

Make Them Think

Evaluation and strategy for Fokus Folkeoplysning



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Synopsis:

This thesis deals with the issue of developing new web strategies for the organization of Fokus Folkeoplysning. The research consists of heuristic evaluations, stakeholder interviews and some few other studies. The result of this is an understanding of the Context, Content and Users in relation to the website.

Based on these things I develop a new strategy that goes beyond the website and develop both web strategies and business strategies. The important discovery in this relation is that it is important to find ways to motivate the users and attract attention towards Fokus Folkeoplysning. The conclusion is that Fokus Folkeoplysning has to stand out and be different compared to its competitors by arranging offbeat happenings in the public spaces of the city. All of this needs to be backed up by a broad focus on social media, the website and the magazine in a way that inspire and motivate the potential customers to visit the website to read more.

Appendices:

Appendix A - Additional findings from the heuristic evaluation

Appendix B - A Google Analytics report

Preface

Writing this thesis has been like a journey. I have explored ideas, gained insight into complex structures and all these thoughts and knowledge has over time begun to make sense as they were written down. The process started back in my 9th semester project in which I was re-evaluating a former case which made me realize that a major problem that usually occurs when organizations or companies launch a website is that the connection between the web strategies and business strategies is absent. This discovery is the starting point for this thesis and I ended up suggesting strategies that develop both business strategies and web strategies.

This thesis is the sum of many hours of work but also the invaluable inputs that I have received during the project. I would therefore like to thank Fokus Folkeoplysning for allowing me to use them as the case for this project. In particular I would like to thank the employees at Fokus Folkeoplysning for spending time at the project. Without them the project could not have been accomplished.

I would also like to thank my supervisor for guiding me in the difficult stages of the project but also for the encouraging and competent supervision. Finally I would also like to thank family and friends for giving me input to the project and keeping me motivated to continue such a long process.

Just a short note: I will be using a citation style that produces sources in brackets in this style [Author(s), Year, Pages]. When a source only accounts for one sentence it is put before the punctuation. If it is used for a range of sentences it is put after the punctuation in the last sentence that it account for in that paragraph. The full description of sources is located in the Bibliography at page 90.

The front page image is made by David Macdonald and used with permission [Macdonald, 2010].

Résumé

The foundation for this thesis started in my 9th semester report in which I discovered that a common problem for many websites is that they lack a connection between business strategies and web strategies. I wanted to use the master thesis for exploring how to establish a balance between "user needs and experiences" and the "business needs and requirements". I needed a practical case and therefore decided to work with the case of Fokus Folkeoplysning.

Based on those considerations I created the problem statement: *"How can Fokus Folkeoplysning improve their web strategies to attract more customers?"*. In order to deal with this problem I decided to investigate different aspects within the context, content, users model by Morville & Rosenfeld. The first part of the research was a heuristic evaluation that I performed together with course attendees from Fokus Folkeoplysning in order to find the issues with the current website and to attain knowledge about the customers that Fokus Folkeoplysning addresses. In the second part of the research I conducted stakeholder interviews with different employees within Fokus Folkeoplysning to find out what Fokus Folkeoplysning want to achieve with their website and how the employees think about it in their daily work. The third part of the research was a study of usage statistics for the website to find out how it is actually being used by its visitors. It was also a study of how people get to the website from for instance the search engine. One of the main findings of the research is that Fokus Folkeoplysning needs to find out how to attract and motivate their users towards their website.

In order to construct a new strategy for Fokus Folkeoplysning I decided to conduct a benchmarking study to compare the website with other websites from the competitors. This was done in order to get inspiration for what is important to do at the website and see if there were ideas that could be used for the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning. I here realized that the most important thing was that Fokus Folkeoplysning need to stand out and be different compared to their competitors.

When developing the strategy I looked at the visions of Fokus Folkeoplysning and the offers they provide. I realized that they wanted to be untraditional and approach their customers with many different at times offbeat offers. I got inspired by the youth revolution ('68 generation) and realized that there were ideas from this that Fokus Folkeoplysning can use for attracting attention. By arranging happenings, flash mobs and other events in the public spaces of the city it is possible to stand out and be different and most important attract attention in a way that makes people become motivated, think, wonder, puzzle because of the events. This is a good approach because this will make people want to find out more about Fokus Folkeoplysning.

The important thing about this strategy is that it should be backed up by the website, magazine, social media and so on. In general it is important that the customers are motivated to visit the website for more information. The website should then contain detailed descriptions of the offers but also contain inspirational content, pictures and articles about the offbeat events that have been arranged.

The conclusion to the problem statement is that it is important to go beyond the strategies of the website as this allows exploring the potentials of the connection between the web strategies and the business strategies. It is therefore necessary that Fokus Folkeoplysning focus on how they can attract and motivate potential customers towards their website. This can be achieved by arranging offbeat events in the context that the potential customers navigate that makes people want to know more and be a part of the events. The good thing about these events are that they can be arranged within the context of the different courses that Fokus Folkeoplysning currently have - it just require some planning.

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In the Information Architecture book the concept of information architecture is defined among others as *"the structural design of shared information environments"* and *"an emerging discipline and community of practice focused on bringing principles of design and architecture to the digital landscape"* [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006, p. 4]. Information Architects need to be able to produce effective, findable and comprehensive flows of information for the right context by creating meaningful structures, navigation and so on. It is therefore a question about designing the layer below the user interface at the website which is not visible to the users. This layer is very important as this is where structure, design and functionality is defined with respect to how the users are expected to conceive and use the website. If something is wrong in this layer the users are not able to use the website in the way it was intended.

In the end of my ninth semester I wrote a small project in which I were trying to take this deeper look at the layer below the user interface at a website I had been evaluating in a former project. During this project I discovered that there were a number of issues which were related to the lack of a good strategy for the website. According to a white-paper from the full service marketing agency Creuna there are seven common pitfalls when developing web strategies. One of these issues is that many companies think of their online presence as something that is secondary to their company strategy [Creuna, 2009]. This is exactly the issue that I found to be the main cause for their issues. The website were something that was secondary to the companies behind it and the fact that it was maintained by an ad-agency which were in contact with the mother company only made it more difficult for them to design a good solution when they could not directly influence the strategies of the individual companies. This discovery became an eye opener to me as I could see this issue happening in many cases and having discovered this issue made it much more obvious to give suggestions on how to solve the issues present at the website.

Apart from this I also used the ninth semester project to define my standpoint of view within the field of information architecture. I had the idea that all information architects would have a different focus. Some would focus more on pleasing the requirements of the decision makers while others would focus more on the interests of the users. The idea was that this focus could be plotted in a linear diagram as shown in figure 1.1. During this process I found that my focus usually were at the end users of the product. I therefore realized that I need to be more aware of the perspective of business goals and decision makers in order to establish a good balance. I also realized during this process that the task of developing a strategy is a good approach for me as this forces me to be aware of both users and business context while it also is a good tool when I have to convince decision makers on how to create a solution.

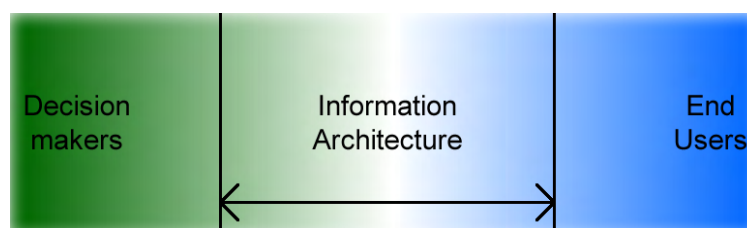


Figure 1.1: Defining the information architect's standpoint of view.

My discoveries from the 9th semester project made me think that I wanted my master thesis to provide me with a chance to further explore how to establish an appropriate balance between the "users needs and experiences" and the "business needs and requirements". I therefore decided

that I needed a practical case in which I could focus on both of these aspects and pay close attention to how I can establish a balance between the two aspects.

1.1 The Case

As I needed a practical case for my master thesis I decided to establish contact with the day- and evening school "Fokus Folkeoplysning" that have many different offers for their customers but wanted to know how to improve their website. In particular they wanted to know how they could attract more customers and get more of their customers to sign up for courses online.

Fokus Folkeoplysning have defined their visions as belonging to four different focus areas as presented in figure 1.2. The areas include re-training, education, public health and cultural offers. The first two are supported through the work of Fokus Daghøjskole while the other two are supported by courses at Fokus Aftenskole. It is difficult for Fokus Folkeoplysning to establish a balance between these two at their website and this something they want to know more about in relation to how they should be presented and what focus there should be on each of the aspects at their website.



Figure 1.2: The Visions of Fokus Folkeoplysning

Apart from the website Fokus Folkeoplysning sends out a magazine two times a year. This magazine contain lists of course descriptions from afterskolen that are provided for the particular season. The good thing about this approach is that this reminds potential customers of

the possibility of going on courses and that this is provided by Fokus Folkeoplysning. This is something that is hard to do on the website as it cannot force customers to look at it by popping up on their computers, it need the customers to actively enter the website. It is therefore a question about both looking at how to improve the website itself but also how to get the potential customers to visit it.

As a small note I want to mention that the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning was relaunched during this project. This relaunch was done in relation to preparing the website for the new season but also in order to be able to generate usage statistics as this was not an option in the former platform that were used for the website. The result of this is that a big part of the initial research is done with the old website in mind while the rest is done with the new relaunched website in mind. I will in section 7.1.1 on page 62 return with a small evaluation of the new website such that it is not being ignored when I in the end of the report will develop new strategies for the website.

1.2 COPE & Remediation

The presentation of courses for the website and magazine is currently done by publishing course descriptions into a database which then is used for both. In this sense Fokus Folkeoplysning is trying to use a method called COPE (Create Once Publish Everywhere). This method is a time saver as it reduces the time needed for preparing the content for both the website and the magazine. Each media has its own standards and the users will approach them in different ways. It is therefore necessary to adapt or remediate the content for each media in an appropriate way. When we present content in a specific media there are two commonly used approaches [Bolter and Grusin, 1998]:

- **Transparent immediacy**

The first approach is something that is often seen in the way that the creator of the media content try to make the media itself transparent. In this sense, a transparent media would be one that erases itself, such that the user is no longer aware of the media but rather have a direct relationship with the contents of the media. [Bolter and Grusin, 1998, p. 23]

- **Hypermediacy**

The second approach is usually seen in many user interfaces on computers where it is not attempted to erase the media. In these interfaces there are buttons and dialogs that the user needs to interact with in order to explore and manipulate the contents of the media. When some software designers characterizes the two-dimensional desktop interface as unnatural they actually mean that it is too obviously mediated. They prefer to imagine an "interfaceless" computer offering some sort of virtual reality which is an attempt to achieve transparent immediacy. [Bolter and Grusin, 1998, p. 33]. The unique thing about hypermediacy is that it combines different kinds of media like pictures, videos, animation and text in a way where the user can interact with the content.

In my opinion there are qualities in both aspects in relation to a website but it is a question about establishing a balance between the concepts of both transparent immediacy and hypermediacy where the media does not become an obstacle. In other words as expressed by Steve Krug:

"Don't Make Me Think!"

[Krug, 2006]

We need to make sure that the website does not contain obstacles that forces the users to stop up think about how they can get to the content they want. It is therefore also important to make sure that the use of Create Once Publish Everywhere does not ruin the presentation on the website and the balance between transparent immediacy and hypermediacy.

1.3 Problem Statement

Based on the considerations about my 9th semester project and the initial considerations about the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning I have developed the following problem statement that will serve as the overall research question in this master thesis.

How can Fokus Folkeoplysning improve their web strategies to attract more customers?

Part I

Research

In this first part of the thesis I will conduct research of the current website and investigate how both employees and users perceive it.

There are many ways to approach the research phase but I have decided to take departure from a model presented in the Information Architecture book where the research phase is divided into three main areas to investigate users, content and context [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006, p. 233] as shown in figure 2.1.

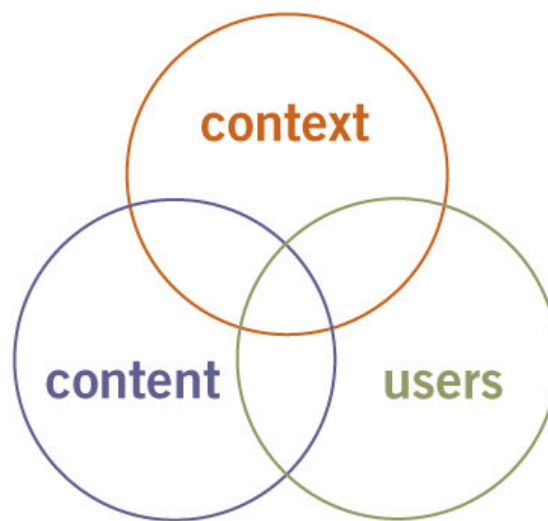


Figure 2.1: Users, Content, Context [Morville, 2004]

The idea behind this model is that the three areas are the important ones to consider in relation to the construction of a website. We need to know who the users are and what they need, we need to understand the business that is holding the website and we need to consider what content the website holds. Finally we also need to understand the relation between each of these three aspects.

In this part of the report I will use three different approaches to the research that covers different aspects of the users, content and context model. In chapter 3 on the following page I will start out by conducting a heuristic evaluation of the website. This evaluation should give me insight into the content at the website and how the users of the site interacts with it.

In chapter 4 on page 35 I will conduct a stakeholder analysis that would give me an understanding of what Fokus Folkeoplysning wants to achieve with their website and how they think about their users. In chapter 5 on page 49 I will focus on how people get to the website and how they use it - based on usage statistics.

As mentioned in the introduction the website was relaunched during this project. This means that the first two parts of the research (heuristic evaluation and stakeholder analysis) were conducted before the relaunch while the last part with evaluation of usage statistics were conducted after the relaunch of the website. Additional presentation of the relaunched website will be given in section 7.1.1 on page 62.

A summary of all the findings from the research is presented in chapter 6 on page 55.

As this project is about the redesign of an existing website it seems natural to start with an evaluation of the existing solution to discover the issues at the current site to ensure that these do not move into the new solution. Furthermore this will give a good background knowledge about the site and serve as a foundation for the creation of a new site.

This option of evaluating the existing website is often missed because people tend to focus on faults and wish to start with a clean state. We need to stand on the shoulders of those who made the previous solution. We can learn from the existing site and identify what's worth keeping. [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006, p. 239]

In order to evaluate a user interface there are four methods for doing this: **Formally** by conducting an analysis, **automatically** by developing a computerized procedure, **empirically** by conducting usability testing with users, and finally **heuristically** where a set of evaluators use a list of usability principles as a guide for the evaluation. Models for formal analysis are being researched but they are not in a stage where they can be applied for real world situations yet. Automatic computerized evaluations are not at all usable except for a few primitive checks. The choice of how to evaluate the user interface is therefore a choice between conducting an empiric or heuristic evaluation. [Nielsen and Molich, 1990]

In general the empiric studies are known to give the best and most thorough evaluation [Nielsen and Molich, 1990]. It is however also true that conducting such an evaluation may be time consuming and therefore expensive. The choice of method is therefore a question about needs, benefit and costs or in other words about defining the purpose.

"Heuristic evaluation is a discount usability engineering method for quick, cheap, and easy evaluation of a user interface."

[Nielsen, 2005a]

My purpose behind this evaluation is to find issues and inspiration from the existing website and to get an understanding of the customers at Fokus Folkeoplysning. I have therefore decided to conduct a heuristic evaluation both on my own but also together with some of those who attend courses at Fokus Folkeoplysning. By conducting the evaluation in this way I will both be able to get an overview of the website content and achieve an understanding of the users perception of the website. This chapter therefore covers the content and users aspects of the users, content and context model as described in section 2 on the previous page as well as the intersections between these two.

I also find it advantageous to conduct heuristic evaluation rather than usability testing in this case simply because it is not necessary in this case to conduct a full extensive usability test of the existing website. The reason is that the existing solution is to be redesigned and relaunched - I only need to get an overview of the main usability issues present at the current site. By conducting this short heuristic evaluation I will be able to get a view on some of the most crucial issues, the content and how the users perceive the site. That is all I need for now - conducting a traditional usability test will make more sense when it is a question about finding minor issues and improving a newly developed website.

Another perspective to consider when planning a heuristic evaluation is the background of the evaluators. I could have decided only to use usability experts as evaluators in an attempt to maximize the number of found issues but this would not give me much understanding of the end users and it would not give me much information on how to rate the issues found. It is not necessary to fix all issues available at the website - it is only important to fix those that the actual users would encounter and to be aware of those who might transfer to the redesigned website.

A heuristic evaluation can be conducted by one or more evaluators that examine the interface using a set of recognized usability principles also known as the "heuristics". It is however difficult

for a single individual to conduct it as one person will never be able to discover all the usability problems in a user interface. [Nielsen, 2005b]. Research initially presented in an article by Jakob Nielsen and Rolf Molich however indicate that when using more researchers it is possible to maximize the found usability problems of a website. Based on a set of heuristic evaluations they compared the number of usability issues found in the evaluations to the number of known usability issues for the specific cases. In figure 3.1 they illustrate how the number of found issues in their cases depend on the number of evaluators. [Nielsen and Molich, 1990]

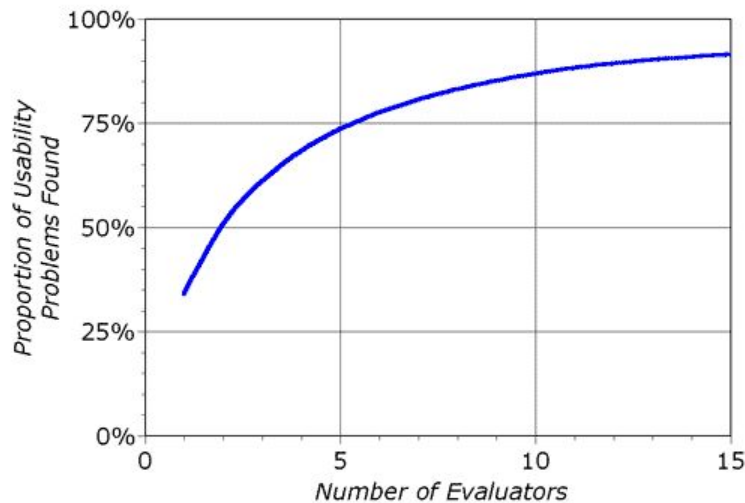


Figure 3.1: The proportion of usability problems found by heuristic evaluation. Based on an average of six case studies of heuristic evaluation. [Nielsen, 2005b]

Based on the diagram in figure 3.1 it could seem that it would be optimal to use a very high number of evaluators in the evaluation. This is however not true because of the amount of resources that is spent on each evaluator. In the aforementioned article by Jakob Nielsen and Rolf Molich they made some estimations on how much each usability problem is worth in money and used this to estimate what the optimal number of evaluators would be. In figure 3.2 a diagram depicting this cost benefit estimation is presented. Based on this estimation the authors suggest having 3 to 5 evaluators in a heuristic evaluation. [Nielsen and Molich, 1990]

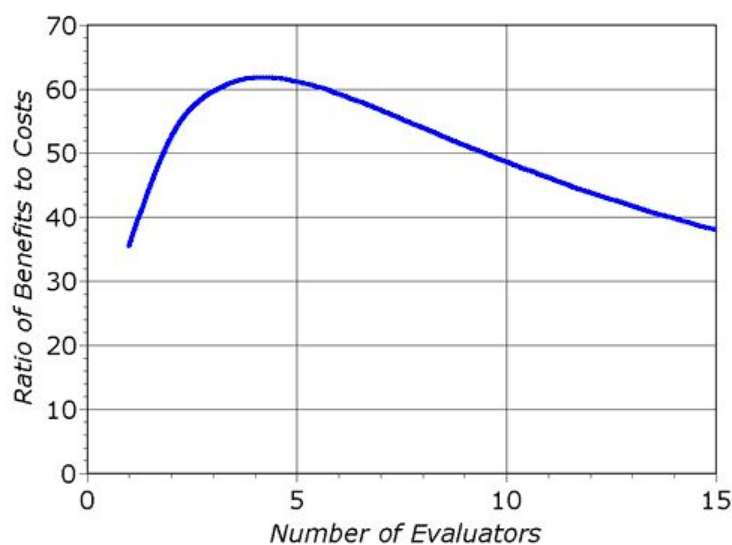


Figure 3.2: beskrivelse [Nielsen and Molich, 1990].

3.1 The Heuristics

As mentioned earlier a heuristic evaluation is done by asking a set of evaluators to look at the interface while trying to come up with their opinion about what is good and bad about the interface. In order to facilitate and qualify this process it is needed to conduct these evaluations according to certain rules such as those that might be found in typical guideline documents. Many of these guideline documents contain thousands of rules to follow and are therefore too large for developers to keep in mind. [Nielsen and Molich, 1990]. In order to make a more comprehensible guideline list Molich and Nielsen created a much shorter list of 9 guidelines based on their own experience [Molich and Nielsen, 1990], [Nielsen and Molich, 1990]. These guidelines have since then become further developed by Jakob Nielsen such that his latest edition made in 1994 contained 10 guidelines [Nielsen, 2005c].

