

Prototype usability testing

How can I make sure the new webshop is user-friendly and optimised for conversion?

Usability testing

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Version history

Version	Date	Author(s)	Amendments	Status
0.1	18-03-2024	Luc Swinkels	First draft	Draft
0.2	20-03-2024	Luc Swinkels	First version with design pattern research	Definitive
1.0	05-04-2024	Luc Swinkels	Added prototyping/peer review results and conclusions	Definitive
1.1	11-04-2024	Luc Swinkels	Moved from combined to separate research file	Definitive
1.2	17-04-2024	Luc Swinkels	Added maze results	Definitive

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Context

The goal of this research is to answer the following research question:

"How can I make sure the new webshop is user-friendly and optimised for conversion?"

Answering this question means I have to set up a proper channel for users to test my designs, and figure out what I want to get out of these tests, so that I can later analyse the results to improve my designs on these specific points.

To do this, I will be using the usability testing (Vogel, n.d.) method.

Methods

Usability testing

For this test, I will be using the usability testing method. These tests will be done using Maze (Maze, 2024). Maze is a prototype testing tool where people can link their design prototypes (in my case, a Figma prototype) and give users specific tasks to complete in the prototype, such as navigating to a certain page. Maze then helps by showing information about the user's path like click heatmaps, misclicks and time spent completing the task.

I chose Maze because it is one of my favourite prototype testing tools and accomplishes what I need, as well as it being trusted by many of my peers and big brands.

The users that will be testing this consist of multiple groups of people who all fit the target audience:

- Monthly employees who are into sports and buy sports clothing regularly (between 20-30 years of age)
- Personal friends who go to the gym multiple times a week and buy sports clothing regularly (between 22-26 years of age)
- Family members that go to the gym multiple times a week and buy sports clothing regularly (between 28-35 years of age)
- Members of my local gym that go to the gym multiple times a week and buy sports clothing regularly (between 20-35 years of age)
- Gym employees / personal trainers (between 20-30 years of age)

I want to figure out possible pitfalls of the design that I overlooked, so for my tests I want to create an authentic experience for users, going through the entire process of buying a product.

I set up the following tasks on Maze to gather information:

10-second test (shown an image of the product page for 10 seconds)

- To see what users remember from a brief look at the product page, I want to see if they recognize the customisation checkbox, the add to cart button, and product information.

Buy a product

- **Start screen:** home page
- **End screen:** order confirmation
- To see what path user's take to go from the beginning to the end of buying a product, and to see if the flow is logical.

Rating from 1-10 (how easy was it to buy a product)

- To gather information on how the users rated the prototype experience.

Open the preview of a customised product

- **Start screen:** product page
- **End screen:** custom kit builder preview overlay
- To figure out if customising a product is easy to find on a product.

