

Inspiring work for VisitEngland

VisitEngland's remit is to support England's tourism industry by encouraging domestic and international visitors to take holidays, breaks and day trips in England. Research had highlighted a gap in the area of 'inspiration', supporting people looking for initial ideas about where to go and what to do on their holidays. VisitEngland's digital team, working with Sapient Nitro, built on this research to create a vision statement and new website design that would address the business opportunity. VisitEngland commissioned *new experience* to undertake research and testing in England, USA and Germany to evaluate the new site against the vision statement and to ensure optimal usability across different cultures.



Lab-based and remote testing using screen sharing



We started by conducting research within England to make sure we caught any usability issues prior to launch of the site. We recruited participants from several regions including some from remote rural locations. Participants from London and Manchester came in for laboratory-based testing, and those from rural areas participated remotely using screen-sharing software. We gave participants open, exploratory tasks to evaluate the holistic experience of planning a trip and finding things to do in England, as well as feature-specific tasks to test important site features.

Follow-up, 'natural' use at-home

The site is very content rich so to explore some of the more experiential questions we gave participants access to the test site following the main usability session, and asked them to use it on their own for a few more days attempting a few open-ended tasks such as planning a short break within England. We then asked them to complete an online questionnaire and join us for a follow-up call to discuss their answers and opinions. This more naturalistic data collection complemented our usability findings and enabled us to really understand impressions of the content offering and effectiveness of the site for trip planning. We discovered several important issues related to navigation and site structure that could be fixed before launch of the UK version.

There's more to England than London and the countryside!

Following launch of the domestic site we replicated the study in the USA and Germany with tailored local versions. Overseas users needed much more help understanding the basic geography of England for the site to be useful, and they put much higher value than domestic users on destination-specific information such as photos, local restaurants and accommodation. In the USA especially knowledge of England could be quite limited beyond a feeling it comprises London and the countryside.

Enhanced design as a result of our research

Our research helped VisitEngland discover and fix key usability issues before its main launch, and also identified areas of opportunity across cultures where the site could serve users better. Our country-specific findings will help VisitEngland engage with people of other nations important to tourism in England.

What our client had to say about working with us

"new experience were a pleasure to work with. They understood the brief and were very flexible and considered in their approach to the project. They delivered well-co-ordinated usability testing across England, USA and Germany and the support, insight and recommendations they gave as a result have been extremely useful." *Alison Lewis-Jones, Web and CRM Manager, VisitEngland.*