The 10 usability guidelines are made for user interfaces in general and not just for websites. It is therefore important to be aware of this difference when conducting the evaluation. In the following I will present the meaning behind each guideline and discuss what it mean in relation to the website evaluation that I am planning:

1. Visibility of system status

The original meaning behind this guideline is that the system/interface should inform users about what is going on by providing appropriate feedback within reasonable time. For a website this mean that pages should appear within a reasonable time, and that information is provided if a page will take some time to generate such that the user can see that something is actually happening. In order to improve this guideline I have also decided that it should include the aspect of users being able to see what they are doing at any page e.g. see that they are at the about page or that they are currently buying something.

2. Match between system and the real world

This guideline is about the language used in the interface. It is important that all text, visualizations etc. are presented in a way that the users understand. For a website like Fokus Folkeoplysning this also mean that terms used internally in the organization need to be considered whether or not users will understand them.

3. User control and freedom

In the original description this guideline is about the fact that users oftenly choose system functions by mistake and therefore needs emergency exits from these unwanted states without having to go through extensive dialogues. It also mean that there need to be support for undo and redo actions. For a website this is almost the same, the user should not get stuck such that he cannot get to or back to the target he want.

4. Consistency and standards

This guideline is all about being consistent in the use of words, situations or actions that is given to the user so that he does not have to wonder what they mean, and which ones mean the same. On a website this is mostly related to the use of links between pages. Links need to be consistently named, and the resulting page names usually need to use these names as well. For the page content this guideline mean that it need to be presented in a consistent manner both in relation to graphical presentation but also the textual writing of the text.

5. Error prevention

The scope behind this guideline is that the interface should be designed in a way that prevent the users from errors. This also counts for websites in the sense that we need to avoid that the user makes wrong decisions at the website that will lead to an error. In general I believe this would be most relevant when considering interactive (non static) parts of a website like order- or search features.

6. Recognition rather than recall

This guideline is about reducing the memory load of the user by providing all the relevant information such that the user does not have to remember it. For a website this is the same, previous selections by the user need to be visible, and all the information that is necessary for a user to make decisions should be available.

7. Flexibility and efficiency of use

The goal behind this guideline is to provide the user of the system with a possibility to customize it to fit his needs. This is important for frequent users of the system, as this might speed up their work with the system. This also accounts for many websites but the need for this kind of functionality depends on the amount of users who use the site frequently.

8. Aesthetic and minimalist design

This guideline require that the dialogs in an interface does not contain irrelevant or rarely needed information. This is also important for a website where we need to reduce the content down to what is really important to present at each page such that the user does not get disturbed by irrelevant information.

9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

The objective behind this guideline is that when errors occur there should only be given plain language descriptions about what the error was and how to fix it. For a website this is also important but one big problem here is the many layers of people responsible for different parts. Some errors and their error messages is something that a website owner cannot always change as they are caused by the underlying software such as the web server, database or content management system. It is of course important to address those that are possible and eventually send feedback to the respective developers of the other systems. In terms of the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning many of the pages are showing only static content and will therefore probably not give error messages that I need to account for.

10. Help and documentation

Even though the optimal situation would be that the user can use the system without any documentation this guideline says that it might be necessary to provide it in some situations. For a website this guideline need to be considered in relation to the specific situation, and it would probably make sense to provide this help and documentation for specific features on a website. It is here also important to be aware of the difference between end users and those who maintain the website. As the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning is rather small the need for documentation will be accordingly small but it might still be possible that places like the online course enrollment need to have available documentation. For those that maintain the content at the website it might also be necessary to document how to add or modify content and maybe provide style guidelines for this work. As this evaluation is held with end users the focus will not be on the documentation provided for those maintaining the website – for now.

As already discussed these ten guidelines are very general and meant for improving the usability of user interfaces in general. When the guidelines were originally presented in the two articles by Jakob Nielsen and Rolf Molich they were described in relation to the evaluation of offline software solutions¹ [Molich and Nielsen, 1990], [Nielsen and Molich, 1990]. A website is of course also a user interface and therefore need to obey these guidelines but it is also important to consider including other guidelines made specifically for websites.

When looking around the web it also becomes clear that many people seem to have added their own guidelines or questions for their evaluation in order to account for more issues and their particular needs and "evaluation style". As put by Louis Rosenfeld:

"Every information architect should always have a set of favorite questions in their back pocket"
[Rosenfeld, 2004]

The worldwide library collaboration OCLC have a large HCI department that utilize heuristic evaluations and usability testing in many cases. When conducting heuristic evaluations they use the ten usability heuristics but they have developed four additional guidelines as presented below. [OCLC - The World's Libraries. Connected, 2010].

1. Affordance

Does the user understand what the text/graphic will do before they activate it?

2. Use chunking

Write material so that documents are short and contain exactly one topic. Do not force the user to access multiple documents to complete a single thought.

3. Provide progressive levels of detail

Organize information hierarchically, with more general information appearing before more specific detail. Encourage the user to delve as deeply as needed, but to stop whenever sufficient information has been received.

¹**offline software solutions:** They are only considered offline in the sense that they are applications running on the local computer and not in a web browser.

4. Don't lie to the user

Eliminate erroneous or misleading links. Do not refer to missing information.

These four guidelines are much more focused on the specific type of content that are present on a website and they therefore seem to be a good extension of the 10 usability heuristics.

3.2 Planning the evaluation

In the first part of this evaluation I will conduct an heuristic evaluation on my own in order to get an overview of the website and the issues that are present. In order to get into as much detail as possible I will use both the ten usability heuristics and the additional four OCLC guidelines. As already mentioned no one will be able to discover all the present usability issues and neither will I. I have therefore decided that I in my own evaluation will strengthen my evaluation by paying attention to certain aspects of the information architecture. This will be done by inspiration from an additional list of questions that Louis Rosenfeld made for heuristic evaluations with focus on the information architecture [Rosenfeld, 2004]. This list of questions were divided into 5 main groups that I will use in order to make sure that I also pay attention to these aspects that might sometimes be forgotten in an heuristic evaluation. The focus areas from this document that I will be paying attention to are listed below [Rosenfeld, 2004]:

- Main Page
- Search Interface
- Search Results
- Site-wide Navigation
- Contextual Navigation

By using this list of focus areas I hope that I will be able to consider some important aspects of the websites usability that otherwise would not have been covered if I only were relying on the usability heuristics. I will not be answering each specific question that were written in these groups I will just use the group categories to guide my attention to make sure that I pay attention to these aspects at the website.

The second part of the evaluation is the most important part because this is where I will be able learn about the actual users of the website and how they perceive the website. As these people most likely are not aware of the many guidelines that are made about usability I will have to make sure that they are able to understand and use the guidelines that I give them. I will use both the ten usability heuristics and the additional four OCLC guidelines for the evaluations but I will need to make them more comprehensible and understandable to these users.

As a preparation for the evaluation sessions I therefore combined the heuristics into a list with short descriptions in danish about which typical issues could belong to each guideline. These descriptions are based on the original descriptions but they are rewritten in a way that I believed the participants would find easier to understand as shown in table 3.1 on the next page.

During the first two evaluations my approach was to read and explain these heuristics for the evaluators but based on my gained experience from this process and the outcome of the evaluations I realized that I needed to change the approach and the descriptions of the heuristic. I therefore decided to try if I could combine some of the heuristics and remove some of those that I did not find useful during the first evaluations. The resulting revised list of heuristics is shown in table 3.2 on page 16.

The main difference between the two versions of the list of usability heuristics is that the new one is shorter and in my opinion have more simple explanations which both makes it more comprehensible and hopefully easier to understand. In the new version I also translated the guideline headers into danish as I wanted to make sure that these would become easier for the interviewees to remember. In order to shorten the list I have removed four of the guidelines from the original list and combined two guidelines. The two guidelines "use chunking" and "provided progressive levels of details" are both about how to present textual content on pages and are natural extensions of each other which is why I combined them into one guideline. The four guidelines that I removed are presented below with argumentations to why they were left out:

- **Visibility of system status**

Brugeren skal altid kunne se hvad han/hun er ved at lave på siden, og side-indlæsninger bør ske hurtigt.

- **Match between system and the real world**

Tal brugernes sprog, med ord, sætninger og koncepter som brugeren kender. Information skal fremstå naturligt og logisk for brugeren.

- **User control and freedom**

Brugere kommer ofte til at vælge system funktioner ved en fejl, og bør derfor have adgang til "nød udgange" så uønskede situationer kan fortrydes uden at skulle igennem en lang dialog.

- **Consistency and standards**

Brugerne skal ikke tænke over om ord, situationer eller handlinger betyder det samme.

- **Error prevention**

Undgå situationer hvor fejl kan opstå. Design så brugeren ikke laver forkerte handlinger, og giv mulighed for at fortryde.

- **Recognition rather than recall**

Brugeren skal ikke tvinges til at huske ting fra forrige sider, instruktioner skal være let tilgængelige. Det skal være nemt og hurtigt at gennemskue hvad der sker ved tryk på links/knapper

- **Flexibility and efficiency of use**

Nogle sider bør kunne tilpasses til brugerens behov, Således kan en side se anderledes ud for brugere der benytter siden ofte, så de får det indhold de har behov for.

- **Aesthetic and minimalist design**

Dialoger/sider må ikke indeholde irrelevant information. Det gør det svært at forholde sig til og finde det relevante på siden

- **Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors**

Fejl beskeder skal forklares i klart sprog uden "koder", og hjælpe brugeren i at løse problemet.

- **Help and documentation**

Optimalt kan siden benyttes uden dokumentation og hjælp, men det bør være tilgængeligt der hvor brugeren måtte have behov for det i forhold til en given handling på siden.

- **Affordance**

Forstår brugeren hvad tekst/grafik vil gøre før det bliver aktiveret?

- **Use Chunking**

Præsenter materialet kortfattet og i mindre overskuelige bidder (1 emne pr. side). Undgå at tvinge brugeren til at åbne adskillige sider/dokumenter for at afslutte en handling/tanke

- **Provide progressive levels of details**

Præsenter information hierarkisk, general information først og detaljer til sidst. Inspirer brugeren til at udforske i dybden efter behov, men også at stoppe når nok information er opnået.

- **Don't lie to the user**

Undgå links der ikke virker, eller som linker til det forkerte. Lav ikke links til manglende information.

Table 3.1: The list of usability heuristics used at the first evaluation sessions with course attendees

- **Flexibility and efficiency of use**

This guideline states that frequent users should be able to customize the website to their needs, but this website does not contain parts where such possibilities for customization would make sense. Furthermore the majority of the expected users will only get to the website a few times in a year and might therefore need to "learn" the site on each of their visits and therefore would not need such a feature.

- **Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors**

It is of course obvious that errors should not occur, and I therefore don't feel the need to inform my interviewees that they should look for errors at the website. If one should occur I would of course note it down and ask if the interviewee understand how to avoid it.

- **Synlighed af systemets status**

Det skal være muligt at se hvad man er ved at foretage sig.

F.eks.: at man kan se hvilken specifik side man er inde på, og at man f.eks. kan se, at nu er man i gang med et betalingsforløb.

- **Tal brugerens sprog**

Sproget skal være nemt at forstå, fagudtryk og lignende skal fremstå så det kan forstås af brugeren.

- **Brugerens kontrol og frihed**

Handler skal kunne fortrydes, og man bør ikke føle sig fastlåst i forhold til hvorvidt man kan komme frem eller tilbage til det man vil hen til.

- **Konsistens og standarder**

Der skal være overensstemmelse og konsekvent brug af udtryk, navne på links osv.

- **Forebyggelse af fejl**

Siderne må ikke lede brugeren til at foretage fejlvalg.

- **Genkendelighed frem for erindring**

Når man står på en given side skal man ikke være nødt til at huske ting fra andre sider – disse skal evt. være præsenteret, så man kan genkende dem igen.

- **Æstetisk og minimalistisk design af indhold**

Der må ikke være overflødig og irrelevant information.

- **Opdeling og stigende informationsniveau**

Information skal præsenteres i små bidder, med mulighed for at gå længere ned i dybden for at få yderligere information.

- **Tilgængelighed**

Det skal være nemt at gennemskue hvad man kommer frem til hvis man klikker på links/-billeder.

Table 3.2: The revised list of usability heuristics given to the evaluators during the last evaluation sessions

- **Help and documentation**

The background for the whole evaluation is that I need to find things that people do not understand how to use at the website so that this can be improved. When improving these situations it would of course make sense to consider if further descriptions are needed to help the user in using the features. I therefore don't think it is necessary to tell people that they should look for places where they miss this information as it would occur naturally when they encounter it.

- **Don't lie to the user**

Once again this guideline that would be rather obvious to discover when looking around the website. If a link does not work I would of course note that down and for situations where links go to the wrong content the "affordance" guideline would cover it.

For all the evaluation sessions I brought the list of usability heuristics as described above on a sheet of paper. In the first two sessions I read and explained the guidelines using my own words in the situation. In the last two sessions I allowed the participants to read the revised sheet on their own in the hope that this approach would make the heuristics more clear in their minds. While conducting the evaluation I wrote notes on another computer and recorded the conversation with a digital camera that pointed at the computer monitor that the interviewees were using. The length of the evaluation sessions ranged from 20 to 35 minutes as they stopped when the interviewees did not have anymore feedback left to give.

3.3 Findings

The results gained during the heuristic evaluation are both related to actual usability problems but also findings about my approach and the method in general. I will start discussing the approach and method and then continue with a presentation of all the actual usability issues

that were found. A summary of all these findings are presented in section 3.3.3 on page 30. Finally I will close the chapter with some considerations about what I have learned about the people that would be using the website.

3.3.1 The method and my approach

It is generally believed that heuristic evaluations originally were proposed by Jakob Nielsen and Rolf Molich for evaluation of software interfaces in general. Although most of the points in their original theories still are valid there still have happened a lot since then because of the rapid development of the web. The 10 usability heuristics therefore as discussed earlier may be insufficient for an evaluation of a website. When looking in the literature and searching the web it also becomes clear that people have agreed on using the 10 usability guidelines but that many want to add some guidelines. This is however where the agreement seem to stop as people adds different guidelines and questions to the list of heuristics.

I decided to add two things to my list one that relates to the content and one that relates to the information architecture of a website. It is my impression that these seem to support the heuristic usability guidelines in a positive way. It would of course be possible to add many more guidelines to the list but adding too many would destroy the whole idea behind conducting a heuristic evaluation within short time. The ten usability heuristic was after all made in an attempt to shorten the list of usability issues into a number of categories that could cover all the issues. The problem however still is that a short list might not be sufficient at reminding the evaluators of all the relevant aspects that have an influence on the usability.

In relation to the evaluation sessions that I have conducted I decided to use "end users" as they to some extent could be considered domain experts in the sense that they are the ones that know how they would use the website. Furthermore they would not be thinking in the same way as if I used employees at Fokus Folkeoplysning that are used to the internal structure in the organization or if I just relied on usability experts for this evaluation. In order to conduct the evaluation I therefore got in contact with four different people who were following different courses at Fokus Folkeoplysning. It was people with quite different backgrounds as described below:

1. The first interviewee is a retired female who was a primary school teacher through 38 years. She is now following a course about textile design.
2. The second is also a retired lady who was a former secretary at Aalborg University. She is currently following a small Pilates course.
3. The third interviewee is a young girl that after a longer period of illness got on social security. She is therefore following a retraining course.
4. The last person is a middle aged man that for some time were self employed within the clothing industry but after getting divorced decided to try start up a restaurant that he then went bankrupt with. All of this resulted in that he like the former interviewee got on social security and a retraining course.

In addition to these four interviewees I had a short conversation with a guy who were following an IT course for non-beginners. Apparently he did not have more than five minutes for this interview and it was the only option for arranging a meeting with him. I could therefore only get some of his immediate thoughts about the website. This short conversation was held after the first main interview but I decided to keep track on his few points as they seemed to be useful for this evaluation.

As mentioned earlier I also decided to conduct the evaluation on my own. I did this in order to maximize the number of found issues but also in order to get an overview of some findings prior to the evaluation and to understand what my point of view is in this evaluation. The downside of doing this could have been that because I have found some issues that I find crucial I might become blind at the following evaluations because I am trying to confirm these issues. In order to avoid this I decided to take notes at the evaluations but also to record the evaluation on a digital camera such that I could verify my notes. I also decided that I was important to keep

track of where the different issues or findings were originated so that it would remain clear who were behind each finding and make sure that my own findings can be distinguished.

After having conducted the interviews I had to start processing the data gathered from the sessions and my own evaluation. In order to do this I decided to use Post-IT's where I wrote each found issue from each interview on a Post-IT. In order to keep track of the source of each issue I used Post-IT's with different colors where each color represented a specific evaluation. I then did a thorough assessment of the videos recorded at each evaluation in order to make sure that I had covered all the issues and not gotten anything wrong.

In the next step I conducted an iterative card sorting exercise on my own in order to find patterns and related issues. The result of this work was some preliminary groups of Post-IT's as shown in figure 3.3. In the next step I wrote down all the issues using my own words while still keeping track of the sources for each issue.



Figure 3.3: Grouping the findings from the evaluation using post-IT's where color represent the individual evaluations.

During the evaluation sessions I also discovered that none of the interviewees seemed to be using the heuristic guidelines that I presented to them. It seemed that the last two interviewees had it in mind but they never referred to it. In my opinion the main problem here is that the interviewees are not used to evaluate websites and that they have very different skills in using computers and websites. One of the first interviewees even expressed that it must be her own fault that she could not find the online course enrollment. A solution could be to spend much more time on informing them about the usability heuristics and how they should use them. I do however still think that this would not really have helped much unless I had been teaching them about it for a very long time.

I do not think it was a big issue that they did not use the usability heuristics as the most important was that they found the issues at the website. The process of mapping the issues to the heuristics is something I could do afterwards.

3.3.2 The usability issues found

In this section I will present the issues discovered in the interviews and my own evaluation. For each issue I will note what evaluations it was discovered in, what usability heuristics I believe cover the issue and how critical I believe it is for this website. In addition to the findings presented in this section I also discovered some issues that were related to the other websites of Fokus Folkeoplysning. These findings are presented in appendix A on page 95.

A summary describing the outcome of the evaluation on a higher level is given in section 3.3.3 on page 30.

The notation of what evaluations the issues were found in is done by the use of symbols that refer to a specific evaluation. The use of symbols are as described below:

- "M" - My own evaluation
- "1" - The retired primary school teacher
- "2" - The guy who followed an IT course
- "3" - The former university secretary
- "4" - The young girl on a retraining course after a long period of illness
- "5" - The middle aged man on a retraining course after he went bankrupt

Navigation Issues

The first group of issues are related to how users are able to or not to navigate around the website. Some of these issues will be overlapping with issues from other groups as the causes for the issues here might originate in other aspects like for instance the graphical design of the website.

- **Cannot see how to find courses by looking at the main page?** (see figure 3.4) - discovered in evaluation M & 2

The problem here is that it is not clear how to find the courses provided by Fokus Folkeoplysning, some people do however realize rather quickly that courses is a part of "Aftenskolen" but this may require an understanding of what "Aftenskolen" is. I find this issue severe as it is crucial to direct potential customers to the courses so they could become paying customers. Based on these considerations I have found that this issue is related to the following heuristics: 2 "match between system and the real world", 6 "Recognition rather than recall" and the first OCLC guideline "affordance".



Figure 3.4: The main page

- **No search functionality at the main site** - discovered in evaluation M

There is a search engine located in the course enrollment part of the site but it is not available at the main site and it can only search in the course enrollment system. Providing a "course search engine" at the main site could maybe guide people more directly to the courses and help users that do not want to browse many pages to find the specific course they have in mind. The rating of this issue is medium-low as it could help some users that either prefer to search or who cannot find what they are looking for by browsing. This issue does not directly belong to a specific heuristic but it was discovered in my own evaluation because of my focus on the information architecture aspects.

- **Cannot see what page is currently displayed** - discovered in evaluation M, 3 & 5

It is not clear from the layout which page one is viewing, there are of course titles on most pages but by looking at the global and local navigation bars there are no highlights of the current sections and there are no breadcrumb available. In some evaluations this was discovered because the evaluators were trying to check out all the pages and therefore wanted to select the next navigation entry but were limited in doing so because they could not see how long they had progressed in the menu. I have decided to rate this issue as medium as it is possible to navigate the website without these visual cues. This issue is related to usability heuristic number 6 "recognition rather than recall".

- **Cannot return to the main site from certain pages** - discovered in evaluation M, 1, 3 & 4

When users wants to follow links from the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning to other sites managed by Fokus Folkeoplysning they appear as separate websites with no possibility to return to the main site. This also accounts for the online course enrollment that is a sub page of the main site. This issue is rated high because of the online course enrollment pages that run completely separated from the main site with no ways of returning. The issue related to the other Fokus Folkeoplysning websites is however only rated medium-low as these are more distinct websites which actually refers to the main website in their contact pages. These issues are related to the third usability heuristic "user control and freedom".

- **Some links are inserted multiple times with different names on some pages** - Discovered in evaluation M

At some few pages it is seen that a link to the same content is provided multiple times on the same page. For instance at the page named "Aftenskolen" the links "SØGEFUNKTION" and "her" both links to the top level page within the course enrollment site. This may be confusing as these links promises different things but refers to the same page. I have rated this issue as low because the the resulting pages do actually contain what the links promises. This issue is related to the fourth usability heuristic "Consistency and standards" and the first OCLC guideline "Affordance".

