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PEER REVIEW & BENCHMARK TEST REPORT

Product Suggestion Tool
for Low Pressure Studio B.V.

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INTRODUCTION

E-commerce product suggestion/recommendation tool is a pretty common way for the companies that are operating an online store to improve their customers user experience, as well as satisfaction with a product. This solution allows users to provide input to the system, thanks to which they'll be provided with products that will suit their needs best. Bataleon is a company that is making snowboards and snowboard related equipment, and they need such a tool. The primary goal of making it is to improve user satisfaction with a product, and decrease return rate, by providing users with products that are most suitable for their needs. This report is based on analysis and testing of each of the most important elements of the UI with 2 peers. This will help me in the development of a product suggestion tool that will best suit the needs of Bataleon.

The goal of this research report is to partly answer research questions:

4. How should the UI of the product suggestion tool be made while

following Bataleon style guides?

7. How can user testing and feedback be incorporated in the

design process of
product suggestion tool to ensure the final product meets client's
needs?

METHODOLOGY

First peer is Ronald, who is my company mentor and is responsible for creating various designs for the company Low Pressure Studio. He has years of experience in designing websites and in developing them, therefore he was a suitable candidate. Second peer is Robin who is one of the Low Pressure Studio employees who is responsible for the development of the website and because his responsibilities are quite similar to mine within a company, he was a suitable candidate to be considered a peer.

Both review and benchmark test were performed in an offline

environment, by
analyzing and gathering peers' opinions on each of the analysed page
elements in
the form of notes regarding each analyzed element and website. The

prototype that
was analyzed was the first one that was adapted to a coded version, which
itself was
based on the 4th prototype made in Figma. Me and Ronald have

determined before

the meeting which elements of the website we should focus on based on his expertise.

Elements that were analyzed in detail are:
- ● Headerandsystemstatusvisibility
- ● Mainpageandcardbuttons
- ● Positioning
- ● ManualInput
- ● StepsandCompanystyleguide.

Lastly there are going to be additional comments made by both Peers regarding overall impressions.
Together with peers, we analyzed the brands that Ronald and I deemed the best from our competitor analysis, in terms of functionality, useful elements and relatability
to our application. They were asked about their opinion on each of the product suggestion tools and about their positives and negatives in their opinion. Analyzed
brands consist of :

- ● Arcteryx
- ● Asics(US)
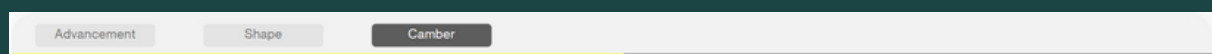- ● Behindthepines
- ● JonesSnowboards.

Our goal was to identify their most useful functionalities and determine which ones would be desirable for the Bataleon product suggestion tool.

RESULTS

Bataleon Snowboard finder UI
## Prototype:
Header and system status visibility

Robin has complemented the inclusion of Progress bar. He said that users often want to fill in any given questionnaire as fast as possible, and providing a progress bar allows them to estimate how much longer it's going to take for them to receive an answer. Ronald also liked the progress bar, but also added that including navigation buttons in the header, would be a great improvement. It would improve user control

