

Preliminary Study: Designing The Writing Feature On Online Media From IDN Times User Experience

Asy Syifa Rahma Ghifari¹, Andreas Rio Adriyanto², Didit Widiatmoko Soewardikoen³

^{1,2,3}Fakultas Industri Kreatif, Universitas Telkom, Indonesia

Abstract: *There has been a shift in the dissemination of information from print media to online media, which is influenced by the development of the internet in information and communication technology. IDN Times is an online media that is popular among millennials and Gen Z. This platform adopts a participatory culture where users not only enjoy content but also contribute to creating online content. Writers from diverse backgrounds, together with the editorial team, are members of the writer's community to publish articles that can be monetized through the gamification system. Although research related to IDN Times has existed before, no one has analyzed the tendency of millennials and Gen Z when choosing a news writing platform from a visual perspective. Data collection was carried out through qualitative methods in the form of visual observations, interviews, questionnaires, and literature reviews. Then the researcher uses a design research method with a design thinking approach at the empathetic stage. The results of the study are in the form of visual aspects that are important in the user interface to create a positive experience, to affect the preferences of young people when using the feature of writing applications or websites. This finding can be a reference for improving and redesigning the user interface of IDN Times media or other online media.*

Keywords: Millennial, Gen Z, Online Media, UI, UX.

INTRODUCTION

The millennial generation, or Gen Y, includes individuals born between 1980 and 1994. Meanwhile, Gen Z or iGen involves those born between 1995 and 2012 (Twenge, Jean M, 2017:6). Even so, Pew research through Michael Dimock, stated that the generation grouping has no scientific basis because the boundaries that place a person in generation Z or millennials are uncertain, have no definition and are not universally agreed. However, technological developments in recent years have certainly affected their attitudes and behaviors, which grow at different times, so that the terms millennial generation and Gen Z can be used as a general reference. The presence of the internet with smartphones as an innovation in the field of information and communication technology has the most impact on people's consumption patterns when receiving and processing information, This has also given rise to the trend of spreading news through print media to online media. IDN Times is an online media from IDN Media, which was established in 2014. The platform has the motto "The Voice of Millennials and Gen Z". IDN Times provides various categories of rubrics, such as news, entertainment, tips & motivation, special topics for men and women, science, technology, food, regional articles, community articles, and other categories. The advantage of IDN Times compared to its competitors is the articles of community writers, freelance writers from the millennial generation, and Gen Z who went through the process with the editors of IDN Times (Rusdi and Imanuella, 2021:713). IDN Times presents its news in the form of listicle articles and narratives, the language is relaxed but always prioritizes facts and speed of information. The listicle format only uses the main idea and visuals in the form of photos or illustrations that are relevant to the discussion. This format is in accordance with the characteristics of the millennial generation and Gen Z who are looking for information quickly, concisely and interestingly. IDN Times awards in the form of points that can be exchanged for various benefits to authors who successfully publish articles after going through the editorial process. In addition to the publication of articles, points also come from users' participation in events, workshops, quizzes, live streaming, and other activities, which, after fulfilling a certain amount, are disbursed in the form of money, vouchers, and coupons, such as gamification systems. However, in its implementation, news publication activities at IDN Times have user and editor complaints. Ernia Karina, manager and coordinator of IDN Times Surabaya community writers, in an interview with the researcher, said that the interest in community writer articles has doubled over the

past year, which is not comparable to the innovation of website and application appearance, as well as the ability of the editorial team's resources. IDN Times also needs a display or system to support journalist principles that state information for written products produced by non-journalists, this is to minimize violations of the journalistic code of ethics and the Information and Electronics Law (Ritonga and Noniya, 2023). Most of the research related to IDN Times has not examined the visual needs of users based on the way they interact with the user interface and the user experience. These two aspects are rarely discussed even though they have been applied to some of the features of the IDN Times platform. As IDN Times' main target, millennials and Gen Z have preferences when choosing websites or applications to write news. These preferences are not limited to the appearance of the website landscape or portrait on the mobile application, but involve filling in the source of information, writing style, processing time and the advantages of the device used. Online media can involve the psychological aspects as well as the habits of the users as mentioned to ensure the competitiveness of the company, research in this way was done earlier by social media companies. The visual attachment that influences the behavior patterns of millennials and Gen Z when interacting with the IDN Times platform is an interesting reason for the author to conduct this study. So the research question arises, "Are the visual elements used in the IDN Times application writing feature currently meet the needs of users?". Therefore, the research aims to understand the effectiveness of visual elements in the news writing menu on the IDN Times platform in meeting the needs of the millennial and gen Z generations, then provide recommendations for visual aspects for the redesign of the user interface.

