Heuristic Evaluation of Domino's Pizza

Trevor Cadigan | ENC3213 | 4/11/20

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April 22, 2020

Richard E. Allison

President/CEO

Domino's Pizza

30 Frank Lloyd Wright Dr.

Ann Arbor, MI

48106

Dear Mr. Allison:

Within the attached document, you will find our detailed analysis of the issues impacting the usability of Domino's website.

Our analysis included researching the websites of several competitors in order to obtain data on what works, and what doesn't. Evaluators were able to identify and resolve five critical flaws with the current design of your site.

- Clicking profile does not bring the user directly to their profile
- Descriptions of pizzas are too small
- Difficult to keep track of order
- Disorganized checkout page
- Inefficient to order with Dom

Thank you for trusting us to complete this heuristic evaluation for you. We look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Sincerely,

Trevor Cadigan

Web Usability Co.

Executive Summary

This report contains a detailed analysis of design flaws impacting the usability of Domino's website. The procedures used to investigate these issues are based on usability expert Jakob Nielsen's heuristic evaluation method.

The heuristic evaluation method is a website analysis technique that involves a handful of evaluators inspecting a website for violations of a pre-defined set of broad usability guidelines, or heuristics. The heuristics used for this report are as follows:

1. Flexibility and Efficiency of Use
2. Consistency and Standards
3. User Control and Freedom
4. Aesthetic and Minimalist Design
5. Visibility
6. Recognition Over Recall

Evaluators discovered five critical flaws with the current design and provided solutions for each one. The issues discovered are:

1. Clicking profile does not bring the user directly to their profile
2. Descriptions of pizzas are too small
3. Difficult to keep track of order
4. Disorganized checkout page
5. Inefficient to order with Dom

Fixing these usability issues will provide an improved user experience and increased efficiency for customers browsing the site. On average, every dollar invested in UX returns brings a hundred in return (Kucheriavy, 2017). The solutions provided by expert evaluators in this report are based on universal UX standards as well as trends in the online food service industry.

Product Information

Product Description

Domino's website aims to streamline the ordering process by allowing users to order food without having to call and speak to an employee. Users can browse the selection of pizza, sides, beverages, and other items from the comfort of their home. The website features photographs and descriptions of the food. In addition, Dominos offers online-only coupons as an incentive to use the website.

Target Audience

The intended audience for this product is people who want to order food. People who are most likely to order through the site, rather than over the phone, are those who have a large/complex order or those that have experienced communication issues while ordering over the phone.

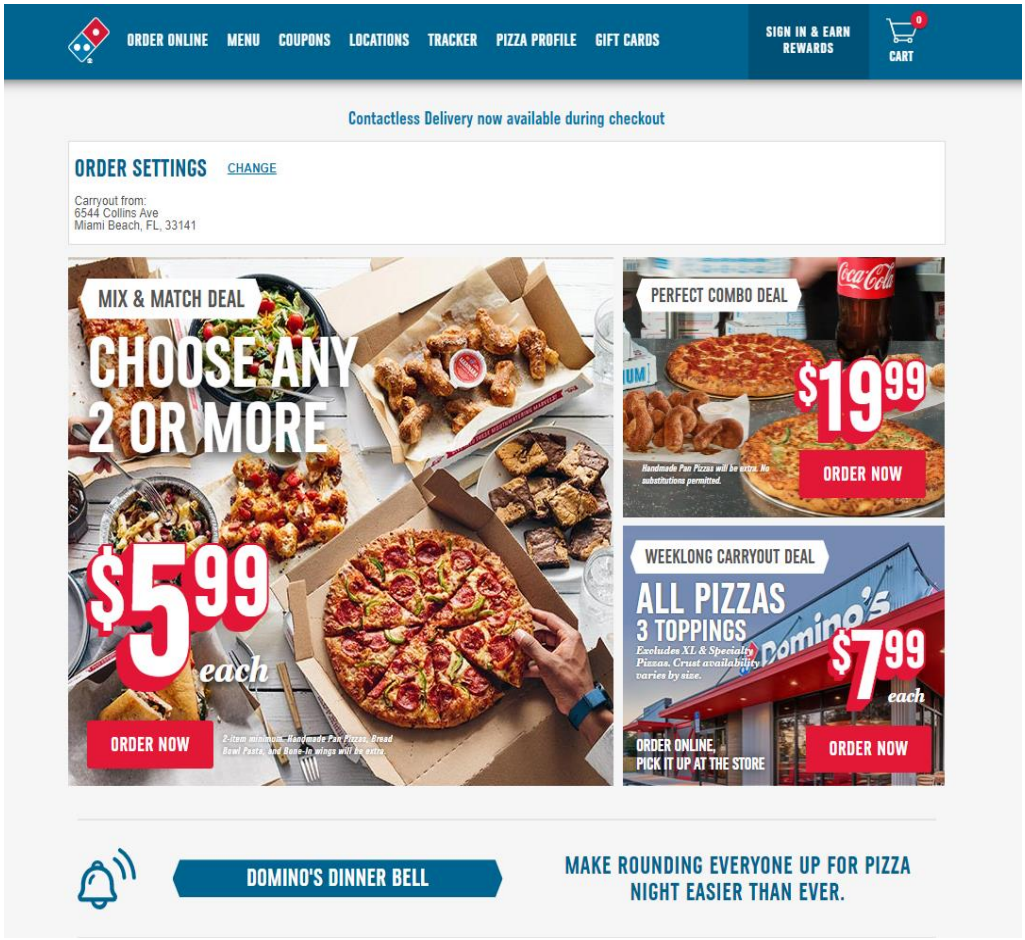


Figure 1: Home page of Domino's, guest view

Heuristic Evaluation Technique

Methodology

A heuristic evaluation is a usability engineering method designed by web usability expert Jakob Nielsen. A heuristic evaluation allows researchers to identify usability issues that are often overlooked during development. Typically, an evaluator will attempt to perform regular user functions on a site, make observations, and compare them with the findings of other evaluators. This method provides insight into how a website performs in the real world, as well as the overall user experience. This is accomplished by gathering a set of usability guidelines, or heuristics, and determining if certain features of a website violate them or not. If a feature does violate a heuristic, the evaluator will analyze it in detail and provide a solution.

