
Heuristic Evaluation

User Interfaces

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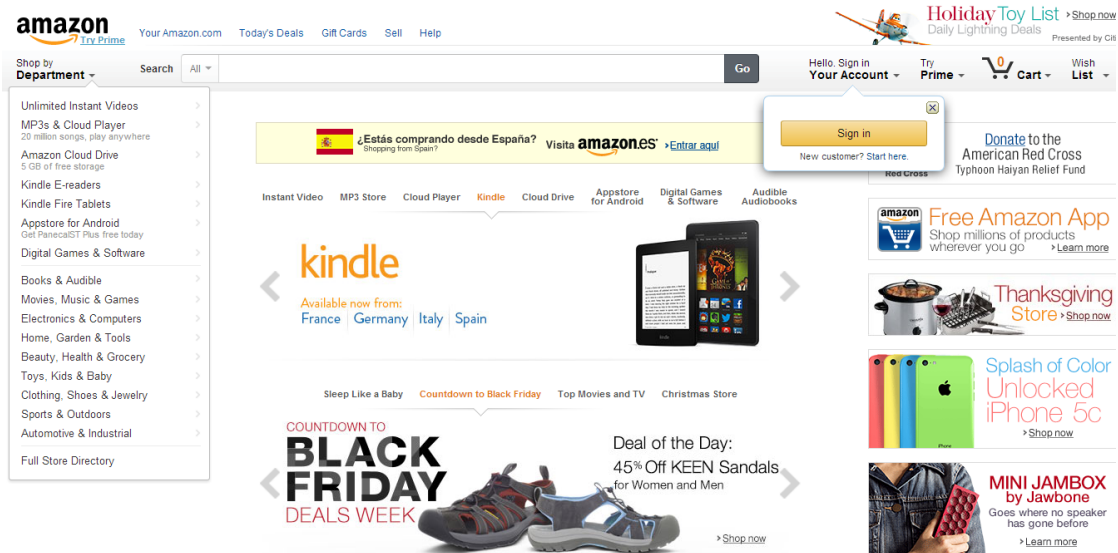
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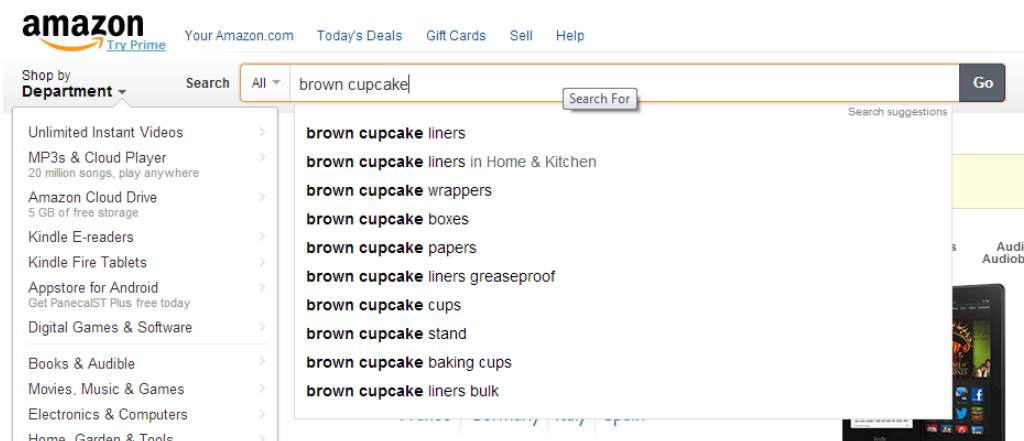
SCENARIO

A user wants to buy brown cupcake cups in amazon and he will use the service for the first time.

Start page



The user proceeds to perform the search using the “search bar” typing “brown cupcake cups” and he appreciates how the system guides him in order to prevent errors. Even when a clear “search bar” exist, he notices that the page is saturated with advertising and text.



In the other hand the left navigation is populated unnecessary content, removing it could result in an improvement making the navigation panel clearer and helpful.

Search results

The screenshot shows the Amazon search results page for "brown cupcake cups". The left sidebar contains navigation links for Departments (Kitchen & Dining, Baking Cups, Decorating Tools), Free Shipping, Color, Avg. Customer Review, and International Shipping. The main content area displays three product listings:

- Chocolate Brown Cupcake Baking Cup Liners -500 Count**: Price \$16.99 (In Stock), \$11.99 new (2 offers). Product Features: Chocolate Brown Cupcake Baking Cup Liners -(pkg/500). Home & Kitchen: See all 774 items.
- A Piece of Cake: A Memoir by Cupcake Brown** (Apr 10, 2007): \$16.00, \$11.54 Paperback (Prime). Order in the next 12 hours and get it by Thursday, Nov 14. More Buying Choices - Paperback: \$7.45 new (56 offers), \$1.55 used (122 offers), \$9.95 collectible (2 offers). Product Features: FREE Shipping on orders over \$35. Other Formats: Library Binding, Audio CD, Audible Audio Edition. Excerpt: Page 139: ... big hug and a cupcake. "I'm so glad you didn't die, Cup," he said in ... See a random page in this book. Books: See all 7 items.
- Regency Baking Cups for Cupcakes and Muffins, Brown Leopard GREASEPROOF, 40 count standard**: \$10.21 (Prime), \$9.99 new (2 offers). Order in the next 10 hours and get it by Thursday, Nov 14. More Buying Choices: \$9.99 new (2 offers). Product Features: 875" bottom x 1.25" wall for standard size cupcakes and muffins.

After perform the search the website offers to the user a useful left side bar in order to filter and improve the search. The user founds what he wants in the first link, but he feels confused with two prices highlighted. *The different provider choices might be clearer if it were not highlighted with the same color as the principal one.*

He proceeds to click the link provided by the tittle.

Product detail

The screenshot shows the Amazon product detail page for "Chocolate Brown Cupcake Baking Cup Liners -500 Count" by GLOBAL SUGAR ART PRODUCTS. The page includes a large product image, a share button, and a right sidebar with purchase options. The main content area displays the product title, price (\$16.99), and availability (In Stock). The right sidebar contains a quantity selector, an "Add to Cart" button, and a "More Buying Choices" section.

Chocolate Brown Cupcake Baking Cup Liners -500 Count
by GLOBAL SUGAR ART PRODUCTS
[Be the first to review this item](#)

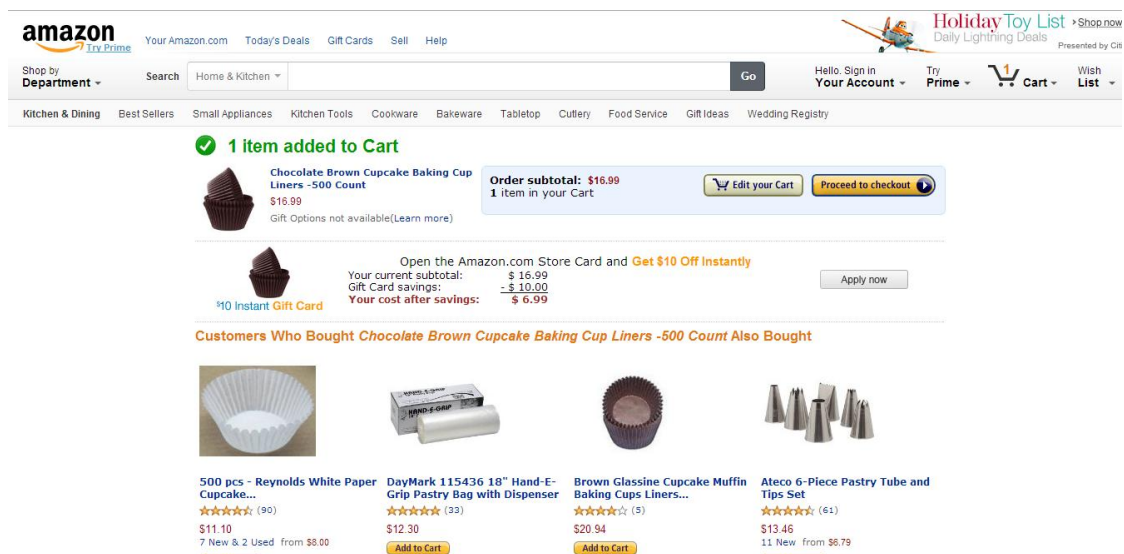
Price: **\$16.99**
In Stock.
Ships from and sold by LARKS Cake & Candy- 99% Free Shipping.
2 new from \$11.99

- Chocolate Brown Cupcake Baking Cup Liners -(pkg/500)
- Standard size chocolate brown cupcake baking liners fit standard US cupcake pans
- Measure approximately 2 inch base, 1 1/4 inch wall

More Buying Choices
Global Sugar Art LLC **Add to Cart**
\$11.99 + \$5.94 shipping
2 new from \$11.99
Have one to sell? **Sell on Amazon**

The user clicks on the button "add to cart" at the right side bar. *The price and the "In Stock" sentence are highlighted in red and green and may not cause the expected impact in color blindness people, changing the combination of color may solve the problem.*

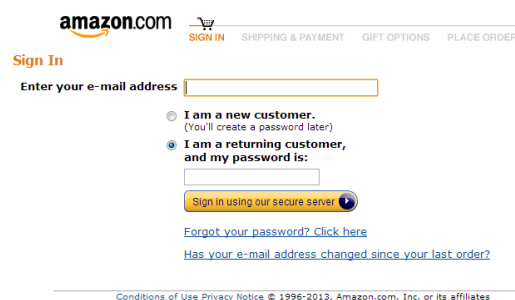
Cart addition



The system provides feedback to the user notifying him that the item has been added to the cart. Error prevention technique is present in the “edit your Cart” option button.

The user clicks the button “Proceed to checkout”.

Forces registering



The user is obliged to follow the registration process starting filling the previous form. *The button to continue the process has the same format until now making it familiar to the user.*

A progress bar is present at the top of the form letting the user know the current state of the whole process.

The screenshot shows the Amazon.com Sign In page. At the top, the Amazon logo is on the left, and navigation links (SIGN IN, SHIPPING & PAYMENT, GIFT OPTIONS, PLACE ORDER) are on the right. A yellow error box with a red 'X' icon contains the message: "There was a problem with your request. Missing e-mail address. Please correct and try again." Below this, the "Sign In" section has a label "Enter your e-mail address" followed by an empty text input field. There are two radio buttons: "I am a new customer. (You'll create a password later)" and "I am a returning customer, and my password is:" (which is selected). Below the second radio button is another empty text input field. A blue button labeled "Sign in using our secure server" is present. At the bottom, there are two links: "Forgot your password? Click here" and "Has your e-mail address changed since your last order?"

The user accidentally clicked the button without filling the form. An error message pop ups specifying the missing information in order to continue.

After filling the

Registering

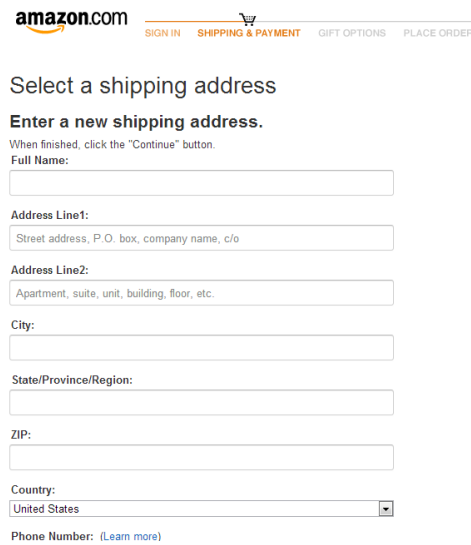
The screenshot shows the Amazon.com Registration page. At the top, the Amazon logo is on the left, and navigation links (SIGN IN, SHIPPING & PAYMENT, GIFT OPTIONS, PLACE ORDER) are on the right. The "Registration" section has a heading "New to Amazon.com? Register Below." followed by several form fields: "My name is:" with an empty text input field, "My e-mail address is:" with a text input field containing "silvina.caino@alumnos.uc3m.es", "Type it again:" with an empty text input field, and "My mobile phone number is:" with a text input field and "(Optional)" next to it. A link "Learn more" is below the phone number field. Below these fields is a section titled "Protect your information with a password" with the subtext "This will be your only Amazon.com password." It includes "Enter a new password:" and "Type it again:" text input fields, and a blue button labeled "Create account" at the bottom. At the very bottom, there is a small link: "Conditions of Use Privacy Notice © 1996-2013, Amazon.com, Inc. or its affiliates".

Amazon then requires the user to provide details about the shipping address to which the product will be shipped. The user is required to fulfill a form.

This form is quite simple and clear. However, maybe some users might not understand what information they are being asked for. Specially, form fields "Address Line 1" and "Address line 2" are not self-explanatory, and a message explaining what information is expected in those fields could be an useful improvement.

A positive aspect of the chosen interface is the top bar, which shows in an intuitive and visual format the step of the registration process in which the user currently is.

