

Evaluating User Experience for Papa John's Online Ordering Interface Design

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Introduction

Papa John's International, Inc., or colloquially known as Papa John's, is a U.S.-based international pizza chain restaurant that began in Jeffersonville, IN, and has over 5,500 locations in 49 countries and territories around the world. Papa John's is the fourth largest pizza restaurant chain in the U.S. and is the world's third largest pizza delivery company.

Usability Study for Papa John's Website

Like many pizza restaurant chains, Papa John's customers can utilize the Papa John's website www.PapaJohns.com to place orders for delivery or pick up in their location, sign up for coupons and deals, give feedback to the company about their ordering experience, and other tasks. This study was conducted to evaluate the overall user experience of the Papa John's website, or more specifically, the principles of usability, including learnability, efficiency, memorability, user satisfaction, consistency, and accessibility.

To assess these principles, 26 moderators conducted real-time, moderated, video-recorded usability interviews of the Papa John's website with 26 participants over the age of 18 who were each given a set of ice breaker questions and three defined tasks to complete. This report analyzed four moderated sessions (four videos) and examined the verbal responses, user actions and pathways, facial expressions, and body language of the participants to evaluate user experiences of the website and develop recommendations and follow-up research questions. This study was conducted to identify issues and offer suggestions to improve the experience of the site, not only for the customer, but to improve sales, reputation, and customer retention for the company.

Table of Contents

Cover Page.....	1
Table of Contents.....	2
Executive Summary.....	3
Website Assessed and Methodology.....	4
Participant Information.....	5
List of Tasks.....	6-7
Synopsis of Findings.....	8-12
Analysis of Tasks.....	13
Follow Up Research Questions.....	14

Executive Summary

Overview

Papa John's and its stakeholders want to understand the positive experiences, challenges, and pain points that customers experience when using the Papa John's website. A set of ice breaker questions and three specific tasks were created and tested to pinpoint issues and identify areas of improvement. This report analyzed the results of the conducted summative usability testing to generate recommendations for a better user experience.

Methodology

26 moderators conducted a real-time, moderated, video-recorded usability interview of the Papa John's website with 26 participants over the age of 18 who were each given a set of ice breaker questions and three defined tasks to complete. The tasks were designed to evaluate the user's ability to navigate the Papa John's website and explore the menu options, to order and customize food for both simple and complex orders, and to sign up for discounts and offers. Participants were instructed to think aloud and describe their experiences as

they completed each task. Four sessions (four videos) were isolated for data analysis. Although example screener questions were developed, moderators recruited their own participants independent of the screener, resulting in a broad range of demographics in participants.

Analysis & Findings

Participants were able to complete their pizza orders, but with some challenges. Some participants were not able to complete certain tasks. Participants were annoyed or confused by the constant pop-up menus. Participants were confused by the lack of feedback or confirmation from the system when an item was added to the cart. All four participants were displeased about being required to give their phone numbers for text messages when they just wanted to sign up for the email list.

Recommendations

The website should give clearer feedback when items are added to the cart and should decrease the number of times pop up menus are displayed.

Website Assessed and Methodology

For this study, the Papa John's website, www.PapaJohns.com, was evaluated by the participants. Moderators recruited their own participants, resulting in a broad range of demographics in participants including a wide range of ages, races, genders, locations, and backgrounds. Although example screener questions were developed, participants recruited their participants independent of the screener. It was noted whether the participant had any experience ordering food online, designated by yes or no in the video description.

26 moderators conducted real-time, moderated, video-recorded usability interviews of the Papa John's website with 26 participants over the age of 18, who were each given a set of ice breaker questions and three defined tasks to complete for summative usability testing. Before beginning the tasks, each participant was given background information on the study, timeframe, and expectations, and was asked for informed consent to participate in the study, confirmed by signing a written consent form.

A set of pre-task questions were asked to gauge the participant's familiarity with online pizza ordering and their general ordering preferences. Then, the participants were asked to perform an ice breaker task and were instructed to launch a web browser, go to Google, search for pizza in their region or zip code, and describe the experience of browsing through the results.

