Usability Testing

OPTIMIZATION

SINCE' 73

WE'RE ROOTS
NICE TO MEET YOU!

EXPERIENCE COMFORT AND STYLE

OVERVIEW

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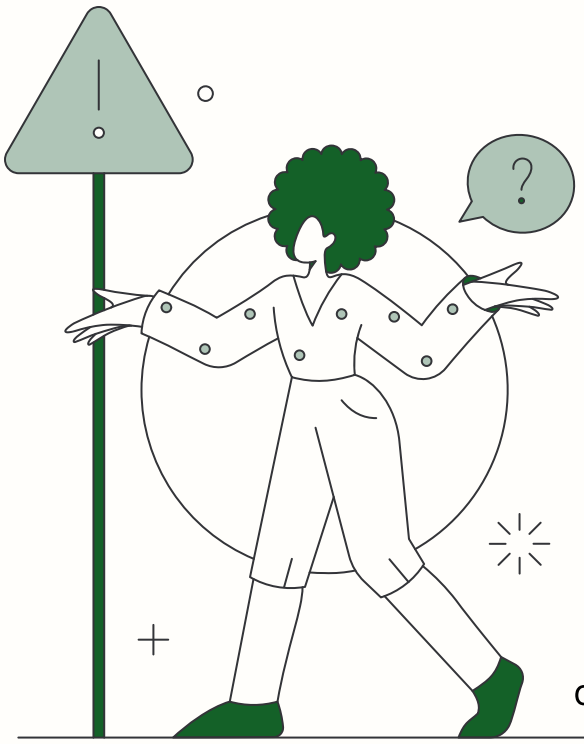
Executive Summary

We created an 8-week plan to find out why there is a drop in online sales at the Roots Canada website.

Our research plan for Roots Canada included an in-depth look of the website's user experience including **competitive analysis** and **high-level heuristic evaluation**. We identified several challenges, particularly the inability for users to add products to their wishlist during the cart removal process and the initial confusion around the "Ship to Store" feature. To address these issues, we suggested many **A/B testing** methods. These include experimenting with visibility of sales by putting them in the top left corner, highlighting size and availability information, and changing the layout of the wishlist feature, either by removing it or adding a dedicated icon. Furthermore, we created a **usability testing** approach to look further into user behaviors and preferences, allowing for additional improvement of the website's design. The above research methods will help us find the issue in the purchase path of Roots and help us uncover the areas of improvement. Through our research and proposed solutions, Roots Canada has an opportunity to enhance user satisfaction and drive sale conversions.

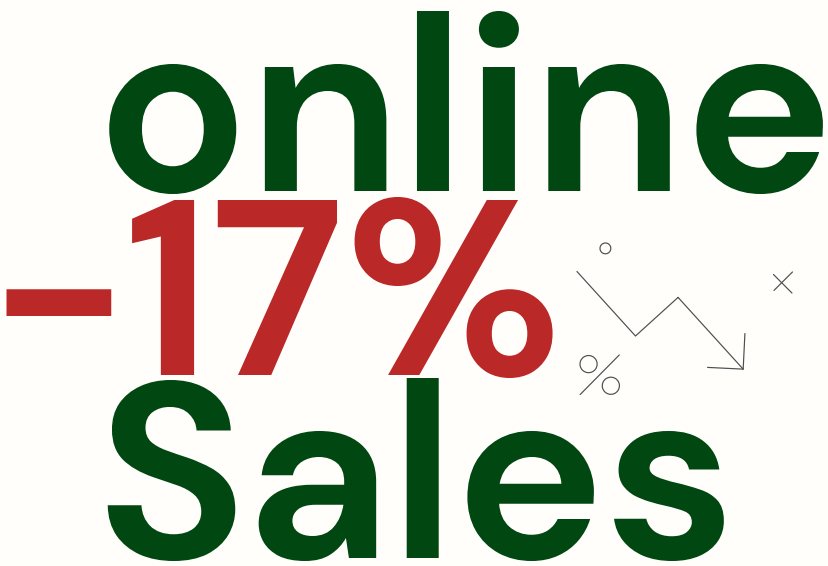


Introduction

The UX research and design team of Roots Canada noticed a significant drop of 17% in online sales for both the desktop and mobile versions for the past three months. The number of visitors coming to the site is roughly the same, but fewer customers complete their online purchases for unknown reasons. A redesign of their buy flow took place six months ago, and they have been receiving positive feedback from their customers.

<u>What do we want to achieve?</u>

- A comprehensive Research Plan
- Increase the online sales
- Insights to form strategic decisions
- Enhance the online purchase experience



What’s the problem?

Roots Canada redesigned their website, and the online sales for both desktop and mobile have dropped since then, even although the number of visitors are same. Roots Canada wants to understand why fewer visitors end up buying online for the next 40-60 days....

Hypothesis

We believe the recent decline in online sales for Roots Canada can be attributed to issues stemming from the redesign of the buy flow of their website, resulting in confusion and frustration among users. This hypothesis suggests that the decline is not due to fluctuations in the user base or marketing efforts but rather critical issues within the buy flow (adding to cart and checkout process) functionality, which may have arisen as a result of the redesign implemented approximately six months ago.

Research Questions

- What were some of the key changes or factors implemented during the re-design of Roots Canada?
- At what step of the whole buy flow process does the user abandon their online purchase?
- Which part of the product description (details like colours, size etc.) are the most important for the user in to finalize a product before they add it to the cart?