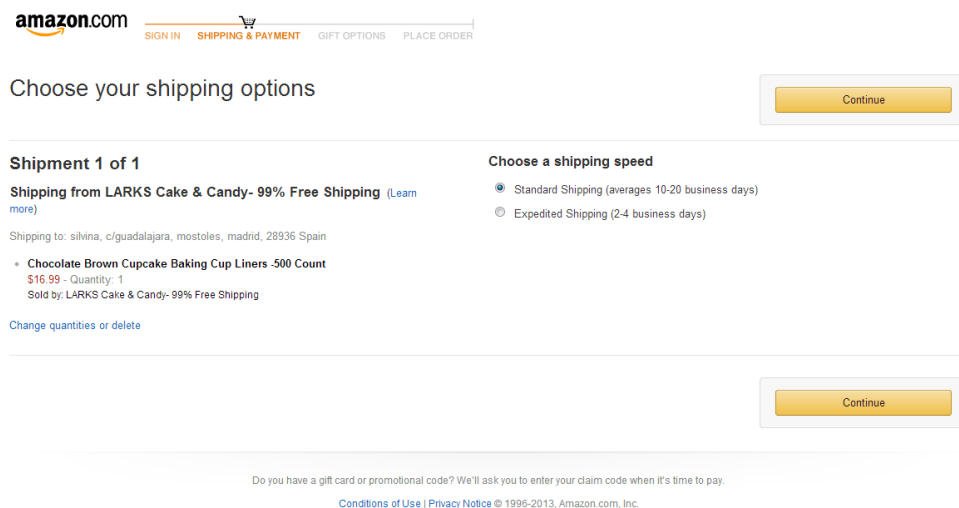
Shipment



The screenshot shows the Amazon.com header with navigation links: SIGN IN, SHIPPING & PAYMENT, GIFT OPTIONS, and PLACE ORDER. The main heading is "Select a shipping address". Below it, a sub-heading says "Enter a new shipping address." followed by a note: "When finished, click the 'Continue' button." The form fields are: Full Name (text input), Address Line1 (text input with placeholder "Street address, P.O. box, company name, c/o"), Address Line2 (text input with placeholder "Apartment, suite, unit, building, floor, etc."), City (text input), State/Province/Region (text input), ZIP (text input), Country (dropdown menu showing "United States"), and Phone Number (text input with a "(Learn more)" link).

The user is given a choice between several shipping speeds, with different prices. The user can choose between them via some radio buttons. Also, while doing this, Amazon shows the summary of the purchase in the left side of the screen: name of the product, shipping company and seller, price and shipping address. The user is given the choice of learning something more about the seller through a “learn more” link, too.

An improvement could be a clearer display of this information, as there is a lot of information provided to the user in a relatively small space. For example, a list with titles (“seller: <the seller>; shipping company: <the company>; product: <the product>, etc) would be very clear and intuitive.



The screenshot shows the Amazon.com header with navigation links: SIGN IN, SHIPPING & PAYMENT, GIFT OPTIONS, and PLACE ORDER. The main heading is "Choose your shipping options". On the right, there is a "Continue" button. Below the heading, the page is divided into two sections. The left section, titled "Shipment 1 of 1", shows "Shipping from LARKS Cake & Candy- 99% Free Shipping" with a "(Learn more)" link. Below this, it says "Shipping to: silvina, c/guadalajara, mostoles, madrid, 28936 Spain". The product details are: "Chocolate Brown Cupcake Baking Cup Liners -500 Count", "\$16.99 - Quantity: 1", and "Sold by: LARKS Cake & Candy- 99% Free Shipping". There is a link "Change quantities or delete". The right section, titled "Choose a shipping speed", has two radio button options: "Standard Shipping (averages 10-20 business days)" (selected) and "Expedited Shipping (2-4 business days)". At the bottom right, there is another "Continue" button. At the very bottom, there is a small text: "Do you have a gift card or promotional code? We'll ask you to enter your claim code when it's time to pay." and a link "Conditions of Use | Privacy Notice © 1996-2013, Amazon.com, Inc."

The buying process continues through a confirmation of successful purchase. However, that would mean to actually buy the product. **As we are not going to buy it in real life**, we are not able to analyze that last interface. However, we think the analysis of the rest of the process is more than enough to be able to do a complete Heuristic Evaluation.

CONCLUSIONS

From the analysis of this particular case, we can extract the following conclusions:

- The system to purchase goods online is pretty intuitive for people with experience with online stores. However, it is a little less intuitive if you are a newcomer to online stores. The existence of a lot of option might be counter-productive for people only looking for a "search" and a "buy" button.
- The system guides you through the process of buying step by step, with buttons whose names are logical ("Search" for a search bar, "Add to cart" to add items to the online cart...). Maybe, for people with not that much of a experience in the world of Internet, a message explaining the utility of each button while the cursor is over would be useful.
- Although the steps for recursive visitors are only a few, newcomers to Amazon are required to provide a lot of information. It is indeed necessary, but might be somehow tiring. The first purchase takes longer.
- The choice of a step-by-step process seems to be a good choice, as it allows the usage of simple steps instead of a too-long and too-tiring single step.
- Advertisements for featured sometimes make the interface to be too annoying, subtracting space in the screen and importance to the product you are looking for. However, the addition of a "similar to this product" space sometimes is quite useful.
- Advanced search options are small and might not be noticed if the customer is not looking for them explicitly.

These conclusions could be reunited in a single conclusion that summarizes the overall idea Amazon's interface transmits to customers:

A lot of options that might not be used can make the interface less intuitive. Also, sometimes the advertisements of featured products get annoying. However, the step-by-step interface guides the customer through the process of buying in Amazon with a maybe necessarily tiring but efficient process.