After the ice breaker, participants were instructed to open the Papa John's website and complete three tasks given a fictional scenario as a background. The tasks were designed to evaluate 1) the user's ability to navigate the Papa John's website and explore the menu options, 2) the user's ability to order and customize food for both simple and complex orders, and 3) the user's ability to sign up for discounts and offers. Through these tasks, participants were instructed to order three specific pizzas, register for email discounts without creating an account on the site, and find corporate contact information after a fictional bad delivery experience. Participants were instructed to think aloud and describe their experiences as they completed each task, what they expected, and what they were trying to accomplish. Four sessions (four videos) of these tests were isolated for data analysis to identify issues and challenges to make recommendations for improvements.

Participant Information

Four videos were selected for analysis. The prevailing theory is that five participants are a large enough sample for usability testing, but testing with four participants can still help to identify patterns, as well as simply generate qualitative, individual experiences that can assist with forming usability recommendations.

All four participants in the videos analyzed are adults over the age of 18, speak English, and all four participants had previously ordered pizza online in the past for pickup, delivery, or both. Below are the four participants and the links to their session:

- Jeremy (Moderator Mary Beth Berberich)
https://video.kent.edu/media/60104_SessionRecording_Jeremy/1_ik52i5du
- Mike (Moderator Romina Painter or "Beck")
https://video.kent.edu/media/t/1_xjod2l92
- Joanna (Moderator Amelia Paraskevas)
https://video.kent.edu/media/60104+Session+Recording/1_tl1x500z
- Derek (Moderator Christina Turner)
https://video.kent.edu/media/CTurnerA+60104+Session+Recording/1_a1xbm5kg

There is limited background information for these participants in terms of their genders, ages, racial or ethnic backgrounds, regional location, etc. These four participants were selected because they are assumed to be roughly in the same age range (between 35-55 years of age), but this information cannot be confirmed.

List of Tasks

Below is the list of questions and tasks given to all participants.

Pre-Task Questions

Before we get started I have a couple of questions: Have you ever ordered pizza online? If not: why haven't you ordered online? If so: was it for delivery or pick up? Why did you pick it up or why did you have it delivered? What did you order? How would you describe your experience?

Ice Breaker

We are ready to get started so go ahead and launch the web browser and go to Google, and then search for pizza in your zip code. Tell me about the experience of using Google and browsing the results. Are you able to find what you need? Is there a pizza place close by? Is it the type of pizza you like?

Task 1

We are going to be looking at papajohns.com web site. Even if you are not a Papa John's fan, imagine that the people you are with are fans of Papa John's and that is where you will be ordering the pizza. There are bunch of people at this party and you need to order 3 pizzas. They are: Mushroom and pepperoni. Half onion and half sausage with light sauce. A specialty pizza, because you want some variety. Tell me a little more about your experience ordering pizza from this site. Is it what you expected?

Task 2

You want to sign up for deals and coupons but you don't want to register. You just want to give them your email. Can you do this and what do you think you will receive by email?

List of Tasks (cont.)

Task 3

Your pizza arrives and it is terrible! Your driver was rude and you are really upset about what just happened. You call the local store but get nowhere. You need to contact the corporate office. How would you do that?

Synopsis of Findings

Pre-Task Questions

All four participants had previously ordered pizza online for pick up, delivery, or both. The first participant, Jeremy, orders pizza often for both pick up and delivery, depending on the situation. Jeremy noted that he likes to order pizza for pick up when he is already out of the house running errands, such as going to the grocery store, and he likes to order delivery when he is stuck at home, such as when he is doing yard work and feels he doesn't have time to leave the house. The second participant, Mike, also orders online often for pick up and delivery. He noted that he normally orders pizza for delivery, but particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, drivers were limited and he would have to order for pick up. The third participant, Joanna, has ordered both delivery and pick up but noted that she mostly orders pizza for delivery because she is "too lazy to pick it up" (2:37). The fourth participant, Derek, has ordered both delivery and pick up but noted that he mostly orders pizza for pick up because he likes to pick up the food as soon as it's ready and doesn't prefer to order delivery because the food gets cold.

