

Minimum Viable Prototype (MVP)

The Criterion Collection Help Centre

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What Is The Criterion Collection?

The Criterion Collection is a boutique physical media label. It licenses films, both classic and contemporary, and distributes DVD, Blu-ray, and 4K editions with special features that enhance the film-watching experience. These peripherals include essay booklets, interviews, behind-the-scenes footage, and commentary tracks. Its lineup of products caters to cinephiles who want to deepen their appreciation of cinema.

Why Create A Help Centre for The Criterion Collection?

We decided to revamp The Criterion Collection's help centre because its current state consists only of extremely long FAQ pages. This makes it difficult to find information quickly. The user often has to sift through information that is irrelevant to their situation. This FAQ format makes it difficult to search and scan for keywords that best apply to a user's situation.

In creating a full-fledged help centre or knowledge base, we can eliminate these frustrating situations.

Our approach relies on organizing related topics and articles into focused categories. This would make it easier for the user to find relevant information, whether they're looking for one topic or multiple related ones. This would reduce navigation time and the need to contact support.

Additionally, we can refine the topics overall so that there isn't any overlap between answers as in the current FAQ model. This way, we can reduce the frustration of users who are forced to constantly encounter the same information in the current FAQ model.

User Persona



"I want to expand my collection of French New Wave Cinema, so my friends can appreciate those films too."

Roger Avary - Cinephile

- 34 years old
- Single, no kids
- Works a busy 9-5
- Lives in a mid-sized city

Goal, Needs, and Motivation

- He loves to collect physical media and wants to own a film rather than depending on expiring license agreements on streaming services
- He appreciates classic, arthouse cinema that isn't usually available on streaming services; he loves owning boutique versions of such films
- He believes Blu-rays provide the best home viewing experience
- He wants to watch a classic movie at least 3-4 times a week.

Frustrations

- He hates it when his packages are delayed
- He dreads disc malfunctions (e.g., poor sound/video quality)
- He detests waiting for an agent or email responses when seeking help, especially after waiting so long for delivery
- Dislikes scrolling through an endless array of FAQs that reduces his experiences to a single question

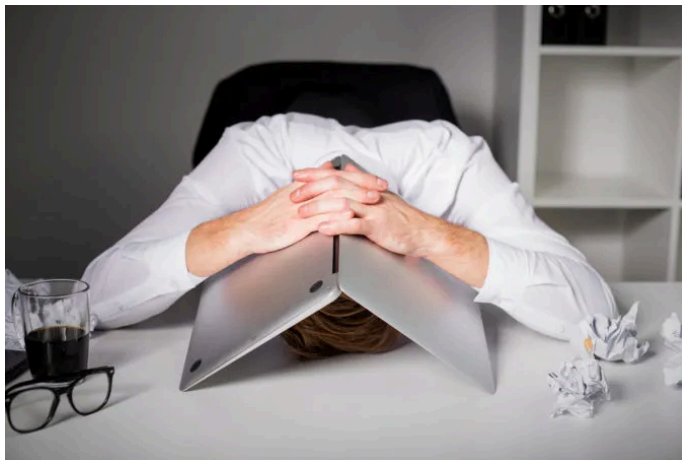
User Story

Beginning of Roger's Story



Roger works a busy 9-5 and loves spending his free time watching movies in his home theatre. He is a film collector who enjoys hosting movie nights for friends and prefers buying movies from the Criterion Collection.

Roger's Plight - Inciting Incident and Middle of the Story



When his order is delayed, and some discs have issues, Roger wants a clear answer so he can plan his movie night. He tries the FAQ page and support line, but it's frustrating. The FAQ is messy, and support is slow.

Roger's Delight - The Climax and End of the Story



Roger finds The Criterion Collection's new help centre. It's quick, easy to use, and helps him solve his issue. He feels relieved, respected, and grateful that the support team understood how much the movie means to him. Roger shares his great experience with his friends and online, saying the service shows they care. He keeps coming back for more titles and opts for early previews of upcoming releases.

Information Architecture

Brainstorming Topics

When developing the structure of our help centre, we brainstormed a variety of topics that we felt our user, Roger, would most seek out. For example, we included topics such as **Delivery Issue**, **Disc Playback Issues**, and **Shipping Methods**.

From there, we branched out to topics we felt were crucial to the shopping experience, such as **Track My Order**, **Release Formats**, **How to Watch Titles**, and **Trouble With Checkout**. Then, we included topics that we find fundamental to most websites, such as **Privacy Policy** and **Contact Us**

Since we wanted to eliminate the FAQ model, we completed card sorting sessions that stipulated that “FAQ” cannot be a category.

Card Sorting

Since the similarities between how the participants grouped the topics, we decided to consolidate their groups’ names into five main categories. For example, **Account & Membership** was derived from “Account Management” and “Membership Info”. Such groups contained the same topics, but had different titles.

Card Sorting 1

Participant: A busy film journalist who is an avid cinephile and physical media collector.

Order & Shipping	Track my order	Shipping Methods	Delivery Issue	Change Shipping Address	Cancel or Edit Order
Payments & Billing	Payment Methods	How to Apply Promotional Codes	Payment Issues	Invoice or Billing Issues	
Technical Support	Website not Loading	Can't Log into Account	Forgotten Password	Trouble With Checkout	Disc Playback Issues
	How to Watch Titles	How to Add Titles To Cart			
Account & Membership	Create or Manage Account	Update Email or Password	Order History	Loyalty Program	
Returns & Refunds	Return & Refund Policy	How to Request a Refund	Damaged Discs or Packaging	Returning a Gift	
General Information	Privacy Policy	Terms of Service	How We Select our Library of Films	Contact Us	About Us
					Release Formats

Card Sorting 2

Participant: Friend of Kim's who enjoys films and collects a few, but is not an avid cinephile

