User Test Report FlightHub.com

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Evaluating Designs with Users
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Executive Summary

This usability test report was conducted on FlightHub.com, the Canada's fastest growing online travel company. It was comprised of 3 tasks and one participant. After conducting the test and analyzing the information, there were 5 key findings of minor usability issues that could be improved.

These issues are generally based around not having applied the most current conventions of functionality and usability. This makes the user feel confused in some cases and in others do not find the options that other similar flight sites have already incorporated.

In general, the site is very usable, with some minor usability problems that can be remedied.

Introduction

Based in Montréal, FlightHub is Canada's fastest growing online travel company. With over 20 years experience of serving Canada's travel needs, it is one of the best sites to plan, book, and manage your travel plans.

The goal of this study was to determine if travelers are able to plan their trips trough FlightHub.com and if its interface allows to do it in the easiest way.

Finding the problems that users could encounter in front of this platform will improve the whole experience and provide better access to information.

Methods

Target population
The target population for this usability study was:

- People who travel more than 2 times per year.
- People who usually plan their trips online.
- People who travel frequently to Canada or live there

Recruiting methods

The method of recruitment was to contact a person in my personal network that would fit in my target audience. This participant is a man, 28 years old, from Latino America, and reside in Canada.

Instruments

Intro-Tasks Overview

You are looking for a trip for moving from Mexico to Ottawa, ON with your couple and 8 months son. You need to bring with you 3 suitcases, and each one should be able to have at least 20 kilograms, so that you can bring with you all you need for a long-term stay. Your budget for this travel is limited, so you don't want to spend more than $1200.

Task 1.

Plan such trip for date Feb 17, and reserve it. Report the lowest cost for this trip.

Task 2

Find the cheapest option to travel in Air Canada for date Feb 17, making a 3-hour stopover in Toronto. Determine how many hours does it takes to arrive to Ottawa Airport.

Task 3

Find a travel in Air Canada with no more than two stops, for departure before 8:00 and time of arrival as soon as possible. Then email the itinerary to provided email.

Analyses methods

Both the screen and the test audio were recorded for later analysis. A post-test questionnaire SUS was also applied to register user impressions with the system. The score was 78.5.

Findings and Recommendations

Key finding # 1
Severity level 3

When choosing the destination of the flight and the place of departure the system admits to place in both boxes the same place. In this case the user had a distraction and placed the same address without realizing it, then proceeded to look for the flights which the system also allows to do, and only after several seconds is the warning alert showing that these addresses should be different in order to offer results.

Figure 1.Key Finding #1

Recommendation:

Considering that users often stop their tasks online to continue later, or that many times they receive distractions, I would suggest validating this field in order that the same addresses in both fields could not be entered.

Figure 2.Key finding # 2

Severity level 4

On the site there are no filters about suitcases to apply to searches. This makes it difficult to prefer the site over other sites for people with special accommodations, who need to have more information about what is allowed. In this case our user would make a trip for a long-term stay with an infant, so he was locked by this impediment.

Recommendation:

Create a filter for bags, which allows the user to choose the number of suitcases he needs, the dimensions allowed and see the variation in prices depending on his choices.
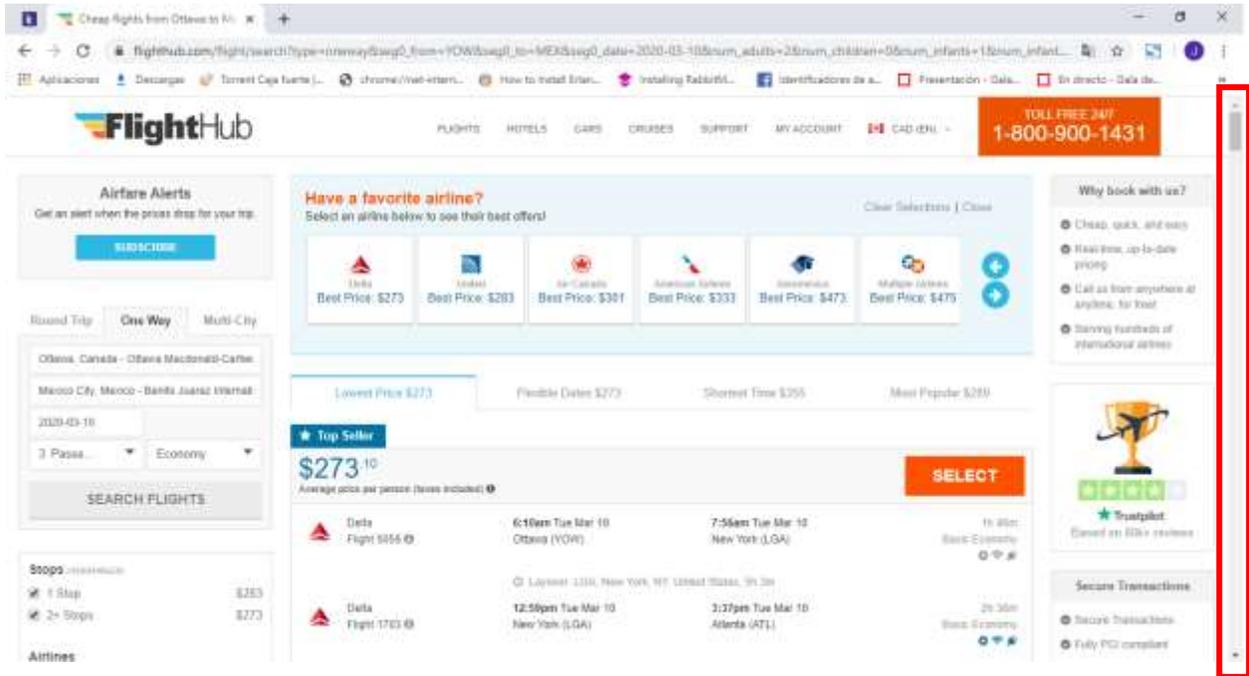
Key finding # 3

Severity level: 2

Figure 3.Key Finding # 3

The flight results page shows many details of each flight, with a long scroll bar to navigate. At this level of search that implies in itself many options users are not looking to see all the details of each flight, rather the most important to consider later with a smaller list which option fits them best.

Recommendation:

Analyze what would be the main details of each flight for this level of search, to shorten the time of scrolling and make navigation more efficient and without room for confusion or overwhelming.

Key finding # 4

Severity level: 2
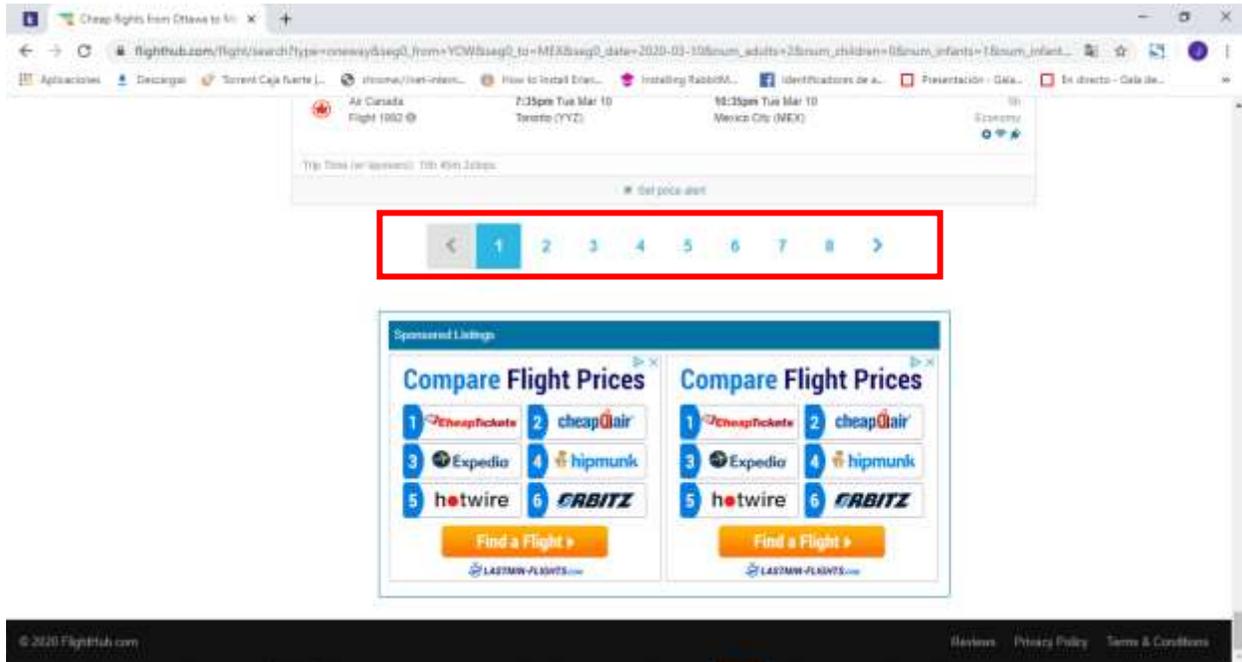
When users, after a long scroll down, find the navigation bar on the sides, they often feel unmotivated to continue the search. If the interest is large or the site is the only option to do so if they continue, but the experience becomes more tiring. Currently many sites solve this problem simply by automatically generating the content as the user scrolls, or giving the option to show more results on the same page without loading another.

