

Usability test: hotel website

AX hotels.

Project AX1-1

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Executive summary

What they liked

Participants highlighted several positive aspects of the website, noting its ease of use and intuitive booking experience. The visual appeal of the website, with high-quality images and an attractive design, was particularly well-received. Participants appreciated useful features like the map functionality, price comparisons with booking.com, and clear presentation of room options and booking details, which enhanced their overall experience.

Additionally, the availability of promotions and discount codes directly on the website was a significant draw, conveying a sense of better value. Families especially valued the specific information provided about child-friendly facilities and programs, which were clearly detailed and accessible. Overall, these features contributed to a smooth and enjoyable booking process, making the participants more likely to use the website again.

Key issues found

Participants noted several key issues with the website. Navigation and the user interface emerged as primary concerns. Many found it challenging to locate specific information due to a lack of clear, clickable links, inconsistent presentation of details, and the need to go back and forth between pages. This was particularly true for mobile users, who experienced additional difficulties with layout and functionality on smaller screens.

Another significant issue was the lack of and clarity of information. Participants often struggled to find detailed descriptions of room amenities, specific details for promotions and rates, and comprehensive information on all-inclusive packages. The website's failure to provide detailed and easily accessible information reduced users' confidence in booking and left them feeling that better value might be available elsewhere .

Take away quotes

Positive:

- "The booking was much better than places before. The details giving the facilities you get in the room as well as the images work really well"
- "It's really good. This is more innovative and dynamic. It brings the whole booking experience alive."
- "I liked that it gives me the different options of packages and stuff and that's very clear to see. It's really clear."
- "Very, very easy. Very easy. And I liked that. And I liked how they made the cancellation experience very easy as well."

Negative:

- "I'm not wowed by the things that are within my price range. Like, I just feel there's better value elsewhere."
- "It's not enough to just check TripAdvisor unless they have thousands of reviews.
 I'll look at other things as well."
- "It isn't the most simple to navigate at all."
- "Why aren't these clickable? Like, I want to know, what do I get if I find something cheaper?"

Method

Remote live moderated testing with 2 groups of 6 participants, taking part using Teams on mobile phone or desktop. Each participant was given one of 2 sets of scenarios, tasks and questions.

Group A - Couples

This group visited the hotel website and gave their opinions. They went on to follow some tasks related to booking for a couple.

Group B - Family

This group visited the hotel website and gave their opinions. They went on to follow some tasks related to booking on behalf of their family.

Test process

For remote testing, the participants are pre-screened for the availability of Teams. When using a mobile phone as their main device they are asked to have a second device to use as a webcam during the session,

Prior to testing day, the participant takes part in a test call to ensure they are able to screen share.

At the time of the test, the participant is called and the testing process is explained. Their right to withdraw is explained and it is confirmed that they are happy for the session to be recorded. During the test, emphasis is placed on the participants' opinions and how they should give their honest reactions. We explain the importance of 'thinking out loud'.

Some initial questions are asked which are designed to put the participant at ease and get them used to talking out loud.

During the test, the test moderator guides the participant through the various tasks, asking the various test questions and adding extra 'insight' questions from the client as required.

Participant selection

Channels used

- Existing participant database
- Targeted Facebook ads

Selection criteria

Group A - Couples

- Aged 45 54 65
- Living in the UK
- Male or Female
- Books overseas holidays for themselves and their partner
- 3 participants on mobile, 3 participants on desktop

Group B - Family

- Aged 25 34
- Living in the UK
- Female
- Books overseas holidays for themselves and their family
- 3 participants on mobile, 3 participants on desktop

Participant profiles

Group A - Couples

	Gender	Age	Occupation	Nationality	Device
Participant CP1	Female	45	Property Manager	British	Laptop
Participant CP2	Male	48	Owner of Bragazzis	British	Laptop
Participant CP3	Male	45	Complaints manager in NHS	British	Mobile
Participant CP4	Male	45	Operations manager	British	Mobile
Participant CP5	Female	47	Podiatrist	British	Mobile
Participant CP6	Female	50	Project Manager	British	Laptop

Group B - Family

	Gender	Age	Occupation	Nationality	Device
Participant FP1	Female	32	Business Development Manager	British	laptop
Participant FP2	Female	32	Customer service advisor	British	Mobile
Participant FP3	Female	31	Account Manager	British	Mobile
Participant FP4	Female	32	Admin Manager	Italian	Mobile
Participant FP5	Female	32	Sales Assistant	British	Laptop
Participant FP6	Female	32	Youth Worker	British	Laptop

Usability findings

Initial questions

Participants favourite overseas holiday destinations, Couples:

Turkey: 2 participants (CP1, CP4)

Greece: 2 participants (CP4, CP5)

Portugal: 1 participant (CP3)

St Petersburg: 1 participant (CP2)

Spain: 1 participant (CP1)

Asia: 1 participant (**CP6**)

Family:

Greece: 3 participants (FP2, FP3, FP4)

Portugal: 1 participant (FP3)

Ibiza: 1 participant (FP1)

Egypt: 1 participant (FP5)

Turkey: 1 participant (FP6)

- Greece is the most popular destination among both groups, with 5 participants favouring it (2 from the Couples group and 3 from the Family group).
- Turkey is also a popular destination mentioned by 3 participants (2 from the Couples group and 1 from the Family group).