Goals

- Identify issues with current design based on commonly used heuristics
- Rank issues based on severity in order to manage workload
- Provide design advice without drastically altering the initial product

Heuristics used

For this evaluation, I created a set of heuristics based on Jakob Nielsen's 10 usability heuristics and 6 usability goals from the textbook *Interaction Design: Beyond Human-Computer Interaction* by Jenny Preece, Helen M Sharp, and Yvonne Rogers. Nielsen's 10 heuristics are a staple of the user experience (UX) industry. They are a broad set of principles for interaction design followed by UX specialists from around the globe. Since Domino's website is already far into development, I felt it would be beneficial to include some more specific guidelines discussed in *Interaction Design*. The final set of heuristics are show in the figure below.

Number	Broad Heuristic
1	Flexibility and Efficiency of Use
2	Consistency and Standards
3	User Control and Freedom
4	Aesthetic and Minimalist Design
5	Visibility
6	Recognition Over Recall

Severity of Usability Issues

While all the issues discussed in this report present a usability hinderance, some are worse offenders than others. To accurately assess the significance of each issue, I have created a chart based on Jakob Nielsen's rating scale from his article *Severity ratings for Usability Problems.* Issues with a high severity should be given a higher priority when redesigning the site.

Rating	Definition
0	Does not affect the usability of the product at all
1	Cosmetic Problem: Does not affect usability but may be distracting and/or undesirable for the product's appearance.
2	Minor Usability Problem: Usability is affected but problem appears infrequently or can be overcome easily.
3	Major Usability Problem: Usability is affected, and problem appears frequently and cannot be overcome easily.
4	Usability Catastrophe: Usability is affected significantly, impedes the user's ability to perform their task.

Specific Problem Areas

1. Clicking profile does not bring the user directly to their profile

#	Problem	Severity Ranking	Heuristic Number	Broad Heuristic
1	Clicking profile does not bring the user directly to their profile	2	#1	Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

Problem:

Going from the home page to the profile section of the site does not allow the user to see their account information (name, address, credit card) immediately. Instead, the first thing they see is their rewards and their recent order, which is already visible on the home page. This violates heuristic #1 because it requires the user to

either scroll down or click a different menu button to glean any new information, therefore reducing their efficiency. This problem is ranked as a minor usability issue because it is easily overcome and only wastes a small amount of time.

Evidence:

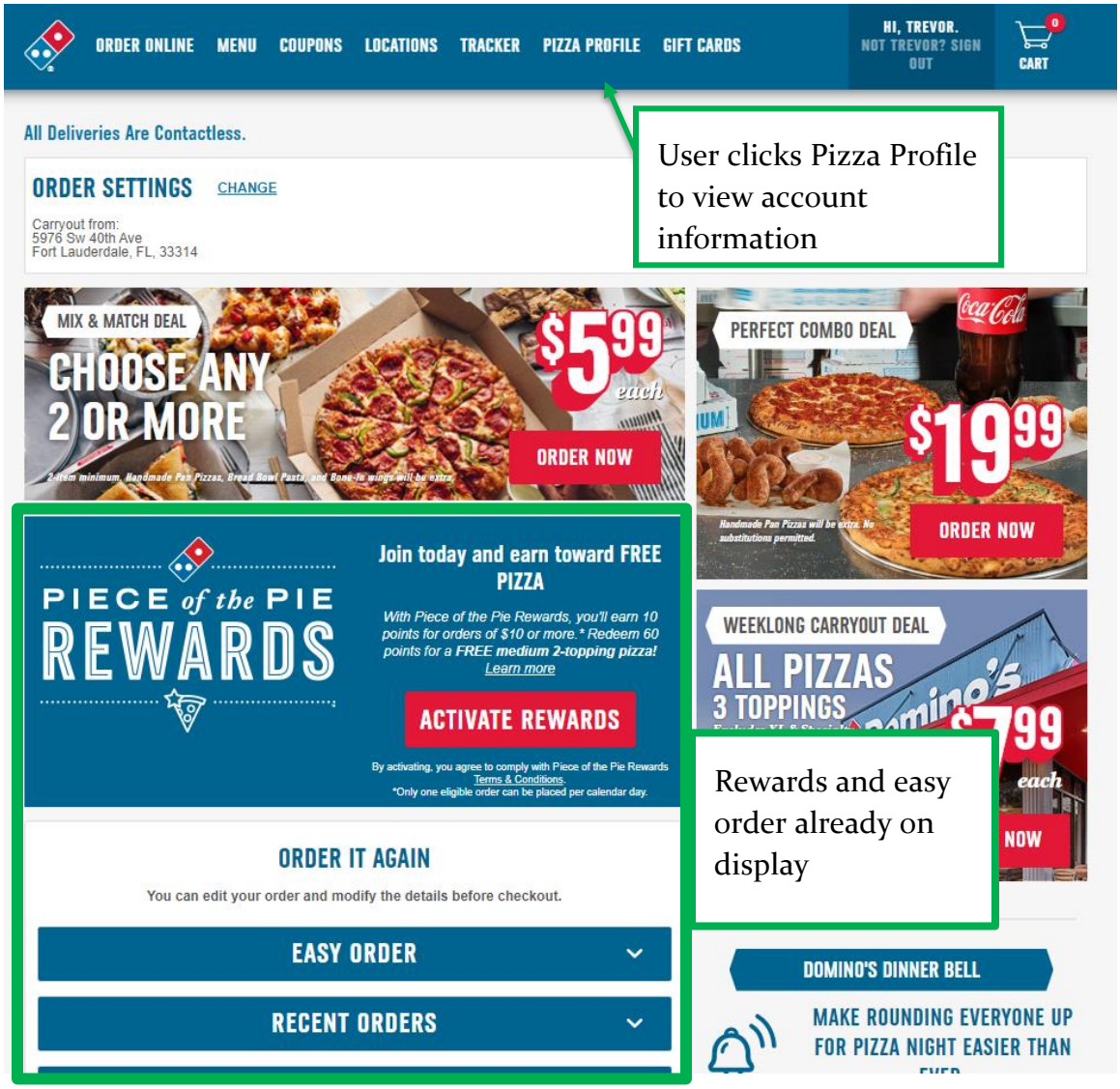


Figure 2: Home page of Domino's, signed in

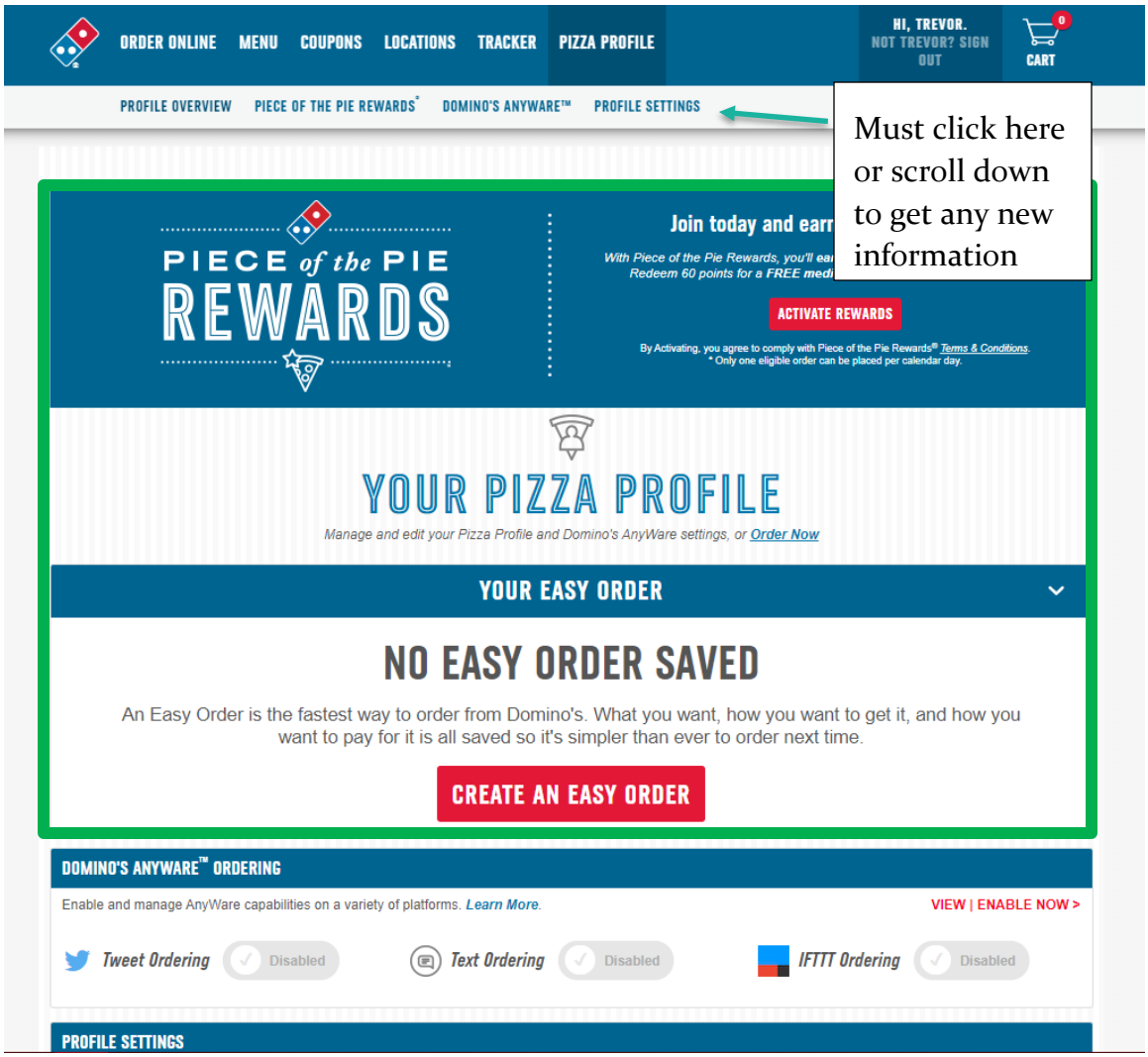
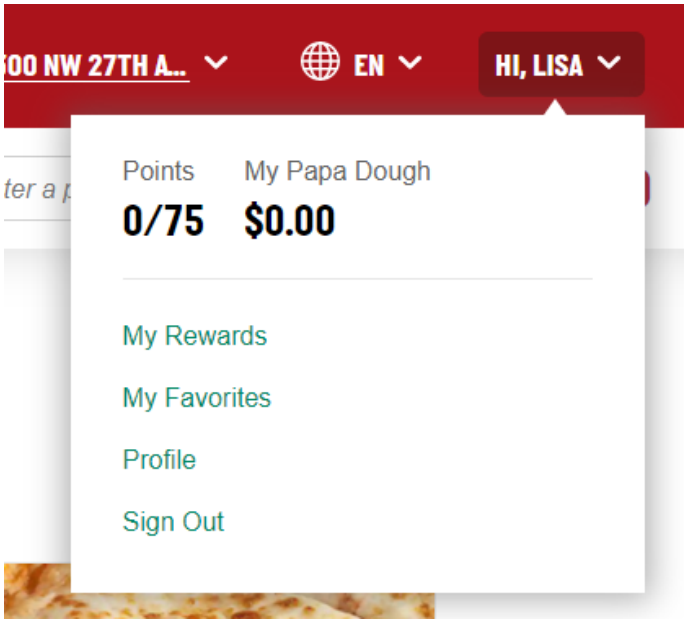