Recommendation:

Generate the content automatically while the user scrolls or considering not to scroll too long replace the navigation bar with an option to hide part of the content on the same page.

Key finding # 5

Severity level: 3
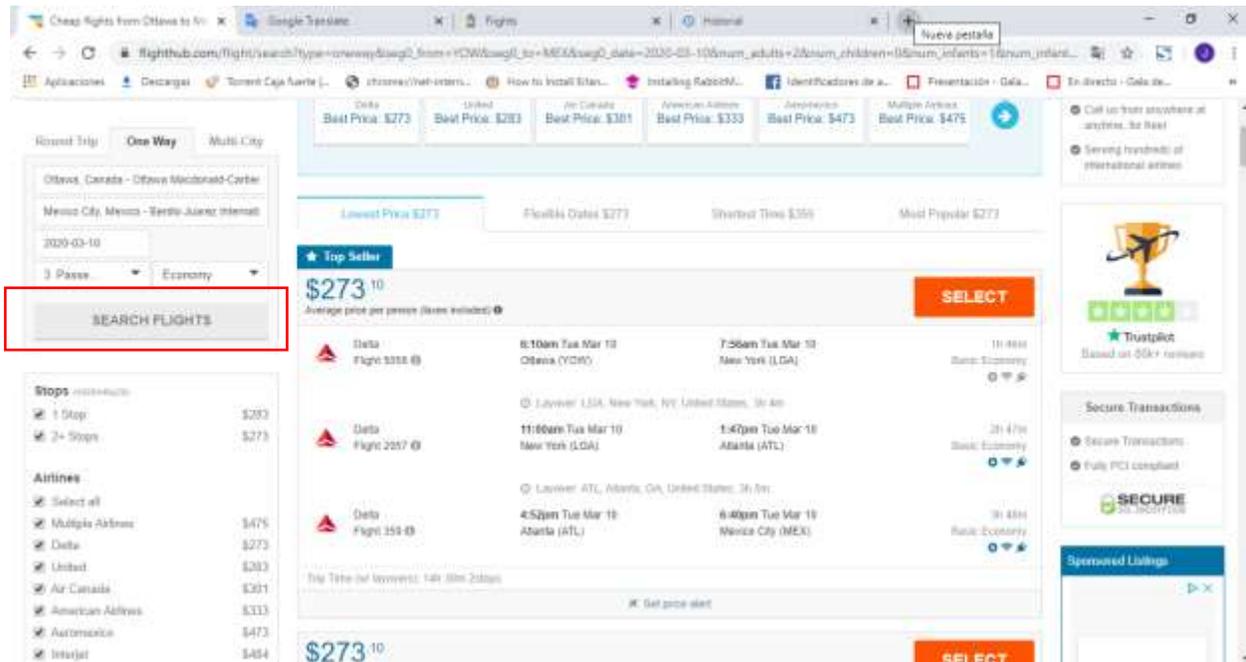
After a first flight search the search bar appears before the filters to apply to the searches. This becomes confusing since the user firstly adds their filters before applying them. Once you have applied them and you are at the bottom of the page you do not see the option to search for flights and you have to scroll up to find it.

Recommendation:

Put the filters before the search option and move them horizontally instead of vertical.

Conclusions

After analyzing the results of the user test, we can say that there are some usability problems on the site that can be improved. Most of them have to do with applying more updated functionality conventions in terms of content layout, validation of text entries, and consider the order in which the user performs the actions on the site.

I would suggest that the issues found be evaluated and solved from less to greater development complexity. As well as do more research and analyze other flight sites like this.