Participants average holiday duration,

Couples:

CP1	Varies, from a long weekend to generally a week or two-week holiday
CP2	About ten days to two weeks
CP3	Standard two weeks in the summer, one week at Easter or half-term, boys' holiday usually three nights
CP4	Usually ten days to two weeks
CP5	Normally a week for Greece, ten days at most
CP6	About one to two weeks

Family:

FP1	Seven nights
FP2	Generally a minimum of one week, usually two weeks
FP3	Ten days to two weeks
FP4	Usually between one or two weeks, ideally around ten days to two weeks
FP5	Variable, can be about two to three weeks, sometimes seven to ten days
FP6	Normally a week

Booking.com: Mentioned by 5 participants (CP1, CP2, CP3, CP4, FP4)

Jet2: Mentioned by 3 participants (**FP2, FP3, FP6**)

Love Holidays: Mentioned by 2 participants (CP5, FP5)

Skyscanner: Mentioned by 2 participants (CP1, CP6)

Airbnb: Mentioned by 1 participant (CP2)

Search Engines (Google): Mentioned by 1 participant (CP4)

On the Beach: Mentioned by 1 participant (**FP2**)

Hotels.com: Mentioned by 1 participant (**CP1**)

Travel Supermarket: Mentioned by 1 participant (CP6)

Expedia: Mentioned by 1 participant (CP3)

Tripadvisor: Mentioned by 1 participant (CP4)

TUI: Mentioned by 1 participant (CP3)

Kayak: Mentioned by 1 participant (CP3)

- Booking.com is the most popular website for booking holidays across both groups.
- Several participants favour using package deal websites like Jet2 and Love Holidays.
- **FP1** prefers to book directly on hotel websites.
- Participants often use multiple websites to compare prices and get the best deals.

Have the participants previously visited Malta?

Couples:

1 participant has visited Malta (**CP1**)

4 participants have not visited Malta (CP2, CP3, CP4, CP6)

1 participant's response was not mentioned (**CP5**)

Family:

3 participants have visited Malta (FP1, FP2, FP6)

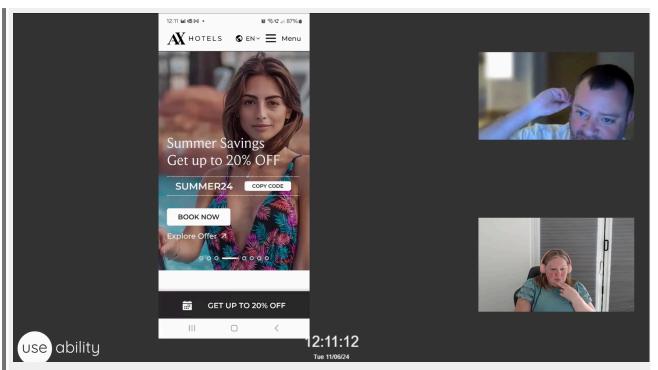
2 participants have not visited Malta (**FP4, FP5**)

1 participant's response was not mentioned (**FP3**)

Tasks

The participants were asked their opinions on the new axhotelsmalta.com website and given scenarios with which to frame their responses.

Participants were asked their thoughts about the homepage,



CP3 world class

Visual Appeal and Navigation:

Many participants appreciated the visual appeal and the ease of navigating the homepage. For instance, **FP1** (08:03) noted that the homepage "feels more like it would be high-end" and (10:06) appreciated that "all the information that I'm looking at so far for me is easy to find".

Luxury and Premium Feel:

A total of nine participants mentioned that the website gave a feeling of luxury or a similar high-end feel. **CP3** (09:11) said, "It's quite luxury hotels, world-class hospitality" and remarked positively on how it highlighted features like Michelin dining . **FP3** (06:47) also shared, "It looks very premium and it looks very nice and very luxurious there" .

Clear and Organised Information:

CP5 (06:50) found the provided information helpful but indicated that the flow could be smoother: "...Straight away it looks quite an upmarket hotel chain... it's giving you quite a lot of information". The presence of offers was positively noted by **FP1** (06:51), "Nice little offer. There's a holiday."

Family-Friendly Indications:

There were suggestions for making the homepage more indicative of family-friendly options. FP6 (11:58) suggested explicitly indicating child-friendly options on the homepage, "If I was looking, scrolling through here and I saw it said all child-friendly".

More Diverse Price Range:

Some participants wanted more varied price ranges highlighted. **FP2** (08:20) noted that most displayed hotels were four or five stars, which might not fit everyone's budget, suggesting incorporating reviews and more diverse options.

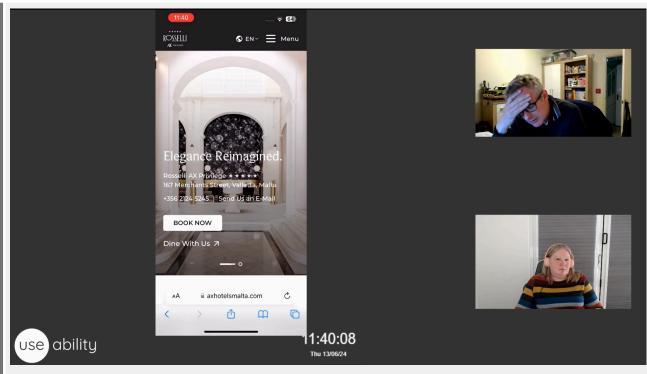
Overall, while the homepage was generally well-received for its appeal and navigation, suggestions centred around enhancing its family-friendliness, improving the visibility of certain pieces of information, and providing a wider range of price options.

Group specific tasks Group A - Couples

Scenario

- You live in London and are planning a holiday next autumn to Malta. You are travelling with a partner for 3 nights and have flights booked in the autumn.
- You would like to book a Luxury hotel in Malta's capital city Valletta (Rosselli).

Participants were asked to look around the hotel's web page and give their thoughts.



