



Hive4.com

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**MagicOnline  
Information Architecture Audit  
RegistrationProcess**

Version 1.0

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# 1.1 Registration: Step One

The screenshot shows the registration page for MagicOnline. At the top, there are navigation links for Marketplace, News & Trends, and Resources. A search bar is also present. The main heading is 'Registration'. Below this, a paragraph explains the benefits of joining the site. A progress indicator shows 'Step 1 of 3'. The form is divided into three sections: 'Contact Information', 'Member Information', and 'Company Contact Information'. Each section contains various input fields for personal and company details. A 'Proceed' button is at the bottom right. Numbered callouts (1-7) point to specific elements: 1 points to the search bar, 2 to the 'Join' button, 3 to the introductory text, 4 to the progress indicator, 5 to the 'D&B DUNNS #' field, 6 to the 'First Name' field, and 7 to the asterisk indicating a required field.

- (1) Help needs to include detailed information on registration process (see #9).
- (2) Since we are currently in the registration process, the “Join” link should not be available here. Its presence here is disorienting to the user, who needs cues that tell him/her where s/he is within the hierarchy of the site.
- (3) Incentive for registration must be presented before the user initiates the registration process. Additional information about the benefits of registration should be presented within the registration process as additional reinforcement, with more information available via help/FAQ/privacy policy (etc) links.
- (4) D&B DUNNS and Tax Exemption Number: if this information is, in fact, necessary, the terminology must be linked to a glossary entry and information about why the information is required (including “what’s in it for me” from the user’s perspective).
- (5) It’s a great idea to tell users to call MagicOnline, BUT! The number is a 900-number, associated with phone sex and other such highly esteemed, extremely costly services; many phone companies block 900 numbers by default. Provide a toll-free number, and include the number prominently along with other necessary information in a help menu.
- (6) It’s a great idea to indicate how many steps there are and where the user is in the process. I’d like to see this displayed more prominently, directly under the main heading, “Registration.”
- (7) It is crucial to indicate which items are required and which are not. But this information is displayed on the right margin—a user is not likely to see it. Also, light blue isn’t

very visible.

The screenshot shows the 'Registration' page for MagicOnline. The page is titled 'Registration' and includes a navigation menu with 'Marketplace', 'News & Trends', and 'Resources'. Below the navigation, there is a search bar and a 'Join' button. The main content area is divided into sections: 'Contact Information', 'Member Information', and 'Company Contact Information'. Each section contains various input fields for user details, company information, and contact data. The form is annotated with 15 numbered callouts (8-15) pointing to specific elements: 8 points to the 'Contact Information' header; 9 points to the left sidebar; 10 points to the 'D&B DUNS #' field; 11 points to the 'Buy or Sell' radio buttons; 12 points to the text below the DUNS field; 13 points to the 'Member Information' header; 14 points to the 'Daytime Phone' field; 15 points to the 'Department' field. A 'Proceed' button is located at the bottom right of the form.

- (8) **Contact Information:** an explanation should be provided about why this information is being collected and why the user benefits from providing it. A link to the privacy policy and other information should be offered.
- (9) In the left-side column, where section navigation is usually offered elsewhere on the site, there should be a menu containing links to an example/overview of the registration process, help, customer service, FAQs, privacy policy, membership benefits, details about Magic, MagicOnline, Hive4, and Advanstar, etc. (Other content depends upon marketing goals, but could include “refer an associate,” for example.)
- (10) If the DUNS # is really necessary, the instructions should state, “Enter your 9-digit DUNS # in this format: 88-888-8888.” There should also be a link to a popup that defines what it is, why it is necessary, and how to get it. (See #12)
- (11) Here, the user is forced to choose between being a buyer OR a seller. A combined “buyer/seller” option is crucial.
- (12) If the DUNS # is really necessary, it’s a good idea to provide this information about how to get the number. But the user must also be told why s/he needs to provide the number.
- (13) **Member Information:** an explanation should be provided about why this information is being collected and why the user benefits from providing it. A link to the privacy policy and other information should be offered.
- (14) For fields requesting phone/fax numbers and email address, the instructions must specify the format that will be accepted as correct. (Do not rely on an error message to tell the user how stupid s/he is after the fact.)
- (15) For the “Department” field, provide a default.

