task: 7
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 7
- What was difficult in doing this task: No instructions anywhere on how to do it
- What was helpful in doing this task: Nothing

- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Instructions on uploading photos**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #4

- How hard was the task: **7**
- How quick was the task: **5**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **7**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Never found the place where people post photos**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **n/a**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **n/a**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #5

- How hard was the task: **7**
- How quick was the task: **7**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **7**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Couldn't find it**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Girl's basketball site was easy to find.**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **In the photo gallery have an option (button) to submit your own pictures.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

#### User #6

- How hard was the task: **5**
- How quick was the task: **5**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **5**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Finding the Huron Basketball page**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Nothing**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Have a link to take you to upload photos from the Sports home page.**

- Additional comments: n/a

## 9. Send a Letter to the Editor to the Flint Journal

### User #1

- How hard was the task: 3
- How quick was the task: 3
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 3
- What was difficult in doing this task: Fuzziness over paper vs. mlive site
- What was helpful in doing this task: n/a
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Better integration between mlive, paper, etc.
- Additional comments: n/a

### User #2

- How hard was the task: 6
- How quick was the task: 6
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 7
- What was difficult in doing this task: Finding the Letters to the Editor section
- What was helpful in doing this task: Nothing—almost like they were discouraging letters
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Have a menu item or something
- Additional comments: n/a

### User #3

- How hard was the task: 1
- How quick was the task: 2
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 2
- What was difficult in doing this task: Nothing on first page, so had to select actual newspaper

- What was helpful in doing this task: When Flint page was opened, there was a "contact us" page
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Add 'How do I contact Editor" to FAQ.
- Additional comments: n/a

#### User #4

- How hard was the task: 1
- How quick was the task: 1
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 1
- What was difficult in doing this task: n/a
- What was helpful in doing this task: n/a
- What could be changed to make the task easier: n/a
- Additional comments: n/a

#### User #5

- How hard was the task: 5
- How quick was the task: 7
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 5
- What was difficult in doing this task: Emails were under a different category than I anticipated.
- What was helpful in doing this task: Once I found it, all emails were on one page
- What could be changed to make the task easier: On page where the letters to the editor are posted, put in a link for contacting the editor yourself.
- Additional comments: n/a

#### User #6

- How hard was the task: 2
- How quick was the task: 4
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 2
- What was difficult in doing this task: Equating "Voices" with editorials

- What was helpful in doing this task: **Nothing**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Nothing**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

**10. Post an announcement about an upcoming singing group concert.**

User #1

- How hard was the task: **2**
- How quick was the task: **3**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **3**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **Choosing a Forum**
- What was helpful in doing this task:
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Mouse-over forum descriptions**
- Additional comments:

User #2

- How hard was the task: **5**
- How quick was the task: **4**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **4**
- What was difficult in doing this task: **No clear guidance on what kind of announcements are available**
- What was helpful in doing this task: **Nothing**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **A button or menu item for "community announcements"**
- Additional comments:

User #3

- How hard was the task: **6**
- How quick was the task: **7**
- How obvious were the steps in this task: **7**

- What was difficult in doing this task: No specific “post entertainment” link
- What was difficult in doing this task: n/a
- What was helpful in doing this task: Nothing.
- What could be changed to make the task easier: Allow specific instructions for people to submit their invitation.
- Additional comments: n/a

User #4

- How hard was the task: 7
- How quick was the task: 4
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 7
- What was difficult in doing this task:
- What was helpful in doing this task: n/a
- What could be changed to make the task easier: n/a
- Additional comments: n/a

User #5

- How hard was the task: 1
- How quick was the task: 1
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 3
- What was difficult in doing this task: n/a
- What was helpful in doing this task: easy to find
- What could be changed to make the task easier: n/a
- Additional comments: n/a

User #6

- How hard was the task: 5
- How quick was the task: 5
- How obvious were the steps in this task: 3
- What was difficult in doing this task: Finding the link to post the announcement.

