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WEBSITE DESIGN ON THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: HOW PORTUGUESE MEN AND WOMEN DIFFER ON THEIR DESIGN PREFERENCES OF DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS' WEBSITES

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Website design on the hospitality industry: How Portuguese men and women differ on their design preferences of destination marketing organizations' websites

Abstract

As the internet and e-commerce rapidly grow worldwide and in Portugal, websites become critical success factors for several businesses. This study investigated gender differences and preferences on the design criteria of Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) websites and it was conducted in Portugal, using Booking.com as an example of a DMO. Results from an online survey with 266 participants showed there were gender differences in the importance given to ease of use and on the importance given to usability and content. This information allows for the content and visuals of a website (e.g. Booking.com) to be adapted considering gender differences and preferences. Results like a higher importance given by women to the ease of use of a DMO website may serve as useful insights for website designers in Portugal.

Acknowledgements

1. Introduction

As the internet reach is rapidly increasing, so is e-commerce and, consequently, online transactions (Ingersoll, 1998). According to Peterson et al. (1997) the internet has been revolutionizing businesses patterns and consumers' way of living because of changes in information retrieval, sales and advertising, customer support, and several other areas.

The lack of consumers' time makes them wish and look for convenient ways to shop online, resulting in a desire to purchase goods and services that are time and effort saving (Berry & Cooper, 1992). Therefore, to appeal consumers across the Internet, companies need to make their websites the most uncomplicated and appealing to use for their businesses to succeed (Taylor & England, 2006), not only because of the users but also due to the increased online competition (Karayanni & Baltas, 2003).

Despite electronic commerce continuous growth, especially through companies' websites, there isn't enough research showing how the websites' design factors can influence the consumers' buying decision and behavior (Jeong & Choi, 2013), nor about gender differences and preferences on this field.

The present research serves the purpose of finding out if there are differences on gender preferences regarding the design evaluation of destination marketing organizations (DMOs) websites in Portugal, using the concrete example of Booking.com; as well as reducing the existing literature gap on gender differences online (Miche & Noirhomme-Fraiture, 2009), especially on DMOs websites, by evaluating 6 different factors commonly used to design any website: usability, content, visual aspects, prestige, online shopping behavior, and communication.

This investigation is important because gender is one of the most commonly used segmentation criteria in marketing, therefore, as online purchases keep on growing,

companies can add value and be able to differentiate by understanding their consumers' preferences, and designing their websites accordingly.

Booking.com was the selected example because it is the most used website to search and to book tourism activities worldwide and in Portugal. On a list of tourism websites visited in 2012 from Marktest and Netpanel, Booking.com is the leader both in number of visits and time spent on the website (Marktest, 2012). Right after is Logitravel and Edreams. Data from 2014 (Statista) indicates that Booking.com was the most visited website in January, with a total of 166 million visits, followed by TripAdvisor, Expedia and Hotels.com. On a list of every website visited during 2016 in Portugal, from Marktest (http://tgi.marktest.pt/), 25.8% of people (out of 6815 persons) visited Booking.com, whereas only 10.4% visited TripAdvisor, and 1.1% visited Expedia.

This report will go from a specific perspective on destination marketing websites, towards a broader one in website design factors, ending on gender differences, outlining a literature review on all these aspects. After that, the methodology is presented along with the results obtained and consequent description. Insights and practical implications are discussed and concluded with the main findings of the study.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Destination marketing organizations

The first definition of tourism destination marketing was offered by Wahab, Crampon & Rothfield (1976), defining it as "the management process through which the National Tourist Organizations and/or tourist enterprises identify their selected tourists, actual and potential, communicate with them to ascertain and influence their wishes, needs, motivations, likes and dislikes, on local, regional, national and international 8 levels, and to formulate and adapt their tourist products accordingly in

view of achieving optimal tourist satisfaction thereby fulfilling their objectives". A more recent definition is given by Gartrel (1994) on destination marketing organizations (DMOs), defining them as organizations designed to promote specific destinations to potential travelers.

Websites are critical success factors for DMOs as they are the bridge between information and consumers (Buhalis, 2000), so the website's visual aspects need to appeal and be personalized to the end-user to attract, engage, and interest them in participation and usage (Gretzel, Yuan, & Fesenmaier, 2000).

The main concern about DMOs websites' is that there is not a defined mechanism for its evaluation, therefore companies have little insight on which are the aspects of the website that trigger or hinder certain attitudes or behaviors from users and on how website design could be improved (Law & Bai, 2006; Tierney, 2000). According to Cronin (2003), website evaluation promotes benefits such as customer retention.

Researchers have agreed that the best way of assessing a website's performance is through a multidimensional approach and measures, rather than a unidimensional method. The question becomes which dimensions and evaluation frameworks should be used in order to consistently evaluate websites. Commonly, studies on websites rely on tangible aspects, instead of consumer opinions. However, when the last ones are used they appear under the categories of quality, loyalty and satisfaction on the website (Park & Gretzel, 2007).

2.2. Website Design Parameters

As human beings increase dependency on web technologies, there is "the need to assess factors associated with website success", says Liu & Arnett (1999). Therefore, retailers need to optimize their website design, adapting it to consumer needs and

preferences, because developing pleasing and organized websites for online shopping is decisive to convert online visits into online purchases through enhancing the beliefs and preferences of online customers (Ahn, Ryu, & Han, 2007; Chang & Chen, 2009).

From the online consumer's perspective, characteristics as the layout, content and design are fundamental success factors in developing a business website (Li & Holeckova, 2005). As so, it is relevant to understand the order by which men and women perceive different design criteria to be relevant, so the first hypothesis is proposed.

H1: Men and women differ regarding the design criteria they believe is the most important on DMO websites.