Order & Shipping	Track my order	Shipping Methods	Delivery Issue	Change Shipping Address	Cancel or Edit Order	Order History
Payments & Billing	Payment Methods	How to Apply Promotional Codes	Payment Issues	Invoice or Billing Issues	Trouble With Checkout	
Technical Support	Website not Loading	Can't Log into Account	Disc Playback Issues	How to Watch Titles	How to Add Titles To Cart	
	Damaged Discs or Packaging					
Account & Membership	Create or Manage Account	Return & Refund Policy	Update Email or Password	Forgotten Password	Loyalty Program	
Returns & Refunds	How to Request a Refund	Returning a Gift				
General Information	Privacy Policy	Terms of Service	How We Select our Library of Films	Contact Us	About Us	Release Formats

Card Sorting 3

Participant: Friend of Prachi who isn't into movies, but can essentially act as a control group, as they regularly visit other e-commerce websites

Order & Shipping	Track my order	Shipping Methods	Delivery Issue	Change Shipping Address	Cancel or Edit Order	Order History
	Damaged Discs or Packaging	How to Add Titles To Cart				
Payments & Billing	Payment Methods	How to Apply Promotional Codes	Payment Issues	Invoice or Billing Issues	Trouble With Checkout	
Technical Support	Website not Loading	Disc Playback Issues	How to Watch Titles			
Account & Membership	Create or Manage Account	Return & Refund Policy	Update Email or Password	Forgotten Password	Loyalty Program	
	Can't Log into Account					
Returns & Refunds	How to Request a Refund	Returning a Gift				
General Information	Privacy Policy	Terms of Service	How We Select our Library of Films	Contact Us	About Us	Release Formats

Key Insights from Card Sorting Sessions

Card Sorting #1

The participant found the **Delivery Issue** topic to be too broad and was unsure if **Technical Support** referred to website support or product support.

Card Sorting #2

For the second card sorting session, most of the topics stayed the same as the first. This told us that, for the most part, these topics were easy to understand and clearly related to similar topics.

We noted three changes. Firstly, **Damaged Discs or Packaging** went from **Returns & Refunds** to **Technical Support**. Secondly, **Trouble with Checkout** went from **Technical Support** to **Payments & Billing**. Thirdly, **Return & Refund Policy** went from **Returns & Refunds** to **Account & Membership**.

These changes further solidified that **Technical Support** may be a bit too vague for users. For example, are they looking for support with using the website itself or with their orders? This motivated us to consider if our topics and, by extension, our categories were precise enough.

Card Sorting #3

For the third card sorting session, three updates were made to improve how topics are generally grouped in an e-commerce website.

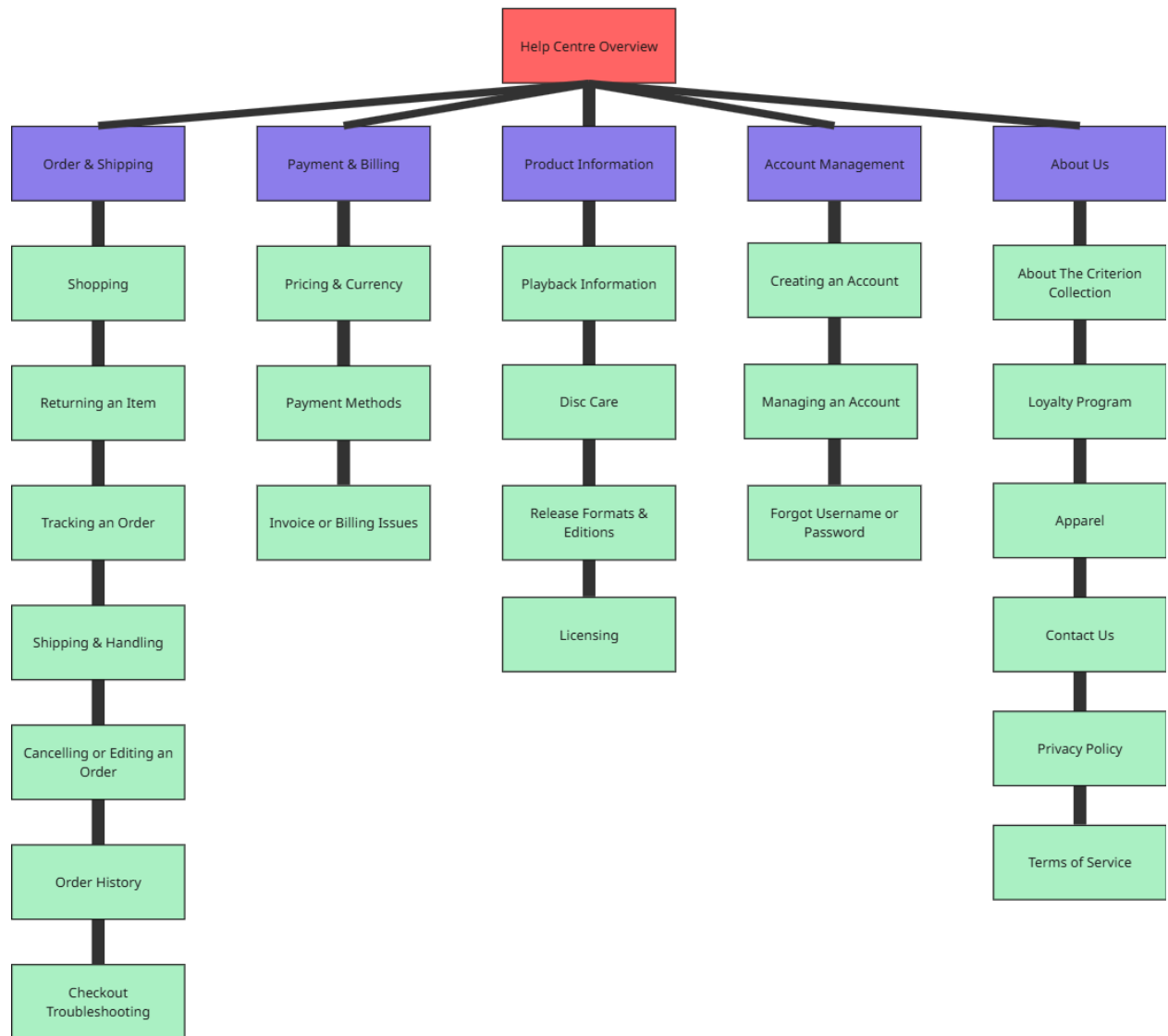
Damaged Discs or Packaging went from **Technical Support** to **Order & Shipping** because, from a general user perspective, it's a delivery issue. **Can't Log into Account** was moved from **Technical Support** to **Account & Membership**, as for most users, it's about user access and account-related issues. **How to Add Titles to Cart** went from **Technical Support** to **Order & Shipping** because users see this as a part of order processing.

