



MARRIOTT DIGITAL PROPERTIES USER RESEARCH PLAN

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Photo: Marriott Panama

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The redesign of Marriott's digital properties website and web applications by Ralston Strategists seeks to meet the following business goals:

- Increase hotel bookings via digital properties by 10%.
- Increase reservations for their Luxury and Lifestyle Collection hotel categories.
- Gain 10k incremental members of the Marriott Rewards loyalty program in the first quarter after the redesign.
- Decrease by 20% the number of people starting and then abandoning a reservation.
- Increase by 5% the number of people choosing a hotel and flight package.

Our user research plan will focus on the needs and motivations behind Marriott digital properties users and will:

- Determine user experience issues.
- Outline the goals of the project.
- Seek to discover the research questions behind this user study.
- Determine the questions that will be answered by a user research study.
- Outline the recommendations for next steps within the project.



USER EXPERIENCE QUESTIONS & ISSUES

A nano usability study of three Marriott.com users was completed to determine the current state of the website. Once this study was complete a few user experience issues were determined, this study helped guide us in reviewing the following questions:

- Why cant some users find how to search for available accommodations?
- What are the reasons for search options being unclear to the user?
- Why cant users find the price for individual accommodations?
- Are users unable to locate a hotel near their destination?
- Why is sorting results by desired amenities difficult for users?
- Why do some users get frustrated and give up?



USER EXPERIENCE QUESTIONS & ISSUES CONTINUED

The nano usability study also highlighted some of these design flaws in the Marriott.com website:

- Filter options don't reflect the users needs.
- Users don't know exactly what they are looking for.
- Users don't know how to find what they are looking for.
- Users don't remember their Rewards log in information.
- Users are unsure if they are a Rewards member.
- Users feel they need to be a Rewards member to create a reservation .



GOALS OF USER RESEARCH PLAN

- Discover the motivation behind the user and their experience booking hotels.
- Increase knowledge about the tasks user must complete.
- Inform design choices based on user preference for reservations.
- Increase hotel bookings and decrease amount of unsuccessful bookings by discovering the challenges of users.
- Discover the reasons behind abandoned reservations.



GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What do people using Marriott.com need?
- Who is the target audience of Marriott.com?
- Does the design work for the users? Why not?
- How can the design be improved?
- What must be included in the design to meet company goals?
- What are the users motivations?
- What must be changed for the redesign?

Photo: Marriott B.C.



SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS: USERS

The user research plan for the redesign of the Marriott digital properties will answer the following questions about our users:

- What demographic makeup are our users?
- Why don't some users choose a Luxury or Lifestyle Collection accommodation?
- Why would a user return to Marriott.com to book accommodation?
- How do users navigate the site, especially when they are looking for something specific?
- Why do users use a Rewards program? What value are they looking for in the program?
- Are users aware of the option to book hotel and flight?
- What search options and filters are users looking for?



SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS: DESIGN

The user research plan for the redesign of the Marriott digital properties will answer the following questions about the design:

- What is the ratio of users who abandon reservations?
- On what pages do users abandon reservations?
- When do users use the website vs. mobile?
- How do users use the different search functions?
- Do users understand the instructions on the reservation page?
- Do users understand they have abandoned a reservation?



RESEARCH METHOD

- Creation of user personas
- Survey online for current users
- Focus groups with potential users
- Task analysis with a variety of in person users

The timeline for this research plan is approximately 4-6 weeks to allow for recruitment of participants in the focus groups and the usability study.



Photo: Marriott Dubai



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

- Finalize research plan.
- Deploy staff to create survey, recruit participants, and develop focus group questions.
- Deploy online survey, complete focus groups, create some initial design changes based on nano usability study.
- Complete usability test with task analysis for users.
- Create wireframes of major design changes.
- Developers to create any major design changes.
- Complete a secondary nano usability study once designs are finalized.



WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?



Photo: Marriott NYC

