

Research Plan

Study 1.

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An online whisky shop that guides the user to new whisky favourites.

Background

The world of whisky/whiskey is vast. The beverage is being produced in many countries and from a variety of raw materials. Finding the way through that maze of whisky flavours can be difficult for users who are curious and seek new whisky experiences. Since most local wine and spirit shops would have limited assortments, the designer would like to offer people with a great interest in whiskey a solution.

A website (designed for all devices, from mobile to desktop) can make it easier for whisky fans (of drinking age, of course) to be introduced to and purchase good quality whiskies.

Research Goal

The goal is to learn out how to help people that have a significant interest in whisky, finding new exciting whisky favourites. Try to understand how they use online web shops. What information they read, how they interact, navigate, make decisions, and so forth. Also, determine the demand for an online whisky shop where whisky connoisseurs can get introduced to new whiskies.

Research Questions (Hence forth referred to as RQ)

1. How would the users like to get introduced to new whiskies?
 - How much information, what are the pain points?
 - What kind of products are of interest?
2. What guides users to decide what to purchase?
 - What are the main reasons why they choose a particular product?
3. How do the users want to interact with the website?
 - Membership only?
 - Possibility to leave feedback?
 - Interact with other users/members?
4. Is there a need for an online whisky shop for whisky connoisseurs?
 - Have the users had any previous experience with a similar website?
 - When did they use it?
 - How did they use it?

Research Method

- A Semi-Structured Interview; the interviewer will follow a script including ten predefined research questions. Follow up questions may be used based on the user's answers.
- The interviews will be conducted in-person or by video link and will take approximately thirty minutes.
- The participant may stop the interview at will.
- If the participant approves, the interview will get recorded.

Recruiting

- 5 participants.
- In the process of collecting data for this study, the designer will be recruiting family and friends.
- The participants must be of legal drinking age, above 20 years of age and have a genuine interest in whisky.

Screenener Questions

1. What is your age?
 - a. under 20 (*Do not fit the user study profile*)
 - b. 20 or above (*Fit the user study profile*)
2. Would you like to know more about whisky?
 - a. I love whisky and is always eager to find new exciting flavours. (*Fit the user study profile*)
 - b. I am fond of whisky and prefer to stay true to the brand I know. (*Do not fit the user study profile*)
 - c. I appreciate the taste but prefer other beverages. (*Do not fit the user study profile*)
 - d. Not interested at all. (*Do not fit the user study profile*)
3. Would you consider using an online service that can introduce you to new whiskies and deliver them to your doorstep?
 - a. Yes (*Fit the user study profile*)
 - b. No (*Do not fit the user study profile*)

Script

Interview Technique Considerations

- Produce specific, non-leading questions that are related to the research questions and relevant to the research goal.
- Avoid hypothetical questions that can be answered in a “Yes, why not” kind of way and questions that would require the participants to predict their own behaviour.
- Be mindful of the participant’s reactions and body language.
- Probe deeper into the issue when the participants express frustration or excitement over their experiences with a website or an application, such as a feature or how to navigate, in order to find the root of the design problem. Try to find the “Whys” and the “Hows” as to what causes the reaction.
- Take extra care to elaborate on whether a frustration might have generated any workarounds. If so, ask the participant to describe it.
- Keep the questions within the UX design area and avoid letting them get too close to the UI design.
- To build a report, start with easy, warm-up questions to get to know the participant, create a relaxed ambience, and establish a more distinguished user profile.

Introduction

Hello. My name is Patrick Svensson and I am a User Experience Designer. I am doing a research study for an online whisky shop.

Since you have let me know that you have a genuine interest in the world of whisky, we would like to learn what **you** would care about when using such a

website.

I have a few questions that I would like to ask. The interview will take approximately 30 min. Our conversation is strictly confidential. Your answers will not be shared or discussed outside the design team.

To facilitate the data processing, I would like to ask permission to record the session. Would that be OK?

Feel free to leave the session at any time. Just let me know, and we will take a break or discontinue the interview altogether.

Before we start, are there any questions you would like to ask me?

Prelude questions

- i. Please, could you tell me a little bit of yourself?
- ii. So, How did you come to like whisky.
- iii. What kind of whiskies do you like the most?

Interview Questions

10 questions

1. What would be the main reasons for choosing an online whisky shop rather than go to your local spirit store?
(RQ-1, We are trying to find out what motivates the users to use an online service. What need is there?)
2. Would you prefer a website based on membership?
(RQ-1&3, What website format do the users prefer.)
 - a) Why? What are the pros and cons? *(Needs)*
 - b) If yes, how? *(Behaviour)*

3. When was the last time you bought a whisky you hadn't tried before?
(RQ-2, We are probing the issue as to what kind of information is most relevant to the users to help them find the whiskies that they like.)

- a) From where did you get the information about that product that made you want to try it?
Articles, Videos, Advertisements, Samples, Friends, Bar, etc?
- b) What would you consider to be too much information? *(What are their pain points?)*

4. When was the last time you ordered spirit online?
(RQ-1,2&3, We wish to learn what the users want to achieve by using the website and how frequently they are prone to use it)

- a) What website?
- b) How often do/did you visit the website?
- c) How was the experience? What impression did the website give you?
- d) Can you describe, or show me, how you used it?