CP4 wants to see reviews

Luxurious and Premium Feel:

Several users appreciated the luxurious appearance of the hotel presented on the webpage. **CP1** (12:40) mentioned that the site "looks quite premium" and beautiful. Similarly, **CP5** (11:23) noted, "It's got a real luxury feel," which added to the site's appeal.

Navigation and Visuals:

Participants found the website visually appealing and easy to navigate. **CP2** (07:52) emphasised, "Easy to navigate," and commented positively on the visuals, calling them "very good".

Content & Information:

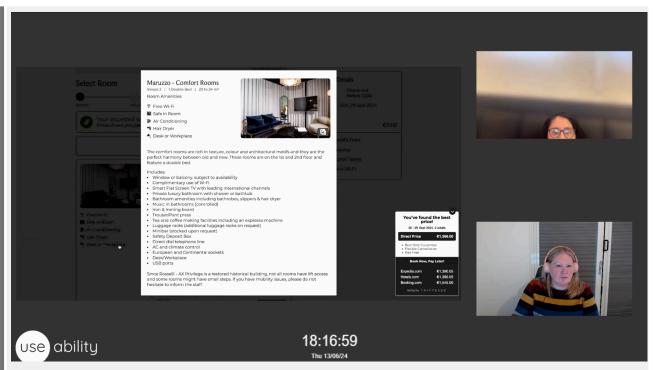
CP2 (07:52) found the details provided about the hotel amenities sufficient and well-organised, stating, "I think they're just about right in terms of length. Not too much, not too less, not too little. Very good. Gives you all the amenities here quite clearly laid out"

Lack of Information:

CP6 (09:07) found the information limited and insufficient for making a booking decision, asking questions like, "Is it in the city centre? Does it have a pool?" and concluding, "There isn't much here. This would not be enough for me to book".

CP4 (05:18) echoed a similar sentiment by indicating they would need to look for third-party reviews, suggesting that the website alone is not convincing.

Room selection experience



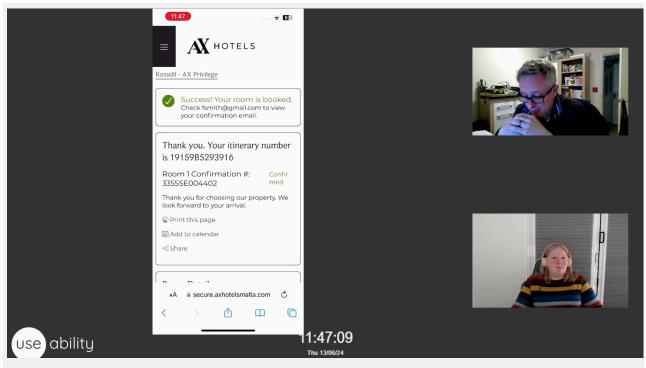
CP6 how big is the room?

The process of selecting a room on the website has received mixed reviews from participants. Some participants appreciated the detailed descriptions and variety of room options available. They noted positive aspects such as the clarity of room descriptions, the availability of amenities, and the visual appeal of images provided.

CP5 (14:37) commented positively regarding the information available for each room type, noting the ease of understanding amenities: "So as I did, it will give your lowest kind of rate room, which looks very nice. It's a comfort room. It's just telling you a bit about the colour, the architecture, the floor it's on. And it's got a double bed... And it's giving you a breakdown of the cost as well".

However, other participants felt that the information provided was insufficient or inadequately organised. CP6 (14:23) pointed out the lack of critical details such as square footage, which they deemed integral: "There's nothing about the square footage or square metres or the size, which to me is integral".

Booking process experience



CP4 pretty slick

Overall, the booking process itself was generally well-received, with participants describing it as straightforward and user-friendly. **CP4** (12:07) observed that the booking process was "pretty slick" and appreciated the available options for add-ons, even suggesting that having 'United Kingdom' as a default country option would enhance the experience further: "Look, that was pretty slick. It was easy to go through. Book the hotel booked, choose the room. Room options. Nice that there were options".

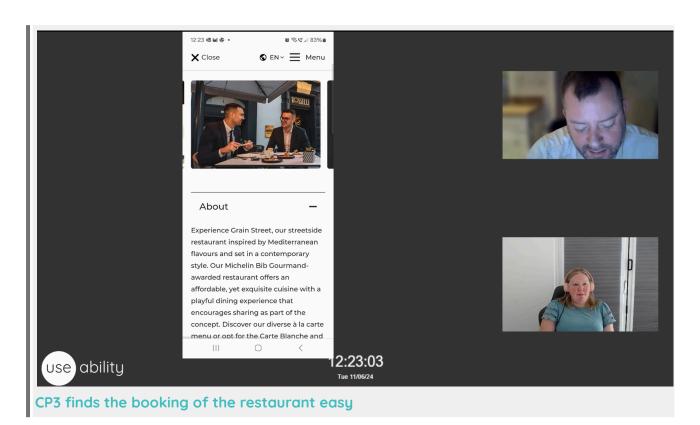
CP1 (36:40) mentioned "Quite simple... I've been on other websites that are quite a little bit more complicated... So relatively simple but very easy. I mean, the booking, it was super simple, which is great".

CP5 (23:10) was happy with the booking process, "Very easy, to be honest with you... it was very transparent... So it was a good experience"

Despite the overall positive feedback, some participants mentioned specific issues encountered during the booking process, particularly when specifying dates or handling promo codes. CP2 (9:19) showed slight concern about the availability of room types during certain periods: "We've got superior rooms, deluxe rooms, comfort rooms".

The experience of selecting a room and booking through the website varied among participants. The room selection was generally praised for its clarity and variety, although details about room size and specific views were sometimes found lacking. The mobile experience highlighted some additional issues concerning image and navigation efficiency. The booking process, on the other hand, garnered predominantly positive feedback for its simplicity and user-friendly interface, despite minor trouble with dates and promotional codes. This diverse feedback suggests that while the current system works well, there is room for improvement in providing detailed information and optimising the mobile experience.

