

Portable lab – know-how in a briefcase

MyBOOM relies on Mangold technology



The task

For Westphalian Internet service provider MyBOOM, the decision to introduce eye-tracking technology resulted from the understanding that a cost-intensive increase in numbers of visitors is less effective than making better use of those that are already there.

After ten years of experience in online selling, MyBOOM experts thus decided, four years ago, to check up on web concepts in terms of their logical functioning and comprehensibility.

The decision to be taken was therefore how future barriers and structural and layout deficits could be detected and documented.

The following points were decisive for the decision-makers:

1. Analyses had to be comprehensible for customers
2. The test subjects were to be tested in an undisturbed, normal environment
3. The method had to be mobile, as MyBOOM operates trans-regionally
4. Customers' perceptions, even without any activity, had to be recognizable.

The following methods were put up for discussion after initial research had been conducted:

1. Customer survey
2. Co-surfing with test subjects
3. Click tracking / mouse tracking
4. Eye tracking

The technological decision

After considering the pros and cons, the MyBOOM product developers decided on a technical method of measurement. Since click tracking only records an activity, but not what is preventing an activity, they decided on eye tracking.



Eye tracking enables the eye movements and visual movements of a test subject to be recorded and analyzed on the basis of various objectives. This method has been used for some time for POI market research analyses and print analyses.

MyBOOM was looking for an eye tracking concept that was able to record both the eye movements of the test subjects and their decisions with the help of a mouse. The developers really wanted to be able to draw conclusions on what users perceive on a screen page, how frequently and for how long certain

content areas (e.g. menus, headlines, banner ads and graphic elements) are captured at a glance, and when decisions are taken with the mouse and when they are not.

The helmet cameras that were tested soon proved to be a flop, since it was not possible to analyze what the mouse had recorded. Besides, head movements resulted in faulty recordings and customers felt that the helmet was very interfering.

After a long search, the focus turned to Mangold. During the past ten years, research lab supplier Mangold International has been able to improve the required devices, which were initially bulky and seemingly threatening, and turn them into compact, non-contact devices. Test subjects are thus not impaired in their natural movement. Moreover, the results of series of tests conducted are not distorted by an excessively artificial test environment. The use of a portable briefcase met another vital criterion of the decision-makers.

Study research work in practice

The "eye tracking lab in a briefcase", as the Mangold concept is known, met all the expectations of the MyBOOM product developers right from the beginning. The huge challenge now was to establish the structures for a web analysis and clearly define the processes for usability consulting.

The example demonstrates how this work was carried out:

MeisterWerke Schulte GmbH relies on eye tracking.

Internet service provider MyBOOM successful with a Mangold lab.

Website visitors are a big mystery. Where do they look first, which element is the eye-catcher in the presentation, do they like the navigation structure, how long do they remain on the pages and last but not least – do they access the homepage with the help of search engines without having to overcome major stumbling blocks? MeisterWerke Schulte, a company that supplies parquet flooring, veneer flooring, cork flooring, laminate flooring, panels, system panels and lighting and accessories, asked itself these very questions. Before putting the new website online in another six languages, Meister commissioned the MyBOOM team with a usability study.

The test took place in a comfortable atmosphere with the Mangold mobile usability lab, in the presence of the people responsible for marketing. Participants in the test accessed the relevant websites in real conditions with the help of Google or by entering the URL direct. The test subjects were given the task of finding a suitable wall and flooring for the extension of their own home. Three different scenarios were chosen. Each participant was given a budget and assigned the task of deciding as quickly as possible.



None of the test subjects thought that the recording interfered with what they were doing. They also commented continuously on their actions during the eye tracking process. This gives those supervising the study important information for potential improvements to a website and they pick up good ideas from consumers. After the capturing had been completed, analysis with the Mangold analyzer was commenced, giving the customer a detailed analysis of the results, including all the strengths and weaknesses of the website in video and image formats.



A method that could have been tailor-made for MeisterWerke Schulte GmbH. "We weren't quite sure whether a homepage that focused more on optical or design-related aspects was sufficient to meet the requirements of users in the World Wide Web," says Marketing Manager Markus Ernst. The aims of eye tracking had been clearly defined: "Technical and user-related shortcomings were to be recognized and rectified, particularly prior to translating the website into the different languages and to newly designing it."

Which search terms are used, where does eye movement move to on a website, is the navigation structure easy to recognize and is it user-friendly? The answers to these questions and to others are fundamentally significant for the success or failure of a website. The project was carried out as requested for MeisterWerke Schulte GmbH. "The project was professionally implemented and the result was clear: our website needs more applications and a coordinated design. We must do more to meet customers' concept requirements. The www.meister.com website will be optimized on the basis of eye tracking. It's good that we took this step in having our new website analyzed," sums up Markus Ernst. MyBOOM CEO Thorsten Voß is most satisfied with the result of the analysis and the implementation of the project: "The aim was to find out whether the test subjects found our website, how they did so and how they managed to navigate through it. This aim was achieved. Our project partner now has a detailed strength-weakness analysis. They know the key words that are decisive for being found with the help of search engines and they can

optimally design their website with a focus on the aspects of appearance, orientation, information and closing. There are clear recommendations for action and also target group oriented analyses."

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