

CmmiTraining.com Website Annotated Validation Comments Week of February 23, 2009

Team

Developer:

- CmmiRox – Bill Smith, Leading Edge Process Consultants

Validation - former students:

- MeasurementLead - Measurement lead for a leading systems integrator
- SmilingCG – Quality manager for a small IT consulting firm based in the DC area
- QC-Dave – Project manager for a west coast IT consulting firm

Validation - business associates:

- DCU99 - Probably the only Lead Appraiser for CMMI-DEV and SVC that is an Environmental Engineer
- G.O.A.T. - A quality and process improvement professional with a sense of humor

Overall

- Overall looks good and straightforward [DCU99]
- *Overall Look-and-Feel.* Clean and organized well. On the right track. [SmilingCG]
- Love the bold, fresh look of the design. It conveys the bold, fresh, no fuss personality of the organization. [G.O.A.T.]
- Resolution seems to be very scalable 800x600 is a little big for the screen but most people don't go that low any more. I have my monitor set to 1600x1280 and its fine to read, even that small. [QC-Dave]

Thanks for the overall feedback that the site is headed in the right direction. I'm trying hard to be professional without coming across as stodgy or conservative -- much better to be "bold" and "fresh", as G.O.A.T. would say! [CmmiRox]

Navigation

- *Navigation Schema.* Liked your choice of linked items; horizontal and vertical (top and left hand) navigation; sub-navigation on the web pages [SmilingCG]
- The Black bar with the white text under each tab is a bit obscure. Maybe change the colors up so they draw attention to themselves as selectable links. [QC-Dave] **(Done – changed site-wide hyperlink color. [CmmiRox])**
- Like how currently the upcoming courses is a constant on the left hand side pane because if you decide to take a course after reading the descriptions then you won't have to search for them [MeasurementLead]

- Recommend Breadcrumbs – helps with site navigation – “How did I get here?” [G.O.A.T.] (Under consideration. Current site www.leadingedgeprocess.com has them. May be one of the last things I add. [CmmiRox])
- Do you need a schedule tab if you have the upcoming classes sidebar? Might that be an agenda page for each day of a course? [QC-Dave] (My draft Schedule page now has 22 entries! <http://www.cmmi.com/schedule.html>) The Upcoming sidebar is meant simply to show the next few classes, not all. [CmmiRox])

I’ve been fighting a losing battle to find the ideal color hyperlink that will show up equally well on light, dark, and medium backgrounds. I’ve finally decided to go with the pretty much web standard blue. It certainly makes links more obvious – at the cost of introducing another color into the scheme. (See http://www.cmmi.com/courses_choosing.html.) Thoughts? [CmmiRox]

Color scheme

- *Color Schema*. Liked. Was able to print a clean copy w/o any problems [SmilingCG]
- Color scheme is good - in line with your logo of course! [MeasurementLead]
- "Contact" hyperlink is grey on my screen and difficult to see on white background. Grey works in the table on the black background, but not so much on the white (throughout entire site) [DCU99] (Done – changed site-wide hyperlink color. [CmmiRox])
- May need to evaluate your color/font/size choices for ADA regs (can’t think of the number, maybe 501?) My old fart eyes had trouble reading some of the fonts (“CMMI is a registered ...” at the bottom of page). [G.O.A.T.] (Global hyperlink color change will help w/ ADA regs. Also increased font sizes of all info in footer as well as some misc text elsewhere. Lightened up some gray text a bit. [CmmiRox])

Layout

- I'm not sure how I feel about the layout of the courses screen - the Agenda in on the right hand side (which gives a great breakdown of what will happen) but then on the left is a bunch of good information that's a half screen lower - I guess my point is that visually it seems awkward and I wasn't sure where to read first. I would expect the left hand side to be higher to guide the reader or an obvious flow to the information to guide you through. [MeasurementLead] (I like having the graphic between the left and right sidebars to visually break things up. I do hear what you're saying, though. This could be a HUGE design discussion, and there may be no “perfect” solution. Comments from other folks? [CmmiRox])

Graphics

- Logo graphics look a bit blurry on CHOOSING A COURSE page but other graphics rock. [SmilingCG] (Logo still a bit fuzzy on all pages in certain screen resolutions / browser combos. Will defer this for a while. [CmmiRox])

- Images on contact page – fuzzy – looks sloppy. [G.O.A.T.] (Eventually there will be a new contacts page. Currently just linking to existing one on www.leadingedgeprocess.com. [CmmiRox])
- “View Schedule” & “Bring Onsite” buttons. Disturbing that the font is distorted – made me think my progressive bifocals were screwing up. Kept tilting my head trying to eliminate the distortion. [G.O.A.T.] (Done. Eliminated distortion from all button text. Don’t want your head to fall off. [CmmiRox])

Content

- Content (where available) is generally concise and relevant [DCU99]

Content – Choosing a Course

- I like that I can click on the column headers to surf directly to the course. [G.O.A.T.]
- Don’t like that the order of the column headers is the inverse of the order across the top of the page. I initially thought the links across the top were breadcrumbs and it was disorienting to find them not in the same order. [G.O.A.T.] (Will consider this. In menu across top, I’m presenting the most important options first -- i.e., the ones that make the most money. Will re-evaluate table column sequence. Will also try to make links look less like breadcrumbs, perhaps by eliminating the bullets between them. [CmmiRox])
- Choosing A Course | table. Like the concept. (1) At first glance, the *Your Situation* column seems wordy, makes the radial buttons slightly larger than needed, and takes away from the listed *Recommended Courses...* the bread & butter. (2) Links to courses don’t stand out [SmilingCG] (Made radial buttons smaller, course links now stand out due out due to global hyperlink color change. [CmmiRox])
- I agree with SmilingCG that the radio buttons are too large (my eyes were dancing) but I really liked the descriptions in the Your Situation box - more specifically the tone and feel of the descriptions. It was your references to "much needed humor" that made me consider your course over the SEI one in the first place. [MeasurementLead] (Made radial buttons smaller. Made them red, though, because I thought the table could still use some visual interest. Is the red okay?) [CmmiRox])
- Under "Your Situation" - I'd use bullets and a little more white space. Less words if you can. [QC-Dave] (See general comment below. [CmmiRox])
- Situation is wordy. Perhaps put the bolded items first and then explain the situation. For example: "**Point Me in the Right Direction:** - *You've heard of the CMMI -- barely. You'd like to know what all the fuss is about, and maybe get advice on how to proceed*" etc. [DCU99] (See general comment below. [CmmiRox])
- “Product Development” “Service Delivery” = CMMI terms. MANY people would not be able to differentiate. “product” sometimes means “you develop custom stuff for customers”, or “you develop stuff that you then shrink wrap, it goes into production, and you crank bazillions of copies out”. “service” sometimes means “you supply bodies who do stuff” or “you do stuff (develop software, do maintenance, run the help desk, clean the toilets” for the customer. Suggest “You develop software or systems” and

“You do non software or system development work for your customers”. This wording doesn’t “sound” like you; I bet you can come up with the right words. Just wanted to point out that the average user may self-select the wrong course due to confusion on the terms “product” vs “service”. [G.O.A.T.] (See general comment below. [CmmiRox])

- Descriptions in “Your Situation” – good until “The above is true....” WHICH above? [G.O.A.T.] (See general comment below. [CmmiRox])

You all seem to generally like the concept here, but would like to see the verbiage pared down or better structured. You’ve convinced me to revisit the descriptions and maybe restructure the table a bit. [CmmiRox]

Content – Course Descriptions (3 pages, limited text so far)

- Free CMMI Breakfast | Agenda. I like the layout of this agenda (to the point). The CMMI-Dev and CMMI-SVC agenda layouts are almost overwhelming even though I appreciate the concept. [SmilingCG] (I’ve tried to make the CMMI-DEV and CMMI-SVC agendas less visually overwhelming by using a smaller, grayish font for the listings of process areas. See http://www.cmmi.com/courses_cmmi_dev.html. Does this help? [CmmiRox])
- Didn’t find answer to “How Much” – I suspect it will be coming soon. ☺ [G.O.A.T.] I plan to keep cost information out of the course descriptions. (I’d like the description to be equally viable for a student selecting a public class and a manager selecting a private, onsite class. Cost will appear on my public class schedule, and on the special “landing page” that each iteration of a public class will have. E.g., my April 21-23 CMMI-DEV class in Reston will have its own page. [CmmiRox])

Business

- "CMMI for Busy People" implies that the rest of us aren't busy. I like the approach and trying to name it something other than CMMI Primer or CMMI Distilled, but probably need a bit more thought into the name [DCU99] (Agreed, and deferred. [CmmiRox])
- April Fools Day is a great day for your first free breakfast. You can probably make that a theme to bring people in. [DCU99] (Sorry, but I’ve removed the April 1 breakfast from the calendar! With my site going live on or around March 16, there simply won’t be sufficient lead time to generate an audience. I’d also be paying money for the room and catering, so it would be disastrous if I held it and only two people showed up. First Free CMMI Breakfast will be May 13. [CmmiRox])