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Mobile.NASA.gov Usability Test Summary

Website: Mobile.NASA.gov ● Test date: May 2013 ● Users tested: 3 ● Method: Formal Mobile Usability Test ● Follow-up to review solutions: TBD.	**Facilitators:** ● Tiffany Aiken ● Kristal Byrd ● Jordan Broderick

High Priority Problems:
1. a. Users received extra characters in title for a video when sent through an email.
b. Users expressed wanting to see search on the top of the page.
c. Users thought right arrows on bars would link them to a page, but only the text linked.
d. User wanted to see numbers for how many times a video was viewed.
e. User was not aware of the bottom navigation.
2. Users found the "News and Features" and "Top Stories" sections confusing.
   a. User wanted more context on "Top Stories". Only first story had a description, but other stories did not.
   b. User thought "Top Stories" title was a link. Instead, user had to scroll down to "More Stories" link.
   c. Users found "News and Features" and "Top Stories" meanings to be confusing.
3. User struggled with having to enter two email addresses to share videos. Not clear what is optional or required to enter two email addresses.
	Solutions:
	1.
	a. Conduct a technical investigation.
	b. Move search to top of the page.
	c. Link the whole bar, not just the text.
	d. Include the numerical data for video views.
	e. Short term solution: Research best practices (maybe color was not contrasting enough?)
	Longer term solution: Add a drop-down menu/ add a menu icon
	
	2.
	a. Include the full headlines for each story.
	b. Conduct further research on linking the "Top Stories" title. Link to where? (Could link to "More Stories").
	c. Combine both sections, or have "Top Stories" as sub-page of "News and Features," by reviewing data on page views.
	
	3. Put a larger asterisk next to required fields. Consider making text box larger.

Tasks with Highest percent failure: ● None. All tasks were completed.

Executive Summary:

Test participants succeeded at completing 100% of the tasks. The top usability issues involved confusion with the difference between the "Top Stories" and "News and Features" sections, the search function on the site, and the logistics of emailing a video. Top recommended solutions involved general clean-up items such as hyperlinking the entire bar instead of just the text, investigating logistics of sending a video via email, adding a search bar at the top of the site, and researching best practices on bottom navigation. Other solutions were combining the "Top Stories" and "News and Features" sections, researching further the possibility of linking the "Top Stories" headline, and adding an asterisk to the required fields when adding emails to send a video. Overall, users said they would be very likely to read news, watch videos, view images, and watch live NASA TV and generally found the site useful and easy to navigate.

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1.   **Top 3 Problems and Solutions**

        Problem #1: General Cleanup:

                Problem 1a: The text for the video, when it is sent through email, includes special and extra characters in the title.

                Solution 1a: Technical investigation

                Problem 1b: Mobile search needs improvement. As an example, some participants want to see the search on the top of the page.

                Solution 1b: Move search to top of page

                Problem 1c: Right arrows looked like a link but they were not. Only the text linked. Whole bar does not link.

                Solution 1c: Link the whole bar

                Problem 1d: User wanted to know how many times a video was viewed. Actual number of views not included (but available on full site).

Solution 1d: Include the numerical data

Problem 1e: User did not see a lot of the bottom navigation.

Solution 1e: Short term solution: Research best practices (maybe color was not contrasting enough?) Longer term solution: Drop down menu/ add a menu icon ?

Problem #2: "News and Features" and the "Top Stories" sections are confusing.

Problem 2a: User wanted more context on "Top Stories". Only first story had a description, but other stories did not.

Solution 2a: Include the full headline

Problem 2b: User thought "Top Stories" title was a link, but not actually a link. Instead, had to scroll down to "More Stories" link.

Solution 2b: Research further? Link to where? (Could link to "More Stories"). Also make sure the text of the link is consistent to the new linked page. ("Top Stories" and "More Stories" are different)

Problem 2c: "News and Features" and "Top Stories" meanings can be confusing

Solution 2c: Combine both sections, or could have "Top Stories" as subpage of "News and Features". Include a way to check views of each "Top Stories" and "News and Features" to determine what to do.

