



Dear ,

Welcome to the Marketing Minute, our email newsletter.

WHO WE ARE: LevinsonBlock LLC is marketing and design firm that has specialized in non profits for over 20 years. Our approach is pragmatic: we help our clients connect with their audiences and make money. Visit us [here](#).

WHAT WE DO: brand strategy and branding; persuasive content; print (such as annual reports, event promotion, periodicals); and usability-focused websites.

If you have marketing questions or a topic you would like us to address in a future issue, [email us here!](#)



Web usability checklist

Why Usability?

Usability is our guiding principle in website development. Why are we obsessed with usability? Because unless a website is usable, it won't achieve your objectives. It can even be harmful to your organization. A confusing, frustrating and inarticulate site will drive users away from you -- and may create a perception that your brand is less professional, less efficient, less committed than it actually is.

Websites are a special kind of software. Users come to your site and need to understand how to operate that software right away. They come to perform tasks, such as finding the information they need on the website; purchasing an item; or joining an email list. Very few users have the time or inclination to figure out a difficult interface, or find hidden information. If the website lacks usability, they will leave.

As Jakob Nielsen, a leading usability expert says: "On the Web, usability is a necessary

condition for survival." To view articles by him, click [here](#).

The Checklist

Take a moment to look at your website: here are some of the most important usability items.

If you don't have time to do this yourself, we'd be happy to informally review your website at no charge or obligation. Just click [here](#), and we'll set it up.

1. *Utility*: Does your website do what users need? For example, if you are a non profit, is there an easy donation path? Is the content what your audience needs and expects to find?

2. *Navigation*: Is the navigation where users expect it to be? Navigation is typically at the top of the page, or along the left-hand side. If you have a non-standard configuration, there needs to be a very good reason! The navigation should be clear and answer three questions: Where am I? Where have I been? and Where can I go?



Consistency: JobsFirst NYC home and interior pages

3. *Consistency*: throughout the website, make sure you use a consistent design and layout for each page on your site. This means using the same brand style, consistent navigation, and consistent link behavior. If users find your website through search engines such as Google, they may enter it through an interior page -- so there should be no doubt what website they are on.



Redundancy: Left: Menu and page titles. Right: breadcrumb menu

4. *Redundancy*. Users need as many clues as possible so they understand where they are in a website. For example, page names should be the same as the navigation names. Breadcrumb menus help a visitor understand the website structure as well.

5. *Use web clichés*: You see these pages on most websites: "About Us", "Contact Us", "Shopping Cart". These may be clichés, but they help users perform tasks quickly.

FACT OF THE MONTH

Most American car horns honk in the key of F.

LevinsonBlock News

We are excited to announce we are starting development of a progress report for The Public Library of Science, a leading open access organization producing scientific journals.

Yes, we do usability! For more information about website usability, communications and branding, SEO or print design, call or email me:

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Fact of the Month courtesy Paul Michael Neuman; www.froggyumpkin.com

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