Some authors have worked on websites' design parameters on their papers, more specifically, on the quality of the website (Huang & Huang, 2010; Hsan & Abuelrub, 2011; Lin, 2010), the usability (Lee & Koubek, 2010; Pearson & Pearson, 2008; Sengel & Öncü, 2010), the aesthetics (Akbulut & Akbulut, 2010; Moshagen & Thielsch, 2010; Zeng, Salvendy, & Zhang, 2009), and the content (Caballero-Luque, Aragones-Beltran, Garcia-Melon & Dema-Perez, 2010; Cormany & Baloglu, 2011), showing that there are several design parameters to take into consideration when evaluating the content, effectiveness and design of websites. On the other hand, Bell and Tang (1998) focused on studying other factors as the access to the web, content of the website, graphics, structure, user-friendliness, unique features, navigation and usefulness. Wan (2000) concluded it was more relevant to divide the web into four different categories: information, friendliness, responsiveness and reliability.

Aladwani & Palvia (2002) agreed that web appearance has several distinct criteria, including: attractiveness, distinctive hot buttons, changing look, organization, correct use of fonts, correct use of colors and color consistency, proper use of graphics,

graphics versus text balance, proper use of multimedia, style consistency, proper choice of page length, good labeling, text-only option, and finding online help.

Although all these criteria would be valuable to use on the present research, as there is not a unified model to evaluate DMOs websites' design (Law & Bai, 2006; Tierney, 2000) it was decided to go with more general evaluation criteria, commonly used when evaluating website's design, ending up with 6 distinct criteria (Annex 1, table 2). All of them were previously used in different researches, although they might have been under different names (except for "communication", that was specifically created for this study).

Regarding color design, according to Best (2012), it is known that reading text on a monitor is harder than it is on paper, therefore web colors need to be carefully chosen regarding color contrast, saturation, light, among other aspects. A very light background will result in the stand out of a darker object, whereas the same object has less strength on a darker background context. Background color is used to enhance, to hide, or to impact an object/product's visual sense of belonging.

Plus, colors need to be aligned with the target market to attract. Moss et al. (2006) concluded that males prefer mainly black or blue color schemes. Jastrow (1897) results are in line with the previous one – men pre-eminently prefer blue and women prefer red. While studying esthetics of color, the author grouped them into dark and light colors. In what gender is concerned, the results were very conclusive: darker colors are the preferred ones – only two out of seven individuals chose the lighter colors. There are no gender differences on this field, as Jastrow (1897) found that ten out of twelve men preferred darker colors and women also preferred darker colors (seven out of twelve). However, there is a visible higher preference for dark colors by men than by women, which is the reason why the second hypothesis is proposed.

H2: Women prefer lighter colors in DMOs websites.

Another parameter of website design is usability, described as a way of minimizing physical and rational effort using a website (Gaspar et al., 2014; Ozok et al., 2014). This concept can be used in websites to conquer effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction (Di Blas et al., 2009; Chowdhury et al., 2014). As website functions increase complexity, users look for natural and user-friendly interfaces (Jung & Im, 2015). Companies can satisfy these desires by having a high level of usability. In fact, according to Wang and Huang (2015), users can experience a greater level of enjoyability by navigating on a website designed based on usability principles.

2.3. Gender differences and preferences in the web

A literature review shows that differences in gender occur because men and women have distinct ways of processing information (Meyers-Levy & Maheswaran 1991; Meyers-Levy & Sternthal 1991). This occurs in several areas of information technology, like websites (Simon, 2001; Sanchez-Franco, 2006).

Researchers attribute these differences in information processing to two factors: social and biological. Social factors occur, as the name indicates, because of socialization. The way people are influenced by their peers, their family, and the environment that surrounds them influences the way they process information. Biological gender differences exist in the hemispheric lateralization of the brain. Whereas male brains are more functionally lateralized (left hemisphere), female brains are more integrated (right hemisphere) (Everhart et al., 2001; Saucier & Elias, 2001). These differences will not be further developed as this is not the core of this research, however it is interesting to know that gender differences in the brain influence information processing.

In fact, men and women behave differently regarding their attitudes, comfort, and anxiety when exposed to computer technology (McIlroy, Bunting, & Tierney et al., 2001). Durndell and Haag (2002) have demonstrated, using a Romanian sample, that men have a more positive perception of, greater interest in and less anxiety when computing than women, as well as greater computer self-efficacy.

Van Slyke et al. (2002) investigated gender differences in the perceptions of the web when shopping online, finding that males give higher ratings to trustworthiness and lower ratings to complexity, while women did the opposite in both cases. As so, the next hypotheses are proposed.

H3: Women give a higher importance to easy to use DMOs websites.

H4: Men give lower importance to the learnability of DMOs websites.

There are not many studies focused on possible gender differences in web design, so it is interesting to study the topic in greater depth, finding if man and women evaluate website design differently when shopping online (Miche & Noirhomme-Fraiture, 2009). Girard et al. (2003) showed some gender differences and preferences while shopping online, finding that more men preferred to shop online for books, personal computers, phones and televisions. On the other hand, women are more likely to make online purchases on clothing and perfumes. Other authors had different results, Heimrath & Goulding (2001) found that man use the internet mostly for games, work, competitions, and software updates, while women use it for shopping, banking, and searching for new information. On the same line of results, Jackson et al. (2001) reported that females have a more personal use of the internet as interpersonal communication through e-mails, whereas males use it to search for information. Plus, Kim et al. (2007) found women visit more travel websites than men.

Cyr and Bonanni (2005) and Moss et al. (2006) reported in an investigative study that men had several preferences in websites: men preferred well-presented information websites, formal typography and images, easy to navigate, with meaningful animations. As so, to understand if the formality of the design of the website really is important for men, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Men give more importance to professionally designed DMOs websites.

When shopping online, risk is still a concern causing online shopping statistics to decrease. Women perceive online shopping to have a higher risk associated (Garbarino & Strahilevitz, 2004). According to Rodgers & Harris (2003), males have more confidence in online shopping than females, meaning that males perceive it as less risky. Thus, the last hypothesis is proposed.

H6: Women give more importance to trust on DMOs websites.