Layout and design issues

The second group of issues are primarily focused on the visual presentation of the website. This group is to a large extend overlapping with issues from the former group as issues in the layout and design of the website have an impact on the navigation.

- **The local navigation bar is visually weak - almost invisible** (see figure 3.5 on the facing page - discovered in evaluation M & 5

When visiting parts of the site that have a local navigation in the left side of the page this navigation bar is held in a gray color and a small font. This navigation bar is therefore something that for instance may not be noticed on pages that include pictures. The rating of this issue is high because this might result in areas of the website not being reached by those that wanted to go there. This issue relates to heuristic guideline number 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design".

- **Bottom links at the main page are not seen** (see figure 3.4 on the previous page) - discovered in evaluation 5

At the main page there are some links in the bottom of the page to specific sections of the website but because of the large magazine image the user have to scroll in order to see them. This issue is rated medium low because these links are not crucial as it is still possible to reach the content by using the other navigation options. This issue is related to heuristic guideline number 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design".

- **The main page image of the magazine occupies too much space** (see figure 3.4 on the preceding page) - discovered in evaluation M & 5

The magazine that Fokus Folkeoplysning create and send out twice a year is presented as the main content at the main page. The problem is that there is nothing else in the main area of the main page that the user can actually interact with. This issue is rated medium high because it is a waste of space on the website that could be used for more relevant entrances to the website. This issue is related to heuristic guideline number 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design".

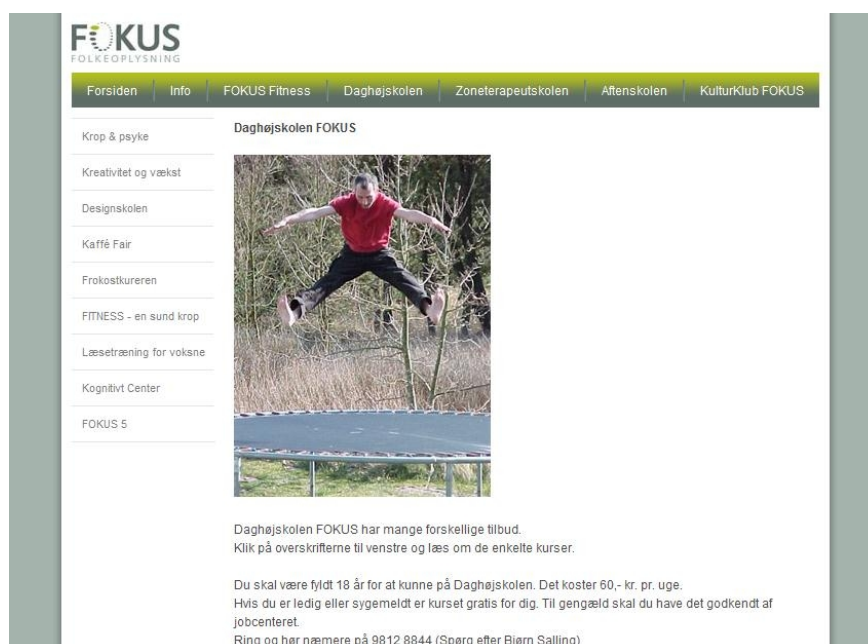


Figure 3.5: Example of a page with local navigation next to a picture

- **Cannot find the content that the main page image promises** (see figure 3.4 on page 19) - discovered in evaluation M

As users might expect the main page to contain more content to interact with it would be natural to expect that the "keywords" used in the image is something that can be found at the website but there are no references to where this is. This issue is just a continuation of the former and therefore have the same rating: medium high. The issue is still related to heuristic guideline number 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design" but the essence of the issue is also related to the expectations that a user might have for the content at the main page.

- **Some pages contain too much text** (see figure 3.6 on the following page)- discovered in evaluation M & 1

There are some parts of the website that contain very text intensive pages, these pages are difficult to comprehend because they are not divided into smaller parts by using more distinct headlines or sub-pages. The result of this is that some people might just skip these pages and that important information disappears in the large amount of text. This issue is therefore related to heuristic guideline 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design" and OCLC guidelines 2 "use chunking" and 3 "provide progressive levels of detail".

- **The images on some pages steal too much attention** (see figure 3.5) - discovered in evaluation M & 5

This issue is related to the overall look and feel of the design used at the website. It is wrong just to blame the images for this problem. I believe the real issue is the use of fonts, font sizes, and colors at the website - the text and headlines simply isn't strong enough to catch attention or compete with the pictures used at the website. This issue has a high rating as it is important that there is a balance in the visual presentation such that visitors are motivated into reading the text and browse around the website. This issue is related to heuristic guideline 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design".

- **Some navigation links in the global navigation show inadequate pages with links for external pages** - discovered in evaluation M, 1 & 4

Some of the projects that Fokus Folkeoplysning is running have their own website and the links to them are therefore different than other links at the main site. There are sub pages at the main site with very short descriptions and links to the respective external websites. These pages does not contain much information and some of them are not good at motivating the users into paying a visit to these external websites. I have decided to rate this issue as medium high because it is important that users are being motivated in going to places where they may generate income for Fokus Folkeoplysning but the most important part of this issue is to present good descriptions and images that motivate the users and make it clear that the links are for external websites belonging to Fokus Folkeoplysning. This issue is related to heuristic guideline 10 "help and documentation" and OCLC guideline number 1 "affordance".



Figure 3.6: An example of a page with a very long text



Figure 3.7: A screenshot of the page named Aftenskolen

• **The following issues are related to the page named "Aftenskolen":** (see screenshot in figure 3.7)

- **The page does not make sense** - discovered in evaluation 1, 4 & 5

Three of the evaluators said that they at their first glance did not understand this page. They expected this page to be about the courses at Fokus Aftenskole but they could not see how to actually get to the courses. One reason could be that they do not read the text in the top of that page and another reason could be that the images themselves do not explain that they could be clicked. This is a severe issue as this is effectively preventing users from browsing the lists of courses and join them. This issue is related to heuristic guidelines 2 "match between system and the real world", 6 "recognition rather than recall", 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design" and 10 "help and documentation". Finally this issue also relates to the first OCLC guideline "affordance".

- **Images are presented in a bad way** - discovered in evaluation M

The images at the page have different aspect ratios and sizes and are not presented in a systematic manner. The result is that this issue have been rated medium high because the presentation of these images look unprofessional. The issue is related to heuristic guidelines 4 "consistency and standards" and 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design".

- **Cannot see that images are links to categories** - discovered in evaluation M

- **It is not logical what the images cover** - discovered in evaluation M, 1, 2 & 3

- **Mouseover is the only thing that explain what category images cover** (see figure 3.8 on the next page) - discovered in evaluation M & 3

- **Not all categories are covered by images** - discovered in evaluation M

As already mentioned it is possible to click the images but the page does not effectively inform users about this possibility. The images link to specific categories within the course enrollment system but just by looking at the images it is not clear what courses can be found below each image-link. To account for this there have been used category labels that show up in a small yellow box once the mouse is held over an image. It is however not clear to the users that they need to do this in order to see these labels and furthermore this process also require more work from the users as they need to use their mouse to uncover these labels. Finally the last problem is that it is not all the course categories that are covered by these 8 images which could mean that there are sections in the course enrollment system that will not be seen by the users. These four

issues have been given a high rating as they are one of the reasons why users feel that the page do not make sense. These issues are related to heuristic guidelines 6 "recognition rather than recall" and 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design", and the first OCLC guideline "affordance".



Figure 3.8: Mouseover example

- the "SØGEFUNKTION" link is not visible, the images take all the focus - discovered in evaluation 3

This issue is related to a previous issue "The images on some pages steal too much attention". The problem once again is that the text is not strong enough to catch the focus, it simply is too small for users to pay attention to it. The result therefore is that this issue have been given a high rating because it prevents some users from visiting the main page of the course enrollment system. This issue is related to heuristic guideline 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design".

- At the page "kulturklub fokus" the link "se alle tilbudende her" is placed in some introduction text (see figure 3.9) - discovered in evaluation M

It is fine to present the link to all the courses where members of "kulturklub fokus" can get a price reduction but at the time where this link is presented there haven't been given any explanations about that these courses are available to anyone and what the price is for becoming a member. In my opinion this issue is related to the overall design of this particular page as there is a lot of text that do not catch attention. This issue is rated medium as it is important to give first time users that see this page a chance of understanding the idea behind "kulturklub fokus" within a short look at one page instead of forcing them to read all the text at this first page. This issue is related to heuristic guidelines 2 "match between system and the real world" and 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design", and OCLC guidelines 2 "use chunking" and 3 "provide progressive levels of details".

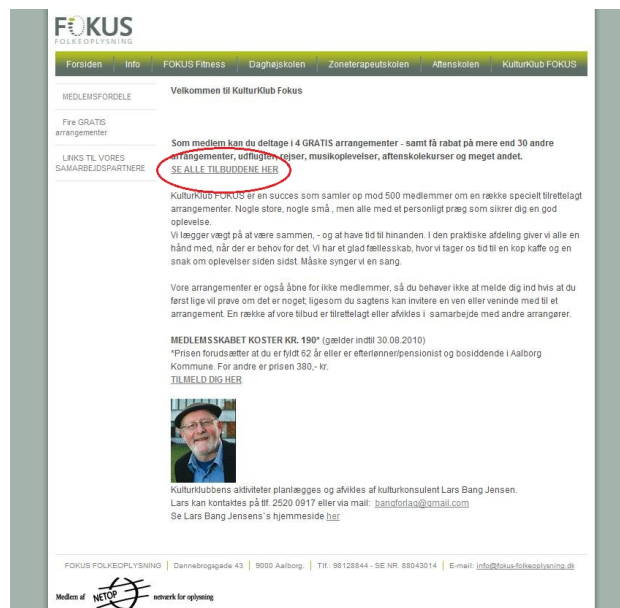


Figure 3.9: The badly placed link "se alle tilbudende her" at the page "kulturklub fokus"

- **The bottom line "medlem af netop netværk for oplysning" does not make sense** (see figure 3.10) - discovered in evaluation 1

One of the evaluators said that the text in the bottom of every page "medlem af netop netværk for oplysning" did not make sense. The evaluator felt that there needed to be some explanation to what this is and why it is presented there. This issue have been rated low because because this were only noticed by one and because this link is in the absolute bottom of the page that most users probably wont notice. Furthermore I am not sure if this really is an issue as it is quite normal to present such links in this manner although I believe a way to accommodate this issue is to rewrite the sentence into something like: "Fokus Folkeoplysning er medlem af NETOP netværk for oplysning". This issue is related to heuristic guideline 2 "match between system and the real world".



Figure 3.10: The bottom line displayed at all pages

Content expectations

The third group of issues are related to the expectations that the users have for content at the website. These issues therefore occurred when the evaluators experienced that they could not find what they were looking for or just in general had different expectations about what content to find at specific pages before getting there. These issues are of course closely related to some of the former issues as the navigation and design of the website will influence whether or not users can find the expected content.

- **The magazine cannot be read online** - discovered in evaluation M, (2) & 4

Most of the surface at the main page is covered by the image of the magazine that is sent out twice a year. It is normally expected that it is possible to read such a magazine directly on the website but this is not the case at this website. This issue is rated medium because it is normal to expect this feature, and because it might be natural to some users to look for the magazine online if they haven't got the paper version by mail. The magazine provides a key element in letting users recognize that they hit the website that is related to the magazine. It could be interesting to further explore this connection. Maybe there should be an interactive version of the magazine available where it is possible to click on the courses in the magazine and the get further information, pictures and the possibility to join the course. As put by the guy who were following the IT course it would be nice if the website were like the magazine (people know how to find content in the magazine) This issue is related to usability heuristics 2 "match between system and the real world", 4 "consistency and standards", 6 "recognition rather than recall" and OCLC guideline 3 "provide progressive levels of details".

- **Some news items on the main page is outdated** - discovered in evaluation M

In the right side of the main page there is a list of upcoming events. This list is manually modified – the news items stays until the page is once again updated manually. The result is that some of the news are old and irrelevant. This issue is rated medium high because it might scare some users away from the website or at least annoy them if they get the experience that the website is not up to date. In order to solve this it could be a good idea to investigate the possibility of creating these news items in a way where they will automatically be removed or replaced at a specific time. This issue is related to OCLC guideline 4 "don't lie to the users".

- **Cannot find the terms for joining courses** - discovered in evaluation 5

When joining a course the user is not met with any requirements for joining the course. In many other situations users would expect that they would have to agree on a terms of use policy or something like that before they could join the course. It therefore seem surprisingly that this is not the case at this website, and if users is actually looking for this they will not be able to find it. This issue is rated medium because such a policy is often seen as being in the favor of those providing the service which mean that not showing it could make some few users think "what are they trying to hide?". This issue is related to usability heuristic 10 "help and documentation".

- **Cannot find further information, images or videos about the courses** - discovered in evaluation M

The course descriptions are presented in a plain text format within the course enrollment system. Users might expect that the online presentation would contain additional information and graphics. The plain text format is boring and does not encourage and motivate users to continue exploring the offers.

This issue is rated high because the use of these possibilities could motivate more users into joining courses. This issue is related to usability heuristics 2 "match between system and the real world", 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design" and 10 "help and documentation".

- **A spelling error was found** - discovered in evaluation 5

At one of the evaluations a spelling error was found at the page "Aftenskolen". When a user discovers this the website appears unprofessional. This issue is rated high as it is important that the website looks and appears to be representing a professional and respectable company. This issue is not directly related to the guidelines but it could to some extent be argued that it has to do with heuristic guideline 5 "error prevention" as we not want errors on the website.

- **In the site section "Info" content for both customers and employees is mixed** (see figure 3.11) - discovered in evaluation M

The links in the local navigation in the "Info" part of the website contain links for content that both addresses employees and other users of the website. It is acceptable that some content is for employees but it should be separated from the other content and it should be clear that the links to it is indeed for employees. This issue is rated medium high as the presence of this information is irrelevant for ordinary users. The issue is related to heuristic guideline 4 "consistency and standards" and OCLC guideline 2 "use chunking".

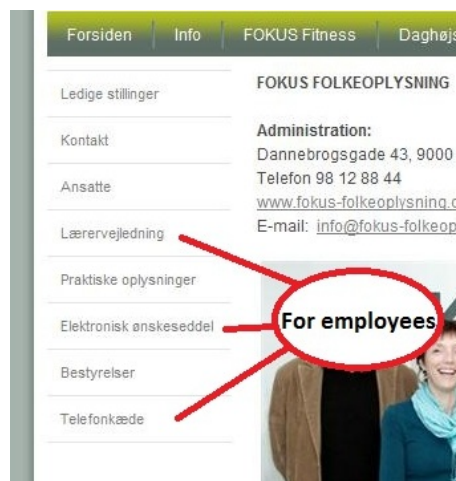


Figure 3.11: Information for employees are mixed up with information for regular website users

- **The following issues are related to pages that are from the site section: "Daghøjskolen"** (see figure 3.12 on the next page):

- **The description of daghøjskolen is too short, what can be expected, what is "Daghøjskolen"?** - discovered in evaluation M & 5
- **The image shown in the page "Daghøjskolen" does not make sense** - discovered in evaluation M & 5

At the first page that belongs to "Daghøjskolen" there is a short description text about Fokus Dagghøjskole, but this text seem very short and it does not really describe what Fokus Dagghøjskole is and what it provides. An evaluator pointed out that he could not understand what the point was in presenting the image at this page. There needs some explanations to what a trampoline has to do with Fokus Dagghøjskole and it might also be an issue that some of the target audience would not be able to associate themselves with the picture as "they do not want to jump on a trampoline". The main issue at this page is that it should motivate users into reading about the provided courses. This issue is rated medium high as it is important that the pages at the website encourages users to explore the offers that the website describes. This issue is related to heuristic guidelines 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design" and 10 "help and documentation", and OCLC guideline 1 "affordance".

- **Some descriptions of the different courses at Fokus Dagghøjskole is missing** - discovered in evaluation 1
- **The descriptions of some courses are very long** - discovered in evaluation M

The presentation of courses at Fokus Dagghøjskole contain very long incomprehensible descriptions for some courses while others almost do not have any description. The courses that do not

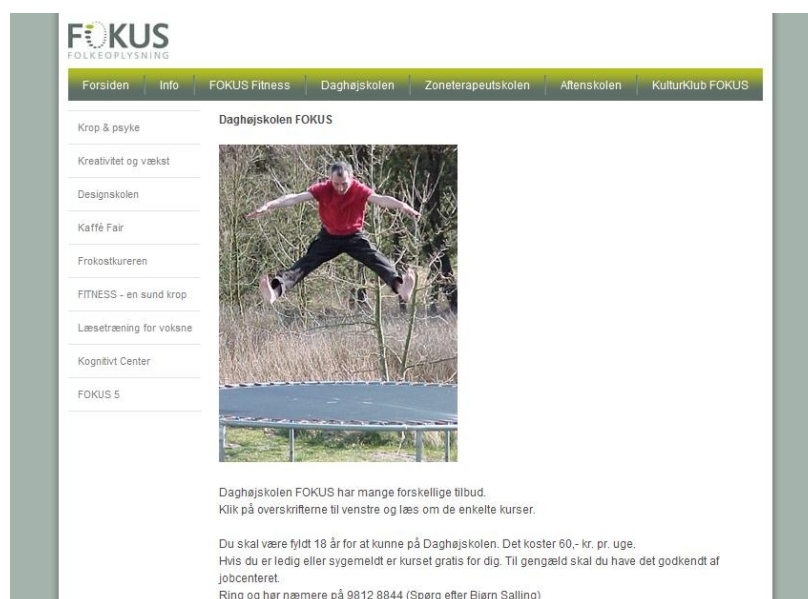


Figure 3.12: The main page of Fokus Daghøjskole

have a full description in this section of the site have external websites that is linked to from these pages which may not be noticed at the first glance. It may confuse the users that there is this difference in presentation of the courses. A solution might for these courses be to present at least a short description of the course and then use the graphical layout to emphasize the links to the external website. This part of the issue is rated high as it is important that the users can find the descriptions if they want to. The issue is related to heuristic guideline 4 "consistency and standards" and 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design". The other part of the issue related to the very long descriptions of courses makes it different for the users to get an overview. The descriptions seem to address both course attendees and social workers but the result is that the text is too long. It is here important to divide the text into smaller parts that can be further explored. This is rated high as the users might skip reading the text as it is too much and does not help them select the part they want to read about. This issue is related to heuristic guideline 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design" and OCLC guidelines 2 "use chunking" and 3 "provide progressive levels of details".

- **The prices for joining the "Kulturklub FOKUS" only mention prices for some target groups** - discovered in evaluation M

When looking at the pages below "Kulturklub FOKUS" there are only provided prices for retired and general population but when signing up it is also possible to get rebate for other groups like students. It does not make sense that these prices are not presented. This issue have been rated low as it is important to address all audiences but it is also important to consider if all these other audiences are in the target group for this offer.

- **What is the difference between Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole?** - discovered in evaluation M, 2 & 4

It is not everyone that clearly understand what the difference between "Daghøjskolen" and "Aftenskolen" is. A typical way to perceive these two is as discussed during the evaluations that it is courses provided at day and evening time. This is however wrong as Fokus Daghøjskole provide longer courses that are primarily offered as retraining for people who are on social security. While Fokus Aftenskole provide short courses for everyone. This issue is rated medium high as it is important to focus on the difference between these two parts of the offers provided by Fokus Folkeoplysning. The issue is related to heuristic guidelines 2 "match between system and the real world", 6 "recognition rather than recall" and 10 "help and documentation" and the first OCLC guideline "affordance".

The online course enrollment

The following issues are related to the course enrollment system (DOFO) as shown in figure 3.13 on the following page. DOFO run independently of the main site but still have a major importance to it. As described in some of the other issues earlier it is problematic that there is a distinction between these two systems. It is also clear when looking at the former issues that there are

issues related to the visual representation of courses in DOFO. These two focus areas in relation to DOFO will not be discussed in these issues once again but it has now been mentioned that these issues also belong in this group of issues.



Figure 3.13: The course enrollment site (DOFO)

- **It is not clear what courses belong to each category** - discovered in evaluation M, 3 & 5
- **The list of courses in some categories are too long and incomprehensible** - discovered in evaluation 1 & 5
- **The sorting of courses in the categories appears to be random, not alphabetically** - discovered in evaluation M
- **It is not possible to find courses by using different pathways such as categories, alphabetically listed and so on** - discovered in evaluation M

These four issues are all related to the organization of the courses. It appears that the course categorization is not appropriate as it is difficult to determine where some courses would be. Furthermore it also became clear through the evaluation sessions that there were courses in categories where they did not make sense (e.g. a course on first aid was placed in "velvære og fordybelse"). It also became clear in the evaluation that the list of courses in some categories were too long for some of the evaluators to comprehend. In some cases the courses are so popular that they run these courses in parallel and therefore these courses get multiple entries in the course enrollment system which therefore causes the lists to become quite long. Maybe there should multiple levels of categories in order to make the lists shorter. Another issue when looking at the lists of the courses is that they appear to be presented in random and not in alphabetic order by default. This once again contribute to the issue of the users finding the lists to be incomprehensible. The overall rating of these issues is high as it is important to support users in finding the courses that they want to find. This is of course a difficult issue to solve due to the many different ways that people will perform this task and where they would expect to find a specific course. The issues are related to heuristic guidelines 2 "match between system and the real world" and 4 "consistency and standards" and OCLC guidelines 1 "affordance", 2 "use chunking" and 3 "provide progressive levels of details".