Goals

- Identify barriers to completion of online purchase.
- Evaluate re-design principles.
- Identify abandonment points in the purchase flow.
- Develop a project plan for optimization strategies.
- Enhance user satisfaction
- Increase online sales (both desktop and mobile)

Project Plan

Methodology

- Heuristic Evaluation
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Data Analysis
- Competitive Analysis
- Usability Testing
- A/B Testing

Deliverables

- Heuristic Evaluation
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Data Analysis
- Competitive Analysis
- Usability Testing
- A/B Testing

Project Plan

- ### UX Specialist

  - Conduct all aspects of user research, including competitive analysis, heuristic evaluation, and usability testing.
  - Conducts in-depth analysis of user feedback and behaviour to identify pain points and opportunities for improvement.
  - Collaborates with development teams to turn research results into reality.

- ### Project Manager

  - Oversees project coordination, ensuring timelines and deliverables are met.
  - Facilitates communication and collaboration between team members and stakeholders.

- **Development Lead**

  - Implements technical solutions to fix reported concerns while keeping the website functional.
  - Performs testing and quality assurance to make sure that usability standards are fulfilled.

Project Plan

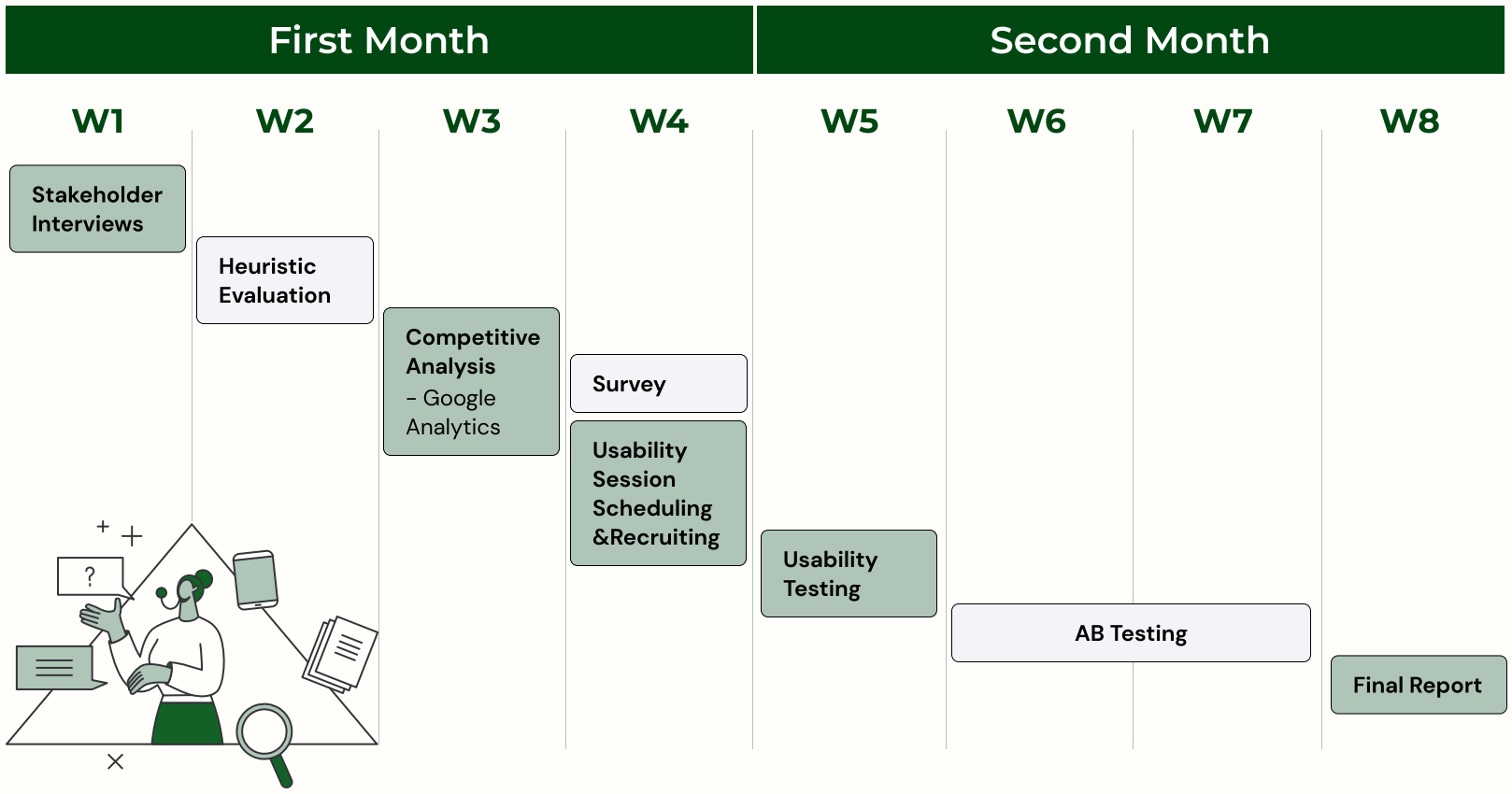
Data

The data collected form the interviews will be secured safely in the researcher's computer. Only the Researchers and professionals in charge will be able to access it.

Ethics

During the interviews, we'll request permission from participants to record them. We'll also ask them to sign consent forms to show they understand the research's terms and conditions. We'll make sure to keep our participants' data safe and confidential. Our questions and interactions will follow ethical guidelines. The information we record will only relate to the goals of this project, and we won't keep any external information.

Timeline



Assumptions, Risks, and Mitigations

Assumptions

- Assuming that users will actively participate in A/B testing and usability testing sessions, providing useful feedback and insights concerning their preferences and behaviours.
- The proposed changes for A/B testing can be feasibly implemented within the current information architecture of the Root Canada's website.