3. Method

The study presented uses a quantitative analysis methodology since it allows to find hard data on actual people's behavior through numbers. It was conducted through an online questionnaire about gender's design perception and opinion on a DMO website. Respondents were firstly asked to indicate if they had used Booking.com website at least once. After that, only the ones who answered positively could continue the survey and were shown a screenshot of Booking.com website. The questionnaire also elicited the gender, age and occupation of the respondents.

3.1. Participants

The target population of this study was Portuguese men and women, with ages above 18 years old who had used at least once Booking.com, which was selected as an example of a DMO website, to help respondents understand the questions asked and

answer them in a more confident way. The perceptions and behavior of the respondents are based on their own experiences and opinions.

A total of 388 questionnaires were answered, from which 266 were valid responses. 59.4% of the participants were females and 40.6% were males with ages ranging from 18 to 65, mostly unemployed and student-workers. Most of the respondents make their purchases on computers (72.9%), followed by smartphones (19.2%).

3.2. Measures

The present study uses frames of questionnaires from previous studies adapted to the purpose of this research (Table 1). A unified framework of frequently used design factors in a website emerged from the analysis of several studies, however there was a need to introduce the last three items on the "online shopping behavior" factor. In total, 6 factors were tested (Annex 1, table 2): usability, content, visual aspects, prestige, online shopping behavior, and communication. All dimensions were measured with Likert-type five-point scales (ranging from 1- totally disagree; to 5- totally agree; or from 1- not important at all; to 5- very important).

Usability: This refers to how easy it is to use and to learn/understand a DMO website. If the website is designed so that users find it simple, the usability is said to be high. Examples of used items are: "The information is easy and quick to find on the website", "The website is user-friendly", and "The website provides clarity of wording".

Content: This refers to the information content on the website and if users perceive it to be useful and to satisfy their needs. Examples of items are: "The information provided on the website is complete" and "The website adequately meets my information needs".

Visual aspects: This refers to a logically presented information and a pleasant aspect of the layout and colors used on the website, all put together to improve the user's visual

experience. Examples are: "The information on the website is well-organized", "The website looks professionally designed", "The screen design (i.e. colors, images, layout, etc.) is attractive", and "The colors in the website are pleasing".

Prestige: This refers to the overall satisfaction and trust on the website. Examples of items are: "Using the website is satisfactory overall" and "I can trust the information presented on the website".

Online shopping behavior: This intends to evaluate the perception users have when shopping online. Examples of items are: "Using the internet to purchase a product seems an intelligent idea to me" and "The design of the website affects my decision on whether to buy from it or not".

Communication: This factor was created to evaluate the perception users have about responsive website design and where they prefer contact information and help displayed on the website. Examples of items are: "I prefer to shop on a website that provides contacts and online help" and "I prefer to shop on a website that provides contacts and online help".

4. Results

An analysis of the scale's reliability was conducted on SPSS, using Cronbach's alpha (table 1) which granted that every factor had a Cronbach's alpha superior to 0.7.

Table 1
Measures and Chronbach's alpha.

Factor	Indicators	Designation
Booking Filter	Have you used Booking.com at least once? (Yes/No)	Booking_Filter
Personal Information	Gender, Age, Occupation	Gender, Age, Occupation
Ease of use (adapted from Hassanein & Head, 2006, $\alpha = .898$)	The website is easy to use The information is easy and quick to find on the website The website is user-friendly My interaction with the website is clear and understandable	Ease_of_use_A Ease_of_use_B Ease_of_use_C Ease_of_use_D

Learnability (adapted from Lin et al., 1997, α = .835)	The website provides clarity of wording	Learnability_A
	The data grouping on the website is reasonable for easy learning	Learnability_B
	The grouping of the menu options on the website is logical	Learnability_C
	The order of the menu options for the website is logical	Learnability_D
Content (adapted from Cyr, 2008, α = .792)	The information provided on the website is complete	Content_A
	The information provided on the website is sufficient	Content_B
	The information provided on the website is effective	Content_C
	The website adequately meets my information needs	Content_D
Information design (adapted from Cyr & Bonanni, 2005, α = .747)	The information on the website is logically presented	Information_design_A
	The information on the website is well-organized	Information_design_B
	All product options, attributes and information are presented on the website	Information_design_C
Visual design (adapted from Cyr & Bonanni, 2005, α = .736)	There is interaction (video, demos selected by the user, etc.) on the website	Visual_design_A
	The website allows to efficiently tailor the information for my specific needs	Visual_design_B
	The website looks professionally designed	Visual_design_C
	The screen design (i.e. colors, images, layout, etc.) is attractive	Visual_design_D
	The website animations are meaningful	Visual_design_E
Color appeal (adapted from Cyr, Head, & Larios, 2010, α = .917)	The colors in the website are pleasing	Color_appeal_A
	I like the colors used on the website	Color_appeal_B
	The colors in the website are appropriate for my culture	Color_appeal_C
	The colors used in the website are emotionally appealing	Color_appeal_D
	The colors used in the website are interesting	Color_appeal_E
	The colors used in the website are visually harmonious	Color_appeal_F
	The colors used make the website look professional and well designed	Color_appeal_G
Users satisfaction (adapted from Cyr & Bonanni, 2005, α = .810)	The website appeals to me visually and emotionally	Users_satisfaction_A
	The website completely fulfills my needs and expectations	Users_satisfaction_B
	The website satisfies my needs well	Users_satisfaction_C
	Using the website is satisfactory overall	Users_satisfaction_D
Website trust (adapted from Cyr & Bonanni, 2005, α = .809)	I can trust the website	Website_trust_A
	I can trust the information presented on the website	Website_trust_B
	I can trust the transaction process on the website	Website_trust_C
Contact information & online help	I prefer to shop on a website that provides contacts and online help	Contact_and_help_A
	I prefer having contact information and online help very visible (e.g. on the right superior edge)	Contact_and_help_B
	I prefer having contact information and online help only accessible when I look for it (i.e. at the bottom of the page)	Contact_and_help_C
Responsive design	A website with responsive design is a good idea	Responsiveness_A
	I believe all websites should have a responsive design	Responsiveness_B
	If a website doesn't have a responsive design I won't buy from it	Responsiveness_C
	Using my phone/tablet to make an online purchase is a good idea	Responsiveness_D
	I would rather make an online purchase on my phone/tablet than in my computer/laptop	Responsiveness_E
	I would rather make an online purchase on my computer/laptop than in my phone/tablet	Responsiveness_F
Online shopping behavior (adapted from David et al., 1989, Taylor, & Todd, 1995, α = .749)	Using the internet to do my shopping is a good idea	Shopping_behavior_A
	My general opinion of electronic commerce is positive	Shopping_behavior_B
	Using the internet to purchase a product seems an intelligent idea to me	Shopping_behavior_C
	The design of the website affects my decision on whether to buy from it or not	Shopping_behavior_D
	I would rather purchase a product from a very colorful website	Shopping_behavior_E
	I would rather purchase a product from a website with light colors	Shopping_behavior_F
	I would rather purchase a product from a website with dark colors	Shopping_behavior_G