Booking a surprise meal for your partners birthday



Ease of Booking:

Several participants found the booking process straightforward and easy. **CP1** (24:55) found the process very straightforward, "I found that... very clear, very easy to use". **CP3** (21:20) emphasised the simplicity, stating, "Yeah, it's pretty straightforward. Sort of simple things you do when you book a restaurant, isn't it? Dates, time... the actual process was pretty fine" **CP6** (26:17) noted, "That booking thing was extremely easy and not painful".

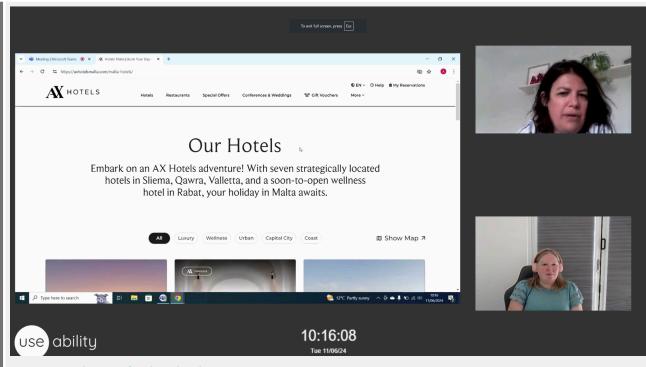
Content and Information:

CP2 (16:10) appreciated the clarity and presentation of the information, saying, "I like it. I like the tone of the wording".

Challenges in Navigation:

CP1 (25:27) had difficulty locating the restaurant, stating, "I'm just looking here to see if there's anywhere that says book dinner or other bookings, perhaps under the hotel info... I suppose. Go back to the homepage" and later mentioned, "I'm back here again, and I was in the restaurant, I think it said restaurant".

Going for a drink at the rooftop bar



CP1 struggles to find a drink

Mixed Discovery Experiences:

Some participants found it straightforward to locate the rooftop bar information. For instance, **CP4 and CP5** (29:32) both found the information on ambiance, panoramic views, and music satisfactory: "It's got a bit about the drinks and the music, some nice pictures, the cocktail looks lovely" .

Challenges in Navigation:

Conversely, CP2 (19:33) found that the information on the rooftop bar was not very clear, leading to initial confusion. They highlighted the difficulty in distinguishing the rooftop bar "Overgrain" from other listings: "Okay, so did you say it was a rooftop?...Oh, no, it's the rooftop lounge".

Suggestions for Improvement:

Based on the feedback, having a streamlined feature or a prominent tab directly leading to options such as dining and bars, along with clearer shortcuts or action prompts, would enhance user experience considerably.

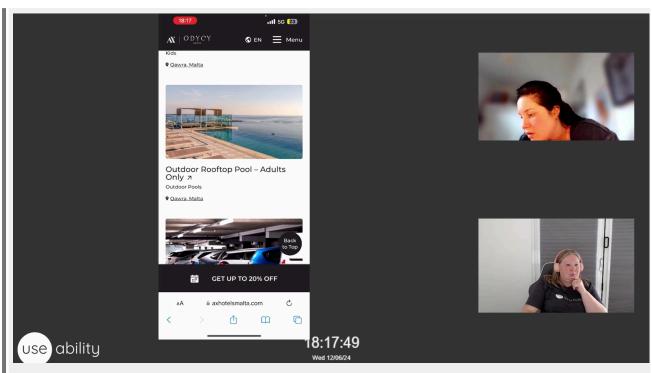
Overall, the couples cohort found the Grain Street restaurant booking process and additional information to be accessible and straightforward, with some noted areas for improvement regarding site navigation, especially on mobile devices. Streamlining access to menus and enhancing the visibility of dining and bar options can further improve user satisfaction.

Group B - Family

Scenario

- You live in London and are planning a holiday away, travelling to Malta with your family for a week in the autumn.
- You would like to book a family friendly hotel with a pool in Qawra on the north coast of Malta (Odycy)

Participants were asked to look around the hotel's web page and give their thoughts.



FP4 likes the idea of the adult only pool

Visual Appeal and Luxury:

Multiple participants noted the luxurious and premium look of the website and the hotel itself. One participant **FP2** (14:14) observed the "lovely pictures, seafront, so lovely view in the mornings and evenings", and described it as a "nice, luxurious feel". The site was also described by **FP6** (16:38) as "really nice, quite fancy, and done very tastefully".

Family-Friendly Facilities:

Participants appreciated family-friendly features such as the water park and the kids club. **FP4** (08:46) mentioned being particularly impressed by the inclusion of a "water park, which is great, and the kids club".

FP4 also liked that there were dedicated adult-only areas like the "adults only pool," which provided options for both adults and kids.

Ease of Finding Information:

Some participants found the website user-friendly, **FP2** (39:39) stating it was "easy to find the information you want".

They appreciated the special offers and clear navigation to different sections like amenities and photo and video galleries.

Navigation Issues:

There were several complaints about the difficulty in navigating the website. One participant **FP3** (08:28) on mobile specifically noted, "It's not very easy to navigate, is it?" while trying to book a stay.

Another participant **FP5** (16:09) struggled to find available dates and specific information, indicating the hotel might be booked for the desired timeframe, requiring changes in dates.

