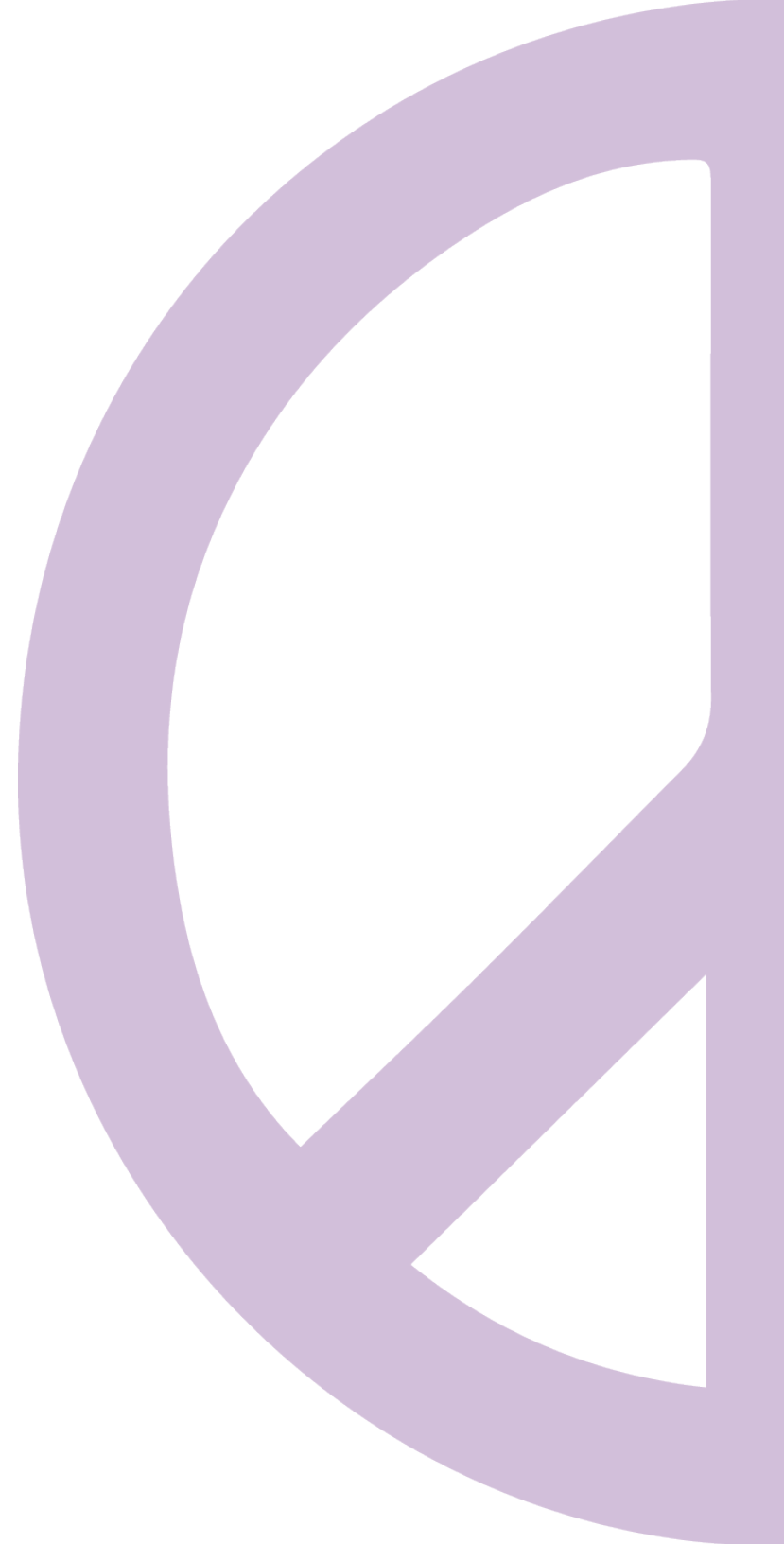


# **Craigslist**

# **Usability Report**

Kelly Prendergast  
Quinnipiac University  
Understanding Your Audience  
Spring 2025



# Executive Summary

This report presents a series of user experience tests and studies conducted to assess and enhance the Craigslist website. These evaluations were performed in-person and remotely with a diverse pool of participants, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The study examined key aspects of the website's usability, including navigation, content organization, visual design, and overall functionality. Detailed findings, data analysis, and insights are provided within this report, along with recommendations for improvement. While Craigslist remains a widely used platform for on-line classifieds, the research highlights areas where refinements could enhance user experience and accessibility.

## Method of Evaluation

The following approaches were used to collect user feedback:

1. **Competitive Analysis**
2. **Personas**
3. **User Interviews**
4. **User Surveys**
5. **Diary Studies**
6. **Card Sorts**
7. **Heuristic Evaluation**
8. **Usability Testing**

## Analysis Results

### Competitive Analysis

The competitive analysis of the Craigslist website highlighted its no-nonsense, straightforward approach, which aligns with its long-standing identity as an on-line marketplace. However, its outdated interface and lack of modern user experience features may hinder engagement, particularly for newer users accustomed to app-based marketplaces. The minimal design, while functional, can lead to navigation challenges, making it harder to filter and find specific listings efficiently. Additionally, the absence of built-in payment processing and buyer/seller verification raises security concerns, potentially deterring users who prioritize safety and convenience in on-line transactions.

### Card Sorting Study

The card-sorting analysis of Craigslist revealed patterns in how users group categories. Users consistently grouped community features into a "Community Hub", while marketplace sections were seen as interconnected. Engagement features pointed to a need for improved profile-based navigation. Safety elements also formed a cluster, emphasizing the importance of clear security measures. The findings suggest Craigslist should consolidate related categories and improve navigation for a more intuitive experience.

### Usability Testing Sessions

The usability study revealed further recommendations to improve the Craigslist website. While users found the site efficient, they often described the design as outdated and cluttered, with excessive text that hindered navigation. Key issues identified included the outdated layout and lack of clear hierarchy, which made it difficult for users to quickly find relevant sections. Overall, the study emphasized the need for a more streamlined, user-friendly design with clearer navigation, improved functionality, and enhanced security measures.



## Recommendations

Based on the research completed in this report, recommendations have been made to improve the overall usability of the Craigslist website. These include simplifying the homepage, enhancing search functionality, improved category navigation and added security features. Future updates to the website should focus on the following:

1. **Simplify Homepage Design:** Reduce clutter and focus on essential features to make the homepage more visually appealing and easier to navigate.
2. **Implement Clearer Navigation:** Organize categories more logically and provide a clear, consistent navigation structure to help users find what they need faster.
3. **Enhance Search Functionality:** Improve the search bar with advanced filters for categories, price range, location, and other key criteria, making it more intuitive.
4. **Improve Category Grouping:** Group related categories more clearly to reduce confusion and streamline navigation.
5. **Design a Mobile-Optimized Version:** Ensure the website is fully optimized for mobile, with an easy-to-use interface and responsive design that matches the desktop version.
6. **Integrate User Ratings and Reviews:** Introduce a rating and review system for buyers and sellers to help users assess the credibility of listings and profiles.
7. **Provide Seller Verification:** Offer a feature to verify sellers, helping build trust among users.
8. **Simplify the Posting Process:** Streamline the posting process with clear, easy-to-follow steps and mandatory fields like price and images to ensure consistency in listings.
9. **Clarify Buying and Selling Processes:** Make the transaction process clearer by adding detailed instructions and security features, particularly around email and phone number sharing.
10. **Add a Dedicated “Home” Button:** Provide a clear, consistent “Home” button in the navigation menu to make it easier for users to return to the homepage without relying on the back button.
11. **Reduce Redundant Buttons:** Eliminate duplicate buttons, such as multiple “Post an Ad” buttons, to declutter the interface.
12. **Improve Listing Organization:** Allow users to sort listings by various factors like date posted, price, and location to make browsing more efficient.
13. **Introduce Better Filtering on Resource Pages:** Make resource pages (ex., jobs, housing) more organized with clearer filters for sorting posts by categories or keywords.
14. **Enhance Security Features:** Add additional security features such as two-factor authentication for users to protect their accounts and transactions.
15. **Make the Flagging/Reporting System Transparent:** Provide users with more transparency on the flagging process, including a section for them to write why they’re flagging/reporting and what happens after a post is flagged and why it’s important.
16. **Improve Accessibility:** Ensure that the website meets accessibility standards, including clear fonts, color contrast, and keyboard navigation for users with disabilities.
17. **Add a “Save for Later” Feature:** Implement the option for users to save listings and revisit them later.
18. **Create Personalized User Dashboards:** Allow users to easily access and manage their saved searches, listings, and preferences from a personal dashboard.
19. **Introduce Clearer Communication Channels:** Add a direct messaging feature between buyers and sellers, allowing users to communicate securely within the platform rather than relying on external emails.





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# Introduction

Craigslist is a US-based on-line marketplace platform that primarily serves as a community-driven marketplace for buying, selling, and trading goods and services. Founded in 1995, Craigslist has maintained its minimalist design and straightforward functionality, offering users an easy-to-navigate platform for a variety of categories, including jobs, housing, personals, and local events.

While the platform's design hasn't undergone significant changes over the years, Craigslist remains one of the most popular on-line platforms due to its no-cost listings and wide-reaching accessibility. The company's philosophy focuses on simplicity, efficiency, and fostering a community-oriented marketplace, while steering clear of advertising-heavy models seen on many modern websites. Despite the competition from newer, flashier platforms, Craigslist's dedication to a user-driven, ad-free experience allows it to stand apart, continuing to serve millions of users each month.




## About the Company

Craigslist, established in 1995 by Craig Newmark, is an on-line platform designed to connect people through classified advertisements.

<https://www.craigslist.org>

Originally created as an email distribution list for local events in San Francisco, Craigslist quickly expanded into a comprehensive marketplace offering categories such as jobs, housing, goods for sale, services, gigs, and community activities. The platform is known for its minimalist design and direct approach to facilitating transactions and connections. Headquartered in San Francisco, California, Craigslist operates in cities and regions worldwide, emphasizing local interactions. Despite its simplicity, the site has had a significant impact on how people buy, sell, and connect on-line, becoming one of the most well-known classified ad services globally.



**craigslist**<sup>®</sup>

US Canada Europe Asia/Pacific/Middle East Oceania Latin America Africa

**craigslist sites worldwide**

**US**

<b>Alabama</b> auburn birmingham dothan florence / muscle shoals gadsden-anniston huntsville / decatur mobile montgomery tuscaloosa	<b>Illinois</b> bloomington-normal champain urbana chicago decatur la saie co mattoon-charleston peoria rockford southern illinois springfield western IL	<b>Montana</b> billings bozeman butte great falls helena kalispell missoula eastern montana	<b>Rhode Island</b> rhode island
<b>Alaska</b> anchorage / mat-su fairbanks kenai peninsula southeast alaska	<b>Indiana</b> bloomington evansville fort wayne indianapolis kokomo lafayette / west lafayette muncie / anderson richmond south bend / michiana terre haute	<b>Nebraska</b> grand island lincoln north platte omaha / council bluffs scottsbuff / panhandle	<b>South Carolina</b> charleston columbia florence greenville / upstate hilton head myrtle beach
<b>Arizona</b> flagstaff / sedona mohave county phoenix prescott show low	<b>Nevada</b> elko las vegas reno / latooe	<b>South Dakota</b> northeast SD pierre / central SD rapid city / west SD sioux falls / SE SD south dakota	<b>Tennessee</b> chattanooga clarksville

*“Craigslist does serve as a platform where people help each other for the basics, and also, shows people that the Internet is good for mutual support. I do feel pretty good about that.”*

- Craig Newmark,  
 Founder of Craigslist



## About the Website

The purpose of Craigslist is to serve as a centralized hub for connecting individuals and communities through advertisements. It enables users to find local opportunities for buying and selling items, securing housing, offering or seeking services, and engaging in job searches. By fostering direct interactions between parties, Craigslist provides a space for commerce, collaboration, and community engagement, making it a versatile platform for addressing various everyday needs.