- What was helpful in doing this task: **Nothing**
- What could be changed to make the task easier: **Having the link to forums be a larger font; more noticeable.**
- Additional comments: **n/a**

# Usability Testing Report

## APPENDIX E: OVERALL WEB SITE EVALUATIONS

Mlive.com

<http://www.mlive.com/>

Christine Boltz  
Sue Senn  
February 12, 2008

## Summary of Overall Website Evaluation

- Quality of Experience:
  - Ease of use: 5/2/4/5/3/4
  - Load speed: 7/na/4/5/1/1
  - Interesting: 6/2/2/2/2/4
  - Efficiency: 6/2/4/7/3/3
  
- Navigation:
  - Organization: 6/2/4/6/3/2
  - Labeling: 6/3/2
  - Finding specifics: 4/3/6/6/5/4
  - Clear categories: 2/2/4/6/3/4
  
- Layout and Appearance:
  - Attractiveness: 2/2/3/7/2/4
  - Reading ease: 2/2/3/3/1/5
  - Focused/distracting: 3/2/3/3/2/4
  - Simple/cluttered:4/4/4/5/1/4
  
- Content:
  - Usefulness: 3/1/3/3/2/3
  - Info value: 3/1/4/2/2/3
  - Comprehensive/incomplete: na/4/4/2/2/3
  - Instructions: 7/4/5/6/2/4
  - Info relevancy:3/1/4/2/3/4

What do you consider the most valuable aspect of the website?

1: Restaurant search

- 2: Easy source of current local information, combined several small newspapers
- 3: n/a
- 4: The vast amount of information available. Very comprehensive.
- 5: Category bars across the top (global nav)
- 6: The search engine

What is the biggest problem with the website?

- 1: So much broken (probably IE)
- 2: Nothing
- 3: No instructions or links for accomplishing common tasks such as announcing upcoming public events.
- 4: Not intuitively organized
- 5: Difficult to find specifics
- 6: Getting to the right place to upload photos.

What parts of the site would you be most likely to visit again?

- 1: Restaurant search
- 2: Home page—news, entertainment
- 3: Visit specific newspaper web sites
- 4: ?
- 5: News
- 6: None

Would you recommend this site to someone else?

- 1: No
- 2: Yes
- 3: Yes
- 4: No
- 5: Probably not.

6: If they were interested in local Ann Arbor Information

Additional Comments:

1: n/a

2: n/a

3: n/a

4: Parts were very easy, but the disorganized parts were very frustrating and overshadowed the good.

5: n/a

6: n/a

Overall impressions of tester:

1. The mlive site has many useful features but users are unable to find them for various reasons. Some difficulties arise because of confusion between the mlive site and the individual newspapers. Users experienced quite a bit of disorientation at various points during the testing.
2. There are some issues with the search engine. Sometimes it is very sluggish and other times it brings up completely irrelevant topics. For the most part users were able to successfully use the search engine, but coming up with irrelevant results were frustrating for users.

# Usability Testing Report

## APPENDIX F: USER DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEYS

Mlive.com

<http://www.mlive.com/>

Christine Boltz  
Sue Senn  
February 12, 2008

## Demographics Survey Summary

### 1. Age:

	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
Under 18					X (age=17)	
18-20						
21-30						
31-40	X					
41-50				X		X
51-60						
61-70		X	X			
71 and above						

### 2. Gender:

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
M	F	M	F	F	M

**3. City and State in Which You Live:**

<b>User 1</b>	Ann Arbor, Michigan
<b>User 2</b>	Perrysburg, OH
<b>User 3</b>	Perrysburg, OH
<b>User 4</b>	Ann Arbor, Michigan
<b>User 5</b>	Ann Arbor, Michigan
<b>User 6</b>	Ann Arbor, Michigan

**4. Job Title:**

<b>User 1</b>	Applications Programmer/Analyst
<b>User 2</b>	Retired Auditor
<b>User 3</b>	Retired
<b>User 4</b>	Homemaker
<b>User 5</b>	Student
<b>User 6</b>	Engineer

**5. Ethnic Background:**

*C=Caucasian N=Native American H=Hispanic AA=African American*

*A=Asian O=Other*

<b>User 1</b>	<b>User 2</b>	<b>User 3</b>	<b>User 4</b>	<b>User 5</b>	<b>User 6</b>
C	C	C	C	C	C