**Registration**

By joining the MagicOnline site, you will be able to submit Request for Proposals, Request for Quotes, Purchase Orders and much more. To complete the registration process please complete these two pages of information about you and your company. You'll need to know your D&B DUNNS number and Tax Exemption #. Please call a MagicOnline representative at 917-326-6182 if you have any questions about the registration process.

**Step 1 of 3** \* - Required

**Contact Information**

Company Name: \*  Do you want to Buy or Sell in the MagicOnline site? \*  
 Buy  Sell

D&B DUNS #: \* (example: 88-888-8888)

To find your DUNS number you can call Dun & Bradstreet at 1-800-333-0505

**Member Information**

First Name: \*  Daytime Phone \*

Last Name: \*  Other Phone

Title:  Fax

If Other:  Email Address \*

Department:

**Company Contact Information**

Address 1: \*  Phone \*  **17**

Address 2:  Fax:

City: \*  URL  **18**

State: \*  **19**

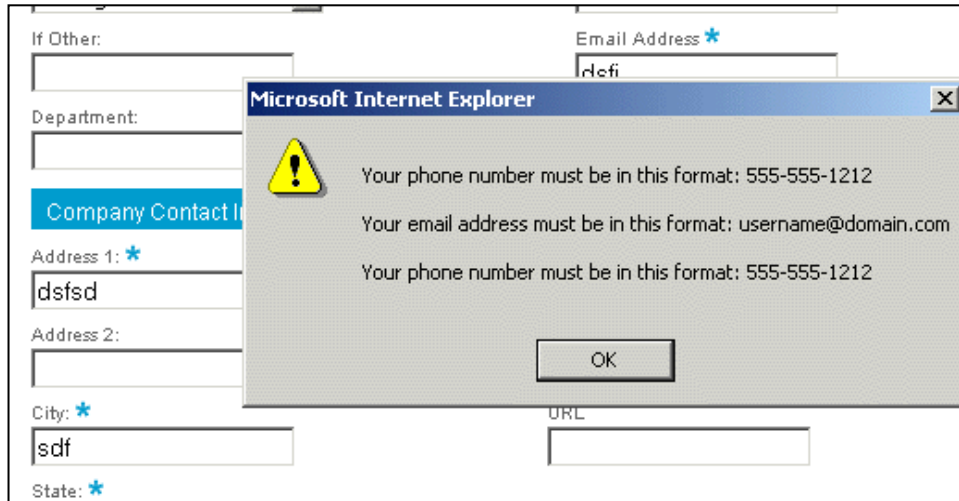
Zip/Postal Code: \*

Country: \*  **20**

**Proceed** **21**


- (16) Company Contact Information: an explanation should be provided about why this information is being collected and why the user benefits from providing it. A link to the privacy policy and other information should be offered.
- (17) For fields requesting phone/fax numbers, the instructions must specify the format that will be accepted as correct. (Do not rely on an error message to tell the user how stupid s/he is after the fact.)
- (18) If a URL is requested, instructions should indicate what URL is being requested (company website?) and should specify the format that will be accepted as correct. (Do not rely on an error message to tell the user how stupid s/he is after the fact.) If there is a benefit to the user for providing this information, it should be highlighted.
- (19) For a field requesting State, a drop-down menu is a good idea to prevent users from typing in nonsense characters (as illustrated in the example). Also, if the website will serve international users, as the Country field suggests, the State field should be expanded to include Provinces and Territories.
- (20) For a field requesting Postal Code, instructions should state the number of characters required. Does this field accept expanded US zip codes? Does it accept international postal codes?
- (21) The "Proceed" button needs to look like an active button. Currently, it looks like a decoration.

