# FASHION NOVA USABILITY

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SI 422

## FOCUS

Fashion Nova has quickly become a prominent name in fast fashion over a short period of time. With an influx of celebrity endorsements and promotion, the brand has taken off in popularity and quickly been able to make a name for itself. However, when a company with a prominent digital presence takes off so quickly, it's definitely important to pay attention to the development process. Increasing inventory, diversifying products and catering to consumer needs are all important, but making sure that the company's resources remain accessible and user intuitive should also be a priority. Throughout this document, the results of usability research will be compiled and analyzed in order to best provide clear findings for recommendations for improving the usability of Fashion Nova's website.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the greatest usability barriers to shoppers on the website?
2. Where can we best effectively allocate effort towards improving site usability.

## METHOD

In order to construct a comprehensive understanding of the usability obstacles in Fashion Nova's site, we will utilize UserTesting.com as a usability testing resource to get quick, informative and personal usability information from real users. Because the site uses a directed and recorded format, it's easy to get a sense of both the time it takes to complete tasks, as well as how that impacts the experience of the user throughout.

## DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The research conducted focused on the experience of the average consumer. UserTesting provides instant outreach to gather participants for usability studies, and as such we were able to utilize this feature to gather participants for the study.  Because of the demographic that Fashion Nova tends to focus their advertising towards, our study screened for individuals that were from the United States, between the ages of 18 and 30, and had average web experience. Throughout the tests they completed the following tasks:

1. **Describe initial impressions of the website. How easy/difficult to navigate does the site appear to be?**
2. **Find the most affordable evening gown on the site.**
3. **Add this item to your shopping bag.**
4. **Go to your shopping bag and view your current number of items. Describe your impression of the cart interface.**
5. **Remove this item from the shopping bag.**

Each of these tasks will allow us to test how easy these actions are to complete for each user, based upon the time that it takes and the feedback recieved. These tasks were then followed up by the following post-test questions:

1. **Describe initial impressions of the website. How easy/difficult to navigate does the site appear to be?**
2. **What frustrated you most about this site?**
3. **Between 1 and 10, how would you rate the total difficulty of completing these tasks?**
4. **Would you shop from this site in the future? Why or why not?**

These post-test questions provide a more qualitative summary of the overall experience that participants have during the usability test. For each task, participants were asked after completion to rate if they knew for certain the task was completed, and how easy they thought the task was to complete. These ratings were collected and compiled for overall qualitative data analysis.

## FINDINGS

Below, each participant and their experiences completing the tasks are detailed along with qualitative and quantitative data.

**Participant 1 (LivelyLlama8182):** *Age: 25, Female, US*

**Question 1 (Verbal):** *Describe first impressions of the website. How easy/difficult to navigate does the site appear to be? How do you feel about shopping at this site?*
- User relates to this scenario.
- Likes the visual, modern appeal of the interface ("sleek").
- Appears very easy to navigate.
- Sales/deals and categories are easy to find.
- Is incentivized to shop at the site.
- *Time: 1:33*

**Task 1:** *Find the most affordable evening gown on the website*
- Large number of categories for gowns might be a bit confusing for the task.
- Selects luxe, high fashion category.
- Resorts to searching for "evening gowns" rather than browsing categories.
- Finds and selects *"Evening Debut Gown - Burgundy"*.
- ***Time: 2:33***

**Task 2:** *Add this evening gown to your shopping cart.*
- Size was sold out for the individual.
- User chose another size as if shopping for a friend.
- Appreciated full confirmation of addition.
- Bothered by pop up advertisements during search, and had to restart search.
- Sorts by price and received a much larger number of results than before.
- Finds and selects *"Evening Debut Gown - White"*.
- ***Time: 0:46***

**Task 3:** *Go to the shopping cart to view your current number of items.*
- Shopping bag is very clearly labeled.
- Recently viewed option was interesting to the user, not an expected function.
- Can easily see that one item is in the cart.
- Cart interface is user intuitive.
- Appreciates that cart allows the user to edit selection (size color).
- Likes that discount codes can be used.
- No apple pay.
- User added to cart.
- ***Time: 2:07***

**Task 4:** *You changed your mind! Remove the item from the shopping cart.*
- User easily removes the item from the cart.
- ***Time: 0:11***

**Participant 2 (Subu53):** *Age: 21, Female, US*

**Question 1 (Verbal):** *Describe first impressions of the website. How easy/difficult to navigate does the site appear to be? How do you feel about shopping at this site?*
- Appreciates the fun advertising.
- Is a bit confused about how advertised discounts interact with one another.
- Visual advertisements of clothing articles are a plus.
- Likes that the models are in real-life scenarios.
- Appreciates the variety in clothing categories.
- Especially interested in the image search functionality on the site.
- The user wants to shop at the site.
- Considering purchasing gifts for others.
- *Time: 4:37*