Problem #3: User struggled with having to enter two email addresses to share videos. Not clear if it's optional or required to enter two email addresses.

Solution 3: Putting a larger asterisk next to required fields. Make box bigger?

2. Other Identified Problems:

1. When user tried to send an email to share the video, it goes into the spam folder of a government email account. However, the email opens in non-government accounts.
2. The play video button appears and disappears sometimes.
3. Information about career is not available.
4. There is no information "About us" for NASA.
5. There was no information about the local NASA offices.
6. The user did not notice the social media icons for sharing content. Example, "follow NASA". Some pages go back to the full website.
7. Details of the video is limited. Context of video isn't provided when click on it.
8. Users did not know what they were viewing on the NASA live TV. There was no context provided. (Could have some sort of mobile TV guide)
9. When the user clicks on the video from the "video screen," it does not open directly and load

immediately.

10. Some search results link to actual regular (non-mobile) website, and not all of those sites link back to the mobile site.

3. Who We Tested

Participant	Age	Occupation	Mobile Device	Hrs. spent surfing web on phone
Travis	25	IT Consultant at GSA	iPhone	5 hr/wk
Hans	29	Consultant on Federal Cloud	iPhone	7 hr/wk
Mike	53	Computer programmer/web designer for USA.gov, Pueblo	iPhone	2 hr/wk

4. List of tasks performed by participants

1. Scroll through the homepage. Tell me which items you perceive to be the most important items on the page.

2a. Find the Image of the Day.

2b. How would you share this image on Twitter?

3a. Find and share a video via email. For the purpose of this test, we want you to send yourself the video. Send the video to your personal email on your phone.

3b. Open the email of the shared video. Is this what you expected?

3c. Play the video. Is this what you expected?

4a. You've heard about NASA TV. Find it and watch it.

4b. Is this what you expected to see?

4c. Can you tell what you are watching?

5. What are the most watched videos on the site?

6a. On the homepage find the "Top Stories." What do you expect to see under this section?

6b. On the homepage find "News and Features." What do you expect under this section?

6c. What do you think the difference is between "Top Stories" and "News and Features?"

6d. Explore the content in each section and tell me if that's what you expected?

6e. Having seen what is under "Top Stories" and "News and Features," what do you think is

the difference between the two? Is it the same as what you expected?

7a. Use the search feature to search for "Mars." Is this what you expected to find?

7b. Click any of the results. Is this what you expected?

8. Where would you go to become a follower of NASA on Twitter?

5. Task Completions for All Participants
*Tasks that were especially difficult are marked in red.

Tasks	Succeed	Succeed w/ Difficulty	Fail	Percentage Failed
2a. Find the Image of the Day	3	0	0	0%
2b. How would you share this image on Twitter?	1	2	0	0%
3a. Find and share a video via email. For the purpose of this test, we want you to send yourself the video. Send the video to your personal email on your phone.	3	0	0	0%
3b. Open the email of the shared video. Is this what you expected?	0	0	0	0%
4a. You've heard about NASA TV. Find it and watch it.	3	0	0	0%
5. What are the most watched videos on the site?	3	0	0	0%
6b. On the homepage find "News and Features." What do you expect under this section?	3	0	0	0%
7. Use the search feature to search for "Mars." Is this what you expected to find?	2	1	0	0%
8. Where would you go to become a follower of NASA on Twitter?	3	0	0	0%

6. Test Notes

- Test instructions altered to reflect use of only one camera (Point 2 View mobile camera software), and not the inclusion of the integrated webcam in the laptop.
- Question 7 changed search term to "shuttle" instead of "Mars" after first participant. Part B added to say, "Click any of the results. Is this what you expected?" in order to gauge participant's expectations of search results linking to both mobile and regular websites.

If you'd like to participate in Usability.Gov Product Testing, contact info.usability@hhs.gov

Read about simple product testing in Steve Krug's book, Rocket Surgery Made Easy: The Do-It-Yourself Guide to Finding and Fixing Usability Problems