Key Conclusions From Card Sorting Sessions

- The **Return & Refunds** category became shorter with each card sorting session, indicating it would be better to consolidate with the **Order & Shipping** category, which falls within the same purview.
- There was a lot of confusion around whether the **Technical Support** category referred to website issues or product issues, indicating we should eliminate or reword it better to associate it with product issues only.

- **General Information** stayed the same across all three sessions, which told us this was the most easily understood category and should probably stay the same in our final iteration of the help centre
- We noticed some topics were quite vague, such as **Delivery Issue** and **Trouble With Checkout**, which motivated us to consider how we could rename, consolidate, or even eliminate topics to refine the help centre's organization

Final Information Architecture

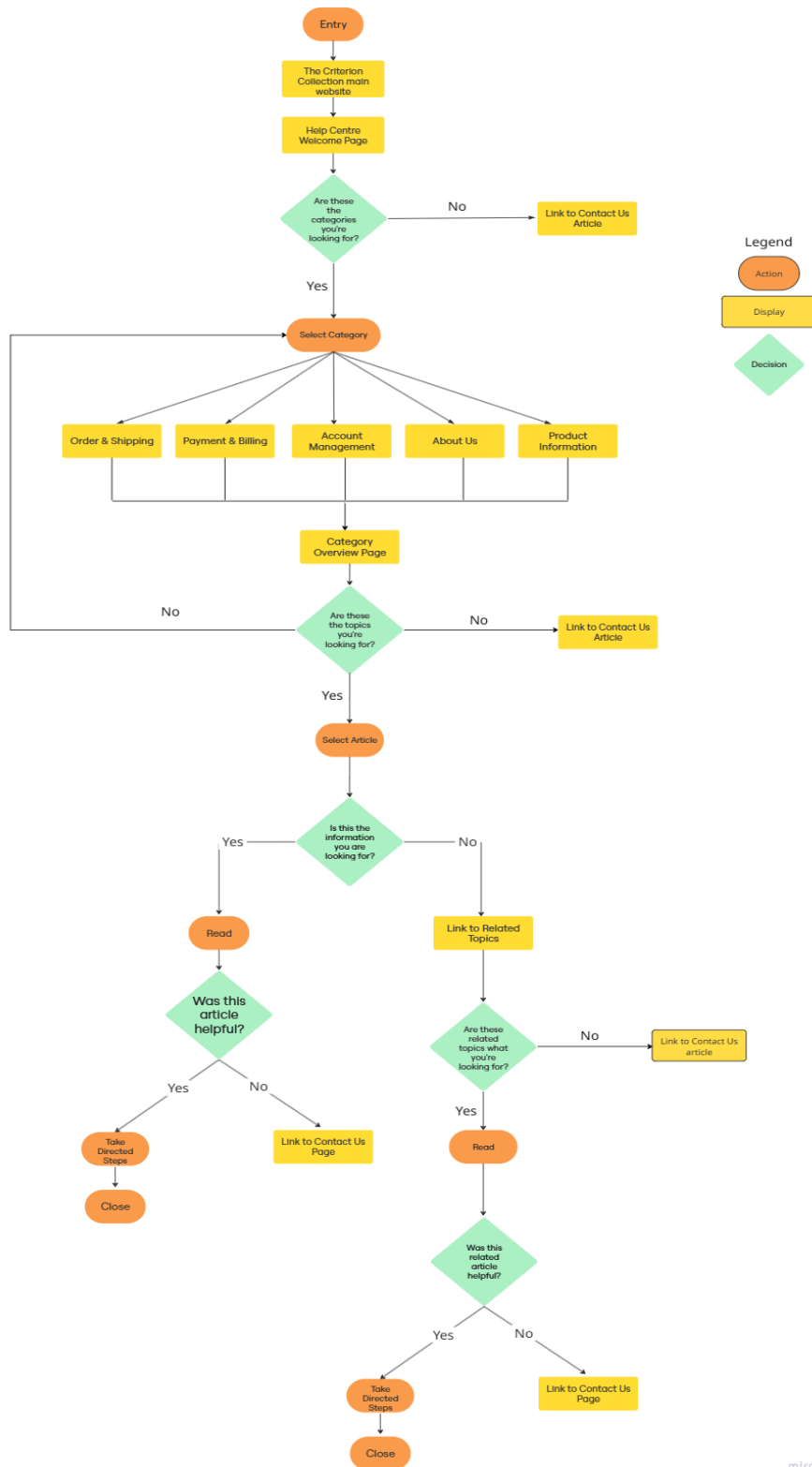


Information Architecture Methodology

This information architecture model incorporates our findings from the three card sorting sessions, as it consolidates, combines, or eliminates topics and categories that were sources of confusion or misinterpretation for our participants. As a result, **Returns & Refunds** was made the **Returning an Item** article under the **Order & Shipping** category. The Technical Support label was split between **Account Management** and **Product Information** to better differentiate between product issues and website issues. Broad topics like **Delivery Issue** or **Trouble With Checkout** are reflected through various, more specific articles under the **Order & Shipping** category.