**6. Your Highest Level of Education:***H=High school C=College G=Graduate P=Post-graduate*

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
G	G	G	G	H	G

**7. Marital Status:***S=Single M=Married D=Divorced W=Widowed O=Other*

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
M	M	M	M	S	M

**8. Do you have Internet access at work?**

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
Y	Y	n/a	Y	Y	Y

**9. Do you have Internet access at home?**

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

**10. On the following scale please circle your general computing ability:***Novice    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    Expert*

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
7	5	4	4	4	7

11. On the following scale please circle your web browsing ability:

*Novice*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Expert*

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
7	6	5	5	5	6

12. Which web browser do you usually use?

	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
Internet Explorer		X	X	X	X	X
Firefox	X				X	
Other (specify)						

13. How often do you use the web?

	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
>5 hr/day	X					
2-5 hr/day		X		X	X	
0-2 hr/day			X			X
3-5 hr/week						
<3 hr/week						
Unsure						

**14. Which activities do you use the web for? (check all that apply)**

	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
<b>News</b>	X	X	X		X	X
<b>Information</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Research (personal)</b>	X	X	X	X		X
<b>Research (work/school)</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Shopping</b>	X	X		X		X
<b>Communities</b>		X			X	
<b>Banking/ Investing</b>	X	X	X	X		X
<b>Gaming</b>	X					
<b>Other (specify)</b>	X					

**15. Have you ever maintained a web site?**

	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
<b>Personal Web Site</b>	X			X		
<b>Work Web Site</b>	X					
<b>No</b>		X	X		X	X

**16. Age:**

	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
Under 18					X (age=17)	
18-20						
21-30						
31-40	X					
41-50				X		X
51-60						
61-70		X	X			
71 and above						

**17. Gender:**

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
M	F	M	F	F	M

**18. City and State in Which You Live:**

<b>User 1</b>	Ann Arbor, Michigan
<b>User 2</b>	Perrysburg, OH
<b>User 3</b>	Perrysburg, OH
<b>User 4</b>	Ann Arbor, Michigan
<b>User 5</b>	Ann Arbor, Michigan
<b>User 6</b>	Ann Arbor, Michigan

**19. Job Title:**

<b>User 1</b>	Applications Programmer/Analyst
<b>User 2</b>	Retired Auditor
<b>User 3</b>	Retired
<b>User 4</b>	Homemaker
<b>User 5</b>	Student
<b>User 6</b>	Engineer

**20. Ethnic Background:**

*C=Caucasian N=Native American H=Hispanic AA=African American  
A=Asian O=Other*

<b>User 1</b>	<b>User 2</b>	<b>User 3</b>	<b>User 4</b>	<b>User 5</b>	<b>User 6</b>
C	C	C	C	C	C

**21. Your Highest Level of Education:**

*H=High school C=College G=Graduate P=Post-graduate*

<b>User 1</b>	<b>User 2</b>	<b>User 3</b>	<b>User 4</b>	<b>User 5</b>	<b>User 6</b>
G	G	G	G	H	G

**22. Marital Status:**

*S=Single M=Married D=Divorced W=Widowed O=Other*

<b>User 1</b>	<b>User 2</b>	<b>User 3</b>	<b>User 4</b>	<b>User 5</b>	<b>User 6</b>
M	M	M	M	S	M

**23. Do you have Internet access at work?**

<b>User 1</b>	<b>User 2</b>	<b>User 3</b>	<b>User 4</b>	<b>User 5</b>	<b>User 6</b>
Y	Y	n/a	Y	Y	Y

**24. Do you have Internet access at home?**

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

**25. On the following scale please circle your general computing ability:**

*Novice*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Expert*

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
7	5	4	4	4	7

**26. On the following scale please circle your web browsing ability:**

*Novice*    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    *Expert*

User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
7	6	5	5	5	6

**27. Which web browser do you usually use?**

	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
<b>Internet Explorer</b>		X	X	X	X	X
<b>Firefox</b>	X				X	
<b>Other (specify)</b>						

**28. How often do you use the web?**

	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
>5 hr/day	X					
2-5 hr/day		X		X	X	
0-2 hr/day			X			X
3-5 hr/week						
<3 hr/week						
Unsure						

**29. Which activities do you use the web for? (check all that apply)**

	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
News	X	X	X		X	X
Information	X	X	X	X	X	X
Research (personal)	X	X	X	X		X
Research (work/school)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shopping	X	X		X		X
Communities		X			X	
Banking/ Investing	X	X	X	X		X
Gaming	X					
Other (specify)	X					

