



Card Sort

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Executive Summary

Six usability tests were conducted on the information section of the Macy’s website January 29 – January 31. This part of the website is currently organized into 4 categories with a different number of subcategories in each.

The primary purpose of the usability test was to determine the usability strengths and weaknesses of this section of the Macy’s website. The test was meant to see what Macy’s should do to maximize the effectiveness and ease of their website navigation for customers by possibly reorganizing the content.

The Macy’s website was tested using the card sorting method. Participants were given 24 cards and were asked to sort them into categories of their choosing. 3 of the card sorts were conducted in-person using the think aloud protocol, while the other 3 were conducted using an online card sorting software on the observer’s laptop. All six tests were analyzed by the observer to determine positive findings and usability errors with the website.

Main positive findings for the Macy’s website:

- Participants were easily able to sort cards dealing with card services into categories.
 - Participants put all of the cards with “card” on them into closely related categories or in the same category. They did this quickly and did not have to think about it intensely.

Main improvements areas for Macys.com:

- Unclear purpose of cards/irrelevant cards
 - All participants did not know what “Macy’s Backstage” was as well as some other cards. A participant kept saying “I wish I knew what this was” in regard to “Macy’s Backstage” when sorting at the end. Some were also frustrated by cards that they didn’t think were relevant to this section of the site. This confusion slowed down the sorting process for all test subjects, causing them to become flustered.
- Too many categories with multiple unrelated links under each.
 - Several participants struggled to put all of the cards under a small number of categories. They found it hard to see the same relationships that that the creators of the Macy’s website did when organizing this section, proving the disorganization of the current site layout.



Description of the Object of Evaluation

The object of evaluation was the Macy's department store website as of February 2019. Macy's sells clothing and home goods. This website targets American middle-class consumers who are seeking to buy higher quality products. The specific section evaluated was the information section in the footer on each page. This section provides customer service help and other links regarding Macy's Corporation that customers may need to navigate the site. The information section of the site contains Customer Service, Macy's credit Card, Macy's Inc., and Our Stores categories.

