

5.10: Case study - AO Becomes customer centred

One-liner

UX testing increased sales at ao.com, a UK based online large kitchen appliances (white goods) store, by 9.5%,



Figure 5.10.1: ao.com logo *Adapted From Insightdiy, 2015*

The challenge

ao.com was using its senior management's hunches to inform its development roadmap and was not considering customers' needs. The conversion manager knew that to become a market challenger in the online white goods market, the company needed to become customer centred.

The solution

To become properly customer centred, the brand needed to work on identifying true customer needs and tailoring the website to provide the best possible user experience. But how did ao.com go about doing this?

The first step was research. Complex research was carried out by WhatUsersDo.com, an expert in UX testing. Users were asked to purchase white goods online from either ao.com, a competitor, or via Google search. Users were observed via their screens and asked to speak their thoughts as they proceeded.

Those who bought directly from ao.com were monitored to observe friction points in the buying process. Those who bought from competitors were monitored to identify the strengths and weaknesses of competitors, and lastly those using Google were watched so see how users would naturally search to buy white goods.

Next, the videos, over 250 hours of footage, were assessed and shown to senior managers who could now clearly see where customers were having problems with the site. Senior managers now started to look at their business from the customer's point of view and the roadmap was re-prioritised to focus on customer needs.

The results showed that the product pages needed the most improvement. There needed to be clearer product descriptions, more compelling videos and much stronger calls to action. The sizes of images and buttons placement were also adjusted according to the feedback.



Figure 5.10.2: A product page for ao.com *Adapted From Whatusersdo, 2014*

The results

Improved user experience definitely yielded great results for ao.com:

- Online sales increased by 9.5%
- The number of calls to the customer support team was reduced by 33%
- Customer reviews increased by 110% demonstrating increased customer engagement.

The changes made may have seemed obvious, but were not recognised by senior managers. Exposure to real clients and their needs is essential in determining a good user experience. To ensure ao.com maintains their customer centred approach, they run weekly

sessions where employees watch how users use their website. Any changes can be made as required in order to continue providing customers with the best user experience possible.

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