All four participants reported that they normally order pizzas, but occasionally order things like salads or pizza-adjacent items. Mike, Joanna, and Derek reported overall positive or neutral experiences with online pizza ordering, each of them finding the experience easy or at least straightforward. Mike noted that he had particularly good experiences with Domino's pizza ordering and liked the flow of the website and the tracking feature. Jeremy reported that he sometimes had negative experiences with online pizza ordering, such as the food arriving cold or being delivered to the wrong house.

Ice Breaker

In the ice breaker questions, Jeremy and Mike searched "pizza" and their respective zip codes, and both participants found that the results were sponsored results on Google and they were not places the participants typically order from. Joanna searched "pizza near me" and Derek searched "best pizza near me" and both found multiple results of pizza restaurants that they liked, were familiar with, or had ordered from previously.

Synopsis of Findings (cont.)

Task 1

In Task 1, Jeremy found the interface intuitive and found that it works similar to other sites he's used before such as pizza sites like Deweys and LaRosa's pizza. The participant navigated the menu and website quickly, found the specialty pizzas easily, and felt that the experience was what he expected. Mike had some difficulty navigating the menu and website. When Mike chose a pizza and was prompted to enter his address for delivery, he did not like the experience because a new screen appeared and the participant wasn't sure what had happened. Mike reported that he thought he could choose the default pepperoni pizza on the menu homepage and the interface would allow him to add mushrooms, however, the participant was becoming frustrated because he did not understand how the drop down menus underneath the pizza worked and why some options were not available. (See below.)

PAPA PICKS



Pepperoni Pizza

\$16.00 320 cal /slice, 8 slices

Large 1

Original Crust

Add Crust Flavor

ADD TO ORDER

CUSTOMIZE



Sausage Pizza

\$16.00 330 cal /slice, 8 slices

Large 1

Original Crust

Add Crust Flavor

ADD TO ORDER

CUSTOMIZE

Synopsis of Findings (cont.)

Mike became frustrated and went back to the delivery or carryout screen and started over. The participant ultimately added the incorrect pizza to his cart. When ordering the second pizza, the participant chose the "create your own pizza" option and was able to order the half sausage and half onion pizza with light sauce. Mike then used the "create your own pizza" option to order a specialty pizza and reported that he wished there were existing specialty options. Mike also wanted items that the site did not have. Mike went back to the menu and found the specialty pizzas, but ultimately decided to add a Papadia instead. Overall, Mike found the experience confusing and frustrating. He also found unexpected items added to his cart in the checkout screen.

Jeremy noted that he liked pizza topping animation when ordering, while Mike reported that he didn't like the background and didn't find the animation useful. Mike also noted that the images were too small to tell the differences between the ingredients.

Joanna found the delivery option quickly and easily, navigated the pizza menu quickly, and explored the whole menu before deciding how to order the three pizzas. She initially chooses the "create your pizza" option, but a pop-up menu interferes and brings her back to the menu page. She then chooses the default pepperoni pizza and finds the menu option to add mushrooms. Joanna accidentally added three pepperoni pizzas to her cart, confused about why the pizza disappeared without any confirmation. She cleared her cart completely and started over. At one point Joanna asked, "Am I stupid?" (9:58). Joanna continued by choosing the closest default pizza and customized the pizza. She used the cart page to check what she ordered and used the edit option to fix toppings. She chose the default sausage pizza and was uncertain how to fix the topping to make it on only half of the pizza. She eventually abandoned that process altogether and chose the "create your own pizza" option. She removed the first pizza from her cart. Joanna found the specialty pizzas easily from her initial look over the menu. She noted that the process overall was "not clear for a first time user" (19:35) and was a little confusing, but that she was able to learn it after adding a few items.

Synopsis of Findings (cont.)

Derek navigated the website easily and noted that he looked at the whole menu page before ordering. Derek said that he didn't want to figure out the modifications for the default pizzas, so he chose the "create your own pizza" option. Derek notes that he's reading the menu and features from left to right. He compared the prices of the custom and default pizza to find that they were the same. Derek navigated easily between the cart and the menu. He easily created the half and half pizza and found the specialty pizzas quickly. He briefly noted that he also did not understand the availability of the options in the drop down menus under the default pizzas. Overall, Derek found the process to be straightforward and what he expected from the website.