## 1.2 Registration: Step One Error (1)



The screenshot shows a registration form in Microsoft Internet Explorer. The form includes fields for 'If Other:', 'Email Address \*', 'Department:', 'Company Contact', 'Address 1: \*', 'Address 2:', 'City: \*', and 'State: \*'. A JavaScript error popup is displayed over the form, containing the following text:

**Microsoft Internet Explorer**

 Your phone number must be in this format: 555-555-1212

Your email address must be in this format: username@domain.com

Your phone number must be in this format: 555-555-1212

OK

There is absolutely no reason why a user should receive a javascript popup error message like this in the registration process, unless it pops up dynamically, before the user clicks “proceed,” while the user is entering information. It’s hostile, it makes the user feel stupid, and it tells the user what s/he should have been told before s/he entered any information in the registration form.

The “you are stupid” popup error message is an excellent way to screen out all customers who cannot read the programmer’s mind.

Format requirements should be stated in the instructions on the form.

### 1.3 Registration: Step One Error (2)

Company Name: \*  
dfascdferwer

Do you want to Buy or Sell in the MagicOnline site? \*  
 Buy  Sell

D&B DUNS #: \* (example: 88-888-8888)  
435566576576

To find your DUNS number you can call Dun & Bradstreet at 1-800-333-0505

**Member Information**

First Name: \*  
dfdsasdfsadf


Last Name: \*  
dfsdfsdf

Title:  
Jobber

If Other:  
[Empty]

Email Address \*  
ldkfj@dsfd.com

Microsoft Internet Explorer

 Please enter a 9 digit number for D&B DUNS#.

OK

If you *really* want to screen out users who can't read the programmer's mind, offering a second "you are stupid" popup message is guaranteed to be effective in getting rid of them.

**Moral of the story:** tell the user what is an acceptable response before s/he enters the information. Make the user feel smart. If the user offers an unacceptable response, the error message must be friendly, specify exactly what the problem is, and explain exactly what needs to be done to correct the problem.

The good news is that the popup error messages shown here specify what is wrong and tell the user how to correct the problem. The content can be used both in instructions and error messages.

## 1.4 Registration: Step Two

Registration

Next, please provide your company specifics. Private Showroom owners select membership based on the information you provided. By providing more information about your company, you increase the likelihood of receiving Private Showroom invitations.

Step 2 of 3

**Company Specifics**

Company Name: \* company Business Type: \* Please select option

Tax Exemption #: \* Please select option

Please enter a company description to be included with site transactions.

Company Description: \*

Please enter the language for your standard terms and conditions. This information will be appended to all POs you created on the site.

Terms and Conditions: \*

**Company Status:**

Company Size: \* Please select option

Retail Locations: \* Select Retail Locations Public Symbol:

Annual Revenue: \* Select Annual Revenue Year founded: \*

**Business:**

Identifying your business may give access to Showrooms

What is your primary business? \* Please select option What is your secondary business? \* Please select option

**Professional Organizations**

Identifying the organization that your business belongs to may give you access to showrooms

Need More Nodes

Other Organizations:

**Member Name and Password**

Desired Member Name: \*

Password: \*  Re-enter Password: \*

Password Reminder: \* Select Password Reminder

Hint Answer: \*

**Customization**

In order to better serve you, we'd like to know more about your interests. Please help us by selecting the industry topics that interest you the most.

Articles and Features:	Product Information:
1. Please select option	1. Please select option
2. Please select option	2. Please select option
3. Please select option	3. Please select option

Proceed

- Again, since we are currently in the registration process, the “Join” link should not be available here. Its presence here is disorienting to the user, who needs cues that tell him/her where s/he is within the hierarchy of the site.
- The phrasing of the instructions here is ambiguous and unclear. Depending on how it is inflected when read, the second sentence could either be stating *why* the user will benefit from providing the information requested (as intended), or it could be addressing Private Showroom Owners, telling them how they select membership. The instructions need to say, in effect, “You, the user, should provide the information we request so that you will receive the benefit of receiving Private Showroom invitations.” It would be an excellent idea to offer further reading on the concept of Private Showroom invitations.
- Company Specifics:** an explanation should be provided about why this information is being collected and why the user benefits from providing it. A link to the privacy policy and other information should be offered.
- Step 1 of the registration process requests the name of the company. The user should not have to enter this information twice.
- Step 1 of the registration process requests Tax Exemption Number. The user should not have to enter this information twice.
- Company Description:** additional information should be provided to explain the purpose of this text. Most importantly, at least one example should be provided via a link or popup window.
- Terms and Conditions:** additional information should be provided to explain the purpose of this text. Also, “PO” needs to be defined, perhaps via a popup window containing a glossary entry and illustration. Most importantly, at least one example should be provided via a link or popup window.
- In the left-side column, where section navigation is usually offered elsewhere on the site, there should be a menu containing links to an example/overview of the registration process, help, customer service, FAQs, privacy policy, membership benefits, details about Magic, MagicOnline, Hive4, and Advanstar, etc. (Other content depends upon marketing goals, but could include “refer an associate,” for example.)