## Key Website Elements

**Extensive Categories:** A wide range of sections, including jobs, housing, services, items for sale, and community events, catering to diverse needs.

**Geographic Segmentation:** Listings organized by location, allowing users to find opportunities or goods specific to their area.

**Direct Communication:** A system for connecting buyers and sellers or service providers and seekers without intermediaries, fostering straightforward interactions.

The screenshot shows the Craigslist website for the 'new haven' location. The interface includes a search bar, a 'post an ad' button, and an event calendar. The main content area is organized into several categories: community, housing, services, discussion forums, for sale, and jobs. A sidebar on the right lists nearby cities. The Craigslist logo is visible in the top left corner.

**community**

- activities
- artists
- childcare
- classes
- events
- general
- groups
- local news
- lost+found
- missed
- connections
- musicians
- pets
- politics
- rants & raves
- rideshare
- volunteers

**housing**

- apts / housing
- housing swap
- housing wanted
- office / commercial
- parking / storage
- real estate for sale
- rooms / shared
- rooms wanted
- sublets / temporary
- vacation rentals

**services**

- automotive
- beauty
- cell/mobile
- computer
- creative
- cycle
- event
- farm+garden
- financial
- health/well
- household
- labor/move
- legal
- lessons
- marine
- pet
- real estate
- skilled trade
- sm biz ads
- travel/vac
- write/ed/tran

**discussion forums**

- apple
- arts
- atheist
- autos
- beauty
- bikes
- celebs
- comp
- cosmos
- diet
- divorce
- dying
- eco
- feedbk
- film
- fixit
- food
- frugal
- gaming
- garden
- haiku
- help
- history
- housing
- jobs
- jokes
- legal
- manners
- marriage
- money
- music
- open
- fixit
- food
- philos
- photo
- politics
- psych
- recover
- religion
- rofo
- science
- spirit
- sports
- super
- tax
- travel
- tv
- vegan
- words
- writing

**for sale**

- antiques
- appliances
- arts+crafts
- atv/utv/sno
- auto parts
- aviation
- baby+kid
- barter
- beauty+hlt
- bike parts
- bikes
- boat parts
- boats
- books
- business
- cars+trucks
- cds/dvd/vhs
- cell phones
- clothes+acc
- collectibles
- computer parts
- computers
- electronics
- farm+garden
- free
- furniture
- garage sale
- general
- heavy equip
- household
- jewelry
- materials
- motorcycle parts
- motorcycles
- music instr
- photo+video
- rvs+camp
- sporting
- tickets
- tools
- toys+games
- trailers
- video gaming
- wanted
- wheels+tires

**jobs**

- accounting+finance
- admin / office
- arch / engineering
- art / media / design
- biotech / science
- business / mgmt
- customer service
- education
- etc / misc
- food / bev / hosp
- general labor
- government
- human resources
- legal / paralegal
- manufacturing
- marketing / pr / ad
- medical / health
- nonprofit sector
- real estate
- retail / wholesale
- sales / biz dev
- salon / spa / fitness
- security
- skilled trade / craft
- software / qa / dba
- systems / network
- technical support
- transport
- tv / film / video
- web / info design
- writing / editing

**gigs**

- computer
- creative
- crew
- domestic
- event
- labor
- talent
- writing

**resumes**

**nearby ci**

- albany
- allentown
- binghamton
- boston
- cape cod
- catskills
- central nj
- eastern ct
- glens falls
- hartford
- hudson valley
- ithaca
- jersey shore
- lancastr
- long island
- new hampshire
- new york
- north jersey
- northwest ct
- oneonta
- philadelphia
- poconos
- reading
- rhode island
- scranton
- south coast
- south jersey
- utica
- western mass
- worcester

**us cities**

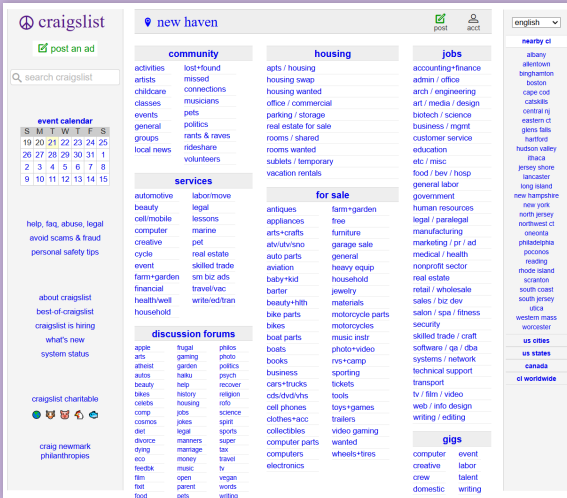
**us states**

**canada**

**cl worldwide**

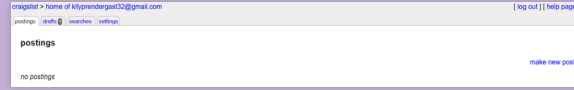


# Site Redesign Considerations



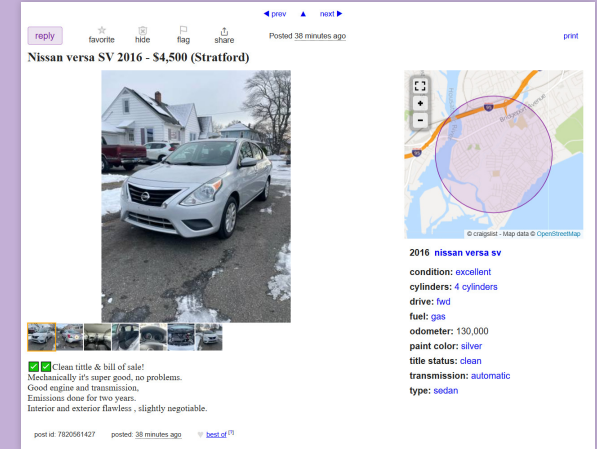
## Streamlined Category Organization with Visual Cues

Reorganize the site's categories and subcategories with a navigation bar and incorporating visual elements like icons, color-coded sections, and expandable menus to make navigation more intuitive. Adding graphical elements such as category-specific images or badges for featured or verified posts could also improve the overall aesthetic while helping users quickly locate what they need.



## User Profile System

Introduce optional user accounts with features like profile ratings, feedback, and transaction history. This would foster trust and accountability while maintaining the platform's focus on simplicity and direct communication.



## Enhanced Listing Presentation

Redesign individual listings with improved formatting, allowing for better organization of details, higher-quality images, and interactive maps for location-based ads. This would make listings more informative and visually appealing without over complicating the interface.



## Business Requirements

- » **Revenue Generation:** Craigslist relies on monetized listings, such as job postings in certain cities and apartment listings in high-demand areas, rather than traditional advertising or subscription models.
- » **Operational Efficiency:** Keeping costs low is vital, as the platform operates with a relatively small team compared to its scale. This requires a streamlined back-end system that can handle high traffic with minimal maintenance.
- » **Legal and Compliance:** Ensuring compliance with regional laws and regulations, particularly concerning housing, employment, and personal ads, is crucial for sustained operations.
- » **Brand Maintenance:** Craigslist's branding focuses on simplicity and function over aesthetics, maintaining its distinct identity as a no-frills platform.

## Overview

Craigslist's business requirements often prioritize operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness over meeting some user desires for modern features, like improved design or enhanced safety tools. While the site's minimalist approach satisfies its need to reduce complexity and overhead, users may find it outdated or less intuitive compared to competitors. Similarly, the lack of robust verification processes or advanced security features aligns with Craigslist's low-cost model but leaves users exposed to risks. Balancing these business goals with evolving user expectations could present opportunities for strategic improvements.

## User Requirements

- » **Accessibility:** Users require easy access to listings across categories, ensuring they can post or browse ads efficiently, even without technical expertise.
- » **Trust and Safety:** As transactions often happen off-line, users prioritize mechanisms to ensure safety and prevent scams, such as flagging suspicious listings.
- » **Comprehensive Listings:** Users expect a wide variety of up-to-date, localized ads to meet their needs, from job searches to finding housing or services.
- » **Free or Low-Cost Access:** Many users are drawn to Craigslist because it offers free or low-cost ad posting compared to other platforms.



# Competitive Analysis

A competitive analysis is the process of researching and comparing your business or product with others in the same market. It helps the design team understand what your competitors are doing well, where they might be falling short, and where there might be opportunities for you to stand out.

Typically, this research is done early in the design phase, as it provides a solid foundation for the design team to build upon.



## Competitive Analysis

Craigslist, eBay, Mercari, and OfferUp all serve as popular platforms for buying and selling items, but they cater to different user needs and offer distinct features.

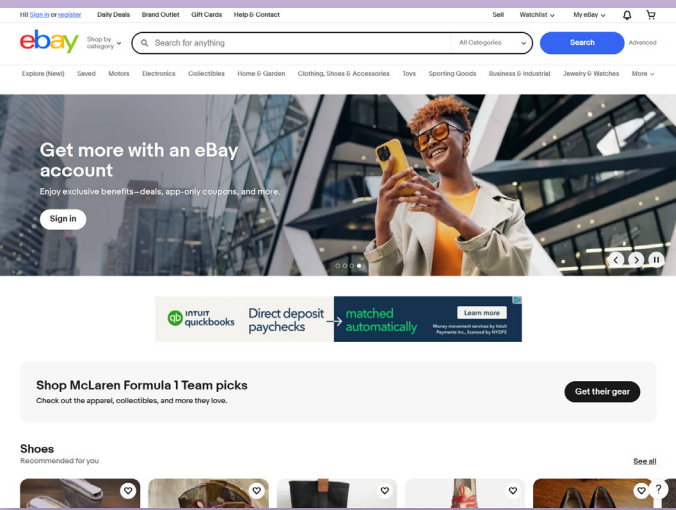
**Craigslist** focuses primarily on local, direct transactions with minimal fees and a wide range of listings, including jobs, housing, services, and goods. However, it lacks advanced features like payment protection or user ratings, which makes it less secure compared to eBay, Mercari, and OfferUp.