To explore gender differences and their preferences in DMOs website's design,

an independent samples t-test was conducted addressing hypotheses 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6,

because it is used to compare the means of two populations (Landau & Everitt, 2004). A sum up table of every hypothesis results can be found in Annex 5, table 4.

From an analysis of the results, it is possible to conclude that the first hypothesis proposed is verified, as it intended to analyze by which order men and women ranked the four different design criteria proposed. In this case, no statistical test was used, in opposition to the rest of the analysis. Instead, a crosstab (in SPSS) was used to create a table that provided the frequency (number of answers), combining one of the design criteria at a time with gender. After this analysis it was possible to conclude that out of usability, visual aspects, content, and prestige, gender shows differences mostly regarding "content" and "usability", since most of men (38.8%) choose content in first place as the most important criteria, whereas women (33.5%) believe usability is the most important design criteria of a DMO website.

When analyzing color preference, the mean for females (*M*=3.01; *SD*=1.028) is slightly lower than for males (*M*=3.09; *SD*=1.055), but the t-test revealed no significant differences, t (226.102) = -.05, *p* > .05, meaning that the proposed hypothesis is not verified. There are no gender differences on the preference of light colors on websites.

Moreover, it is possible to infer that women attribute more importance to a DMO website that is easy to use, since the mean for females (*M*=4.57; *SD*=0.441;) is higher than for males (*M*=4.27; *SD*=0.678), and a t-test revealed significant differences, t (169.157) = -4.15, *p* < .01. To emphasize this result, 101 women answered "very important" to the affirmation "The website is easy to use", whereas only 50 men have the same belief.

However, when testing "learnability", no gender differences were found, although the mean for females (*M*=4.13; *SD*=0.543;) is slightly higher than for males (*M*=4.06; *SD*=0.704), a t-test revealed no significant differences, t (264) = -0.073, *p* >

.05, meaning men and women give the same importance to the learnability of the website.

When evaluating if men give more importance to a professional appearance, the mean for females (*M*=3.81; *SD*=0.883) is approximately the same as for males (*M*=3.75; *SD*=1.015), and a t-test revealed no significant differences, t (208.262) = -.05, *p* > .05, meaning that the proposed hypothesis is not verified.

Regarding "trust", the mean for females (*M*=4.29; *SD*=0.619) is the same as the mean males (*M*=4.29; *SD*=0.656), and a t-test revealed no significant differences, t (221.162) = -.041, *p* > .05, meaning that the proposed hypothesis is not verified.

5. Discussion

This study examines gender differences and preferences regarding the evaluation of the design of destination marketing organizations websites in Portugal. Overall, the results reveal there are significant gender differences in the importance given to ease of use; and differences were also found when respondents were asked to rank the design criteria by order of importance (although we cannot consider this last result as significant or non-significant as no statistical test was conducted). But, in the case of DMOs, no significant gender differences were found regarding learnability, color preference, trust, and formal design preference.

The elements of website design proposed on the questionnaire were ranked (by level of importance) differently by men and women: whereas men ranked the design criteria by content (38.8%), prestige (32.4%), usability (35.2%), and visual aspects (25.9%), women ranked the same criteria by usability (33.5%), prestige (43.6%), content (32.9%), and visual aspects (22.2%). It is possible to infer that, in the case of DMOs websites, men attribute "content" a much higher importance than women; and women attribute a higher importance to "usability" than men. Both genders believe that

"visual aspects" is the least important criteria on the design of a website. As Moss and Colman (2001) had stated that males are more interested in function than aesthetics, in this case it is possible to affirm that men are more interested in content than in aesthetics, while women are more interested in usability.

5.1.Theoretical implications

Regarding content, Simon & Peppas (2005) found similar results: compared to females, males usually have a "more positive attitude towards the content of a website".

In what regards the learnability criteria, a different study on website design quality and usage behavior, from Al-Qeisi, Dennis, Alamanos, & Jayawardhena (2014) also found that female and male participants did not differ significantly on the importance they both grant to this aspect. But, different studies have different results, since Lin & Hsieh (2016) findings were that the three most important design criteria for males were compatibility, minimal action and flexibility, whereas for women were compatibility, learnability and user guidance. This means, in this case, women attribute a higher importance to learnability than men, which contrasts with the current study.

Although several studies showed gender differences concerning trust, color preference and higher importance given by men to professionally designed websites, when testing the same factors on DMOs websites, the results differed as there were no significant differences in gender when evaluating these factors.

Studies like the ones from Garbarino & Strahilevitz (2004) and Rodgers & Harris (2003), found males have more confidence in online shopping than females and women would grant a higher importance to trust on websites, possibly because they do not trust the internet as much as men. In the present study, when asked to indicate their level of agreement with the sentence "Using the internet to do my shopping is a good idea", most women "somewhat agree" while most men "totally agree" with it, which

may lead to the conclusion of men being more secure about shopping online than women. Yet, the results of this study showed there were no significant gender differences when evaluating the importance of trust on a DMO website. This result could have been influenced by the fact that Booking.com was used as an example to contextualize people on what a DMO website is. Since Booking.com is already well-known and has a high reputation and prestige it is possible that respondents gave biased answers because they already trust the website.