**30. Have you ever maintained a web site?**

	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4	User 5	User 6
<b>Personal Web Site</b>	X			X		
<b>Work Web Site</b>	X					
<b>No</b>		X	X		X	X

# Usability Testing Report

## APPENDIX G: TABLE OF CAMTASIA COUNTER MARKERS

Mlive.com

<http://www.mlive.com/>

Christine Boltz  
Sue Senn  
February 12, 2008

**Camtasia Counter Markers  
By Task**

The following lists the range of time (hh:mm:ss) of the attached video files in which each user attempted to complete each task.

Task Number	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4 *	User 5 *	User 6 *
1	00:46 - 07:04	2:13 - 5:55	01:04 - 07:18	0:09 - 3:00	0:06 - 2:40	0:06 - 5:00
2	07:05 - 20:49	36:10 - 40:00	36:40 - 37:45	3:15 - 9:00	3:40 - 6:10	7:40 - 15:10
3	21:35 - 28:50	7:00 - 19:12	07:22 - 12:20	12:00 - 18:15	7:40 - 9:28	19:15 - 21:00
4	29:00 - 32:15	19:23 - 23:40	15:06 - 17:23	19:45 - 24:00	10:50 - 12:00	22:10 - 24:00
5	32:18 - 45:10	40:30 - 48:08	38:50 - 41:00	24:30 - 26:50	12:18 - 15:35	24:45 - 30:00
6	45:11 - 54:12	24:23 - 26:43	19:00 - 20:50	28:45 - 34:50	17:10 - 18:50	32:00 - 34:30
7	54:13 - 59:05	27:05 - 35:48	23:35 - 32:49	36:00 - 38:35	19:40 - 24:00	35:15 - 36:25
8	59:09 - 01:09:21	48:10 - 54:50	42:20 - 51:45	39:23 - 45:35	25:10 - 28:40	37:40 - 42:20
9	01:09:39 - 01:15:35	55:00 - 1:06:06	53:40 - 55:45	46:00 - 46:45	29:50 - 34:50	44:40 - 46:00
10	01:15:40 - end	1:06:30 - end	58:25 - end	47:05 - end	36:10 - end	47:30 - end

\* Due to Camtasia recording difficulties, the audio for users 4 - 6 may lag behind their video recordings.

**Camtasia Counter Markers  
By Recommendation**

Recommendation	User 1	User 2	User 3
<b>Global Navigation:</b>			
<i>High priority:</i>			
Use a different color for the global navigation	Facilitator's General Observation	Facilitator's General Observation	
Test global navigation menus in Firefox and other browsers	Facilitator's General Observation		
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Global navigation should be consistent throughout site	Facilitator's General Observation		
<b>Integration of newspapers and mlive.com site:</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Provide a list of cities covered by each newspaper	n/a	n/a	n/a
Filter content if user chooses "Local Edition"	48:00 - 50:37	n/a	n/a
<i>Low Priority:</i>			
Create a central directory for contacts for mlive and affiliate papers	n/a	56:10 - 01:11:04	55:00 - 55:45
<b>News</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
"Send Letter to Editor" contact to pages which features newspaper Letters to the Editor	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Travel</b>			
<i>Low Priority:</i>			
Rename "Travel Resources" as "Travel Guides" or "Travel Directory"	32:34 - 34:03	n/a	n/a
Add "Travel Deals and News" to Travel section of the global navigation	34:50 - 35:15	n/a	n/a

**Camtasia Counter Markers  
By Recommendation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>User 1</b>	<b>User 2</b>	<b>User 3</b>
<b>Entertainment</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
On the Arts and Events page, make the "Submit a Listing" button more noticeable	n/a	n/a	55:24 - 1:00:10
<b>Classifieds</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Allow the mlive user ID and password to be used when placing a classified ad	09:12 - 09:40	n/a	n/a
<b>Search</b>			
<i>High Priority:</i>			
Alert users that cookies must be enabled to use Search	09:28 - 09:40	n/a	n/a
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Improve search results	n/a	7:55 - 8:30	27:00 - 27:50
<b>Email Newsletters</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Provide one menu of all newsletters and a description of each	36:00 - 37:50	41:17 - 42:00	39:25 - 40:29
Standardize e-mail newsletter sign-up procedures	36:00 - 39:07	42:26 - 44:50	n/a
Provide clearer confirmation after user has subscribed to email	n/a	43:09 - 44:50	n/a
Remove newsletters from the section labeled "Advertising"	39:00 - 41:09	n/a	n/a