METHOD

The primary data collection method is carried out qualitatively through in-depth interviews to meet the aspect of the makers. An in-depth structured interview was conducted on December 29, 2023 with Ernia Kurnia Ayu, manager and editorial coordinator of IDN Times Community Surabaya who has served since 2016 at IDN Times. The second interview for the user aspect was conducted on December 29, 2023, with Ines Sela Suseno, a verified author from the community writer since 2018 who won the Millennials of the Months award for December 2019 for actively writing and winning the best article in the news category during the annual IDN Times Community Award. Additional data on the user aspect is in the form of an initial survey in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire with random sampling. The number of respondents was 43 people from the WhatsApp community group managed directly by IDN Times.

The data analysis process uses the design research method, through the empathic design thinking approach, in order to determine the needs of users of the IDN TIMES platform, so that the visual aspects of the user interface that must be improved as the basis for the redesign are known.

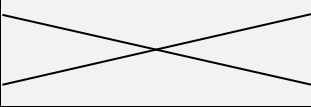
Usability -Usability from a design perspective is the capacity of an application to be understood by the user, learned by the user, operated by the user, and interesting to the user. The concept of mobile app usability is the development of traditional software and website usability. There is a close relationship between aesthetics and usability because the user's first impression comes from the aesthetics of the visual display, followed by the ease of use and finally navigation or control (Huang, 2023:716-717). Based on this theory, mobile app usability becomes one of the theories of observation of the image aspect in the user interface of the application and the IDN Times website. To measure the effectiveness of mobile applications and websites when interacting with users, usability theory is used in all categories, namely cognitive support, information support, interaction support, user support and performance support, because it discusses the close relationship between aesthetics and functionality of a software.

User Interface dan user experience -The user interface (UI) is part of an interactive computer system that communicates with the user. The user interface includes all aspects of the system that are visible to the user (Boucher & Yalcin, 2006). Good communication is the main key behind the success of the user interface, the communication is established between the user and the design interface to achieve their goals. Once the user opens the user interface, the design interface already communicates where they are, what can be done, and how they should do it (Miksovsky, in Boucher, 2013:1). Therefore, the selection of icon designs, fonts, colors, layouts, animations and other visual elements is the main focus of the user interface.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The first stage carried out in this study was visual observation to compare the user interface of the news writing menu on websites and applications. The visual data on each news writing menu in Table 1 are analyzed descriptively for the interpretation of these elements from existing theories. The researcher only applied the theory of affordances and signifiers during observation, because previous research used these two aspects as a reference to discuss the visual user interface and its relationship with psychology and user experience. Then five aspects of usability that must exist in software are used, namely cognitive support, information support, interaction support, user support and performance support because it discusses the relationship between aesthetics and functionality of a software.

Table 1 Comparison of article writing menus on IDN Times website and application pages

Yes	Website Page	Application Menu	Article Writing Features
1	Home page	Home	Popular topics
			Featured articles
			Article trending
			New articles published
			Popular tags
2	Community dashboard		How to & FAQ
			Redeem history
			Assignment
		Creator menu	Writing guide
			Total views
			See the ranking
			Bonus point
			Draft
			Moderated
			Revision
			Appear
			Rejected
			Create an article
3	Create an article	Write news	Writing guide
			Select a topic
			Title column
			Snippet column
			Upload a cover image.
			Opening paragraph columns
			Subheading column
			Embed image
			Description fields
			Move section button
			Add section button
			Undo and redo features.
			Article Preview Features
			Send and save button.

Source: Personal Documentation

Homepage (Menu Home)

The homepage is the first part seen by users who want to read news and community writers before entering the news writing menu. An example of signifier is the Popular Topics feature displayed in the keyword button on the homepage, serving as an affordance that directs users to a collection of articles on similar topics and helps search for news or article writing ideas, as shown in Figure 3, which users use Popular Topics very often. The results of the survey 34.9% of these respondents were used as initial data.

