

# Assessing the Quality of Web Sites

Layla Hasan<sup>1</sup> and Emad Abuelrub<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Information Science, Loughborough University, UK

<sup>2</sup>Department of Computer Science, Zarqa Private University, Jordan

**Abstract:** In the age of information technology and with the rapid growth of the World Wide Web, the spectacular growth trend in e-business, that has been experienced so far, is expected to continue. Since the introduction of the first commercial website in 1994, electronic commerce has spread across the globe as a marketing, sales, and communication phenomenon, changing the fact of some business sectors. Companies seeking to achieve significant benefits through e-business need to create an effective and usable web presence to ensure successful interaction and communication with their employees, partners, and customers. Web services are being widely deployed throughout business, education, government, and other organizations. The Internet creates a new business environment, far different from anything that has come before; because it lets a company conducts its entire set of business processes and practices online. As the dependency on web technology increases, the need to assess the factors associated with website success increases as well. This paper reviewed the most recent evaluation criteria methods, which were used in different e-business services. Furthermore, it proposes general criteria for evaluating the quality of any website regardless of the type of service that it offers. The dimensions of the criteria are content quality, design quality, organization quality, and user-friendly quality. These dimensions together with their comprehensive indicators and checklist can be used by web designers and developers to create quality websites to improve the electronic service and then the image of any organization on the Internet.

**Keywords:** e-commerce, criteria, framework, website evaluation, website quality.

(Received May 29, 2008 / Accepted October 29, 2008)

## 1. Introduction

Since the introduction of the first electronic web service in the mid nineties of the last century, electronic services have spread across the globe in various shapes, changing the face of many business sectors. The new e-revolution is not only driving the global economics but also transforming societies into a knowledge-based economics all over the world. In the last few years, the Internet has shown a rapid growth in term of commercial trade volume, which led to a new definition of almost all aspects of business. The deployment of recent information and communication technologies enabled firms to provide higher quality services, lower prices for customers, and increase the profit margins for businesses. Also, the new technology created new trends in business and produced new era in business, finance, and economics [21, 42].

The Internet created a new business environment, far different from anything that has come before, enabling any company to conduct its entire set of business processes and practices online [45]. E-business is any business process performed via an Internet-based, computer-mediated network [34]. There are many categories of e-business; for example Business to Business (B2B), Business to Consumer (B2C), Consumer to Business (C2B), and Consumer to Consumer (C2C). E-business and e-commerce tend

to be used interchangeably leading to policy incoherence.

Recently, we have seen a proliferation of electronic websites with a tremendous amount of information either with high quality, or with low quality, as well as sites that are outright misleading [13, 18]. The number of websites grew from 17 million in the middle of 2000 to 65 million in the middle of 2005 [37]. The explosion of the web has determined the need of measurement criteria to evaluate the aspects related to the quality in use, such as usability and accessibility of a web application. The objective is to make a website useful, profitable, user linking, and accessible [38]. Awareness of quality issues has recently affected every industrial sector [32]. An organization with a website that is difficult to use and interact with, gives a poor image on the Internet and weaken an organization's position. Therefore, it is important for any organization to have the ability to make an assessment of the quality of their e-commerce service, in order to improve their offerings over time and benchmark against competitors and best practices in any industry [5].

In the last decade, numerous studies have focused on the designs of websites for general information seeking purposes and for electronic commerce purposes [49]. The design and commercial development of websites are very critical to e-commerce success [5]. Numerous practitioner reports

and reviews have been published seeking to identify the good and bad features of websites. Site reviews range from theoretical and scientific opinions to surveys of successful sites and features to existing successful e-businesses. Although, there has been a significant research on supporting electronic commerce, most of the existing empirical research focusing on success factors of websites is mainly exploratory in nature [28]. Up to our knowledge, there is no standard framework or benchmark defining website effectiveness [6].

This paper reviewed the most recent evaluation criteria methods which were used in different websites, and proposes a general comprehensive framework for evaluating the quality of any web service regardless of the type of service that it offers. The remaining of the paper is as follows. Section 2 gives a brief review of previous work. Section 3 discusses and analyzes the proposed framework. Section 4 defines the dimensions of the proposed framework and its indicators. Section 5 concludes the paper and suggests some future work.

## 2. Previous Work

As the dependency on web services increases, the need to assess characteristics with website quality and success increases. Websites characteristics are important; they have been a constant concern of research in different domains and they were widely studied in the e-commerce literature [17]. Although there has been a significant research on supporting e-commerce, many existing empirical studies focusing on the quality of websites is mainly exploratory in nature. Most of the current studies are either dealing with a limited number of quality factors or directed toward a specific web service. Thus, while there should be a considerable number and variety of factors associated with web site success, little research exists about the combination of these factors and services. Recently, research and studies are accumulating including different models and/or frameworks to evaluate the quality and performance of websites. We categorized the previous studies that investigated the quality dimensions of websites according to the type of service that the website offers; for example business and commercial, educational, banking, governmental, and others. This section briefly reviews the previous studies according to the website service.