	Craigslist	eBay	Mercari	OfferUp
Unique Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Local classifieds</li> <li>» Anonymous email relay</li> <li>» Simple posting process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Global marketplace</li> <li>» Auction options</li> <li>» Buyer and seller protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Shipping integration</li> <li>» Fixed-price listings</li> <li>» No in-person transactions required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Mobile-first design,</li> <li>» User ratings,</li> <li>» In-app messaging,</li> <li>» Buyer/seller protection</li> </ul>
Design Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Minimalistic</li> <li>» Easy to load on any device</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Professional</li> <li>» Detailed item pages</li> <li>» Advanced search options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Clean and visually appealing interface</li> <li>» Streamlined checkout process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Intuitive mobile app design</li> <li>» Robust image handling</li> <li>» Location-based search</li> </ul>
Design Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Outdated interface,</li> <li>» Lack of modern visuals or features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Can feel cluttered due to the vast number of options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Limited desktop experience,</li> <li>» Lacks some advanced search and filtering options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Heavy reliance on app experience; web version has fewer features</li> </ul>
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Email address for posting</li> <li>» Minimal listing details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» User accounts</li> <li>» Detailed item descriptions</li> <li>» Fees for listings and sales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» User accounts</li> <li>» Commission on sales</li> <li>» Shipping integration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» User accounts</li> <li>» Optional paid features for visibility</li> <li>» App access required for full functionality</li> </ul>
Core Features				
Local Listings	✓	✗	✓	✓
Buying + Selling Items	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shipping Integration	✗	✓	✓	✓
Payment Protection	✗	✓	✓	✓
User Ratings/Reviews	✗	✓	✓	✓
Mobile App	✗	✓	✓	✓
Advanced Search Filters	✗	✓	✓	✓

While Craigslist remains a straightforward, low-cost platform with broad reach, eBay, Mercari, and OfferUp cater to users seeking more security, streamlined transactions, and mobile-friendly features.

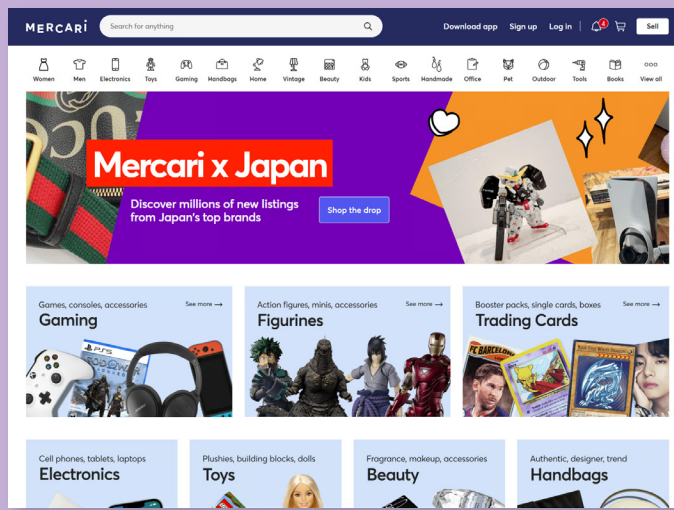


1



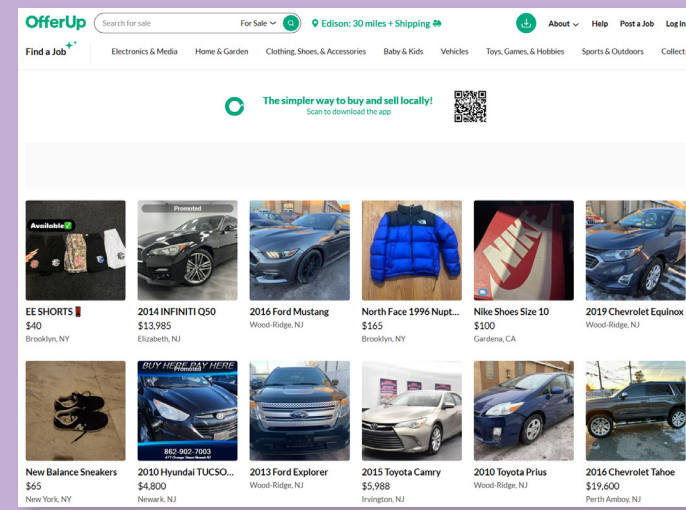
eBay is a global marketplace that offers auction-style listings and fixed-price sales, with built-in buyer protection and shipping options, making it ideal for those looking to buy or sell unique or collectible items.

2



Mercari, on the other hand, offers a more streamlined, mobile-first experience with built-in shipping and user ratings, focusing primarily on fixed-price sales.

3



OfferUp also emphasizes local buying and selling, with a mobile-centric platform that includes ratings and escrow payments for added security.



# User Personas

A user persona is like a character profile, but instead of a fictional story, it's a detailed representation of a real user who would use a product or service. Think of it as the “who” behind the screen. It helps designers and businesses understand users' backgrounds, goals, and pain points, making it easier to design with real people in mind.

A user persona essentially turns data and demographics into a human face, giving everyone a clearer idea of who they're designing for. By developing personas, teams can build empathy with their users, ensuring that the end product meets expectations and accessibility standards.





## Amber Rodriguez

### THE JOB SEEKER

*"I just need to find something stable to get back on my feet quickly"*

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

24

Austin, Texas

Bachelor's Degree in Communications

Recently Laid-Off Administrative Assistant

Single, No Children

#### TECHNOLOGY USAGE



70%



30%

## ABOUT AMBER

Amber, 24, is an ambitious and resourceful professional living in Austin, Texas. With a degree in Business Administration, she has built a strong foundation in administrative work but is currently facing the challenge of finding a new job after being laid off. Amber is practical and self-reliant, balancing her optimism with a cautious approach to on-line opportunities. She is detail-oriented, spending hours tailoring her applications while carefully vetting potential employers. Amber's analytical mindset drives her to maximize her chances of success, even as she navigates the frustrations of scam-heavy platforms.

## GOALS

- » Secure a full-time administrative position.
- » Connect with employers who are actively hiring locally.
- » Save money by finding job listings without expensive subscription fees.

## SCENARIO

Amber recently lost her job as an administrative assistant due to company downsizing and has been actively searching for a new position to regain financial stability. She doesn't have the budget to pay for premium job search platforms, so she turns to Craigslist for its free local job listings. Logging into the site on her laptop, Amber navigates to the "Jobs" section and filters for administrative roles in Austin, Texas. She notices a mix of postings—some from small businesses and others that look suspiciously vague, with titles like "Immediate Hire!" but no company name listed.

Amber spends time crafting a concise cover letter tailored to each job and sends emails to a handful of listings. After two days, she receives a response from one employer, only to find out it's a scam requesting her personal information upfront. Discouraged, she modifies her strategy to research employers before applying, cross-referencing their details on LinkedIn and Google. Over the next week, she applies to five more jobs and finally hears back from a local event planning company offering a part-time role. She schedules an interview and remains hopeful but cautious.

Amber appreciates Craigslist for its accessibility and local focus but wishes there were tools to verify job postings or employer legitimacy, as the process often feels time-consuming and risky.

## KEY PERSONALITY TRAITS

Practical Idealistic

Risk-Tolerant Risk-Averse

Self-Reliant Help-Seeking

Analytical Impulsive

## FRUSTRATIONS

- » Limited job postings that lack detailed descriptions.
- » Fear of encountering scams or fraudulent job ads.
- » No tools to assess the credibility of employers.





## James Carter

### THE CAR SELLER

*"I need to sell my car quickly without losing too much value"*

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

52

Columbus, Ohio

High School Diploma

Warehouse Supervisor

Married, 1 Child

#### TECHNOLOGY USAGE



40%



60%

## ABOUT JAMES

James, 52, is a hardworking warehouse supervisor from Columbus, Ohio. With years of experience managing logistics, he's practical and focused on getting things done efficiently, including selling his old car to make room for a newer vehicle. James is highly self-reliant and confident in his ability to negotiate and handle transactions, but he remains cautious when dealing with on-line buyers. His analytical nature ensures he researches market prices and thoroughly evaluates potential buyers, though his risk-tolerant side allows him to navigate the unpredictable aspects of Craigslist sales with patience and confidence.

## GOALS

- » Sell his used sedan at a fair price within a week.
- » Connect with serious buyers who are ready to purchase.
- » Avoid paying high fees for listing or commissions.

## SCENARIO

James recently purchased a newer truck to better suit his needs, so he's ready to sell his reliable 2012 Toyota Camry. Instead of trading it in for a low dealership offer, he decides to list it on Craigslist, where he believes he can get a fair price from a local buyer.

Sitting at his home office, James logs into Craigslist on his desktop and writes a detailed listing with the car's mileage, maintenance history, and high-quality photos he took earlier with his phone. He sets the price at \$9,000, based on research he did comparing similar listings. Within hours of posting, he starts receiving inquiries; some serious, others clearly scams offering to pay through suspicious wire transfers.

After filtering out sketchy messages, James arranges a meetup with a potential buyer at a busy grocery store parking lot. When they meet, the buyer inspects the car and asks for a test drive. James insists they ride together for security reasons. After the drive, the buyer negotiates the price down to \$8,500, and James, satisfied with the offer, agrees. They finalize the deal in cash at a local bank to ensure a safe transaction.

Though the process took a few days of back-and-forth communication, James feels satisfied that he got a fair price without dealership fees. However, he wishes Craigslist had better fraud protection and a secure payment system to avoid the hassle of filtering out scam messages.

## KEY PERSONALITY TRAITS

Practical Idealistic

Risk-Tolerant Risk-Averse

Self-Reliant Help-Seeking

Analytical Impulsive

## FRUSTRATIONS

- » Time wasted with non-serious buyers or low-ball offers.
- » Difficulty standing out in a crowded market.
- » Concerns about safety when meeting buyers.





## Sophie Neaton

### THE APARTMENT HUNTER

*"I'm looking for a place that's affordable and close to work, but finding one feels like a full-time job"*

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

32

Portland, Oregon

Bachelor's Degree in Graphic Design

Freelance Graphic Designer

Single, Lives With Roommate

#### TECHNOLOGY USAGE



50%



50%

## ABOUT SOPHIE

Sophie, 32 is a creative freelance graphic designer based in Portland, Oregon. With her lease ending soon, she's on the hunt for a new apartment closer to her clients in the city. Sophie's practical mindset and independent nature make her comfortable navigating Craigslist to find affordable housing, but she remains cautious about unverified landlords and incomplete listings. Her analytical personality drives her to research neighborhoods and compare options thoroughly, while her adaptable attitude helps her navigate the challenges of the competitive rental market.

## GOALS

- » Find an affordable apartment close to public transportation.
- » Ensure the landlord or rental agent is trustworthy.
- » Move within the next month without overspending.

## SCENARIO

Sophie's current apartment lease is about to expire, and she needs to move closer to downtown Portland to be near her freelance clients. With her budget tight, she decides to use Craigslist to find an affordable studio or one-bedroom apartment. She prefers Craigslist because of the variety of local listings and its focus on independent landlords who may be more flexible with rental terms.

Sophie starts her search in the "Apartments / Housing" section, using filters to specify her desired location, budget, and apartment size. She browses dozens of listings but quickly realizes many lack key details, such as the square footage or whether utilities are included. She saves several promising options and contacts the landlords through Craigslist's email system.

Over the next few days, Sophie receives mixed responses. One landlord asks for a deposit before she even views the apartment, which raises a red flag. Another responds promptly and schedules a showing for the next day. Sophie visits the property and finds it meets most of her criteria, but the rent is slightly above her budget. She negotiates with the landlord and agrees to a slightly lower price in exchange for signing a year-long lease.

Although Sophie secures a new apartment, the process highlights some of Craigslist's limitations, including the prevalence of scams and incomplete listings. She wishes there were tools to verify landlords and reviews from past tenants to help make more informed decisions.

## KEY PERSONALITY TRAITS

Practical Idealistic

Risk-Tolerant Risk-Averse

Self-Reliant Help-Seeking

Analytical Impulsive

## FRUSTRATIONS

- » Lack of detailed listings with clear pricing and photos.
- » Risk of encountering rental scams or hidden fees.
- » Limited ability to evaluate landlords or property managers.





