

Case Study

Virgin – Usability Testing February 2006

The Brief

Virgin.com is a portal to the products and services provided by the Virgin group of companies. There are a large number of goals that can be achieved on the site, from booking holidays, buying mobile phones to obtaining loans and insurance. Virgin wanted to know how easily these goals could be achieved.

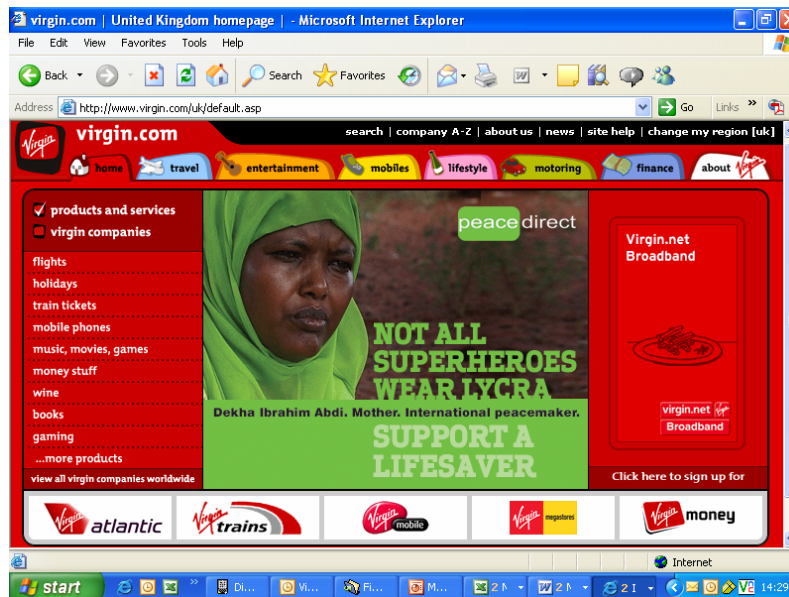
How we responded to the brief

As Virgin wanted some quick, high level feedback we proposed a single day of research with 3 testers, observed by the key stakeholders, followed by a facilitated discussion. This 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 which identified 24 key user goals on which feedback was required.

We then recruited the 3 testers, people in their 20's and 30's who were regular online shoppers. The testing was conducted in viewing facilities in central London – convenient for the client. The research session was recorded (audio recording and screen capture with tester picture-in-picture).



The observers watched the testing through a one-way mirror capturing issues on post-its as they occurred. Following the observed testing, a discussion was facilitated by a WUP consultant to agree the issues and appropriate actions.

Following the testing, we detailed the outcomes of the research and the conclusions of the facilitated discussion in a report.

The outcomes

The research identified a number of strategic issues about the Virgin site as well as c.50 usability issues. During the facilitated discussion, Virgin staff gained a shared understanding of these issues, and changes to improve the site were agreed.

"Thanks again for your work – I think we had a successful day. The outputs are really helpful for the redesign of the website." Pooja Tanna - Senior Site Producer

Timing and costs

The project was conducted in February 2006 and took just 2 weeks to complete from recruitment to delivering the final report at a cost of approximately £5,000.