- **It is not explained what the status colors mean** - discovered in evaluation 1 & 4
- **There are outdated courses shown in the system** - discovered in evaluation M

On the list of courses in the different categories there are presented a color (red, green or yellow) for each course in a field name status as shown in figure 3.14 on the next page. It is however not explained what exactly these colors mean. When clicking on a course it is however possible to see that the status has something to do with how many free places there are remaining at the course. It is therefore an important information for people to know if they can sign up for the course just by looking at these colors. Another problem with the list of courses is that courses which have started or even ended are still shown in the course enrollment. It is acceptable that people who are actually looking for these old courses can do that. It is however problematic that people who want to join a course have to be aware of courses which are not open for submissions anymore. A solution to this could be to give users the option to select whether or not these courses are shown. It is crucial that users can find what they want in the course enrollment system without being confused with irrelevant courses that cannot even be joined -

these issues have therefore been rated high. The issues are related to heuristic guidelines 7 "flexibility and efficiency of use" and 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design" and OCLC guideline 4 "don't lie to the user".

FOKUS Folkeoplysning - Forår 2010 - Familie og fødsel

Familie og fødsel

Hold nr	Hold navn	Underviser	Start dato/tid	Undervisningssted	Status
30433	Baby-massage for far og barn	Lotte Spliid	30-01-2010 10:00	FOKUS FOLKEOPLYSNING	●
30460	Efterfødselshold for mor og baby	Marianne Matzen	10-02-2010 09:15	FOKUS FOLKEOPLYSNING	●
30420	Yoga for gravide	Tina Sørensen	09-02-2010 17:00	FOKUS FOLKEOPLYSNING	●
30421	Yoga for gravide	Tina Sørensen	13-04-2010 17:00	FOKUS FOLKEOPLYSNING	●
30426	Fødselsforberedelse for par	Lotte Spliid	16-04-2010 18:30	FOKUS FOLKEOPLYSNING	●
30441	Bassintræning for gravide.	Sarah Olsen	24-03-2010 16:00	Hotel Scheelsminde	●
30430	Efterfødsel	Lotte Spliid	22-03-2010 10:00	FOKUS FOLKEOPLYSNING	●
30435	Efterfødsel	Lotte Spliid	07-06-2010 10:00	FOKUS FOLKEOPLYSNING	●
30423	Bevægelse for gravide	Lone Rohde	09-02-2010 19:00	FOKUS FOLKEOPLYSNING	●
30469	Rytmik for 2-årige	Hanne Julie Møller	09-02-2010 16:30	Nr. Utrup Husflidsskole	●
30464	Babyrytmik	Hanne Julie Møller	12-02-2010 11:30	FOKUS Fitness, Thistedvej 58	●

Figure 3.14: The use of status colors next to each course in the course enrollment system

- It is required to select "kommune" during the course enrollment (see figure 3.15) - discovered in evaluation 5

When a user decides to sign up for a specific course he or she need to provide some information about their address and so on. In this dialog the user must provide a postal code, and then the system automatically check what city this postal code belong to. But the user is also asked to select what municipal (Kommune) he or she belongs to. This request seem to be redundant because the city is already selected based on postal code. It is of course true that this city cannot directly be translated into the actual municipality due to the nature of postal codes but as the user is forced to fill in the full address it would have been possible to determine municipality based on this information. Another problem is that the list contain all municipalities in Denmark even though most visitors probably would only come from a few municipalities surrounding Aalborg. This issue is rated medium low because it does not prevent the users from continuing but just give a short annoyance once users have decided to join a course. This issue is partly related to heuristic guideline 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design"

Figure 3.15: The course sign up process in the course enrollment system (DOFO)

- The following issues are related to the use of the search engine provided in DOFO:
 - search results are bad - discovered in evaluation M
 - The search engine does not support advanced searching - discovered in evaluation M

When using the search engine it quite quickly becomes clear that it is a very simple search engine that just searches through all the text that is given for each course. This mean that if one for

instance try to search for "sy" the search engine will give quite a lot search results as it includes all the words where "sy" is a part of. The result is that a course where the word "sylvetøjsglas" is used in the course description will make it to the results even though it has nothing to do with the concept of sewing. It would make more sense if the first results would have been "syning". Additionally a user cannot use quotation marks to improve the results. In order to solve these issues it might be relevant to change the search engine such that it first show results that gives a match based on the course title before it uses the course description. It could also be relevant to define tags that describe the courses so that these would be the ones that users are searching upon. These issues are rated high as the search engine in its current shape is bad at helping users in finding what they are looking for. The issues are related to heuristic guidelines 2 "match between system and the real world" and 4 "consistency and standards".

- **All search results contain an invalid date for the field "tilmeldningsfrist"** - discovered in evaluation M

When searching for something at the search engine all the search results have a field named "tilmeldningsfrist" but this field have the value "01-01-0001" for all the search results. This is something that do not make sense as all the courses obviously would have a certain date where it would no longer be possible to join them. If this field was defined it could also help with a former issue about showing outdated courses in the system because the system then automatically could hide these courses when they are outdated. This issue is rated high because it does not make sense to give the users this invalid date and because filling in this information could help in solving some of the other issues. The issue is primarily related to OCLC guideline 4 "don't lie to the user".

3.3.3 Summary of Findings

The findings presented in the former section are quite extensive as they cover many big and small issues present at the website. In this section I will sum up what the main findings from the heuristic evaluations are. It is clear that many of the issues are related and overlapping - in the following I have tried regroup some of the issues in order to give a more coherent presentation of the overall findings.

Navigation

The first main finding is that it in some aspects is difficult to navigate the website. This is of course also related to the design and layout of the website but most importantly it is also related to the structure of the content.

When looking at the main page it is not clear to the users how they can find the courses that is provided. In the global navigation there are provided links to "Daghøjskolen" and "Aftenskolen" but it is not clear which ones cover the courses that one wants to look for. Once a user actually get past these issues and arrive at the course enrollment site it is difficult to determine what category to find a specific course within and it is not possible to return to the main website again if that is desired as this is not a fully integrated part of the website.

When looking at the possibilities for searching on the website the first issue is that it is only possible to search for courses, and this is only provided when entering the course enrollment website. If a user uses this search engine it appears that it is not a good search engine because it is too simple and only does a simple full text search of all course entries without any grouping of the content based on its relevancy (e.g. put course title matches first in the results).

Design and motivation

The design and motivation issues are to some extent integrated into the navigation issues as they in some cases are the direct cause that makes the navigation difficult.

First of all the main issue in this group is the overall design and layout of the website that do not establish a balance between textual and graphical content. When looking at the textual content it does not highlight the important content and provide clear headlines that visually divide the content and motivate the readers into reading more or support the users in pointing out the important parts that they want to read about at the individual pages.

When looking at the general page layout there are also issues related to the navigation options. The menu bars do not highlight the current page and there are no breadcrumb provided to inform

users about their current location in the website hierarchy. Furthermore the local navigation menu have a very weak presentation of its entries which make it disappear on some pages because of the grey text that is used in this menu next to very colorful images at these pages.

Some of the issues also pointed towards unused potentials for the website where for instance the connection to the magazine could be an online version of the magazine where it was possible to click on courses and other items in the magazine to get further information, pictures and more direct access to the course enrollment. This issue further connects to the actual presentation of courses in the course enrollment site that are only done in a plain text format without any colors or picture. It is important that the website encourages the users to explore the offers but it is not done properly when the courses is presented in a non inspiring template with no colors, images and extended descriptions. At other pages like those below "Daghøjskolen" it also became clear that considerations about the descriptions of these courses are needed as some of these seem to be way too short and graphically insufficient if they should encourage users into progressing towards the respective external websites that describe these courses.

Expected content

The first group of issues here is related to content that is not provided even though it is expected. This content for instance include an online version of the magazine, a description of the terms that must be accepted in order to join courses and finally full descriptions of courses at Fokus Daghøjskole and more extensive descriptions of the courses provided at Fokus Aftenskole.

The second group of issues is related to items or whole pages that do not make sense to the users. For instance the "Aftenskolen" page does not clearly give users a direct way to navigate towards the courses and explain how to find the courses. In other parts of the website this issue appear when users for instance cannot see why a specific picture is used at a specific page like "Daghøjskolen" where an image of person jumping on a trampoline is shown.

The third group of issues is related to irrelevant content such as items that are not up to date or courses that have passed the registration deadline.

The final group is related to the difference between the main website and the course enrollment system (and other websites belonging to Fokus Folkeoplysning). It seems that the difference between these websites is closely related some of the navigation and design issues discovered in the evaluation. It is therefore important to consider the integration of these different websites in relation to the main website. This is needed in order to improve the flow when navigating between the sites such that the integration becomes more seamless.

3.3.4 Additional heuristics

During the evaluation of the findings discovered during the heuristic evaluations I realized that there were issues which were difficult or not at all possible to directly relate to the 10 usability heuristics and the 4 additional OCLC guidelines that I have presented. It is therefore clear to me that these guidelines is not sufficient to describe usability issues that will be met on a website although they can inspire the evaluators into finding the issues. One reason for this is of course that the usability heuristics are not specifically created with websites in mind.

In this section I will therefore try to describe what type of guidelines that I were missing during the evaluation.

Most of the issues that were related to the graphical design of the website was of course linked to heuristic guideline 8 "aesthetic and minimalist design" but in many cases I had a feeling that this guideline was insufficient. This guideline only points out that the design "should look good" and not contain irrelevant information. The guidelines does however not focus on the motivation of users and the difference between audiences that visit the website. In relation to the navigation and content related issues I also experienced that the heuristics did not fully cover the issues. The problem here is that the guidelines do not say something about the expectations for content and how to locate content.

Based on these considerations I decided to formulate some new heuristics that could cover these aspects. These new heuristics are as follows:

- Motivate users into exploring the website

- Address all the audiences
- Present the content that would be expected
- Make content findable

At a more general level I feel that a majority of the issues found in the evaluation could be related to an overall statement like "make the website look professional and trustworthy". This statement lies very close to the concept of establish credibility at a website. In this relation there is made a famous list of credibility guidelines called "the Stanford guidelines for web credibility" as listed in table 3.3 [Fogg, 2002].

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make it easy to verify the accuracy of the information on your site.2. Show that there's a real organization behind your site.3. Highlight the expertise in your organization and in the content and services you provide.4. Show that honest and trustworthy people stand behind your site.5. Make it easy to contact you.6. Design your site so it looks professional (or is appropriate for your purpose).7. Make your site easy to use – and useful.8. Update your site's content often (at least show it's been reviewed recently).9. Use restraint with any promotional content (e.g., ads, offers).10. Avoid errors of all types, no matter how small they seem. |
|---|

Table 3.3: The Stanford guidelines for web credibility [Fogg, 2002]

It is clear to me when looking at these guidelines that they are good at covering many of the issues that I found hard to relate to the 10 heuristic usability guidelines and the additional four OCLC guidelines. Especially guideline 7 is one that I think would cover the heuristics that I proposed. That being said I do not think that I should have used these guidelines for the evaluation sessions as I think some of these guidelines are too specific and will be of much more use when redesigning the website.

3.3.5 My understanding of who the website users are

It is of course difficult to explain exactly which kind of visitors that come to the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning just by looking at this evaluation as it has only been focused on a small part of the potential customers. Fokus Folkeoplysning is a rather large organization that run many different projects which also make them interesting for other companies, communality employees, politicians and so on.

When looking at the customers that join courses held by Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole it also becomes clear that these parts of the audiences are quite large and diverse as people come from many different social backgrounds and join very different courses depending on their current interests and their current status in life. These differences are quite important to be aware of when designing a website for this large audience as these people will have many different interests, expectations and approaches to what they are looking for at the website.

According to [Boutelle, 2010] the term stakeholder analysis originates from a book called "Strategic Management" [Freeman, 1984]. In this book Freeman used the term "stakeholder analysis" to remind the organization that it was in the company's interest to pay attention to people who are impacted by or have an impact on the activities of the company [Boutelle, 2010].

In order to understand what a stakeholder analysis is all about it is first and foremost important to understand what a stakeholder is. A stakeholder could be defined as:

*"[...] individuals or organisations who stand to gain or lose from the success or failure of a system [...] Stakeholders include **customers** or **clients** (who pay for the system), **developers** (who design, construct and maintain the system), and **users** (who interact with the system to get their work done)"*

[Nuseibeh and Easterbrook, 2000]

This definition of stakeholders contain all the people that in any way are connected or influenced by the solution that we create. It is of course important to be aware of all of them but it is also important to limit the amount of work by focusing on the important ones and dividing the stakeholders into smaller groups that can be investigated separately.

As mentioned in the introduction to the research I am using the "users, content, context" model as proposed in the Information Architecture book [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006]. In this chapter I will touch upon all of the three areas in the model but for now however the interesting part is only the distinction between users and (business) context. The distinctions between these two are of course made because they are two very different sets of people to investigate and therefore requires different methods. For the business customers the book suggests to conduct stakeholder interviews [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006, p. 238].

Even though we distinguish between users and business stakeholders they are not very different to approach. According to [Boutelle, 2010] we could see the business stakeholders as users. They are of course not the same but we can utilize some of the same methods for both audiences.

When we are investigating the different goals and perspectives of the business stakeholders we will most likely encounter conflicts between different requirements which is something that is also present when looking at the users. It should therefore be easy for user experience professionals to transfer their knowledge on how to create solutions that meet the conflicting requirements or even eliminates them [Boutelle, 2010]. Furthermore it should be even easier to work with the business stakeholders because [Boutelle, 2010]:

- It is possible to reach each specific stakeholders as they are working within the organization. There are no hard to define users.
- The goals of the business stakeholders are often concrete and tied explicitly to particular business or performance metrics. It is therefore possible to get more precise descriptions of goals and what objections a particular stakeholder might have for the project.

The ultimate reason for conducting the stakeholder interviews is as put in the following quotation:

"A design must meet the business needs of the company, and must be supported by disparate members of the management team, in order to be actually implemented."

[Boutelle, 2010]

The information gathered from the analysis will help in guiding the rest of the design process so that it can be accepted by the organization. Secondly it helps in getting acceptance from the stakeholders even though not all requirements are met in the first place because the stakeholders have taken part in the analysis. Furthermore it is easier for the developer to be prepared for objections against the project with arguments on how the change will affect the company more positively in the long run [Boutelle, 2010]. It is also worth considering that:

"The primary measure of success of a software system is the degree to which it meets the purpose for which it was intended."

[Nuseibeh and Easterbrook, 2000]

It is usually the business stakeholders and not the end users that define what the "system" to be developed is intended for. This is the reason why I have to focus on the goals and perspective of business stakeholders before trying to establish a balance between the users and business stakeholders.

4.1 Conducting a stakeholder analysis

When looking in the literature it is clear that there are many different ways to conduct a stakeholder analysis. The reason is that a stakeholder analysis depends hugely on the specific case and therefore need to be customized. That being said there are of course a lot of guidelines for conducting the stakeholder analysis and interviews.

At a very high level we could according to [Boutelle, 2010] divide the stakeholder analysis into four steps. In the following I will just present how this approach is described in the literature, how I approach the stakeholder analysis will be discussed in section 4.2 on the facing page.

1. Identify organizational stakeholders

The first step is to identify who the stakeholders are. A project will succeed or fail based on actions from people who care enough to support or oppose them. We therefore need to identify who these people are. An organizational chart may be a help but it often does not reflect the real patterns of influence in the organization. It is therefore good to use the initial stakeholder interviews for identifying other stakeholders. [Boutelle, 2010].

2. Prioritize stakeholders

The next is an ongoing process that happens while planning the individual stakeholder interviews. It is here a question about prioritizing the stakeholders based on their influence and interest in the project in order to find out how much time to spend with them. One interesting thing here is that "interest" matters more than influence. People with high interest gives more useful information and inspiration while people with low interest and high influence only need to be convinced that the project is important but they do not give much valuable information [Boutelle, 2010]. It is here also suggested by [Beavers, 2010] that stakeholder interviews need to be conducted with employees at all levels in the organization and that we consider if each stakeholder has a tactical or strategic point of view and if they are focused on short term or long term goals.

3. Understand stakeholder perspectives

A good way to get valuable information from the stakeholders is by conducting semi-structured interviews with broad and open-ended questions. By asking questions about how the project might go right or wrong and what sources of data that could be used is a good way of getting a collaborative conversation on how to solve the issues that the project is facing. The process of conducting stakeholder interviews is an ongoing process that is primarily used in the beginning of the project but can also be utilized through the rest of the project [Boutelle, 2010].

4. Incorporate stakeholder perspectives into design

Many of the findings from the stakeholder interviews will naturally fit into the design that is being developed. The challenge here is mostly when a stakeholder has strong objections to certain elements in the project. It is here a question of trying to solve the conflicts by design or find arguments that are greater than those the specific stakeholder have. [Boutelle, 2010]

4.2 Adapting stakeholder analysis for this particular case

As already mentioned there are many ways to conduct the stakeholder analysis as it need to be customized for the specific case. There are however one major difference between the cases that are described in the literature sources and this case at Fokus Folkeoplysning. The difference is that the literature discusses very large organizations whereas Fokus Folkeoplysning is smaller which mean that many of the roles that the literature talks about does not exist or is maintained by much fewer people. The existing website is for instance primarily maintained by the company manager. This mean that I have to adapt each interview based on what each individual is engaged with.

One important thing when planning a stakeholder analysis is to set up goals for what to achieve by conducting it. This will guide me in developing the appropriate questions for the interviews. In the following I have tried to describe the main goals that I have for the stakeholder analysis.

- **Get viewpoints, ideas and inspiration on what is important at the website**

The important thing about this goal is for me to get an understanding of how Fokus Folkeoplysning want their website to be. More specifically what I need in this goal is to understand differences in the opinions across the organization regarding the website. This is necessary in order to understand how the website can become usable and valuable for Fokus Folkeoplysning. I believe this is a question of being able to define how the website can and cannot help Fokus Folkeoplysning.

- **Understand the current information flow relevant to the website**

This is a rather broad goal that is an continuation of the former goal. It is here important to attain knowledge about the surroundings to the website to probe ideas for what could be used at the website. Furthermore this would hopefully make it easier to give suggestions on how to change procedures in relation to the website in the future.

- **Understand company visions and strategies**

It is important that there is a connection between the business strategies and the website. Optimally the online web presence would be considered in the business strategy but I at least need to know something about the company strategies in order to give suggestions that is in line with their own visions.

- **Locate obstacles**

This goal is of course quite self explanatory but it is important that I get aware of issues or obstacles as early in the process as possible in order to be able to account for them and avoid that they end up being a problem.

4.2.1 Creation of core interview questions

The stakeholder interviews are semi-structured by open-ended questions that are continuously updated based on my experiences from former interviews and the questions that "pop-up" during the project. As a start I decided to create some foundational questions that could be used as the basis for each interview. These questions are founded in the goals defined before and inspired by the questions presented in the Information Architecture book [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006, p.238]. The questions are only a foundation of questions that will be asked in each interview. Prior to each interview I will therefore consider what other questions I need to ask. The interviews

are held in Danish but the questions are here translated to English together with my explanations on how they could provide the information that meet my goals.

- **Optimally, how would you like the homepage to be used and look?**

This question mainly relates to the first goal about getting viewpoints, ideas and inspiration for the website. The results of this question is expected to be individual opinions on how people in the organization would like the website to be.

- **What are the website's main challenges?**

This question quite obviously belongs to the last goal about locating obstacles but these obstacles might originate from perspectives related to the other goals.

- **Are there any initiatives in the organization that I need to account for?**

The goal about company visions and strategies were the inspiration for this question. It is here important to find out if there are any upcoming changes or initiatives that I need to be aware of. It is of course clear that this question does not inform about what the actual visions and strategies of Fokus Folkeoplysning is.

- **How is your relationship to the website?**

- **How do you incorporate it into your daily work?**

These two questions is mostly based on the second goal of understanding the information flow surrounding the website. It is here a question about getting to know how employees think about the website, and to what extent they think about it in their daily work.

- **What are the most important success factors for the website?**

- **How can these be measured?**

It is here a question of determining what is needed for Fokus Folkeoplysning to view the changes for website as being successful. These questions are therefore considered as a combination of goal three and four as they are related to the visions and strategies but also the obstacles for the website project.

- **What are the three topmost priorities in relation to the new website?**

This question is mostly a continuation of the former two questions, and it is therefore based on the same goals. The main difference here is just that depending on how many success factors the interviewee gives I might need to get them prioritized.

- **Is there any question that you think I should have asked that I have forgotten?**

This question could belong to all the goals. The main point is that the interviewee might have something they want to tell me that I have not considered when creating the questions. This is therefore mainly meant as a possibility for the interviewee to get in charge of the conversation.

It is important to be aware that these questions and the questions prepared for each individual interview are only considered as a starting point for a discussion during the interview and that there naturally were asked elaborative questions when found relevant.