Task 2

In Task 2, Jeremy found the sign up at the bottom of the page, mentioning that it was similar to other sites he'd used. He found the process of signing up for email offers without registering for an account easy as expected. Mike did not clearly understand the difference between registering or creating an account and signing up for email discounts. With some prompting, Mike finds the email sign up option at the bottom of the page. Joanna navigated through the various menus, but could not find the email sign up options after trying multiple pages. She was able to find the option to register for an account, but not for email offers and was not able to complete the task. Derek wasn't sure whether to choose the sign up option in the top right hand corner or the Papa Rewards menu option, but he quickly discovers that the two options lead to the same page. After reading more closely, he finds text and email offers at the bottom of the page.

Task 3

In Task 3, Jeremy quickly navigated to the bottom of the page and found the contact page to use Papa Chat. Mike found the Help > Customer Service option quickly at the bottom of the page. He chooses the feedback form option, but finds the map function for choosing a location "weird" and goes back to the feedback page. He doesn't like the tab function and getting sent to a new page. Joanna found the Help option at the bottom of the page and discovered the feedback form page and international corporate number. Joanna

Synopsis of Findings (cont.)

understood the map function and felt that the feedback page was easy to find. Derek also quickly found the Help feature at the bottom of the page and felt that it was similar to other websites he'd seen. Derek noted that if he needed something immediately, he would use the Papa Chat and for non-urgent feedback, he would use the feedback form. He also noted that the map function on the feedback form looks "ancient" and doesn't look like the rest of the website.

Overall, participants had mixed experiences. Some felt that the interface was easy and straightforward, while others struggled with the tasks. In some cases, expectations were met and in some cases, they were not. Positively, all four participants felt that the half and half graphic was easy to use and intuitive. All four participants were easily able to find the contact us/help feature to give feedback. Some common issues that emerged were that participants were annoyed or confused by the constant pop-up menus after adding items to their cart. Some participants were confused by the lack of feedback or confirmation from the system when an item was added to the cart. All four participants were not happy about being required to give their phone numbers for text messages when they just wanted to sign up for the email list, and all four participants believe they will receive spam emails more frequently than they want.

Analysis of Tasks

Task 1

This task evaluated the participants' ability to navigate the site and menu and add specific orders to their carts. Some participants found it easy to navigate, while others struggled to understand the differences and availability of custom pizzas, default pizzas, and specialty pizzas. Some participants added the incorrect pizzas to their cart or had to go back and remove their orders from their cart and start over. Two participants found unexpected items in their cart. The menu and site interface was not universally understood by the participants and did not always assist users in completing the task.

Task 2

This task evaluated the participants' ability to find the email sign up option without registering for an account. Two participants easily found the option at the bottom of the page. One participant was not able to find the option at all and could not complete the task. One participant did not clearly understand the difference between registering or creating an account and signing up for email discounts. The option was not obvious to all users and users may not realize that this is even an option to sign up without registering for an account. The interface was not always successful in helping people complete the task.

Task 3

This task evaluated the participants' ability to find the corporate number to give feedback on a bad ordering experience. All the participants were able to find the Help > Customer Service option at the bottom of the page, which was familiar to them from other websites they had used previously. Two participants noted that the map function on the feedback form was dated and unusual. The participants generally noted that the contact option was easy to find. The interface was mostly successful in helping people complete the task, but the map function could be improved.

Follow Up Research Questions

Based on these tasks and the participants' actions and responses, there are several research questions that could be explored to suggest further improvements to Papa John's website.

- What is the optimal frequency of displaying pop-up menus and on what pages to increase sales but not deter customers?
- What is the best way to show confirmation or feedback that an item has been added to a customer's cart?
- How can customers be motivated to sign up for email rewards or even to create an account? How can customers be reassured that they won't receive excessive spam emails?
- How can the menu interface be improved to encourage users to see all options before ordering? How can the menu interface be improved to show users the differences between custom pizzas, default pizzas, and specialty pizzas?