User Test Report

The Archivist Round Table (nycarchivist.org)

By: Maeve Countey, Kreya Jackson & Julie Schaeffer

Pratt Institute
LIS 644-Spring 2015

Executive Summary

This report details a recent assessment of the Archivist Round Table of Metropolitan New York's website, nycarchivists.org, conducted through user testing. As a professional organization A.R.T. recognizes that the website is an important tool to inform and engage current and future members.

Users were impressed by the clean layout and strong resources of the website. Our findings look at several specific areas of the website and include areas like navigation, membership, and jobs. Based on user responses and suggestions, our recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation #1: Increase font size

Recommendation #2: Keep the drop down menu functional after following menu bar

Recommendation #3: Redirect Jobs menu bar landing page from Resources to the Job Postings section

Recommendation #4: Apply a filter or job search function to the jobs posting page

Recommendation #5: Implement return-to-top of page option, or alternatively, separate job postings onto individual pages

The A.R.T. website provides a wealth of information. These actionable recommendations will improve engagement of the user base and ensure that members remain dedicated for years to come.

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York is a well-established professional organization for archivists, librarians, and records managers. A.R.T. was founded in 1979 and currently has around 650 members. They are hoping to further develop their website to serve their members and encourage new ones to join. This study focused on the membership information page and the jobs page. Six users participated in our study. Five were tested using the Silverback usability recorder application and one participated remotely through User Zoom. The users came from a variety of backgrounds, including library students, working librarians, and non-library professionals.

Methodology

2.1 Background

The Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan NY website, nycarchivists.org, was reviewed through the user testing method of analysis. User testing is the backbone of usability and user experience study. Through observation, user testing allows us to learn about the user from the user. As the maximum cost-benefit ratio can be achieved with three to five participants, user testing is considered very effective with a relatively small pool. (Barnum 2011)

Six users took part in this user test of the A.R.T. website. Under the guidance of a usability evaluator, the user was led through two tasks on the website. The usability recording application Silverback was employed to document the user's actions on the website. Users were asked to utilize the "Think Aloud" method throughout their navigation of the tasks as a means of documenting their internal thought process.

A pre-test questionnaire was developed to gauge user interest in the site's topic. As part of a post-test questionnaire to capture the qualitative user experience, the System Usability Scale was employed as a quantitative measurement of the user's experience with the site. The pre-test questionnaire, post-test questionnaire, and System Usability Scale can be found in the appendix to this report.

2.2 Tasks

The users were led through two tasks on the A.R.T. website. These tasks were designed with typical user needs in mind and were scenario based. Before the tasks began, users were given

the general direction: What is your initial reaction to this site? What do you think this site is about?

Task 1: You are an archives professional, new to NYC and looking for a professional association. You discover the Archivist Round Table (A.R.T.) website and are interested in becoming a member, but only if it is affordable and connects you with a large number of archivists in the area. Find how much it costs to join ART as a professional and how many organizations they represent.

Task 2: You are an archives student interested in an internship opportunity for the summer. Recently you have had an interest in working at an arts organization. You cannot start until June and can only work part-time. Does the A.R.T. have any postings that would fit your needs?

Findings and Recommendations

The users found that the A.R.T. website contained a wealth of information, and was strong in orientation. One user described the site as "minimalist and neat." The site garnered a total System Usability Score of 69.2, which is just above average (an average score is 68). The Usability rating was slightly below average, at 65.1. The Learnability rating was very high, at 85.4.

SUS	Usability	Learnability
69.2	65.1	85.4
75.0	68.8	100.0
82.5	84.4	75.0
45.0	40.6	62.5
72.5	65.6	100.0
75.0	68.8	100.0
65.0	62.5	75.0

Where the site began to falter was in areas of organization and technical details. The following recommendations will ensure that the unique and invaluable resources offered by the Archivists Round Table will remain accessible, as well as encourage growth of the membership base.

Recommendation #1: Increase font size.