# Research Methods

To conduct a usability report for the Craigslist website, several research methods were used to gather insights. **Interviews** provide in-depth, qualitative data on user experiences, while surveys offer a broader quantitative overview of satisfaction and issues. **Diary studies** capture real-world usage patterns by having users log their activities over time. **Card sorting** helps optimize site navigation by understanding how users categorize information. **Heuristic evaluation** involves usability experts reviewing the site based on established principles to identify potential issues. Finally, **usability testing** involves observing users as they perform tasks to pinpoint specific usability challenges. These methods together give a comprehensive understanding of the site's strengths and areas for improvement.



# User Interviews

A user interview is a research method used to gather insights about how real users interact with a product or service. In these interviews, a researcher asks participants a series of questions to understand their experiences, needs, pain points, and preferences. The goal is to uncover valuable information that can improve future versions of the product and ensure it meets user expectation.

Typically, a user interview is broken down into five parts: an introduction, a warm-up, the main body of questions, a cool-off period, and a final wrap-up. These interviews are crucial for gaining a deeper understanding of users, guiding design decisions to solve real problems.



# Research Questions:

Interviews are one of the most frequently used methods for understanding users and their experiences. This interview will follow a structured script and focus on relevant research questions to gain deeper insights into Craigslist's user experience. In order to improve Craigslist's interface, it is essential to understand the goals and pain points of those who use the platform.

Current Craigslist users will be interviewed to gain insight into the following research questions:

- » **How do users navigate and search for products or services on Craigslist, and what challenges do they encounter during this process?**
- » **What factors influence user trust and decision-making when interacting with listings and sellers on Craigslist?**
- » **What design and functionality improvements could enhance the overall user experience on Craigslist?**

By addressing these key questions, this research aims to identify opportunities for improving Craigslist's user interface and usability, ensuring a more seamless and efficient experience for all users.



# Phase 1: Introduction

My name is **Kelly Prendergast**, and I am with the **Craigslist** research team. I appreciate you taking the time to participate in this interview and share your insights. During our session, I will ask you a series of questions about your experiences using Craigslist, particularly as a **[user/buyer/seller]**. If at any point you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

This interview will take approximately **1 hour** to complete. My colleagues and I from the **Craigslist** research team will be listening to your responses to better understand how Craigslist can be improved to enhance user experience. Based on our records, you have previously used Craigslist to **[browse, purchase, sell, or interact with listings]**, and we would like to hear your thoughts on how we can improve the website's interface and usability.

With your permission, we would like to record this interview so that we can accurately capture your feedback and revisit your insights at a later time. Please know that I am here as a neutral researcher, and nothing you say about Craigslist or your experience will offend me. I encourage you to be honest, and if you do not have an answer to a question or do not feel strongly about a topic, that is completely fine—just let me know. Your honesty is what will help us make meaningful improvements.

Before we begin, I invite you to read and sign the consent agreement, which outlines how your insights will be used. If at any time you no longer wish to participate, you are free to leave the session.

Do you have any questions before we get started?



## Phase 2: Warm-up

**Let's get started!** Before we dive into questions about Craigslist's website, I'd like to learn more about your background and experiences using the platform.

- » **Can you walk me through the most recent time you used Craigslist and what you were hoping to achieve?**
- » **Can you tell me about a particularly memorable experience you've had with Craigslist, whether it was positive, challenging, or just stood out for some reason?**
- » **How would you describe your overall experience using Craigslist? Has it generally been positive, negative, or mixed?**

Now that I know more about your experiences, we're going to move on to a few more related questions before we dive deeper into Craigslist's website and usability.



# Phase 3: Main Body

## 1. Can you describe how often you use Craigslist?

- » *Follow-up: Has your usage pattern changed over time? If so, what factors influenced those changes?*

## 2. How do you typically use Craigslist?

- » *Follow-up: What type of items or services do you search for or list?*

## 3. How would you describe the overall ease of navigation when browsing Craigslist?

- » *Follow-up: Are there any specific areas where you feel the layout could be improved?*

## 4. Do you use the filtering and sorting options when searching for listings?

- » *Follow-up: If so, how was your experience with them? Are there any additional filtering options that you believe would improve your experience?*

## 5. How clear and informative do you find the listing pages?

- » *Follow-up: Is there any information you wish was more prominently displayed?*

## 6. What features under the account page do you find most useful?

- » *Follow-up: Are there any features that you wish were easier to find or use?*

## 7. Have you ever felt concerned about scams or safety when using Craigslist?

- » *Follow-up: What makes you feel more comfortable or hesitant when buying from or selling to someone?*

## 8. Have you ever contacted a seller?

- » *Follow-up: If so, how did you handle them, and what would have made the process easier for you?*

## 9. How's your experience been managing your listings and interactions?

- » *Follow-up: Was there a time when managing these were particularly easy or difficult?*

## 10. How does your experience using Craigslist compare to similar platforms you've used?

- » *Follow-up: Are there any features from those platforms that you wish Craigslist had?*

## 11. If you could change one major aspect to improve the overall experience, what would it be?

## 12. Is there anything specific you've encountered that we haven't covered, but you think is important to mention?



## Phase 4: Cool-Down

We've discussed various aspects of your experience using Craigslist, and I truly appreciate your honesty and insights. To wrap up our conversation, what do you think was the most important takeaway from our discussion?

## Phase 5: Wrap-up

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and experiences. We've reached the end of our interview, and I'm going to stop the recording now. Before I do, do you have any final questions for me?



# User Surveys

User surveys are a useful tool for collecting feedback from a large group of people quickly and efficiently. They're easy to set up, cost-effective, and can reach many users at once without needing direct interaction. Surveys usually consist of different types of questions, like multiple-choice, ranking, or open-ended questions, allowing users to share their thoughts and experiences. The data gathered can then help answer key questions like who the target audience is, what problems users are facing, and how they are currently using a product. This makes surveys a great way to understand user needs and improve the overall user experience.



# Introduction

Thank you for participating in this survey! We are conducting research to better understand Craigslist users, their goals, and their experiences when using the platform. Your responses will help us improve the overall functionality of Craigslist to better meet user needs. This survey will take approximately **5–10 minutes** to complete. All responses will remain confidential.

[Craigslist Survey Link](#)



## Who Are We Looking to Learn About?

This survey is designed to gather insights from individuals who actively use Craigslist for various purposes, including buying and selling goods, searching for jobs, finding housing, and utilizing services. We want to learn about both frequent and occasional users, as well as those who may have had past experiences but no longer use the platform. By understanding the diverse range of Craigslist users, we can identify the specific needs and challenges different groups face when interacting with the site.

## What Questions Are We Trying to Answer?

The goal of this research is to better understand how users interact with Craigslist and what challenges they encounter. We are specifically looking to answer:

- » **What are the most common reasons people use Craigslist?**
- » **How do users navigate the platform, and what difficulties do they experience?**
- » **What factors influence user trust and decision-making when browsing listings?**
- » **What pain points exist in communication, transaction processes, and overall usability?**
- » **How does Craigslist compare to other online marketplaces, and what improvements would users like to see?**

By answering these questions, we can uncover potential areas for improvement and prioritize changes that enhance Craigslist's usability, functionality, and user trust.

## How Will We Distribute the Survey and Collect Responses?

Responses will be collected through an online survey tool for convenience, and the data will be analyzed to identify key insights that will guide recommendations for improving Craigslist's user experience.



1. What is your age?

- a. Under 18
- b. 18-29 years
- c. 30-49 years
- d. 50-65 years
- e. Over 65 years

2. In which region do you live?

- a. Africa
- b. Americas
- c. Asia
- d. Europe
- e. Middle East
- f. Oceania

3. How often do you use Craigslist?

- a. Daily
- b. Weekly
- c. Monthly
- d. Once a year
- e. 3-6 times a year
- f. Rarely/Never

4. How do you typically access Craigslist?

- a. Desktop / Laptop
- b. Mobile Phone (Browser)
- c. Mobile Phone (App)
- d. Tablet

5. What is your primary purpose for using Craigslist? (Select all that apply)

- Buying items
- Selling items
- Searching for jobs
- Renting or finding housing
- Hiring services or finding gigs
- Other (please specify)

6. Have you ever successfully used Craigslist to buy or sell something?

- Yes
- No

7. How do you usually find listings on Craigslist?

- a. Browsing categories manually
- b. Using the search bar
- c. Filtering and sorting options
- d. Other (Please specify)

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, how easy is it to find what you are looking for on Craigslist?

- 1 = very difficult
- 2 = difficult
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = easy
- 5 = very easy

9. Have you ever encountered a scam or fraudulent listing on Craigslist?

- Yes
- No



10. What factors influence your decision to trust a listing on Craigslist? (Select all that apply)

- Seller's response time
- Quality of listing descriptions / photos
- Price compared to similar listings
- Reviews or external references
- Other (please specify)

11. How confident are you in the reliability of sellers or service providers on Craigslist?

- 1 = not confident at all
- 2 = not confident
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = confident
- 5 = very confident

12. Have you ever had difficulty contacting a seller or buyer on Craigslist?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable (I have never contacted anyone)

13. Which method do you prefer for communicating with Craigslist users?

- a. Craigslist's anonymous email system
- b. Phone call
- c. Text message
- d. Other (Please specify)

14. How satisfied are you with Craigslist's filtering and sorting options?

- 1 = very dissatisfied
- 2 = dissatisfied
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = satisfied
- 5 = very satisfied

15. If Craigslist introduced a user rating or review system, would you find it helpful?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure



16. Have you ever used another online marketplace (eBay, Mercari, OfferUp)?

- Yes
- No

17. If you answered “Yes” to the previous question, how does Craigslist compare to those other platforms? (Open-ended response)

18. Have you encountered any of the following while using Craigslist? (Select all that apply)

- Outdated or fraudulent listings
- Difficulty navigating / searching for items
- Lack of user reviews or verification
- Poor communication with buyers / sellers
- Other (please specify)

19. How likely are you to recommend Craigslist to a friend or colleague?

- 1 = not likely at all
- 2 = not likely
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = likely
- 5 = very likely

20. Please provide a specific experience or feature you'd improve. (Open-ended response)

21. Would you be interested in participating in future usability testing for Craigslist improvements?

- Yes
- No



# Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Your insights will help shape potential improvements to Craigslist, making it a more effective and user-friendly platform.

If you have any additional comments, please feel free to share them.



# Diary Study

Diary studies are an effective way to collect real-world, in-the-moment insights over time. By allowing participants to document their experiences, thoughts, and frustrations in their own words, we can capture qualitative and quantitative data that reflect real user behavior. This study aims to uncover key usability issues and opportunities for improvement on Craigslist by tracking user interactions over several months.



## Objective

The goal of this diary study is to dive deep into what users do, think, and feel while browsing Craigslist, searching for listings, and engaging with sellers. By capturing real-time interactions and frustrations, we can identify areas where Craigslist's user experience can be improved.

## What questions for this diary study aim to answer?

Craigslist has remained relatively unchanged for years, relying on its simple and functional design. However, this can present usability challenges for modern users who are accustomed to more polished and intuitive platforms. This study aims to answer:

- » *How do users navigate Craigslist to find what they need?*
- » *What pain points and frustrations arise during browsing, searching, and transaction processes?*
- » *How do users assess the credibility of sellers and listings?*
- » *What improvements could enhance the overall user experience and trust in the platform?*

By addressing these questions, we can identify areas where Craigslist's interface and functionality could be modernized while maintaining its core purpose and appeal.

