

Case Study | EasyJet Desktop Gadget

The Brief

Create a desktop gadget for Windows Vista which enables EasyJet to provide a more personalised experience to their business travelers.

In October of 2006, EasyJet asked Flow Interactive, working closely with Splendid on the visual design, to design and build a desktop gadget which would enable EasyJet to provide personalised services to their business customers. In addition, the design for the gadget, which was co-funded by Microsoft, needed to be completed in time for a Microsoft launch event for its new Windows Vista operating system in early December 2006, where it was to be shown as an example of the possibilities made available to businesses by Window's Vista.

At the time of the commission, much of the Microsoft technology was still in pre-release and there were few examples of what was possible with gadget technology. Over a period of 8 weeks, our team had to identify what was needed from the business to ensure it demonstrated a clear business case, identify what was useful to EasyJet customers to ensure it was successful with end users and identify the technical limitations of this new technology to ensure we were able to deliver a design which we would ultimately be able to implement after the launch of Window's Vista on January 29th, 2007.

What We Did

Apply User-Centred Design techniques to evaluate and refine the design with end users prior to build.

Prior to starting the project, EasyJet had gathered quite a lot of feedback from business customers outlining some key needs that the gadget needed to address. In addition, Flow had significant knowledge about the specific travel needs of business customers.

Given the incredibly short time-frames for the project and the collective experience of the team, we began the project with a series of workshops with Easyjet that focused on the development of three key Personas as well as defining scenarios that explored customer needs at each stage of the Travel Lifecycle, from exploring options, through the travel experience itself and ultimately to the returning home.

Once key Personas and Scenarios had been defined, we created and prototyped a concept which we tested with real end users and used the feedback to develop the designs which were then tested with users again prior to final development and launch.

The Results

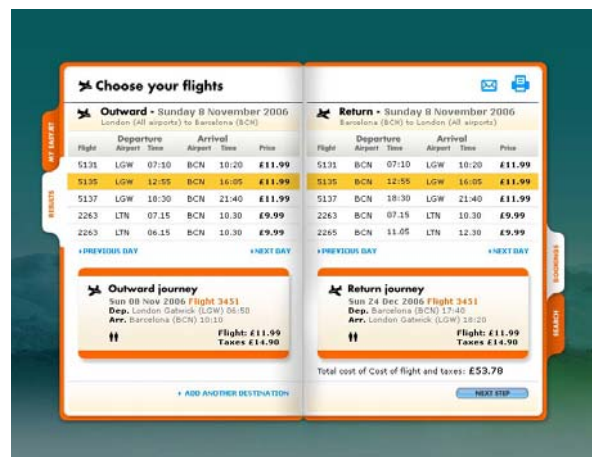
A Windows Vista desktop gadget which demonstrates a new model for creating more personal customer relationships while also pushing the boundaries of the gadget concept.

By employing *User Centred Design* techniques to help focus the gadget on customer needs, the team were able to

successfully design and build a working prototype of the gadget in time for Microsoft's business launch event for Windows Vista in December. In addition, the *User-Centred Design* techniques employed by Flow eliminated most of the risks to customer acceptance, thereby giving Easyjet the confidence that it would be a success.

The new gadget, which allowed users to book and manage flights directly from their desktop, proved incredibly successful with end users, all of whom were excited to know when it would be available for download. In addition to search and booking tools, it also gave them the ability to easily manage their account and personal information from their desktop in a way that was more convenient than using the Easyjet Website.

Equally, Easyjet was able to define a new mechanism for building relationships with their frequent customers that set them apart from (and ahead of) other airlines and reinforced their desired shift in customer perception of the Easyjet brand to reflect exemplary customer service as well as value for money.



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