

Client's challenge

The International Information Systems Security Certification Consortium, Inc. [(ISC)²] is the number one leader in providing education and certifications in information security to professionals around the world. (ISC)²'s primary revenue source is online registration fees and sales from purchases completed by users interacting with their website. However, in the fall of 2007 (ISC)² were faced with a major challenge. Throughout the years more and more information and functionality had been added to the (ISC)² website with little to no consideration taken to usability. This led to an outdated site, being extremely hard to navigate, causing a flood of customer complaints and drop-offs, ultimately threatening the main revenue source.

Design Interactive, Inc (DI) was rewarded the contract out of 3 companies asked to bid on the job.

"I recognized that DI possessed superior expertise in user behavior study and the testing processes" said Kim White, (ISC)² Manager of Web Services.

Technical solution

DI worked closely with the (ISC)² team to establish project goals, ensure sufficient understanding of their business and to determine the optimal technical approach to tackle their problems.

"I felt they were fully engaged in our project and the quality of interactions was always friendly, professional and valuable." White said.

Design Interactive, Inc. completed a suite of quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods (e.g. expert review, user profiling, task analysis, empirical user testing with actual users etc) to assess the website and determine areas of improvement.

Results

The expert assessment of the website revealed features that were greatly appreciated and these should be implemented in future designs as well. However, several areas of the site included critical usability concerns with respect to user task completion and overall interaction.

"We were thrilled with the results, as they pointed out some known weaknesses, but many unknown weaknesses. For example, we were shocked to discover that the sale of our main product was not successfully completed by all participants. What a powerful piece of information for us!" White said.



"Design Interactive was an integral part of improving our Website."

Usability concerns were prioritized and associated with redesign recommendations to drive future development of the website. Expected benefits from implementation of redesign recommendations include increased efficiency and user satisfaction and greater revenue due to higher task completion rates.

"The recommendation document was easy to read...I was able to share the document with upper management because it was so reader friendly."

"Design Interactive was an integral part of improving our Website. Customer complaints about the site have dropped significantly and the staff's own feelings about it have improved as well. We have something we did not have before; valuable user feedback, expert analysis and a clear direction. We know what needs to be fixed, why it needs to be fixed, and how to fix it." White said.

Tools/Techniques Used	Deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •User Profiling/Needs Analysis •Expert Evaluation •Cognitive Walkthrough •Empirical User Testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Expert Inspection Results •Usability Strengths/Weaknesses •Usability Metrics •Redesign Recommendations