and allow user to quickly change to the desired section, without the need of re-clicking the same button multiple times.
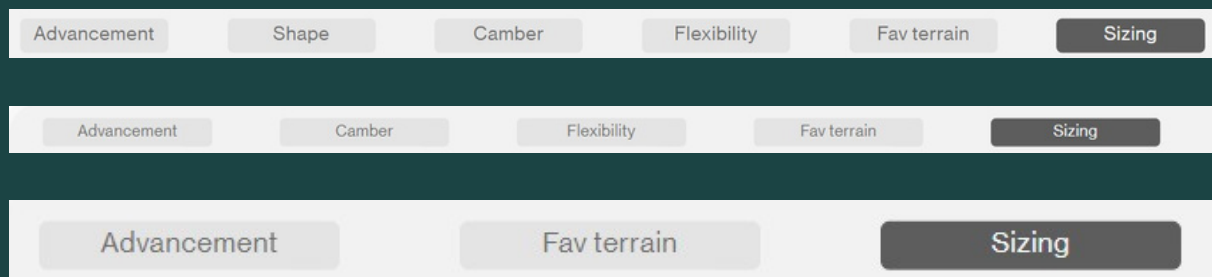
Main page and cards
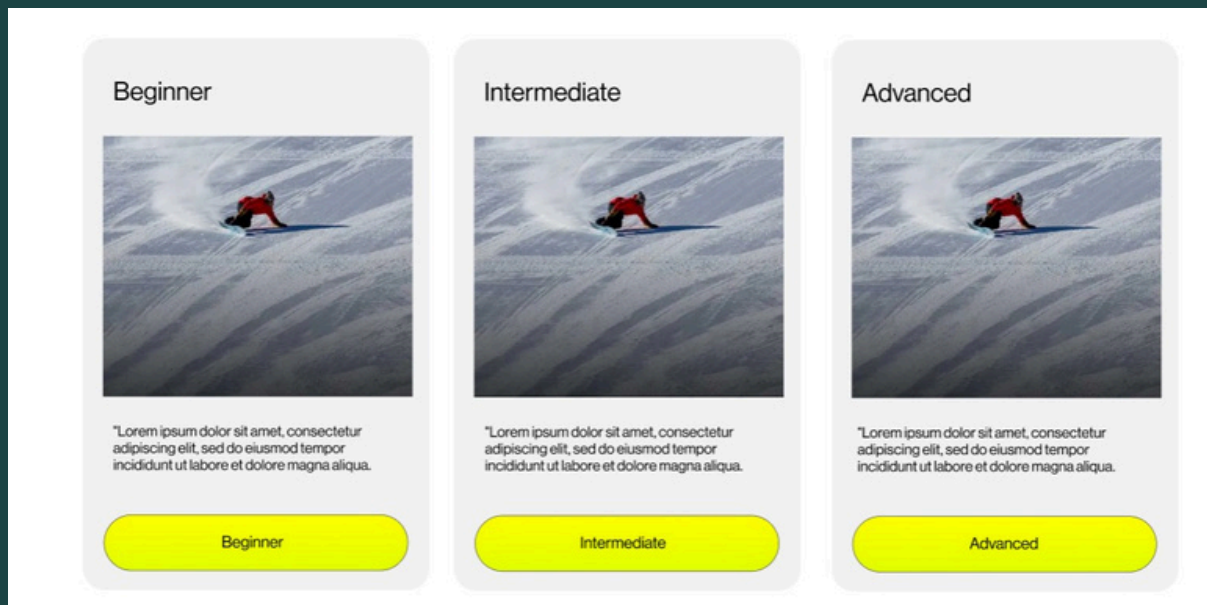
Robin liked clear visuals of the main page and cards but wasn't a huge fan of positioning of the title of cards. Currently it's located on the top left part of each card, but in his opinion, positioning the title in the middle of each card would be more intuitive. Additionally, pictures and descriptions should be more relevant . He also expressed that descriptions of answers and /or questions should be either located inside buttons themself, or we should include an on hover/click function for each of questions and/or answers, that would display whenever needed. Ronald liked the current solution but said that it would be beneficial to include descriptions of answers either at the bottom of each card-button, or in a form of an additional button within a button, with a question mark, which would indicate that under it there is an explanation.

Manual input

Current version requires users to input specific numbers into user input. One of the alternatives is using an approximation instead, but in Robins' opinion we should stick to a specific number as an answer since in his opinion, the approximation method tends to make users uneasy in terms of selected choices. In his opinion, we should also include an appendix that is expressing that given choices are estimated with a 2-5 kg radius, so answers don't need to be exactly precise. Ronald has expressed that it's a good thing to have a question about sizing at the end of the questionnaire, because it's usually the most time consuming and irritating, especially with manual input, instead of approximation, and putting it at the beginning could discourage users from proceeding with snowboard finder further.

Steps

| Advancement | Shape | Camber | Flexibility | Fav terrain | Sizing |

| Advancement | Camber | Flexibility | Fav terrain | Sizing |

| Advancement | Fav terrain | Sizing |

In Robins' opinion it's good that depending on selected option, questions are becoming more and more specific, however in his opinion it might be beneficiary to not call it "user advancement level", and instead call it something along the lines of "advancement of questions", since users' opinion about their own riding advancement level, tends to be very biased, and users' sense of pride or their riding peers might influence their choice. For instance, if a user is riding with very advanced snowboarders, they might think of themselves as beginners even though they're quite advanced, or the other way around. Therefore, calling it "advancement of questions" would be better in terms of allowing users to pick an option that is more relevant to them, even if a beginner user would want to pick something very specific, they should have the option to do so. Similarly, being an advanced user, might not mean that user is looking for something particularly specific, and a simple question about their terrain and sizing, might be enough to fulfill their needs. Ronald said that It's good that we have manual input at the end of all of the questions and that we should include camber for intermediate and advanced users.

Company style guides

Neither Robin nor Ronald had many comments regarding styling, in their cohesive opinions it looks good, and fulfills its primary function, while filling in with rest of the elements of the website smoothly. Both of them have also confirmed that the

prototype does fulfill Bataleon style guides, and since Ronald is a head designer in the company, I consider the current design to be fulfilling Bataleon style guides.

Additional comments

Robin: It might be a good idea to filter matches, while displaying more and more specific options with each answered question. However, for the final match, there should be only 3 best options, since the user needs the best option, and displaying 8 when there was 18 at the beginning, isn't really helpful.

Ronald: Besides buttons for each step, as mentioned before, it would be beneficial to include percentage of match when displaying final outcome.

Analysed brands:

Arcteryx [1]
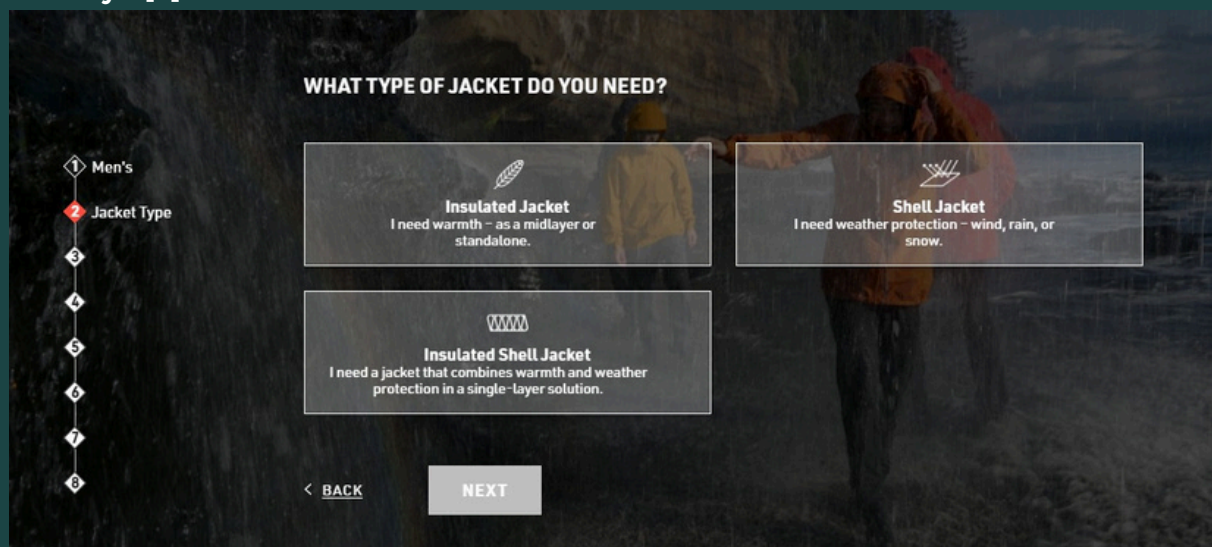
Both Robin and Ronald liked this solution. Robin has expressed that it might be a good idea to make the suggestions gradually more customized while displaying them below the product suggestion tool itself. Ronald really liked the feature of displaying percentage of matches.

Asics(US)[2]

Robin wasn't a huge fan of asking questions about stance type, or other questions regarding user's physiotherapy and has said that the questions that we currently have are perfectly sufficient. They might be relevant, and good questions to ask in case of sophisticated shoes, but in terms of snowboards they will be counterproductive. Ronald has agreed with Robins' opinion, regarding those questions, and suggested that we shouldn't include anything similar into the Bataleon product suggestion tool.

Behind the pines[3]

Robin and Ronald both liked the progress bar and how behind the pines product suggestion tool is presented, and its always visible position on top of the finder. Ronald has complemented its efficiency and the best match solution. They have also

acknowledged my concern regarding lack of translation, and we have confirmed that Bataleon product suggestion tool will only use English, since it's the only language available on Bataleon website.

Jones Snowboards[4]

Both Robin and Ronald really liked this solution. The question flow, progress bar, header buttons, and other elements all were to their liking. Ronald said that this solution is the closest to what they want Bataleon product suggestion tool to work and look like, but it should be more in line with Bataleon style guide. At the same time, he has highlighted that due to the high cost of outsourcing product suggestion tool to such services like ebbot AI that Jones is using, we won't be able to use them to create product suggestion tool for Bataleon.

Raw notes from both usability testing and benchmark test are available in Appendix A.

Discussion

Analyzing existing prototype, as well similar product suggestion tools with both Peers has helped us determine some important key points for development of Bataleon product suggestion tool. UI wise it was confirmed by both peers that elements such as navigational buttons, progress bar, color scheme or styling of elements do fit into Bataleon website very well. Furthermore a benefit in using progress bar and

navigational buttons is confirmed by industry trends which is highlighted in the Competitive Analysis & Best, Good and Bad Practices Report. Explanation of answers is another useful feature that was observed on multiple occasions. Its inclusion should decrease the probability of users not understanding the discussed feature, which in comparison with more advanced questions being asked exclusively to more advanced users will greatly decrease the probability of user confusion regarding the questions. Some of the showcased product suggestion tools both in this document and in Competitive Analysis & Best, Good and Bad Practices Report, such as behind the pines, were using an estimation instead of asking users about exact numbers regarding their weight and boot sizes. Robin has expressed his dislike towards this practice, since in his opinion it might make the users uneasy. While I wasn't able to find any studies regarding this subject, approximation didn't provide any significant benefits, therefore I have decided to include a system that requires a manual input of numbers instead of approximation. Providing users with a percentage match for their snowboard was complemented by both peers, however while I agree that it is beneficial in some cases, I disagree in terms of its inclusion to Bataleon product suggestion tool. My reasoning is that we already provide users with both highlighting of a best match and with top 3 matches, therefore including yet another form of showing the user which option is the best is a bit counterproductive in my opinion.

Apart from analyzing the elements with peers they also had some other suggestions regarding the development of product suggestion tool for Bataleon. In Robins' opinion relocating the title from the left side of the button to the center is more intuitive. While it is true, I have noted that most of the elements present on Bataleon website are starting from the left, therefore to keep the page build as unitary as possible, I'll be keeping them as they are. Both peers have also noted that images and descriptions need to be updated, which I 100 % agree with, and looking back I think that using a prototype with not included images and descriptions was a mistake. Ronald has suggested using a vertical navigation button in the mobile version of the product suggestion tool and stated that it would improve mobile version. In my opinion it would be better to include them at the top like in the

desktop
version, to keep the build unitary. Additionally, the mobile version aims to have the "card" element as a sliding button, so adding vertical navigation buttons to that will make the area too cramped in my opinion. It's a good thing that we include questions
about sizing at the end, because these types of questions are the least entertaining ones, therefore the user is most likely to skip them. By including them at the end, most users will be prone to fill them in, since they already filled in most of the questionnaire. This thesis is confirmed by a study made by Pritha Bhandari [5](Bhandari, 2023) which states that a questionnaire should start with questions

that
the user is going to be engaged in the most. Robin has stated that in his experience users' opinion about their own riding advancement level, tends to be very biased, and users' sense of pride or their riding peers might influence their choice. While I agree that this phenomenon is true, I disagree with unnecessarily complicating

things by renaming question about users' level, with "sophistication of questions", especially that those two things ultimately are summing up to the same outcome, therefore there is little reason for changing it.

This document, along with other relevant materials, offers valuable insights that broadly address the research questions 4 and 7. Benchmark testing performed together with peers has partly proved that the current solution of question based system is sufficient in extracting information from users, which is further reconfirmed
by Usability testing. It has also proved that usability testing, which is available in Usability testing report, is necessary in order to ensure good user experience.

Appendixes

Appendix A

Main points of focus :

    - Headerandsystemstatusvisibility
Robin: nice to have a progress bar, how far in a questionnaire you are. Good to have a clear end in sight. You know how far you are.

Ronald: Maybe include all of the steps in the header but display them like jonnes

    - Mainpageandcards
Robin: Clear visual. Not sure about the title being on the left. More accurate pictures and descriptions.

Ronald: Let's stay as it is. Good to have a description of a question.(like jonnes)

    - Positioning
Robin: Yeah, seems good.

Ronald: Good. But include the step buttons. Maybe made them slidebal on mobile kind of like jones but actually clickable.

   - Manualinput
Robin: The customer might not like the approximation. make it as specific as possible.

Ronald: it's good to have it at the end (its the most boring one, it might be discouraging to include all of the input at the beginning.)

   - Steps
Robin:
 It's good that it becomes more and more specific. Advanced users might be more incentivised to answer more specific questions. Good that we make questions more specific.

Ronald: Good to have input at the end, Include camber for above beginner.

   - Companystyleguides
Robin: Consistent font, colors are the same, i think it would fit.

Ronald: Looks good.

   - Additionalcomments
Robin: It might be a good idea to filter matches, while displaying more and more specific options with each answered question. However, for the final match, there should be only 3 best options, since the user needs the best option, and displaying 8 when there was 18 at the beginning, isn't really helpful.

Ronald: Besides buttons for each step, as mentioned before, it would be beneficial to include percentage of match when displaying final

Compare with some of the competitors (the better ones in my opinion) :

Make beginner, intermediate, advanced recommendations, instead of asking users what their level is. indicate more specific questions instead of telling how "advanced user is".

Arcteryx

Robin: Make suggestions more and more customized while displaying them below the product suggestion tool. Ronald: It would be cool to have a percentage of matches.

Asics
Robin: Advanced questions like stance type aren't very relevant for snowboards. Add binding suggestions to search results.
Ronald: I agree with Robin

Behind the pines

Robin: Maybe include which elements

Ronald: could bo more then only dutch, but best match feature is cool

Jones Robin:Incorporate filter of snowboards into product suggestion tool

(? might be hard
to implement tho)
Ronald: Best display 3-4 best selling options

References

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     (n.d.). https://www.asics.com/us/en-us/shoe-finder/Behind the Pines. (n.d.).

[3] Snowboard Finder Tool | Vind je perfecte Snowboard.
https://www.behindthepines.eu/nl/service/snowboard-finder/

[4] Jones Snowboard and Splitboard Finder | Jones. (n.d.).
https://www.jonessnowboards.com/content/511-find

[5] Bhandari, P. (2023, June 22). Questionnaire Design | Methods, question types &

     examples. Scribbr. https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/questionnaire/