As it is known, there are no concrete rules about feminine or male colors. However, there is a generalization, like the case that pink is for women and blue is for men. According to a study about colors, females' favorite colors are blue, purple and green, whereas males' favorite colors are blue, green, and black (n.d. Retrieved from: https://blog.kissmetrics.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/true-colors1.pdf).   As previously mentioned, there are two big color groups: dark and light; and when comparing both, the results were very conclusive – darker colors are the preferred ones (Jastrow, 1897). On the current study, when tested if women would prefer lighter colors on a DMO website, results revealed they didn't. Most males and females are indifferent to whether the website has light or dark colors. However, more respondents agree they would prefer to make an online purchase on a website with lighter colors than in one with darker colors.

Lastly, it is true that every individual will have a specific design preference based on their tastes, but previous research has demonstrated that men give a higher importance to a professionally designed website than women (Cyr and Bonanni, 2005; & Moss et al., 2006), however, according to the results of the current study, no significant gender differences were found in the case of DMOs websites in Portugal.

5.2. Limitations and Future Research

Starting with limitations, although this study has a relatively good sample in terms of size, age, and balance between female and male respondents, there is a lack of diversity in terms of nationality on its composition, as the study was conducted in Portugal (in Portuguese) and only targeted Portuguese residents. In this case, the results cannot be generalized, so a suggestion for future research is to use a larger and more diversified sample in terms of nationality.

Another limitation of this study was the fact that the questionnaire conclusions would have been too broad if no concrete example was used. However, by using Booking.com as an example, the brand name may elicit product and brand associations for the user, causing biased answers. Ideally, similar studies could/should test the questionnaire for a wider range of DMOs websites so that results on the design of each website could be compared.

The first proposed hypothesis results cannot be considered as significant or non-significant because no statistical test was conducted. The reason for this to have happened was the fact that the way the results were displayed in SPSS did not allow for a t-test or chi-square test to be conducted. The lack of experience using the mentioned program was also a limitation. In order to know if significant gender differences exist in the design criteria men and women believe is more important, one of these tests must be conducted.

Plus, this study is focused on gender differences regarding their visual design preferences on DMOs websites when they shop online on computers and every result shown on literature review is based on online shopping on this platform. However, although results keep demonstrating computers are still the most used platform for shopping online, smartphones seem to be gaining importance in this area as it is the

second most preferred platform. For future research it would be interesting to evaluate if there are different design preferences when shopping on the computer or on the smartphone.

Moreover, it would possibly be interesting for other authors to create a consistent scale to evaluate the importance of a responsive design and if there are differences in gender when analyzing the place where online communication and help should be displayed on the website, as I did not find any, nor literature on the topic. Although these scales (responsive design and contact information and online help) were created by me from scratch and included in the questionnaire, when analyzing its consistency, they revealed that internal consistency was not sufficient, therefore no conclusions were taken from it. Both these scales can be found in annex 1 (table 3).

Out of curiosity, it was also decided to include on the questionnaire a question to evaluate if men and women preferred items/products displayed as a mosaic or on a list form. Results show, in Portugal, for DMOs websites, the list format is the favorite one (60.2%). However, the results were not included in this project since no literature was found on this topic.

Literature on gender differences and preferences on DMOs website design is still very few, consequently there is not a single model designed to evaluate it, which leads to inconsistent/different results from study to study. Further research is suggested to more deeply verify the existence of gender differences in this area and develop a standard measurement instrument for design satisfaction on DMOs websites.

6. Conclusion

As e-commerce grows, website design becomes a critical success factor (Kim, Shaw, & Schneider, 2003). However, research on web and website design evaluation has not led yet to a conclusive and unified evaluation model. Instead, diverse

approaches are used testing several design criteria. Since website evaluation is a crucial factor for DMOs' websites, this study intended to reveal if there are gender differences when assessing different design criteria on them. Findings reveal that there are significant gender differences regarding the importance given to the ease of use of a DMO website, as women give it more importance than men. Differences were also found in the three most important design criteria for men and women: men grant more importance to content, prestige, and usability, whereas women attribute more importance to usability, prestige, and content. Although only 2 out of the 6 proposed hypotheses were verified, it is possible that Portuguese consumers' have specific preferences for the design of DMOs' websites. This investigation provides information that could be spread to Portuguese companies looking forward to adapt their websites taking into consideration gender preferences, specifically in the case of DMOs' websites.

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Annex 1

Table 2
Website design parameters.

	Main design parameters	Sub-design parameters	Explanation
Website Design Parameters	Usability	Perceived ease of use	The perceived easiness when using the website for the first time
		Learnability	The users should adapt to the website in short time
	Content	Information content	The information needs are fulfilled
	Visual Aspects	Information design	The information is logically presented
		Visual design	The site should have a pleasant visual design
		Layout design	The site should display its contents in a pleasant way for the user
		Color appeal	The colors of the site should be coherent and please the user
	Prestige	User's satisfaction	Overall satisfaction with the website
		Trust	The users should be able to trust on the site
	Communication	Contact information & online help	Contact info is presented in a way that makes sense for the user
		Responsive design	The website should adapt its content to every screen

Table 3
Internally inconsistent factors.

Factor	Indicators
Contact information and online help	I prefer to shop on a website that provides contacts and online help
	I prefer having contact information and online help very visible (e.g. on the right superior edge)
	I prefer having contact information and online help only accessible when I look for it (i.e. at the bottom of the page)
Responsive design	A website with responsive design is a good idea
	I believe all websites should have a responsive design
	If a website doesn't have a responsive design I won't buy from it
	Using my phone/tablet to make an online purchase is a good idea
	I would rather make an online purchase on my phone/tablet than in my computer/laptop
	I would rather make an online purchase on my computer/laptop than in my phone/tablet

This annex serves the purpose of demonstrating how the questionnaire was presented to the respondent. The questionnaire was built using Qualtrics.

Olá!