**Camtasia Counter Markers  
By Recommendation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>User 1</b>	<b>User 2</b>	<b>User 3</b>
<b>High School Sports</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Cross-link the different sections to which users can upload photos	01:05:18 - 01:05:45	51:40 - 52:18	n/a
Add to the "Send Us Your Photos" a link to the gallery page	01:05:56 - 01:06:35	n/a	n/a
Add a "Send Photos" link to the HS Sports Home Page	n/a	n/a	n/a
Add a list of schools (or a link to a list) to the HS Home Page	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Forums</b>			
<i>High Priority:</i>			
Prominently provide a definition of Forums	n/a	39:15 - 39:20	n/a
Cross link Classifieds and Forum sections	12:25 - 12:43	36:45 - 36:55	n/a
Alert users that some cookies must be enabled in order to post a new topic	13:00 - 14:27	n/a	n/a
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Change the global navigation label "Forums" to "Community"	Facilitator's General	Observation	
Add links to other sections of the site related to a Forum	01:01:23 - 01:04:00	50:23 - 51:00	n/a
<b>Newspaper Subscription</b>			
<i>High Priority:</i>			
Add subscription links to the top of the Home Page	n/a	n/a	04:30 - 05:09
Subscription icon should link to a page on which the user can purchase a subscription	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Relabel "Subscribe" to "Subscribe to E-Mail Newsletter"	n/a	n/a	02:11 - 02:20
On newspaper subscription form, add an mlive logo link back to the mlive Home Page	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Low Priority:</i>			
Enter MI as the default State	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change form so that after entering the area code, it advances to the phone number field	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Camtasia Counter Markers  
By Recommendation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>User 1</b>	<b>User 2</b>	<b>User 3</b>
<b>Living</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Combine Advanced Search and the main Restaurant Search	n/a	n/a	n/a
Prominently provide definitions of price ranges	23:25 - 26:25	n/a	09:49 - 10:04
Provide a link to each restaurant's web site in restaurant listing	n/a	13:55 - 14:15	n/a
Integrate keyword search with restaurant search	n/a	7:55 - 8:30	n/a
Relabel "Find a Business" search to "Find a Business on switchboard.com"	n/a	12:28 - 15:52	30:26 - 31:29
Add Restaurant Search to Living on global navigation	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provide an option to sort restaurants by price range	23:56 - 25:00	n/a	n/a
Make Advanced Search button more noticeable if it continues to be used	n/a	n/a	13:46 - 13:58
<b>Blogs</b>			
<i>High Priority:</i>			
Prominently provide a definition of Blogs	n/a	34:35 - 35:20	n/a
Redesign blog directory	n/a	32:18 - 32:20	24:30 - 26:55
Add Blogs to the global navigation	n/a	35:35 - 35:40	n/a
Add Blogs to every global navigation menu	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Search results should include the name of the blog where the article is located	n/a	29:30 - 30:20	29:20 - 30:06
Replace the term "web blogs" with "blogs" to be consistent	n/a	35:20 - 35:35	n/a

**Camtasia Counter Markers  
By Recommendation**

Recommendation	User 4	User 5	User 6
<b>Global Navigation:</b>			
<i>High priority:</i>			
Use a different color for the global navigation	Facilitator's General Observation		
Test global navigation menus in Firefox and other browsers	Facilitator's General Observation		
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Global navigation should be consistent throughout site	Facilitator's General Observation		
<b>Integration of newspapers and mlive.com site:</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Provide a list of cities covered by each newspaper	29:00-29:20	18:00-19:00	34:45-35:18
Filter content if user chooses "Local Edition"	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Low Priority:</i>			
Create a central directory for contacts for mlive and affiliate papers	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>News</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
"Send Letter to Editor" contact to pages which features newspaper Letters to the Editor	n/a	29:50-34:50	45:40-49:00
<b>Travel</b>			
<i>Low Priority:</i>			
Rename "Travel Resources" as "Travel Guides" or "Travel Directory"	27:00-27:30	n/a	24:45-30:00
Add "Travel Deals and News" to Travel section of the global navigation	24:30-26:50	12:18-15:35	n/a