4.3 The interviews

4.3.1 Interview 1 - the manager

The first stakeholder interview that I conducted was of course in collaboration with my contact Bjørn Salling at Fokus Folkeoplysning who is the manager of the organization. As mentioned earlier in the report Fokus Folkeoplysning is two organizations one that covers Fokus Aftenskole and one that covers Fokus Daghøjskole. The main connection between these two organizations is that they are both branded within the Fokus Folkeoplysning concept and that the manager

Bjørn Salling is employed within both organizations which is also why this stakeholder has a high influence on this project. During some initial meetings it also became clear that the website is primarily maintained by this stakeholder which could mean that he has a high interest in the website.

As this is my first stakeholder interview and was held in the beginning of the project I needed to get answers on some more practical questions apart from the core interview questions in order to get a better understanding of the organization. In the following I will present what the essence of these additional questions were and why I needed them. Again the interviews were held in danish and they might have been expressed differently at the interview than what is presented here:

- **How is the website maintained and by whom?**

As the whole background for this project is the website this question might seem obvious to ask as I need to understand how the website is currently being managed and who is responsible for this. This question is related to the second interview goal "understand the current information flow relevant to the website".

- **How many employees are there and how is their connection to Fokus Folkeoplysning?**

This question is also related to the second interview goal "understand the current information flow relevant to the website". I need to understand the overall structure of the organization.

- **Is there any written strategies and visions that the organization have?**

As mentioned in the introduction it is important to think about the website in relation to the company strategies in order to combine the web strategies with the company strategies or at least establish a balance between the two. This question is related to the third goal "understand company visions and strategies".

- **What is the connection between the two organizational board of directors?**

This question is related to the second goal "understand the current information flow relevant to the website". The reason why I asked it was that I in the current website was able to see that there was two, and I therefore need to know how this is affecting the information ecology at Fokus Folkeoplysning and how this could have an impact on the website.

- **How are the connections to the different sub-projects like fitness, zoneterapi and designskolen and how can we improve their presentation?**

This question is related to two goals - the first "get viewpoints, ideas and inspiration on what is important on the website" and third "understand company visions and strategies" goal. Even though my primary focus is on the main website it is important to be aware of the projects that have their own website and how they are connected to the main website. The reason why I ask about this is to find out if there are already some relevant considerations about this.

- **How do customers join the different offers?**

In order to understand the current situation I need to know what the current status is about how people sign up for the offers that Fokus Folkeoplysning have. This both account for Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole. This question is related to the second goal "understand the current information flow relevant to the website".

- **How do the offers change over time?**

This question is about the courses provided at Fokus Aftenskole where I was unsure about how the available offers changed over time (got added and removed) and when they were renewed. This question is related to the second goal "understand the current information flow relevant to the website".

- **What do customers ask for on the phone?**

In order to find out how to improve the website I find it obvious to ask this question in order to understand what the customers need and to understand if there are something that

they can not find at the website. This question is related to the first goal "get viewpoints, ideas and inspiration on what is important at the website" and the last goal "locate obstacles".

- **The intranet content on the website**

During some initial investigation of the website I discovered that there were some content at one section of the site that were only meant for the teachers at Fokus Folkeoplysning but this was presented together with other content. I therefore needed to ask what this content had to do at this page or if it should be moved to an intranet instead. This question is related to three of the goals: 1 "get viewpoints, ideas and inspiration on what is important at the website", 2 "understand the current information flow relevant to the website" and 4 "locate obstacles".

Findings from the first interview

The result from this first interview relates to many different things but I have decided to present it in four groups of information:

What he wants to achieve

The first thing that the manager mention in relation to this is that he would like to see that more customers would use the website when they want to sign up for courses in stead of contacting the employees at the office as this requires time. He would also like if the website would have a much better visual expression and marketing effect than what it currently have.

Apart from these business goals he also mention some more specific content and usage goals that he think would be good. One point here is that he would like to have better descriptions of both teachers and their courses, including the use of both videos, images and text. Another point is that it would be nice if there were more activity and involvement of the course attendees at the website as this could create attention towards the website and motivate potential customers.

The challenges

The main challenge that the manager points out as being relevant in this case is the use of time and money. If there should be a more constant use of money and time on the website it is crucial that these changes can earn themselves home by for instance saving time in other work areas or by attracting more customers. But this also bring on the next issue which is that some of their customers might be hard to change such that they would use the website when signing up for courses either because they prefer talking to a physical person at the office or by phone or because they do not have access to a computer with Internet access. Another aspect of the time versus money issue is that it might be hard to find the right person to do the job of maintaining the website and create the extended descriptions of courses and so on as current employees do not have the time and because it is hard for a new person just to do it sufficiently as this person does not know Fokus Folkeoplysning and its courses that well.

For now however he points out that there is some important research that need to be done in order to find out what the focus of the website should be. It is important to find out how the many offers should be balanced at the website. Is it important to focus on the many projects at Fokus Daghøjskole and to what extend compared to Fokus Aftenskole. Finally it is also important to consider how the separation between Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole would be optimally represented at the website in order to avoid that the users get confused about the two.

The current use of the website

In the managers opinion the website is not something that is thought about in the everyday work at Fokus Folkeoplysning by any of the employees. Currently it is only himself and a secretary that occasionally updates it when they discover that something needs to be changed. In general he think they need some standard procedures for how to maintain the website and that it might be worth considering if the maintenance of the website should be distributed among more employees.

Other facts

According to the manager Fokus Folkeoplysning currently spend about $\frac{1}{2}$ a million on getting their magazine created and mailed. He mentioned that if the website at some point could do the work on its own then the money spent at this magazine could be used on the website in stead. There are however some issues in doing so, first and foremost this would mean that there would be a transition problem as the creation of such a website would need some investment until it is strong enough to take over. Secondly it is important to be aware that if we stop sending out the magazine it might be difficult to attract new customers as we cannot expect the potential customers to land at the website - the website cannot force itself into the hands of the customers like the magazine.

As mentioned I decided to ask if Fokus Folkeoplysning have some written visions or strategies for the organization, and it turned out that they a few days before this interview actually were having a meeting in order to redefine their descriptions of the visions that were behind Fokus Daghøjskole. At this point in time these descriptions just needed to be accepted by the board of directors but I was given a copy. The visions will be discussed later in relation to the construction of the new strategy in chapter 8 on page 71.

As mentioned there is some pages at the current website that contain content that would normally be located at an Intranet website. The manager here points out that they actually have an Intranet that the teachers can use and where it of course would make sense to store this content. But it is however also important to be aware that some of the teachers are only connected with Fokus Folkeoplysning in order to teach some very short courses. It is therefore important that these teachers can easily find at least some practical information about what it means to be a teacher without having to log in to an Intranet.

During the interview I as mentioned also asked about how the course offerings changed over time, and was here informed that courses are planned for two seasons (spring and autumn). The courses do of course not all start at the same date within these periods but they all start and end within these seasons with an option for the course attendees to continue at the course in the next season.

When looking at how course attendees at Fokus Aftenskole subscribed to their courses the manager gave me some statistics on this. In the period from November 18th 2009 to Marts 12th 2010 there were 1870 new online subscriptions, 2119 new subscriptions by phone etc. and 1440 continued subscriptions. In figure 4.1 this data has been illustrated in a pie chart.

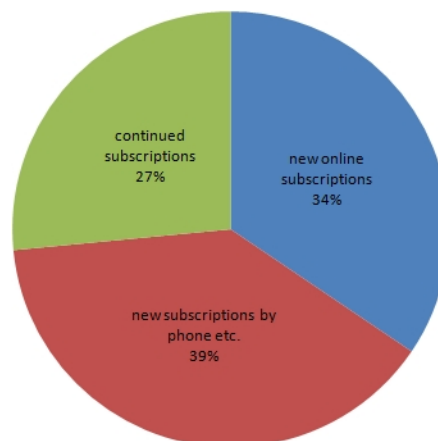


Figure 4.1: How users subscribed to courses in the period from November 18th 2009 to Marts 12th 2010

In relation to the difference between the two organizations (Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole) he explained that they are two organizations with each their own cvr number, budget and board of directors because they cannot be joined due to regulations in the law. Fokus Aftenskole is regulated by "loven om folkeoplysning" while Fokus Daghøjskole is an independent institution that provide retraining courses that primarily is used by people who were referred by the communality.

There are about 20 permanently and 100 part time employees at Fokus Folkeoplysning. The group of part time employees have working times ranging from two hours to full time.

4.3.2 Interview 2 - the secretary

In preparation for this second interview I realized that it was important to change the core interview questions such that I would also ask what the interviewee's job is and what he or she is doing in their daily work. In the former interview I did not feel the need for this question as I already knew that he was the manager of the organization.

The second interviewee Hanne Tambo is a secretary at the office who is responsible for the administrative work related to Fokus Aftenskole. I was recommended by Bjørn Salling to establish contact with Hanne Tambo for the stakeholder interviews. As she is working at the office and is responsible for the administration related to Fokus Aftenskole I would expect that she has some more specific knowledge related to Fokus Aftenskole and its customers than what I could get from the manager in the former interview.

Hanne Tambo is responsible for different aspects in relation to Fokus Aftenskole. She is the one who handles the administration in relation to the creation of courses, contact with teachers and the administration hereof. The creation of the magazine is also a part of her work as she prepare the text and images for this. Apart from this she also assists Bjørn Salling in updating news items at the website. Finally she also responds to phone calls from customers.

In the following I will present the additional questions that I prepared for this interview:

- **What information do the customers need from the website?**
- **What do customers ask for on the phone - is this information missing at the website?**

It is crucial for this project to get an understanding of what information the customers need and this why i have decided to ask these two questions. The questions are related to the second core interview goal "understand the current information flow relevant to the website".

- **What focus should sub-projects like fitness and kaffe-fair have at the website?**

As mentioned in relation to the former interview it is important find out how the balance should be among the content at the website. I have decided to ask this question in relation to the first core interview goal "get viewpoints, ideas and inspiration on what is important at the website".

Findings from the second interview

The findings gathered from this interview is divided into 3 sections as presented below:

What she wants to achieve

The secretary in general wants that the website becomes more accessible and interesting for its visitors. This should be achieved by making it easier to join courses when a better integration of the website and the course enrollment system is created such that these two systems are not experienced as two separate systems. Ultimately she would like that the changes result in more customers for Fokus Aftenskole and kulturklubben. It is also her opinion that the main focus on the website should be at Fokus Aftenskole as most of the other projects have their own website and is marketed in other ways.

The challenges

The main challenge that the secretary points out is that we need to find out how people are actually looking and searching for courses in order to find out how we can attract the potential customers to the website.

Another challenge is the way that the website is currently maintained and thought of in the daily work - it is important but there is not allotted time for this. The result is that the website is not being frequently monitored and updated.

What people ask for

As a secretary she responds to many phone calls from the customers and it is her impression that many people phone to the office because they cannot figure out how to use the website. Many people also asks about when the course that they have signed up for will start and where it is held. It is therefore her opinion that people do not print out or store the e-mail with this information such that they could easily find it again.

4.3.3 Development of the core stakeholder interview questions

During the process of conducting the first two stakeholder interviews I realized that I needed to make some changes to the core interview questions. I realized that I could remove an obsolete question and that I had to add two questions in order to strengthen the outcome related to the first stakeholder interview goal "get viewpoints, ideas and inspiration on what is important at the website".

The question "what are the three topmost priorities in relation to the new website?" were not really used for anything in the first two interviews as there were not so many things discussed that it would make sense to ask the interviewees how they would prioritize them. I have therefore decided not to include this question in the core stakeholder questions for the remaining interviews.

I already have a question where I ask the interviewees how they use the website in their daily work but I realized that it at some points were hard to get people to come up with ideas and inspiration and I therefore decided that I needed to continue the former question by asking "how would you like to be able to use the website in your daily work?".

As discovered in some in the first two interviews there seem to be an issue about how to balance the presentation of Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole at the website I therefore realized that it was important that the rest of the interview participants were also asked to consider this. I therefore created the question "How do you think that the separation between daghøjskolen and aftenskolen should be represented at the website?".

4.3.4 Interview 3 - an employee

The third interviewee Peder Ditlev is employed at Fokus Daghøjskole and has many different roles here. Among others he is working at two projects at Fokus Daghøjskole namely "Fokus 5" and "Fsrokostkureren". It is therefore obvious for me to ask him questions about Fokus Daghøjskole and how he think they need to be marketed at the website compared to Fokus Aftenskole. In the following I will present the additional questions that I prepared for this interview:

- **What does the customers need to find at the website?**
- **Do the course attendees at daghøjskolen need information that could be presented online?**
- **Do the social workers at the municipality need information that could be presented online?**

These three questions are both related to the second stakeholder interview goal "understand the current information flow relevant to the website", and I ask them in order to get his opinion on what information he thinks the customers of Fokus Folkeoplysning need to be given at the website.

- **Is there any specific material or information that I should further investigate?**

This question is related to first stakeholder interview goal "get viewpoints, ideas and inspiration on what is important at the website". This question is asked in order for him to express things that he think is important to investigate in order to create a good website.

Findings from the third interview

The findings gathered from this interview is divided into four groups as presented below:

What he wants to achieve

The general point in what he wanted to achieve at the website is that it becomes more user friendly in a way where the user can find the content by navigating logical paths without using too many clicks.

The obstacles

In his opinion an important obstacle could be how to describe and put name to the different offers. Fokus Daghøjskole has offers for drug addicts and it is therefore important to consider how to get these to follow these courses. If for instance a person was asked to go to the center for drug addicts then it might be hard for this person to accept that he need to go there because he have not fully accepted that he indeed is a drug addict and needs help.

Another important obstacle that he thinks could be a problem is the use of the current technical website platform if some wanted functionality for the future website is not supported by the current solution.

Fokus Daghøjskole

In relation to Fokus Daghøjskole he points out that the content is primarily addressing the social workers at the communality and not the clients but in Aalborg these descriptions are actually put on to the Intranet that the communality uses. The description of these courses might therefore only be relevant for social workers at other communalities.

Idea generation

In this interview we talked a lot about how we could use the website for other things than what it currently support. The big thing that he found interesting in this relation was the idea of creating a social network for the course attendees at Fokus Folkeoplysning. In particular he thought this might be relevant in relation to those who attend courses at Fokus Daghøjskole as many of these people have a weak social network. It could also be interesting if some of the work with these participants could be done inside this community such that there could be closed discussion groups for each class and a possibility for the course attendees to have private conversations with their teachers.

Another idea is the creation of a platform for remote learning such that courses could be held for people across the whole country and not just in Aalborg. This could be by the use of web cams, video lectures and discussion forums. In particular he imagined that there could be a course on painting online where the participants could upload images of their creations and then get feedback online.

Finally he thought it could be good if course descriptions over time could be updated with images and videos by teachers and course attendees. In particular he mentioned that it would be nice if people at one course which had been on a trip could upload pictures.

4.3.5 Interview 4 - an employee

At the end of the former interview with Peder Ditlev I was suggested to interview the IT teacher Changiz Khalyani who were available for an interview few minutes after the former interview. At this point I therefore decided to accept this suggestion but as I did not have time for preparing new questions I decided to use the same as those I used for Peder Ditlev. I realized that the questions that I could ask this new interviewee would not be that much different - which again was another reason for accepting the interview.

Changiz Khalyani is working as a member of the staff at "Frokostkureren" which is a course at Fokus Daghøjskole. He also work as an IT-teacher in some of the courses held at Fokus Aftenskole.

Findings from the fourth interview

The outcome of this stakeholder interview was primarily a list of what he wanted to achieve with the website as presented below:

First and foremost he wants the website to look better and be more easy to work with. In this respect he also emphasizes that many of the course attendees are retired people that are not used to surf on many websites. He therefore stressed that it is important that it is designed in a way that they can understand and use.

In his opinion it would be better if the website had more visual content such as videos and pictures from former activities such that people could see what the different courses are actually about.

Finally he points out that it might be worth considering to separate Fokus Aftenskole and Fokus Daghøjskole into two separate websites. There need to be a focus on both of them individually.

4.4 Summary of findings

The findings from the different interviews cover many different and interesting aspects. In this section I will sum up on the different findings and present them in a more coherent way. The findings will be presented in groups similar to those that I created for the findings of each interview but some of the groups have of course been merged here in order to combine the findings that are close to each others.

4.4.1 What is wanted and ideas for new functionality of the website

The first group of findings are related to the foundation of the entire project as they are focused on what Fokus Folkeoplysning wants to achieve with their website and how they want it to be. First of all it was pointed out that they wanted to get more customers and get more people to sign up for courses on the website. The next part of this group of findings is that most of the interviewees point out that the website should be more user friendly, accessible, motivating and interesting for the users. In particular some points out that it should have more logical navigation, better visual representation and expanded course descriptions with pictures, videos and comments. The interesting thing about these findings is that they focus much on usability and that they do not like the representation of content at the current website. As expressed by the manager it is important they get knowledge about what focus they should have at the website and how to structure its content appropriately in relation to this focus. In this relation it was pointed out by one person that the primary focus should be on Fokus Aftenskole and by another that the two should be more separated.

As a continuation of this first group of findings some of the interviewees made suggestions for new uses of the website and ideas in general. It was here suggested that the process of updating the website maybe should be a more distributed task among the employees such that for instance descriptions of courses, pictures and videos from activities could be managed by the teachers and the course attendees. Another much more extensive idea was to create a social networking platform at the website where teachers and course attendees could form groups, discussion and strengthen their social network between each others. Finally it was also suggested that there could be created a platform for e-learning such that the education that Fokus Folkeoplysning provides does not necessarily have to take place in Aalborg.

4.4.2 Obstacles

The second group of findings are related to the obstacles that are or might become a problem in relation to the development of a new website and strategy for Fokus Folkeoplysning. The first main obstacle that was mentioned is related to the time and money that will be required for realizing changes to the website. It is here crucial that the changes sort of earn themselves. This obstacle also closely relates to the aspect of getting more customers and more people to sign up online as these goals are something that would be able to "pay" for improvements on the website and the additional time spent at maintaining it. But the aspect of getting more people to sign up online is also something that some interviewees point out as an obstacle simply because some customers prefer doing it offline or do not have access to a computer with Internet. Another important issue that was pointed out is that of how to actually attract people for courses at the

website, it is here important to adjust the website such that it will attract potential users from search engines depending on how they actually search. As a continuation of this issue it was also pointed out that it is an obstacle to decide the focus of the website and how to prioritize the different content at the website (e.g. the difference between Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole).

Another obstacle that was pointed out during one of the interviews was that some users might find it hard to associate themselves with certain courses like those for drug addicts. It is therefore important to be aware if there are some courses especially at Fokus Daghøjskole where the descriptions could prevent some attendees from actually going to the course. The final obstacle that was pointed out is that of the technical limitations of the different website platforms that are used at Fokus Folkeoplysning. This also includes the fact that the course enrollment system is running in a different system than the actual website.

4.4.3 The current situation

The third and final group of findings are about how the website is currently managed and what they have experienced that the users need from the website.

In general most of the interviewees expressed that the website is secondary as they do not think about it in their daily work - they do however think they should use more time on it but they haven't got this. The result of this is that the website is only updated occasionally. Currently the distribution between users signing up for courses online and users making contact to the office when they want to sign up for courses is about fifty/fifty. The secretary expresses that some of those phoning the office say that they cannot figure out how to do it on the website. Finally it was also pointed out that they get frequent phone calls from course attendees that want to know when and where their next lesson at their course is held.

4.5 Reflections on the method and approach

During the interviews I discovered that there were big differences on how the participants were engaged into the discussion. This is of course expected due to their interest in the project but I did discover that the interview with one participant (Peder Ditlev) gave much more concrete input and inspiration as this participant had been considering what feedback he wanted to give prior to the interview. It could therefore be tempting to suggest that any participant in this kind of interview should do this. A possible drawback of this approach of course could be that the interviewee would take too much control over the conversation and maybe focus too much on small or irrelevant aspects. I therefore think that this depend a lot on the case in mind.

In order to verify the validity of the interview descriptions I asked each interviewee to read the description of their interview and inform me if something were misunderstood. This process only resulted in a minor change that has been incorporated into the description of that interview.

A website could be compared to a shop located on an island [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006]. The shop needs customers in order to earn money. It is therefore necessary to build bridges to the mainland so the customers can get to the shop. If we consider the website as the island then the main land is the search engines, social communities and offline adverts. If there are no references to the website from "the main land" it is not going to be successful. It is therefore important that we consider how people currently gets to the website such that we can maintain and improve this crucial aspect. In this chapter I will focus on the current connections to the website from other online media. This chapter therefore focus on all the aspects in the users, content and context model discussed in section 2 on page 9. In relation to context I am in this chapter however broadening it to also contain other websites that surround the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning.

As mentioned in the introduction the website has been relaunched for the new season during this project. The relaunch made it possible to generate usage statistics for the website by using Google Analytics. The platform used for the old website did not support this. The statistics I therefore describe only accounts for the relaunched website. The data that I use from Google Analytics will be from June 16th to July 9th. It is worth to be aware however that this is not the primary period where people visit the website as it is in the end of the spring season and before the next magazine is sent out. That being said the course enrollment system (DOFO) were updated with courses for the new season around July 1st. A copy of the analytics report used for this chapter is located in appendix B on page 97.

