

Airline Usability Test Notes

Key:

Blue = user quote

Green = positive experience/reaction

Red = negative experience/reaction

Brown = user preference

Points in bold are marked for attention

Video 1

User Background:

- Occupation: Full time Mother and Carer
- Lives: City West, Dublin
- Typical travel; holidays for leisure, once a year
- Access internet through phone primarily (apps for primary interaction), laptop secondarily (broadband at home)
- Current apps for air travel: Aer Lingus & Ryanair
- Flights booked through online/app usually, doesn't enjoy over the phone or in person interactions, unless a unique circumstance
- **Generally would use an app rather than a website**
- **Never used flight comparison sites (eg Skyscanner), would usually look at individual companies through their websites/apps as they usually take quite routine flights**
- Generally prioritises price for short flights, longer distance flights are slightly less price focused and consider comfort as well, flight time is also considered regarding sleep patterns of their children, especially on longer flights
- Prices compared by progressing through the process in both apps for flight booking, right up until the final total and payment request was made, then picked the cheapest

Most Recent Booking Experience:

- Trip to Amsterdam, began looking around Oct/Nov last year, before booking. Ryanair was the cheapest, used the app to book. When booking this flight, participant was the decision maker overall and booked on behalf of husband and children too. The information/booking details were passed on verbally, face to face, to confirm the flights and final booking

Task 1 - Aer Lingus:

Goal:

- Book a flight from Cork, Ireland, to Faro, Portugal, for a week across the school midterm break (starting 28th Oct - 1st Nov), for 7 nights for 2 people, ideally flying out on the 26th Oct, returning Nov 2nd

Homescreen:

- Has used this app before
- Easy for user to locate the airports for the task with scroll function, set the passenger number and set the dates with the calendar without issue
- User scrolls rather than uses search function to locate flight criteria
- Only one flight is shown each way for their criteria

Flights/Fares:

- Easily deciphered the information along the top of the screen when picking flights

- Noted the purpose/benefits of the alternate fares for different dates/prices around their selected flights along the top of the screen
- **Initially not clear how to find out more about the alternate Fare Benefits options** (saver/plus/advantage), upon clicking on this it gave an error and removed all info before reloading the screen, user would have hoped clicking on the option would expand the information around it rather than just confirm the selection
- Once they worked out and utilised the compare fare benefits it gave the information they wanted, they did say this wouldn't change their usual approach of gravitating toward the cheapest option in this case
- They found the amount of information and the process to get to the Fare Benefits frustrating
- **They expected to see comparison between the Fare Benefits by default**, under the price, rather than have to work to bring the details up themselves

Flight Summary:

- Found the information suitable on the Flight Summary page
- If they were to share the flight details they would use WhatsApp which was provided (not something they would usually do due to usually discussing face to face)
- **Didn't utilise or have an opinion on the save for later feature.** They've never saved a flight before

Conclusion:

- Straightforward
- Enjoyed how easy the process felt
- Didn't feel they had to input an excessive amount of information
- Found it easy enough to navigate through the options
- Suggested being shown the Fare Benefits by default, under the price, rather than have to work to bring the details up themselves

Task 2 - Eurowings:

Goal:

- Same dates as above, but this time, any London Airport to Barcelona Airport

Homescreen:

- Has never used this app before
- **Screen recording crashes as soon as the app is opened and requires reopening**
- **Goes straight for low fare calendar** as they believe it will give them the cheapest flight. Departure defaulted to London Stansted rather all (didn't seem to be a clear option to set to all in low fare calendar)
- Takes a moment to realise return flight is below and requires scrolling down, which causes visible confusion/frustration (low fare calendar)
- Then, there are **no prices for a return flight, which again, causes visible confusion/frustration** and makes them reconfigure the departure destination (low fare calendar)
- Unclear why they cannot progress to step two, then notices they need to select the flight class, states they didn't find it immediately clear
- Doesn't like that the currency isn't defaulted to your location/local currency
- Then try's London airports one by one in the low fare calendar which takes a lot of time and causes confusion, requires a lot of capacity
- Proceeds to says they would try the general flight booking process to check whether they can get a better deal than just using low fare process
- **App remembered/autofilled dates from their previous search** when moving from low fare calendar to regular flight booking process
- **App autofilled arrival airport** when moving from low fare calendar to regular flight booking process
- **App doesn't remember/autofill the number of passengers** from the previous search, despite remembering/autofilling the dates and some airport details

- The general book flights option allows all London Airports to be selected, where as the low fare section didn't suggest this option and they instead seemed to have to try London Airports individually

Flights/Fares:

- **Likes that this app immediately shows the difference between flight class options**, rather than it needing to be expanded to show the information and found themselves more likely to upgrade
- Says they would write the prices as they go (physically)
- **Chooses Smart, rather than Basic price** on flight class once they compare the perks of each, which are shown by default in this app

Flight Summary:

- Easy to locate details and criteria of the seat selection process
- **Frustration caused by the lack of stopover information given.** They then backtrack and check, before stating the mention of the changeover is far too vague and unclear for their liking. They feel betrayed by the process and would end the interaction at that point if they were on their own
- Didn't like that there **wasn't an option to select the same seats on the way back, they state this is an option on other apps offer and saves a lot of time and unnecessary effort**

Conclusion:

- Finds out about the changeovers on the flight too late in the process and says they would immediately stop the interaction if this was a personal experience. Felt misled
- Would prefer low fare calendar integrated into book flights
- Preferred clarity of upfront costs over hidden charges

Video 2

User Background:

- Occupation: Hospitality Manager
- Lives: Raheny, Dublin
- Accesses internet mostly on phone (primarily apps) but also on laptop through broadband
- Flight Apps: Booking, Skyscanner, Aer Lingus
- Type of travel: both business and leisure, flies at least 3 times a year
- Doesn't do the same flight journeys routinely
- Nearly always uses Skyscanner first
- Prioritises timing for business flights (price is also important), also important for personal. Happy to pay more for a more convenient time

