

PannaUllah_Project 3

Desktop Usability Testing

Introduction

All the information obtained in this document will focus on two comparative desktop usability tests on **airline websites**.

Each of the users was given the task of booking a flight on two different airline websites and the notes in this document will help us explore the user's experience as they journey through the site.

The document will be used as a bank of key insights to help us identify and understand the user's context, goals, behaviours, positive interactions and pain points. This information will be used as a reference for the design of FlyUX's online experience.

Colour reference

- Positive feedback
- Negative feedback
- Neutral / improvements

Participant 1 - Desktop Usability Test

User background info

- Occupation: Homemaker
- Location: Ireland
- Accesses internet using:
 - iPad
 - Mobile Phone
 - No Laptop/desktop
- Home broadband: Yes
- Frequently used apps:
 - RyanAir - handy for checking in
 - Aer Lingus - handy for checking in
 - Games
 - Social Media
 - Sports

User travel background

- Type of travel: Leisure (considers herself as a frequent flyer)
- Travelled x3 this year (mini-breaks)
 - Dubai - x5 months
 - Lanzarote - x1 week
 - Benidorm
 - Liverpool - x1 day
- “Mostly” books flights online on PC
- Never used travel aggregators (like Skyscanner)
- Frequently uses RyanAir and Aer Lingus for flights

- Last booked flight was to Liverpool x 1 day
 - Needed to know how many people were going = 7 people
 - It was their second trip over, so user already had everyone's detail saved on her phone
 - Logged in > searched for suitable return flights for their preferred day
 - Important aspects for the user when booking this flight:
 - Price
 - Time
 - User compared prices/deals with sister-in-law simultaneously in person
 - User viewed price on Ryan Air
 - Sister-in-law viewed price on Aer Lingus

Task

Website 1, user 1 -

Aer Lingus - Flight and date selection

Assumptions:

- Travel: Cork to Faro
- During school mid-term - Monday 28th Oct - Friday 1st Nov
- Looking to fly out on Saturday before
- X1 week stay
- X2 adults

Task observation notes:

- Does not like going on ad sites or third-party sites from Google search engine to get to Aer Lingus.

- “Hate when you go on to Aer Lingus and then it’ll come up with Aer Lingus, but flights through something else...”
- User is somewhat familiar with the Aer Lingus website, so was quite confident to start searching.
 - A good mental model with search functionality [UDI, Desktop usability test 1, 12:20].
 - Familiar with search fields; from, to, dates, one-way, return.
- Familiar with the term ‘Add promo’ but has never used any promotional code.
- Prefers to select dates using calendar format, rather than to type in dates, this way the user can ensure she has selected the right dates. She has never typed in dates [UDI, Desktop usability test 1, 13:40]
- User missed the ‘Search’ button after entering all the fields, presumed the button would be further down the page, though the page was longer.
 - Would prefer the search button to stand out more, perhaps use a primary colour (red maybe)
- The user expresses she can see the flight time availability for the date she selected, and also available dates before and after her selected dates.
 - This feature is desired by the user because if a suitable time is not available for her date, she can see the nearest date available, instead of having to go through the search function again
- User likes that it shows flight times (departure/arrival) and duration
 - The user feels she has all the info she needs on the flight booking pages; price, date, duration and did not have to look any further
- Would like some indication if there are other available flight times for that day, or if it could say ‘1 flight daily’
- Saver, Plus, Advantage packages

- after selecting the price button the user is presented with 3 packages - user says: "This is where they get you" [UDI, Desktop usability test 1, 17:00]
- User is aware "when you pay dearer" you can get more:
 - Baggage allowance
 - Select seats
 - Priority boarding
- Not familiar with:
 - Collect Avios
 - Earn tier credits
- Likely to select premium package if it was for business travel, but for personal use, would select the low-cost option and purchase extras (such as toiletries and makeup from a supermarket of arrival destination)
- The 3 packages are easy to distinguish and the differences are communicated well.
- Price lock flights - "It would be" a useful feature

Pain Points

On flight selection page - selecting a flight to book [UDI, Desktop usability test 1, 18:35]

- After the user has seen her flight times, she wishes to proceed with the booking process but looks a little lost; "I can't find where to book.." (spoken out loud)
- User clicks on multiple elements and even opens the 3 packages fare drop-down again, but still misses to make a selection on a package at this step
- The user expresses nervous laughter and a feeling of challenge