**Registration**

Next, please provide your company specifics. Private Showroom owners select membership based on the information you provided. By providing more information about your company, you increase the likelihood of receiving Private Showroom invitations.

Step 2 of 3 \*- Required

**Company Specifics**

Company Name: \* [Company] Business Type: \* [Please select option]

Tax Exemption #: \* [ ]

Please enter a company description to be included with site transactions.

Company Description: \* [ ]

Please enter the language for your standard terms and conditions. This information will be appended to all POs you created on the site.

Terms and Conditions: [ ]

**Company Status**

Company Size: \* [Please select option] 10

Retail Locations: [Select Retail Locations]  Public Symbol: [ ]

Annual Revenue: \* [Select Annual Revenue] Year founded: \* [ ] 11

**Business**

Identifying your business may give access in Showrooms

What is your primary business? [Please select option] 12 What is your secondary business? [Please select option]

**Professional Organizations**

Identifying the organization that your business belongs to may give you access to showrooms

Need More Nodes

Other Organizations: [ ]

**Member Name and Password**

Desired Member Name: \* [ ]

Password: \* [ ] 15 Re-enter Password: \* [ ]

Password Reminder: \* [Select Password Reminder]

Hint Answer: \* [ ] 16

**Customization**

In order to better serve you, we'd like to know more about your interests. Please help us by selecting the industry topics that interest you the most.

Articles and Features: 18

1. [Please select option] 2. [Please select option] 3. [Please select option]

Product Information:

1. [Please select option] 2. [Please select option] 3. [Please select option]

**Proceed**

- (9) Company Status: an explanation should be provided about why this information is being collected and why the user benefits from providing it. A link to the privacy policy and other information should be offered.
- (10) The format for a public symbol should be stated, with information on how the user can obtain the information. What is the checkbox for?
- (11) For “Year founded,” the correct date format should be specified.
- (12) Business: additional information should be provided about how identifying business can provide access to showrooms. Also, the distinction between “primary” and “secondary” should be explained. One small point (not shown in the screen shot): it might be a good idea to include “e-commerce” as a business type.
- (13) Professional Organizations: the concept of “professional organizations” needs to be defined, and additional information should be provided about how identifying business can provide access to showrooms. Obviously, “need more nodes” must be replaced with a list of professional organizations that can be selected. “Other organizations” needs to provide a larger text entry box.
- (14) Member Name and Password: this should be the FIRST thing asked of a new member in the registration process. The purpose of the member name and password should be explained.
- (15) If there is a required format for member name and password, this information should be specified in the instructions for these fields.
- (16) For “Hint Answer,” an explanation should be provided that explains that, if the user forgets his/her password, s/he will be prompted with the “Password reminder” question and required to supply the answer chosen here. “Password hint” would be clearer than that “Password reminder.”
- (17) Customization: more information needs to be provided in the instructions here so that the user understands the benefits of supplying the information. The user must be told exactly how we will “serve [him/her] better” if the information is provided.
- (18) A list of options with check boxes would be preferable to drop-down menus for selection of “interests” for customization. The difference between “Articles and

Features” and “Product Information” should be explained.

