

# Usability Basics

Beth Tucker Long

# Who am I?

- Elizabeth Tucker Long (Beth - @e3betht)
- Editor-in-Chief – php[architect] magazine



Want to write?  
See me after.

- PHP Essentials Instructor
- Freelance consultant



# Audience Participation?

- Yes, there will be. So, when I ask the audience a question, don't be shy about answering.

# Usability

- According to Wikipedia:  
**Usability** is the ease of use and learnability of a human-made object.
- According to Beth:  
**Usability** means structuring things so you don't leave your users angry, frustrated, and complaining about you on Facebook or Twitter.

# Importance of Usability

- What is the first thing people will do when a site is difficult to use?

# Where to Start

- Who are your users?
- What do you want them to do on your site?
- What do they want to do on your site?
- How tech-savvy are your users?
- Where will your users go if your site isn't working for them?

# Once You Have a Design

Jakob Nielsen's Five Quality Components of Usability:

1. **Learnability:** How easy is it for users to accomplish basic tasks the first time they encounter the design?
2. **Efficiency:** Once users have learned the design, how quickly can they perform tasks?
3. **Memorability:** When users return to the design after a period of not using it, how easily can they reestablish proficiency?
4. **Errors:** How many errors do users make, how severe are these errors, and how easily can they recover from the errors?
5. **Satisfaction:** How pleasant is it to use the design?

# Common Problems to Avoid

- Know your user, and you are not that user.
- Don't overwhelm the user.
- Consistency, consistency, consistency.
- Minimize the need for a mighty memory.



# Typing Practice

## Account Information

Email Address \*

Password \*

Confirm Password \*

## Personal Information (see [Privacy Policy](#))

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Address Line 1 \*

Address Line 2

City \*

State \*

Zip \*

Country \*

[Special Shipping Instructions?](#)

Sign Me Up

# Typing Practice

## Account Information

Email Address \*

beth@blueparabola.com

Password \*

\*\*\*\*\*

Confirm Password \*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Personal Information (see [Privacy Policy](#))

First Name \*

Beth

Last Name \*

Tucker Long

Address Line 1 \*

123 Street Boulevard

Address Line 2

City \*

That Place

State \*

That State

Zip \*

12345

Country \*

United States

[Special Shipping Instructions?](#)

Sign Me Up

# Typing Practice

Your passwords do not match. Please try again.

## Account Information

Email Address \*

Password \*

Confirm Password \*

## Personal Information (see [Privacy Policy](#))

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Address Line 1 \*

Address Line 2

City \*

State \*

Zip \*

Country \*

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# Typing Practice

Don't delete good data. If it's good, keep it. Don't make the users do any more work than is necessary.

# The Sneak Attack

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Account Information</b>                         | <b>Personal Information</b> (see <a href="#">Privacy Policy</a> ) |   |
| <b>Email Address *</b>                             | <b>First Name *</b>   | <b>Last Name *</b>                          |
| <input type="text" value="beth@blueparabola.com"/> | <input type="text" value="Beth"/>                                 | <input type="text" value="Tucker Long"/>    |
| <b>Password *</b>                                  | <b>Address Line 1 *</b>   | <b>Address Line 2</b>                       |
| <input type="text" value="*****"/>                 | <input type="text" value="123 Street Boulevard"/>                 | <input type="text"/>                        |
| <b>Confirm Password *</b>                          | <b>City *</b>   | <b>State *</b>                              |
| <input type="text" value="*****"/>                 | <input type="text" value="That Place"/>                           | <input type="text" value="Select a State"/> |
|  | <b>Zip *</b>  | <b>Country *</b>                            |
|  | <input type="text" value="12345"/>                                | <input type="text" value="United States"/>  |
|  | <a href="#">Special Shipping Instructions?</a>                    |   |
|  |   | <input type="button" value="Sign Me Up"/>   |

# The Sneak Attack

Please choose a State

**Account Information**

**Email Address \***

**Password \***

**Confirm Password \***

**Personal Information** (see [Privacy Policy](#))

|                         |   |                       |   |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| <b>First Name *</b>     | <input type="text" value="Beth"/>                 | <b>Last Name *</b>    | <input type="text" value="Tucker Long"/>    |
| <b>Address Line 1 *</b> | <input type="text" value="123 Street Boulevard"/> | <b>Address Line 2</b> | <input type="text"/>                        |
| <b>City *</b>           | <input type="text" value="That Place"/>           | <b>State *</b>        | <input type="text" value="Select a State"/> |
| <b>Zip *</b>            | <input type="text" value="12345"/>                | <b>Country *</b>      | <input type="text" value="United States"/>  |

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**Sign Me Up**

# The Sneak Attack

Error messages should actually mean something to the user  
and tell the user how to fix the problem.