We wanted to sort our final information architecture in a way that allowed users to access the most important information first. Because our user persona and participants focused on difficulties with shipping, purchases, and products, we decided to put **Order & Shipping**, **Payment & Billing**, and **Product Information** first. **Account Management** and **About Us** are latter categories as they offer help with the website or general conceptual information that is not as pertinent as product and purchase-related issues.

The Criterion Collection Help Centre User Flow



User Flow Explanation

This link leads to our user flow: https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVlxZBGeg=.

This user flow shows how visitors can navigate The Criterion Collection Help Centre to find the support they need. While the flowchart includes decision points, these aren't questions the system asks, but they represent the logical choices a user makes as they explore the help content.

- **Starting Point:** Users begin on the main Criterion Collection website and proceed to the Help Centre Welcome Page.
- **Choosing a Category:** At this point, users are presented with several categories. If none of the categories match what the user is looking for, they can proceed directly to the Contact Us article.
- **Browsing by Category:** When a user selects a category, they are taken to an overview page. If they don't find any relevant articles, they have the option to either go to the Contact Us article or return to the Help Centre home page.
- **Selecting an Article:** After selecting an article, the user first determines if it contains the information they're looking for. If it does, they proceed to read the article. If not, instead of reading further, they have the option to choose from the list of related articles that might match their needs.
- **Exploring Related Topics:** From the related topics, the user can browse different articles. If the article turns out to be what they are looking for, they can read the article. If not, or if none of the related topics are useful, they have the option to go to the Contact Us page to get further assistance directly from support.
- **After reading a Related Article:** Once the user reads a related article, they again evaluate whether it was helpful. If the article provides the solution they were looking for, they follow the directed steps outlined in the content and solve their issue. If the article still doesn't meet their needs, they're given one final option to visit the Contact Us page, where they can get direct help from the support team.

Note: Every category in the Help Centre will follow the same structure for consistency. This diagram provides a general overview of the overall web page flow, showing how users move through the Help Centre from start to finish.

Priority Guide Layout

Help Centre Overview Page

This priority guide outlines the landing page. It is structured exactly like our information architecture, where the most important information is the first thing users see. Each section of the overview page contains a heading, body text that provides a description of the articles it will contain, and a relevant image. Movie stills were selected to align with the brand's tone.

Category Overview Page

The priority guides for our five categories are structured the same way: the most important information is at the top. The articles' titles are featured with descriptive body text and a corresponding image.

Article Page

These pages hold the main content of the help centre. They are conceptual, task-based, or reference-based articles. The headings are ordered by priority, where the topmost content sections are the most pertinent to users.

For example, the **Shopping article page** follows a consumer logic where users want to learn about **How to Browse Titles and Collections** before **Checking Out** certain items. The **How to Wishlist** content section comes last, as only after learning about the last two concepts do they search for this particular feature.

Because we want articles to be interconnected, each article page links to other articles within the same category. We also offer a link to the **Contact Us** page in case users didn't find their answer in the article's content. This also prevents users from being caught in a loop between the category overview page and its other articles, as per our user flow.

Note: We attached a separate PDF containing all of our priority guides.

Heuristics Evaluation #1: Medium-Fidelity Prototype

Visibility of System Status

Rating 2 = Minor

We used an animation to show the opening of the hamburger menu, but we don't have any loading bars to show that pages are in the process of opening. This is only a minor issue because it will not cause a huge headache for our users. They can easily refresh the page if the load time is too long. We also do not anticipate long system status wait times because the help site is not bloated with excessive visuals.

Match Between the System and The Real World

Rating 0 = No Issue

Our help website does not have jargon that is difficult for general users to understand. Also, the way we designed it is similar to other popular websites. For example, the use of a hamburger menu and clickable tiles.

User Control and Freedom

Rating 3 = major

Within the pages, user control and freedom are supported through our multiple navigation avenues (i.e., hamburger menu, other helpful articles, contact us button). However, there's a major oversight—we don't have any way to go back to the home page once you're inside a category overview page or an article page.

Consistency and Standards

Rating 0 = No Issue

The help site is very cohesive in the way it was designed. All of the tiles have the same design and formatting, which makes it intuitive for the users to navigate the site. The writing style is the same throughout, and there aren't difficult words in our help content. Possible actions that users can take, such as clicking on links, all look the same.

Error Prevention

Rating 0 = No Issue

We don't feel that our website has opportunities for errors or error prevention.

Recognition Rather Than Recall

Rating 0 = No Issue

Firstly, before reading the description of a category, users are presented with a simple, related image that helps them get a general gist of the content.

Secondly, all written content is laid out on the page (i.e., nothing in dropdown menus), allowing users to read everything without having to remember hidden content.

Lastly, if an article refers to content that's part of another article, we provide a link to that other article. This makes it easy for users to quickly identify and navigate between related issues without having to recall similar articles.

Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

Rating 2 = Minor

Users can quickly navigate to category pages from the home page or through the hamburger menu. However, it does take longer to get to article pages, which may frustrate an expert user. For example, article pages are accessed through category pages and not through the main page. Another issue is that when a user is within an article page, there isn't an easy way to get back to the main page (only other article pages within that category).

This does not greatly impact the quality of the help site, but it can be frustrating for some users, which makes it a minor issue.

Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

Rating 0 = No Issue

We only included the most necessary information, making it easy for users to understand the content without feeling overwhelmed. Additionally, we used a minimalist colour palette (black, white, and gold), which prevents excessive stimuli and makes the site look cohesive overall.

Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

Rating 0 = No Issue

We do not feel that our website has opportunities for error messages. For example, we do not have an option for users to add anything to a cart or select text boxes. Our users are primarily clicking on links and reading help content. If a page does not load properly, the browser will tell the user.

Help and Documentation

Rating 0 = No Issue

We think our help content is straightforward and easy to follow for our users. The presented information isn't overly dense thanks to our use of headings and our clear separation of articles or topic groups.