### Extended Diary Study Option

To get a full picture of the Craigslist user journey, an extended diary study could track interactions across multiple touchpoints. This would include initial browsing, communication with sellers, transaction completion (or abandonment), and post-transaction impressions.



## Participant Recruitment

We will recruit 20 Craigslist users, ensuring a mix of buyers, sellers, frequent users, and those who have tried Craigslist but abandoned it. By including a diverse range of participants, we can capture a broad spectrum of user experiences and pain points. To gather well-rounded insights, participants will be selected from major cities across the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Australia, allowing us to analyze regional differences in user behavior and platform expectations. This approach ensures that our findings reflect the needs of a varied and representative user base.

## Tasks + Questions for Participants

Participants will submit one diary entry per month, reflecting on their Craigslist experiences. If they do not use Craigslist in a given month, they will still submit an entry explaining why. This ensures we capture both active and passive user behaviors.

Participants will provide insights into their Craigslist experience, including their purpose for visiting, ease of navigation, usability issues, trust in listings and sellers, transaction success, and overall satisfaction. They will also describe their search process, challenges encountered, and suggest improvements to enhance their experience. They will also have the opportunity to share additional feedback on how the platform could be improved.

## Study Duration:

**20  
people**

To provide diverse insights across different Craigslist use cases. This ensures balance of perspectives while keeping the data manageable

**6  
months**

This allows for tracking seasonal variations in Craigslist usage while keeping participant commitment manageable

**30  
minutes**

Each session should take about 30-45 minutes, including browsing time and survey completion

## Method + Formatting:

Entries will be submitted via an online form linked in reminder emails. Participants will be encouraged to “star” the email for easy access each month. Reminders will be sent one week before the end of each month to ensure high participation. Craigslist users vary widely in tech familiarity, so the diary submission process will be simple and mobile-friendly. Participants can submit as many additional entries as they wish if they use Craigslist more frequently.



## Benefits

- » Captures organic, real-world interactions over time.
- » Identifies usability pain points as they occur.
- » Provides insights across different user groups (buyers, sellers, job seekers, etc.).
- » Uses digital submission to keep data collection efficient and accessible.

## Drawbacks

- » Participants may forget specific details if they do not use Craigslist frequently.
- » Some users may drop out if they lose interest.
- » Subjective responses require careful analysis to extract actionable themes.

## On boarding + Incentives

A kickoff Zoom session will be held before the study begins to:

- » Confirm everyone has received their study materials.
- » Walk participants through expectations and submission steps.
- » Troubleshoot any tech issues with the submission platform.

Payment Structure:

- » \$15 after completing two months
- » Another \$15 after completing two more months.
- » A final \$70 bonus after completing the sixth month and a short post-study follow-up interview.

## Analyzing the Results

Each month, data will be analyzed using thematic analysis. Responses will be categorized into recurring themes based on user feedback, allowing us to identify patterns in navigation issues, trust concerns, and transaction difficulties. By systematically coding responses, we can develop actionable insights that highlight areas for improvement on Craigslist.



## Participant Introduction and Instructions

“Hello! Thank you for participating in this study. The goal of this study is to understand how Craigslist’s user experience can be improved. Your honest feedback will help identify areas for enhancement, whether in navigation, search, trust factors, or overall ease of use.

Each diary entry should take about 30-45 minutes, depending on your experience that month. Your responses are confidential and will only be used for research purposes. Please do not include any personally identifiable information.

You will receive an email reminder one week before the end of each month with a link to submit your entry. You may also submit additional entries if you have multiple interactions with Craigslist in a given month.

Thank you for your time and insights! Your participation will help shape improvements to Craigslist’s interface and functionality. If you have any questions, please contact [research@craigsliststudy.com](mailto:research@craigsliststudy.com).”



## Diary Entry Example Questions

1. Did you visit Craigslist this month?

- Yes
- No

2. If yes, what was your primary reason for visiting?

- a. Buying
- b. Selling
- c. Browsing
- d. Job search
- e. Rental search
- f. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Were you successful in your goal?

- Yes
- No
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Describe your process of searching or navigating?

5. How would you rate the ease of finding what you needed? (1-5 scale, with explanation)

6. What challenges did you encounter? (Confusing navigation, poor search results, lack of trust in listings, etc.)

7. Did you complete a transaction?

- Yes, as a buyer
- Yes, as a seller
- No

8. If applicable, what factors influences your trust in a listing or seller?

9. What would improve your Craigslist experience?

10. Any additional comments?



# Card Sorting

Card sorts are important because they help improve the structure and organization of information on websites or apps, ensuring that it aligns with how users naturally think about and categorize content. By involving users in the process, card sorting provides valuable insights into their mental models—how they perceive, group, and label different pieces of information. This helps designers create more intuitive and user-friendly navigation systems that make it easier for users to find what they're looking for.

Card sorts also reveal potential issues like redundant or confusing categories, gaps in the information structure, or mismatched terminology. By addressing these problems early in the design process, card sorts can lead to a more streamlined, efficient user experience. In addition, they promote a better understanding of user behavior and preferences, which can guide decisions on content organization, labeling, and overall site structure. Ultimately, card sorts are a key tool for designing websites and applications that are easier to navigate and meet users' expectations.



## Purpose

The purpose of the Craigslist card sorting exercise is to improve the site's information architecture, ensuring it aligns with how users naturally think about and organize content. The goal is to develop a more intuitive navigation system by learning how users naturally group and label categories, making it easier for them to find what they need. This exercise helps identify redundancies, unclear categories, and gaps in Craigslist's current structure. The findings will directly inform the redesign of Craigslist's navigation to enhance overall usability and provide a more user-friendly experience.

## Methodology

An **“open sort”** approach will be used, allowing participants to organize categories in a way that made sense to them without predefined groupings. A total of 39 cards, representing existing Craigslist categories along with potential new ones, were used in the exercise (see [Appendix A](#)). Participants were asked to group the cards and label the groups with terms that reflected their understanding of the content, helping uncover how users mentally structure the site.

The exercise was conducted remotely using the online tool Useberry, enabling participants to complete the task at their own pace. Each participant received a Zoom invite and attended a live session, where the facilitator monitored the exercise and answered any clarifying questions. This setup ensured participants had support while still allowing them to approach the sorting process independently.

Once all sessions were completed, the results were analyzed using Useberry's similarity matrix tool to identify common patterns in how participants grouped and labeled categories. This analysis will guide the restructuring of Craigslist's information architecture, ensuring it reflects user mental models, eliminates confusion, and improves the overall browsing experience.

## Introduction Script

“Hi and thank you for taking the time to join this card sorting exercise! I'm Kelly Prendergast, and I'm here on behalf of the Craigslist team. We're exploring ways to improve how users navigate the Craigslist website, and your input will help us organize information in a way that feels natural and easy to use. This session should take about an hour, and I encourage you to share your thoughts out loud as you go. With your permission, I'd like to record this Zoom call so I can focus on what you're saying without worrying about note-taking. There are no right or wrong answers here; we're interested in how you think the information should be structured to improve the overall user experience.

Before we begin, I'll ask you to review and sign a consent form that explains how we'll use the information you provide. Feel free to ask questions at any time, and if you need to step away, that's completely fine. Do you have any questions before we begin? If not, I'll start with a quick demo to show you how the card sorting process works with the online tool. Let's get started!”

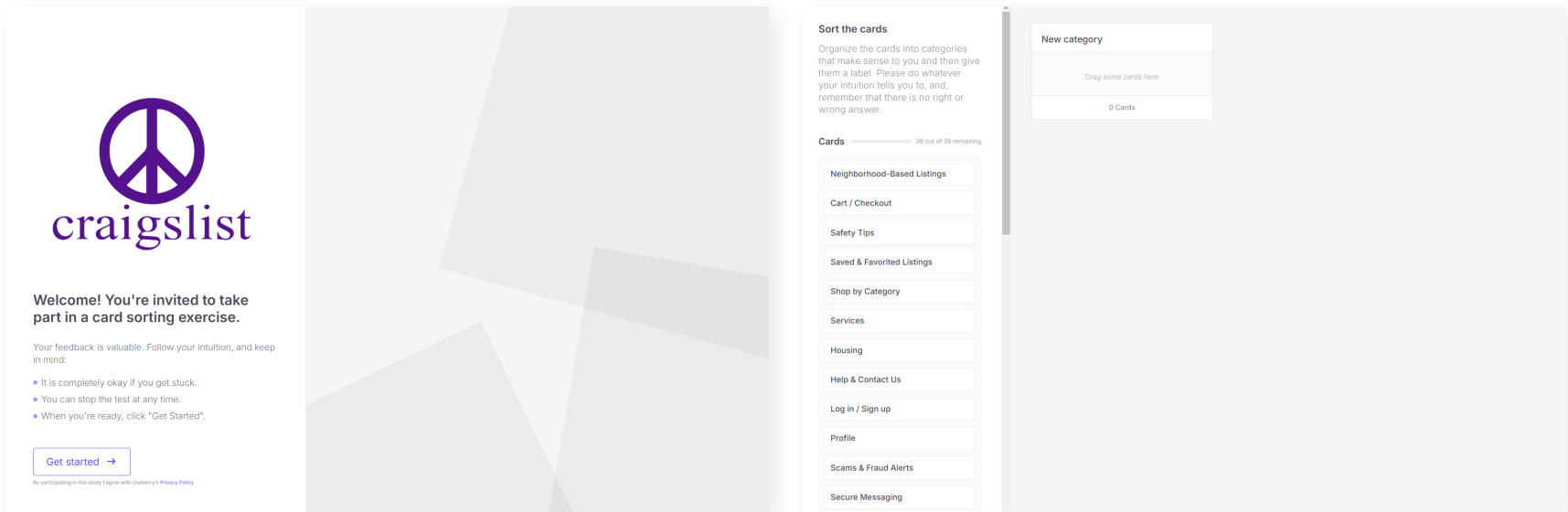


# Card Sort Link

## Card Sorting Exercise

### Participant Instructions

You'll complete the card sort exercise on the Useberry website. After a welcome screen and brief instructions, you'll see 39 cards to sort into groups that make sense to you. Simply drag and drop cards into boxes and label them with names that fit best. To create a new group, drag cards into the "new category" box. Make as many categories as you like, and if a card doesn't fit anywhere, feel free to place it in a group labeled "unknown." There are no right or wrong answers, we're interested in your perspective. Feel free to talk through your thought process as you go; it helps us understand your reasoning. When you're finished, let us know if you have any thoughts or feedback. Your input is valuable!



### Wrap-up Script

Thank you so much for participating in this card sorting exercise! Your input is incredibly valuable and will play a key role in helping us improve how users navigate the Craigslist website. We really appreciate you taking the time to share your perspective and walk us through your thought process. If you have any final thoughts or feedback about the categories, the process, or anything else that comes to mind, we'd love to hear it. Otherwise, that wraps up our session.

Thanks again for your help. I hope you have a great rest of your day!



# Data Analysis Summary

The card sort analysis reveals several clear clusters based on the three participant responses. All participants were familiar with the Craigslist website and had used the site to browse or make purchases in the past six months. It was conducted remotely through the website useberry.com and monitored with zoom.