Open suggestion

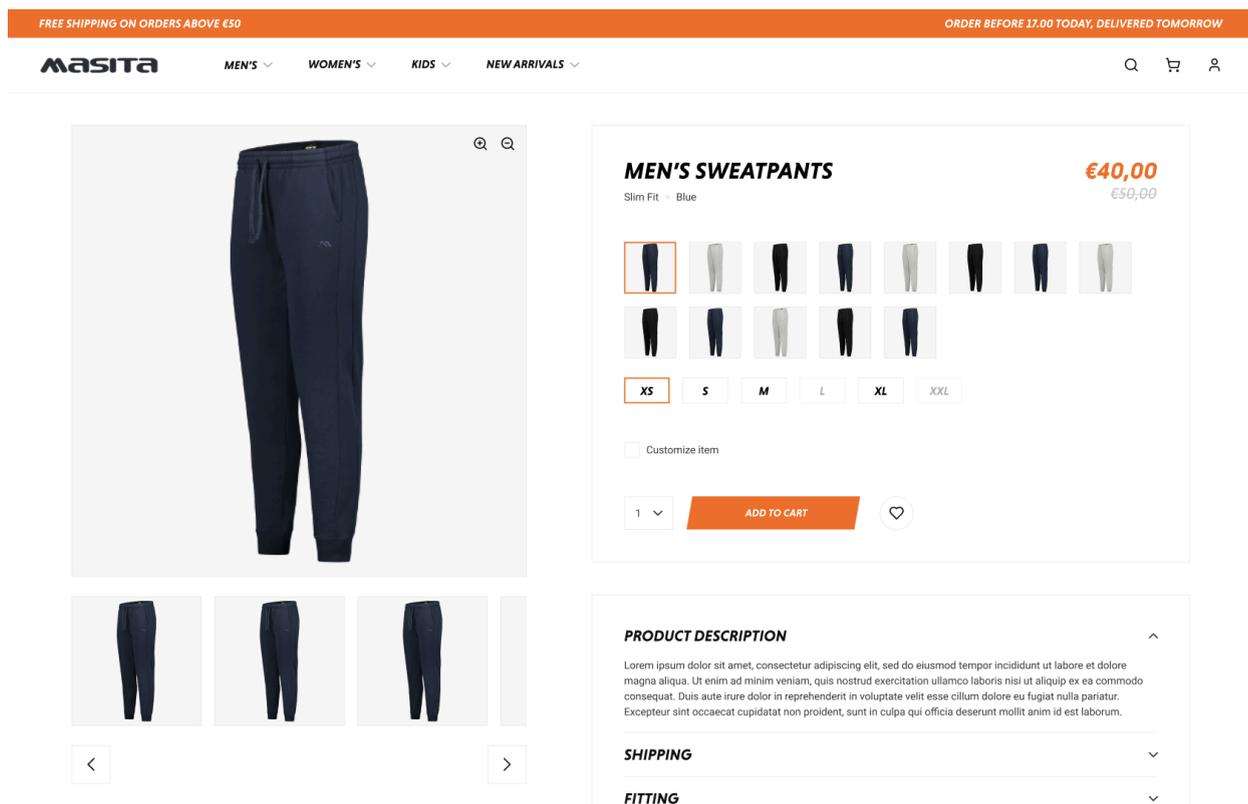
- To gather any open suggestions from users in terms of design, UX, or other concerns.

Results

I sent out the Maze to the target audience and ended up with 25 results. I noticed that the test was well received and nobody had any real issues while going through the prototype or answering questions. Most of the participants ended up leaving positive feedback at the end.

10-second image (look and describe)

Users were shown the following image of the product page for 10 seconds and were then asked to list as many elements as possible that they saw:



- Malita logo, discount from 50 to 40, free delivery from 50 euros, black training pants.
- Section for mens, womens, kids, new arrivals, different size options, you can like a product, you can see the discount, you can add a product to your shopping cart, orange page, logo of the company top left.
- I saw the sizes, option to customise the article, the product photo, the title and description of the product. Thereafter, I saw the top menu that navigates to other product categories.
- Men's sweatpants (slim fit) ranging from XS to XXL, multiple colour options, orange coloured header, white background, body text in black, header text in white, in header "arrivals" was a heading.
- 5 sizes, one size sold out, 14 colours, option to see multiple pictures, menu, add amount to shopping cart, recommended products.