Our Research Plan

Our card sorting research provided attitudinal insights about our users. For us to get more balanced insights, we plan to incorporate a behavioural-based research method.

We used moderated usability testing to conduct our research. This is a real-time test where we:

- Ask background questions to the user to determine their demographic and product knowledge level.
- Ask the user to find specific pages to observe their navigation process and how our website hinders or supports their navigation.
- Ask the user questions about their navigation process, especially if we find they're having problems with navigating.
- Ask the user what they think of the overall content and website design.
- Use the collected data to inform our next design iteration.

We did two separate rounds of usability studies. For each round of usability studies, we asked 8 users for their insights. The first round was to get insight from users about our Version A prototype. After collecting feedback from the research session, we implemented it into our Version B prototype. After Version B was complete, we conducted our second round of usability studies to gather insight on whether the changes we implemented were beneficial.

Questions for Usability Studies

To maintain reliability in data collection, we used the same questions for both usability studies.

The questions include:

1. What's your gender and age demographic?
2. Which features do you use the most when browsing e-commerce websites?
3. Which features do you have the most trouble with on e-commerce websites?
4. How often do you use your phone to browse e-commerce websites or help centres?
5. How often do you use The Criterion Collection?
6. Navigate to Returning an Item, Order History, and Loyalty Program. How was your experience navigating to these pages?
7. Read the Create an Account page. Do you think there's anything that needs to be added or removed?
8. You mentioned that you use [these features] the most when using e-commerce websites. If you were having issues with those features on The Criterion Collection and had to find help from the help centre, do you think you'd be satisfied with the help?
9. On a scale of 1-10, how intuitive was our help centre?

Usability Study 1: Insights from Testing Prototype Version A

We used Version A of our prototype for our first usability study:

<https://www.figma.com/proto/0VoFIll5l3v24e2OA2LkD4/The-Criterion-Collection-Help-Centre?node-id=53-75&p=f&t=rp6dPkOBjcHKp8TG-1&scaling=scale-down&content-scaling=fixed&page-id=0%3A1&starting-point-node-id=53%3A75>

After testing our Prototype A with multiple users, they found some features to be unintuitive or difficult to use. The average rating we gathered from our users is a 7.5/10.

We took note of the following pain points and made the following changes to address them:

Change	Reason for Change
Replace “Contact Us” dropdown with “Contact Us” button	<p>We observed that users had difficulty using the “Contact Us” dropdown.</p> <p>They sometimes didn’t realize they could click it to reveal more information. Adding a “Contact Us” button that directs to the appropriate page remedies this issue and makes the user experience more intuitive.</p>
Add a “Contact Us” button on the Category Overview pages	<p>Users would look for the Contact Us button on the Category Overview page.</p> <p>We added the button to those pages to ensure it was accessible on more pages throughout the help centre. This also allows each page to be more interconnected and appear more balanced.</p>
Remove “Help Centre” title on the navigation bar.	<p>Users mentioned the navigation bar looked cluttered with the “Help Centre” title.</p> <p>We removed the text and kept the logo to improve scanability and add more white space to each page.</p>
Add “Search for your question” text on the search bar.	<p>Some users did not interact with the search bar on the Landing and Category Overview pages.</p> <p>By adding this text, this calls the user to action and prompts them to attempt to use the search bar to find specific information.</p>
Remove the search bar from article pages.	<p>Users found the search bar to be cumbersome and superfluous within the articles. We removed the search bar to add more white space within articles and improve their usability and scanability.</p>
Center Category Overview page headings.	<p>Users found the page to be visually unbalanced when the Category Overview page heading was left-aligned.</p>

	Since the Category Overview page follows the same structure as the landing page, it felt natural to structure these two page types identically.
Add "Rights Reserved" text in the footer on every page.	<p>In Prototype A, users scrolled to the bottom of each page and found that some pages did not include the "Rights Reserved" footer. They thought the page wasn't fully loaded, which confused users.</p> <p>We made sure the footer text appeared consistently throughout the help centre.</p>
Changed "Hi, How can we help you?" to "Hi, how can we help?" on the landing page.	<p>Users felt the heading felt a little too robotic and impersonal.</p> <p>Changing the heading allows the help centre to assume a more friendly, relaxed, and conversational tone.</p> <p>The change also addresses a capitalization error in the original heading, as "How" was incorrectly capitalized, which distracted users.</p>

Analysis and Insights from Research Session #2 (Prototype B)

We used Version B of our prototype for our second usability study:

<https://www.figma.com/proto/0VoFIll5l3v24e2OA2LkD4/The-Criterion-Collection-Help-Centre?node-id=94-802&p=f&t=7ERa2x1tqRazP8r2-1&scaling=scale-down&content-scaling=fixed&page-id=86%3A367&starting-point-node-id=94%3A802>

We received similar insights from our users during these usability studies. Some insights we received are:

- The site was easy to navigate with simple, digestible information.
- The blocks are organized and the blurbs make it easy to know what each tile leads you to.
- It was easy to switch through pages because of the hamburger menu and 'other helpful articles' tiles.
 - This could be improved by making the logo clickable to take the user back to the home page.
 - Homepage should also be added to the hamburger menu.
- Content answers are easily understood but there may be a need for more images within the article pages to split up the text.
- The content is comprehensive and not overwhelming (not too much or too little information).

- The use of movie stills on the homepage excited users familiar with movies, making them feel like our help centre truly catered to their needs
- The way content was ordered was a little confusing sometimes, such as information required to sign up being after how to sign up

The average rating we gathered from our users is an 8/10.

High-Fidelity Prototype Changes

Based on our insights from research session #2 and our previous heuristics evaluation, we added additional updates and changes to our help centre design. We implemented these changes using JavaScript.