Family Orientation Doubts:

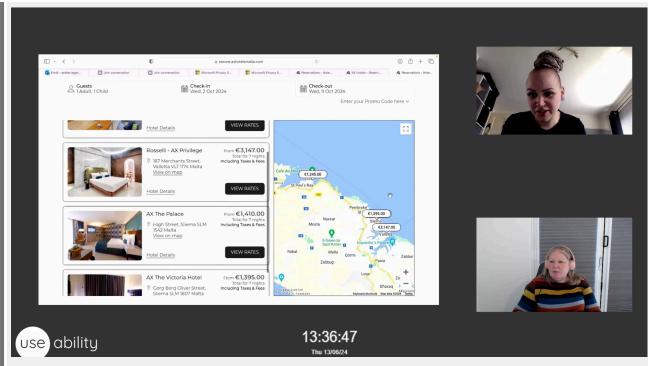
While the hotel and website appeared luxurious, some participants, such as **FP3** (06:47), expressed doubts about its family-friendliness. They stated, "if it's a family holiday, it's not jumping out to me as being family-friendly".

Another participant FP6 (20:51) suggested that the website's initial imagery did not make it obvious that the hotel catered to families. They expected more family-friendly images, like the water park, to be prominently displayed.

Mobile vs Desktop:

Participants using mobile devices had unique challenges compared to those using desktops. Mobile participants (**FP2**, **FP4**, etc.) frequently mentioned difficulties with navigation and website behaviour. For example, **FP2** (13:34) wasn't expecting the site to scroll automatically on mobile "That's scrolling itself. That's not me". These participants often found it more cumbersome to navigate the site compared to desktop users, possibly affecting their overall impression of the website's user-friendliness.

While the Odycy hotel received praise for its luxurious appearance and family-friendly facilities, issues with website navigation and clarity on family orientation were notable concerns among the participants.



FP5 only spots 3 places

Ease of Booking Process:

Multiple participants found the booking process straightforward. **FP4** (19:38) noted, "it was super easy, super straightforward. Like, very easy".

FP2 (22:29) echoed the straightforward nature of the booking process, they facilitated navigation within the pages during booking, making sure it was simple.

FP5 (32:14) Found the process "very easy" and "simple," particularly appreciating the final booking confirmation layout with details of the stay.

Navigation Issues:

Several participants faced navigation issues, particularly in finding specific information or dates. **FP5** (17:16) noted difficulty in reaching certain sections: "It's not letting me go past there". **FP4** (24:18) noted challenges in initial setup for dates and promo codes which caused repeated attempts: "So, I wanted the 21st. Yeah, have a good look around the rooms. Make sure you're happy with which one you want to book".

Technical Difficulties:

Technical issues were a recurring problem. FP2 (23:10) Mentioned having to try again when the initial button click didn't yield the expected results. They said, "Just thinking about it, I didn't press that date, you silly thing. Okay, let's try again".

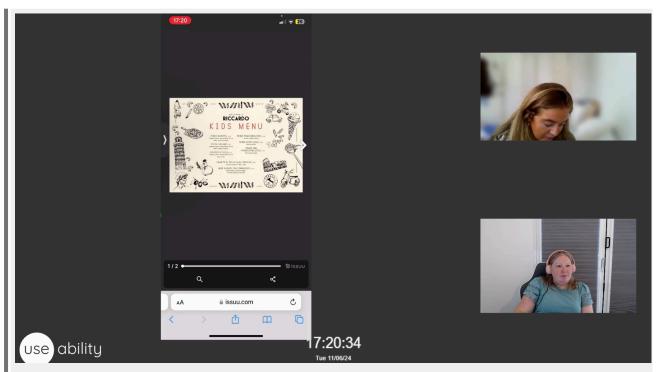
FP5 (17:34) also struggled with page zoom and visibility of hotel options, indicating, "it's actually only showing me three places on, even on a map".

Mobile vs Desktop:

FP3 (19:45) had a challenging experience booking a room on the mobile website. The participant found the website difficult to navigate and described it as "quite confusing the way you have to kind of, you know, I wanted to go back and make an amendment, and then I had to go. I was a bit confused. I couldn't simply go back". The lack of a "basket icon" for easy access and edits also added to the complication and made the process less user-friendly compared to other booking websites she had used, such as Hilton. She emphasised that it was "complicated in a way to make edits and a bit confusing"

While the Odycy hotel's website earned praise for its visual appeal and overall booking process, significant navigation and technical issues were noted, especially among desktop users. Mobile users experienced a slightly smoother interaction but still encountered specific difficulties related to promo codes and page behaviour. Improvements in navigation and technical performance could enhance the overall user experience across different devices .

Booking a family meal during the stay



FP3 feeding the children

Ease of Booking:

Participants often found the booking process straightforward. **FP5** (33:59) found the process intuitive once they located the restaurant section. They said, "I can see restaurants. So I click on restaurants... Then I'd go on to book a table... Quite easy" although makes comments about the restaurant booking not being confirmed immediately. **FP4** (23:55) is happy with the process, "pretty standard what I would expect from a table reservation"

Information Availability:

Participants appreciated having access to relevant information. **FP5** (35:27), for example, stated, "It tells you I like it. I'm sorry, can you just go to the bottom? And then it's got the menus, which is good".

FP3 (23:05) found the menu helpful, saying, "Usually I look at the menus and check children's menu".

Navigation Issues:

Some participants experienced difficulty navigating the website. FP2 (33:02) noted, "It was straightforward, obviously. I obviously didn't quite click the right button to start with to check for the week's stay".

FP5 (32:51) often had to navigate back to the homepage when trying to access the restaurant booking section, making the process cumbersome.