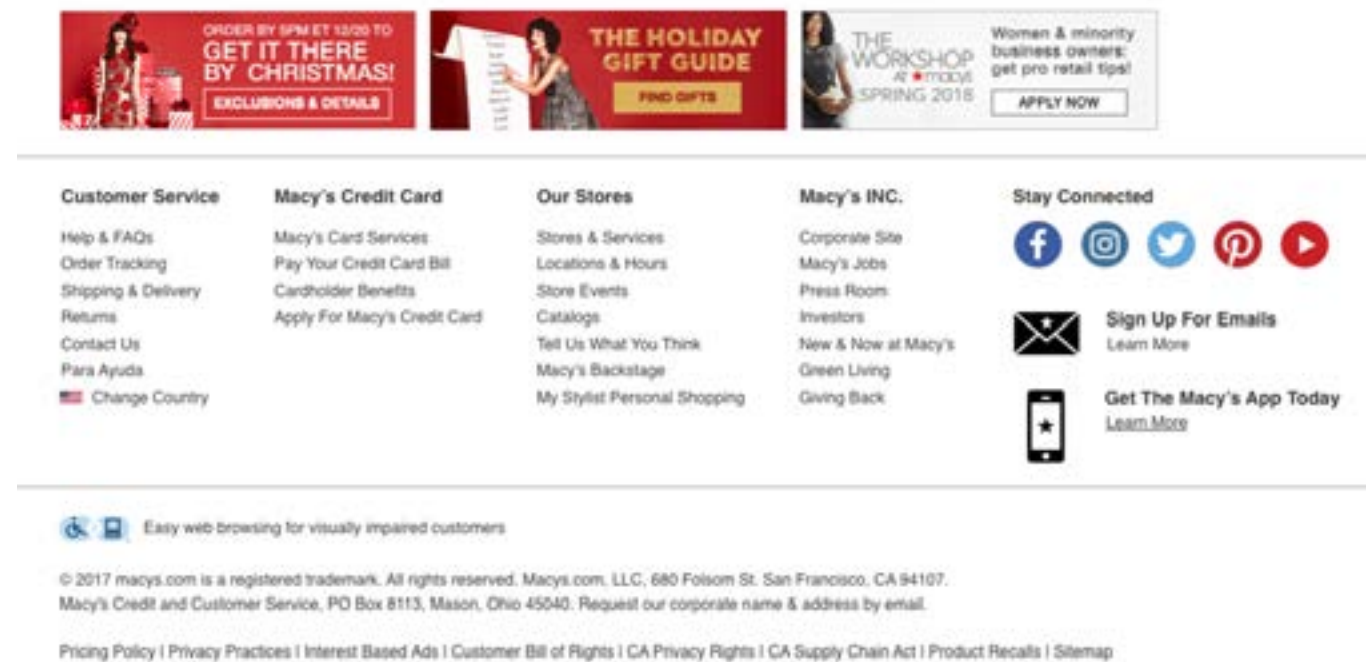


Figure 1 Macy's Information Section

Findings

Wording

- Participants were easily able to sort cards dealing with card services
 - Participants put all of the cards with “card” on them into closely related categories or in the same category. They did this quickly and did not have to think about it intensely.
- Unclear purpose of “Macy’s Backstage” card - **Critical Problem**
 - All participants did not know what “Macy’s Backstage” was as well as some other cards. A participant kept saying “I wish I knew what this was” in regard to “Macy’s Backstage” when sorting at the end. This confusion slowed down the sorting process for all test subjects, causing them to become flustered.
 - Macy’s should change the names of some of their subcategories or provide descriptions of words that may be hard to interpret in parentheses or through a pop-up that appears when you hover over the words. This clarification will prevent confusion and frustration for customers in the future.
- Only 2 cards paired together by all 6 participants – **Critical Problem**
 - Only 2 cards, “Cardholder Benefits” and “Apply for a Macy’s Credit Card” Were put together by 100% of participants. All of the other card pairings had at least 1 out of 6 participants that didn’t put the two cards together.
 - Macy’s need to think about reorganizing this whole section. They need to create smaller groups that have cards that are going to relate to that category for the average customer. This will allow customers to become less frustrated and have a quicker time finding what they are looking for.
- “Press Room” card is irrelevant to customers – **Minor Problem**
 - Some of these links, especially the “Press Room” link, caused participants to have a hard time naming categories. They could sometimes see a relation with the cards but didn’t know what to name the category because of how random some of the cards were. One participant questioned this by saying “Why do I care about this?” in regard to the “Press Room” card, showing that the average customer doesn’t want to be bothered by the confusion of this link when trying to find customer service help.
 - This link that participants found irrelevant should be moved to a different place on the site, such as a “Want more Information about Macy’s?” section, for customers who actually want to read them. Important information for customers using the site for the purpose of wanting to make a purchase or looking at a past

one should be in the same location, while other links are moved to a different one to create a shorter navigation time for customers wanting a fast process.

- “Tell us what you think” link wrongly placed – **Minor Problem**
 - 67% of participants placed “Tell Us What You Think” and “Contact Us” cards in the same category that they related to customer service. Participants proved that most of them did not think that it should be in the category that it is in because of its relation to customer service.
 - Macy’s needs to add this link to its Customer Service section of the page so that customers can access this link and the “Contact Us” link easier. They are both dealing with talking to Macy’s representatives, meaning they should be very close to each other.

Organization

- Unrelated links in Macy’s Inc. category – **Major Problem**
 - Several participants struggled to put these cards under a small number of categories. They found it hard to see the same relationships that that the creators of the Macy’s website did when organizing this section, proving the disorganization of the current site layout.
 - Macy’s website developers should create smaller categories with a smaller amount of links underneath each. This will allow for users to navigate the site quicker and with less searching. Viewers will be less frustrated and be less likely to leave it.
- Unrelated links in “Our Stores” category – **Major Problem**
 - Customers put the cards in these categories in all sorts of different groups. Not one participant put them in the same group as the Macy’s website did. Cards in this category slowed down the process of the in-person card sort, as participants did not know what to do with them