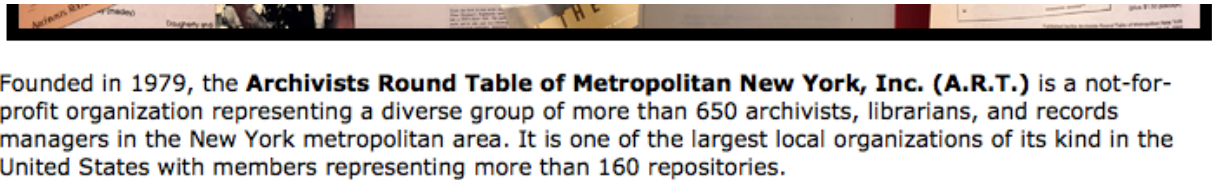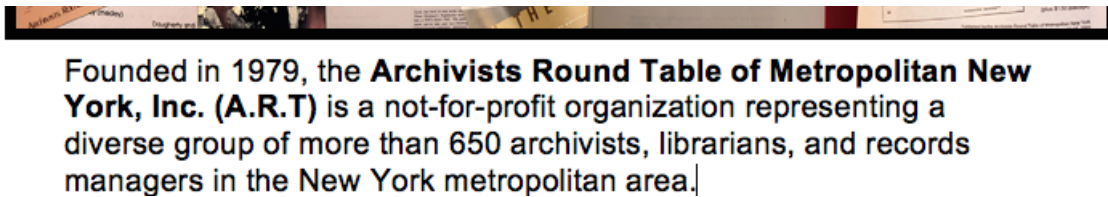Users found the font size on the site to be small and therefore difficult to read.

Founded in 1979, the **Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York, Inc. (A.R.T.)** is a not-for-profit organization representing a diverse group of more than 650 archivists, librarians, and records managers in the New York metropolitan area. It is one of the largest local organizations of its kind in the United States with members representing more than 160 repositories.

Figure 1: ↗ Example of small font presentation under the *About* section.

Figure 2:↘ Suggested example of increasing font to pt. 14

Founded in 1979, the **Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York, Inc. (A.R.T)** is a not-for-profit organization representing a diverse group of more than 650 archivists, librarians, and records managers in the New York metropolitan area.

Increasing font size will ensure that all visitors to the site can easily navigate it without visual strain.

Recommendation #2: Keep the drop down menu functional after following menu bar.

Drop-down menus disappear when you are in a specific menu bar section, forcing the user to the side of the page to re-navigate.
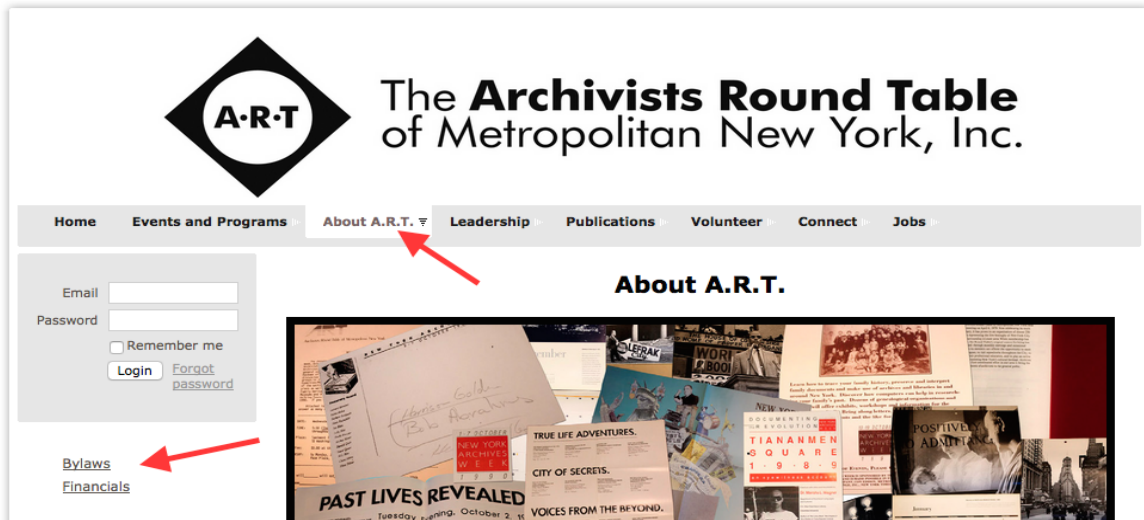
Figure 3