Apart from the statistics Fokus Folkeoplysning have also been utilizing Google Adwords for some time in order to advertise for their website. During one of my first conversations with the manager at Fokus Folkeoplysning I was told that they are paying a company to create and maintain the keywords that Fokus Folkeoplysning uses for Google Adwords. In this relation I were given access to a Google Adwords report that was generated on January 4th.

In the following I will start with a discussion of the use of Google Adwords as this is the most tangible online attempt to attract users to the website. Secondly in section 5.2 on the next page I will present and discuss usage statistics gathered from the relaunched website. And finally in section 5.3 on page 51 I will give a summary of the findings in this chapter.

5.1 Google Adwords

Google Adwords is a product that allow website owners to advertise for their website in the Google search engine. The advertisements are text only and very short. In the search engine the Adwords are shown next to and above the search results as shown in figure 5.1 on the next page.

In order to determine the order of Adwords in the search results a Click Through Rate (CTR) is calculated for each advertisement keyword. The Click Through Rate is the percentage of people clicking the Adword after being exposed to it. It is therefore very important to consider the aspects that influence the CTR as a higher value also mean more traffic to the website. It here important to use more specific keywords like "jogging shoe repair" as too general keywords like "shoes" will get low Click Through Rates because of their popularity. In addition to this a more specific keyword are more likely to address the intended audience. [Redfly Online Marketing, 2010]

It is clear when looking at the Google Adwords report that they have a quite extensive list of keywords which are rather specific. This is of course good in relation to the Click Through Rate. When looking at the statistics it is only about half the active keywords that have a CTR above 1% and about a fourth that have a CTR above 10%. As mentioned earlier a low CTR on general keywords would be expected and it is therefore possible that a rating below 10% could be

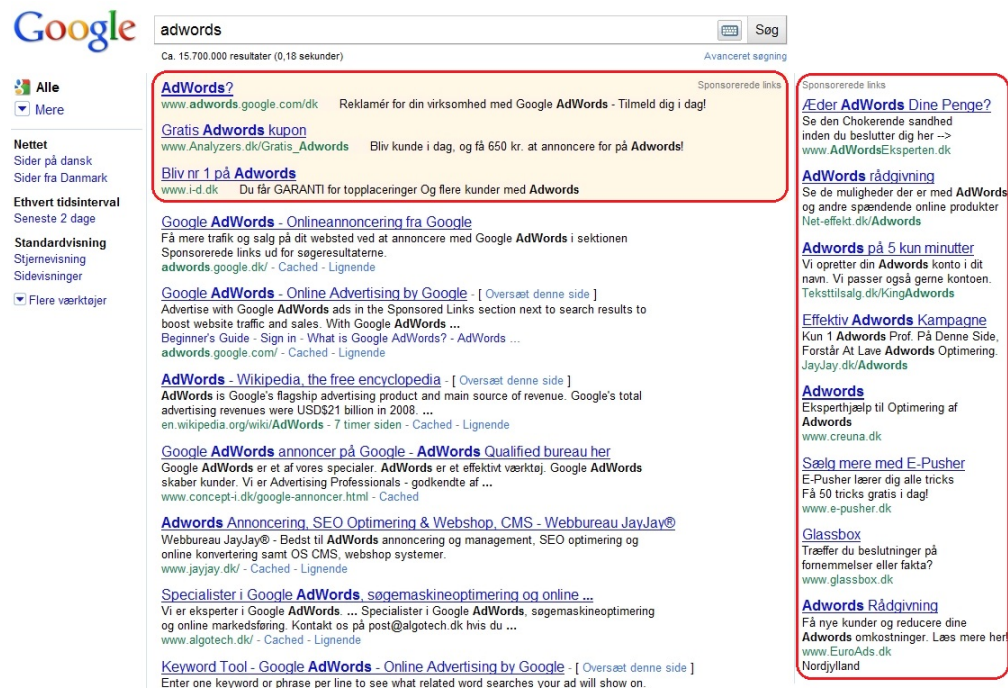


Figure 5.1: Sponsored links when searching for "adwords" on Google

acceptable for these keywords. It is however my impression that many of the keywords are not general. In these cases a low rating could be caused by competition or that users are searching for something else. Finally it could also be that the text used for the Adword does not attract the users.

During my own heuristic evaluation of the website I also spent a little time on investigating how the website is marketed at the Google and I discovered some important issues in relation to the Adwords. The lists of keywords are not updated to reflect the current offers. Before the relaunch of the website it was for instance possible to see links for Fokus Folkeoplysning when searching for "fransk Aalborg" even though such a course were not provided at that time. By having Adwords for such a course Fokus Folkeoplysning spend money on attracting non potential customers and even worse they annoy the users by saying they provide something that they actually do not.

Another issue that I also discovered in the evaluation was that if a user search for a specific course and finds the Adword link for Fokus Folkeoplysning they will only get to the main page of the website. The user therefore have to figure out how they can actually find the course they were searching for. Optimally they would be taken directly to the course they were expecting to find.

5.2 Usage statistics

When looking at the usage statistics gathered for this website it is important to be aware that the statistics only cover a short period at the end of the season and that this amount of data therefore only gives a small glimpse of how the site is being used. That being said there have actually been gathered an acceptable amount of data to look at (934 visitors entered the website in this period).

Google Analytics provide many different information about the visitors of the website and I will present and discuss some of those. It is of course obvious to start with a look at the amount of visits as shown in figure 5.2 on the facing page.

As it can be seen in the graph there is about 30 people that visit the website every day and some days even more. It also seems that the periods with lowest amount of visitors tends to be in the weekends. The most active period is as could be expected occurring at the time where the



Figure 5.2: The amount of visitors pr. day

new courses were made available in the course enrollment system.

When looking at how users actually use the site the first important thing to notice is that almost 35% of the users are "rejected" in the sense that they leave the site after having been exposed to the first page they see at the website. There can be many causes for this but the most relevant ones would either be that the users are not attracted to continue browsing the website or that a too large amount of irrelevant traffic to the site is generated. I think a the "reject-rate" of 35% is acceptable low, this could mean that a large portion of the users are regular customers or at least interested in the offers that is provided at the website.

Another interesting thing to focus on is what pages the visitors are visiting and where they stop browsing the site. It is here worth to mention that the statistics are only running at the main website. There are no statistics from the other websites that Fokus Folkeoplysning administrates or the course enrollment system. This is also something that might have influenced the "reject-rate" because if a user uses the links to some of these external sites at the main page they will be considered as rejected because they did not see any other pages at this website. That being said it is still possible to see that 236 (25%) of the users stop browsing the website when they reach the course enrollment system (aftenskolen). The other sections of the site have much smaller amounts of users that stop browsing when they reach these sections. The information and contact sections have about 7,3% that stop browsing at these pages and daghøjskolen have about 6,3% that stop browsing in this section. It is difficult to use these statistics for very much at the moment because of the small amount of data but it seems that a large portion of the users wants to browse the courses that Fokus Folkeoplysning provides.

When looking at how the users actually get to the website it is clear most come from the search engines. 68% of the users came from a search engine (see figure 5.3). This may be caused by the use of Adwords. The traffic from other websites however seem to be rather low (8%). This number should have been lower as users coming from websites managed by Fokus Folkeoplysning also count in this. It would therefore make sense to consider if there are enough references to the website from other websites.

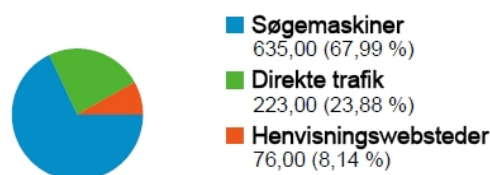


Figure 5.3: Where users visiting the website originate from

5.3 Summary of Findings

During this chapter I have been discussing the use of Google Adwords and some usage statistics from the website. The use of Google Adwords seem to be acceptable although there are some issues that need to be considered. First of all it turned out that many of the keywords used for the Adwords have a low Click Through Rate which maybe could be improved by customizing the Adword text much more depending on the keywords that gave a match. Secondly the list of keywords used for the Adwords are not updated to reflect the courses provided which mean that there are Adwords for courses that do not exist. Finally when a user click on an Adword they

only get to the main page of the website and not to the content that they were searching for.

In the evaluation of the usage statistics it appeared that many of the users are browsing towards the course enrollment system but it was not possible to see how many of the users went for the external websites managed by Fokus Folkeoplysning. It seemed that the rejection rate were low but it might also be the case that this should have been even lower as the users that follow the links to the external websites from the first page they see at the website would count as being rejected. It was also discovered during this evaluation that the majority of the users arrive at the website after having found it in the search engines but almost none came from other external websites. This could be indicating that Fokus Folkeoplysning should focus on getting references to the website from external sites, communities and other places where the potential customers might be.

It has been interesting to shortly pay attention to the data about usage statistics and the use of Adwords for the website but as mentioned a couple of times the period in which the usage statistics were gathered is very short. I think it would be more interesting to look at the statistics at a later time when more data have been gathered. It would also be interesting to combine usage statistics with the other websites that Fokus Folkeoplysning manages and to combine the usage statistics with the Adwords statistics.

During this first part of the report I have used heuristic evaluations, stakeholder analysis and a small evaluation of usage statistics and the use of Google Adwords. In these chapters I strived to attain knowledge about the organization and the background for the website. In the three research chapters I ended up with findings that are the foundation for this chapter. I am not going to present all the findings once again but I will use this chapter to discuss how the findings of each evaluation correlates. The individual summary of findings from the three parts of the research may be found in:

- Heuristic evaluation - section 3.3.3 on page 30
- Stakeholder evaluation - section 4.4 on page 45
- Finding the website - section 5.3 on page 51

One of the findings from the stakeholder analysis was that Fokus Folkeoplysning wants to get more customers to sign up to courses by using the website and thereby limit the amount of phone calls they receive. A secretary pointed out that she had experienced that some customers start the phone conversation by saying that they could not figure out how to do it on the website. During the heuristic evaluations it also became clear that there are issues related to the navigation that could be the cause for this problem. These issues were both related to the structure, design and layout of the main site but also the fact that the other Fokus Folkeoplysning websites and the course enrollment are not seamlessly integrated into the main site. It is therefore clear that there needs to be paid close attention to these issues. In the stakeholder analysis it was also found that most of the interviewees were aware that these factors needs more attention. One final problem however in relation to getting more customers to sign up for courses online is as pointed out by an employee in the stakeholder analysis that it is not all customers that are willing to and have the possibility for doing this online.

Another finding from the stakeholder analysis was that they want to get more customers. In the evaluation of the usage statistics for the website it was discovered that most of the users of the website come from search engines but when they find the website here and follow an Adword they are only directed to the main page and not to the content they were searching for. The result is that the users have to figure out how to find it. The fact that most users come from the search engines and almost none from other websites also indicates that it could be good to focus on how to attract potential customers from other websites and communities.

The problem in relation to solving many of the issues surrounding the website is as stated in the stakeholder analysis that time and money is difficult to find. It is therefore important that additional time spent on the website must earn itself by saving time at other work or by getting more customers. As it is now the employees do not have time for the website and it is therefore something that is secondary in their daily work. The result is as discovered in the heuristic evaluations but also the evaluation of how users get from the search engines to the website that there are content which is not up to date. This also mean that there is not spent time on making additional descriptions of courses or added images and videos to the course presentation. As a solution to these issues an employee suggested in the stakeholder analysis that the task of updating the website should be distributed among the employees. Another employee also suggested that it would be better if the course holders could update the descriptions with pictures and videos. Another suggestion that maybe could make the website get a higher priority in the daily work could be if there were constructed a social network for the course attendees or maybe an e-learning platform. By adding some of these solutions it might even be possible to let the customers take part in solving some of the issues as they could help uploading pictures, videos and comments for their courses and motivate potential customers by doing this.

In general it was pointed out in the stakeholder analysis that Fokus Folkeoplysning need to find out what the focus of the website should be and how this would influence the structure and design of the website. It was for instance pointed out that it was important to figure out what the balance should be between Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole. When looking at the usage statistics it was found that most of the users browse for the course enrollment system (aftenskolen) and it would therefore make sense to focus on Fokus Aftenskole. The problem however is that the statistics do not inform how changes to the website would be able to move the focus in the direction of Fokus Daghøjskole. One of the employees also pointed out that both Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole should be in focus but that it might be good to keep them more separate.

Part II

Developing a new strategy

In this second part of the thesis I will develop my ideas by first looking for inspiration at other websites and secondly by developing the new strategy that Fokus Folkeoplysning can use.

Benchmarking is the process of measuring the user experience of one product against another. In this context benchmarking involves systematic identification, evaluation and comparison of information architecture features of websites. These comparisons can be made between different versions of the same website (before-and-after benchmarking) or as a benchmark of different websites (competitive benchmarking). [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006, p. 244].

There are different ways in which a benchmark can be performed. It could be held as a quantitative study in a controlled environment of a usability lab where end users evaluate different criteria or it could be done as a qualitative study as an expert review [u sentric, 2010] [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006, p. 244].

In the following I have decided to conduct a qualitative expert review with both a before-and-after benchmark and a competitive benchmark. The goal of these evaluations is to find good ideas that can be used on the final website and to become aware of things that does not work. I will start out with the before-and-after benchmark in order to get inspiration from the website in question before moving on to the websites of competitors.

7.1 Before-and-after benchmarking

According to the information architecture book a before-and-after benchmark could be used to measure improvements such as [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006, p. 245]:

- *How much did the intranet redesign reduce our employees' average time finding core documents*
- *Has the website redesign improved our customers' ability to find the products they need?*
- *Which aspects of our redesign have had a negative impact on user efficiency of effectiveness?*

In this evaluation I will focus on the last two aspects. As mentioned a couple of times the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning was relaunched during this project. I therefore need to consider the relaunched website in order see how it has improved the usability and if there are aspects that have had a negative impact.

In addition to the relaunched website, Fokus Folkeoplysning once asked a graphical designer to make a suggestion for how the website design. I will start the benchmark by looking at this proposal as it was made before the relaunch and because I believe some of the ideas in the relaunched website is based on this. The proposed design is shown in figure 7.1.



Figure 7.1: The redesign of the main page as suggested by a graphical designer.

The first thing that I realize about this proposal is the very different approach to what content is shown on the main page. The new content provide entrances for the different offers by addressing the users' interests and emotions by the use of both text and images. It now seems that the two images in the top of the page is made to give much more direct entrances to the offers of Fokus Aftenskole but the text in these images might not cover all of these offers and these labels might therefore need to be reconsidered. Another issue in this proposal is that there haven't been done anything to solve the issue of the difference between Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole. Some of the offers from daghøjskolen is shown at the main page but this is not all of them, and the users looking for these offers need to know that they should look for them in the menu below the section of "daghøjskolen". I do however think that this might be solved by making more clear entrances for the offers of both Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole at the main page where the focus would not be on these names but on the offers that are provided below each of them. I like the idea of having multiple "boxes" with content at the main page and these could be used for showing the different offers at both Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole. The main issue will however still be to find out how to present all the offers that Fokus Folkeoplysning have in such a little space.

7.1.1 The relaunched website of Fokus Folkeoplysning

In this section I will just touch upon the different improvements that I have noticed about the relaunched website and describe the ideas that I find useful in future changes to the website. I will however not do a thorough assessment of the relaunched site by referring to all the findings in the heuristic evaluation.



Figure 7.2: The main page of the relaunched website

The biggest change when looking at the website is the main page as illustrated in figure 7.2. At this page the focus has changed so there are entrances to many of the different offers that Fokus Folkeoplysning provides at Fokus Aftenskole directly at the main page. First of all it is worth noticing that the center of the page contain images with labels that refer to different categories of the course enrollment and some of the external offers. I think this idea of presenting direct entrances to the offers is good as it removes some of the problem related to how the users can find the offers they are looking for without having to consider what the difference is between Fokus

Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole. It is also worth to notice the links to the external websites that belong to projects managed by Fokus Folkeoplysning as they have now been presented by their logos in the left side of the page such that it is easy to get directly to these from the main page. I think the relaunched main page provide better entrances to the different offers although there still are some small minor issues such as links to offers in the center of the page that are not going directly to the content.

When looking at the layout of the new relaunched website it is clear that it is inspired by the proposal from the graphical designer as the header in the top and the black background is used in both solutions. There are however some differences as the length of the global navigation menu in this solution is much longer and not justified to the right edge. This is of course caused by the additional menu entries, the font and the horizontal size of the page. The use of colors is balanced and the green color that were also used at the old website is used for the header. It is however an issue that the green background in the header is making the small letters in the logo blurred. At other pages that have local navigation it is also worth noticing that this local navigation have become much more visible and that it now utilizes sub menu entries (see figure 7.3). This is good as this makes it possible to divide the content much more. It is however still an issue at some pages that they contain way too much text.

When looking at the "info" section in the global navigation it is clear that some changes have been made to this. First of all they have created a part of this section in which they describe the visions and values that Fokus Folkeoplysning have as shown in figure 7.3. They have also made a menu entry in which customers can find all the practical information and terms that apply for customers. I think it is good that this content have been made available at the website as this could make people feel much more interested in becoming customers as they can relate to the visions and because they can find the terms. It is however still important that people can find the terms in relation to the course enrollment as this is where it could be necessary for the user to review.



Figure 7.3: The info page about the visions of Fokus Folkeoplysning

The global navigation entry for Fokus Aftenskole has also been changed such that it puts the content of the course enrollment system in an iFrame in the main site as shown in figure 7.4 on the following page. This is certainly an improvement as this provide the users with the possibility to stay at the main site with all of the options there while getting access to the course enrollment system. It does however not fully solve the issues related to the difference between the two systems as it is clear that the course enrollment is using a different layout than the main site

and still has a text only visual appearance. Another interesting thing is that the presentation of the course categories have been changed to a tree-like structure where categories have become more specialized. But this tree like structure contain many entries and no graphics which makes it look boring and to some extent incomprehensible.



Figure 7.4: The page for Fokus Aftenskole in the relaunched website

When looking at the section related to daghøjskolen it is also clear that some changes have happened as the presentation of at least some of the courses have been divided into smaller chunks where people can read about specific topics related to that course as shown in figure 7.5 for one of the courses. This of course influences the length of the pages but it still seems to be a problem that some of the descriptions are quite long and that there are no visual headlines at some of these pages. I find that it is good that the new layout provides sections in which people can read about the different aspects related to each course as long as this is done for all the courses and that it is presented in a comprehensible way.



Figure 7.5: One of the presentations of a course at daghøjskolen in the relaunched website

7.2 Competitive benchmarking

As human beings the process of borrowing ideas from others are quite natural, it is a part of our competitive advantage. After all if we all needed to invent the wheel on our own most of us would still be walking to work. It is however important to be careful about what ideas we borrow from others - we could risk borrowing a bad idea. [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006, p. 245]

In this evaluation I will focus on two different competitors. The first is FO-Aarhus that uses the same systems for their website as Fokus Folkeoplysning. The other one is AOF that is a nationwide organization that is known to many people in Denmark for providing courses.

7.2.1 FO-Aarhus

As mentioned FO-Aarhus uses the same systems for their website www.fo-aarhus.dk and it is therefore quite relevant to see how they have managed to use these systems and how they eventually have solved some of the issues that Fokus Folkeoplysning deals with.

When looking at the main page as shown in figure 7.6 the first thing I noticed is that they have made some boxes in the top of the page called "se også" in which they have links to external websites that they are managing or just related to. It is therefore clear that they have decided that their main page should focus primarily on their course offerings at "aftenskolen" while the other offers such as "daghøjskolen" is linked to in a way where it might be more clear to the users that these are external links.



Figure 7.6: The main page of FO-Aarhus

Another interesting thing is that they have integrated the course enrollment system into their website such that it does not utilize an iFrame but instead is integrated into the main website. The result of this is that it does not appear as an external system and that it is possible for them to create direct links to categories or specific courses from other pages at the website. This is something that is currently being tested at Fokus Folkeoplysning but this is only done at a separate "test" page.

Another thing I noticed is the way they have made references from their magazine to the website. I found it quite interesting that they have decided to present short links (URL's) for each main category in the magazine (see example in figure 7.7 on the next page). By doing this the customers can be presented with a tailored page that show information that they might be interested in further exploring or reading.



Figure 7.7: An example from the magazine of FO-Aarhus where they have made links to category pages at their website.

7.2.2 AOF

AOF is as mentioned quite a big competitor that many people in Denmark know provides courses just like Fokus Folkeoplysning. AOF is a successful nationwide company and it is therefore quite relevant to look at their website www.aof.dk. When looking at the main website it is clear that it focus on general courses like those aftenskolen does at Fokus Folkeoplysning but they have a link in their "om aof" page to an external website of AOF in which it is possible to see that they also run something similar to daghøjskolen at Fokus Folkeoplysning. It is interesting that they have made this separation of daghøjskolen from aftenskolen and that this information initially appears to be hidden. However once a user have selected what area he or she wants to find courses from some of these local websites actually present these offers alongside their normal courses by for instance creating a category called "længere forløb" - this is the case at www.nord.aof.dk.



Figure 7.8: The main page of aof.dk

When looking at the main page of aof.dk as shown in figure 7.8 there is not presented very

much content, it is just briefly explained that they offer a specific amount of courses, lectures and experiences. The good thing about this approach is that it is easy to get a quick overview and that the user can quickly continue selecting courses, region or maybe browse something entirely different.