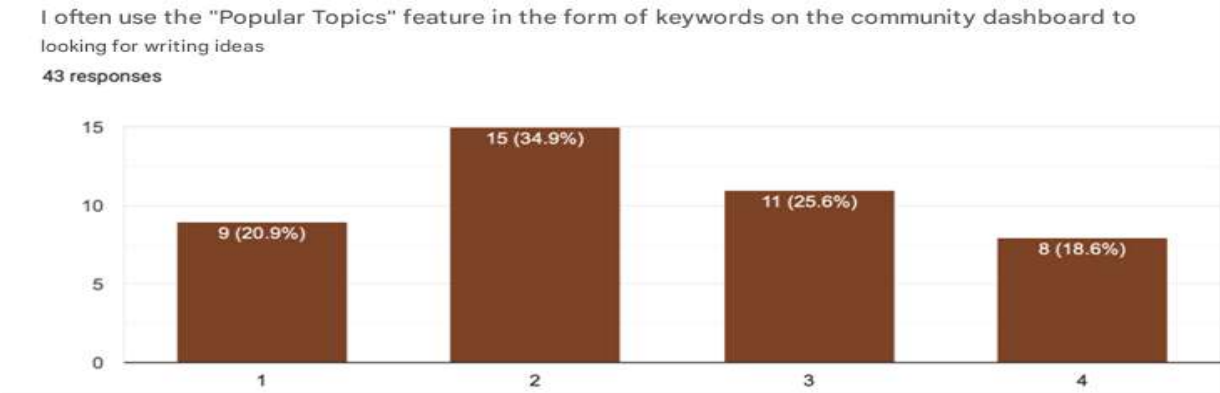




Figure 1 Survey results of the ease of use of popular topic features in the homepage menu.
Source: Personal documentation

Further explain the comparison between affordance and signifiers aspects seen in the home section of the website and mobile application in Table 2.

Table 2 Comparison of affordance and homepage menu signifiers on website and app pages

	Website	Mobile app
Home		
Affordance		
Signifiers	<p>Shortcuts in headers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. IDN Times logo to go to the home menu2. Pencil icon to go to the news writing menu3. Profile icon to go to the community dashboard menu <p>The navigation for article categories is arranged in the menu header at the top position in the direction of the eye which has a white background, there are 7 menus, namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. #GENZMemilih2. Quiz3. News4. Business5. Sport6. Tech7. Hype	<p>The navigation on the home page is located at the top according to the eye view which consists of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. News2. IDN Live3. Quiz <p>Then the navigation is located at the bottom adjacent to the finger position, consisting of 4 menus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Home2. Search3. Live streaming menu shortcuts and write news4. Notification5. Profile

	<p>8. Korea 9. Life 10.Health 11.Community 12.Regional 13.Other However, there is still other information for regional and other categories so drop down so that the display does not look full.</p>	<p>This difference in position makes it easier for users to choose the menu when touching the screen with their finger.</p>
	<p>The entire user interface uses red and black, this color is the company's key visual as applied in the IDN Times logo. IDN Times has another news portal that is still in existence even though it is marketed to a different target audience, the shortcut to the media website appears on the hamburger menu icon in the upper right corner which when clicked appears a dropdown button. Then signifiers in the use of warm colors, namely red and yellow to indicate an active menu or category, then monochrome colors for inactive menus. Because the large screen displays the website menu uses only icons or text, the remaining space is focused on adding other amounts of information such as the most popular news, trending news that is not in the application. There are differences in size, color and position between the headline, category and date of publication for easy readability.</p>	<p>The color combination used is red and black, the same as the colors on the website. However, unlike websites, in the application signifiers are in the form of a plus sign (+) at the bottom of the screen as a shortcut to directly enter the "create article" menu from any section. Then part of the menu design uses icons with a combination of images and text.</p>

Conclusion:

Overall, Table 2 shows many differences in the design of the home menu on websites and applications. The website menu display uses icons or text, while applications use both to adjust the screen size used by the user. This difference in menu position and design was found due to a gap in screen size, some functions such as the category menu in the website header, were moved to the explore menu in the application. But there are also similarities, namely popular topics that are both made into keyword buttons to make it easier for users to see articles on the same topic without having to search manually on menus or other navigation. Then the share icon makes it easier for users to share articles to social media on every article on the website or application.

Source: Personal Documentation

After analyzing the affordance and signifiers aspects of the user interface of the website and mobile application, a usability analysis was carried out in Table 3 to see the effectiveness of aesthetics and functionality, and then the relationship with the user experience.