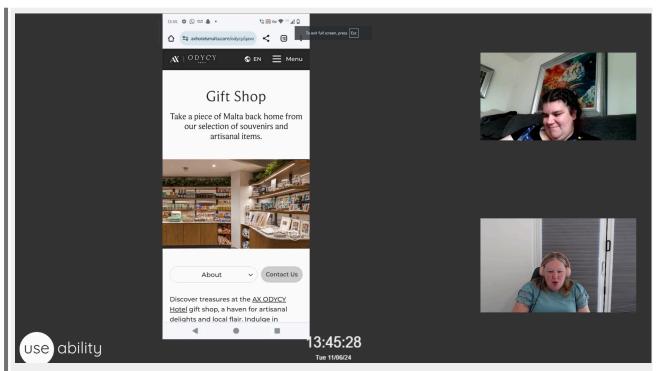
FP6 (37:16) got confused initially by clicking on the wrong tabs and had to navigate back. They said, "I got a bit confused here...initially, I clicked on that first tab"

Mobile vs Desktop:

Participants using mobile phones noted that some elements were harder to interact with. **FP2** (33:43) commented, "I need to come out of all this hotel stuff. I'm not quite sure how," indicating issues with mobile navigation.

While many family participants found the overall booking process for Trattoria Ricardo straightforward and appreciated the availability of detailed information, common navigation issues and sometimes clunky mobile experience detracted from the user experience.

Finding the gift shop



FP2 finds the gifts

Ease of Discovery:

Many participants found the information about the gift shop without much difficulty. For instance, **FP2** (41:35) finding the gift shop mentioned, "I thought it was in amenities" but easily finds it under facilities. Similarly, **FP6** (41:00) located the gift shop relatively easily by navigating through the "facilities" section, saying, "Oh, yeah, gift shop".

Adequate Information:

Participants appreciated the information provided about the shop once they found it. **FP3** (29:30) found that the gift shop information was clear and appreciated its inclusion, as it "kind of tells you what you know, it's showcasing kind of local souvenirs, artisan design" which is what they would expect from a hotel gift shop.

Navigation Challenges:

Some participants had trouble finding information because it was not located where they expected. **FP3** (27:48) said, "It's not looking like it does, no," after initial attempts to find the gift shop information under "amenities".

FP5 (40:23) echoed a similar sentiment where their initial search was unsuccessful, "I would probably... I would assume it would have it, like, at the top somewhere, but I can't see anything at the top".

FP4 (26:02) found the gift shop easily under the facilities section but suggested that it would be more helpful to have an illustration or a map indicating where it is located in the hotel.

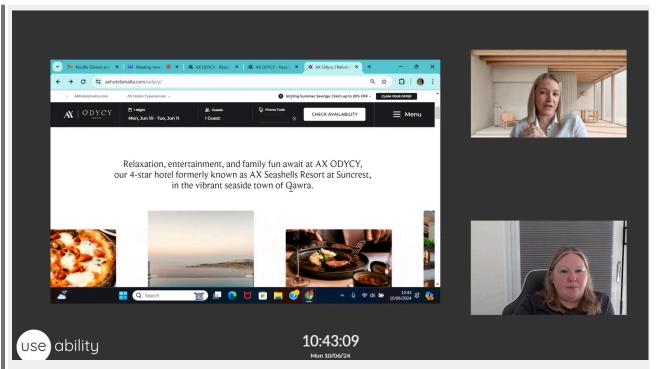
FP5 (41:48) had some criticism about the accessibility of gift shop information. They found the navigation slightly confusing and believed that information such as opening and closing times should be more prominently displayed rather than mixed with other details.

Mobile vs Desktop:

Participants using mobile devices sometimes had different experiences, often tied to smaller screen sizes and different navigation setups. **FP2** (41:06), who used a mobile phone, "I did look for. I'd have gone straight to amenities, which obviously you saw. I did, and it wasn't in there at all. [...] amenities. Yeah, gift shop"

While most family participants were able to eventually find the information about the gift shop, they sometimes encountered difficulties depending on their chosen navigation path and device. Streamlining navigation paths and ensuring consistent placement of information across different sections could enhance the user experience further.

Information about baby cot availability



FP1 can't find the cots so would call

FInding information:

Several participants eventually found the information through some persistent searching. **FP5** (42:43) found out that baby cots were available in the FAQ section: "Our baby cots provided, cots are provided for a charge, please contact our guest relations".

FP4 (28:59) had problems finding where to get information relating to baby cots initially trying the family room details. After being guided to the FAQ section, the participant states "I wouldn't normally look at that, to be honest".

Difficulty in Finding Information:

Participants generally had trouble easily locating information about baby cots. FP2 (28:07) said, "I'm here in the rooms page, and I'm not really seeing this".

FP1 (38:29) had to click through several options before considering calling the hotel: "So, I feel like I probably, if it's not showing me here, I probably try and call them to find out".

Mobile vs Desktop:

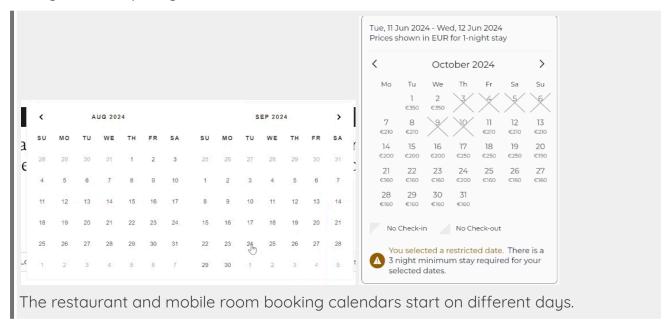
Using a mobile device sometimes made navigation harder. **FP4** (28:07) shared that they might opt to contact the hotel directly: "Oh, room details. Yeah. So, even in the family room details, I'm not seeing any mention of the possibility of having a baby cot"

FP2 (41:55) also found that finding detailed information like baby cots was not intuitive from the rooms and suites page, leading them to think they would need to email: "I would assume I'd go to contact us and literally ask them".