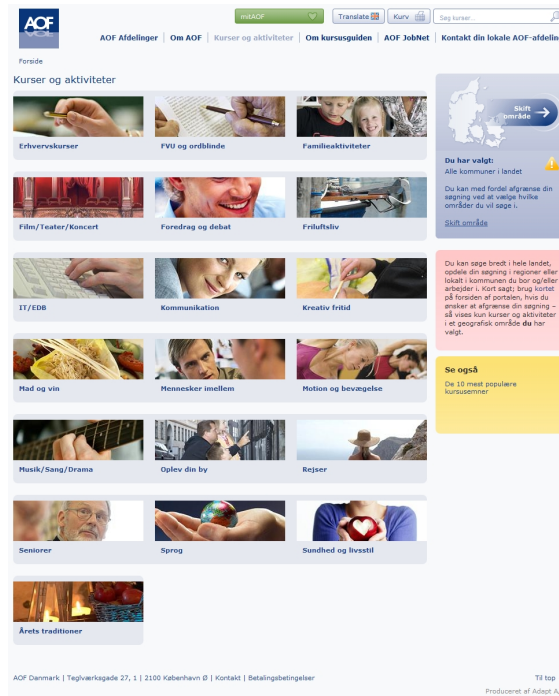


Figure 7.9: The course and activities page of aof.dk

Once a user decide to browse for courses he or she is presented with a wide range of categories as shown in figure 7.9. Most of the categories are divided into other categories and therefore allow users to find their courses by selecting more and more specifically what they want to find. Another good thing about these pages is that the category buttons also show images that assist the label of the categories and also makes sure that these pages have a good graphical presentation that encourages the users to explore the categories.

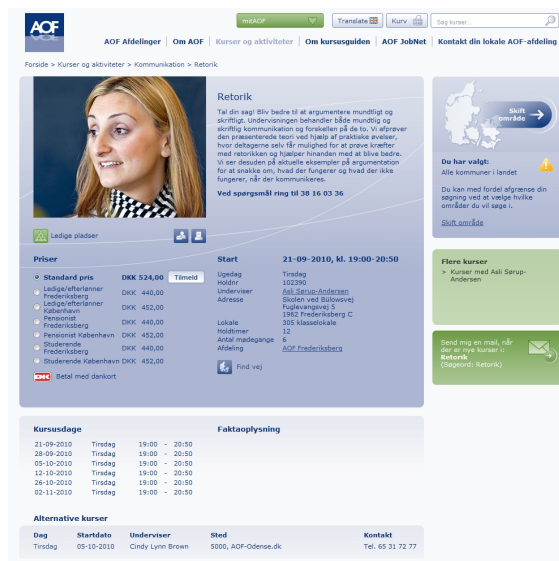


Figure 7.10: A course description and enrollment page of aof.dk

At the course description pages as shown in figure 7.10 it is also clear that they have been fully

integrated into the page layout. They are presented at a colored background with descriptions, images and prices for joining the course. The good thing about this presentation is that it is seamlessly integrated into the website in a discrete way.

In general the website of AOF has a simple design and structure to navigate. The design looks professional and looks like something that could be used on any website representing a professional company. The downside of this approach however is that it looks too general and does not stand out as something different where they are not just providing what everyone else does. If one wants to be remembered it is not enough just to have professional design it is important to stand out as something different than all the others.

In the former chapters of the thesis I have used different approaches to get knowledge which could be used for the construction of a new strategy for the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning. In the following I will describe my proposal for the new strategy by developing my ideas and understanding of the findings. It is here important to find new ideas that can be used for solving the issues and consider how realistic they are.

In order to get this process started I will start the definition of the strategy with a broad perspective that goes beyond the website by discussing in relation to the visions and values that Fokus Folkeoplysning have defined. And then I will define how this overall strategy influences the website.

8.1 The overall strategy

As Fokus Folkeoplysning wants to get more customers the main issue is how to attract potential customers. It is therefore very important to consider how these potential customers notice and perceive the attempts to attract them. As there are many other players on the market that tries to provide some of the same offers and as people are flooded with offers and advertisements it is very important to stand out and differentiate from the competitors.

When looking at the values that Fokus Folkeoplysning have defined it is clear that they want to "move" people both physically and mentally. In order to move people mentally they want to provide offers that allow self reflection and challenges the opinions that people have. When looking at the current offers it is clear that there are many traditional courses and many offbeat course courses where some for instance are inspired by ancient traditions from the east. In the visions they point out that they are not afraid to "walk against the current". All these values and the offbeat offers seem to have something in common with the diversity that were seen in the youth revolution ('68 generation) where people were exploring in many (at the time) offbeat directions such as the hippie culture, feminism and environmentalism.

This similarity have made me think that it might be interesting to use some inspiration from the youth revolution on how to stand out and appear different than other players at the market. In particular I am thinking about the idea of arranging happenings. There are many of the courses both at Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole that could be used as a foundation for happenings and many people would probably find it interesting and funny to take part in a happening. By using this idea of happenings it is possible to stand out and if it is planned and executed correctly it will also be noticed by potential customers either on the street or through the media.

Ideas for happenings will of course need to be discussed in relation to the individual courses but a few examples could be that attendees at a course on painting would be asked to create posters that illustrate "being moved". These posters could then be used for advertisements around the city. It could also be bigger events inspired by the "knitaplease.com" events where people decorate a part of a town by covering artifacts with knitted cloth as exemplified in figure 8.1(a) and 8.1(b) on the next page. It could also be happenings that are attempts to beat records where for instance many people would join at a central location in the town all performing some sort of exercise.

Another idea for happenings could be the rather new concept of flash mobs where a large group of people suddenly assembles in a public space to perform an unusual act for a short time and then disperse [Wikipedia, 2010b]. These events are usually planed by the use of new media such as SMS messages, Facebook and viral e-mails. An example of these events could be a pillow fight on the street as shown in figure 8.2 on the following page. It could for instance



(a) A bus covered by knitted cloth[knitaplease.com, 2008]



(b) A bike covered by knitted cloth [Hayes, 2010]

Figure 8.1: Two examples of happenings where objects have been covered by knitted cloth

be imagined that a group of people for a period would plan to conduct a session of Tai Chi in the free lane on "Limfjordsbroen" once a day when the bridge opens for ship traffic. Another idea could be inspired by how hippies in the youth revolution managed to put up small hearts with small statements like "make love not war". The idea should then be to put up posters at various locations in the city with for instance some of the keywords that Fokus Folkeoplysning uses in their visions and other relations. In general it is a question about finding the events or happenings that catch peoples attention and that people find interesting to be a part of.

**Figure 8.2:** A pillow fight flash mob [BuenosTours, 2006]

8.2 The website

As the overall strategy is now defined it is now a question about finding out how the website should be constructed such that it supports the overall strategy.

During the heuristic evaluations it was found that there were issues related to the visual presentation of the website. It is important to establish a good balance between textual and graphical content such that the pages are easy to comprehend for the users. It is also important

that the content at the different pages are divided into smaller chunks either by visually clear headlines or by dividing the text into sub-pages. In order to make the website stand out it is also important to consider ways to create a graphical layout and representation that stands out. In this relation it could be worth considering the use of texture and pictures that emphasizes that Fokus Folkeoplysning wants to be different. It could for instance be worth considering untraditional approaches where content elements and backgrounds looks like they have been painted or like different kinds of materials such as knitted cloth, brick-walls, pavements and many others. But when using these untraditional effects it is still important to make the graphical representation look professional otherwise this idea will fail. In this relation it could be worth asking a graphical designer to play with these ideas. It could be a little expensive to get this done but it is however a one time task to do most of this work and therefore not an ongoing expense.

8.2.1 Happenings, Courses & Category Pages

In relation to the comparison with the website of FO-Århus it was discovered that they used links to category pages in their magazine. I think this is an idea that could be taken advantage of at this website. The idea should then be that a category page is created for each group of courses at Fokus Aftenskole like "musik & sang" and "velvære & fordybelse". These pages should then contain links to the actual courses but they should also contain other inspirational content that motivate the users. In this respect it would make sense to present articles, videos, images and comments about the courses in this category but also to present happenings that are related to the category. In order to attract customers to these category pages it is important that simple links (URLs) are created for these pages that then could be presented in the magazine. In the magazine it also important to inform the readers that they can find much more information, inspiration, pictures, articles and so on at the category pages as this could make the readers interesting in reading more at the website instead of just signing up for a course by phone.

In relation to the actual presentation of the courses it was discovered in the evaluation that there were issues related to the fact that the course enrollment is a separate system. It is however possible to make a much tighter integration of the course enrollment into the website where content of the course enrollment system is integrated into the website without the use of an iFrame. When this is done it is possible to create more direct links to specific pages in the course enrollment system without leaving the main website. During a conversation with a supporter from the creators of the course enrollment system (DOFO) I also found that using this approach allowed to customize the presentation of courses by the use of CSS¹ and that the system allowed to attach pictures to each course that then would be displayed at the course description pages. The good thing about making this integration is that it would be possible to create direct links from the category pages to the courses of a specific category and not just to the top of the course enrollment system.

Another important thing to consider is the categorization of the courses as it was found during the heuristic evaluations that some of the categories contained other courses than what the users were expecting. I think it would be good to conduct a small evaluation of the categories to find more appropriate categories. The developed categories should also remain persistent for the upcoming seasons in order to avoid having to create new category pages for each season. A way to conduct this study could be to ask 3-5 customers to perform a collaborative card-sorting session where all the cards contain names of the courses.

Another issue that was discovered during the evaluations was that the courses remain in the course enrollment even if they are full or have expired. I think it would be better if it was possible to either hide these course or make it more clear that these are not possible to subscribe anymore. It could be that it would be better if customers could choose whether or not to show these courses. In my own evaluation I found that there was attribute called "tilmeldningsfrist" for the courses that are not defined. It might be that defining this attribute would hide the course when this date have be reached but I am not sure about that. This is an issue that need to be considered and maybe solved in collaboration with the creators of the course enrollment system DOFO. It is however also important to be aware that implementing this change could result in the course enrollment system being empty in the end of the seasons which may not be desired.

¹CSS: is a common used file for websites that can define the style and layout of all the content at websites

Maybe the best option would be to somehow visually indicate which courses are available for subscription.

It is important to consider how to attract customers to the courses and the website in general. It is in many situations seen that the use of viral marketing can be effective because of the word of mouth effect between people that know each others. According to Wikipedia there are currently 2,2 million users of Facebook in Denmark which makes Denmark the country that have the highest amount of users on Facebook compared to the number of citizens [Wikipedia, 2010a]. It would therefore be worth considering to use Facebook for attracting customers using the effects of word of mouth between friends on Facebook. In this relation it would be a good idea to focus on both courses and especially happenings. It should be an option for visitors on the website to "share" or "like" the presentation of courses and happenings on Facebook as this could be seen by other potential customers which in turn feels that they have been recommended by a friend to visit the website of Fokus Folkeoplysning. It would also be a good idea to create a Facebook fan-page for Fokus Folkeoplysning as this could be a very good way to share news with customers and also tell them about new happenings that they in turn could recommend their friends to read about.

In general it is very important to focus on the idea of happenings as this is a very effective way to stand out and get attention. It is therefore important also to make sure people are aware of the different happenings. One way is as mentioned the use of word of mouth effects through Facebook but it should also be in focus through all the other media such as the magazine, the press and the use of Google Adwords.

In relation to the use of Google Adwords it is also important to be aware that this is something that need to be continuously updated to reflect the content of the website. It was during the research discovered that there were Adword matches for courses that were not currently offered. It would therefore make sense to update the use of Adwords in the beginning of each season to make it reflect the current offers in order to avoid confusing and to attract the correct potential customers.

8.2.2 Structure and Organization of the website

It was found during the heuristic evaluations that it was difficult to navigate back from the external websites to the main website. It is fine that there are these external websites for some of the offers but it might be worth considering the connections to the main website. It is important to make it clear that they belong to Fokus Folkeoplysning and that it is possible to get to the main website if a user wants to. Maybe there should just be a more direct link from any page of these websites to the main website. Apart from this another issue is that Fokus Folkeoplysning have so many different offers that they need to present at the website. The result is that the global navigation menu becomes incomprehensible due to the number of entries. It is in my opinion a question about limiting the number of overall categories that cover the content both from daghøjskolen and aftenskolen. That being said it is of course not the intention to limit the focus on some of these many offers - it is just a question about finding another way to do it.

In this relation I find it important to use the main page for presenting entrances to the many different offers and to support the global navigation. Once again it is important that the main page stands out both in terms of the visual presentation but also by showing the multifarious activities that Fokus Folkeoplysning provides. It is therefore an issue that we want to show as many aspects as possible but also to keep the page comprehensible. I do however think that this is just a question about establishing a balance by making a visual design that supports showing overall sections of the site and show content from each of these sections. I would therefore suggest that the main page in some sense consist of boxes that represent individual sections of the site. It is of course clear that these boxes should be visible and give a quick overview of the content of each section and the site in general. The boxes could be named: "kurser", "uddannelser", "jobafklaring & aktivering" and "Se også". In order to show the content of each section of the site there could for instance still be used the idea of showing course categories with images in the section related to Fokus Aftenskole. As we want to show the diversity of Fokus Folkeoplysning it is important that the main page show this by for instance presenting entrances to some of the happenings in a visual news feed. It could also be that there should be references to some of the happenings in the boxes but it is a question about keeping the

page comprehensible and not just cluttering it up with all the content that is available. To illustrate this idea of having boxes at the main page I have created a simple wireframe as shown in figure 8.3. It is here worth to mention that this is not a final solution - it needs further considerations in relation to the actual design of the website. I also think that it might be a good idea to reconsider the sizes of the boxes and maybe make the "kurser og aktiviteter" box larger than the others. It could also be that there should be a dedicated area for news at the website.

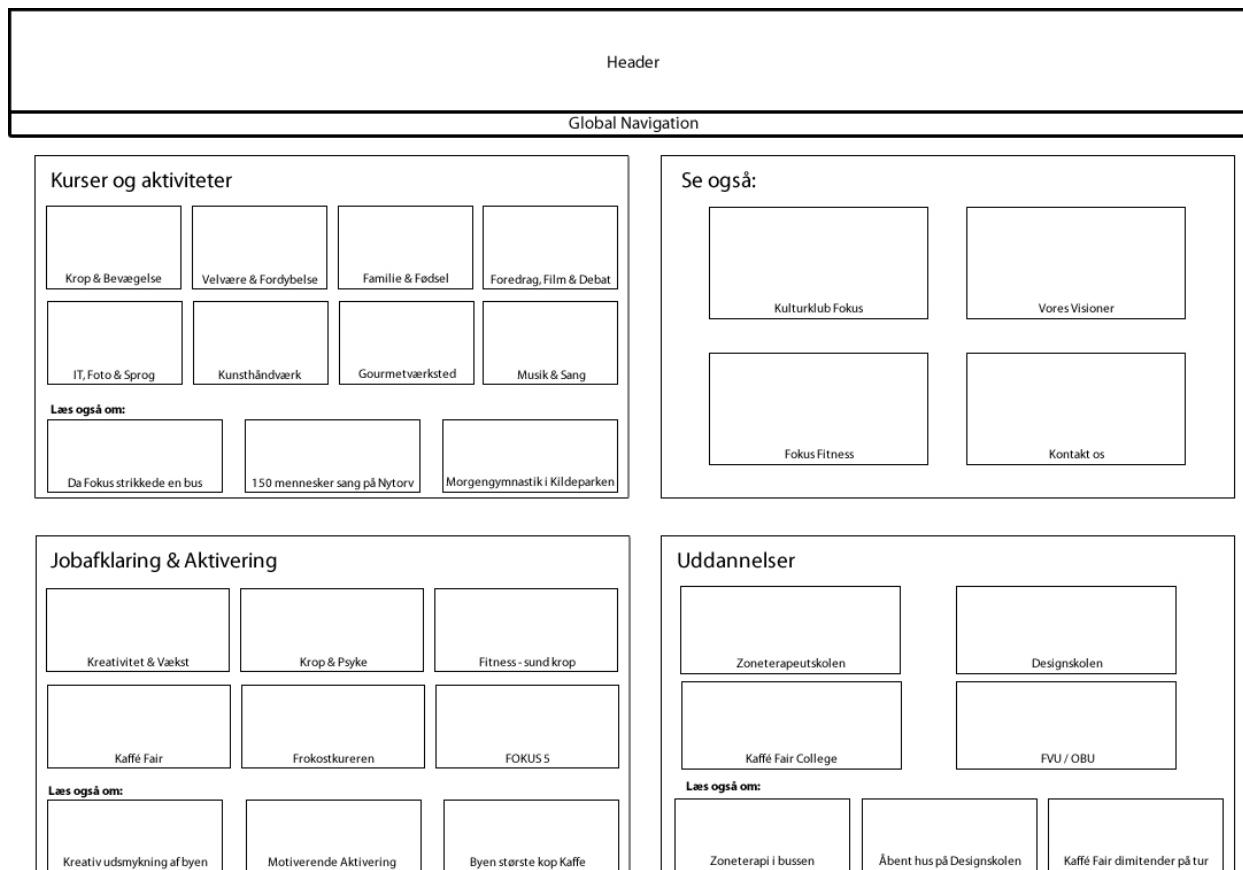


Figure 8.3: A simple wireframe illustrating how entrances at the main page could be grouped

8.2.3 Additional Options

Apart from the above tangible findings I were also presented with some much more extensive suggestions in a stakeholder interview. It was here suggested that a community like platform should be build at the website. This platform should make it possible for course holders and attendees to have online private discussions, presentations of their accomplishments, pictures and so on. Constructing such a solution could maybe strengthen the social network for some of the participants which in particular could be relevant for some of those following courses at Fokus Daghøjskole. It was also suggested that a platform for e-learning could be established such that courses could be held for customers across the country and not just in Aalborg.

As this project has primarily been focus on how to improve the website as it is now and how to get more customers it has not really been within scope to focus very much on these suggestions. It could be interesting to look at these suggestions but doing this will require another quite extensive research on the benefits, how to construct these and how they would actually be used in the individual courses and by the course attendees in their spare time.

8.3 Realizing the ideas

As mentioned a couple of time a big issue in relation to creating a new website is how to fund the changes and find time to maintain it. The biggest suggestion in my strategy probably is the idea of arranging happenings. This idea of course require some planning but the actual work in this relation is possible to do as a part of the many courses held at both Fokus Daghøjskole and Fokus Aftenskole. Most course attendees might even find it quite motivating to be a part of these events and those at Fokus Daghøjskole might even find it good to feel that they are part of something that will be noticed and is useful.

The idea of arranging these happenings of course need to be supported by the magazine and the website. The biggest problem in this relation is of course how to improve the website and fund the changes. I do however think that if the happenings are executed successfully and supported by the use of the website, Facebook and the press it will give a boost in the attention towards Fokus Folkeoplysning that will hopefully give an increase in the number of people wanting to join courses.

Finally it is worth to mention that if the idea of focusing on happenings or flash mobs is not appreciated it is possible to take advantage of the many other suggestions which I believe will also improve the situation on their own.

The full strategy is presented in the former chapter from page 71. Below I will shortly outline the main points of the strategy:

Arrange happenings It is important to focus on how to attract attention towards Fokus Folkeoplysning. A good way to do this is by organizing happenings or activities that will be noticed by the press and make people talk about Fokus Folkeoplysning.

Improve the visual representation of the website Make sure it is easy to comprehend the content at the website and make it stand out as something different. For instance consider if it is possible to use untraditional graphics for the content elements. E.g. should it be painted or look like it is knitted?

Create Category Pages A category page should present courses, pictures and articles but also presentations of the happenings that have been arranged.

References from the magazine It is important that the magazine contain references to the content that are present at the website. This could be done by having direct links to the category pages at the website and by mentioning that the reader can find more pictures, articles and presentations of the happenings and courses at the website.

Utilize Facebook A good way to attract potential customers is by the use the worth of mouth effect. It should be possible for customers to share articles, happenings and courses that they find at the website with their Facebook friends.

Update Google Adwords It is important that the use of Google Adwords reflect the current offers in order to attract the correct potential customers. The Google Adword keywords should therefore be updated at every season to reflect the current offers.

Strengthen the relation between the websites Make sure that it is visible at the different websites that they are part of Fokus Folkeoplysning. Provide visible links that return to the main website.

Reduce the number of entries in the global navigation The main menu contain many entries and it might be difficult to understand what some of the entries cover. Present only those that really are the top-level entrances.

Have more direct entrances to the content at the main page In order to support the global navigation it is important that there are entrances to the different offers that Fokus Folkeoplysning provides from the main page. By providing more direct links to the offers the users might much quicker be able to realize what part of the website they want to visit.

Part III

Discussion & Conclusion

In this last part of the thesis I will probe for an answer to the problem statement.

The overall idea behind the strategy that I proposed is to find a way that makes Fokus Folkeoplysning stand out, attract attention in a way that is different from the competitors. In order to accomplish this there need to be focus on both the visions of the organization, how willingly they are to be different and of course the user experience.

In order to build up a good motivating user experience it is required to be aware of both users, content and context. I have therefore decided to use this model as a structure for the discussion.

10.1 Users

When looking at how to attract the potential customers it is important to think beyond the website - we need to know what attracts them. In this relation it is worth paying attention to some of the theory about learning as this also focus on the issue of how to motivate people.