Figure 3: Domino's Pizza Profile page

There is no new information visible after the user clicks Pizza Profile. This means the user must click again to find the information they are looking for when it should be available immediately. It subverts the expectations of the user resulting in two things: decreased confidence in the product and increased frustration. This means the user is less likely to continue using the site, and ultimately, less likely to make a purchase.

Solution:

There are several ways to solve this problem. The simplest approach would be to add another menu button specifically for account information. This is not the best solution because it would add clutter to the menu bar and obscure the rewards themselves. **The best approach would be to repurpose the sign out button into a drop-down menu that lets the user select whether they want to view their account info, rewards, or simply sign out.** This approach is used by a competitor, Papa Johns, and provides a much more efficient way to access both rewards and account information.



2. Descriptions of pizzas are too small

#	Problem	Severity Ranking	Heuristic Number	Broad Heuristic
2	Descriptions of pizzas are too small	1	#5	Visibility

Problem:

The descriptions of each individual pizza on the menu page are too small. The font size used to list the toppings are noticeably smaller than everything else on the site. The font is even smaller than the "small text" (disclaimers, privacy policy, terms of use) at the bottom of the page. This violates heuristic #5 Visibility which states that all information required to perform a task should be clearly visible. If the user is trying to pick out a pizza for their order, they must zoom in to read what toppings are on it. This problem is ranked as a 1 on the severity scale because it presents only a minor inconvenience and is mostly a cosmetic issue.

Evidence:

Figure 5 shows a close up of how the pizzas are presented to the user. On the menu page (figure 4) there could be 10-12 pizzas on display at the same time. Displaying the toppings in such a way is inefficient and distracting.