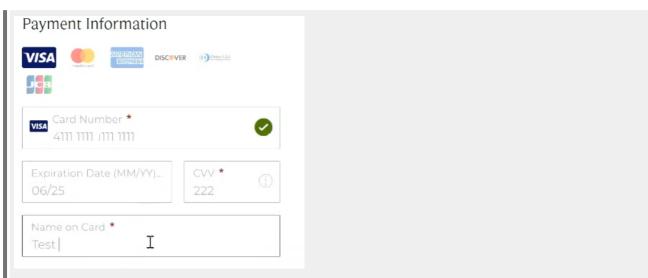
Family participants experienced notable difficulties when trying to find specific information about baby cots on the hotel website. These issues were compounded for those using mobile devices, suggesting a need for more intuitive and accessible information placement on the site across all device types.

General observations

Calendar layout discrepancy



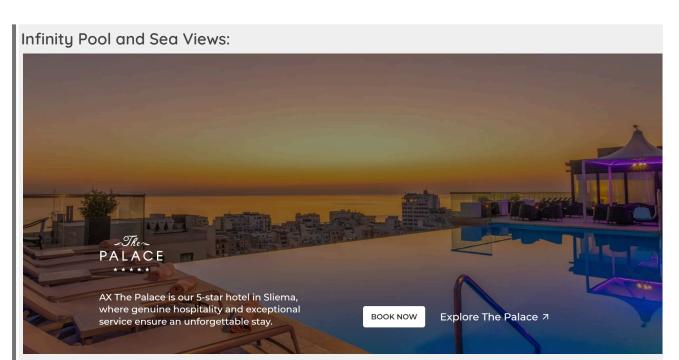
Low contrast on credit card fields



There is low contrast on the information entered into the credit card fields, this can impact accessibility for some users.

After having used the website for a while, the participants were asked:

What is the image that most stood out?



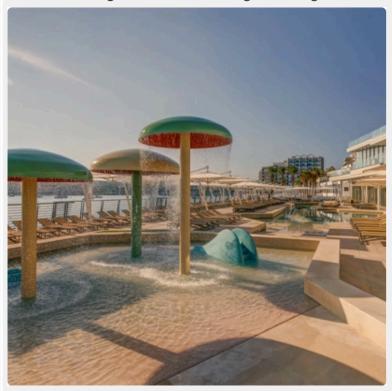
Participants frequently highlighted the image of the infinity pool and views of the sea as the most striking. **FP6** mentioned, "I mean, not on this hotel, but on the other one that, like, infinity pool, when that first came up, was really striking". Similarly, **FP4** noted that sea views, including infinity pool images, attracted their attention.

Rooftop Lounge and Panoramic Views:



The rooftop lounge with its stunning views also stood out. **CP1** identified the rooftop lounge with a view as particularly memorable. **CP2** similarly mentioned the foyer image of Roselli, which, by extension, connects to the panoramic views from a high point like the rooftop.

Children's Play Areas and Family-Friendly Facilities:



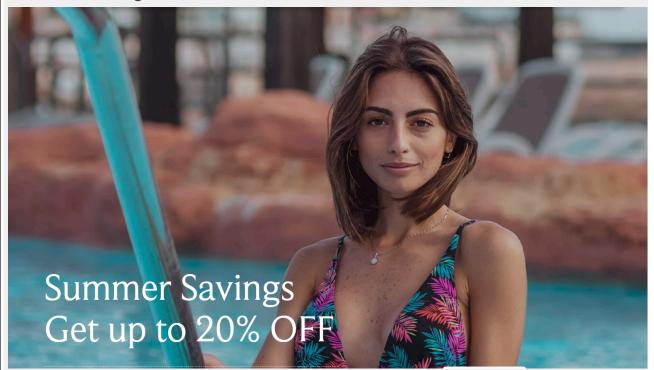
Images depicting children's play areas were particularly significant for participants seeking family-friendly environments. **FP6** noted that the image of the children's play area stood out because it confirmed the child-friendly nature of the hotel.

Rooms with Ornate Decoration:



Participants were also drawn to images of ornately decorated rooms and suites. **CP1** highlighted the suite images for their ornateness and luxurious furnishings. **CP5** found the simplicity combined with bold floral decor in the room images to be particularly appealing, giving a luxurious feel while also seeming relaxing.

Promotional Images:



The promotional image featuring a woman on the home screen was repeatedly mentioned. This image seemed notable due to its standout quality and repeated appearances, making it hard to ignore. **FP3** shared that this image "kept coming up" and was quite memorable.

Did you see any images that didn't make sense?

Several participants didn't report any images that didn't make sense to them. They generally found the website visually appealing, with images that matched their expectations of luxury and sophistication. For instance, **FP1** confirmed that all images seemed fitting with their expectations and depicted different facilities logically

Was it easy to find the information you were looking for?

Many participants found it relatively easy to find the information they needed. **CP1** noted, "Yes, yes, it was very intuitive" while mentioning that it was slightly difficult to find the restaurants section initially but otherwise found the website straightforward to use. **FP2** also remarked, "So usability-wise it was fine," but noted some scrolling inconvenience. **CP2** echoed a similar sentiment, stating that the information was "very easy" to find during their tasks. Additionally, **FP1** found the website quite easy to navigate, describing it as straightforward except for a few minor issues related to finding details about baby cots and if the hotel had a gift shop.