There are many different things that can motivate people. When looking at how people acquire knowledge it is often seen that it does not happen as a smooth progressive process. It is usually triggered by some sort of disjuncture between the experiences or knowledge that a person already have and some new knowledge. It is here interesting that disturbances, challenges and mismatches appeal equally to emotions and motivation as it does to insight and comprehension. [Illeris, 2006, p. 102-104]. In this relation I have paid attention to another interesting aspect about how people perceive a phenomenon as described in the following danish quotation:

"På den ene side er den fiktive tekst, som ordets betydning angiver: indbildt, opfunden, opdigtet; den vedrører ikke-virkelige forhold. På den anden side vækker den fiktive tekst i særlig grad vores "indre billeder", som i sig selv er komplicerede blandinger af erfaringer, drømme, længsler og håb, der udspringer af virkeligheden - læserens omverden. Fiktion har evnen til at holde læseren/seeren fast, fange hans/hendes opmærksomhed, skabe undren, medleven, meddigtning, samt formidle erkendelser, indsigter og sammenhænge. Den berører ikke bare forstanden, men sætter sig spor i hele kroppen. Der er tale om en sanselig erkendelsesproces, som foregår i billeder snarere end i begreber - en æstetisk kommunikation."

[Bang, 2007]

This is what the strategy that I proposed deals with. The idea behind the different events, happenings or flash mobs is to involve the potential customers by catching their attention, make them wonder, touch their emotions, beliefs and insights. There are many different ways to do this but an interesting research in this relation is the idea of intelligences as originally proposed by Howard Gardner. I believe the idea of the intelligences could be an interesting inspiration for how to address the different senses or "intelligences". It is afterall inspiring and motivating for people to be challenged on these intelligences. The intelligences that Howard proposed includes [Illeris, 2006, p. 189-190]:

- Musical intelligence
- Body-kinesthetic intelligence (motion, bodily)
- logical-mathematical intelligence
- Linguistic intelligence
- Spatial intelligence
- Interpersonal intelligence (understanding of contact with others)

- Intrapersonal intelligence (understanding of and contact with one self)
- Naturalistic intelligence (understanding of and contact with the nature)
- Spiritual intelligence (existential consciousness)

When looking at the strategy that I proposed it was also my idea that the happenings that Fokus Folkeoplysning should arrange should be different to address different people. I therefore find the above research quite interesting as the idea of the intelligences is useful for inspiration for which activities to arrange. Furthermore it is also my impression that the above intelligences is quite good at covering the variety of courses that Fokus Folkeoplysning provides.

10.2 Context

Apart from the users it is also important to be aware of the context that the strategy operates within. The context in this relation both includes the context of the organization but also the context that the users navigate.

As mentioned a couple of times the main idea in the strategy I proposed is to go beyond the website. By doing this I am trying to develop the overall strategies and visions of the organization. This process is as mentioned in the introduction very important in relation to the guideline from Creuna about the importance of incorporating the web strategies into the business strategies [Creuna, 2009, p. 11]. It is of course difficult for an "outsider" to suggest changes to the overall strategy of an organization. It really require good arguments to convince decision makers that the changes are worth spending resources at implementing. I do however still think that it is an important step as the alternative would just be to adapt the website to the organization. If we do not try to develop both business and web strategies in an attempt to construct a coherent strategy, it is my belief that the potentials for improvements are not fully explored.

The proposed strategy suggest changes to how Fokus Folkeoplysning should attract customers by using a much more energetic driving force. They should arrange events in the city and thereby use the context that the users navigate. This is a big change but the important thing is that it is possible to realize within the context and economy of the courses that Fokus Folkeoplysning already have - it just require good planning.

Another important part in the proposed strategy is that the events or happenings that Fokus Folkeoplysning arranges should be supported by a broad and coherent marketing approach through different media like Facebook, the website, the magazine and the press. It is here important that the focus in this relation always is to give a coherent image of Fokus Folkeoplysning as a different and multifarious organization that wants to address the motivation, senses and intelligences at their customers. In order to do this it is important to be aware of the different possibilities, representation, audiences and how the users will perceive these different media. It is my impression that by using these many different media it is possible to address the many potential customers. It might even be that it is easier for Fokus Folkeoplysning by using this strategy to attract more younger people as many of them uses Facebook on a regular base and probably would be very interesting in taking part in the happenings when these are announced and planned at Facebook.

10.3 Content

One thing is to understand what motivates the users, what the organization wants to achieve and the context in which it all takes place but we also need to have some content to provide.

In this relation the strategy is focused primarily at the presentation of the events, happenings and flash mobs that Fokus Folkeoplysning could arrange. The important thing in this relation is to understand that the purpose behind all of these presentations are to motivate potential customers to visit the website. The overall idea here is to get people to use the website for signing up for courses but it is here important not to be too aggressive on this fact.

The primary focus on the presentation of events, happenings and flash mobs needs to be at the website. The idea here is as mentioned in the strategy that users should want to read more

about the events and other events that they hear about through other media. It is therefore important that we use the other media to direct the potential customers toward the website. In the magazine the strategy propose that there should be links to different sections of the website but in general it is important to make the magazine contain teasers that encourage the potential customers to visit the website for full presentation of both courses and the events.

As discussed earlier one of the things that motivate people is to get challenged and in this relation it could be interesting to consider providing challenges for the potential customers at the website. These challenges could be ranging from statements that challenges the mind or in the other end of the scale there could be exercises that people could solve on the website eventually to win a free course.

10.3.1 The additional ideas

During the stakeholder interviews I was presented with the idea of constructing a community at the website and the idea of arranging e-learning courses. I think these ideas could fit perfectly into the strategy and the ideas about motivation. Both of the ideas could make people use the website on a much more regular base if they are successfully implemented. These ideas could be very interesting to explore further but this would require a whole new study specifically about these ideas. It is important to find out exactly how these should be implemented and what the benefits of doing this would actually be compared to the costs of implementing and maintaining this functionality.

As stated in the introduction in section 1.3 on page 4 the problem statement for this report is:

How can Fokus Folkeoplysning improve their web strategies to attract more customers?

To answer this question I have conducted research of different aspects within the context, content users model proposed in the Information Architecture book [Morville and Rosenfeld, 2006]. Based on this research, considerations about the competitors and knowledge about how to attract peoples attention in general I was able to construct a new strategy for Fokus Folkeoplysning.

The main discovery during this process was that it is not enough just to focus on the strategies behind the website it is also necessary to go beyond the website and develop the business strategies. It is not always necessary to perform major changes to the business strategy but it is important to be aware that there might be unexplored potentials to consider in relation to how the web strategies interplay with business strategies. The strategy that I have proposed goes beyond the website in the sense that it has suggestions for how Fokus Folkeoplysning as a whole can attract customers and direct them towards the website by using many different media and approaches. The most important in this relation is that Fokus Folkeoplysning need to focus on how they can motivate their potential customers.

The answer to the problem formulation is that they need to stand out and be different (compared to the competitors). To do this the strategy propose that they arrange events, happenings, flash mobs and so on in the context of the city as this will be noticed by many different people. It is important in this relation that there are events, happenings or flash mobs that address the different intelligences¹ at the users in order to motivate the different audiences that Fokus Folkeoplysning wants to address.

In order to support this overall strategy change it is important to establish a "connection" between the marketing through all the different media such as the magazine, the website, Facebook and the press. The important thing here is to motivate the potential customers into visiting the website to read more about Fokus Folkeoplysning, the courses and the "alternative" events. It is therefore also important that the website contain a lot content that the potential customers can explore in order to get inspired and motivated. The strategy therefore also focus on suggestions for how the website should be organized in a way that support this. The main point here was that there should be much more direct entrances to the different sections of the website from the main page. Another point of focus is the graphical representation at the website which need to be improved in a way that stands out and motivate the users. The effect of all this should hopefully be that the customers are motivated into taking part in the many activities by joining the courses that Fokus Folkeoplysning provides.

In the introduction I mentioned a famous quotation by Steve Krug: "Dont make me think!". It is however funny that I now am able to suggest the opposite. Fokus Folkeoplysning need to **make people think**, wonder, puzzle, create and make them motivated in order to attract more customers.

¹intelligences: see the discussion about users in section 10.1 on page 83

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Part IV

Appendix

This part of the thesis contain additional materials that have not been included in the main part of the report.

Even though the evaluation was primarily focused on the main website some of the evaluators progressed out to some of the external websites that is also maintained by Fokus Folkeoplysning. The following issues are specifically about the website of Fokus Fitness where two of the evaluators spent a little time before I told to them to move back to the main website. Even though this specific website is not in my focus during this project I have decided to present them here anyways although I will not discuss which guidelines they are related to and how serious they are. It is therefore important to understand that these findings does not represent a full evaluation of that website.

- **Cannot find the terms for signing up** - discovered in evaluation 5

This issue is related to the issue also present on the main website where users are not able to find the terms that they have to agree when signing up. For a fitness club this issue might be even more relevant as this is something that users know they usually have to read and accept when joining these clubs as some of them have had a reputation of binding customers to certain requirements. E.g. users want to know how and when they can unsubscribe.

- **Bad formulation of text** - discovered in evaluation 5

On the main page of Fokus Fitness there is the text "priser fra kun 155,00 pr. måned". This sentence is badly formulated and does not appear in way that is usually seen in other advertisements when announcing the price. It could be an idea to consider rewriting it into something like "priser fra 155,- pr. mnd." where the price text is on its own line and much larger than the rest of the text.

- **The use of star sign is not correct** - discovered in evaluation 5

*At the page named "priser" there is put a small star like symbol next to some of the prices which mean that there is something important to notice about these prices. The problem is that users would normally expect this additional text to be at the bottom of the page but instead it is put above the prices which makes it difficult for users to find unless they started out by reading the introduction text on this page. Furthermore the star like symbol is not made using the normal * symbol but instead by writing a black diamond symbol.*

- **Use of page position links** - discovered in evaluation 4

At the page "Holdbeskrivelser" there are made links to different course descriptions that are all presented on this page and linked to by using page position links (also known as #-links). This page is therefore quite long and the courses do not have separate pages with space for longer descriptions, pictures and the like. Due to the length of the page it might also be difficult for some users to get an overview and navigate the page.

The following pages contain the Google Analytics report for the relaunched website of Fokus Folkeoplysning. There might be additional data in the online version of the Google Analytics reports that I have used in my discussion of the usage statistics.

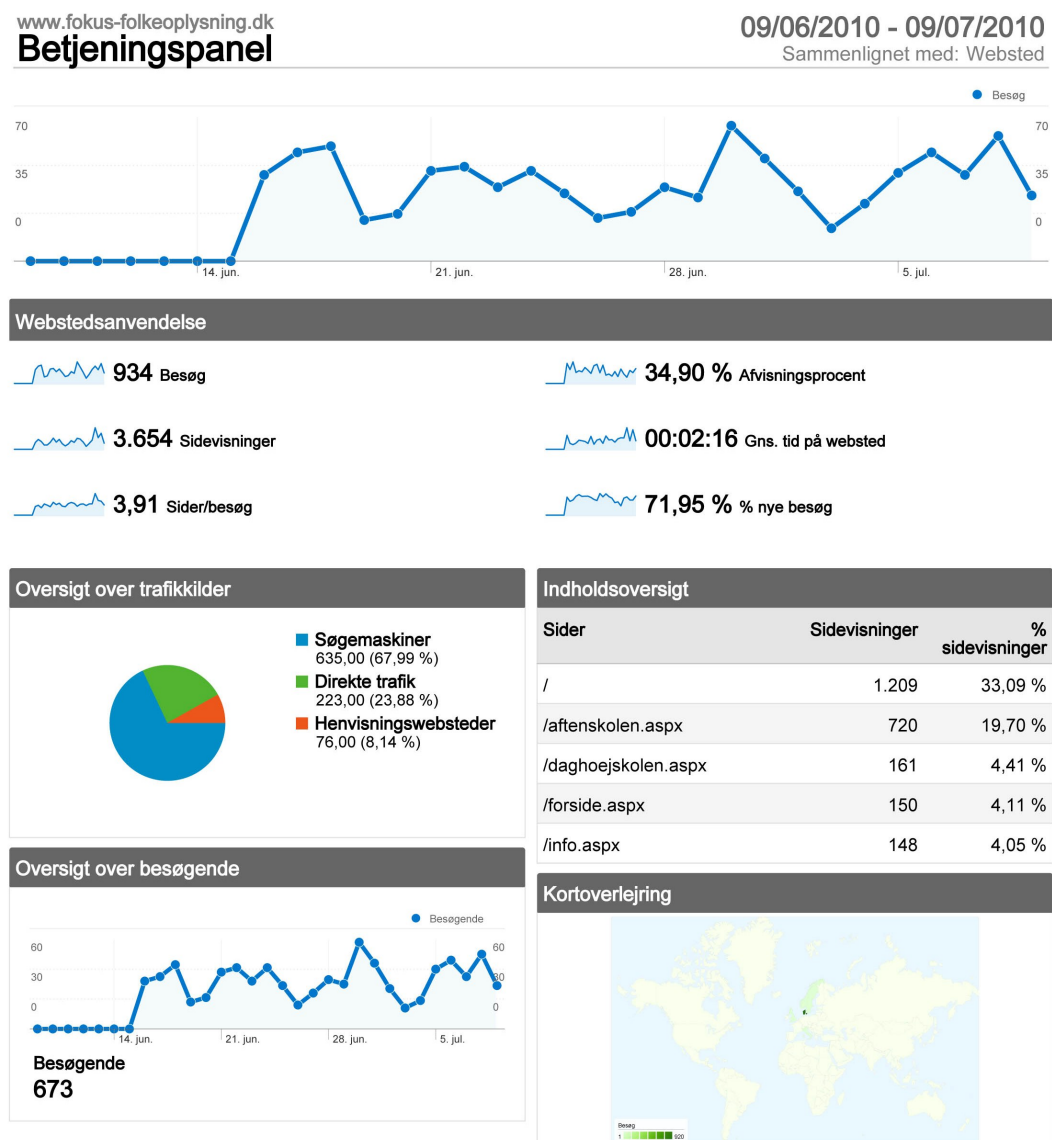


Figure B.1: Analytics Report - page 1

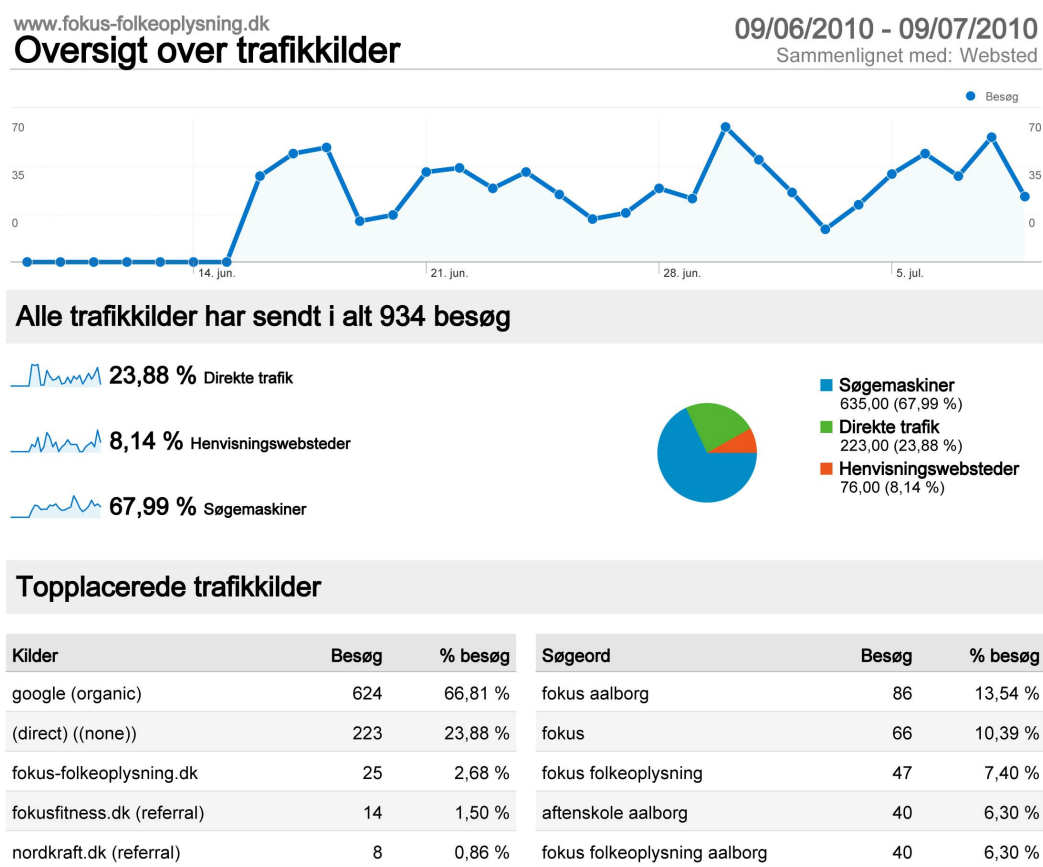


Figure B.2: Analytics Report - page 2

Oversigt over besøgende

09/06/2010 - 09/07/2010

Sammenlignet med: Websted



673 personer besøgte dette websted

934 Besøg

673 Absolut entydige besøgende

3.654 Sidevisninger

3,91 Gennemsnit af sidevisninger

00:02:16 Tid på websted

34,90 % Afvisningsprocent

71,95 % Nye besøg

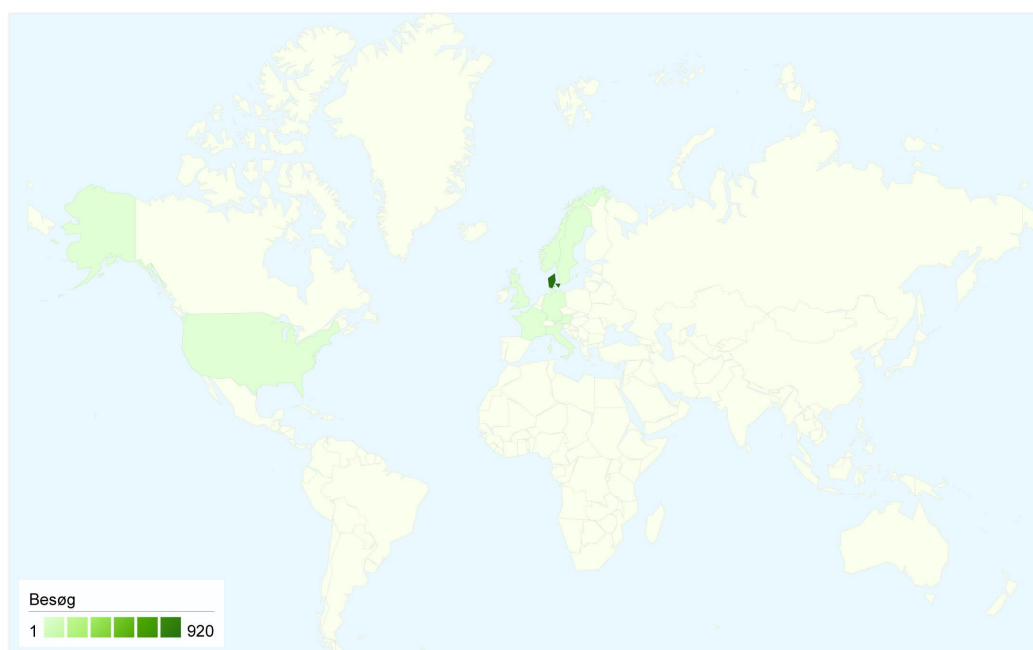
Teknisk profil

Browser	Besøg	% besøg	Forbindelseshastighed	Besøg	% besøg
Internet Explorer	764	81,80 %	DSL	430	46,04 %
Firefox	90	9,64 %	Unknown	237	25,37 %
Safari	51	5,46 %	Cable	229	24,52 %
Chrome	29	3,10 %	T1	22	2,36 %
			Dialup	6	0,64 %

Figure B.3: Analytics Report - page 3



Figure B.4: Analytics Report - page 4



934 besøg kom fra 9 lande/områder

Webstedsanvendelse					
Besøg 934 % af webstedstotal: 100,00 %	Sider/besøg 3,91 Gns. for websted: 3,91 (0,00 %)	Gns. tid på websted 00:02:16 Gns. for websted: 00:02:16 (0,00 %)	% nye besøg 71,95 % Gns. for websted: 71,95 % (0,00 %)	Afvisningsprocent 34,90 % Gns. for websted: 34,90 % (0,00 %)	
Land/område	Besøg	Sider/besøg	Gns. tid på websted	% nye besøg	Afvisningsprocent
Denmark	920	3,88	00:02:14	71,63 %	34,89 %
Sweden	4	8,50	00:09:31	100,00 %	0,00 %
United Kingdom	3	8,67	00:01:52	66,67 %	66,67 %
Italy	2	3,00	00:04:30	100,00 %	50,00 %
Norway	1	1,00	00:00:00	100,00 %	100,00 %
Austria	1	3,00	00:01:37	100,00 %	0,00 %
Germany	1	7,00	00:01:01	100,00 %	0,00 %
France	1	7,00	00:02:48	100,00 %	0,00 %
United States	1	1,00	00:00:00	100,00 %	100,00 %
1 - 9 af 9					

Figure B.5: Analytics Report - page 5