# The Sneak Attack

Please choose a state. For security reasons, please reenter your passwords.

| Account Information  | Personal Information <small>(see <a href="#">Privacy Policy</a>)</small>     |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Email Address *</b><br><input type="text" value="beth@blueparabola.com"/> | <b>First Name *</b><br><input type="text" value="Beth"/>                     | <b>Last Name *</b><br><input type="text" value="Tucker Long"/> |
| <b>Password *</b><br><input type="text"/>                                    | <b>Address Line 1 *</b><br><input type="text" value="123 Street Boulevard"/> | <b>Address Line 2</b><br><input type="text"/>                  |
| <b>Confirm Password *</b><br><input type="text"/>                            | <b>City *</b><br><input type="text" value="That Place"/>                     | <b>State *</b><br><input type="text" value="Select a State"/>  |
|  | <b>Zip *</b><br><input type="text" value="12345"/>                           | <b>Country *</b><br><input type="text" value="United States"/> |
|  | <a href="#">Special Shipping Instructions?</a>                               |  |
|  | <input type="button" value="Sign Me Up"/>                                    |  |



# The Sneak Attack

Please choose a state. For security reasons, please reenter your passwords.

| Account Information  | Personal Information <small>(see <a href="#">Privacy Policy</a>)</small>     |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Email Address *</b><br><input type="text" value="beth@blueparabola.com"/> | <b>First Name *</b><br><input type="text" value="Beth"/>                     | <b>Last Name *</b><br><input type="text" value="Tucker Long"/> |
| <b>Password *</b><br><input type="text"/>                                    | <b>Address Line 1 *</b><br><input type="text" value="123 Street Boulevard"/> | <b>Address Line 2</b><br><input type="text"/>                  |
| <b>Confirm Password *</b><br><input type="text"/>                            | <b>City *</b><br><input type="text" value="That Place"/>                     | <b>State *</b><br><input type="text"/>                         |
|  | <b>Zip *</b><br><input type="text" value="12345"/>                           | <b>Country *</b><br><input type="text" value="United States"/> |
|  | <a href="#">Special Shipping Instructions?</a>                               |  |
|  |  | <input type="button" value="Sign Me Up"/>                      |

# Be Forgiving and Empowering

- Everyone makes mistakes, so every mistake should be fixable.
- The user should control the system. The system should not control the user. The user is the boss and the system should show it.
- User should be able to do what they want.
- Alert users to an error before things get worse.
- Strive to empower the user, not speed up the system.

# Button Roulette

## Account Information

Email Address \*

beth@blueparabola.com

Password \*

\*\*\*\*\*

Confirm Password \*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Personal Information (see [Privacy Policy](#))

First Name \*

Beth

Last Name \*

Tucker Long

Address Line 1 \*

123 Street Boulevard

Address Line 2

City \*

That Place

State \*

That State

Zip \*

12345

Country \*

United States

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Sign Me Up

Clear Form

# Button Roulette

| Account Information  | Personal Information (see <a href="#">Privacy Policy</a> ) |   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Email Address *      | First Name *   | Last Name *                                 |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/>                                       | <input type="text"/>                        |
| Password *           | Address Line 1 *   | Address Line 2                              |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/>                                       | <input type="text"/>                        |
| Confirm Password *   | City *   | State *                                     |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/>                                       | <input type="text" value="Select a State"/> |
|                      | Zip *  | Country *                                   |
|                      | <input type="text"/>                                       | <input type="text"/>                        |
|                      | <a href="#">Special Shipping Instructions?</a>             |   |
|                      | <input type="button" value="Sign Me Up"/>                  | <input type="button" value="Clear Form"/>   |

# Button Roulette

Please choose a State

| Account Information  | Personal Information (see <a href="#">Privacy Policy</a> )                   |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Email Address *</b><br><input type="text" value="beth@blueparabola.com"/> | <b>First Name *</b><br><input type="text" value="Beth"/>                     | <b>Last Name *</b><br><input type="text" value="Tucker Long"/> |
| <b>Password *</b><br><input type="text"/>                                    | <b>Address Line 1 *</b><br><input type="text" value="123 Street Boulevard"/> | <b>Address Line 2</b><br><input type="text"/>                  |
| <b>Confirm Password *</b><br><input type="text"/>                            | <b>City *</b><br><input type="text" value="That Place"/>                     | <b>State *</b><br><input type="text" value="Select a State"/>  |
|  | <b>Zip *</b><br><input type="text" value="12345"/>                           | <b>Country *</b><br><input type="text" value="United States"/> |
|  | <a href="#">Special Shipping Instructions?</a>                               |  |
|  | <input type="button" value="Clear Form"/>                                    | <input type="button" value="Sign Me Up"/>                      |

# Button Roulette

Keep things consistent. Users click without reading. Users don't want to have to read before clicking.

