GLUBBLE
Usability Study Summary
Overview

- Glubble is a Firefox add-on that allows parents to control the web content their elementary school-age children can see online.
- A study was undertaken to assess Glubble’s usability and parents’ satisfaction with it.
- Four participants were tested to evaluate the processes of creating new student accounts, as well as adding and removing websites from the accounts.
- A range of moderate and serious usability issues were revealed, including a lack of adequate instructional text and help content, poor error handling, obscure paths to core tasks, unintuitive nomenclature and control labeling, and confusing visual hierarchy of content/functionality.
- The study revealed some surprising finding and several important lessons for future tests.
Important Findings

- **Lack of Adequate Instructional Text and Help Content**
  - All four participants showed some hesitation before starting the task of adding a new student account, and looked around for instructions and help, which they did not find.

- **Inadequate Error Handling**
  - One participant was completely unable to recover from an account naming error while creating a new student account.

- **Obscure Paths to Core Tasks**
  - The current path to adding and/or removing websites from student accounts was challenging for all participants.
Important Findings (Continued)

- **Unintuitive Nomenclature and Control Labeling**
  - Participants expressed confusion around “My Glubble Library”, “Edit” and “Add”.

- **Confusing Visual Hierarchy of Content and Functionality**
  - The hierarchy of information and functionality is confusing to users within the Glubble library and individual Glubbles (sets of approved sites).
Surprising Finding

- The testing revealed drastically different levels of basic computer knowledge even among those participants with similar user profiles.
  - One participant completely did not understand the following error message and could not recover from the error:
    - Invalid contents (use a-Z, 0-9, dash, dot or underscore)
  - Task completion times varied drastically between users.
Lessons Learned

- Chatty participants took longer to complete tasks.
  - Some participants went-off on tangents during the execution of tasks, which may have inflated task completion times.
  - The test monitor needs to have a standard means of keeping the participant on-task without discouraging thinking aloud.

- Sequential dependencies between tasks caused problems when tasks could not be completed.
  - A participant could not complete the task of adding a website, so the task of removing a website was problematic.
  - The test monitor must ensure that the participant completes each task, even when it requires direct intervention to do so.
Report Format

- The test report was formatted into the following sections:
  - Executive Summary
  - Method
  - Results
  - Findings and Recommendations
  - Appendix I: Recruiting Quotas and Criteria
  - Appendix II: Participant Screener
  - Appendix III: Consent Form
  - Appendix IV: Usability Test Script
  - Appendix V: Usability Test Log
  - Appendix VI: Questionnaire
  - Appendix VII: Completed Test Logs and Questionnaires