

Case Study

Screwfix – Competitor Site Testing July 2006

The Brief

Screwfix, famous for their range of low cost building materials, were undertaking a major review of their web site. Their site is an important sales channel and they wished to get user feedback on various competitors' sites to inform the redevelopment, with evidence of how customers search for products.

How we responded to the brief

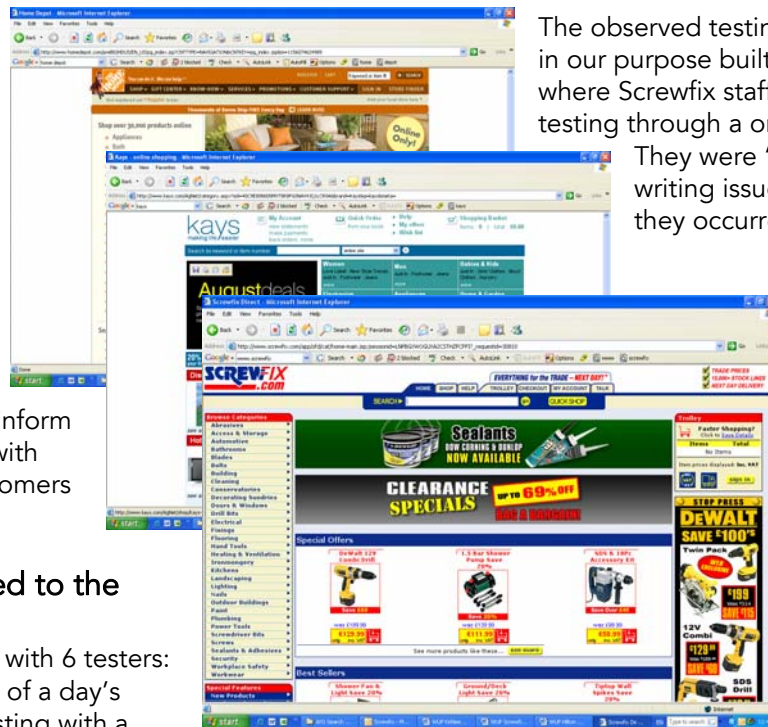
We proposed testing with 6 testers: 3 of these in advance of a day's observed usability testing with a further 3 testers, followed by a facilitated discussion of the issues and to agree actions.

In order to ensure buy-in to the research results, we felt it important that key Screwfix staff gained a shared understanding of the issues by observing users on the site. By following this with a facilitated discussion, it would allow the observers to identify the key issues and agree actions in a single day.

What we did

We discussed the objectives of the project with the project manager and prepared a facilitation guide to achieve these. We recruited 6 testers, a mixture of home owners with a keen interest in DIY and trade buyers, all who order online.

We undertook the unobserved testing in advance of the observed testing and prepared an interim report of the findings.



The observed testing was conducted in our purpose built viewing studios where Screwfix staff watched the testing through a one way mirror.

They were 'active' observers, writing issues on post-its as they occurred.

The testers reviewed the competitor sites, and their preferences for the various search features were recorded.

Following the observed testing, a discussion was facilitated by a WUP consultant

to agree the issues and appropriate actions.

The outcomes

Some clear conclusions emerged from the research about the features that made product searching easy for users. During the facilitated discussion, Screwfix staff gained a shared understanding of these issues, and actions were identified that could be implemented

"Thanks for the report – the session has proved very valuable and given us a clear view about how we want to proceed." Paul Marko – Screwfix

Timing and costs

The project was conducted in July 2006 and took less than 2 weeks to complete from recruitment to delivering the final report at a cost of approximately £6,000.