- A pair of jeans available in different sizes.
- Sweatpants, discounted price (40 euros instead of 50), L and XXL sold out for selected colour, customizable.
- A product page listing a pair of sports pants. The product featured multiple variants/editions and was priced at 40 euros.
- 3 smaller images of the product, the sizes that are still available, the price, and the other colours in which the product was available.
- A webshop, showcasing a pair of pants with options for different colours and the option to add it to your shopping cart.
- Product page of 'Masita' with an action bar at the top with, I think, free shipping. Large product photo of training pants and smaller product photos of other colours. Striking orange product price.
- Free shipping above €50. Many different colours and sizes. Product was discounted from 50 to 40 euros. And there was something else on the top right, but I forgot.
- Sports pants with a size filter under the product title. The image was very clear, and the Masita brand stood out.
- Jogging pants/training pants. Price was 50 euros, but now discounted to 40 euros. 2 sizes were no longer available, and the brand was Masita.
- Men's track pants in multiple colorways. The pants were 40 euros. Masita header above and product description below.
- Product images, product description, product price, product sizes, ability to add to cart, + header menu.
- Pants - Free shipping above 50 euros - size XS was selected - different colours of pants - Orange accents on the website - Product discounted from €50.00 to €40.00.
- Page for a product. Option between a lot of colours and sizes. Also saw a discount code at the top.
- I saw a page consisting of multiple products, all of them pants. They were available in different colours and had a nice discount on them. Furthermore, I was able to see navigation options on the top that clearly indicated what other pages were available.
- - Orange bar on top - One big picture of the product with smaller pictures below it - Title and options on the right of the pictures - Description below the options.
- Product image, product image gallery, sizes, customise button.
- A webshop where I can order gym pants in different colours and sizes.
- I saw a blue sports pants that was now discounted from 50 euros to 40 euros. The sizes L and XL were sold out.
- Product info, image, buy button, sizes, and colours.

Most participants mentioned the things that I wanted them to see (product image, price, product info), which is good. One of my main concerns was if the price discount was possibly not prominent enough, but a couple of participants mentioned that they saw a discounted price.

Buy a product (live prototype test)

Users were then asked to complete the whole “buy product” flow. Starting at the homepage, ending after clicking on the checkout button. They were able to use one of three possible paths:

- Path 1: homepage → product → add to cart → cart → checkout
- Path 2: homepage → category → product → add to cart → cart → checkout
- Path 3: homepage → cart → checkout