Risks

- Suggested A/B testing variations might not result in significant changes in user behaviour, and even result in poor outcomes, leading to user confusion or dissatisfaction.
- Usability testing might not capture a wide range of user preferences and choices, resulting in limited findings, friction points and ineffective solutions.

Mitigations

- To address the limitations of usability testing, we will recruit participants from varied demographics, locations, and levels of technological proficiency.
- Before implementing A/B testing variations across the site, we will create prototypes or mock-ups that replicate user interactions and get input from stakeholders.

Professional Dog Walker | 30

Emily Johnson

Emily is a professional dog walker based in Toronto, Canada. With a passion for animals and the outdoors, she turned her love for dogs into a rewarding career. Emily spends her days exploring the city's parks and trails, providing exercise, companionship, and care for her furry clients. As a dog walker, Emily values comfort, practicality, and durability in her clothing choices.

Goals and Motivations:

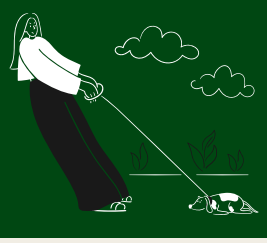
- Prioritizes comfort and mobility in her clothing, especially during long hours spent walking and playing with dogs.
- Durable, practical, and able to withstand wear and tear clothing.
- Values style and professionalism in her appearance.

Needs:

- Needs clothing that allows her to move freely and comfortably.
- Durable, practical, and able to withstand wear and tear clothing.
- Ample storage options to carry essentials.
- Functional and Stylish Clothing

Pain Points:

- Experience discomfort and restricted movement in clothing that is too tight or uncomfortable.
- Struggles with inadequate storage options, leading to the inconvenience of carrying essentials in her hands or pockets.



Stakeholder Interviews

Why Stakeholder Interviews?

Interviewing stakeholders will help us gain a better understanding of what they genuinely anticipate from the brand in terms of business and their goals. Interviews are a great method for finding the answers for specific issues/questions in order to design better for the various user types.

Aim :

These interviews will assist us in comprehending stakeholder's goals and requirements.

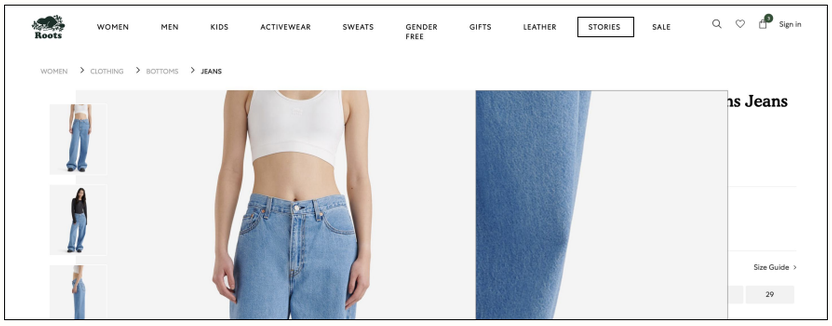
Heuristic Evaluation

Why Heuristic Evaluation?

Heuristic evaluation is helpful at different steps of the design journey from discovery till the final prototype as helps measure the ease of usability of user interfaces. It'll also help identify issues affecting the user flow in Roots Canada.

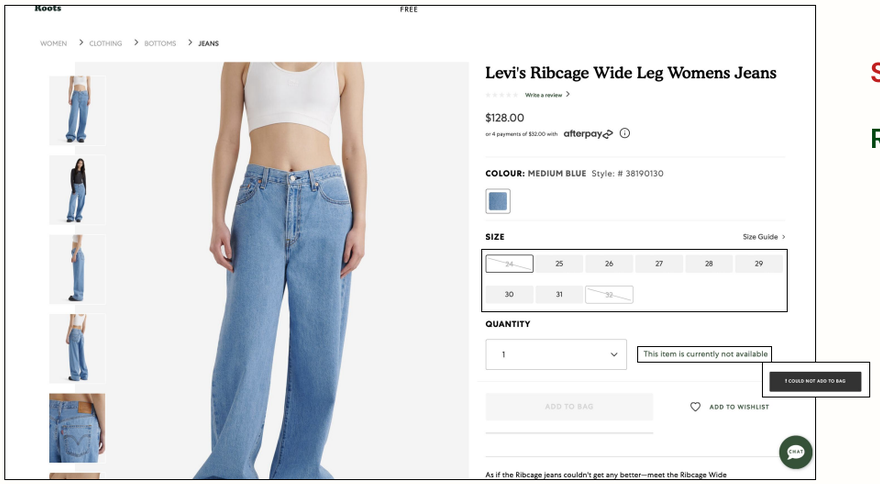
Aim :

We intend to conduct a heuristic evaluation for Roots Canada that helps us identify user interface issues that might affect the online sales and create a friction in the browsing experience for users.



Heuristic Violation: ❌

- Unclear terminology used in the header.
- No confirmation message when item has been added to the cart.
- Sizes are different/unfamiliar than commonly used.
- Error messages are unclear and not noticeable.
- Error message "could not add to bag" stays only for a few seconds and does not stay on the screen for longer thus, leaving the users confused.