Business and commercial websites were studied from different perspectives. Some researchers investigated website features or factors that are critical to e-business success, in which they called them critical success factors [10, 27, 28, 30, 33]. Other researchers address key issues, ideas and strategies to be considered in the management of online business from customer satisfaction perspective, and they assess whether a website has been built with a customer's goals in mind [8, 19, 41, 46, 49]. Another group of researchers investigated the

perspective of web designers in order to elicit factors that they consider important when designing or developing effective websites [8, 43]. Other researchers developed generic tools or measurement frameworks for the assessment of website quality [4, 5, 12, 14, 26, 32, 38]. Some researchers concentrated on some important features; they either proposed a framework to measure the important features of the website or used previous models to find out to which extent e-business websites incorporate these important features. Others [6, 25, 40] concentrated in their studies on website usability, Heimlich and Wang [19] proposed key issues of website's structure, while Cao and Zhang [7] examined factors that affect e-commerce website design. Heimlich [18] discussed content evaluation of websites, Hussin *et al.* [20] studied the extent in which companies incorporate ethical and trustworthy elements on their websites, while Fogg *et al.* [13] investigated how different elements of websites affect people's perception of credibility.

Educational websites were also studied from many different perspectives. Zhang and Dran [49] developed a theoretical framework for evaluating website quality from a user satisfaction perspective. Others concentrated on some specific features of websites. For example Lautenbach *et al.* [24] developed a framework to measure usability of websites, while Yoo and Jin [48] investigated and evaluated the design of university websites. Other researchers, while assessing the university websites, took in consideration other features. Osborne and Rinalducci [35] designed a criteria to evaluate web resources for utilization within the context of scholarly research within the discipline of the art history. Singh and Sook [39] attempted to find solutions to user problems and involved evaluating South African university websites on certain factors.

Banking websites were studied from many different perspectives using different models. Diniz *et al.* [11] proposed a model to evaluate and build digital business environment from the user's point of view. While other researchers proposed a specific framework to evaluate the Internet banking websites and the service quality of Internet banking [2, 44, 47]. Other researchers adopted through their studies a number of previous models to evaluate Internet banking websites. For example, Awamleh and Fernandes [3] used Diniz Model to evaluate websites of foreign and local banks in the United Arab Emirates. Guru *et al.* [16] evaluated the web presence of banks in Islamic countries based on a Diniz Model too. Paynter and Chung [36] examined how New Zealand banks enhanced their retail banking services through the Internet using Hersey's Model for website evaluation.

Governmental websites were studied from different perspectives. Zhang and Dran [49] developed a theoretical framework for evaluating website quality from a user satisfaction perspective

through theoretical and empirical investigations. While Krauss [23] identified seventeen comprehensive quality dimensions that can be used to rate website quality features that are important to e-government websites. Others researchers concentrated on other features. For example Kokkinaki *et al.* [22] presented a framework for evaluating existing e-government initiatives in Cyprus. It includes content characteristics, design characteristics, and common features of e-government websites. Choudrie *et al.* [9] described the issues related to the accessibility, quality, and privacy of government web using a common set of performance metrics and web diagnostic tools which are WebXact, Ntmechanic, and Vizcheck. Ma and Zaphiris [29] studied the usability and content accessibility of UK e-government websites and investigated whether they are ranked high in terms of accessibility. The usability and accessibility of fifty selected UK e-government websites were measured using two automatic evaluation tools, Bobby and LIFT. Abanomy *et al.* [1] investigated the issue that makes a website accessible and explored the importance placed on web accessibility with respect to e-government websites.

Other researchers addressed other kinds of web services from different perspectives. Lin and Joyce [27] studied different e-commerce models of online auction websites. Six critical success factors for a successful online auction website were identified. They include design and content, consumer education, security, customer support, online community, and market positioning. Barnes and Vidgen [4] deployed WEBQUAL in the domain of Internet auctions and identified three quality dimensions; information, interaction, and site design. Lim [25] evaluated the impact of four relevant factors to e-shopping; usefulness, ease of use, enjoyment, and security. Results showed that perceived ease of use and usefulness of the e-shopping website have a significant direct impact on the success of the site.

### 3. Discussion and Analysis

The objective of this research is to develop a theoretical, comprehensive, and measurable framework for assessing the quality of websites in order to provide straight forward criteria to encourage improvements of website design and its implementation. Furthermore, we aim to develop a framework that is capable of reliable applications across a broad range of websites regardless of the service they provide. A multi-phase approach was adopted that included a wide range of literature review, review of leading sites, identification of success factors from research and industry literature, comparison of factors with published industry scoring studies, and using our own experience in the field. Our process overlaid industry and academic research to identify quality factors in order to meet the objectives of this research.