The 39 cards primarily focused on site navigation elements. They represent various sections, features and actions users need to navigate Craigslist. Based on the responses we've gathered the following information:

- » **Community-related features** such as *Local News & Community Announcements, Community, Services, and Discussion Forums* are strongly associated, indicating users view these as part of a central community hub.
- » **Marketplace features** like *For Sale, Jobs, Gigs, Resumes, and Neighborhood-Based Listings* are grouped together, showing that users see job listings, gigs, and sale items as interconnected. *Today's Deals and Free Stuff* also align closely within this cluster.
- » **User engagement features**, including *User Profiles and User Ratings*, are strongly linked, as are *Popular or Trending Posts with Explore, and Saved & Favorited Listings with Recently Viewed*, highlighting how users connect profile information with content exploration.
- » **Safety and support features** such as *Scams & Fraud Alerts, Safety Tips, Verified Listings, and Secure Messaging* form another distinct cluster, emphasizing the importance of secure communication and fraud prevention.
- » **Shopping-related features** like *Cart / Checkout and Returns* are closely associated, with moderate connections to *Purchase History, Live Auctions, and Watchlist*, reflecting common user flows during transactions.

To enhance the user experience, related categories should be consolidated. For example, merging community-related content into a single "Community Hub" or grouping shopping features under "Order Management." Clear navigation and logically grouped sections can streamline the overall user journey and improve feature discoverability.



# Participants

All participants are frequent Craigslist users and are in their early 30s. They share similar backgrounds with bachelor's degrees and work in freelance-based occupations, indicating flexibility and comparable digital habits. They are from the same location to ensure consistent regional browsing patterns.

## Participant 1 -

Frequent Seller & Bargain Hunter

- » **Age:** 31
- » **Gender:** Female
- » **Education:** Bachelor's Degree
- » **Occupation:** Freelance Designer
- » **Location:** Seattle, Washington

*"Hmm, I'll put all the selling and buying stuff together. I don't want to dig around when I'm just trying to post something or snag a deal."*

## Participant 2 -

Gig Worker & Job Seeker

- » **Age:** 29
- » **Gender:** Male
- » **Education:** Bachelor's Degree
- » **Occupation:** Freelance Musician
- » **Location:** Seattle, Washington

*"Jobs, gigs, and resumes should go in the same spot. It's annoying when they're separated. Services kind of fit here too since I use them for work."*

## Participant 3 -

Community Oriented Browser

- » **Age:** 33
- » **Gender:** Female
- » **Education:** Bachelor's Degree
- » **Occupation:** Freelance Photographer
- » **Location:** Seattle, Washington

*"All the community things belong together. If I'm checking local news, I usually look at events and forums at the same time."*



## Participant 1 Sorting

<b>Event Calender</b> <u>Category:</u> Community & Info	<b>Location</b> <u>Category:</u> Search & Navigation	<b>Language</b> <u>Category:</u> Search & Navigation	<b>Search</b> <u>Category:</u> Search & Navigation	<b>Sell / Post an Ad</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy & Sell
<b>Profile</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile & Account Management	<b>Announcements</b> <u>Category:</u> Community & Info	<b>Local News &amp; Community Announcements</b> <u>Category:</u> Community & Info	<b>Community</b> <u>Category:</u> Community & Info	<b>Services</b> <u>Category:</u> Jobs & Gigs
<b>Discussion Forums</b> <u>Category:</u> Community & Info	<b>Housing</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy & Sell	<b>For Sale</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy & Sell	<b>Jobs</b> <u>Category:</u> Jobs & Gigs	<b>Gigs</b> <u>Category:</u> Jobs & Gigs
<b>Resumes</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile & Account Management	<b>Neighborhood-based Listings</b> <u>Category:</u> Home Page	<b>Today's Deals</b> <u>Category:</u> Home Page	<b>Free Stuff</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy & Sell	<b>User Profiles</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile & Account Management
<b>User Ratings</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile & Account Management	<b>Popular or Trending Posts</b> <u>Category:</u> Home Page	<b>Shop by Category</b> <u>Category:</u> Home Page	<b>Explore</b> <u>Category:</u> Home Page	<b>Purchase History</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy & Sell
<b>Saved / Favorite Listings</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile & Account Management	<b>Recently Viewed</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile & Account Management	<b>Live Auctions</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy & Sell	<b>Returns</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy & Sell	<b>Tools &amp; Apps</b> <u>Category:</u> Search & Navigation
<b>Log in / Sign up</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile & Account Management	<b>Watchlist</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy & Sell	<b>Cart / Checkout</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy & Sell	<b>Privacy Settings</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile & Account Management	<b>Help &amp; Contact Us</b> <u>Category:</u> Help & Safety
<b>Scams &amp; Fraud Alerts</b> <u>Category:</u> Help & Safety	<b>Safety Tips</b> <u>Category:</u> Help & Safety	<b>Verified Listings</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy & Sell	<b>Secure Messaging</b> <u>Category:</u> Help & Safety	



## Participant 2 Sorting

<b>Event Calender</b> <u>Category:</u> Community & Events	<b>Location</b> <u>Category:</u> Navigation & Tools	<b>Language</b> <u>Category:</u> Navigation & Tools	<b>Search</b> <u>Category:</u> Navigation & Tools	<b>Sell / Post an Ad</b> <u>Category:</u> Home
<b>Profile</b> <u>Category:</u> Account	<b>Announcements</b> <u>Category:</u> Community & Events	<b>Local News &amp; Community Announcements</b> <u>Category:</u> Community & Events	<b>Community</b> <u>Category:</u> Community & Events	<b>Services</b> <u>Category:</u> Work & Opportunities
<b>Discussion Forums</b> <u>Category:</u> Community & Events	<b>Housing</b> <u>Category:</u> Unknown	<b>For Sale</b> <u>Category:</u> Buying & Selling	<b>Jobs</b> <u>Category:</u> Work & Opportunities	<b>Gigs</b> <u>Category:</u> Work & Opportunities
<b>Resumes</b> <u>Category:</u> Work & Opportunities	<b>Neighborhood-based Listings</b> <u>Category:</u> Home	<b>Today's Deals</b> <u>Category:</u> Buying & Selling	<b>Free Stuff</b> <u>Category:</u> Buying & Selling	<b>User Profiles</b> <u>Category:</u> Account
<b>User Ratings</b> <u>Category:</u> Account	<b>Popular or Trending Posts</b> <u>Category:</u> Home	<b>Shop by Category</b> <u>Category:</u> Buying & Selling	<b>Explore</b> <u>Category:</u> Home	<b>Purchase History</b> <u>Category:</u> Account
<b>Saved / Favorite Listings</b> <u>Category:</u> Buying & Selling	<b>Recently Viewed</b> <u>Category:</u> Buying & Selling	<b>Live Auctions</b> <u>Category:</u> Buying & Selling	<b>Returns</b> <u>Category:</u> Support & Safety	<b>Tools &amp; Apps</b> <u>Category:</u> Navigation & Tools
<b>Log in / Sign up</b> <u>Category:</u> Account	<b>Watchlist</b> <u>Category:</u> Buying & Selling	<b>Cart / Checkout</b> <u>Category:</u> Home	<b>Privacy Settings</b> <u>Category:</u> Account	<b>Help &amp; Contact Us</b> <u>Category:</u> Support & Safety
<b>Scams &amp; Fraud Alerts</b> <u>Category:</u> Support & Safety	<b>Safety Tips</b> <u>Category:</u> Support & Safety	<b>Verified Listings</b> <u>Category:</u> Work & Opportunities	<b>Secure Messaging</b> <u>Category:</u> Support & Safety	