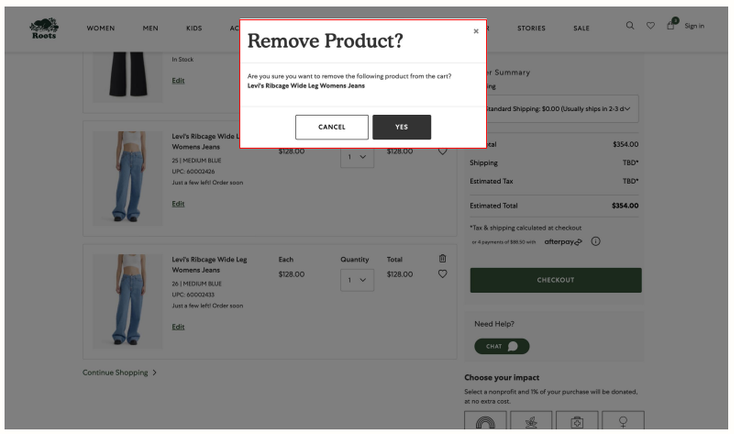


- No errors messages displayed when clicked on add to bag without selecting colour/size.

Severity level: Major (3/3)

Recommendation:

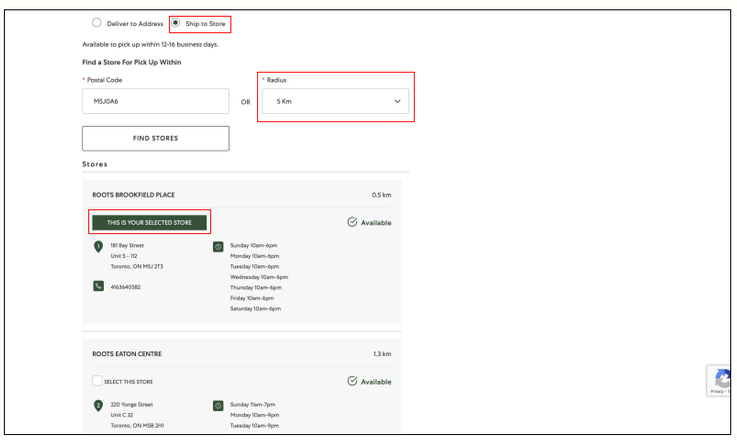
- The terminology used throughout the screens need help and documentation.
- The information for the sizes used should be the ones that are commonly used to make the website more familiar and not leave the users to figure them out on their own.
- The error message should stay on the screen and guide the users how to fix it.
- The error messages can also be in a different colour that is more known to users commonly.



Heuristic Violation: ☒

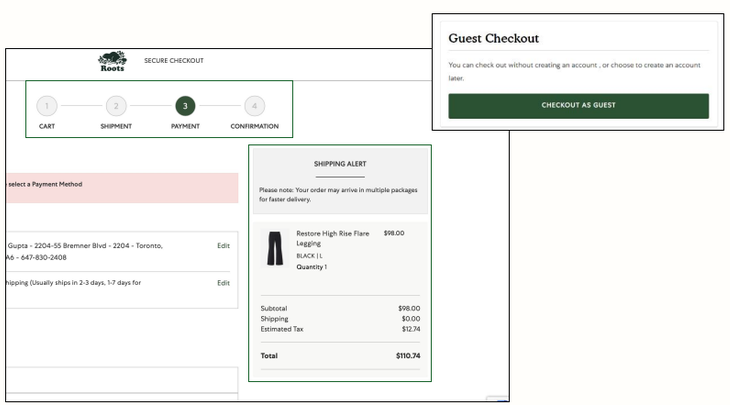
- No flexibility for the users to add an item to the wishlist at during the remove the product from the cart step.
- Ship to Store option is unclear for the users at first. It becomes clear once the user sees more option after clicking on the button.
- No option to select the "nearest store" to the user's location or added location.

Severity level: Major (3/3)



Recommendation:

- There should be an option to add an item to the wishlist before removing the product from the cart.
- Terminology used can be changed to the ones that are more commonly known.
- Reduce steps by introducing "closest to my location" button/option.
- Increase user's flexibility by introducing "edit" option after selecting the nearby store.



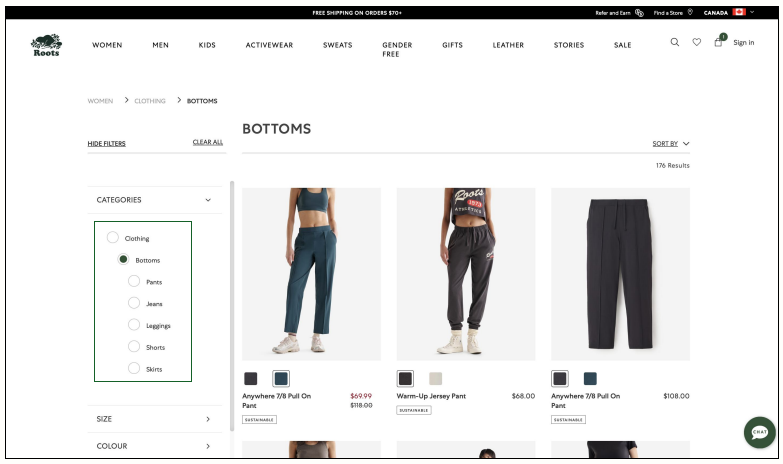
Positive elements/features: ☑

Visibility of system status

- Breadcrumbs or the total no. of steps to track the whole procedure helps users identify or go back to earlier steps before checkout.

Visibility of system status

- Breakup of the total pay and details of the items selected



helps users keep a track of the items in the cart before proceeding to the checkout.

Flexibility and Efficiency of use

- Provides an option to checkout as guest.

Flexibility and Efficiency of use

- Provides multiple options in filters to increase efficiency and decrease the browsing time.

