

Class Project 12 – User Testing Maynooth Furnitures

Introduction

Testing products in real life situations not only paves the path for further refinement but might also lead to innovative insights that designers can't account for in the creation process. The goal of this assignment was to perform a moderated test on a high fidelity prototype of a furniture website and mobile application. The prototypes were tested on a participant with a similar user persona to Katherine (see persona details). The testing started out with a think aloud assignment followed by a semi-structured interview.

Method

Before the participant was invited, a screen capture was used on the laptop and mobile testing devices. The application was loaded onto the mobile version of Adobe XD and the website used the prototype preview on the laptop. The researchers initially introduced the participant to the furniture website and app. They were then introduced to Katherine's persona. It was the participant's task to test the prototypes while being put in Katherine's shoes. In the first part, the participant was asked to purchase a bed from the website/app. While exploring the website participants were verbally mentioned their thoughts on the website. They were also informed that the website was a prototype and most features didn't work. In the second part, the participant was asked a few evaluative questions about the prototypes. Finally the participant was thanked for taking part in the testing procedure.

Results & Improvements

Website

- After clicking on the bedroom page the participant went to the product page and back to the category page to see if there were any other bed options → need to add a subcategory page for choice of beds.
- Remarked that she liked a few inspirational items and clicked on the "Shop Now" button, surprised they were not working. → Need to add a clear indicator that these are inspiration ideas and an intermediary page after clicking "Shop Now"
- Clicked most buttons that are supposed to be clickable except Pinterest and change perspective → perspective button has same design as hero header so might be due to lack of interest. All other buttons seem functional.
- Generally liked the look of the website and the convenience of buying things from home.
- In the interview she liked that many of the furniture items were according to her taste.

Application

- Confused about where to press after the splash screen → Need to automatically transition into login screen instead of a touch option.

- Was very confused by the touchscreen interface on mobile. Also mentioned this in the interview → The mobile version is not very suitable for testing. Although there are hints for clickable items, left flicks automatically go the next artboard.
- Wanted to see if bed suited her taste → Need some inspiration options on the product page
- Dragged left to see more products on homepage → interface works

Evaluation

I found some very useful insight for the next design iteration. An obvious insight is the need for a subcategory page since it provides people with choice. A less obvious insight is the confusion while using the mobile prototype. Furthermore, I found that my own instructions influenced the results quite a lot. Even though I had conveyed that not everything was working I had also told them to explore as they pleased. In the website prototype, there was no indication of clickable items so the user spent a lot of time clicking various buttons to see what they did. As an improvement, it might be good to mention that it is ok to ask questions during the thinking aloud experiment (in case participants are confused). The entire experience was quite a bit different to experiments in more controlled environments since the participant had more freedom while testing the prototype. I personally found it more difficult to strike a balance between obtaining objective results and telling the participant what to do.

Prototype Testing Guidelines

Introduction and purpose

- Testing a furniture website built with a certain customer in mind
- Katherine:
 - o 55, Executive officer earning \$110,000 per year
 - o Price and style conscious (likes to use pinterest)
 - o Kids are in university
 - o Wants to update furniture in a 4 bedroom home.
- Purpose: Put yourself in Katherines shoes while testing the furniture website and app.

Part 1: Think aloud

- I want you to purchase a bed from the website/app
- While looking around I want you to say out loud what you are thinking while performing actions on the website. Don't be afraid to be critical.
- Feel free to explore!

Part 2: Interview

- o What did you like about the website and the app?
- o What could be improved?
- o Would you use this website and app if you were Katherine?