- When the moderator asked the user, “what is your total amount so far?” The user replied, “350”, but realised after, that the total balance still shows 0.00 in the top corner of the page when it got pointed out. [UDI, Desktop usability test 1, 20:46]
- The user expresses, “I thought there should be something there” to book the flight as she continues looking around.
- Eventually, the user figured out she had to select a package. But quickly faced the same problem for the return flight.
- The user expresses that she had forgotten what she had just done
- Eventually finds the fare button again and makes a selection as she did for the previous selection step
- User displays a look of relief and laughter
- The total cost of the flight is acknowledged

Overall Experience of Aer Lingus

Liked

- All flight info was on one page and didn't have to click further or re-enter search details
- Straight forward
- Liked that the departure link was already populated from a previous screen to enter a current location, so didn't have to re-ent the departure destination again

Disliked

- Upon fare selection - “It didn't prompt me to say, choose” - this is what “threw” the user off her journey
 - Fare selection to be more clear
- Would “like the ‘Search flights’ button to be a different colour may be” - to make it stand out

Website 2, user 1 -

Euro wings - Flight and date selection

Assumptions:

- Travel: London (any airport) to Barcelona
- During school mid-term - Monday 28th Oct - Friday 1st Nov
- Looking to fly out on Saturday before
- X1 week stay
- X2 adults

Task observation notes

- Never heard of Eurowings
- The user initially wasn't sure where to go, had to search for flight booking search function, managed to find in the drop-down from Main navigation
- Gave the option for car hire straight away, "I didn't want that and i don't like that" [UDI, Desktop usability test 1, 27:04]
- Hoping to see a list of London airports and all airports in the UK and then other cities underneath
- "nice bright search for flights" - regards to the search button, the user speaks out loud
- User liked that she can select children as well
- User able to analyse and understand what's displayed on the flight selection page
- The user realises the flights listed has a 'stopover'
 - Felt the flight was "too short a flight for a stopover"
 - But was positive that this information was informed of this straightaway on this page rather than further down the process
- Fare prices (basic, smart, business class)

- Is familiar with fare packages deal across all airline website
 - For shorter flights would pick low-cost fares
- 'Add flex option' - likes the idea of this option
 - useful for connecting flights
 - Free of charge for 40 mins before departure
- A pop-up modal appeared notifying the user that the destination and return flight are not the same
 - User admits she did not check the airport for return
 - Likes this warning feature
 - User assumed she was coming back to the same airport, so glad that she was notified
- Like itinerary/summary of her flight is shown once the selections have been made
- User want to confirm a booking after making her flight selections, she does not want to make any more selections
- User questions if the baggage selections that appear on the following page is even necessary, as in the previous page the user has already made their selection which specifies their baggage allowance.
 - To the user, these steps are 'the same stuff'
 - User intentionally did not make any selection on the following page for baggage selection

Pain Points

Date selection on the flight search function

- Upon clicking the 'search for flights' button, the user is prompted to enter a date ('DD/MM/YY') in the date field. Then upon clicking the date field to input data, the date placeholder texts return to 'Outgoing flights' - user expresses "It just said Outgoing flight and Return flight

before I clicked on that, it didn't suggest that you put your date in there [UDI, Desktop usability test 1, 28:35]

- Users typed in dates this time instead of selecting from the calendar as the user normally would. The user expresses "I think this was because, this was here..." as she points down at the calendar below the search function [UDI, Desktop usability test 1, 29:19]. Felt the design lead the user to type.

Flight selection page

- Whilst the user scrolled from top to bottom of the page, the user is unsure why the package deals jump prices
- Unsure if the price is for one person or 2 people
- Presumes, outbound flight price displayed is for one person. but the flight package opened up at the bottom of the page shows the price for the returned flight.
- The user seemingly correlates the two elements as one, assuming the bottom price (return flight) is for two people.
- Ends up making a selection eventually

Overall Experience

Likes

- Wasn't too daunting for first time user
- Handy prompts
- "Fairly easy, probably would've been easier if I had known about this website" - previous experience preferred
- Prefers calendar format for date selection
- User did like that she had a big warning pop up about the difference in airport

- The user was surprised to see this but found it was a very useful notification

Dislikes

- Was mad that she wasn't told about the airport she was coming back to until she was ready to move forward with the booking, "before going on, could've rectified that"
 - The difference between the airports should've been communicated sooner
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Participant 2 - Desktop Usability Test