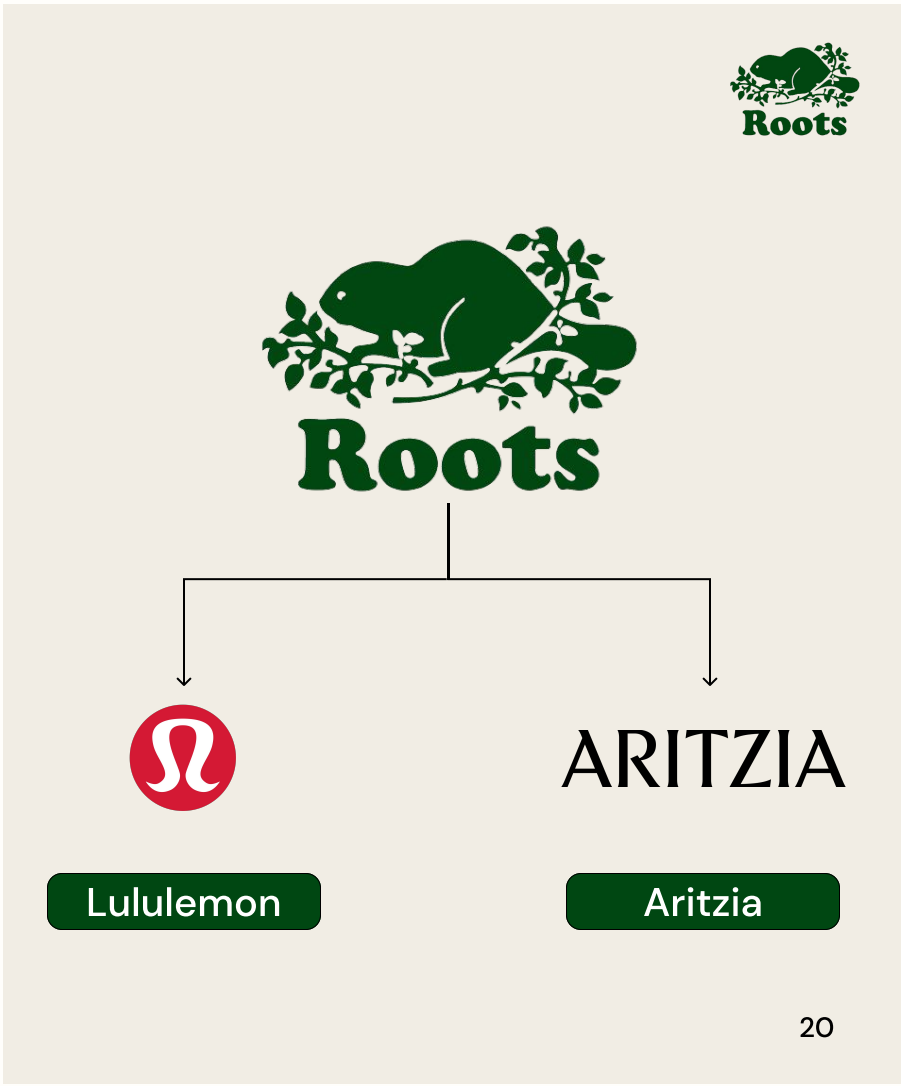
Competitive Analysis

Why Competitive Analysis?

Competitive Analysis is helpful in identifying opportunities and market trends. It also helps identifying strengths and issues of its competitors to analyze the area of improvement.

Aim :

We intend to analyze Lululemon and Aritzia as Roots Canada's competitors to identify and evaluate strengths, weakness to increase the browsing experience and find out the reason for decrease in online sales.



Competitive Analysis

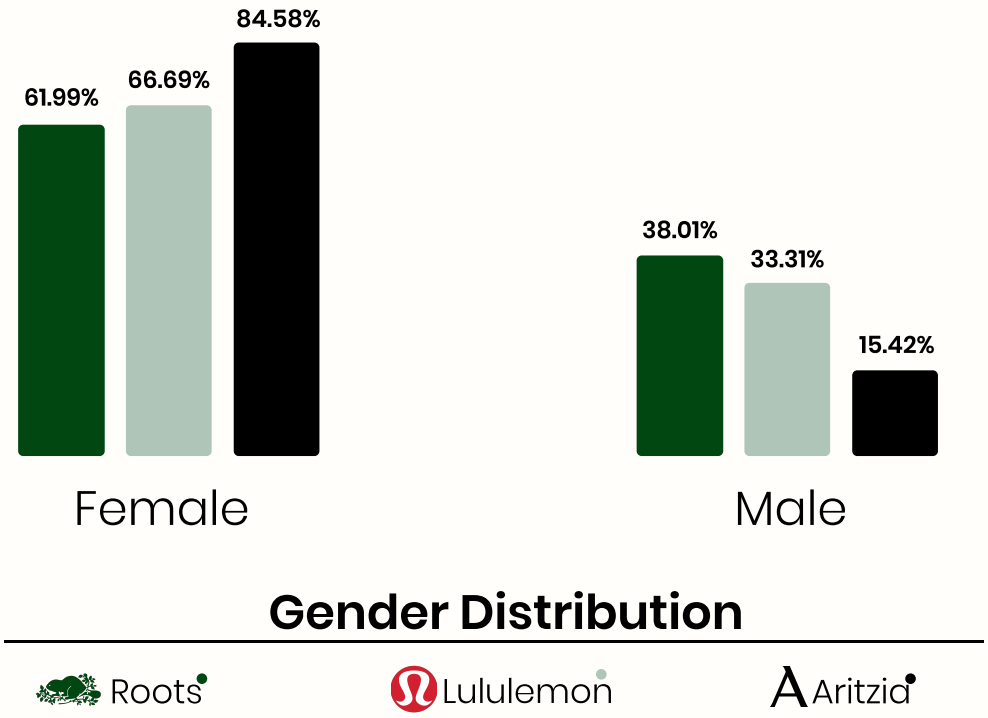
Brand	Background	Target Audience	Strengths	Weakness	Opportunities	Threats
Roots	• Canadian heritage, outdoor lifestyle • Apparel, footwear, leather goods	• Casual wear enthusiasts, outdoor adventurers	• A distinct style, excellent leather craftsmanship, and a unique Canadian heritage. • Emphasis on sustainability	• Limited international presence • Relying on seasonal trends due to an outdoor lifestyle focus.	• Expansion into new international markets • Leveraging online platforms to promote sales and brand visibility.	• Intense competition • Recessions in the economy affect consumer spending on non-essential things.
			3.5/5	2/5	3.5/5	3/5
Lululemon	• Premium athletic wear, performance • Athletic wear, yoga apparel, accessories	• Yoga, fitness, and athletic lifestyle	• Strong brand reputation for quality and innovation in athletic wear. • Growing global presence	• Dependence on a relatively small category of yoga and fitness enthusiasts. • High prices	• Expanding product offerings beyond athletic wear to include lifestyle items. • Further international expansion	• Increasing competition • Quality or ethical issues in the supply chain bring a risk to reputation.
			4.5/5	2/5	4/5	3/5
ARITZIA	• Fashion-forward, contemporary • Women's fashion apparel, accessories	• Trend-conscious young women	• Modern designs with a strong appeal to the younger female audience. • Growing presence in the North American fashion retail market.	• Exposure to changes in fashion trends and preferences. • Depending on simply one demographic may limit market diversity.	• Expanding e-commerce capabilities to reach wider audiences. • Further development of sustainability initiatives.	• Intense competition • Potential supply chain delays affecting production and inventory management.
			4/5	3/5	3.5/5	3/5

Competitive Analysis

	roots.com	shop.lululemon.com	aritzia.com
Total Visits	686.8K	19.3M	7.3M
Last Month Change	▼ 39.79%	▼ 28.23%	▼ 25.81%
Avg Visit Duration	00:02:38	00:04:13	00:04:21
Pages per Visit	4.17	5.99	8.78
Bounce Rate	47.65%	42.13%	32.76%

Source: Similarweb

Competitive Analysis



Google Analytics

Why Google Analytics?

This methodology can help us comprehend how people interact with the website. It'll assist us in gathering insightful quantitative data, demographics, website traffic, and much more. It can also help us identify specific areas where users drop.

Aim :

Our intend is to obtain deeper research data using qualitative research methods to understand our user types.

Survey

Why Survey?

It is one of the best methods to interact with the users and learn about their needs and pain areas. It helps understand what appeals the users, pain points in purchase path through these surveys and help quickly collect data that can improve the usability of the website/application.

Aim :

Collect specific data that can help understand the issues with target audience through questions.

Usability Testing

Why Usability Testing?

Usability testing helps us identify issues encountered while using or browsing for certain products on the website or application. Its a method with which we can identify exact pain points of the users and how they interact with the website/ application. It is one of the most important methods in understanding at exactly which steps does the user feel friction and does not complete the shopping process and why.

Aim :

We intend to identify exact pain points in a user's journey and issues limiting the online sale.

Usability Metrics

- **Success Rate**

The percentage of users who actually complete their buying process and able to make an order.

Rationale: Indicates how intuitive and user-friendly the app's design is in terms of task completion.

- **Task completion time**

The average time taken by users to make an order.

Rationale: Evaluate the effectiveness of application navigation and job flow. Shorter completion times often reflect greater usability.

- **Error Rate**

The number of errors made by users when attempting make an order.

Rationale: Identifies usability concerns such as wrong selections, navigational challenges, or system failures. A lower error rate indicates that users have fewer obstacles during task execution.

Usability Metrics

- **User Satisfaction**

User's subjective evaluation of their overall satisfaction with the complete experience.

Rationale: Provides information on what users think of usability, attractiveness, ease of use, and overall satisfaction with the experience.

- **Navigation Path Analysis**

Analysis of user's navigation paths across the website, including clicks, page views, and the order of actions performed.

Rationale: Identifies usability flaws such as unclear navigation, obstacles, and inefficient directions.

These usability metrics offer an extensive structure for evaluating the success and functionality of the roots website, enabling data-driven decisions on recurrent modifications focused on improving overall usability and user experience.

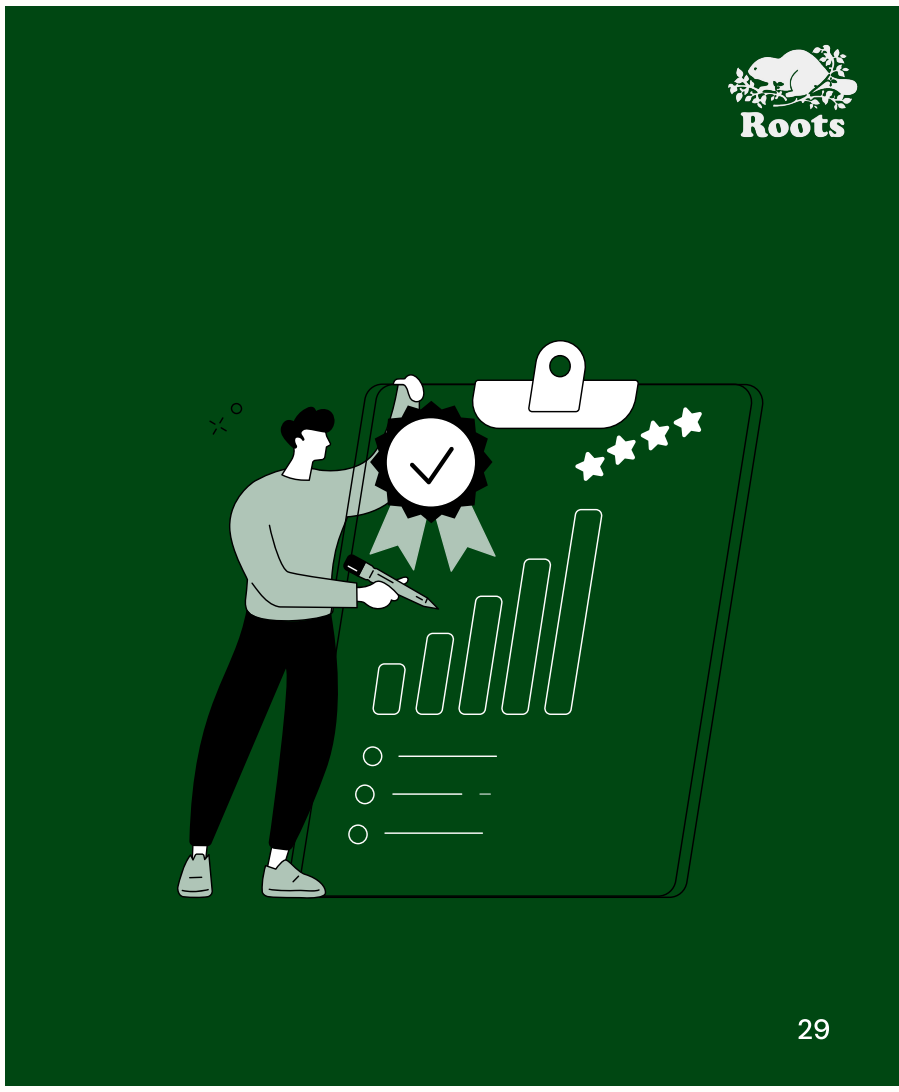
AB Testing

Why AB Testing?

AB Testing is a method where two designs of the same screen are represented side by side and analysis is done on the basis of user needs, and requirement. Once, users needs are identified, recommendations are made accordingly.

Aim :

We plan to keep the two screens for the users to choose from, and find out which makes them more comfortable and enhances their user experience as a whole.



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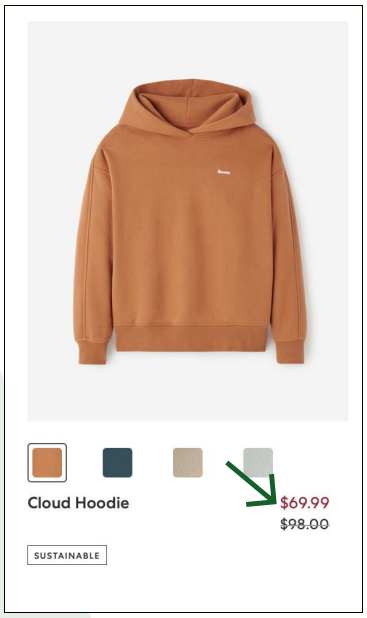
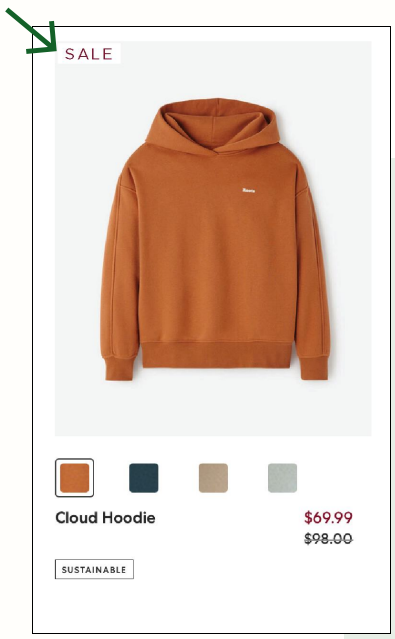
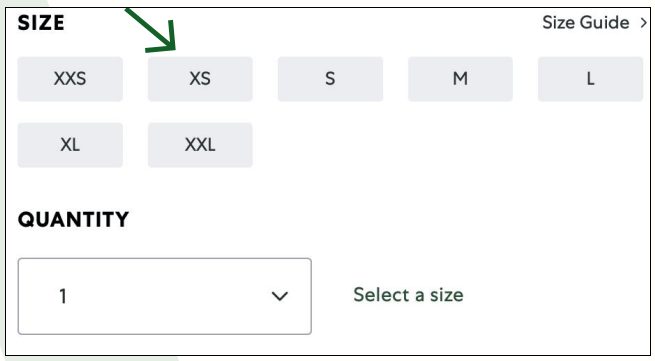


