Research on Financial Web Sites Designed for Teenagers

(Focus on the KidsInvest Web Site)

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We would like to thank the following people for their assistance with the project:

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IIT UTEC (Usability Testing and Evaluation Center) conducted a research project to evaluate financial web sites designed for teenagers to make recommendations to improve the KidsInvest web site.
Introduction | Project Background

• What is the KidsInvest web site?

• A web site of the Securities Department of the Illinois Secretary of State initiated to educate teenagers in the basics of financial issues
Introduction | Project Goals

• Discover insights that will help improve the KidsInvest web site

• Research directives
  • Types of financial content
  • Appropriate level of content
  • Type of visuals that are most appealing
  • Type of navigation design that is most effective
Research Methodology

• Establishing research criteria
  Content vs. Navigation

• Defining the target population
  Students between 9-12th grade
  Students who have had part-time jobs
  Students who have access to the Internet
• Identifying, Selecting, and Analyzing web sites

  15 good educational web sites for kids
  8 good financial web sites for teenagers
  2 best sites regarding interactive vs. informative
Research Methodology (continued)

• Identifying, Selecting, and Analyzing web sites
  15 good educational web sites for kids
  8 good financial web sites for teenagers
  2 best sites regarding interactive vs. informative

• Contacting participating schools
  Women’s Leadership Charter School
  The De LaSalle High School Computer Club
  Whitney-Young Magnet High School
Research Methodology (continued)

- Identifying, Selecting, and Analyzing web sites
  - 15 good educational web sites for kids
  - 8 good financial web sites for teenagers
  - 2 best sites regarding interactive vs. informative

- Contacting participating schools
  - Women’s Leadership Charter School
  - The De LaSalle High School Computer Club
  - Whitney-Young Magnet High School

- Preparing usability materials
Findings | Phase 1. Analysis of 15 web sites for kids

• Emerging patterns of 15 websites:
  • Web sites that are highly educational tended to be less interactive
  • Web sites that are interactive integrated some entertainment aspect to its content delivery
  • Interactive web sites tended to have an organized step-by-step content and a better navigation structure
Findings | Phase 2. Elimination of web sites

• We eliminated web sites for 2 reasons:
  • Outside the target population
  • Technical restriction in the high school environment
    (e.g. flash, speed of internet connection etc)
Findings | Phase 2. Analysis of 8 selected web sites

• Based on the criterion of the targeted user group (high school students)

• Young investors network
• Stock Quest
• Lava Mind
• Think Quest
• There is something about money
• Kid Stock
• Money Cents
• TeenAnalyst.com
Findings | Phase 2. Analysis of 8 selected web sites (cont.)

• Main patterns of 8 selected web sites
  • Stock information is a main subject
  • Contents include information not only for teenagers but also for educators, such as teachers and parents
  • Interactivity includes a virtual experience, such as building a portfolio and buying and selling stocks
  • Connection with a real context, such as a class room
Findings | Phase 3. Analysis of two best practice web sites for kids

• Best of the best
  • Focused on both content and navigation
  • Selected one informative web site
  • Selected one interactive web site
Findings | Phase 3. Analysis of two best practice web sites for kids

• YoungInvestor.com
  Highly interactive

• Content
  • Clear division between entertaining and informative
  • Easy and simple games

• Navigation
  • Well-defined content structure
  • Graphic style can attract kids interest
  • Clear navigation structure
Findings | Phase 3. Analysis of two best practice web sites for kids

- YoungInvestor.com
Findings | Phase 3. Analysis of two best practice web sites for kids

- **Yourmoney.cba.ca**
  - Highly educational

- **Content**
  - Rich information about financial issues with simple, plain language
  - Practical information related to daily financial activities

- **Navigation**
  - Step-by-step content and navigation structure
  - Effectively integrated content structure
  - Subtle graphics
Findings | Phase 3. Analysis of two best practice web sites for kids

• Yourmoney.cba.ca
Conclusions

• Text
Conclusions

• Text
Next Steps

- Text
Next Steps

• Text
Next Steps

- Text