Some users found navigating the website more challenging. FP3 on mobile noted that the website felt "a bit jumpy" and that navigating back to the basket was not clear. She also criticised the website for having too much information and images, making it harder to get to where they wanted compared to other websites. CP3 faced an initial struggle with the top bar and mentioned, "I wasn't too clear what I was doing at first" but found booking the hotel and restaurant to be straightforward afterward. FP4 indicated that finding some specific information, especially related to child facilities, was a bit tricky, noting that details could be better presented in the room descriptions.

Mobile vs Desktop:

Participants using mobile devices tended to find it slightly more challenging to navigate the website compared to those on desktops. **FP2 and CP3**, both mobile users, during the study mentioned needing to scroll a lot and difficulty with the top bar navigation, respectively. This may indicate some device-based differences in user experience.

Overall, while most participants found the website relatively easy to use, there were common pain points related to navigation and information layout that could be improved. Some participants specifically mentioned the need for better filtering options and a clearer representation of certain amenities.

Is there anything you saw that didn't make sense?

Misplacing Important Information:

FP5 mentioned the difficulty in finding room details regarding baby cots, suggesting that such information should be easier to access and ideally included in the room details or booking process.

CP3 pointed out the lack of clarity in the images provided, specifically critiquing that there were too many pictures of drinks, which seemed redundant and unhelpful.

Help Section Confusion:

FP6 mentioned finding the help section somewhat ambiguous, suggesting it might be better labelled or structured differently to be more intuitive, potentially as an FAQ section, "Well, after you point out the help thing, yeah, I just think maybe it could have had like, you know, FAQ or something there or another tab or something".

CP6 noted frustration with the website's provision of food and drink menus, suggesting that these should be more prominently displayed and detailed.

While some found no elements confusing, most appreciated the overall layout and logic of the site:

CP1 and FP2, among others, generally found the website intuitive and satisfactory with no major confusing elements.

Similarly, participants such as **FP1 and CP2** noted that they did not encounter any images or sections that did not make sense.

Mobile vs Desktop:

There weren't significant differences specifically tied to mobile versus desktop concerning the confusing elements, although some mobile users mentioned general navigation difficulties and the need for more optimisation (not outright confusion).

In summary, while participants generally appreciated the website design, areas such as the placement of room details, clarity in help sections, and redundancy in displayed images (especially drinks) were noted as points for improvement. Several participants emphasised the need for more logical and accessible information placement, especially regarding amenities for children and menus for dining options.

How was the booking experience compared to other websites you have booked with?

Ease of Use:

CP6 (23:04) stated, "Very seamless indeed. Excellent. They've done a fantastic job". CP1 (36:40) found the site "super simple" compared to other websites that are more complicated and prone to taking users through multiple pages for booking. FP2 (31:13) described the booking process as "a little bit more straightforward, a little bit quicker" than options like booking.com.

Visual Appeal and Innovation:

FP1 (43:14) appreciated the innovative and dynamic features, highlighting that the visuals make the booking experience come "alive".

CP6 (24:46) also liked the automatic update of room options without needing to search for specific rooms.

CP4 (18:46) mentioned, "It was quick. It didn't take very long, did it? So it was pretty seamless".

Complex Navigation:

FP3 (36:04) noted that the booking process involved navigating through too many images and text, making it feel cumbersome compared to other websites. It required more clicks and scrolling than needed. FP3 (37:26) also noted that the AX hotel website feels "a bit more complex to kind of use and not as straightforward" compared to other booking sites.

Lack of Useful Features:

FP4 (32:45) missed having reviews from other guests, a feature they often rely on for gauging the quality and vibe of a location.

FP5 (46:24) preferred booking pages where everything is located on a single page rather than navigating from page to page for details.

Additional Observations

FP3 (36:04), using mobile, found the experience less direct compared to using other booking sites.

CP2 (33:03) did not note any significant issues but observed that the processes were quite similar to other booking websites.

Overall, while many participants found the booking experience on this website to be seamless, intuitive, and visually appealing compared to other sites, some criticised the navigation complexity and the missing useful features like reviews and simpler pages.

Closing questions

Participants were asked about the best or most useful features seen on other websites.

Simplistic and Easy Navigation:

Participants appreciated websites that were simplistic and easy to book on. **CP1** highlighted, "where it's very simplistic and easy to book and manage" as a beneficial feature.

Similarly, **CP2** mentioned, "Just simplicity, really. You know, able to input dates and change dates".

Filtering Options:

Filters to sort options based on user preferences were widely praised. **FP3** mentions that other booking websites are "just really kind of easy to navigate. They're quite, you know, the filter, you can filter quite easily".

FP6 appreciated filters to sort facilities and meal packages, "when I was booking everything and it came up with that bed and breakfast, half board, all-inclusive".

Visual and Interactive Elements:

Visual elements like images and interactive tours were found useful. **CP4** enjoys "the interactive tours where you can actually go into the room and see it visually". **FP1** mentioned, "the amenities that you got, that was really good. This carousel here

that I've got going across a minute. That is exciting".

Additional Booking Options:

Participants liked additional options like booking dinners or bars post hotel booking. **CP1** mentioned, "you can just book the restaurant afterwards or book the bar".

Clear Information and Reviews:

Availability of clear and comprehensive information, especially reviews and ratings from other users, was highly valued. **FP4** and **CP4** stressed the importance of reviews, with **FP4** stating, "the reviews, like, actual reviews from other guests... to get the vibe from a place".

Cancellation and Policy Details:

Easy cancellation options and clear policy details were also seen as advantageous. **FP6** appreciated Booking.com's feature of "cancel by this date and get your money back" and wanted it on the front page.

Disclaimer

Several factors may have an affect on the results of a usability test. It is important to remember that people bring their own experiences and biases into a test without realising. Whilst this may appear to be a negative, the participants have been selected to represent your typical users and the way they act is generally indicative of how a real user may act.