5. When buying whisky from a website, could you walk me through the decision process?
(RQ-2, What information is vital for the decisions the users makes?)

- a) What sort of information of a whisky would you consider intriguing enough to make you want to try the product?

6. Of the whiskies you have previously purchased online, what characteristics would you say they have in common?
(RQ-2, This information can guide us to what products to include.)

- a) Is there any dominant kind? If so, why?

7. If you would make an estimation, what percentage of the purchases you made were due to:

- a) special offer? *(RQ-2, Is low prices and discounts of importance to the users?)*
- b) Limited edition *(RQ-2, Is limited availability important to the users?)*

- c) Premium product (*RQ-2, Is the quality important to the users?*)
- d) Other values? What values? (*RQ-2, What values is of importance to the users?*)

8. In what way would you choose to interact with the website so they could learn what your whisky preferences are?

(RQ-3, How much information do the users want to share?)

- a) Would the participant like to leave their feedback through text, ratings, or both.
- b) Would the participant be willing to give the website a brief description of their preferences when signing up, a personal profile?

9. What features would you like to have had that the website did not provide?

(RQ-3, What do the users want to achieve and how?)

- a) What features, of the once that the website did provide, do you consider to be redundant?

10. Is social communication and collaboration with peers on the site important?

(RQ-3, How much do the users want to interact with each other?)

- a) Why?
- b) How?

Conclusion

That was the last question, and it wraps up the session. Thank you so much for your participation. I am very grateful for your support and it will be a tremendous help to this study. Can I contact you again if I find that I need a little further information? If you come to think of anything that you would like to add or something you would like to ask regarding this interview, you can always reach me at my email address reachme@patrick.eu.com.

The conundrum of memberships.

Background

The first study showed results that there are benefits to connecting the website with a membership subscription. It also gave indications that there are risks of losing users due to the sensation of purchase pressure.

Further studies are needed to find a way for the website to benefit from the advantages of memberships and still keep the user's trust and loyalty.

Research Goal

This study delves deeper into the membership issue, trying to understand what generates the sensation of purchase pressure and the overall importance of membership to the users. It is of interest to learn what the website can do to retain the values a membership-based site with a subscription can offer and what measures it can take to prevent the sensation of purchase pressure.

Research Questions

- How to benefit from the advantages of memberships and keep the users satisfied and loyal to the site.

Research Method

- Conduct a digital user survey assigned thirty participants.
- Test run the survey with five volunteers recruited among the designer's friends.
- The designer runs a private test on a browser in incognito mode.

Recruiting

- 30 participants that meet the research study user profile criteria.
 - Currently, or have previously been, a member in a spirits webshop.
- The participants will be recruited from spirit facebook groups.

Survey Questions

10 questions

1. For how long have you been or were you a member of a spirits website?
(*Loyalty.*)

- ☐ Less than six months
- ☐ ½ - 1 year
- ☐ 1 ½ - 3 years
- ☐ 3 ½ or longer

2. How often do/did you use any of the membership privileges? (*Assess the membership value.*)

- ☐ Several times per month
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Quarterly
- ☐ Twice per year or less

3. Which of these privileges do/did you use more than once? Select all that apply. *(user needs.)*

- ☐ Free shipping
- ☐ Free product
- ☐ Free samples
- ☐ Access to special assortments
- ☐ Member only discounts
- ☐ Events (Like tastings, tours etc.)
- ☐ Social community channels

4. How significant to your choice to become a member were these features? *(What value have the different privileges.)*

	Not at all	Somewhat	A lot	A must have
Free Shipping				
Free product				
Free samples				
Access to special assortment				
Member only discounts				
Events				
Social community channels				

5. How often have you declined an offer to receive a product included in the membership fee because of low interest in the product? *(Is there a connection between the member fall off and the quality of the offers.)*

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Once or twice
- ☐ Several times
- ☐ Always

6. What is most important on a product that is included in the membership fee? (*Quality vs price.*)

- ☐ No additional costs added.
- ☐ The ability to choose any product from the assortment with a discount.

7. What feelings do/did the membership bring? Select all that apply (*Emotional effects.*)

- ☐ Exclusiveness
- ☐ Satisfaction from making good deals
- ☐ Affinity with peers
- ☐ Purchase pressure
- ☐ Economic stress

8. What is your age? (*People of different age might have different buying behaviour and needs.*)

- ☐ 20 - 30
- ☐ 31 - 40
- ☐ 41 -60
- ☐ Above 60

9. What is your civil status? (*People of different civil status might have different buying behaviour and needs.*)

- ☐ Married with children above the age of 18
- ☐ Married with children under the age of 18
- ☐ Married without children
- ☐ In a civil partnership
- ☐ Single

10. Would you recommend a spirits webshop membership subscription to a friend? *(To reveal possible additional insights.)*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Please, give a few words why.