User must navigate to the left side menu to access the Bylaws & Financial sections of the "About A.R.T." menu bar option

Users naturally attempted to use the menu bar to delve further into a given section. To go to the left side of the page to rediscover the menu was unintuitive. Restoring functionality for the menu bar within sections while maintaining the side-bar menu will give users multiple points of access and ensure ease of navigation.

Recommendation #3: Redirect jobs menu bar landing page from resources to the job postings.

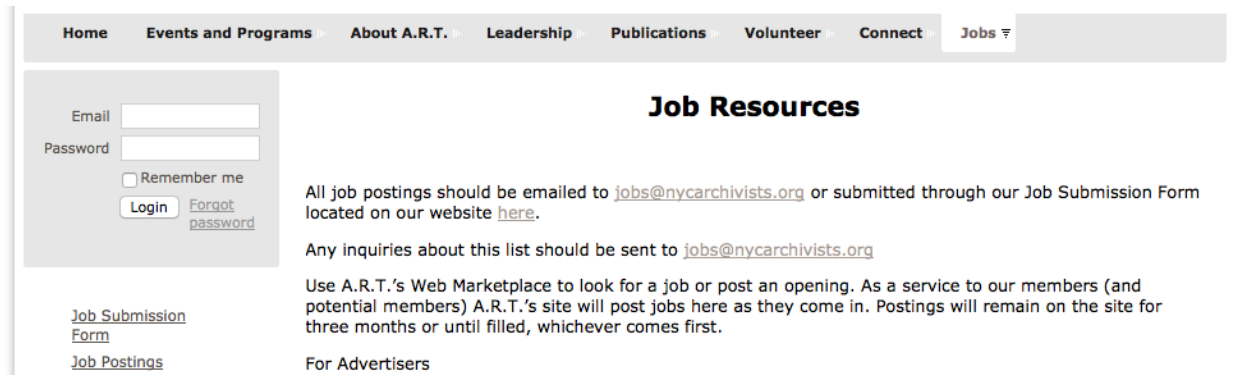The current Jobs menu bar home page directs user to an informational resources page:

Figure 4: ↗ Current landing page of Jobs menu bar.

Users expectations dictated that clicking on Jobs should directly navigate to the jobs postings, favoring the needs of the job seeker versus the poster. By redirecting the Jobs landing page to Job Postings and maintaining the Job Resources page as a drop down selection, user expectations will be fulfilled without relegating important resource information.
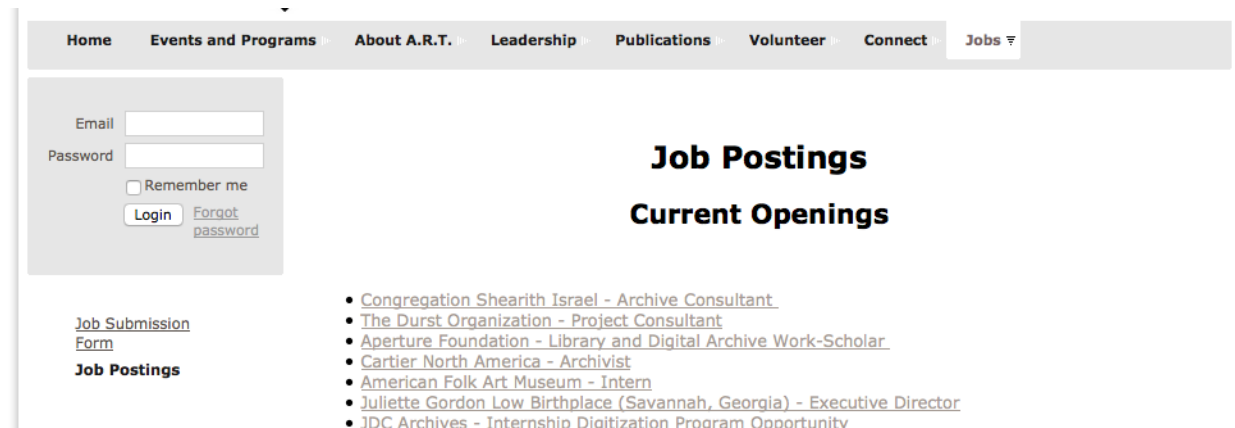