## 1.5 Registration: Step One (Bad Data Entered)

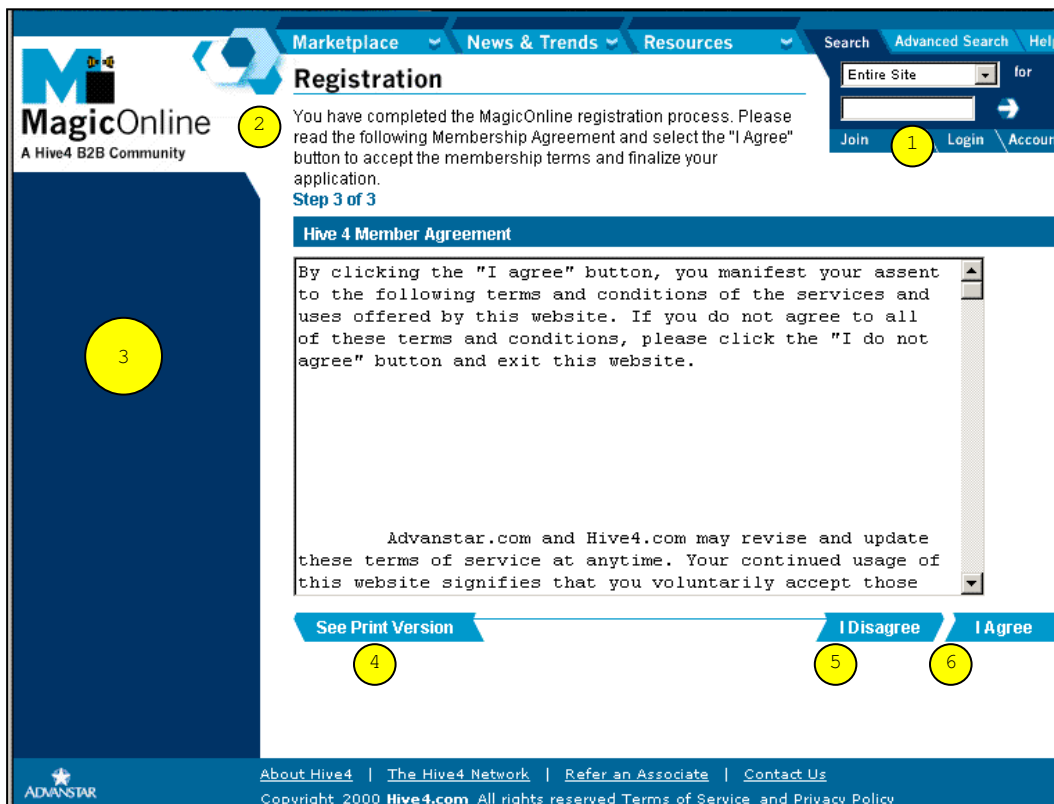
The screenshot shows the 'Registration' page on MagicOnline, Step 2 of 3. The form is titled 'Company Specifics' and contains several sections with various input fields. 16 yellow circles with numbers 1 through 16 are placed over specific fields to indicate bad data entries:

- 1: Company Name field (contains 'company')
- 2: Business Type dropdown menu (contains 'Please select option')
- 3: Tax Exemption # field (contains '755r34')
- 4: Company Description text area (contains 'uyyut')
- 5: Terms and Conditions text area (contains 'uyyui')
- 6: Company Size dropdown menu (contains 'Please select option')
- 7: Retail Locations dropdown menu (contains 'Select Retail Locations')
- 8: Annual Revenue dropdown menu (contains 'Select Annual Revenue')
- 9: Year Founded field (contains '345x')
- 10: Primary Business dropdown menu (contains 'Please select option')
- 11: Secondary Business dropdown menu (contains 'Please select option')
- 12: Desired Member Name field (contains 'jtest1')
- 13: Password field (empty)
- 14: Password Reminder dropdown menu (contains 'Select Password Reminder')
- 15: Hint Answer field (contains 'mudhens')
- 16: Product Information dropdown menu (contains 'Please select option')

In this example, bad data has been entered in almost all of the fields. No error message is displayed after this page is submitted via the “proceed” button. Error messages appear only after the user has completed the final step of registration.