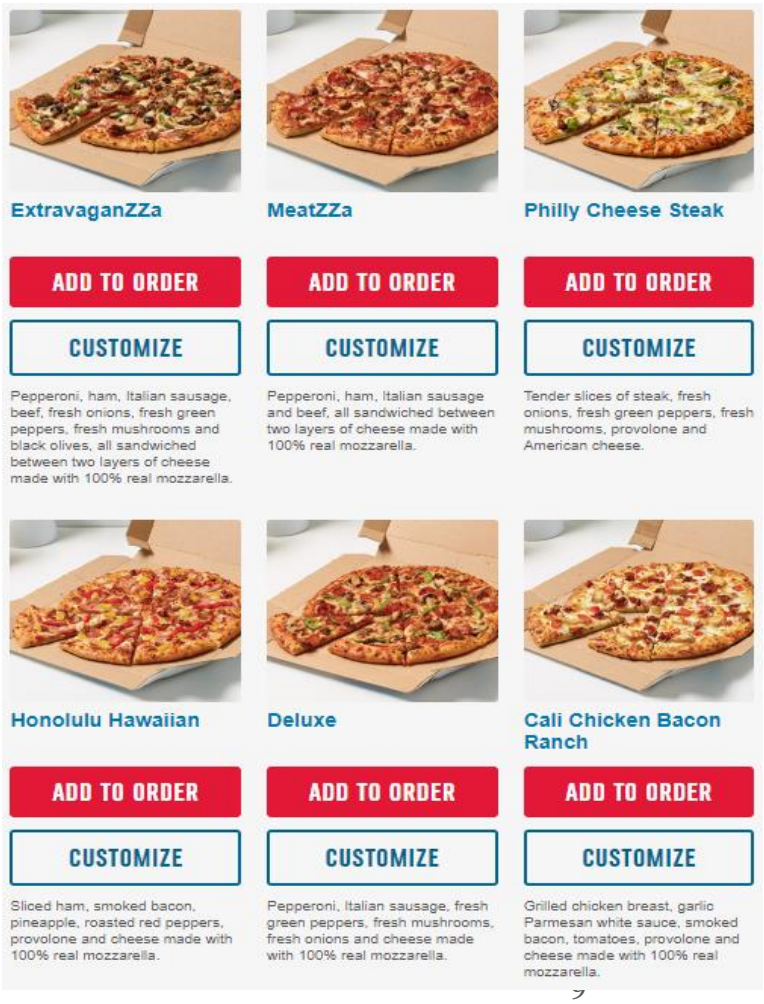


Figure 4: Pizza menu

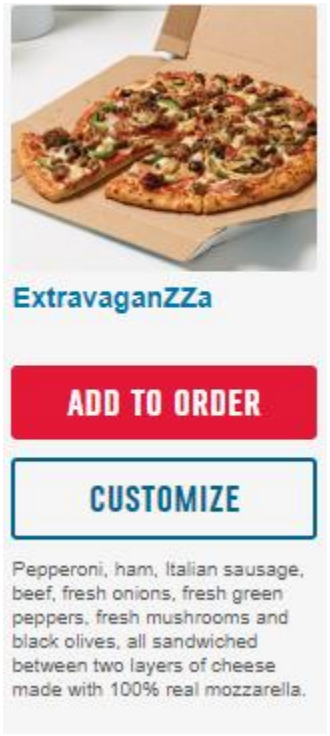


Figure 5: Domino's supreme pizza

Solution:

The obvious solution to this problem is to increase the font size. There is plenty of free space on the page, and this fix would require minimal resources. However, too much information could be overwhelming for the user. **The recommended solution is to increase the font, and only display the toppings when the user hovers over a pizza with their mouse.** This solution makes toppings more visible while also reducing clutter on the screen. Look at Pizza Hutt's design as an example.

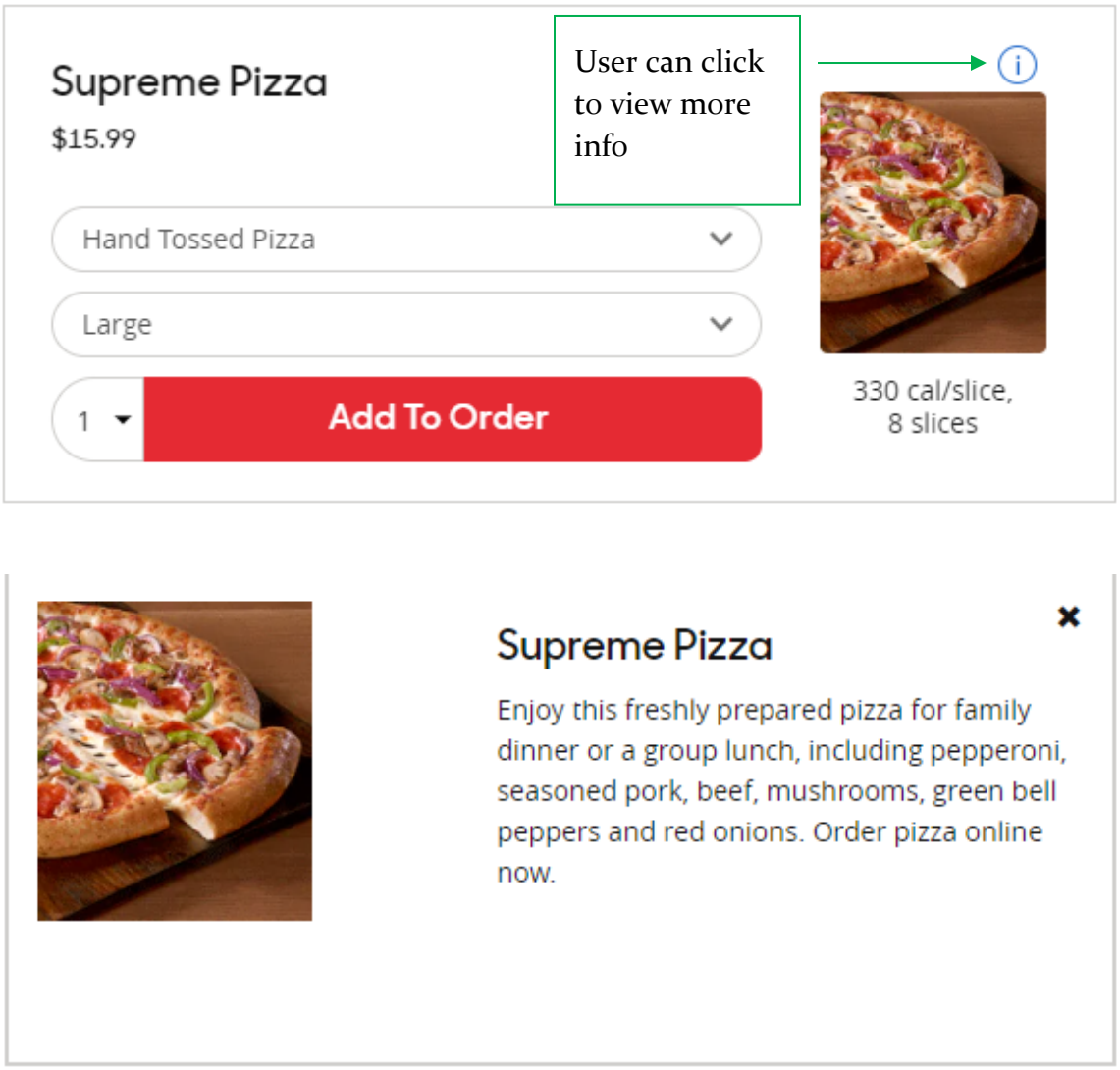


Figure 6: Pizza Hutt's supreme pizza

3. Difficult to keep track of order

#	Problem	Severity Ranking	Heuristic Number	Broad Heuristic
3	Difficult to keep track of order	2	#2, #6	Consistency and Standards; Recognition Over Recall

Problem:

While the user begins to add items to their cart, they may have trouble keeping track of what's in their order. While the cart is empty, a box with the heading "my order" appears. This box is empty since the user hasn't added anything to their cart, however, once something has been added to the cart, the box transforms into a checkout button. The user may be led to believe that this box will help keep track of their order when it really doesn't seem to do anything. This violates heuristics #2 and #6. Heuristic #2 states that functions should perform as expected based on established standards. If a box is titled "my order" the user expects their order, not a checkout button, to appear there. Heuristic #6 states that forcing the user to recall rather than recognize drains their mental resources and decreases productivity. In this case, the items in the cart are not displayed where they are expected to be, and the user must remember their order.