Community Dashboard (Menu Kreator)

The community dashboard is a special menu for creating content on the IDN Times platform. On the website, the content created is only in the form of articles, while in the mobile application, there are two types of content in the form of articles and live streaming. The community dashboard allows community writers to see the status of their articles, including those that have entered the editor's desk or are moderated, have been published or published, pending or unpublished but have passed the editorial, revised and rejected or

rejected, and drafts or are still in the process of being written. Indirectly, the use of terms for article status uses aspects of cognitive support and hidden affordance because it is related to the language habits and behavior of people from journalism and editorial. In the survey conducted, questions related to affordance and signifiers aspects related to the ease of users finding and understanding the news writing guidelines provided by IDN Times. Figure 2 shows the results of respondents' answers, based on the survey of many respondents understand the writing guidelines through the information provided on the community dashboard so that 93% of respondents' answers are used as initial data.

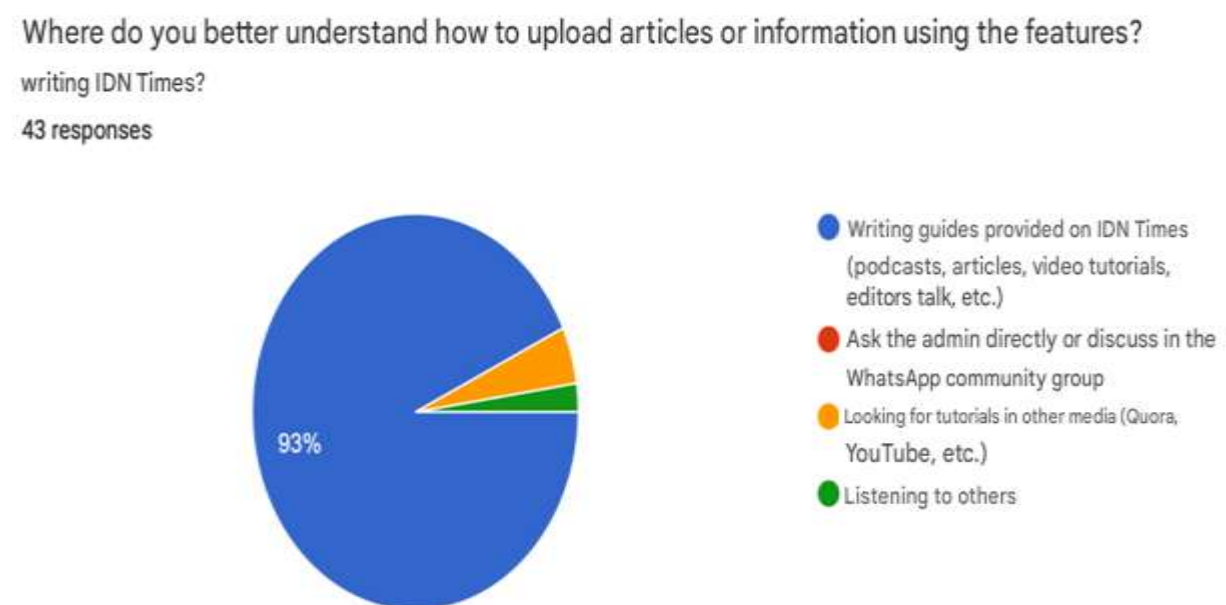


Figure 2 Results of the survey on ease of understanding the guidelines for writing news provided by IDN Times

Furthermore, the application of usability aspects is further presented in Table 4 which compares the appearance of the community dashboard and user experience on websites and mobile applications. Table 3 shows the usability analysis for the community dashboard menu on websites and applications based on user experience.

Table 3 Implementation of usability on the community dashboard on the IDN Times website and application

No.	Features used	Usability Aspects
1	Provide the same theme and color for a variety of Screen orientation and size	Cognitive support
2	Displays consistent, interconnected navigation on the website and application	User Support
3	Focus on one task every time you open a new interface, minimal animations, color gradients and other designs that make loading more difficult.	Information Support
4	Provides an intuitive and responsive interface that is interconnected in each view making it easier to do activities, such as shortcuts	Cognitive support, Interaction Support