- (1) Company Name: no selection
- (2) Business Type: no selection
- (3) Tax Exemption: invalid entry
- (4) Company Description: nonsense entry
- (5) Terms and Conditions: nonsense entry
- (6) Company Size: no selection
- (7) Retail Locations: no selection
- (8) Annual Revenue: no selection
- (9) Year Founded: nonsense entry
- (10) Business section: no selections
- (11) Professional Organizations section: no selections
- (12) Desired Member Name: real entry
- (13) Password and Re-enter Password: no entry
- (14) Password Reminder: no selection
- (15) Hint Answer: real entry (notice: what question will be asked to prompt for this hint answer?)
- (16) Customization: no selections

## 1.6 Registration: Step Three



- (1) Again, since we are currently in the registration process, the "Join" link should not be available here. Its presence here is disorienting to the user, who needs cues that tell him/her where s/he is within the hierarchy of the site.
- (2) If the user has completed the registration process, what happens if s/he quits now, without clicking "I Agree"? The user needs to be told that registration is not complete until s/he accepts the member agreement.
- (3) In the left-side column, where section navigation is usually offered elsewhere on the site, there should be a menu containing links to an example/overview of the registration process, help, customer service, FAQs, privacy policy, membership benefits, details about Magic, MagicOnline, Hive4, and Advanstar, etc. (Other content depends upon marketing goals, but could include "refer an associate," for example.)
- (4) "See Print Version" is ambiguous language. "Print Version" could mean MagicOnline is going to send out a printed document by mail. "Printable Version" would be a page formatted for printing.
- (5) The buttons need to look like buttons.
- (6) "I Disagree" should assume the user wants to know what happens if they disagree. Provide an extra step with more information and additional incentive copy encouraging the user to complete the registration process.

## 1.7 Registration: Step Three (T&C “Print Version”)

**Registration Agreement**

Advanstar.com and Hive4.com may revise and update these terms of service at anytime. Your continued usage of this website signifies that you voluntarily accept those changes.

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[Close Window](#)

A "print version" should remove all web formatting that might affect printing. This T&C should be presented outside of the standard Hive4 table formatting, specifically without the left side column and search/member area. A URL should be provided on the page. The primary navigation, MagicOnline logo, and titles can remain.

# 1.8 Registration: Step Three Error

The screenshot shows the MagicOnline registration page. At the top, there are navigation tabs for Marketplace, News & Trends, and Resources. The main heading is "Registration". Below this, there is a search bar and a "Join" button. The page contains several error messages in red text:

- "This form does not allow passwords to be set to null"
- "The value 'Password' is required and must be supplied."
- "The value 'Login Name' is required and must be supplied."

Below the errors, it says "Please try again." and "Step 1 of 3". The form is divided into sections: "Contact Information", "Member Information", and "Company Contact Information".

**Contact Information**

Company Name: \* [sdllkjfsldj] Do you want to Buy or Sell in the MagicOnline site? \*  
 Buy  Sell

D&B DUNS #: \* (example: 88-888-8888)  
[888888888]

To find your DUNS number you can call Dun & Bradstreet at 1-800-333-0505

**Member Information**

First Name: \* [ksdjf] Daytime Phone \* [123-456-7890]  
Last Name: \* [sdfddsf] Other Phone [ ]  
Title: [Jobber] Fax [ ]  
If Other: [ ] Email Address \* [dsfj@asd.com]  
Department: [ ]

**Company Contact Information**

Address 1: \* [123 adfa] Phone \* [123-456-7890]  
Address 2: [ ] Fax: [ ]  
City: \* [ ] URL [ ]

As pointed out previously, multiple errors in Step Two were not flagged prior to Step Three. Now, after completing Step Three, the user is brought back to **STEP ONE** with errors flagged in blazing red.

The good news is that previously entered information is prefilled on the form.