O meu nome é Raquel Coelho e quero antes de mais agradecer a sua participação neste questionário, que é fundamental para o desenvolvimento da minha tese de mestrado.

Este questionário tem uma duração de cerca de 5 minutos e pretende estudar diferenças de género em websites.

Peço que as perguntas sejam lidas com atenção e respondidas de forma honesta. Todas as respostas são anónimas e os dados daqui provenientes serão apenas utilizados num contexto académico.

Antes de começar, por favor tenha em mente o website do Booking (www.booking.com) e responda às seguintes questões.

→

Já esteve no website booking.com pelo menos uma vez?

Sim

Não

Página inical Booking

Usabilidade

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- nada importante; 5- muito importante) o nível de importância que atribui aos seguintes aspetos quando compra num website como o Booking.com.

Facilidade de uso percebida

	Nada importante	Pouco importante	Nem muito, nem pouco importante	Importante	Muito importante
O website é fácil de utilizar.	○	○	○	○	○
A informação é fácil e rápida de encontrar no website.	○	○	○	○	○
O website é fácil de utilizar (na perspetiva do utilizador).	○	○	○	○	○
A interação com o website é clara e compreensível.	○	○	○	○	○

Facilidade de aprendizagem

	Nada importante	Pouco importante	Nem pouco, nem muito importante	Importante	Muito importante
O website providencia clareza nas palavras.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
O agrupamento da informação no website é razoável para uma fácil aprendizagem.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
O agrupamento das opções no menu do website é lógico.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
A ordem das opções no menu no website é lógica.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Conteúdo

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- nada importante; 5- muito importante) o nível de importância que atribui aos seguintes aspetos quando compra num website como o Booking.com.

Conteúdo da informação

	Nada importante	Pouco importante	Nem pouco, nem muito importante	Importante	Muito importante
A informação dada no website é completa.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
A informação dada no website é suficiente.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
A informação dada no website é bem-sucedida (eficaz).	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
O website corresponde adequadamente às minhas necessidades de informação.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Aspetos Visuais

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- nada importante; 5- muito importante) o nível de importância que atribui aos seguintes aspetos quando compra num website como o Booking.com.

Design da informação

	Nada importante	Pouco importante	Nem pouco, nem muito importante	Importante	Muito importante
A informação no website é logicamente apresentada.	○	○	○	○	○
A informação no website é bem organizada.	○	○	○	○	○
Todas as opções de produtos, atributos e informação estão presentes no website.	○	○	○	○	○

Design visual

	Nada importante	Pouco importante	Nem pouco, nem muito importante	Importante	Muito importante
Existe interação no website (vídeo, demos escolhidas pelo utilizador, etc.).	○	○	○	○	○
O website permite que seja feita uma adaptação eficiente da informação para as minhas necessidades específicas (ex. filtros).	○	○	○	○	○
O website aparenta ter um design profissional.	○	○	○	○	○
O design do ecrã (ex. cores, imagens, layout, etc.) é atrativo.	○	○	○	○	○
As animações do website têm significado no contexto.	○	○	○	○	○

Por favor selecione, de acordo com a sua preferência, como devem estar expostos os produtos do website:

Prefiro uma disposição em mosaicos (imagens em mosaicos).

Prefiro uma disposição em forma de lista.

Atratividade das cores

	Nada importante	Pouco importante	Nem pouco, nem muito importante	Importante	Muito importante
As cores presentes no website são agradáveis.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Gosto das cores usadas no website.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
As cores presentes no website são apropriadas para a minha cultura.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
As cores usadas no website são emocionalmente apelativas.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
As cores usadas no website são interessantes.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
As cores usadas no website são visualmente harmoniosas.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
As cores usadas fazem o design do website parecer profissional e bem feito.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Prestígio

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- discordo totalmente; 5- concordo totalmente) o nível de concordância com as seguintes frases, tomando o Booking.com como exemplo:

Satisfação dos utilizadores com o website

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo em parte	Não concordo nem discordo	Concordo em parte	Concordo Totalmente
O website apela visualmente e emocionalmente.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
O website satisfaz completamente as minhas necessidades e expectativas.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
O website satisfaz bem as minhas necessidades.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Utilizar este website é no geral satisfatório.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Confiança no website

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo em parte	Não concordo nem discordo	Concordo em parte	Concordo Totalmente
Posso confiar no website.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Posso confiar na informação presente no website.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Posso confiar no processo de transação no website.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Comunicação

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- discordo totalmente; 5- concordo totalmente) o nível de concordância com as seguintes frases:

Informação de contactos e ajuda online

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo em parte	Não concordo nem discordo	Concordo em parte	Concordo Totalmente
Prefiro comprar num website que providencia contactos e ajuda online.	○	○	○	○	○
Prefiro ter as informações de contacto e ajuda online muito visíveis (ex. no canto superior direito).	○	○	○	○	○
Prefiro ter as informações de contacto e ajuda online acessíveis apenas quando procure por elas (ex. no final da página).	○	○	○	○	○

Responsiveness (quando o conteúdo do website se adapta corretamente a qualquer ecrã)

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo em parte	Não concordo nem discordo	Concordo em parte	Concordo Totalmente
Um website com um responsive design é uma boa ideia.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Eu acredito que todos os websites deveriam ter um responsive design.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Se um website não tiver um responsive design, não irei fazer nenhuma compra lá.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Usar o meu telefone/tablet para fazer uma compra online é uma boa ideia.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Prefiro fazer uma compra online no meu teIefone/tablet do que no meu computador/portátil.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Prefiro fazer uma compra online no meu computador/portátil do que no meu telefone/tablet.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Prefiro comprar um produto/serviço de um website com cores claras.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Prefiro comprar um produto/serviço de um website com cores escuras.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Comportamento de compra online