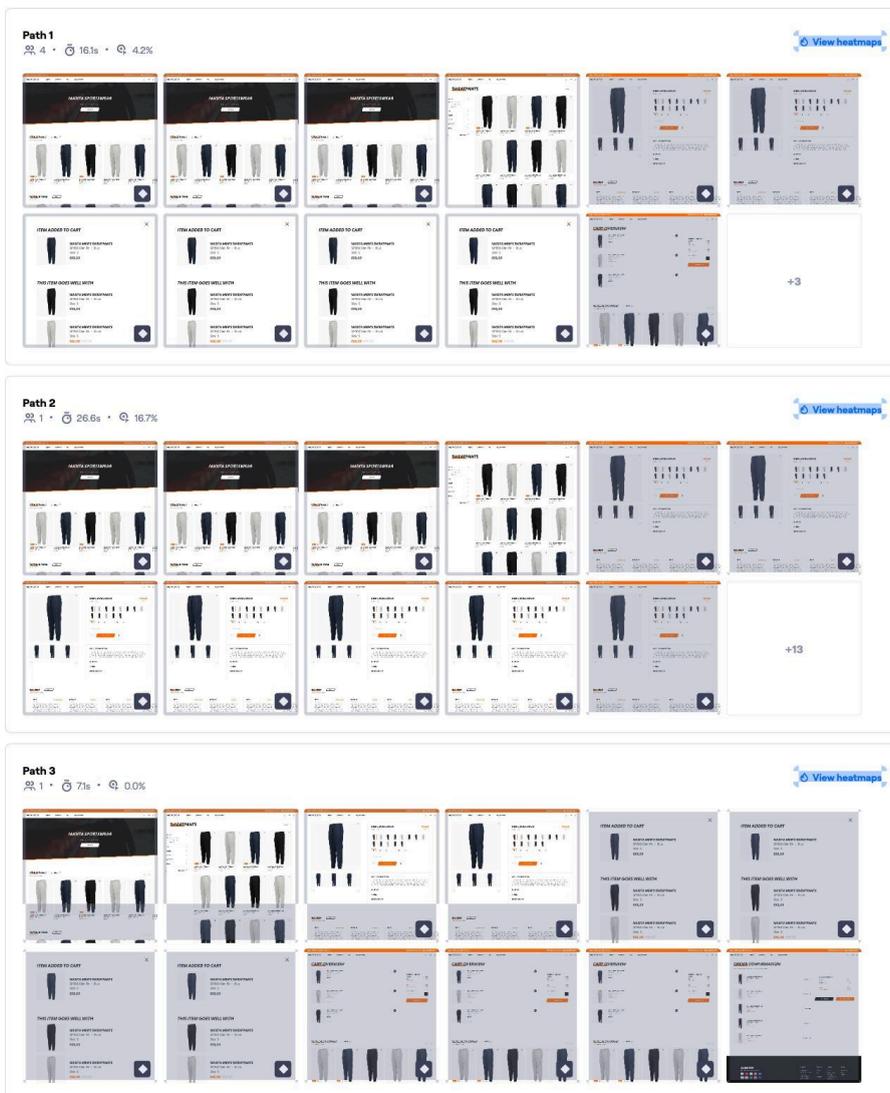


Mission paths

Shows the paths testers took and how they completed the mission.



Testers who completed the mission via the expected path(s).



From all participants, everyone was able to buy a product and finish the task.

It looks like some participants took an indirect path to finish, while 25% did not click on any irrelevant screens at all and had a direct success.

While a 25% direct success rate might seem low, the 75% indirect success rate is totally fine with me because there are lots of screens and overlays that are clickable in the prototype, and if they user clicked on a single one of these overlays or screens, it means their success will be deemed "indirect".

My main concern here was participants running into issues and taking really long to finish the task, or possibly abandoning the task as a whole..

It took the average participant 18 seconds to go from the homepage and, which I am satisfied with.

The heatmaps from this flow show nothing out of the ordinary, every participant clicked on the relevant button to go to the next page, and there weren't many misclicks.

How easy was it to buy a product? (feedback rating)

After completing the "buy product" prototype flow, users were asked to give a 1-10 rating based on how easy they thought it was.



* I was notified that the 1 smiley at 6 was an accident, they meant to press 8

With an average of 9.2/10, it seems like everyone thought it was easy to buy a product. For me, this validates that the navigation in the app works correctly because nobody ran into any issues.

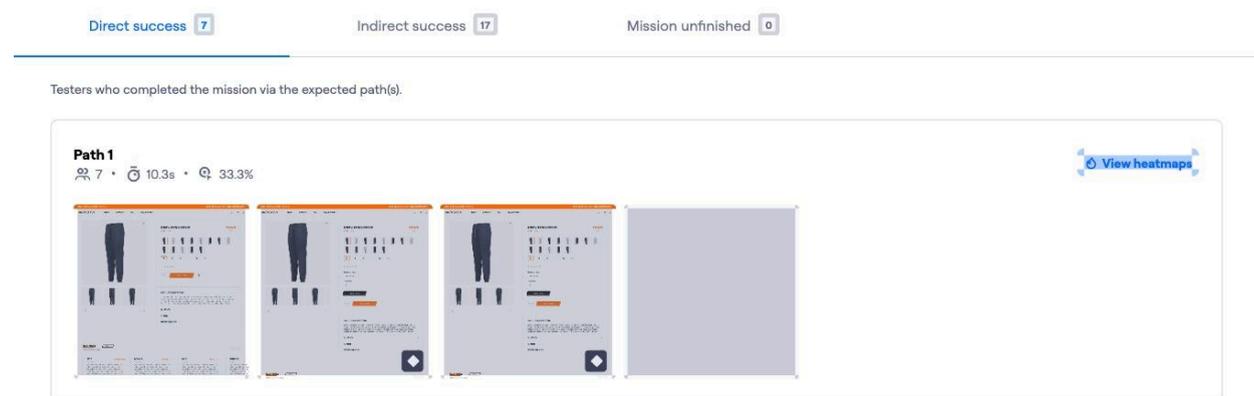
Open the customised product preview (live prototype test)

Next, users were asked to complete another flow, which was the “customise a product” flow, where they started on the product page, had to check the “customise product” checkbox, and then look at the preview of their custom product.