### The bad news is very bad.

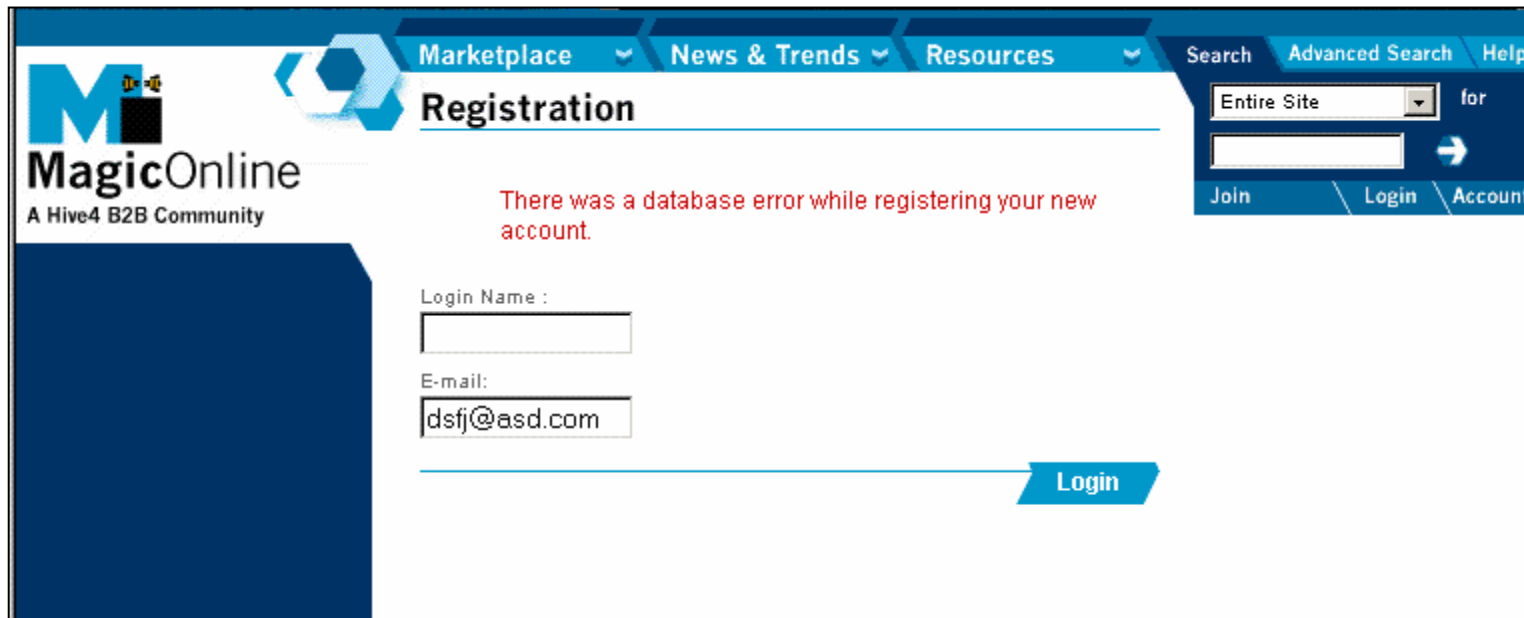
- The user is forced to start from the beginning for no good reason.
- The user sees exactly the same page s/he started with, except for the blazing red “you are stupid” error messages.
- The error messages are rude.

### A better solution would be as follows:

- The user is given complete instructions on how to complete the registration form so s/he has the chance to do it right the first time.
- If required information is missing or entered incorrectly, the user is told before moving to the next step.
- Error messages are presented on the form itself (like the screen shot shown here, but are written in a way that is polite and empowering to the user, rather than insulting.
- Specific problem areas are highlighted so that the user can find them easily.
- The user never has to start over. All correct information is always prefilled on the form.

## 1.9 Registration: Complete with Mysterious Error

Upon completing the registration process, I was greeted with the page shown here:



Even assuming that this page resulted from the fact that MagicOnline is under development, the error message itself exists as a possible error message a user might see for whatever reason.

The fact that the (fake) email address I entered in the registration process is prefilled in the “E-mail” field suggests that the website recognizes at least some of the information I entered. However, as a user, I do not know what the mysterious “database error” was or what it means for my membership. I still find myself on a page titled “Registration,” the “join” button remains in the upper right corner of the page, and I am being asked to “Login,” which is what I thought I’d been doing for the past half hour. For all I know, I’m not registered at all.

If there is any possibility of such mysterious “database error” happening to a user, an error message must be provided that identifies, as clearly as possible, what the problem is, and, **most importantly**, what the user needs to do to correct the problem.