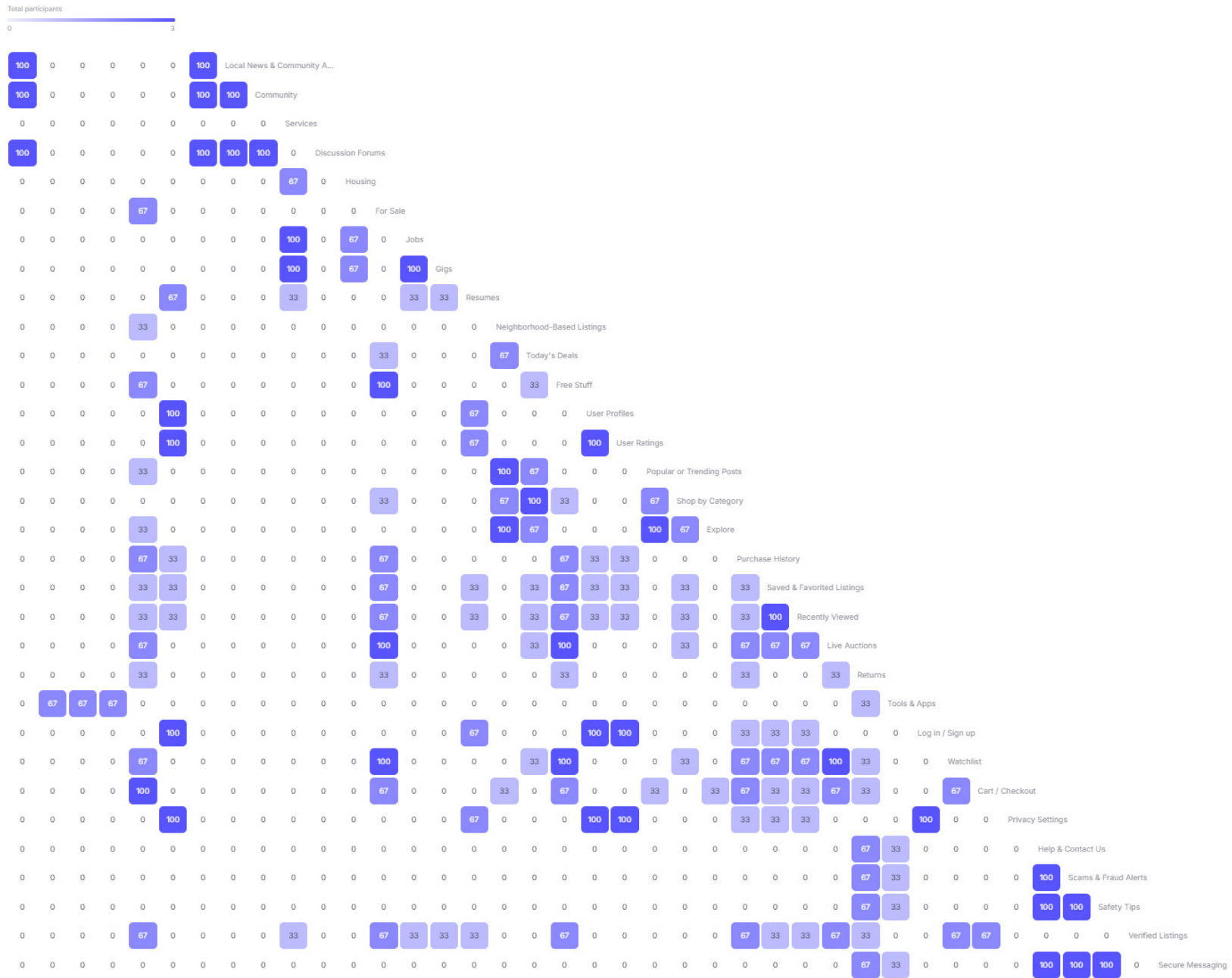


## Participant 3 Sorting

<b>Event Calender</b> <u>Category:</u> Community	<b>Location</b> <u>Category:</u> Navigation	<b>Language</b> <u>Category:</u> Navigation	<b>Search</b> <u>Category:</u> Navigation	<b>Sell / Post an Ad</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy, Sell & Giveaways
<b>Profile</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile / Account	<b>Announcements</b> <u>Category:</u> Community	<b>Local News &amp; Community Announcements</b> <u>Category:</u> Community	<b>Community</b> <u>Category:</u> Community	<b>Services</b> <u>Category:</u> Opportunities & Listings
<b>Discussion Forums</b> <u>Category:</u> Community	<b>Housing</b> <u>Category:</u> Opportunities & Listings	<b>For Sale</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy, Sell & Giveaways	<b>Jobs</b> <u>Category:</u> Opportunities & Listings	<b>Gigs</b> <u>Category:</u> Opportunities & Listings
<b>Resumes</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile / Account	<b>Neighborhood-based Listings</b> <u>Category:</u> Main Page	<b>Today's Deals</b> <u>Category:</u> Main Page	<b>Free Stuff</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy, Sell & Giveaways	<b>User Profiles</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile / Account
<b>User Ratings</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile / Account	<b>Popular or Trending Posts</b> <u>Category:</u> Main Page	<b>Shop by Category</b> <u>Category:</u> Main Page	<b>Explore</b> <u>Category:</u> Main Page	<b>Purchase History</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy, Sell & Giveaways
<b>Saved / Favorite Listings</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy, Sell & Giveaways	<b>Recently Viewed</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy, Sell & Giveaways	<b>Live Auctions</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy, Sell & Giveaways	<b>Returns</b> <u>Category:</u> FAQ & Security	<b>Tools &amp; Apps</b> <u>Category:</u> FAQ & Security
<b>Log in / Sign up</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile / Account	<b>Watchlist</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy, Sell & Giveaways	<b>Cart / Checkout</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy, Sell & Giveaways	<b>Privacy Settings</b> <u>Category:</u> Profile / Account	<b>Help &amp; Contact Us</b> <u>Category:</u> FAQ & Security
<b>Scams &amp; Fraud Alerts</b> <u>Category:</u> FAQ & Security	<b>Safety Tips</b> <u>Category:</u> FAQ & Security	<b>Verified Listings</b> <u>Category:</u> Buy, Sell & Giveaways	<b>Secure Messaging</b> <u>Category:</u> FAQ & Security	



# Similarity Matrix



[View Full Size]

# Heuristic Evaluation

A heuristic evaluation is a method where usability experts assess a website or app by reviewing it against a set of established guidelines, called heuristics. These guidelines are essentially a list of best practices for good design. The idea is for experts to independently go through the interface and identify any usability problems based on these rules, without needing to involve actual users. This method, which is fast and cost-effective, helps catch potential issues early in the design process, allowing for improvements before conducting more complex testing with real users.



Heuristic	Severity	Comments
Visibility of system status	0 1 <b>2</b> 3 4	Craigslist does not always provide clear feedback when actions are performed (ex. submitting a post or sending a message), which might leave users uncertain if their action was successful.
Match between system and the real world	0 1 2 <b>3</b> 4	Some terms and interactions could be more intuitive or aligned with user expectations (e.g., the site uses specific jargon like “Gigs” or “For Sale,” which may not be immediately clear to everyone).
User control and freedom	0 1 <b>2</b> 3 4	While Craigslist allows users to edit and delete listings, it can be difficult to undo an action once it’s done, especially with no clear confirmation prompts.
Consistency and standards	0 1 2 <b>3</b> 4	The design is inconsistent in places, such as different layouts across pages (e.g., listing pages and homepage), making it harder for users to navigate.
Error prevention	0 1 2 <b>3</b> 4	Craigslist doesn’t prevent errors, such as submitting a post with missing information or an invalid email, which can cause user frustration.

Severity: 0 = No Problem 1 = Cosmetic 2 = Minor 3 = Major 4 = Catastrophic



Heuristic	Severity	Comments
Recognition rather than recall	0 1 <b>2</b> 3 4	While most functions are easily accessible, some features, like the search filters, are hidden in dropdown menus or require users to remember certain actions.
Flexibility and efficiency of use	0 1 2 <b>3</b> 4	Craigslist lacks shortcuts or customization options for frequent users, which slows down efficiency when compared to other more modern websites.
Aesthetic and minimalist design	0 <b>1</b> 2 3 4	The design is overly simplistic, which could be seen as outdated, but it doesn't significantly impact functionality or user satisfaction. Some might find the minimalist style pleasant, though others may feel it's too sparse.
Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors	0 1 2 <b>3</b> 4	Error messages on Craigslist are often vague and unhelpful. When something goes wrong (e.g., a failed post), the site doesn't offer clear instructions on how to resolve the issue.
Help and documentation	0 1 <b>2</b> 3 4	While there is some basic help available, it's not very comprehensive or easy to find. Users might struggle to locate guidance for more complex issues.

Severity: 0 = No Problem 1 = Cosmetic 2 = Minor 3 = Major 4 = Catastrophic



# Usability Testing

A usability study is a research method used to evaluate how easily and efficiently users can navigate and interact with a product, website, or system. The primary goal is to identify any usability issues, understand user behavior, and gather feedback to improve the overall user experience. During a usability study, participants complete specific tasks while researchers observe their actions, listen to their thoughts and analyze any challenges they face. This process helps uncover design flaws, confusing elements, or areas that need improvement. By conducting usability studies, organizations can create more intuitive, user-friendly experiences that meet the needs of their target audience.



# Introduction

Craigslist is a widely used on-line platform for buying and selling goods, posting job listings, finding housing, and engaging in various community activities. As a primary channel for peer-to-peer transactions, its usability significantly impacts user experience and efficiency. This study aims to evaluate the usability of Craigslist through a series of structured tasks completed by participants in both in-person and on-line settings. The test involved three participants, each completing five identical tasks on the website. The study was conducted by Kelly Prendergast, with sessions recorded using Apple's screen recording function and OBS (Open Broadcast Software) to capture both on-screen interactions and verbal feedback, with participants' consent. In-person sessions were observed directly, while on-line sessions were conducted remotely with screen recording enabled. Each session began with an introduction, instructions, and background questions to familiarize participants with the process. Participants were reassured that the test was evaluating the website, not their abilities, and that there were no right or wrong answers. After completing the tasks, participants provided additional feedback through follow-up questions and concluding remarks.

## Testing Overview

The usability study was conducted both in person and on-line on March 1st, 2025. Each session lasted approximately 30 minutes and included an introduction, background questions, instructions, task completion, follow-ups, and a concluding discussion. Participants were asked to complete five tasks, detailed in [\[Appendix C\]](#). All users who participated had visited Craigslist at least once before and were familiar with navigating the Internet independently. Their prior experience with on-line platforms allowed them to provide valuable insights into the site's usability and overall user experience.

While users acknowledged the site's efficiency, they overwhelmingly described the design as "outdated" and "cluttered" with excessive text. Despite these concerns, all participants were able to complete the assigned tasks. However, completion times varied across tasks. It took the three participants roughly the same amount of time to complete each task, highlighting common usability challenges. The time to complete task 3 (searching for a new apartment) was very different between all three participants. Overall usability concerns and recommendations for the Craigslist website include:

- » **Navigation & UI:** Craigslist's layout is outdated and lacks hierarchy, making it hard to find relevant sections quickly. Dedicate a "Home" button in the main menu to ensure users can quickly return to the homepage without relying on the "back" button.
- » **Remove Redundant Buttons:** Eliminate duplicate "post an Ad" buttons to declutter the interface.
- » **Clarity in Transactions:** The buying/selling process is unclear, with security concerns around email and phone number sharing.
- » **Consistency in Posting Requirements:** Users expect a structured process with required fields like images and pricing.
- » **Search & Filtering Improvements:** Search functionality should be more intuitive, with filters easier to locate and use.
- » **Reporting/Flagging Transparency:** Users need to provide reasoning and understand what happens when they report/flag a post and why it matters.



## Methodology

Participants were recruited from the family and friends of the head researcher during the week of February 23, 2025. Each participant received a \$15 Amazon gift card as compensation for their time. To ensure confidentiality, participants' names were not recorded, and instead, they were assigned labels (Participant 1, 2 & 3). Before the study began, they were provided with a brief synopsis and an overview of what the session would entail. They were informed that both audio and video recording would take place during the session, with verbal consent obtained initially and formalized through a signed consent form [[Appendix D](#)].

Testing was conducted on a variety of devices, including the researcher's Mac-book Pro and PC, as well as participants' personal computers for virtual sessions. All testing was performed using Google Chrome, with screen recording enabled to capture both the all the participants' interactions and verbal feedback. This allowed the researcher to review both their actions and thoughts while completing assigned tasks.

At the start of each session, the moderator introduced the study, clarifying its purpose and emphasizing that the participants were not being tested; rather, the website itself was under evaluation. Additional instructions were provided as necessary, including details on how the session would be recorded and how the collected data would be used. The head researcher then read a synopsis of the tasks to be completed and presented the consent form for signing. A full script [[Appendix B](#)] and task list [[Appendix C](#)] can also be found in the Appendices.

## Warm-up Questions

Once participants had given full consent to both the study and the recording, it was important to ease them into the session. This was achieved by starting with simple, low-pressure questions that they could easily answer. Doing so helped put them at ease, reduce any nerves, and boost their confidence before moving onto the main tasks. The questions will consist of:

1. Can you tell me a little about your background and what you do day-to-day?
2. How much of your daily routine involves using a computer or smartphone?
3. If you had to estimate, how many hours a day do you spend on-line, including both work and personal use?
4. What type of websites or apps do you find yourself using the most?
5. Are there any websites or apps you particularly enjoy using? What makes them stand out to you?

Each task was read to the participant one at a time. Throughout the process, they were encouraged to think out loud while completing the tasks, allowing the researcher to gain insight into their thoughts. When needed, the researcher asked follow-up questions to gather more information but refrained from providing any hints or guidance.

At the end of the session, participants were given the opportunity to share any final thought or general recommendations about the website based on their experience.



# Participants

## Participant 1 -

- » Testing administered **in person** on **March 1st, 2025**
- » Female
- » 29 years old
- » Administrative Assistant
- » **10 hours/day Average Online**
  - » Computer 75%
  - » Smartphone 25%
- » **Most Used Websites / Apps:** Tiktok, Instagram, Google, Outlook, ChatGPT, Spotify
- » **Favorite Site:** ChatGPT - to help solve problems and interactions at work

## Participant 2 -

- » Testing administered **in person** on **March 1st, 2025**
- » Male
- » 26 years old
- » Architect
- » **4 hours/day Average Online**
  - » Computer 50%
  - » Smartphone 50%
- » **Most Used Websites / Apps:** Youtube, Instagram, AI Tools, Pinterest, Adobe Products
- » **Favorite Site:** Youtube - for learning and entertainment

## Participant 3 -

- » Testing administered **on-line** on **March 1st, 2025**
- » Male
- » 31 years old
- » Manufacturer
- » **8 hours/day Average Online**
  - » Computer 35%
  - » Smartphone 65%
- » **Most Used Websites / Apps:** Steam, YouTube, Twitter, Apple Music, Amazon, Google, Mail
- » **Favorite Site:** YouTube - for everything



# Analysis and Recommendations

Every participant successfully completed all tasks, resulting in a 100% completion rate. However, the time it took to complete each task varied among participants, with no single task being consistently the fastest or slowest. Completion times are recorded in minutes and seconds.