**Task 1:** *Find the most affordable evening gown on the website*
- Large number of categories for gowns might be a bit confusing for the task.
- Selects "sexy dresses".
- Resorts to searching for "evening gowns" rather than browsing categories.
- Bothered by pop up advertisements during search, and had to restart search.
- Sorts by price and received a much larger number of results than before.
- Finds and selects "*Evening Debut Gown - White*".
- *Time: 3:50*

**Task 2:** *Add this evening gown to your shopping cart.*
- All sizes were out of stock, left item to choose another option.
- Page took a large amount of time to load.
- Saw that many other options were also out of stock.
- Instead added "Evening Debut Gown - Burgundy" to the cart.
- *Time: 2:07*

**Task 3:** *Go to the shopping cart to view your current number of items.*
- Price with shipping is easy to see.
- Easily finds quantity and price.
- Doesn't like that the item is not exchangeable or returnable.
- Details that purchase options are easy to find, appreciates initial other item recommendations.

- Further recommendations were not applicable.
- *Time: 2:28*

**Task 4:** *You changed your mind! Remove the item from the shopping cart.*
- Easily removes the item from the cart.
- *Time: 0:18*


**Participant 3 (AncientScorpion178):** *Age: 30, Male, US*

**Question 1 (Verbal):** *Describe first impressions of the website. How easy/difficult to navigate does the site appear to be? How do you feel about shopping at this site?*
- Is familiar with Fashion Nova.
- Clean, simple interface.
- Doesn't like how quickly images flash by, wants to be able to get a better sense of outfits.
- Images are large and high quality.
- Not the user's favorite place to shop.
- Very average experience with the site.
- *Time: 3:50*

**Task 1:** *Find the most affordable evening gown on the website*
- Large number of categories for gowns might be a bit confusing for the task.
- No particular "Evening Gown" category.
- Resorts to searching for "evening gowns" rather than browsing categories.
- Bothered by pop up advertisements during search, and had to restart search.
- Sorts by price and received a much larger number of results than before.
- Had to redo search for the item.
- Finds and selects *"Evening Debut Gown - Burgundy"*.
- *Time: 3:19*

**Task 2:** *Add this evening gown to your shopping cart.*
- All sizes were sold out but S and XS.
- User added to cart.
- *Time: 0:32*

**Task 3:** *Go to the shopping cart to view your current number of items.*
- Appreciates that there aren't discrepancies in pricing.

- Doesn't like the empty space in the shopping cart interface.
- Image of the item is too small.
- Item information is easy for the user to read.
- *Time: 1:41*

**Task 4:** *You changed your mind! Remove the item from the shopping cart.*
- User easily empties the shopping cart.
- *Time: 0:17*

**Task Data Compilation:**

| Task | Moderate | Easy | Very Easy |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| Task 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Task 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Task 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Task 4 | 0 | 0 | 3 |

## SUMMARIZING FINDINGS

Overall throughout the study, participants had a relatively easy time completing tasks. Participants appeared to have the most difficulty completing the first task. This task involved finding the cheapest evening gown on the site, and there were a multitude of obstacles that were observed during the task.

- Applying search filters increased the amount of items that appeared after searching "evening gown" rather than decreasing it.
- Pop-up advertisements interrupted the search process and made the task more difficult than the others.
- The term "evening gown" was intentionally non-categorical, however the multitude of dress categories made this item difficult to focus on a particular category.

- Stock status of items was not shown until customers selected the article of clothing.

## LIMITATIONS

Some limitations of our study (although they were largely intentionally implemented to focus the demographic of participants) include the age range of our participants, their location, and the platform used to recruit them. The screening questions instantly alienate some potential users that may use the site, including minors and those over 30. Although the 18-30 range is largely reflective of the average user, it is certainly alienating the perspective of users outside of that demographic and leaving out more usability information. This is the same issue we face when screening for participants located in the United States.

Another potential limitation of our study is the method in which participants are recruited. Because we are using the UserTesting platform, the participants that we have in our study were a part of the network that the platform reaches out to individuals that are a part of their network. Therefore, it's hard to consider our participants as particularly "average" users, as they were individuals who were seeking studies to participate in, and are likely a bit more savvy to the usability test process than the average consumer.

## FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon our findings, recommendations for Fashion Nova on improving the usability of their website is largely based on the functionality of the item search process. Participants had a relatively easy time adding items to their cart and found the checkout process fairly easy to navigate. However, the biggest usability issues came from the inconsistencies in the number of results when search filters were applied. Altering these algorithms to make results more sensical, as well as making pop-up ads less intrusive to the search process, would be two great implementations to take away from this research.