B



Without adding sale or with adding sale on top left corner for better visibility

A



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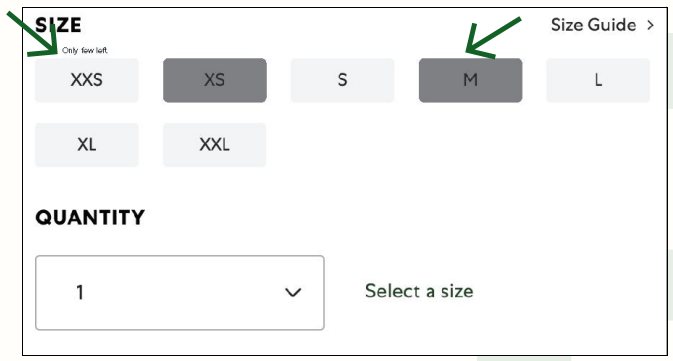
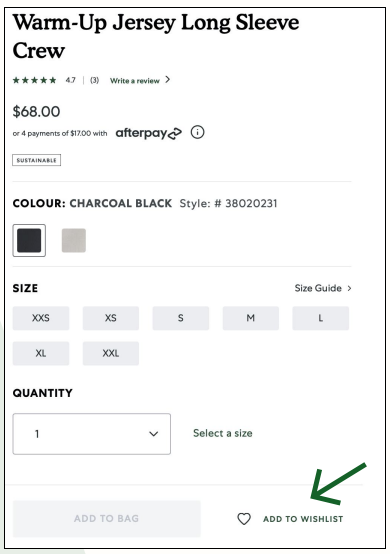


Without highlighting size + availability or with highlighting size + availability

A



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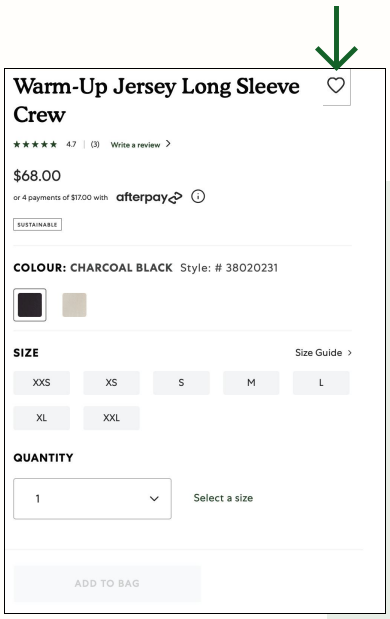
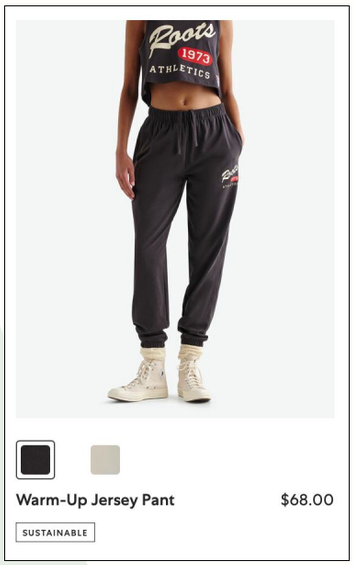
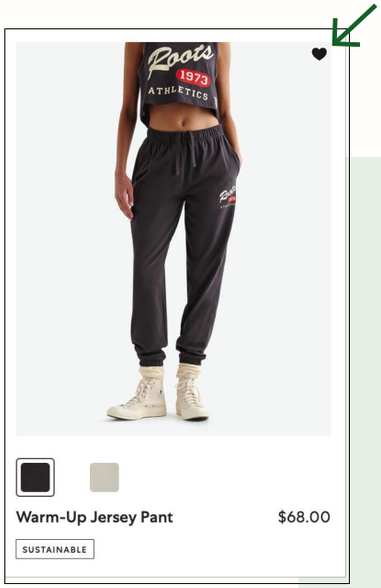


Add to wishlist written below or wishlist icon on top right

A

B

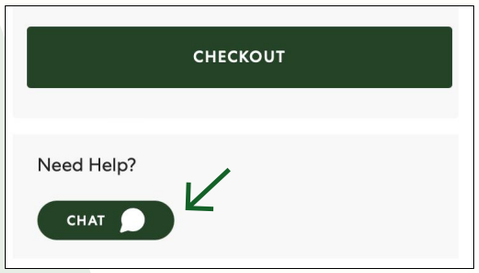




No wishlist on products or wishlist icon on product on on top right corner

Roots

A



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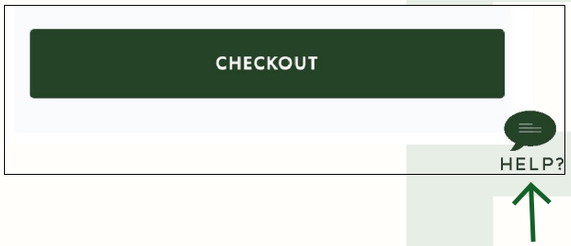

Need help bar below checkout or help chat pop-up throughout the page

Success Metrics

Roots

- Enhanced online engagement rate

- Elevated user experience satisfaction
- Increase in online sales for both desktop and mobile.
- Decreased bounce rate.
- Improved checkout completion rate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, our research plan will highlight important areas for improvement on the Roots Canada website, identifying particular pain points in purchase flow that are leading to a potential decrease in online sales. Through careful Competitive Analysis and Heuristic Evaluation, we discovered significant errors such as a lack of flexibility in wish list feature and confusion around the "Ship to Store" option. Our suggested A/B testing strategies will give promising results for resolving these difficulties while also improving overall usability, whereas our planned usability testing will provide essential qualitative insights to validate and develop our proposed solutions. By applying the results and recommendations from our research strategy, Roots Canada will begin on a path that will provide an improved online shopping experience which will help in increasing user engagement and drives company sales.

References

- Roots Casual clothing for men, women, and kids | Roots. (n.d.). https://www.roots.com/ca/en/homepage
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