Mission paths

Shows the paths testers took and how they completed the mission.



These results raised some potential issues, as I feel like a 15 second average duration to customise a product when you are already on the product page is too long, even for a fairly “niche” feature that most webshops do not have. This was then later confirmed in the open suggestion feedback, where users mentioned that the checkbox was not prominent enough.

The heatmaps from this flow show nothing out of the ordinary, every participant clicked on the relevant button to open the custom product form (once they were able to locate it), and then on the button to open the preview. There weren’t many misclicks.

Open suggestion (feedback)

Afterwards, I gave all participants the chance to give me open suggestions and feedback.

- The customise button didn't stand out to me very much, but other than that, it was very clear and looks clean.
- The customise option could be a bit more visible (perhaps a black button with white text) so it pops out a bit more. I think the buying process was very intuitive and the design of the site was clean.
- Maybe a direct customise or buy button when hovering over the product on the main page for quicker purchase.
- It took a while for me to find the option to see the custom options.
- The site looks very nice and clean, and it was pretty easy to find the relevant options that a customer would need to check the available products, the price, and then make a purchase.
- The webshop looks clean. I would like to see more available products instead of only pants, but maybe in future user tests.
- Would like to give feedback but everything was immediately clear and clean, so well done!
- The design itself looks very sleek, makes a good impression!
- The customization button didn't stand out very much. I overlooked it at first. After that, it was clear, and the fields to enter text stood out well.
- Don't use a checkbox, maybe a separate bigger button.
- I would align the price of the product more on the left-hand side. It's crucial information for your user. But now you don't really see it in the first place. You have to look for it because it's aligned to the right instead of the left.
- The customization option is not really clear. I scrolled through the entire page just to go back to the top and spot it. It's not bad in any means; however, I would emphasize it a bit more. For the rest, the design looks great and follows the usual structure of a webshop (which is great).
- Looks just like a normal webshop, so it all seems clear and logical.
- It felt easy to navigate!
- Clear instructions and a nice website design.
- Maybe you can highlight the "customise" button slightly more.
- The customizable part should be made slightly more prominent, for example, by using a button. Additionally, you could perhaps use a modal with a live preview of your product.
- Keep up the good work!
- To me it was all very clear and logical.

Overall, the feedback highlights the clarity and cleanliness of the website design. However, there are suggestions to improve the visibility of the customization button, perhaps by using contrasting colours or making it more prominent. Additionally, users suggest making the buying process more intuitive, such as adding direct customization or buy buttons for quicker access. Some users also noted the need for more available products beyond just pants. There are also recommendations to align crucial information like product prices more effectively and to emphasise the customization options better. Despite these suggestions, users generally found the website easy to navigate with clear instructions.

Conclusion

From my maze tests, I can conclude that the design is clean, well thought out and functions like a regular webshop that people are used to, which is good.

A lot of participants mentioned that the customise product checkbox was not easy to find and not prominent enough when they were asked to “open the customised product preview”. While this is not a direct harm to the flow of buying a product, it is one of Masita’s custom integration requests, which means it should still be fairly prominent, and intuitive for users that visit Masita to buy a custom product.

The average time to buy a product was 18 seconds, therefore I do not deem it necessary to change the navigation flow or button (CTA/navigation) styles, as I feel that these are intuitive and positively received.

In terms of colours, people mentioned that the Masita branding was prominent and was well-integrated, which means I do not have to rethink my colour usage.

Based on this, I will be making the following improvements to my design:

- Improved visibility for customise product (button instead of checkbox)
- Rethink if product price is prominent enough and aligned correctly (this was only suggested by one participant)

Sources

1. Vogel, J. (n.d.). ICT Research Methods — Methods Pack for research in ICT. ICT Research Methods. <https://ictresearchmethods.nl/lab/usability-testing/>
2. Maze. (2024, January 23). Maze | The continuous product discovery platform. Maze. <https://maze.co/>