Change	Reason for Change
"Back to top" button	We added this feature to all our pages to help mobile users quickly return to the top of the page without needing to scroll manually. This improves site navigation and saves the user's time.
Tap/hover effects on tiles	We added this effect to our index/category pages to provide visual feedback. The effect helps users understand that a category tile is clickable and their location within a given page. It also lends a user-friendly feel that is more interactive than our previous iteration.
Clickable hamburger menu	<p>The clickable hamburger menu appears on smaller, mobile devices for all our pages. It is part of our responsive design, and it displays the main category headings when clicked.</p> <p>Adding this functionality keeps the screen clear and uncluttered for mobile users, providing greater white space and a more scannable, readable page.</p>
Increased heading sizes (CSS)	We increased our heading sizes to improve the scaling on our help centre across devices, so users can more easily scan the website and focus on content that is most relevant to them.
Text size adjustment bar	We added a text size adjustment bar to our article pages that allows users to adjust the text size between three different sizes. This allows our website to be more accessible, especially for users with visual impairments.

Progress loading bar	A loading bar along the top of the screen throughout our site shows our users the page's loading progress. This limits a guessing game on the user's part if there are any delays during the loading process. The loading bar feature also provides users with input feedback, so they know the help centre has registered their input.
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Heuristics Evaluation #2: High-Fidelity Prototype

Visibility of System Status

Rating 0 = No Issue

We added a **fade-in animation** to our hamburger menu when it is clicked. This shows the user that the hamburger menu, and the headings within it, are loading. This fade-in animation is also a way to provide input feedback to the user.

We also created a **loading bar** along the top of the screen to show our users the page's loading progress. This limits a guessing game on the user's part if there are any delays during the loading process. The loading bar feature also provides users with input feedback, so they know the help centre has registered their input.

Match Between System and The Real World

Rating 0 = No Issue

Our help website does not have jargon that is difficult for general users to understand. Also, the way we designed it is similar to other popular websites. For example, the use of a hamburger menu and clickable tiles.

Additionally, the symbols in the **text size buttons** are intuitive (e.g., bigger letter means bigger page text), which aids users in immediately identifying what the buttons are for.

User Control and Freedom

Rating 2 = minor

Within the pages, user control and freedom is supported through our multiple navigation avenues (i.e. hamburger menu, other helpful articles, contact us button).

In our high-fidelity prototype, we added a '**back to top**' function so users can be directed to the top of the page. This gives them an easy way to get to the top of the page where the navigation menu is.

We now have a way to get back to the home page through the navigation menu with the Home button. However, we had to remove the functionality where a user can click the logo to get back to the home page since clicking the logo now takes a user to the top of the page.

Some users might find clicking the logo to go back home more intuitive, so we consider this change a minor issue. It may affect the website's intuitiveness for some users, but overall, the design provides adequate user control and freedom.

Consistency and Standards

Rating 0 = No Issue

The help site is very cohesive in the way it was designed. All of the tiles have the same design and formatting, making it intuitive for the users to navigate the site. The writing style is the same throughout and there aren't difficult words in our help content. Possible actions that users can take such as clicking on links all look the same.

Error Prevention

Rating 0 = No Issue

We don't feel that our website has opportunities for errors or error prevention.

Recognition Rather Than Recall

Rating 0 = No Issue

Firstly, before reading the description of a category, users are presented with a simple, related image that helps them get a general gist of the content.

Secondly, all written content is laid out on the page (i.e. nothing in dropdown menus), allowing users to read everything without having to remember hidden content.

Lastly, if an article refers to content that's part of another article, we provide a link to that other article. This makes it easy for users to quickly identify and navigate between related issues without having to recall similar articles.

Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

Rating 2 = Minor

Users can quickly navigate to category pages from the home page or through the hamburger menu. However, it does take longer to get to article pages which may frustrate an expert user. For example, article pages are accessed through category pages and not through the main

page. Another issue is that when a user is within an article page, there isn't an easy way to get back to the main page besides using the hamburger menu.

This does not greatly impact the quality of the help site, but it can be frustrating for some users which makes it a minor issue.

Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

Rating 0 = No Issue

We implemented the use of **white space** and **hierarchy**, which contributes to an easy-to-navigate aesthetic design. We only included the most necessary information, making it easy for users to understand the content without feeling overwhelmed.

Additionally, we used a minimalist colour palette (black, white, and gold) which prevents excessive stimuli and makes the site look cohesive overall.

We also used **grouping** and **scaling** concepts in our design. For example, our topics are in their own separate tiles and we made our headings larger for scaling purposes. This prevents cognitive load and makes the site easy to navigate.

We also used a combination of **focal point** and **white space** to draw users' eyes to the main tiles within the home page. By using big colour photos in an otherwise black and white site, users can immediately get a sense of where to begin.

Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

Rating 0 = No Issue

We do not feel that our website has opportunities for error messages. For example, we do not have an option for users to add anything to a cart or select text boxes. Our users are primarily clicking on links and reading help content. If a page does not load properly, we have added a loading bar for users to see the progress.

Help and Documentation

Rating 0 = No Issue

We think our help content is straightforward to follow for our users. The presented information isn't overly dense thanks to our use of headings and our clear separation of articles or topic groups.

Our High Fidelity Research Plan

To maintain consistency, we kept two factors the same. We used moderated usability testing, the same research method. We also conducted research with the same 8 users.

We conducted one research session to test our changes to the high-fidelity prototype. We had our users navigate our site in a mobile-first format (iPhone 16 pro). We asked our users the following questions as we observed their usage of our website:

1. Which features do you use the most when browsing e-commerce websites?
2. Does the clickable hamburger menu help you navigate the website more quickly? Why or why not?
3. Do you think the loading bar is helpful? Why or why not?
4. Start navigating throughout the website and skimming the articles. How helpful is the 'back to top' function?
5. When skimming the articles, can you quickly see topics that are important to you?
6. How do you feel about the text size adjustment on the article pages?
7. Do you feel the website is more responsive than the last time you used it? Why or why not?
8. How well did the website adapt to your mobile screen? Did you need to zoom in or scroll awkwardly?
9. You mentioned that you use [these features] the most when using e-commerce websites. If you were having issues with those features on The Criterion Collection and had to find help from the help centre, do you think you'd be satisfied with the help?
10. On a scale of 1-10, how intuitive was our help centre?