**Camtasia Counter Markers  
By Recommendation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>User 4</b>	<b>User 5</b>	<b>User 6</b>
<b>Entertainment</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
On the Arts and Events page, make the "Submit a Listing" button more noticeable	48:42-49:42	n/a	49:00-50:30
<b>Classifieds</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Allow the mlive user ID and password to be used when placing a classified ad	n/a	n/a	9:45-10:45
<b>Search</b>			
<i>High Priority:</i>			
Alert users that cookies must be enabled to use Search	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Improve search results	13:00-13:30	n/a	n/a
<b>Email Newsletters</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Provide one menu of all newsletters and a description of each	n/a	n/a	24:45-25:51
Standardize e-mail newsletter sign-up procedures	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provide clearer confirmation after user has subscribed to email	n/a	n/a	n/a
Remove newsletters from the section labeled "Advertising"	n/a	13:00-14:00	25:51-26:40

**Camtasia Counter Markers  
By Recommendation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>User 4</b>	<b>User 5</b>	<b>User 6</b>
<a href="#">High School Sports</a>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Cross-link the different sections to which users can upload photos	39:23-45:35	29:50-34:50	37:40-42:20
Add to the "Send Us Your Photos" a link to the gallery page	39:23-45:35	29:50-34:50	37:40-42:20
Add a "Send Photos" link to the HS Sports Home Page	39:23-45:35	29:50-34:50	37:40-42:20
Add a list of schools (or a link to a list) to the HS Home Page	39:23-45:35	29:50-34:50	37:40-42:20
<a href="#">Forums</a>			
<i>High Priority:</i>			
Prominently provide a definition of Forums	n/a	n/a	n/a
Cross link Classifieds and Forum sections	n/a	4:45-6:10	7:49-10:45
Alert users that some cookies must be enabled in order to post a new topic	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Change the global navigation label "Forums" to "Community"	Facilitator's General Observation		
Add links to other sections of the site related to a Forum	n/a	n/a	50:30-51:38
<a href="#">Newspaper Subscription</a>			
<i>High Priority:</i>			
Add subscription links to the top of the Home Page	n/a	n/a	n/a
Subscription icon should link to a page on which the user can purchase a subscription	n/a	n/a	0:25-2:00
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Relabel "Subscribe" to "Subscribe to E-Mail Newsletter"	n/a	n/a	n/a
On newspaper subscription form, add an mlive logo link back to the mlive Home Page	2:39-3:05	2:40-2:55	4:30-5:00
<i>Low Priority:</i>			
Enter MI as the default State	n/a	n/a	3:00-3:25
Change form so that after entering the area code, it advances to the phone number field	1:45-2:00	n/a	n/a

**Camtasia Counter Markers  
By Recommendation**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>User 4</b>	<b>User 5</b>	<b>User 6</b>
<b>Living</b>			
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Combine Advanced Search and the main Restaurant Search	16:45-18:15	8:10-9:28	19:15-20:30
Prominently provide definitions of price ranges	16:30-17:30	8:38-8:48	19:15-21:10
Provide a link to each restaurant's web site in restaurant listing	n/a	8:55-9:10	n/a
Integrate keyword search with restaurant search	13:00-13:32	8:10-9:28	n/a
Relabel "Find a Business" search to "Find a Business on switchboard.com"	n/a	n/a	n/a
Add Restaurant Search to Living on global navigation	13:15-14:00	7:40-8:10	n/a
Provide an option to sort restaurants by price range	n/a	8:10-9:28	n/a
Make Advanced Search button more noticeable if it continues to be used	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Blogs</b>			
<i>High Priority:</i>			
Prominently provide a definition of Blogs	n/a	n/a	35:30-35:51
Redesign blog directory	n/a	n/a	n/a
Add Blogs to the global navigation	n/a	n/a	n/a
Add Blogs to every global navigation menu	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Medium Priority:</i>			
Search results should include the name of the blog where the article is located	n/a	21:20-24:00	n/a
Replace the term "web blogs" with "blogs" to be consistent	n/a	n/a	n/a