↑

Figure 5:
Suggested landing page for Jobs menu bar.

Recommendation #4: Apply a filter or job search function to the jobs posting page, including organization by internship/part-time/full-time etc.

In completing Task 2, while searching for an arts-related internship position, a user having trouble deciphering the different job classifications exclaimed, "Is this applicable? Can you just tell me?" More than one user expressed a desire for the job postings page to have a filter or job search function to ease navigation. By implementing a simple search function, users may have more success in finding relevant archival positions, increasing the likelihood that they may join the Archivist Round Table (A.R.T.) Organization.

Figure 6:
Example of search function appended to job postings page.

Recommendation #5: Implement return-to-top of page option, or alternatively, separate job postings onto individual pages.

The current implementation of anchor links on the job postings page leaves users stranded in the middle of the page after following a title of interest. Users expressed discontent with having to manually scroll back up to the top to continue their search. As one user noted, the simplest option would be to enable a "Return to Top" button that follows users as they scroll down the page.

Figure 7:
Suggested implementation of "Return to Top" link

Alternatively, the job postings page could be reorganized to give each posting its own page. However, this may be out of the scope of the current A.R.T. website development.

Side Notes/Evaluator Observations:

There was discussion of the site's predisposition towards what could be construed as too much information. The site favors the use of large blocks of text that may bury important information within. To limit text information will limit the likelihood of user abandonment.

We noticed two broken links on the site

- The link to the Archives Week Symposium: http://www.nycarchivists.org/New-York-Archives-Week

- The cover page link to the 30th Anniversary Metropolitan Archivist journal: http://www.nycarchivists.org/metro_archivist_issues

Conclusion

The Archivist Round Table (A.R.T.) of Metropolitan New York, is committed to developing a more engaging, user friendly website for users. The A.R.T. website provides a wealth of informative information but modifications to the site's interface were suggested, after usability experts (at Pratt Institute's School of Library and Information Science) conducted a user test on the Archivist Round Table's website. After the user test was completed, it revealed that there were three areas related to the site's interface that could use improvements.   For example, it revealed that the site's navigational capabilities needed refinements, and that improvements surrounding visibility and organization were needed as well. Once the actionable recommendations suggested in this report are implemented, it will enhance the websites interface and ability to create a more user-friendly experience.

References

Barnum, C.M., (2011). *Usability testing essentials ready, set…test.* Burlington, MA:
    Morgan Kaufmann.

Appendix A:

Moderator Script

Introduction

Hi, I'm [**name]** and I'm part of a team of Usability Consultants from Pratt Institute School of Information and Library Science. Thanks for agreeing to participate in this user study. Your feedback will be helpful in assessing the usability of the Archivists Round Table interface.

This test will document your actions on the website using Silverback, which is a usability recording application. With the rest of my team, I will compile the results of the test and we will analyze the data. We will use the recording only in the context of the report.

Consent Form

Please review the consent form and let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

[Give form, get it signed, collect**]** Thanks!

Procedural Instructions

The next 20 minutes will be dedicated to the study, involving pre and post test questions and three tasks that I will guide you through.

Are you familiar with the Think Aloud process? **[if no**: The Think Aloud process involves you voicing your thoughts as you use the website and I will take notes.**]**

During this test, Silverback will run in the background to record your actions on the website.

Do you have any questions before we begin? As we move through the process, I may ask you questions.

Pre-Test Questionnaire

Please start by filling out this questionnaire so that we can have a background of your web experience.

Thank you.

Intro to Tasks

We have two tasks for you to complete. Keep in mind that these tasks are an evaluative tool of the website and not a test of your abilities. I will now ask you to begin "Thinking Aloud" from this point forward.

What is your initial reaction to this site? What do you think this site is about? **[**record answers**]**

Scenario 1: You are an archives professional, new to NYC and looking for a professional association. You discover the Archivist Round Table(A.R.T.) website and are interested in becoming a member, but only if it is affordable and connects you with a large number of archivists in the area.

Find how much it costs to join ART as a professional and how many organizations they represent.

Scenario 2: You are an archives student interested in an internship opportunity for the summer. Recently you have had an interest in working at an arts organization. You cannot start until June and can only work part-time. Does the ART have any postings that would fit your needs?

Thanks again for taking the time to help us with this survey.

Post-Test Evaluation

Before I let you go, please fill out this final questionnaire on your thoughts regarding this website.

Debrief

As a token of appreciation, please enjoy this small, sugary treat. We thank you for your time and value your input. Your details will not be used in the final report. Our team will view the Silverback recording and use it to write our usability report for the Archivists Round Table.

Do you have any other questions? Thanks!

Usability test consent form

Please read and sign this form.

In this usability test:

- You will be asked to perform certain tasks on the Archivists Round Table website facilitated by a Usability Consultant.

- You will be recorded with a Usability Testing program.

- You will be interviewed post-task by a Usability Consultant.

- You will be asked to fill in two brief questionnaires.

Participation in this usability study is voluntary. All information will remain strictly confidential. Your descriptions and findings may be used to help improve the web site.

However, at no time will your name or any other identification be used. You can withdraw your consent to the experiment and stop participation at any time.

If you have any questions after today, please contact Julie (jschae60@pratt.edu), Kreya (kjackso9@pratt.edu) or Maeve (mcountey@pratt.edu).

I have read and understood the information on this form and have had all of my questions

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Usability Consultant Signature _____ Date _____

-

Appendix B: Pre- and Post-Test

ART Pre-Test Questionnaire

* Required

- What is your name? *
- How old are you?
    - o 18-24
    - o 25-34
    - o 35-44
    - o 45 +
- What is your occupation or field of study?
    - o Library Science
    - o Archivist
    - o Researcher
    - o Unrelated field
- Are you familiar with the Archivists Round Table website?
    - o Yes
    - o No
- When you visit a website, what is your preferred mode of content?
    - o Images
    - o Text
    - o Video
    - o Social Media
- Are you a member of any professional organizations?
    - o Yes

o   No

- Are you interested in archival study?

  o   Yes

  o   No

- *Never submit passwords through Google Forms.*

A.R.T. Post-Test Questionnaire

* Required

- What one word would you use to describe your experience with this site? *

- Do you have any suggestions for improvement? *

- Are you inclined to learn more about the organization? Why or why not? *

- I think that I would like to use this website frequently *

•	· 1	· 2	· 3	· 4	· 5	·
· Strongly disagree	·	·	·	·	·	· Strongly agree

· I found the website unnecessarily complex *

•	· 1	· 2	· 3	· 4	· 5	·
· Strongly disagree	·	·	·	·	·	· Strongly agree

· I thought the website was easy to use *

•	· 1	· 2	· 3	· 4	· 5	·
· Strongly disagree	·	·	·	·	·	· Strongly agree

· I think that I would need the support of a technical person to be able to use this website *