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- discordo totalmente; 5- concordo totalmente) o nível de concordância com as seguintes frases:
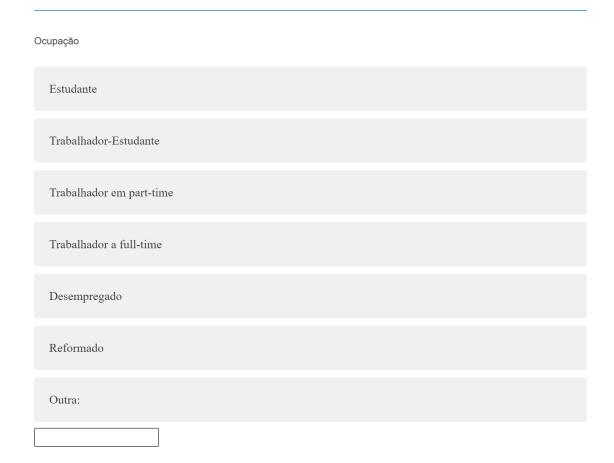
Crenças na compra online

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo em parte	Não concordo nem discordo	Concordo em parte	Concordo Totalmente
Usar a internet para fazer as minhas compras é uma boa ideia.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
A minha opinião geral no comércio eletrónico é positiva.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Usar a internet para comprar um produto/serviço parece-me uma ideia inteligente.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
O design do website afeta a minha decisão de comprar ou não através do mesmo.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Prefiro comprar um produto/serviço de um website muito colorido.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Importância dos critérios no design do website

Por favor organize, por ordem de importância os seguintes critérios de design de um website:

Usabilidade

Aspetos Visuais

Conteúdo

Comunicação

Prestígio

Plataforma de compras online

Por favor indique a plataforma onde mais faz as suas compras online

Computador/Portátil

Smartphone

Tablet

Dados demográficos

Para terminar, por favor indique:

Género

Masculino

Feminino

Idade

Ocupação

Estudante

Trabalhador-Estudante

Trabalhador em part-time

Trabalhador a full-time

Desempregado

Reformado

Outra:

Muito obrigada pela sua participação. **A sua resposta faz a diferença**!

Original English Version of the questionnaire

Filter question: Have you used Booking.com website at least once?

- Yes
- No

1. USABILITY

Please rate on a 1 to 5 scale (1-not important at all; 5- very important) the level of importance of the following aspects when purchasing on a website as Booking.com.

1.1. Perceived ease of use

a) The website is easy to use.
b) The information is easy and quick to find on the website.
c) The website is user-friendly.
d) My interaction with the website is clear and understandable.

1.2. Learnability

a) The website provides clarity of wording.
b) The data grouping on the website is reasonable for easy learning.
c) The grouping of the menu options on the website is logical.
d) The order of the menu options for the website is logical.

2. CONTENT

Please rate on a 1 to 5 scale (1-not important at all; 5- very important) the following aspects when purchasing on an online website.

2.1. Information content

a) The information provided on the website is complete.
b) The information provided on the website is sufficient.
c) The information provided on the website is effective.
d) The website adequately meets my information needs.

3. VISUAL ASPECTS

Please rate on a 1 to 5 scale (1-not important at all; 5- very important) the following aspects when purchasing on an online website.

3.1. Information design

a) The information on the website is logically presented.
b) The information on the website is well-organized.
c) All product options, attributes and information are presented on the website.

3.2. Visual design

a) There is interaction (video, demos selected by the user, etc.) on the website.
b) The website allows to efficiently tailor the information for my specific needs (i.e. filters).
c) The website looks professionally designed.

d) The screen design (i.e. colors, images, layout, etc.) is attractive.

e) The website animations are meaningful.

    3.2.1. Please select, according to your preference, how products/services should be exposed on the website:

- I prefer a mosaic arrangement.
- I prefer a list arrangement.

3.3.Color appeal

a) The colors in the website are pleasing.

b) I like the colors used on the website.

c) The colors in the website are appropriate for my culture.

d) The colors used in the website are emotionally appealing.

e) The colors used in the website are interesting.

f) The colors used in the website are visually harmonious.

g) The colors used make the website look professional and well designed.

4. PRESTIGE

Please rate on a 1 to 5 scale (1-not important at all; 5- very important) the following aspects when purchasing on an online website, taking booking.com as an example.

4.1.Website user's satisfaction

a) The website appeals to me visually and emotionally.

b) The website completely fulfills my needs and expectations.

c) The website satisfies my needs well.

d) Using the website is satisfactory overall.

4.2.Website trust

a) I can trust the website.

b) I can trust the information presented on the website.

c) I can trust the transaction process on the website.

5. COMMUNICATION

Please indicate your level of agreement on a 1 to 5 scale (1- totally disagree; 5- totally agree) with the following sentences.

5.1.Contact information & Online help

a) I prefer to shop on a website that provides contacts and online help.

b) I prefer having contact information and online help very visible (e.g. on the right superior edge).

c) I prefer having contact information and online help only accessible when I look for it (i.e. at the bottom of the page).

5.2.Responsiveness

a) A website with responsive design is a good idea.

b) I believe all websites should have a responsive design.

c) If a website doesn't have a responsive design I won't buy from it.
d) Using my phone/tablet to make an online purchase is a good idea.
e) I would rather make an online purchase on my phone/tablet than in my computer/laptop.
f) I would rather make an online purchase on my computer/laptop than in my phone/tablet.

6. ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOR

Please indicate your level of agreement on a 1 to 5 scale (1- totally disagree; 5- totally agree) with the following sentences.

6.1.Online shopping beliefs

a) Using the internet to do my shopping is a good idea.
b) My general opinion of electronic commerce is positive.
c) Using the internet to purchase a product seems an intelligent idea to me.
d) The design of the website affects my decision on whether to buy from it or not.
e) I would rather purchase a product from a very colorful website.
f) I would rather purchase a product from a website with light colors.
g) I would rather purchase a product from a website with dark colors.

6.2.Design criteria importance

Please organize by level of importance the following criteria on website design:
● Usability
● Content
● Visual Aspects
● Prestige
● Communication

6.3.Online shopping platform

Please indicate the platform where you mostly do your online purchases.
● Computer/laptop
● Smartphone
● Tablet

7. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Just for data correlation purposes, please indicate:

7.1.Gender:
● Male
● Female

7.2.Age: _____
7.3.Occupation:
● Student
● Student-Worker
● Part-time worker

- Full-time worker
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other:_____

Questionnaire translation and counter-translation

       The questionnaire was translated from English to Portuguese and again from Portuguese to English, by three different persons, to be sure that every sentence had the same meaning and it was clear in both languages. The reason this questionnaire was translated is because it was applied only in Portugal. As so, respondents are more comfortable in their mother language.