	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5
Participant 1	2:07	2:28	3:37	3:09	3:27
Participant 2	2:35	3:22	6:10	2:38	4:17
Participant 3	2:31	3:23	1:40	3:40	4:30
Total Task Time	7:13	9:13	11:27	9:27	12:14
Mean Task Time	2.24	3:04	3:49	3:09	4:04

The head researcher who conducted the tests compiled the following analysis and recommendations. These insights are based on both the participants' verbal feedback and their actions during the study. The results will be reviewed and broken down by each individual task.



## Task 1 Findings

**Task:** You're looking for a used bicycle to start riding around your neighborhood. You decide to check Craigslist to see what's available nearby. Start by searching for a bike in your city, and once you find one that seems like a good deal, go through the process of contacting the seller (without actually sending the message).

**Results:** Users relied on filters such as price and location to refine their searches but struggled to find a map view for better geographic context. Contacting the seller was also unclear, as the "Reply" button was not immediately obvious, leading to confusion about how to initiate communication. Additionally, users were unsure about the legitimacy of the email format provided, finding it unfamiliar and potentially suspicious.

Issues Identified	Proposed Changes	Severity
Contact method is unintuitive; users expected a "Contact Seller" or "Make an Offer" button.	Make "Reply" more prominent and introduce a "Send a Message" and/or "Make an Offer" button for a smoother transaction process.	High
Map /Location filtering could be more accessible.	Improve the visibility and placement of the map feature for better geographic filtering.	Medium
Email and phone number available to the general public confused users, raising concerns about transaction security.	Do not release a listers personal information until you contact the lister and then proceed with a transaction.	High



## Task 2 Findings

**Task:** You're cleaning out your garage and realize you have an old coffee table you no longer need. Instead of letting it collect dust, you decide to sell it on craigslist. Go through the steps of creating a listing, adding a title, description, price and images. Stop just before submitting the post.

**Results:** Users expected that creating an account would be necessary to post an ad but were surprised to find that they could do so without one. Additionally, the required fields felt inconsistent, as certain details like condition were mandatory, while crucial information such as price was optional. Editing a post without an account was also unclear, leaving users unsure whether they would be able to make changes after publishing.

Issues Identified	Proposed Changes	Severity
Users assumed they needed an account to make a post, but later realized they didn't	Users will have to create an account to post on the website and clearly state posting requirements upfront to manage expectations.	Medium
Lack of clarity on post-editing without an account	Provide instructions on how users can edit or access their post after submission.	High
No mandatory image uploads, leading to vague or misleading posts.	Require at least one image per listing to improve listing credibility.	Medium



## Task 3 Findings

**Task:** You're planning to move to a new apartment and want to find a two-bedroom rental within your budget. Head to Craigslist and start searching in your area. Apply any filter you think are necessary and browse the listings until you find one that looks promising.

**Results:** Users struggles with navigation due to the overwhelming amount of text and unclear category organization, making it difficult to find relevant listings. While filters were helpful, they were sometimes hard to locate, slowing down the search process. Additionally, many housing posts lacked images and crucial details such as location information, reducing the credibility and usefulness of the listings.

Issues Identified	Proposed Changes	Severity
Homepage is cluttered, making navigation challenging.	Redesign homepage for better readability, hierarchy, and ease of use. Narrow down the options to select from on homepage.	High
Filtering options like "bedrooms" took too long to locate.	Improve filter visibility and accessibility by repositioning or highlighting key filters	Medium
Listings lacked consistency in displaying key details.	Make location, pricing, and image uploads mandatory for all housing listings.	High



## Task 4 Findings

**Task:** You've decided it's time for a career change and want to see what job opportunities are out there. Search Craigslist for a job in your field and within your preferred location. Once you find an interesting listing, take a look at the details and figure out how you would apply.

**Results:** Users had difficulty finding essential details such as the job location and company name within postings, making it harder to assess opportunities. Additionally, filtering by location did not always work as expected, often displaying results outside the selected area. The application process was also unclear, leaving users unsure whether they should click "Reply" to apply directly or if they needed to visit an external site.

Issues Identified	Proposed Changes	Severity
No clear application process; users didn't know how to apply to the job.	Add a clear "Apply Now" button as an option and/or require a link to the company's website to apply.	Very High
Job postings lacked company details.	Require company names and additional details in job postings.	High
Location filters showed irrelevant results.	Improve location-based filtering to ensure job postings stay within the selected area.	High



## Task 5 Findings

**Task:** While browsing Craigslist, you come across a listing that seems a little too good to be true; maybe the price is suspiciously low, or the description seems off. Take a closer look at the post and try to determine what makes it seem like a scam. Once you've identified the red flags, go through the process of reporting the listing to Craigslist to see how easy or difficult it is to flag suspicious content.

**Results:** Users were uncertain about the impact of flagging a post, as there was no clear indication of what happens after submitting a flag. The lack of an option to provide a reason for flagging further added to the confusion, leaving user unsure if their concerns were being properly addressed. Additionally, the ability to flag posts without an account raised concerns about potential misuse, as there no safeguards to prevent spam or malicious flagging / reporting.

Issues Identified	Proposed Changes	Severity
Flagging is vague, with no feedback on what happens next.	Provide confirmation and explanation of what flagging does.	Medium
Users cannot specify why they are flagging something.	Allow users to provide a reason when flagging a post.	High
Potential for abuse since anyone can flag posts without verification.	Users need an account to flag / report posts so it is recorded and not taken advantage of.	Low



# Conclusion

Craigslist is a widely used platform for buying, selling, job hunting, and finding rental properties, but its usability presents several challenges. The site's layout is simplistic, yet its organization can feel cluttered and outdated, making it difficult for users to quickly find what they need. Important features, such as search filters and posting guidelines, are not always intuitive, while less useful elements take up valuable space. Additionally, navigation can be confusing, with inconsistent labeling and a lack of clear visual hierarchy. Despite these issues, most users can eventually complete their tasks, though the experience could be significantly improved with better structure and readability enhancements.



# Appendix

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**Appendix A - Card Sorting Cards**

**Appendix B - Usability Test Script**

**Appendix C - Usability Tasks**

**Appendix D - Usability Consent Form**



# Card Sorting Cards

Event Calender	Location	Language	Search	Sell / Post an Ad
Profile	Announcements	Local News & Community Announcements	Community	Services
Discussion Forums	Housing	For Sale	Jobs	Gigs
Resumes	Neighborhood-based Listings	Today's Deals	Free Stuff	User Profiles
User Ratings	Popular or Trending Posts	Shop by Category	Explore	Purchase History
Saved / Favorite Listings	Recently Viewed	Live Auctions	Returns	Tools & Apps
Log in / Sign up	Watchlist	Cart / Checkout	Privacy Settings	Help & Contact Us
Scams & Fraud Alerts	Safety Tips	Verified Listings	Secure Messaging	



# Usability Test Script

Hello (participant name), thank you for joining me today. My name is Kelly Prendergast, and I am the lead researcher for this study. I'll be guiding you through the session and providing any necessary instructions along the way.

Before we get started, I'd like to go over a few details so you know what to expect. You've already received a brief overview of today's session, but let me explain again. We'll be looking at the Craigslist website to evaluate how well it works for users like you. We're interested in hearing your honest feedback; what works well, what doesn't, and anything else you feel is necessary to share. The session will take about 30 minutes.

I want to emphasize that this is not a test of you or your abilities and that we are testing the website itself. There are no right or wrong answers, and you don't have to worry about making mistakes. Any feedback you provide will be extremely valuable, and nothing you say will hurt our feelings, we're simply here to observe and learn.

As you go through each task, I ask that you think out loud. This means sharing your thoughts, reactions, and any challenges you face while navigating the site. With your permission, I'd like to record both the screen and our conversation. This recording will be used solely for research purposes and will not be shared outside the research team.

If everything sounds good to you, I'll ask you to sign a simple consent form confirming that you agree to participate and understand that this session will be recorded. *[Hand them the consent form.]*

During the session, feel free to ask me any questions. I may not be able to answer them right away, as we want to see how participants work through tasks independently, but I'll do my best to clarify once the test is complete.

Do you have any questions before we begin?



# Usability Test Script

## Warm-up Questions

Before we begin with the tasks, I would like to ask you a few simple questions:

1. Can you tell me a little about your background and what you do day-to-day?
2. How much of your daily routine involves using a computer or smartphone?
3. If you had to estimate, how many hours a day do you spend on-line, including both work and personal use?
4. What type of websites or apps do you find yourself using the most?
5. Are there any websites or apps you particularly enjoy using? What makes them stand out to you?

## Homepage Review

Before we jump into the tasks, I'd like you to take a moment to look at the website (without clicking anything just yet) and share your initial thoughts. This could include what you think the site is used for, what kinds of actions you believe you can take on it, and anything else that stands out at first glance. If you were to click on something right away, what would grab your attention first?

## Tasks

Great, thank you for your feedback! Now that you've had a chance to get familiar with the homepage, I'll be asking you to complete five tasks based on different scenarios. As a reminder, I encourage you to think out loud as you go so I can better understand your thought process.

Are you ready to begin? Alright, Let's get started! Tasks listed in [[Appendix C](#)]

## Wrapping Up

Thank you so much for your time today! Your participation has been incredibly helpful. Before we wrap up, do you have any final questions for me?

If anything comes to mind later, whether it's a question or additional feedback, feel free to reach out to me at [kprendergast1@quinnipiac.edu](mailto:kprendergast1@quinnipiac.edu), which you'll also find on the copy of the consent form you signed.



# Usability Tasks

1. You're looking for a used bicycle to start riding around your neighborhood. You decide to check Craigslist to see what's available nearby. Start by searching for a bike in your city, and once you find one that seems like a good deal, go through the process of contacting the seller (without actually sending the message).
2. You're cleaning out your garage and realize you have an old coffee table you no longer need. Instead of letting it collect dust, you decide to sell it on craigslist. Go through the steps of creating a listing, adding a title, description, price and images. Stop just before submitting the post.
3. You're planning to move to a new apartment and want to find a two-bedroom rental within your budget. Head to Craigslist and start searching in your area. Apply any filter you think are necessary and browse the listings until you find one that looks promising.
4. You've decided it's time for a career change and want to see what job opportunities are out there. Search Craigslist for a job in your field and within your preferred location. Once you find an interesting listing, take a look at the details and figure out how you would apply.
5. While browsing Craigslist, you come across a listing that seems a little too good to be true; maybe the price is suspiciously low, or the description seems off. Take a closer look at the post and try to determine what makes it seem like a scam. Once you've identified the red flags, go through the process of reporting the listing to Craigslist to see how easy or difficult it is to flag suspicious content.



# Consent Form

## Participation Consent Form

Please read the following statement and sign where indicated. Thank you for your participation in our Craigslist usability research study. If you have any questions or comments following the study, please contact the researcher, Kelly Prendergast, at [kprendergast1@quinnipiac.edu](mailto:kprendergast1@quinnipiac.edu)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in this website usability research study conducted by **Craigslist**. I understand and accept that both my screen and my voice will be recorded for research purposes.

Print your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