User background info

- Occupation: Administration
- Location: Ireland
- Access Internet using:
 - MacBook mostly
 - Mobile phone (iPhone - wifi mostly)
- Home broadband
- Frequently used apps:
 - Email
 - Health apps
 - WhatsApp
 - Social Media
 - Instagram
 - Facebook

- Skyscanner
- Travel Apps
 - My Wallet (for boarding pass)
 - Sky scanner
 - Aer Lingus (deleted)
 - Ryan Air (for boarding passes)

User travel background

- Frequent flyer - once a month before the pandemic
- Prefers using desktop because it's a bigger view
- Travelled x2 this year (before pandemic)
 - Asia- Bali, Indonesia - March
 - Canada, Italy - Jan
- How user books flight:
 1. Skyscanner - to check what's available
 - On phone
 - On desktop (preferred)
 2. Then go to individual airline websites to compare prices
 3. If airline works out cheaper > user would book via the airline website
 4. If Skyscanner works out cheaper > user would book via recommended third party website
- Last booked flight:
 - The user wanted to go to Canada
 - Went on Skyscanner > entered Dublin to Montreal (return flight)
 - Selected departure and arrival dates
 - Saw what got populated

- Air Canada flight was cheaper as there were no extra fees thus booked via Air Canada website (this was a new website to the user)
- An important aspect for the user:
 - That particular trip - Date
 - Would've been booked regardless of the price
- Solo trip
- If going away with others, users usually book all flights on behalf of friends/family and flight details are exchanged via WhatsApp and screenshots are shared.

Task

Website 1, user 2 -

Aer Lingus - Flight and date selection

Assumptions:

- Travel: Cork to Faro
- During school mid-term - Monday 26th Oct - Friday 30th Nov
- Looking to fly out on Saturday before
- Prefer to travel on the weekend
- X1 week stay
- X2 adults

Task observation notes:

- User is confident with searching for the site via a google search engine
- A good mental model of pop-up field entry
- Notices banner on airline website landing pages with travel information, but the user feels it takes up too much of the screen and doesn't feel it's necessary.[UDI, Desktop usability test 2, 17:03]

- A good mental model of the search functionality
- Prefers to use calendar format and see the whole month instead of entering dates (typing).
 - The user feels it's clear and is familiar with this setup as this is how she uses the calendar on her MacBook
- Can see where there is and isn't flights available in the parameters of what she needs
- Fare option - Save, plus, advantage
 - Familiar with these packages but usually would she would purchase extras at the airport if needed
 - Prefers to book save option, then figure out what extras she needs later, this is how the user prefers to operate
- Familiar with price lock functionality but not very useful for user
 - Feels this may be useful for groups or if someone is on a budget (students)

Pain Point

Flight selection page:

- When the user first glanced at the flight availability she felt confused. She thought she was leaving at 1.30 pm because this time is displayed directly beneath the selected date, but it leaves at 11 am which is located on the far left side [UDI, Desktop usability test 2, 19:48]
- Prefers the departure time to be placed below the date
- The user does not care what time she arrives at a destination.

Overall Experience

Likes

- Easy to use, smooth
- Easy to follow, not too many pop-ups

Dislikes

- Landing page banner took up too much of the page
- 1st-page popup - selecting country
 - Didn't feel this was needed
 - The user felt by default the website should already know since its an Irish airline, an Irish site and the user is in Ireland
 - Prefer one less step
- Placement of arrival and departure times
 - Should be beneath the dates
 - Not many people have attention to detail so may miss this departure date if it's not clear
- Does not see the value of baggage packages, prefer to decide later as she would like to get the booking of the flight out the way first.