After deep and comprehensive review of different evaluation methods and their elements that were used in different services over the Internet, we propose 4-dimensions criteria which is comprehensive and includes all previous dimensions and elements, in order to be used as general criteria to evaluate all kinds of websites. The dimensions of the proposed criteria are *content quality*, *design quality*, *organization quality*, and *user-friendly quality*. In order to investigate how our proposed criteria were used in previous studies, we re-arranged each element of each dimension of the previous work to be under one of the four new dimensions. The result of re-arranging the dimensions of previous work into the proposed 4-dimensions criteria is shown in Figure 1.

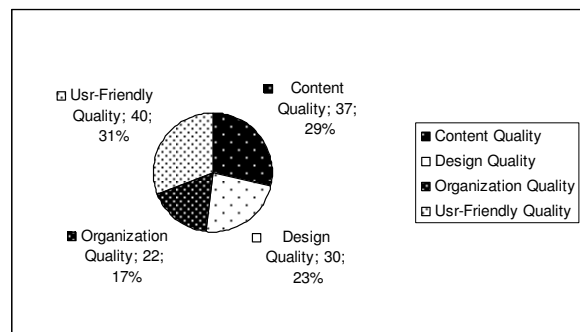


Figure 1. Common dimensions after re-arrangement.

We summarized the common quality dimensions according to the service that a website offers. Common dimensions that were used in evaluating e-business and e-commerce websites were concentrating on currency, accuracy, comprehensive and value added content, ease of use, reliability, availability of the needed information, speed of downloading, customization, effective internal search, different types of service and support to customers, security and privacy in all types of transactions, logical grouping of website elements, and attractive design that will attract the user and encourages him/her to spend more time in the website [4-7, 10, 12-14, 18-20, 25-28, 30, 32, 33, 38, 40, 41, 43, 46, 49].

Common dimensions that were used to assess the quality of educational websites were concentrated on currency, accuracy and comprehensibility of information, ease of use, clear layout of websites, and an attractive design [24, 35, 39, 48, 49]. Common dimensions that were used to assess the quality of banking websites focused on ease of use, customization, internal search function, security of transactions, aesthetic effects, and useful interaction between users and websites in order to get instant feedback from website to user [2, 3, 11, 16, 36, 44, 47, 49]. Common dimensions that were used to assess the quality of governmental websites are quick response time, up-to-date, accurate information, effective search tool, easy to understand, and secure transactions [1, 9, 22, 23, 29, 49]. Common

dimensions that were used to assess the quality of auctions and e-shopping websites are design, content, security, support, and ease of use [4, 25, 27].

#### 4. The Proposed Framework

The proposed framework attempts to integrate knowledge and experience from disparate sources, a range of reference disciplines and empirical practices. The objective is to identify measurable features and indicators that currently comprise a successful web site. A set of features is developed that comprise a current representation of a perfect website. The proposed framework can be used to compare between

the quality of websites, to identify a path for improvement of a website, and to provide a guideline for designers and developers when creating new websites.

After we reviewed each evaluation criteria, we added its indicators to the suitable place of the proposed 4-dimension criteria, besides adding some indicators in which we see them important from our own experience. Our criteria include all main indicators of the previous studies of evaluating the quality of websites. Figure 2 summarizes the hierarchy of the proposed framework.

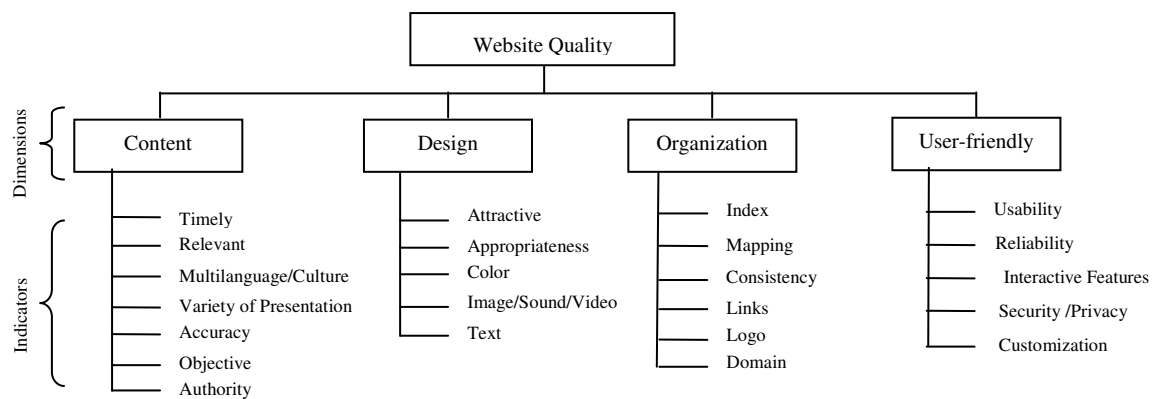


Figure 2. Hierarchy of the proposed framework.

#### 4.1 Content Quality

It is generally agreed that content quality is an important dimension, which deals with the characteristics of websites' information. Singh and Sook [39] called this dimension the king dimension of any website, since it is the major source of value to customers. This dimension has been addressed by a variety of researchers in different ways. Some researchers studied the content of websites without taking into consideration other dimensions [15, 18], while others considered content quality or information quality as one of the basic dimensions of their evaluating models [2, 4-6, 10, 22, 27, 28, 32, 33, 36, 38-40, 43].

The following indicators and check elements, which are summarized in Table 1, are the most important relating to the content quality dimension.

1. *Timely*: The currency of websites' information and how much it is up-to-date, how frequently the website is updated, and is it clear when the site was updated [4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 18, 19, 22, 24, 28, 30, 31, 33, 35, 38, 41, 49].
2. *Relevant*: The extent to which websites' information is comprehensive, complete and provides the right level of details [5, 10, 12, 14, 15, 18, 32, 33, 35, 43, 49]. The extent to which it is informative, meaning, value added according to its audience [22, 46], and fits to users' need [7, 22, 23, 32, 35, 39]. So, websites include

information about the organization's objectives [3, 19, 22, 36], organization's history [3, 6], customers or audience [15, 18, 36], products or services [6, 28, 36], and photographs of organization's facilities to reduce customer fears of dealing with the website [6].

3. *Multilanguage/Culture*: The websites' information is available in different languages [1, 12, 13, 22, 23, 26, 44], suitable to different cultures [12, 23], and meets the needs of all customers regardless of their country.
4. *Variety of presentation*: Information is presented in different forms (text (.doc, .pdf, ... ), video, audio, ... ), so that the user can download the form that suits him/her [22, 39, 44].
5. *Accuracy*: Information is precise, there is no spelling errors or grammar errors [4, 5, 7, 12, 14, 15, 18, 22, 23, 28, 32, 33, 39, 41, 49] and the sources of information is identified [13, 15, 18, 35].
6. *Objective*: Information is presented in objective manner without political, cultural, religious, or institutional biases [15, 18, 35].
7. *Authority*: The credibility or the level of user confidence of websites' information is clearly identified by providing information about: the organization's physical address [13, 20, 22], sponsor(s) of the site [12, 15, 18, 19, 26, 32, 35], manager(s) of the site [12, 18, 19, 35], specification of sites' manager(s) [12, 18],

identification of copyright [35], email to manager of the website exists [13, 15, 19, 35], and metadata elements exist [9, 12].

Table 1. Indicators and check elements of the content quality dimension.

Indicators	Checklist
Timely	Up-to-date information
	How frequency the website is updated
	When the website was updated
Relevant	Organization's objectives
	Organization's history
	Customers (audience)
	Products or services
	Photography of organization's facilities
Multilanguage/ Culture	Use different languages
	Present to different cultured
Variety of Presentation	Different forms (text, audio, video, ...)
Accuracy	Precise information (no spelling, grammar errors)
	Sources of information is identified
Objective	Objective presentation of information
Authority	Organization's physical address
	Sponsor (s) of the site
	Manager (s) of the site
	Specifications of site's managers
	Identification of copyright
	Email to manager

#### 4.2 Design Quality

This dimension concerns with the visual characteristics of websites' design that attract the users and encourage them to stay longer time viewing the website and reenter it. Most previous studies cover this dimension for its importance. Companies put a great effort to design their websites in an attractive and innovative way since poor design can mean that potential readers never see excellent material as they may become bored, confused, and eventually abort their attempt to view the information [39]. Yoo and Jin [48] explained extensively twelve characteristics that concentrate on website design dimension. Some researchers consider this dimension as an important dimension in their evaluating model. They called it design, display, or presentation of information [4, 18, 19, 22, 27, 38-40, 43], while others described this dimension as part of the usability dimension of their criteria [5, 6, 24, 29].

The following indicators and check elements, which are summarized in Table 2, are the most important relating to the design quality dimension.

1. *Attractive*: The design of the website is innovative [23], has an aesthetic effect by its graphics and animation [2, 4-8, 13, 19, 22, 23, 36, 39, 43, 47]. It has an emotional appeal which makes the user happy, pleasant, enjoyable, and cheerful when visiting the website [4-7, 12, 23, 25, 28, 39, 49].
2. *Appropriateness*: The design of the website is appropriate to the type of the website [5]. Images used within the pages serve their functional purposes [18, 35]. Images, colors, and text are

appropriately balanced on each page [19], and a fewer number of screens in each page [22, 48].

3. *Color*: This concern with the effective use of background and text colors when designing the website [1, 6, 8, 19, 22, 24, 27, 39, 40, 43]. According to background color, light colors are preferred to be used [47]. Concerning text color, it shouldn't exceed four colors within the same page [48].
4. *Image/Sound/Video*: It concerns with the non text elements which are used within the website [2, 6, 8, 18, 19, 22-24, 32, 35, 36, 39, 40, 43]. Few number of image/sound/video should be used and the size should be small since large size of image/sound/video per page will slow downloading the page which is not preferred by users [38, 48]. Alternative text should be used for all non-text elements [22, 29, 38].
5. *Text*: It concerns with the characteristics of text used within websites' pages [6, 8, 24, 40, 43]. There should be consistency in text; pages should use one font size and one font style except for titles [48]. Text font should be chosen among the most readable ones [1, 22, 38] with relative size [19, 38]. Pages shouldn't use all capital letters unless in titles or headings since they are hard to be read and space wasting [38, 48]. Pages should use white space or breathing space between page elements to avoid crowded pages [27, 48]. Different or multiple headings such as titles, sub titles, sub sub titles are preferred as appropriate [48]. If pages use scrolling text, it shouldn't hide a large amount of information [48]. Pages should show the text first then the image(s) to see text while downloading image(s) [48].

Table 2. Indicators and check elements of the design quality dimension.

Indicators	Checklist
Attractive	Innovative
	Aesthetic effects
	Emotional appeal
Appropriateness	Appropriate to the type of website
	Image used within it serve functional purposes
	Balancing (images, colors, and text)
	Number of screens per page
Color	Background color
	Text color
Image/Sound/ Video	Number of image/sound/video
	Size of image/sound/video
	Provide alternative text for all non text elements
Text	Consistency (type, style)
	Readable
	Relative size
	Capital letters
	Breathing space
	Multiple headings
	Scrolling text
	Sequential appearance of text then images

### 4.3 Organization Quality

This dimension concerns with the logical grouping, categorization, or structure of websites' elements in order to help the user to reach the required information quickly, navigate easily within the website, feel comfortable within its layout consistency, and keep him/her informative that he/she is still in the same website [1, 22, 32, 43, 46]. Heimlich and Wang [19] proposed structure themes that extensively cover most elements of this dimension. Most researchers referred to the elements of organization dimension as part of usability dimension in their models [2, 11, 36, 39, 40, 47]. While others referred to the elements of organization dimension as part of other dimensions like information [2], communication [20], content [38], or navigation [6, 38, 43].

The following indicators and check elements, which are summarized in Table 3, are the most important relating to the organization quality dimension.

1. *Index*: An index or links to all the website's pages is available from the main page, so that the user will have an idea about all main categories of the website [12, 19, 47].
2. *Mapping*: Adequate website map or navigation bar/menu is available in each page to facilitate navigating the website [2, 8, 12, 22, 26, 36, 38]. A user can know the current page that he/she is in while browsing from the navigation title [8, 19, 22, 29].
3. *Consistency*: A general layout of each page is consistent through the website [6, 11, 19, 22, 24, 47].
4. *Links*: Links work properly; it should take the user where he/she is intended to go [13, 15, 18, 20, 22, 28, 38-49]. Assistant links should be available in each page so that the user can get back to the main page from every section of the website; it can help the user to return to top of the page within the long pages of the website and can return to the original website when he/she follows external link of any page [6, 12, 19]. Worthy links that take user to other related websites are available [2, 15, 22, 39], no dead links [20, 38], and the link's color is changed after the user has visited it [19].
5. *Logo*: Organization logo is clear and noticeable in every page of the website [26].
6. *Domain*: Organization has a meaningful name related to the service it provides and according to the net standards[17].

Table 3. Indicators and check elements of the organization quality dimension.

Indicators	Checklist
Index	Index or links to all website's pages
Mapping	Adequate website map or navigation bar/menu
	Current page
Consistency	General layout

Links	Working links
	Assistant links (back to home, top, back to original website)
	Worthy links (to other related websites, no dead links)
	Visiting pages
Logo	Organization's logo is clear and noticeable
Domain	Meaningful domain name

### 4.4 User-friendly Quality

Nearly all previous studies included this dimension or at least one of its indicators in their criteria model because of its importance. It concerns with many issues that help any user regardless of his/her education or experience to find the needed information within a reasonable time [24], the capability of the website to maintain specific level of performance when used [14], and interactivity or connectivity which emphasize the existence of interaction between user and website using different tools.

The following indicators and check elements, which are summarized in Table 4, are the most important relating to the design user-friendly dimension.

1. *Usability*: The website is easy to use, understand, operate, find information, or navigate [1, 3-6, 8, 10-14, 18, 19, 22-25, 27-29, 33, 36, 38, 40, 41, 43, 47, 49]. It is easy to find the website using external websites [6, 18, 32, 41], and it is clear to the user that new information is added to the website.
2. *Reliability*: Website's address is appropriate and easy to remember [13, 15, 32, 44], short download time [9, 10, 13, 22, 32, 33, 36, 39, 43, 46], multi browser support [1, 22, 29], and work properly using different screen settings. Few ads are in the website's pages to avoid long time downloading of website's pages [2] and there is away to measure its efficiency by counting the number of visitors [6, 10]. Also, the website is available 7 days/week, 24 hours/day [1, 3, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 33, 46].
3. *Interactive features*: The website has clear instructions to use different parts/sections/forms of it [4]. Help function and clear error messages are available to help users [2, 15, 18, 27, 28, 38, 39, 41, 47]. FAQ is available that summarizes frequently asked questions and their answers [2, 20, 26, 27, 33, 36, 44]. Effective internal search tool to search the content of the website is available [2, 3, 6, 7, 11, 13, 16, 18-20, 22, 23, 26, 28, 36, 48, 49]. Communication channel and feedback exist between user and website through email, chat rooms, online community, or suggestion form [2, 3, 5-7, 10-14, 16, 18-20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 30, 32, 33, 36, 39, 44, 47]. Follow-up service is offered and users can track their order easily [28].
4. *Security/Privacy*: In order to gain users' trust, effective mechanisms are used to keep the

transactions secure [2-5, 10-12, 14, 15, 20, 22, 23, 25-28, 33, 36, 39, 49]. In order to gain users' confidence, privacy of personal information is needed so that information can't be handled or read by unauthorized users [2, 5, 6, 11, 15, 22, 23, 25-28, 33, 36].

5. *Customization*: The process of tailoring the content of the website according to the needs and performance of specific users [2-6, 10, 11, 13, 16, 30, 32, 39, 46].

Table 4. Indicators and check elements of the user-friendly quality dimension.

Indicators	Checklist
Usability	Ease to use, understand, operate, find, or navigate
	Easy to find using search engines
	What's new
Reliability	Appropriate and easy to remember URL
	Short download speed
	Multi browser support
	Work properly using different screen settings
	Fewer ads
	Measuring efficiency
	Availability
Interactive Features	Clear instructions
	Help function
	FAQ
	Effective internal search tool
	Feedback between user and website (email, chat, online community, suggested forms)
	Review transactions
	Tracking order
Security /Privacy	Secure transactions
	Privacy
Customization	Tailoring content to the needs of specific users

## 5. Conclusions and Future Work

Recently, the Internet has shown a rapid growth in term of commercial trade volume which led to a new definition of almost all aspects of business. The deployment of recent information and communication technologies produced new era in business, finance, and economics. The Internet created a new business environment far different from anything that has come before. The explosion of the web has determined the need of measurement criteria to evaluate the aspects related to the quality of web applications. Awareness of quality issues has affected every industrial sector in recent years, since an organization with a website that is difficult to use and interact with, gives a poor image on the Internet and weaken an organization's position. Therefore, it is important of an organization to assess the quality of its e-commerce service, in order to improve its services over time and benchmark against competitors and best practices in any industry.

This paper reviewed the most recent evaluation methods, which were used in evaluating the quality of different websites, and proposes a comprehensive framework for assessing the quality of any website

regardless of the type of service that it offers. The dimensions of the framework along with their indicators and checklist are summarized in the Appendix below. Furthermore, our framework is capable of reliable applications across a broad range of websites regardless of the service they provide. These dimensions with their indicators, after being given certain weights, could be easily converted into a questionnaire. The questionnaire could be applied to different website domains such as business, education, banking, commerce, government, and others. Results from the analysis of the questionnaire will help in evaluating these dimensions and their indicators and make the needed update on them.

## References

- [1] Abanumy A., Al-Badi A., and Mayhew P. e-Government website accessibility: in-depth evaluation of Saudi Arabia and Oman, *The Electronic Journal of e-Government*, v. 3, n. 3, p. 99-106, 2005.
- [2] Achour H. and Bensedrine N. An evaluation of internet banking and online brokerage in Tunisia, in *Proceedings of the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on E-Business and E-learning (EBEL)*, Amman, Jordan, p. 147-158, 2005.
- [3] Awamleh R. and Fernandes C. Internet banking: an empirical investigation into the extent of adoption by banks and the determinants of customer satisfaction in the United Arab Emirates, *Journal of Internet Banking and Commerce*, v. 10, n. 1, 2005.
- [4] Barnes S. and Vidgen R. Assessing the quality of auction web sites, in *Proceedings of the 34<sup>th</sup> International Conference on System Sciences*, 2001.
- [5] Barnes S. and Vidgen R. An integrative approach to the assessment of e-commerce quality, *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, v. 3, n. 3, p. 114-127, 2002.
- [6] Basu A. Context-driven assessment of commercial web sites, in *Proceedings of the 35<sup>th</sup> Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, 2002.
- [7] Cao M. and Zhang Q. Evaluating e-commerce web site design: a customer's perspective, in *Proceedings of Decision Sciences Institute 2002 Annual Meeting*, p. 1186-1191, 2002.
- [8] Chanaron J. Evaluating e-learning: the case of automative small-medium suppliers, in *Proceedings of the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on e-Business and E-learning (EBEL)*, Amman, Jordan, p. 13-25, 2005.
- [9] Choudrie J., Ghinea G., and Weerakkody V. Evaluating global e-government sites: a view using web diagnostic tools," *Electronic Journal of e-Government*, v. 2, n. 2, p. 105-114, 2004.
- [10] DeLone W. and McLean E. The DeLone and McLean of information systems success: a ten-year update, *Journal of Management Information Systems*, v. 19, n. 4, p. 9-30, 2003.
- [11] Diniz E., Porto M. R., and Adachi T. Internet banking in Brazil: evaluation of functionality, reliability, and usability, *The Electronic Journal of*

- Information Systems Evaluation, v. 8, n. 1, p. 41-50, 2005.
- [12] Fitzpatrick R. Additional quality factors for the World Wide Web, in Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Congress for Software Quality, Japan, 2000.
- [13] Fogg B. J., Marshall J., Laraki O., Osipovich A., Varma C., Fang N., Paul J., Rangnekar A., Shon J., Swani P., and Treinen M. What makes web sites credible? a report on a large quantitative study, *Computer Human Interaction*, v. 3, n. 1, p. 61-68, 2001.
- [14] Gledec G. Evaluating web site quality, in Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> Internet Users Conference (CUC2005), Croatia, 2005.
- [15] Granath K. Evaluating web pages, available at: [http://www.lib.umt.edu/research/guide/int\\_evalweb.htm](http://www.lib.umt.edu/research/guide/int_evalweb.htm), 2006.
- [16] Guru K. B., Shanmugam B., Alam N., and Perera J. C. An evaluation of internet banking sites in Islamic countries, *Journal of Internet Banking and Commerce*, v. 6, n. 1, 2001.
- [17] Hasan L. and Abuelrub E. Criteria for evaluating quality of websites, in Proceedings of the 6<sup>th</sup> IBMA International Conference on Managing Information in Digital Economy, Germany, 2006.
- [18] Heimlich J. Evaluating the content of web sites, Environmental Education and Training Partnership Resource Library, Ohio State University Extension, USA, 1999.
- [19] Heimlich J. and Wang K. Evaluating the structure of web sites, Environmental Education and Training Partnership Resource Library, Ohio State University Extension, USA, 1999.
- [20] Hussin H., Suhaimi M., and Mustafa M. e-commerce and ethical web design: applying the BBOnline guidelines on Malaysian web sites, *The International Arab Journal of Information Technology*, v. 2, n. 3, p. 218-226, 2005.
- [21] International Trade Center UNCTAD/WTO and Jordan Export Development & Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO) Secrets of electronic commerce: a guide for small and medium sized exporters, Amman, Jordan, 2001.
- [22] Kokkinaki I. A., Mylonas S., and Mina S. e-government initiatives in Cyprus, e-Government Workshop (eGOV05), Brunel University, UK, 2005.
- [23] Krauss K. Testing an e-government website quality questionnaire: a pilot study, in Proceedings of the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on World Wide Web Applications (WWW2003), 2003.
- [24] Lautenbach M. A., Schegget I. S., Schoute A. M., and Wittenman C. L. Evaluating the usability of web pages: a case study, available at: <http://www.phil.uu.nl/preprints/ckipreprints/PREPRINTS/preprint011.pdf>, 2006.
- [25] Lim K. Security and motivational factors of e-shopping web site usage, in the Proceedings of Decision Sciences Institute 2002 Annual Meeting, p. 611-616, 2002.
- [26] Lin F., Huarng K., Chen Y., and Lin S. Quality evaluation of web services, in the Proceedings of the IEEE International Conference on e-Commerce Technology for Dynamic e-Business, 2004.
- [27] Lin O. and Joyce D. Critical success factors for online auction web sites, in the Proceedings of the 17<sup>th</sup> NACCQ, 2004.
- [28] Liu C. and Arnett K. Exploring the factors associated with web site success in the context of electronic commerce, *Information and Management*, v. 38, p. 23-33, 2000.
- [29] Ma H. and Zaphiris P. The usability and content accessibility of the e-government in the UK, in Proceedings of Human Computer Interaction International Conference, Greece, 2003.
- [30] Madeja N. and Schoder D. Designed for success: empirical evidence on features of corporate web pages, in the Proceedings of the 36<sup>th</sup> Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, 2003.
- [31] Mendo A. The evolution of SMEs websites in the UK, in the Proceedings of the 9<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Software Maintenance and Reengineering, 2005.
- [32] Mich L., Franch M., and Gaio L. Evaluating and designing web site quality, Feature Article, *IEEE Multimedia*, IEEE Computer Society, 2003.
- [33] Molla A. and Licker S. P. e-commerce systems success: an attempt to extend and respecify the Delone and Maclean of IS success, *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, v. 2, n. 4, p. 131-141, 2001.
- [34] Moodle S., Morris M., and Kaplinsky R. School of development studies: incorporating the centre for social & development studies, University of Natal, 2007.
- [35] Osborne C. and Rinalducci J. Evaluation of web based resources within the art history discipline, Technical Report, University of North Carolina, 2002.
- [36] Paynter J. and Chung W. An evaluation of internet banking in New Zealand, in Proceedings of the 35<sup>th</sup> Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, 2002.
- [37] Pew Internet and American Life Project. Senior Research Fellow Deborah Fellows, USA, 2006.
- [38] Signore O. A comprehensive model for web sites quality, in the Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> IEEE International Symposium on Web Site Evolution (WSE'05), 2005.
- [39] Singh I. and Sook A. An evaluation of the usability of South African University web sites, in Proceedings of the 2002 CITTE Conference, Durban, South Africa, 2002.
- [40] Singh M. and Fisher J. Electronic commerce issues: a discussion of two exploratory studies, in the Proceedings of the Electronic 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference on Electronic Commerce, Victoria University, New Zealand, 1999.
- [41] Srivihok A. An assessment tool for electronic commerce: end user evaluation of web commerce

sites, Technical Report, Faculty of Science, Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand, 2000.

[42] Sui D. and Rejeski D. Environmental impacts of the emerging digital economy: the e-for-environmental e-commerce?, *Environmental Management*, v. 29, n. 2, p. 155-163, 2002.

[43] Tan F. and Tung L. Exploring website evaluation criteria using the repertory grid technique: a web designers' perspective, in the Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Workshop on HCI Research in MIS, WA, 2003.

[44] Vijayan P. and Shanmugam B. Service quality evaluation of internet banking in Malaysia, *Journal of Internet Banking and Commerce*, v. 8, n. 1, 2003.

[45] Vlosky R. and Westbrook T. The state of forest products industry e-business, *World Wide Web Network, Ltd*, 2007.

[46] Webpartner, available at: [www.webpartner.com](http://www.webpartner.com), 2007.

[47] Wenham D. and Zaphiris P. User interface evaluation methods for internet banking web sites: a review, evaluation, and case study, in Jacko and Stephanidis J. C. (Eds.), *Human-Computer Interaction: Theory and Practice*, p. 721-725, Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, USA, 2003.

[48] Yoo S. and Jin J. Evaluation of the home page of the top 100 university web sites, *Academy of Information and Management Sciences*, v. 8, n. 2, p. 57-69, 2004.

[49] Zhang P. and Dran G. Expectations and ranking of website quality features: results of two studies on user perceptions, in the Proceedings of the 34<sup>th</sup> Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, 2001.

## Appendix

Dimensions, indicators, and checklist of the proposed framework.

Dimensions	Indicators	Checklist
Content	Timely	Up-to-date information
		How frequency the website is updated
		When the website was updated
	Relevant	Organization's objectives
		Organization's history
		Customers (audience)
		Products or services
		Photography of organization's facilities
	Multilanguage/Culture	Use different languages
		Present to different cultured
	Variety of Presentation	Different forms (text, audio, video, ...)
	Accuracy	Precise information (no spelling, grammar errors)
		Sources of information is identified
	Objective	Objective presentation of information
	Authority	Organization's physical address
Sponsor (s) of the site		
Manager (s) of the site		
Specifications of site's managers		
Identification of copyright		
	Email to manager	
Design	Attractive	Innovative
		Aesthetic effects
		Emotional appeal
	Appropriateness	Appropriate to the type of website
		Image used within it serve functional purposes
		Balancing (images, colors, and text)
		Number of screens per page
	Color	Background color
		Text color
	Image/Sound/Video	Number of image/sound/video
		Size of image/sound/video
		Provide alternative text for all non text elements
	Text	Consistency (type, style)
		Readable
		Relative size
Capital letters		

		Breathing space
		Multiple headings
		Scrolling text
		Sequential appearance of text then images
Organization	Index	Index or links to all website's pages
	Mapping	Adequate website map or navigation bar/menu
		Current page
	Consistency	General layout
	Links	Working links
		Assistant links (back to home, top, back to original website)
Worthy links (to other related websites, no dead links)		
Visiting pages		
Logo	Organization's logo is clear and noticeable	
	Domain	Meaningful domain name
User-friendly	Usability	Ease to use, understand, operate, find, or navigate
		Easy to find using search engines
		What's new
	Reliability	Appropriate and easy to remember URL
		Short download speed
		Multi browser support
		Work properly using different screen settings
		Fewer ads
		Measuring efficiency
	Availability	
	Interactive Features	Clear instructions
		Help function
		FAQ
		Effective internal search tool
		Feedback between user and website (email, chat, online community, suggested forms)
		Review transactions
	Tracking order	
Security /Privacy	Secure transactions	
	Privacy	