Version 1 a): English to Portuguese:

This was the final version used for this study since it was conducted in Portugal.

Filtro: Já utilizou o website booking.com pelo menos uma vez?
- Sim
- Não

1. USABILIDADE

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- nada importante; 5- muito importante) o nível de importância que atribui aos seguintes aspetos quando compra num website como o Booking.com.

1.1.Facilidade de uso percebida
a) O website é fácil de utilizar.
b) A informação é fácil e rápida de encontrar no website.
c) O website é fácil de utilizar (na perspetiva do utilizador).
d) A minha interação com o website é clara e compreensível.

1.2.Facilidade de aprendizagem
a) O website providencia clareza nas palavras.
b) O agrupamento da informação no website é razoável para uma fácil aprendizagem.
c) O agrupamento das opções no menu do website é lógico.
d) A ordem das opções no menu no website é lógica.

2. CONTEÚDO

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- nada importante; 5- muito importante) o nível de importância que atribui aos seguintes aspetos quando compra num website como o Booking.com.

2.1.Conteúdo da informação
a) A informação dada no website é completa.
b) A informação dada no website é suficiente.
c) A informação dada no website é bem-sucedida (eficaz).

d) O website corresponde adequadamente às minhas necessidades de informação.

3. ASPETOS VISUAIS

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- nada importante; 5- muito importante) o nível de importância que atribui aos seguintes aspetos quando compra num website como o Booking.com.

3.1. Design da informação
a) A informação no website é logicamente apresentada.
b) A informação no website é bem organizada.
c) Todas as opções de produtos, atributos e informação estão presentes no website.

3.2. Design visual
a) Existe interação no website (vídeo, demos escolhidas pelo utilizador, etc.).
b) O website permite que seja feita uma adaptação eficiente da informação para as minhas necessidades específicas (ex. filtros).
c) O website aparenta ter um design profissional.
d) O design do ecrã (ex. cores, imagens, layout, etc.) é atrativo.
e) As animações do website têm significado no contexto.

   3.2.1. Por favor selecione, de acordo com a sua preferência, como devem estar expostos os produtos do website:
- Prefiro uma disposição em mosaicos (imagens em mosaicos).
- Prefiro uma disposição em forma de lista.

3.3. Atratividade das cores
a) As cores presentes no website são agradáveis.
b) Gosto das cores usadas no website.
c) As cores presentes no website são apropriadas para a minha cultura.
d) As cores usadas no website são emocionalmente apelativas.
e) As cores usadas no website são interessantes.
f) As cores usadas no website são visualmente harmoniosas.
g) As cores usadas fazem o design do website parecer profissional e bem feito.

4. PRESTÍGIO

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- discordo totalmente; 5- concordo totalmente) o nível de concordância com as seguintes frases, tomando o Booking.com como exemplo:

4.1. Satisfação dos utilizadores com o website
a) O website apela visualmente e emocionalmente.
b) O website satisfaz completamente as minhas necessidades e expectativas.
c) O website satisfaz bem as minhas necessidades.

d) Utilizar este website é no geral satisfatório.

4.2.Confiança no website
a) Posso confiar no website.
b) Posso confiar na informação presente no website.
c) Posso confiar no processo de transação no website.

5. COMUNICAÇÃO

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- discordo totalmente; 5- concordo totalmente) o nível de concordância com as seguintes frases:

5.1.Informação de contactos & ajuda online
a) Prefiro comprar num website que providencia contactos e ajuda online.
b) Prefiro ter as informações de contacto e ajuda online muito visíveis (ex. no canto superior direito).
c) Prefiro ter as informações de contacto e ajuda online acessíveis apenas quando procure por elas (ex. no final da página).

5.2.Responsiveness (quando o conteúdo do website se adapta corretamente a qualquer ecrã)
a) Um website com um *responsive design* é uma boa ideia.
b) Eu acredito que todos os websites deveriam ter um *responsive design.*
c) Se um website não tiver um *responsive design,* não irei fazer nenhuma compra lá.
d) Usar o meu telefone/tablet para fazer uma compra online é uma boa ideia.
e) Prefiro fazer uma compra online no meu telefone/tablet do que no meu computador/portátil.
f) Prefiro fazer uma compra online no meu computador/portátil fo que no meu telefone/tablet.

6. COMPORTAMENTO DE COMPRA ONLINE

Por favor indique, numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- discordo totalmente; 5- concordo totalmente) o nível de concordância com as seguintes frases:

6.1.Crenças na compra online
a) Usar a internet para fazer as minhas compras é uma boa ideia.
b) A minha opinião geral no comércio eletrónico é positiva.
c) Usar a internet para comprar um produto/serviço parece-me uma ideia inteligente.
d) O design do website afeta a minha decisão de comprar ou não através do mesmo.
e) Prefiro comprar um produto/serviço de um website muito colorido.
f) Prefiro comprar um produto/serviço de um website com cores claras.
g) Prefiro comprar um produto/serviço de um website com cores escuras.

6.2.Importância dos critérios no design do website

Por favor organize, por ordem de importância os seguintes critérios de design do website:

- Usabilidade
- Conteúdo
- Aspetos visuais
- Prestigio
- Comunicação

6.3.Plataforma de compras online

Por favor indique a plataforma onde mais faz as suas compras online:

- Computador/Portátil
- Smartphone
- Tablet

7. DADOS DEMOGRÁFICOS

Para terminar, por favor indique:
7.1.Género

- Masculino
- Feminino

7.2.Idade: _____

7.3.Ocupação:

- Estudante
- Trabalhador-Estudante
- Trabalhador em part-time
- Trabalhador a tempo inteiro
- