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Recording script E4: Electronic Products

Researcher: Hello, Joe, good to see you again.

Joe: Hi, you too.

Researcher: So how did you get on with the devices we asked you to test for us?

Joe: Oh, fine. Well, mostly.

Researcher: OK, well, we'll come back to those in a minute. First of all, I was wondering if I could ask you a few questions about your attitude to new electrical products. This will help us with future marketing. Is that OK?

Joe: Sure.

Researcher: OK. First of all, how much do you spend on electronic items a month?

Joe: Hmm, let me see. I don't earn a lot, so I don't have much left after I've paid for things like rent, bills, food and so on. Anything else is a luxury. So, I'd guess about 5%, maybe 10% of my monthly salary.

Researcher: All right, and what influences you in your choice of product? Say you wanted a new mobile phone, how would you decide which one to buy?

Joe: Well, first I look at reviews on the Internet, you know, what other customers think about them. Then I'll ask my friends what they think. In fact, their opinions are probably more important than anything.

Researcher: How much does advertising help you choose a product?

Joe: I think that depends on how the product is advertised, and who is advertising it.

Researcher: For example?

Joe: Well, if it's someone I respect, you know, I like a famous sportsman or actor, that can certainty make a difference. I know it shouldn't really, but it does.

Researcher: And where do you buy most of these products? The High Street? The Internet?

Joe: Most people seem to avoid shops, these days, don't they, for things like that? They think they can get things cheaper on the Internet.

Researcher:	Right.
Joe:	But I find that if you say to a shop assistant that you can get a new. er, camera for example, for £100 on the Internet, they'll often match the price. So, that's where I go.
Researcher:	Any other advantages?
Joe:	Well, you get personal service and you don't have to wait for the product to delivered. Ordering online means you have to wait, sometimes for ages, to get the things you've ust bought. I hate that. I guess I'm just very impatient.
Researcher:	OK, one final question. Do you ever see a product and think I've *absolutely* got to get one of those?
Joe:	Oh, all the time, especially if I'm walking past a shop and I see a new electronic item in the window, especially if it's unusual, you know, something I've never seen before. It takes a lot of willpower...
Researcher:	Right. Joe, let's move on. Now, we gave you three items to test for us. Let's start with the mobile phone.
Joe:	OK. Well, it has its good points and its bad points. The purple and silver make it quite eye-catching, you know, modem, exciting.
Researcher:	Right. Anything else?
Joe:	Well, it's very small, isn't it? I know people say small is good but in this case I think you might have gone too far.
Researcher:	In what way?
Joe:	It can be a bit difficult to use, especially if you've got big hands like mine. You press one key, and you end up pressing another at the same time. On the other hand, thanks to the oval design, it does fit comfortably in your hand. Mobiles are usually sort of rectangular, aren't they? I think this is much better.
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Joe:	What else? When I was sending text messages. I had real problems seeing what I was writing. It's not that the screen was too small, just that it was a bit dark. If you're outside, you can hardly see anything on it.
Researcher:	We added a few things that you don't get on other mobiles. What did you think about those?
Joe:	Ah, right well, that noise it makes it you move away from it? That's really annoying. It's basically a good idea, but I think that after a while it would drive me mad.
Researcher:	So, you probably wouldn't buy it?
Joe:	Probably not. When I buy a mobile phone, I don't want one that's going to be difficult to operate. There's no point having a phone that looks good if you have to spend ages trying to make a call or send a text message. It's funny, but I find that more expensive mobile phones are more difficult to use than cheaper ones. It should be the other way round.
Researcher:	So keep it simple, right?
Joe:	Right. And I want a phone that doesn't have problems picking up a signal, or doesn't cut you off halfway through a call. And all those games and other things you get on a mobile? I really can't see the point in those.
Researcher:	Fair point. Next, the digital radio. What did you think?
Joe:	The audio quality was crisp and clear, even if you turned it up really loud. Some sound systems can sound a bit distorted at higher volumes, but not on this one. So 10 out of 10 for that.
Researcher:	Great.
Joe:	The thing is, I'm not sure if it's the area I live in, but the choice of radio stations seemed very limited. It didn't make any difference what I did with the aerial or where I put the radio, high up on a shelf, low down on the floor. And there seemed to be a delay when you turned up the volume.
Researcher:	What do you mean?

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Joe: Well, when you press the volume control, for example, nothing seems to happen for a few seconds. And the same thing happens when you want to change radio stations.

Researcher: OK, the third item was the laptop computer. What's your opinion on that?

Joe: Oh, I really liked it. It's so small, so compact, but easy to use at the same time. I don't think you could make it smaller if you tried. But at £900, I'm not sure you'd get many customers. That's a lot of money for a laptop. Bring that down to, say, £400 and things might be different.

Researcher: Any other changes you'd make? Like adding more memory, for example?

Joe: I think that's fine as it is. Three hundred gigabytes of memory is probably more than enough for most people. Oh, and incidentally, the way the keyboard folds out so that it's like a full-size one? That's really clever. But the computer doesn't have anywhere you can play CD-ROMS. And I'd include a light in the keyboard so you can use it when it's dark.

Researcher: Well, thanks, Joe, for your comments. I think we ... [fade]