# Button Roulette

## Account Information

Email Address \*

Password \*

Confirm Password \*

## Personal Information (see [Privacy Policy](#))

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Address Line 1 \*

Address Line 2

City \*

State \*

Zip \*

Country \*

[Special Shipping Instructions?](#)

Clear Form

Sign Me Up

# Button Roulette

## Account Information

Email Address \*

Password \*

Confirm Password \*

## Personal Information (see [Privacy Policy](#))

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Address Line 1 \*

Address Line 2


City \*


State \*

Zip \*

Country \*

Special Shipping Instructions?

 Clear Form

Sign Me Up 



# Great Expectations

Resources:

- **A Day in the Life of an Astronaut**
- **Biography of Neil Armstrong**
- **Early photos of astronaut training**
- **Buzz Aldrin, in his own words**

# Great Expectations

The user should always know what is happening.

Surprising things can be scary.

# Great Expectations

The user should always know what is happening

Resources:

- **A Day in the Life of an Astronaut**
- **Buy the Biography of Neil Armstrong on Amazon**
- **Early photos of astronaut training (slideshow)**
- **Buzz Aldrin, in his own words (PDF)**

# Cliff Notes

**Welcome, Friend**

**Create an Account**

This site is an awesome place to do things and buy stuff and you should visit it every day.  
This site is an awesome place to do things and buy stuff and you should visit it every day.  
This site is an awesome place to do things and buy stuff and you should visit it every day.

We have an awesome catalog of **great products**

**Sign Up Today**

Have you checked out our **newsletter**?

**Sign Up Today**

Learn more about how awesome our **great products** are!

**Check Them Out**

Browse our awesome catalog of **great products**

**Check Them Out**

# Cliff Notes

Users should always be able to find out what to do next just by skimming the page.

# Cliff Notes

## Welcome

[Create an Account](#)

This site is an awesome place to do things and buy stuff and you should visit it every day.  
This site is an awesome place to do things and buy stuff and you should visit it every day.  
This site is an awesome place to do things and buy stuff and you should visit it every day.

## Learn More About Our Products

We have an awesome selection of products. They are just the greatest in the whole world.  
We have an awesome selection of products. They are just the greatest in the whole world.  
We have an awesome selection of products. They are just the greatest in the whole world.

[Read Reviews](#)

[View Catalog \(PDF\)](#)

## More Information:

If you would like more information, we offer a weekly [newsletter](#) as well as a printed [catalog of our products](#). Both are free of charge.

[Sign Up Today](#)

# Cliff Notes

Welcome to our site! It looks like you don't have an account yet, be sure to **sign up** for an account to receive the maximum benefits from our site. Also, we have a great newsletter that you can **sign up** for as well. We have some great reviews of our products on **this site**, and you can **click here** to view the products we have available for purchase.

# Cliff Notes

Welcome to our site! It looks like you don't have an account yet, be sure to **create an account** for an account to receive the maximum benefits from our site. Also, you can **sign up for our great newsletter** as well. While you are here, you can **read product reviews** as well as **browse our products** that we have available for purchase.



# Unicorn Puke

Welcome to **our site**! It looks like you don't have an account yet, be sure to **sign up** for an account to receive the maximum benefits from our site. Also, we have a great newsletter that you can **sign up** for as well. We have some great reviews of our products on **this site**, and you can **click here** to view the **products** we have available for purchase.

# Unicorn Puke

Just Don't.

Things that look the same should act the same.  
Things that look different should act differently.

# Lost in Translation

The information for the decision must be there when the decision is needed.

## Pizza Size:

- 12"
- 18"
- 24"

## Pizza Crust:

- Joe's Specialty
- The Original
- The New Original

# Lost in Translation

The information for the decision must be there when the decision is needed.

Make sure you are using the language of your users.