Most Recent Booking Experience:

- Booked for work/business; Aer Lingus to London, left it a bit late so had to do it through Aer Lingus app on their phone, but checked on sky scanner first to compare prices. They were booking all flights for others too, sent them their boarding pass QR code through phone

Task 1 - Aer Lingus:

Goal:

- Book a flight from Cork, Ireland, to Faro, Portugal, for a week across the school midterm break (starting 28th Oct - 1st Nov), for 7 nights for 2 people, ideally flying out on the 26th Oct, returning Nov 2nd

Homescreen:

- Would've logged in if they had an account first
- **Initially looked past the book a flight button**
- Uses the search function rather than scroll due to efficiency and speed
- **Locates and fills out airport and passenger criteria easily and without any issues or frustrations**
- **Doesn't find it clear that outward date has been set**, prefers it when a new view/interaction appears once you set the outward date, especially when booking multi stop flights

Flights/Fares:

- **Also struggles with the differences between the flight class options** and also says they would prefer the differences to be there immediately
- Also doesn't notice the compare fare benefits prompt
- Similarly to first user, user also assumes that clicking on a choice of flight class will expand and give you more information, finds it confusing when instead it selects that flight class and moves to the next step (return flight)
- Suggests they would **prefer a concise summary of the fare differences under each price point**, also similar to first user
- Would like it to state outbound and inbound flights, doesn't find the airport info at the top helpful or efficient

Flight Summary:

- **Can see the purpose of the share feature**
- **Likes that it automatically saves search when you share in case you need to come out of the app**
- Would like flight summary page to clearly show outbound and inbound rather than just airport names
- **User is cautious of save search feature** due to fear of it increasing the price and would rather book it

Conclusion:

- **At the end saw the comparison for fare benefits but thinks it should be more clearly available, current layout feels like an inefficient use of space as majority of the page is blank and the compare feature is very small, whole bottom half of the screen is empty**
- **Straight forward process**

Task 2 - Eurowings:

Goal:

- Same dates as above, but this time, any London Airport to Barcelona Airport

Homescreen:

- Goes to London all airports and goes straight to book flight, doesn't interact with any of the other home screen functions
- The app and its **overall layout looks a lot more cluttered**
- **Menu at the top duplicates what is on the main screen**
- Log in option on the main screen also appears in the top right expandable menu and the top left log in specific button
- Again, uses search function, rather than scrolling to locate

Flights/Fares:

- Doesn't like that it shows a quicker flight but it just says unavailable, no context given on why its unavailable, feels frustrated and confused
- Doesn't like that business class is there but not available, again frustrated and confused
- **Confusion around progressing to return flight selection**, ended up clicking on one way option to see what it means as they felt its function wasn't clearly explained and it removed the return flight option, **doesn't like the phrasing of the displayed information on this page**
- Prefers the summary of differences in flight class options without having to click on any gestures or features to find out about them
- Adding flex option is clear enough and makes sense to them
- **Changes to Smart class when presented with the class fare options**
- Likes that the top of the page states which flight (out/inbound) times are being presented for clarity

Flight Summary:

- Similarly to the previous user, **confused by the addition of changeovers on the flight as didn't see it when selecting the flights, backtracked to double check whether this was communicated clearly in earlier stages, finds it annoying/frustrating, says they would cancel and look elsewhere for direct flights. Doesn't like that this was only noticed at the seat selection stage.**

Conclusion:

- Feels very confused at the process overall
- Everything felt very busy
- Expected stop over information to be clearer/available, when backtracking at the end, they notice it, but, **says it isn't clear and doesn't give any information on where the stopovers are**
- Feels a lot of the features aren't necessary
- Likes the additional fare information

Airline Usability Test Conclusion:

Overall it seemed conclusive the users preferred their experience with the Aer Lingus app, versus the Eurowings one. This is highlighted in the number of pain points, by both users, when using the latter. With both users at times experiencing the same issues/frustrations (namely frustrations with the stopover information and how cluttered the app appeared), highlighting that these issues should require assessment. Also taking into account that between the users they also noted various other aspects of the app that didn't make sense to them or caused frustration, creates some concern for the general layout of the app and the way in which information is displayed.

This isn't to say that the Aer Lingus one is a perfect benchmark of a best in class app, as both users still struggled to identify the flight class options feature and both attempted to interact in the same way to obtain this information (by clicking on one of the flight class options, with them both then being confused and surprised that this in fact selects the option and progresses onto the return flight). However when using this app there were far more positive interactions, less pauses/moments of thinking and the app was noted by both users to on the whole be a lot more simple and effective.

Usability Test Personal Notes/Observations:

- The host is good at remaining impartial when user had confusion or questions around the process, ensuring pain points or positive interactions aren't interfered with, given or missed
- The hosts introduction to give context is clear, giving insight into the set up, purpose and narrative. Does a good job of communicating the nature of the task and the running order
- Seems unfair to have a more rigorous process for the second app (Eurowings), as they were instructed to use any London Airport it makes it a more complicated and different process

- Was it a good idea to make the users task have different criteria on each app? Would it have been better and given clearer side by side results to ensure they complete the same task on both apps with the same criteria?
- Toward the start of the videos whilst the host was introducing the task and providing context for the test, the phones display timer ran out and locked the screen, meaning they had to unlock the phone again, ensure the display is set to remain unlocked for my future tests to avoid this happening
- Ensure all previous app history/recent searches have been cleared if a new user comes in, otherwise it will affect the test. For example when the user goes to do the task and the airports are already suggested because they have previously been filled in by the previous user in the previous test