Analysis and Insights from High Fidelity Research

After conducting our research, we received the following insights from our users:

- There should be more options for the text adjustment sizer, as it currently only provides three text size options (14px, 16px, 22px). Users also mentioned that using a slider instead of a button format would provide more customizable adjustment settings.
- The text resizer was superfluous for some users; they said they could zoom in/out if they needed to.
- The clickable hamburger menu was helpful. It made the navigation easier, especially on a mobile screen. They appreciated that the menu only appeared when tapped, which kept the screen less cluttered.
- They liked the 'back to top' button because it made navigation faster; they could reach the hamburger menu or just quickly scroll to the top.
- The 'back to top' button was cutting into text, which was cluttering the article text/interface, but they liked not having to scroll manually after reading long articles.
- Users gave our website an overall rating of 9/10.

Our Reflection and Room for Improvement

We believe that based on our research insights and development process, we created a good product. It is easy to navigate, minimalistic, and incorporates principles of layout design. Our users did not have trouble navigating the website, and their final feedback was on minor issues. In addition, our final heuristics evaluation mostly had good scores.

We believe there are areas of improvement we can incorporate for the future. Based on our own evaluations and research results, this is where we can improve:

- Making our text size buttons into a slider.
- Keep the logo and 'back to top' function stuck to the top in a bar with the hamburger menu. This will ensure that they do not cut into the text when users are scrolling.
- Back to top functionality and a clickable logo (located in the header) that can bring users back to the main page. In our current website, we had to sacrifice the logo bringing you to the homepage for the 'back to top' function.

After these implementations, we are confident that this design can be rated at a 10/10 by our users.

Overall, we worked well as a team. We highlighted every team member's strengths and incorporated them into our workflow. Our research sessions were well planned out, and all of us collaborated efficiently.

Minimum Viable Prototype (MVP)

The following sections detail the design changes, research methods, analyses, and reflections related to our Minimum Viable Prototype (MVP).

Design Changes

Change	Reason for Change
Text Spacing	<p>We increased the spacing of our text by 1.5px to accommodate more white space in our help centre.</p> <p>Since our help centre is text-heavy, the slight increase in spacing makes our content easier to read and scan through.</p>
Remove Search Bar	<p>After repeated rounds of testing, users routinely avoided using or forgot about the search bar.</p> <p>Our users perceive the search bar as a superfluous feature, and will look to our MVP research to see how users will react to its complete removal.</p>
<p>“Back to Top” Feature Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Logo in the nav bar links to homepage- “Back to Top” text is now clickable	<p>When first implementing the “back to top” feature in the high-fidelity prototype, we made the logo clickable. However, it overrode the function of having the logo link back to the homepage.</p> <p>We made the “back to top” text clickable and restored the logo’s function as an intuitive way to navigate back to the homepage.</p>
Remove Box Shadow from “Other Helpful Articles” section	<p>The “Other Helpful Articles” section has a box shadow that is slightly jarring and feels at odds with the minimal aesthetic of our article pages.</p> <p>Removing the box shadow allows for a sleeker, congruous aesthetic that makes for easier reading and scanning on the article pages.</p>

Heuristics Evaluation: MVP

Visibility of System Status

Rating 0 = No Issue

We added a **fade-in animation** to our hamburger menu when it is clicked. This shows the user that the hamburger menu, and the headings within it, are loading. This fade-in animation is also a way to provide input feedback to the user.

We also created a **loading bar** along the top of the screen to show our users the page's loading progress. This limits a guessing game on the user's part if there are any delays during the loading process. The loading bar feature also provides users with input feedback, so they know the help centre has registered their input.

Match Between System and The Real World

Rating 0 = No Issue

Our help website does not have jargon that is difficult for general users to understand. Also, the way we designed it is similar to other popular websites. For example, the use of a hamburger menu and clickable tiles.

Additionally, the symbols in the **text size buttons** are intuitive (e.g., bigger letter means bigger page text), which aids users in immediately identifying what the buttons are for.

User Control and Freedom

Rating 0 = No Issue

Within the pages, user control and freedom are supported through our multiple navigation avenues (i.e. hamburger menu, other helpful articles, contact us button).

In our MVP, we fixed our **'back to top'** function so users can be directed to the top of the page. This gives them an easy way to get to the top of the page where the navigation menu is.

Clicking on the logo also allows our users to be directed to the home page. The user no longer has to navigate all the way to the nav bar. This is intuitive since many websites have this functionality. It's also a quicker way to navigate and gives users the freedom to use the logo or the nav bar to return to the home page.

Consistency and Standards

Rating 0 = No Issue

The help site is very cohesive in the way it was designed. All of the tiles have the same design and formatting, making it intuitive for the users to navigate the site. The writing style is the same

throughout, and there aren't difficult words in our help content. Possible actions that users can take, such as clicking on links, all look the same.

Error Prevention

Rating 0 = No Issue

We don't feel that our website has opportunities for errors or error prevention. For example, our website doesn't feature any checkout/cart features that might cause issues. Our users simply visit our website, read, and leave.

Recognition Rather Than Recall

Rating 0 = No Issue

Firstly, before reading the description of a category, users are presented with a simple, related image that helps them get a general gist of the content.

Secondly, all written content is laid out on the page (i.e. nothing in dropdown menus), allowing users to read everything without having to remember hidden content.

Lastly, if an article refers to content that's part of another article, we provide a link to that other article. This makes it easy for users to quickly identify and navigate between related issues without having to recall similar articles.

Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

Rating 0 = No Issue

Users can quickly and easily navigate to the category pages, home page, and other related articles.