Evidence:

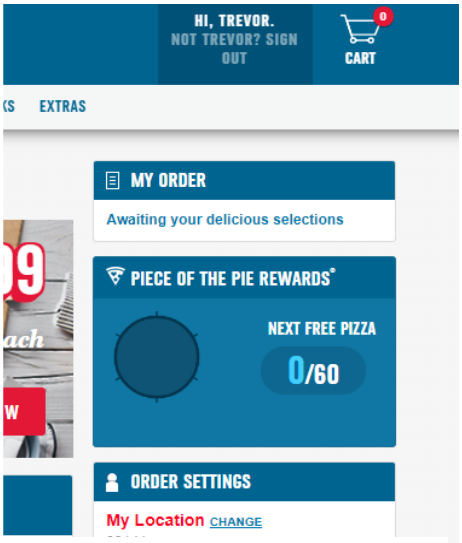


Figure 7: my order

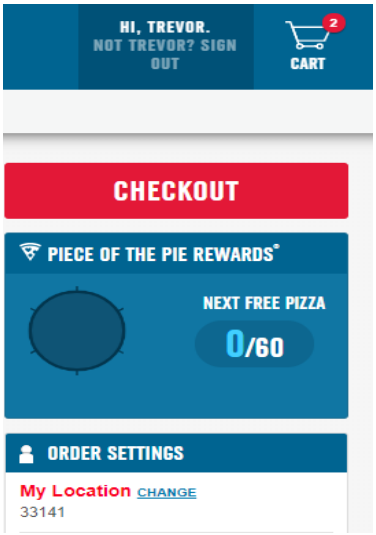


Figure 8: checkout button

Solution:

In this case, the simplest solution happens to be the best solution. **Instead of replacing the "my order" box with a checkout box, display the users order once they have added items to their cart.** This allows the user to continue browsing without having to remember if they got an item. Currently, no major competitors offer this feature, so it would be beneficial to fully implement this feature.

4. Disorganized Checkout Page

#	Problem	Severity Ranking	Heuristic Number	Broad Heuristic
4	Disorganized checkout page	2	#2, #4	Consistency and Standards; Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

Problem:

When the user accesses the checkout page they might be taken aback by the unconventional layout of the page.

Typically, a checkout page will display the user's information (name, address, phone number, etc.) followed by their payment method, and lastly, a button to place the order. This issue violates heuristic #2 which states that interfaces should be designed based on established standards. The layout of domino's checkout page is radically different from what a user might expect. Interfaces that don't follow platform conventions take more time to learn and are detrimental to usability (Nielsen, 1999).

Evidence:

Figure 9 shows the checkout page of domino's website. The first box on the left titled "order review" does not offer any useful info. The box below that titled "order settings" implies that something can be changed, but there is nothing the user can

interact with in that box. The “place order” button is usually found directly below the total; however, dominos instead has a box displaying the amount of rewards points the purchase will net. It isn’t until the user scrolls down that they can finally place their order.