# Lost in Translation

## Pizza Size:

- 12" (feeds 1-2)
- 18" (feeds 2-3)
- 24" (feeds 3-4)

## Pizza Crust:

### ○ Joe's Specialty

Hand-tossed with cheese baked into the crust.

### ○ The Original

Traditional thin crust.

### ○ The New Original

Our traditional thin crust, now with special seasoning baked in.

# How to Test

- Create Personas
- Create a script/list of the most common procedures or tasks on your site
- Identify success criteria
- Sit down with users individually and give them one task at a time

# What to Test?

- Old design
- Competitor's websites
- Sites popular with your users
- Proposed site

# Design in Stages

- Create your design
- Test it on users
- Improve your design
- Test it on users
- Improve your design
- Test it on users
- And so on...



# Keep It Simple

- The more often your user has to do something, the easier it should be to do.
- Don't waste clicks, keystrokes, and time.

**Brace Yourself**



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Registration deadline extended:  
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*Let us not forget ...*

**Neil Armstrong 1930-2012**



**If at first you don't succeed...  
you may walk on the moon someday!**

[Read about Astronaut Armstrong's Experience in the late 1960s at a District Science Day at Bowling Green State University.](#)



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### Important Dates

2013 Annual Meeting  
April 6, 2013  
**University of Findlay**  
[Call for Papers](#)  
[deadline Nov. 5, 2012](#)

February 1, 2013  
[Ohio Patent Award](#)

March 2013  
[District Science Days](#) at 15 locations

May 11, 2013  
[State Science Day](#) at The Ohio State University

October 1, 2012 and May 1, 2013  
Postmarked [Deadline](#) for Environmental Science Scholarship Applications

June 20, 2012  
Postmarked [deadline](#) for Governor's Thomas Edison Awards for Excellence

### What is the Academy?

**The Ohio Academy of Science** is a membership based, volunteer-driven, not-for-profit organization. The Academy is the leading organization in Ohio to foster *curiosity, discovery, and innovation* and to unite all who value **education, science, engineering, technology, or**

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Welcome to *The OHIO ACADEMY of SCIENCE*  
Curiosity > Discovery > Innovation



|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
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| <b>SEARCH</b>                              | <b>NEWS</b><br>(under construction)                      | State Science Day                                      | Science Day Awards and Scholarships                    |
| <b>Academy Store</b>                       | <b>Call for Papers</b>                                   | District Science Days-<br>MAP/Dates                    | <b>Governor's STEM Awards</b>                          |
| Ohio J. Science<br>Instructions to Authors | <b>What is Science?</b>                                  | Science Day<br>STANDARDS &<br>RULES                    | <b>Ohio Patent Award</b>                               |
| Open Access<br>Ohio J. Science             | <b>What are science, technology<br/>and engineering?</b> | Science Day FORMS                                      | <i>Ohio's Natural Heritage</i><br>(under construction) |
| Consent Form<br>and<br>Privacy Policy      | <b>Staff</b><br>(under construction)                     | Environmental Science<br>& Engineering<br>SCHOLARSHIPS | <b>Board of Trustees</b><br>(under construction)       |

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123<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF THE OHIO ACADEMY OF SCIENCE

# CALL FOR PAPERS

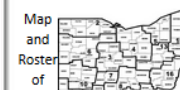
April 5, 2014  
Hosted by **Walsh University** in North Canton, OH  
Abstract Deadline  
**Postmarked by November 4, 2013**  
THEME:  
**T. B. A.**

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**Important Dates**

October 1, 2013 and May 1, 2014 postmarked deadlines.  
[Environmental Science Scholarship Applications](#)  
**2014 Annual Meeting**  
April 5, 2014 **Walsh University, North Canton.**  
[Call for Papers deadline Nov. 4, 2013](#)

February 1, 2014  
[Ohio Patent Award](#)

March 2014  
[District Science Days](#) at 16 locations

May 10, 2014  
[State Science Day](#) at The Ohio State University

June 23, 2013  
Postmarked application [deadline](#) for Governor's Thomas Edison Awards for Excellence. Program



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**Stormwater Harvesting & Storage**



**A Design and Consultancy Business**

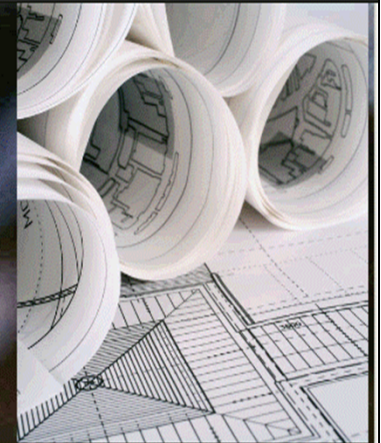
Water Equipment Technology is a professional company that offers critical support in harvesting, storing and the efficient application of your water supply.