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| 5 | A display that shows enough information on a single screen because
The information is arranged in an orderly and logical manner, and the same color scheme is used for online and offline activities. | Cognitive support, Information Supp |
| 6 | There is an informational guide that helps to understand the system, the flow of the system is easy to remember and understand because completing tasks can be done with just a few clicks | Cognitive support |
| 7 | Creating an aesthetic and easily recognizable icon, there is a color contrast between the background and the front content, white space, images to clarify information, easy-to-read writing, delimiting and giving titles to each screen that is currently displaying. | Information Support |
| 8 | Gives the menu order consistent, and the controls adjust the size of the finger or mouse for easy control. | Performance Support |
| 9 | Using the language of words, phrases and sentence structure
Understood by users | Cognitive support |

Source: Personal Documentation

Create Article Menu (Write News Menu) and Image Gallery

The article creation menu has a separate page that looks very different from other menus in IDN Times, this menu provides a minimalist page with design features adapted from word processing software for written documents that are also commonly used by other software to make it easier for community writers to understand the features that exist to write their stories. The create article menu has an article image input column in the sub-heading section which is named image gallery. An image gallery is a pop up box that appears when you press the "insert picture" icon on the embed menu. When you press the button, the entire screen will be filled with a "picture gallery" pop-up with a news menu background with a lowered lighting level. This display is an aspect of cognitive support with the application of affordance so that users focus on one task. In the image gallery menu, community writers can upload new images or reuse images that have been uploaded, previously uploaded images can be inserted into the image gallery that functions as a folder. Users can create as many folders as possible and name them as per their needs. Table 6 contains a comparative analysis of affordance and signifiers from the article-making menu section of the IDN Times website and mobile application.

User Needs

The first data from the initial survey was in the form of a likert scale questionnaire with random sampling. The number of respondents was 43 people from the WhatsApp community writers group which was managed directly by the IDN Times editorial. Based on the questionnaire, it is known that community writers are more millennials as much, with 67.5% compared to the total generation Z, which is 32.6%. Respondents had student or student jobs 32.6%, freelancers 39.5%, and permanent jobs 23.8%.

Age
43 responses

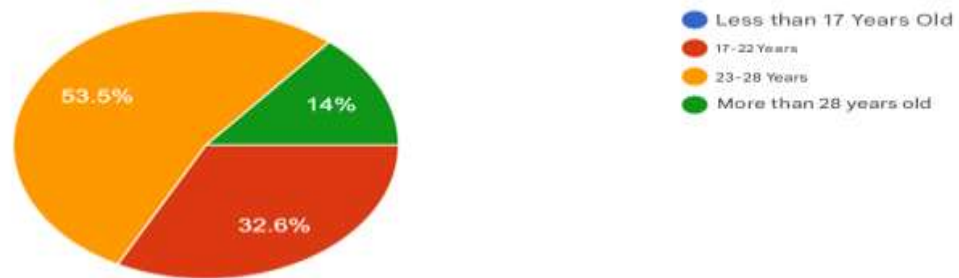


Figure 3 Results of the age comparison survey of community writers

Source: Personal documentation

There is a tendency where the millennial generation prefers to write articles through websites because it is easier to multitask, the screen size is larger, so that it displays more complete information, the article search system is accurate, and they like to type through the keyboard on a laptop.

As a millennial (aged 42-27 years) I prefer to write articles via websites.
30 responses

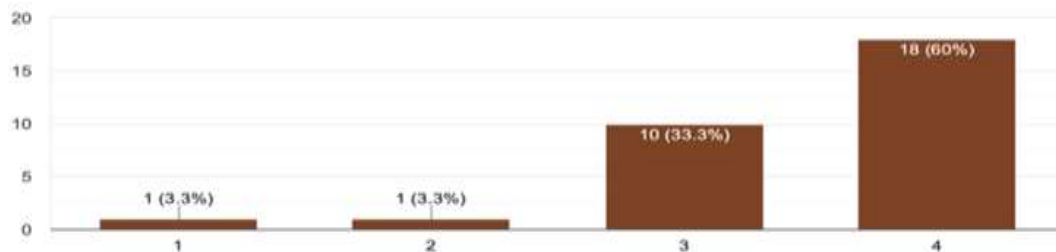


Figure 4 Results of the survey comparing the age of community writers

Source: Personal documentation

Gen Z often uses mobile applications to read news daily, but does not like to write on the IDN Times mobile application except for the flexibility aspect, because they can write draft articles anywhere, but the finalization of articles is still done on the website. Even so, Gen Z likes a minimalist user interface even though it needs to be improved to find news features to be more accurate and system improvements to minimize errors.