Within articles, users can click on other related articles at the bottom, click on category pages in the hamburger menu, and click on the logo to be directed back to the home page.

We provided users with more flexibility and efficiency of use since the logo can take the user to the home page. This eliminates the issue of only having the hamburger menu to go back to the home page.

The flexibility and efficiency of use for this help site have been greatly improved.

Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

Rating 0 = No Issue

We implemented the use of **white space** and **hierarchy**, which contributes to an easy-to-navigate aesthetic design. We only included the most necessary information, making it

easy for users to understand the content without feeling overwhelmed. We also added adequate line spacing so that users can read fuller articles more easily.

Additionally, we used a minimalist colour palette (black, white, and gold), which prevents excessive stimuli and makes the site look cohesive overall.

We also used **grouping** and **scaling** concepts in our design. For example, our topics are in their own separate tiles, and we made our headings larger for scaling purposes. This prevents cognitive load and makes the site easy to navigate.

We also used a combination of **focal point** and **white space** to draw users' eyes to the main tiles within the home page. By using big colour photos in an otherwise black and white site, users can immediately get a sense of where to begin.

Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

Rating 0 = No Issue

We do not feel that our website has opportunities for error messages. For example, we do not have an option for users to add anything to a cart or select text boxes. Our users are primarily clicking on links and reading help content. If a page does not load properly, we have added a loading bar for users to see the progress.

Help and Documentation

Rating 0 = No Issue

We think our help content is straightforward to follow for our users. The presented information isn't overly dense thanks to our use of headings and our clear separation of articles or topic groups.

We display documentation with appropriate spacing and text size, making it easier to scan for help content.

Our MVP Research Plan

To maintain consistency, we kept two factors the same. We used moderated usability testing which is what we used in our research sessions for our previous prototypes. We also conducted research with the same 8 users.

Choosing usability testing as our research method allows us to capture detailed behavioural and attitudinal insights about our users. Their oral feedback allows us to gauge how helpful our website is. Being able to observe how they navigated our website also gave us insights on how intuitive our website is and if there are any glaring navigational issues.

We decided to only use our web prototype because its design is much more advanced than the Figma one. For example, our web prototype includes JavaScript functionalities, like the loading bar, that are crucial to the overall user experience and for heuristics evaluations. Additionally, we didn't need to use the Figma version for comparisons since we had the high fidelity web prototype to weigh against our MVP.

We conducted one research session to test the changes we made in our MVP. We had our users navigate our site in a mobile-first format (iPhone 16 pro dimensions). We asked our users the following questions as we observed their usage of our website:

1. When you need help, do you prefer browsing help articles or using the search bar?
2. What do you think about us removing the search bar?
3. Is the text in our help centre easy to read and scan?
4. Do you feel the spacing between lines of text is comfortable for reading?
5. Does any part of the article page design distract you from reading the content?
6. How do you feel about the text size adjustment on the article pages?
7. What do you expect to happen when you click the site logo?
8. Start navigating throughout the website and skimming the articles. How helpful is the 'back to top' function?
9. Do you feel the website is more responsive than the last time you used it? Why or why not?
10. On a scale of 1-10, how intuitive was our help centre?

Analysis and Insights from MVP Research

Our users gave us many helpful insights about the updated help site. Insights include the following:

1. When asked about the search bar, our users did not notice that we removed the search bar.
 - a. They concluded that the search bar would not speed up or improve their navigation of the help centre.
 - b. The search bar can be an ancillary feature.
2. Our users enjoyed the slight increase in spacing and said it improved scanability.
 - a. Since our help centre is text-heavy, the increase in spacing makes content easier to read.
3. Our users enjoyed the reintegration of the clickable logo. They felt that it is intuitive to click on it to be redirected back to the home page.
4. Our users enjoyed the 'back to top' button being separate from the clickable logo, as using the logo to navigate back to the homepage is an intuitive and recognizable feature from other websites.
 - a. Users liked the clear call to action that the 'back to top' button had. Using an icon for the 'back to top' function right next to the logo might have been confusing.
5. The rating we received from our users: 9.3.

Reflection on Our UX Design Processes Throughout the Semester

Incorporate Additional User Personas

Our Help Centre's design is structured around a broad user persona that we believe captures the sentiments, desires, and frustrations of most Criterion Collection customers. However, if we were to repeat our UX Design process, we would incorporate a diverse array of user personas that would allow us to tap into more detailed, hyper-specific frustrations and needs.

Building a diverse set of User Personas would allow for a more comprehensive help centre that not only broadly meets the needs of users but also continues to engage in meaningful discourse with them.

Meeting Length and Productivity

Our team gets along really well, which enhances our collaboration since we're always willing to bring ideas forward, discuss them, and try to incorporate them into our prototypes. Regular meetings also allowed us to align on goals, review progress, and quickly address any roadblocks.

Throughout this project, we improved our understanding of UX principles, usability research methods, and responsive designs, which strengthened our technical and teamwork skills.

However, we would always want to chat with each other, resulting in us getting sidetracked often. Our meetings would be four or five hours on average. If we had stayed focused on our work, we might have been able to finish our meetings more quickly, so that we had time for other things in our busy schedules.

Card Sorting

For the card sorting process of our help centre, we only conducted closed card sorting. Upon reflection, if we were to repeat our research process, we would conduct open card sorting research sessions. We feel that we could have received more attitudinal insights from our users with the integration of both closed and open card sorting sessions.

Team Collaboration Protocol

Our team collaboration protocol process can be improved. For some of our meetings, we forgot to complete the agenda, roll call, and activities at the beginning of the meeting. Forgetting to do

this in the beginning made it difficult for us to stay on track with the goals of our meeting. If we had a do-over, we would want to ensure that our team collaboration protocol process followed a stricter procedure.

This ties into our concern with meeting length and productivity. Improving our team collaboration protocol process helps address these issues.