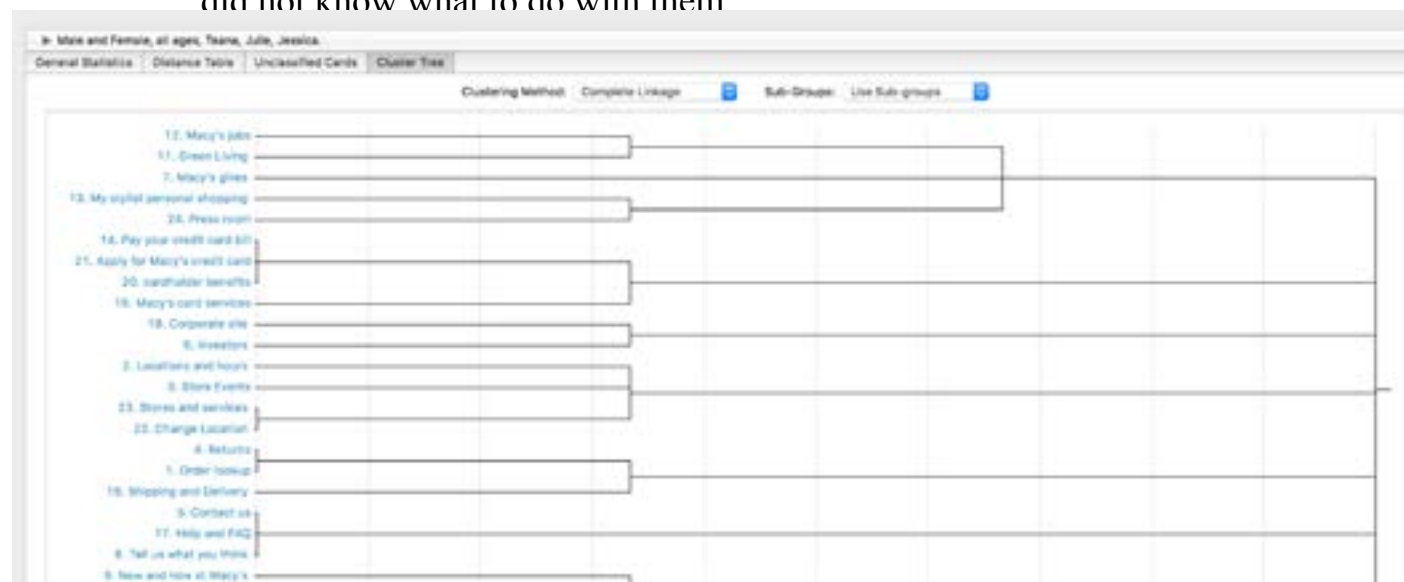


Figure 2 Cluster Tree from Online Results

Purpose of Evaluation

The primary purpose of the usability test was to determine the usability strengths and weaknesses of the information section of the Macy’s website. The test was meant to make recommendations for Macy’s to help them maximize the effectiveness and ease of their website navigation for customers by possibly reorganizing and renaming their content as recommended.

Method of Evaluation

The Macy's website was tested using the card sorting method. Participants were given 24 cards that contained the names of the links in the information section of the Macy's website and were asked to sort them into categories of their choosing. 3 of the card sorts were conducted in-person using the think aloud protocol, while the other 3 were conducted using an online card sorting software on the observer's laptop. All 6 tests were analyzed by the observer to determine positive findings and usability errors with the website.

In-person

Each in-person card sort lasted under 15 minutes. Each participant laid out the 24 index cards in front of them and sorted the cards into their own designated categories while the observer watched. They each talked out loud to explain their thinking process.

Online

These 3 participants used xSort software to sort the cards into their chosen categories in the same way online. The think aloud protocol was not used due to the results being distributed online.

Target Group

The target group for the card sort was middle class Americans of any age range who frequently shop at Macy's and have used their website before. They are people who want higher quality products and want to buy them from a highly-rated store. The target group is expected to have experience with online shopping and be familiar with its goals and purposes. However, they do not have to have a lot of knowledge on the subject.

Overview of Protocol

The task was to sort 24 cards into categories of the participant's choosing based on relations of the cards. For in-person sorts, participants were asked to think aloud. For the online sort, participants were given the same instructions online and took the test by themselves in their own environment of their choosing.



Summary of Participants

Participant 1

Participant 1 is a male in his 20's studying Technical Communication.

Participant 2

Participant 2 is a male in his 20's studying Technical Communication.

Participant 3

Participant 3 is a 19-year-old female studying Business. She uses Macy's frequently because they have sizes that fit her body type well. She loves online shopping because she doesn't have much time to go out and shop.

Participant 4

Participant 4 is a 20-year-old female studying Education. She has only used Macy's site a few times to buy clothes.

Participant 5

Participant 5 is a 20-year-old female studying Marketing. She likes to buy coats at Macy's and will look at the site every so often when she has something specific she is trying to find.

Participant 6

Participant 6 is a 20-year-old female studying biochemistry. She has used the Macy's website a few times as she enjoys shopping for her clothes online.