Our business strategy is Sustainable Water Management Solutions

A Sustainable quality water supply is the life blood of any Agricultural Property, Horticultural Garden or Sporting Arena. This day and age, such irrigators must have their own water supply complete with a water usage management plan to guarantee themselves of an uninterrupted sustainable water supply.



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**Lake & Pond Management**  
**Stormwater Harvesting & Storage**



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Water Equipment Technology is a professional company that offers critical support in harvesting, storing and the efficient application of your water supply.

Our business strategy is Sustainable Water Management Solutions

A Sustainable quality water supply is the life blood of any Agricultural Property, Horticultural Garden or Sporting Arena. This day and age, such irrigators must have their own water supply complete with a water usage management plan to guarantee themselves of an uninterrupted sustainable water supply.



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Keep me logged in

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## App Center

Find great social apps



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The Ville



SongPop

## Sign Up

It's free and always will be.

First Name:

Last Name:

Your Email:

Re-enter Email:

New Password:

I am:  Select Sex:

Birthday: Month:  Day:  Year:

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By clicking Sign Up, you agree to our [Terms](#) and that you have read our [Data Use Policy](#), including our [Cookie Use](#).

Sign Up

[Create a Page for a celebrity, band or business.](#)

Email or Phone

Password

Log In

Keep me logged in

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# Sign Up

It's free and always will be.

Birthday:

Month:

Day:

Year:

[Why do I need to provide my birthday?](#)

Female  Male

By clicking Sign Up, you agree to our [Terms](#) and that you have read our [Data Use Policy](#), including our [Cookie Use](#).

Sign Up

[Create a Page](#) for a celebrity, band or business.

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## Gmail

A Google approach to email.

Gmail is built on the idea that email can be more intuitive, efficient, and useful. And maybe even fun. After all, Gmail has:



Lots of space

Over 10293.662278 megabytes (and counting) of free storage.



Less spam

Keep unwanted messages out of your inbox.



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### What Other Customers Are Looking At Right Now



Unlocked iPhones

# Recap

- **Typing Practice** – Don't delete good information
- **Sneak Attack** – Be clear on what is missing
- **Button Roulette** – Keep buttons consistent
- **Too Many Cooks** – Make the path obvious
- **Cliff Notes** – Make the content scannable
- **Unicorn Puke** – Pick a color and stick with it
- **Great Expectations** – Same cause, consistent effect
- **Lost in Translation** – Use the user's language

Lund, A. M. (1997). Expert ratings of usability maxims. *Ergonomics in Design*, 5(3), 15-20. A study of the heuristics design experts consider important for good design.

When evaluating the design and usability of a website, consider the following:

1. Know the user, and You are not the user.
2. Things that look the same should act the same.
3. The information for the decision must be there when the decision is needed.
4. Error messages should actually mean something to the user and tell the user how to fix the problem.
5. Every action should have a reaction.
6. Everyone makes mistakes, so every mistake should be fixable.
7. Don't overwhelm the user.
8. Consistency, consistency, consistency.
9. Minimize the need for a mighty memory.
10. Keep it simple.
11. The user should always know what is happening.
12. The more you do something, the easier it should be to do.
13. The user should control the system. The system should not control the user. The user is the boss and the system should show it.
14. Eliminate unnecessary decisions and illuminate the rest.
15. The best journey has the fewest steps. Shorten the distance between the user and the goal.
16. User should be able to do what they want.
17. Alert users to an error before things get worse.
18. Users should always know how to find out what to do next.
19. Strive to empower the user, not speed up the system.
20. Things that look different should act different.
21. These are presented in a descending order determined by their mean rating of importance.

# Sites to check out

- Usability First - <http://www.usabilityfirst.com/>
- Usability Toolkit - <http://www.stcsig.org/usability/resources/toolkit/toolkit.html>
- <http://www.usability.gov/>
- Jakob Nielsen - <http://www.nngroup.com/articles/>

# Books to check out

- "Don't Make Me Think" and "Rocket Surgery Made Easy" by Steve Krug

# Find Me

- Twitter: e3betht
- Madison PHP User Group (Meetup)  
<http://www.madisonphp.com>
- Slides Available on:  
<http://www.TreelineDesign.com/slides>



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