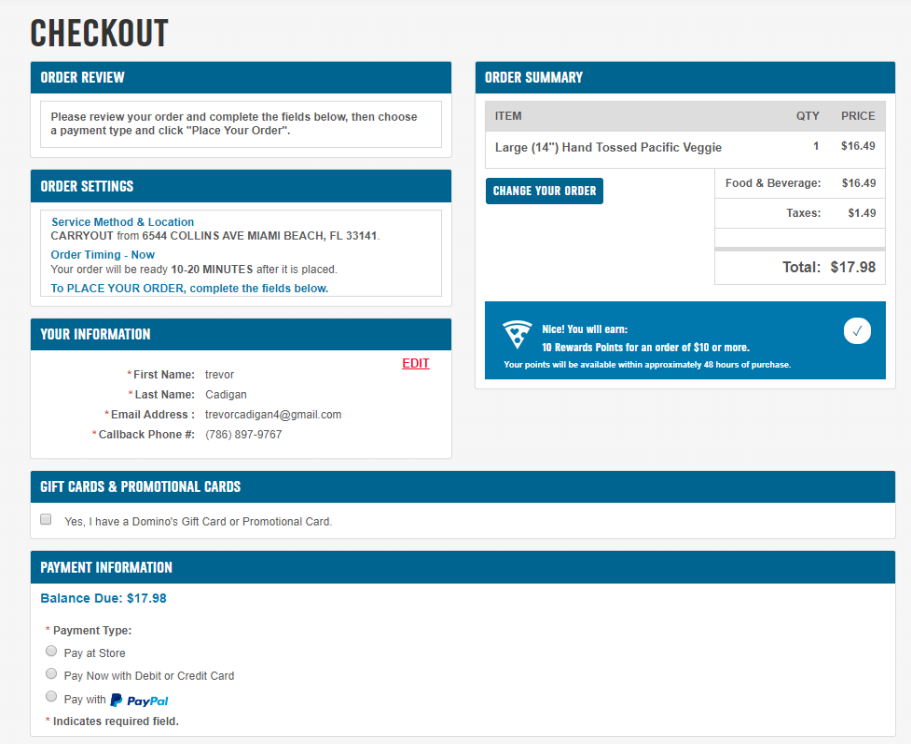


Figure 9: Domino’s checkout page

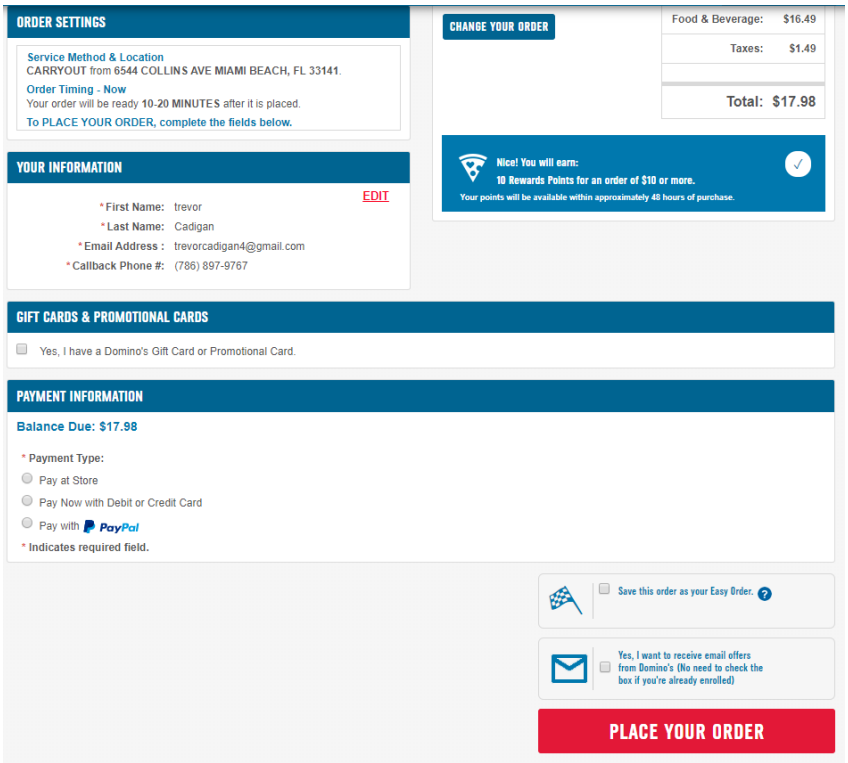


Figure 10: Domino’s checkout page, scrolled down

Solution:

In general, domino's checkout page needs to appear more familiar to the user. The checkout page could be greatly improved by moving the "place order" button into the space where the rewards are shown. Rewards should be displayed at the bottom of the page, since it is not the top priority while checking out. Additionally, the "order settings" box should be renamed to something along the lines of "order info" for clarity.

5. Inefficient to Order with Dom

#	Problem	Severity Ranking	Heuristic Number	Broad Heuristic
5	Inefficient to Order with Dom	**3**	#1, #2, #3	Consistency and standards; Flexibility and Efficiency; User Control and Freedom

Problem:

The latest addition to Domino's website, "Dom," is an interactive chatbot designed to take the users order. Currently, it is far less efficient to order through Dom compared to the regular site.

The most immediate issue is how the user selects their options. The primary method for interacting with Dom is through text. The user must manually type what they want to order. To help speed up the process, Dom offers a drop-down menu the user can select from. In violation of heuristic #3, this menu may only appear once, forcing the user to scroll up to click another option. This menu is not always available which makes the interface inconsistent to use and violates heuristic #2. When building a custom pizza, most of the interface can be navigated through the clickable menu until reaching the toppings. In order to choose what toppings they want on their pizza, the user must type out each one individually. It doesn't help that the toppings are displayed in one giant chunk of text with no pictures. This process is time consuming and decreases the user's efficiency, violating heuristic #1.

Evidence:

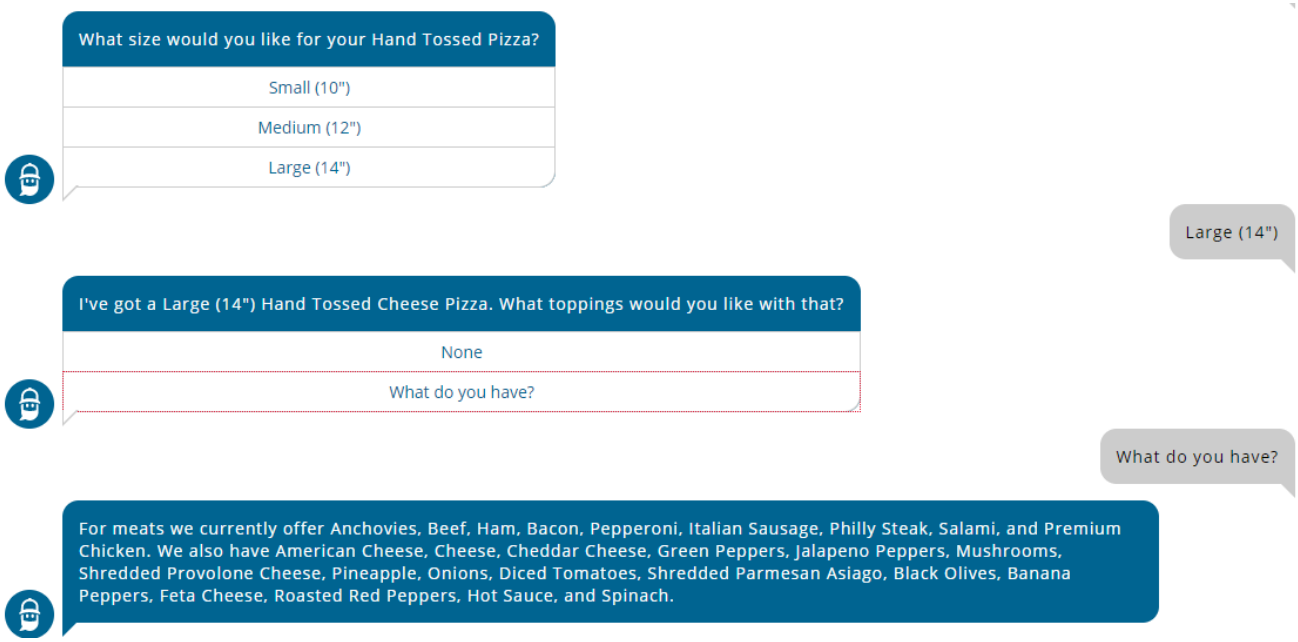


Figure 11: A custom order with Dom

Difficult to read selection of toppings. Cheese and hot sauce are mixed in with vegetables in no clear order. No drop-down menu unlike previous input prompts.

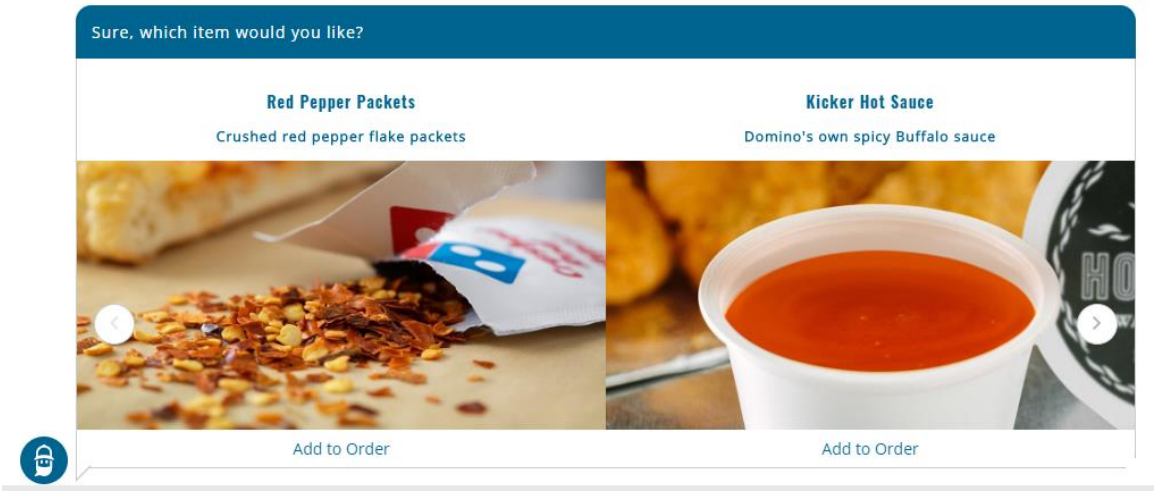


Figure 12: Ordering extras with Dom

When selecting extras, only two are shown at a time, requiring the user to click through the selection at a slow pace. Showing a close shot of red pepper flakes and hot sauce is not necessary, especially when there are thirteen other options to view.

Solution:

Before any other improvements are made to Dom, it is imperative that the interface becomes more consistent. Having a consistent interface makes it easier to learn for the user and leaves an impression of professionalism and reliability ("Why Consistency is Critical," 2005). The toppings selection needs to be more organized and functional. A drop-down menu organized into meat, vegetables, and cheeses would make it easier for the user to find what they are looking for. For extras, more than two items should be shown at a time since they are small add-ons.

Conclusion

The heuristic Evaluation of Domino's website revealed several shortcomings in terms of usability. As Domino's shifts their service to online outlets through their website, mobile app, and chatbot, they must ensure that the user experience is as efficient and functional as it can be.

The overall assessment is that the site works well but requires too much effort from the user to learn its systems. This is evident in the heuristics most frequently violated which were "Flexibility and Efficiency" and "Consistency and Standards." The five main issues with usability are:

1. Clicking profile does not bring the user directly to their profile
2. Descriptions of pizzas are too small
3. Difficult to keep track of order
4. Disorganized checkout page
5. Inefficient to order with Dom

Resolving these issues with the solutions provided will greatly increase usability and provide a better user experience.

Resources

Kucheriavy, A (2017, January 23) *How UX Is Transforming Business (Whether You Want It To Or Not)* Accessed April 20, 2020, at

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Appendix: Heuristics

1. **Flexibility and Efficiency of Use**

- Provide user the tools to complete a task in an efficient manner
- Menus should limit unnecessary clicks
- Don't waste user's time

2. **Consistency and Standards**

- Layout and menus should be consistent between pages
- Functions should perform as expected based on established standards
- Only make user learn new systems if necessary

3. **User Control and Freedom**

- Provide clearly marked exits (undo, redo)
- Leave tools required to complete a task in users' possession

4. **Aesthetic and Minimalistic Design**

- Keep interfaces simple where possible
- Don't overload users' cognitive load with irrelevant info
- Use concise language

5. **Visibility**

- Elements relevant to the task should be clearly visible
- Needless visuals kept to a minimum
- Use colors to symbolize importance

6. **Recognition over Recall**

- Don't force user to recall if the information can be displayed for them
- If instructions are necessary, keep them within reach