Website 2, user 2 -

Euro wings - Flight and date selection

Assumptions:

- Travel: London (any airport) to Barcelona
- During school mid-term - Monday 28th Oct - Friday 1st Nov
- Looking to fly out on Saturday before
- X1 week stay
- X2 adults

Task observation notes

- User doesn't trust 'AD' URL links from google search engine because of third party sites
 - The user once thought she was booking a flight via Ryan air, but it was actually though E-Dreams

- This turned out expensive
- User Ignores cookie messages, just clicks it to get it out the way
- Departure/ arrival field easy to populate from the list
- Date selection
 - Likes calendar format as this is her preference
 - The calendar shows the user what dates are and are not available
- Number of passengers
 - Was about to type in the number of passengers as there is a blinker indicating to the user to type
 - User preferred to click the + button as it's faster and easier
- Departure and Arrival date and times are easy to see on the flight selection page
- A user noticed there is a stopover displayed by the flight time [UDI, Desktop usability test 2, 40:06]
 - User is curious to find out more about the stopover
 - User clicks on the info button
 - Stopover break down was clear
 - Breakdown clarified to the user the total travel time and the layover time as the time indicated on the flight selection pages wasn't clear what it was referring to.
 - "Don't know how to close it" - Modal did not have an 'x' to indicate to the user how to close the pop-up. But figured out quickly, was able to click away
- Prefers to select a smart package
- 'Add Flex' option
 - User is aware of this option thinks it could be useful.
 - The user expresses that on paper, this is a good idea but in reality, it could be a lot different.

- The user shared that she got stranded in Bali during the pandemic. She called the airline and the travel agency but could not speak with anyone. For at least 7-9 hours, she waited at the airport to speak to someone.
- Mileage club
 - This makes no difference to the user. Feels Europe don't have much to offer
 - American airlines are more forward with this incentive
- Chat icon at the bottom of the page
 - The user would like to know if she can speak to a real human
 - Or is it a bot, or FAQs
 - Would like to be able to talk to a real person if she has a question

Pain Point

- Fare packages [UDI, Desktop usability test 2, 41:00]
 - User questions why 'Bizzclass' package is not available
 - If it's not an option why tell the user they cannot have it?
 - There is nothing that explains to the user why they cannot have it
 - Basic package
 - User doesn't understand what it means when the package says that they cannot guarantee taking their hand luggage on board
 - No further information is given to help make a decision
 - Smart package
 - User doesn't know what 'preferred seating' means
 - Doesn't display info about guaranteeing hand luggage on board like the basic package, so the user feels the airline is giving preference to smart travellers, or user thinks maybe

the box doesn't have enough space in the box to fit this detail

- 'Cabin carriage' - user confused - user questions if this is a benefit for paying extra as a smart traveller

Overall Experience

Likes

- Much easier, easy to follow and navigate
- Option to click and select all airports rather than trying to type
- More colour on the website - aesthetically pleasing
- Users like the calendar date selection feature. The user feels this is much easier than typing. Also on an American website, where the date is written in a different order
- Departure and Arrival very clear
- Popup for stopover was very clear and useful

Dislikes

- '£4 Save your price' - Word it better. The current wording is unclear
 - Not keen on having options visible that are not available to the user to select
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Conclusion

From the usability test sessions conducted, both users were able to reach their goal of booking a flight on both airline websites.

The key elements identified to keep on an airline website are the calendar, for date selection, as this is familiar and easier for the user's to ensure they have selected the correct dates. The 'i' (Information) button for stopover details, as this impacts the user's decision to continue with the current flight selection. Bolder colours, not just for visual aesthetics but also for accessibility. And the ability to make selections (departure, arrival, number of passengers, date) instead of typing in the input fields of search functionality for ease and speed.

However, I have identified that there were a few trending usability issues across participants which disrupted the user's flight booking journey therefore opens an opportunity of improvement with its placement and process. This includes the fare packages in the flight selections page, where currently the user needs to select 1 of 3 packages to proceed with the flight bookings, but seemingly not all users understand every element in the packages and nor are they too happy to see a package appear or the screen that isn't available to them. And for some participants, the fare packages are too much information at this stage of the flight booking process. Simplifying this would reduce the confusion of what a user is to do next whilst they're in the process of booking a flight.

Revise marketing material, travel information and popup placements on the landing page, by reducing or removing this, it would enable the user to reach their goal faster.

Also, improve the visual placements of departure and arrival, date, times and prices to help users know their exact travel times giving them confidence and control.

The following summarises the context, goals and behaviours of users for using a desktop airline website:

Context (of use)

- Home
- Work
- Last minute travel booking at the airport

Behaviours (taking place when using the website)

- Selecting their travel **dates**
- Selecting **flight times**
- Looking out for the best deals
- Entering the number of **passengers**
- Selecting baggage size
- Comparing and sharing pricing information with friend and family

Goal (what the user wants to do with the website)

- Book a flight
- Quick and easy

The next steps would be to analyse this data further.