User Needs

Based on the data collected from visual observations and literature reviews for the image aspect, then primary data in the form of questionnaires and in-depth interviews for the audience aspect, structured interviews for the maker aspect which all use the design research method, the conclusion emerges that the user interface that must be improved based on user experience is:

1. Development of a new user interface that retains functional features
2. Added a link column for a collage image source in the image gallery menu
3. Guide to writing articles visualized through an interactive user interface
4. Picture gallery menu development, old photos can be deleted by users
5. Images from published articles are made into a separate open source menu so that they can be accessed by community writers for reuse
6. Bookmark feature to save articles for re-reading

7. Redesign icons for Q&A rubrics to eliminate misconceptions about feature functionality with chat admin
8. Design pop up feedback when exiting the writing menu for the site

The empathize stage has been carried out so far, it takes further stages in the form of defining before making a prototype menu and new features for the user interface of the IDN Times website and application. However, design recommendations in the form of pop up feedback for users when they exit the website writing menu need can be done at this time, so here is the design display of the feedback feature.

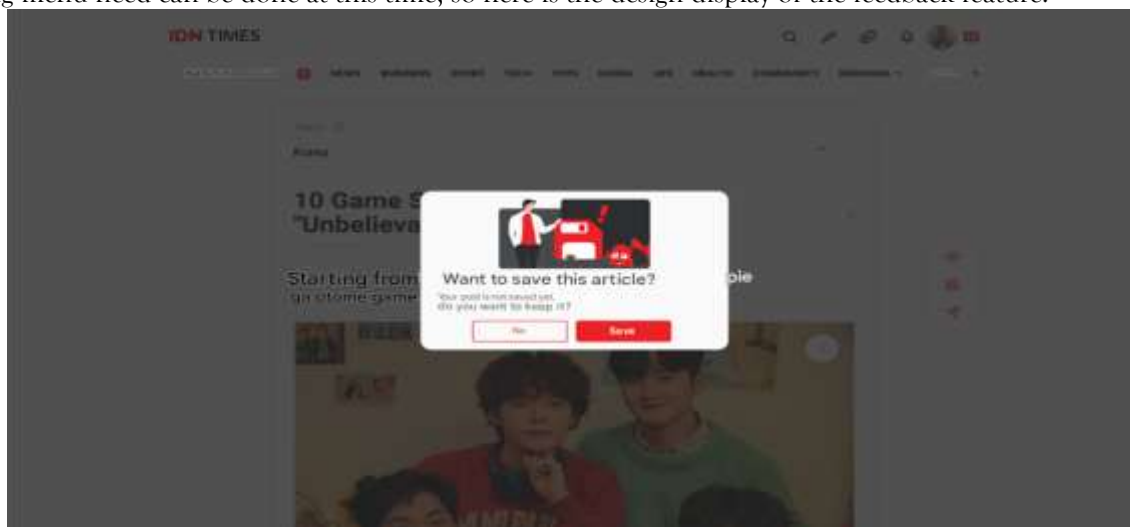


Figure 5 Design results for feedback pop up on a website

Source: Personal documentation

The pop up design applies the visual concept of IDN Times brand identity that has been used in the mobile application user interface. Based on observations, the key visuals in the application consist of fonts, flat design illustrations, photos and color palettes. The type of font used is the Awan Zaman font (Figure 7), flat design illustrations and color combinations (Figure 8).

Figure 7 Medium Age Cloud Fonts and Heavy Age Clouds in the IDN Times application



Source: Personal documentation

Figure 8 Results of the age comparison survey of community writers

Source: Personal documentation

CONCLUSION

IDN Times as an Indonesian online media attracts the attention of the millennial generation and Gen Z by providing a forum to write and publish news online through a simple editorial process supported by an interactive, adaptive and easy-to-understand user interface. Another advantage, IDN Times has a practical money disbursement system and is also active in building personal relationships through online and offline activities between the community of community writers and the editorial team. However, there is a need to

redesign the user interface to make it easier for users to enter quality images and accurate sources of information according to the guidelines, as the number of articles entered and published is not proportional to the capabilities of the editorial team. The redesign of the user interface is an anticipatory step in the event of a violation of the Journalistic Code of Ethics and the Information and Electronic Law (ITE) because the article is written by non-journalists. The emphasize stage has been carried out, so it takes further stages in the form of defining before making a prototype user interface as a whole as a whole. The define stage can be carried out after the collection of usability testing data involving five participants from millennials and generation Z who were given the task of creating articles from scratch within a certain completion time.

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