•	· 1	· 2	· 3	· 4	· 5	·

· Strongly disagree	·	·	·	·	·	· Strongly agree

· I found the various functions in this website were well integrated *

•	· 1	· 2	· 3	· 4	· 5	·
· Strongly disagree	·	·	·	·	·	· Strongly agree

· I thought there was too much inconsistency in this website *

•	· 1	· 2	· 3	· 4	· 5	·
· Strongly disagree	·	·	·	·	·	· Strongly agree

· I would imagine that most people would learn to use this website very quickly *

•	· 1	· 2	· 3	· 4	· 5	·
· Strongly disagree	·	·	·	·	·	· Strongly agree

· I found the website very cumbersome to use *

•	· 1	· 2	· 3	· 4	· 5	·
· Strongly disagree	·	·	·	·	·	· Strongly agree

· I felt very confident using the website *

•	· 1	· 2	· 3	· 4	· 5	·
· Strongly disagree	·	·	·	·	·	· Strongly agree

· I needed to learn a lot of things before I could get going with this website *

•	· 1	· 2	· 3	· 4	· 5	·
· Strongly disagree	·	·	·	·	·	· Strongly agree

Appendix C: Responses

Timestamp	What is your name?	How old are you?	What is your occupation	Are you familiar with the	When you visit a website	Are you a member of an	Are you interested in arc
4/28/2015 17:07:16	████████	25-34	Library Science, Archivis	Yes	Text	Yes	Yes
4/29/2015 19:30:34	██	25-34	Unrelated field	No	Text	No	Yes
4/29/2015 20:00:10	██	18-24	Unrelated field	No	Images	No	No
4/30/2015 17:05:57	████████	18-24	Library Science	No	Text	No	Yes
4/30/2015 19:07:02	███	25-34	Library Science	No	Text	Yes	No
5/2/2015 11:08:13	██	35-44	Library Science	No	Images	Yes	No

Timestamp	What one word would yo	How easy was it to navig	Do you have any suggestions for improvement?	Are you inclined to learn more about the organization? Why or why not?	I think that I would like to	I found the website unne	I thought the website wa	I think that I would need	I found the various functi	I thought there was too	I would imagine that mo	I found the website very	I felt very confident usin	I needed to learn a lot of
4/28/2015 17:22:02	Professional		(User Emily A.) while the website has a lot of great professional resources it does seem a bit cluttered. On the job board I also wish they would post the date they listed the job opportunities.	Yes. As an archivist currently searching for a job it seems like they have a lot of great networking and skill-building opportunities.	4	3	4	1	3	2	5	3	4	1
4/29/2015 19:39:22	Informative		For the job postings, I think it would have been helpful to either have a "sort" filter so people can look at just internships, etc., or to have a 'jump to the top' link along the margins. When I was looking for internships it was time-consuming to have to scroll back up to the top after viewing each posting.	Yes, there was a lot of content on the site and the job postings looked very interesting.	3	1	4	1	5	1	5	2	4	3
4/29/2015 20:14:55	Text-based		The font was small, and a bit square in shape which made me feel like it was more of a dated program, not current. There were also not enough pictures to visual describe the purpose of the particular link.	Right now it seemed to be very informative but perhaps about too many topics that were slightly related but not quite unified.	3	5	3	1	4	3	2	3	2	4
4/30/2015 17:24:26	Satisfactory		Tested Jacquline s. I wished it was organized a little better. The job openings and available internships were mixed together. I think they should be categorized. Also, I wish the information was a little moe obvious so I don't have to read paragraphs before I find it.	Yes. They seem to have a wide outreach according to it's homepage.	3	2	4	1	4	2	4	3	3	1
4/30/2015 19:15:18	Alright		A return to top little javascript thingy would be nice.	No, but if I were an archivist, sure.	3	2	4	1	3	2	4	2	4	1
5/2/2015 11:26:46	enjoyable		In the job listings, have 'return to top' links after few postings so that it is easier to get to the top of the page. Perhaps als	yes, because the site is attractively put together.	4	3	3	2	4	3	4	3	4	2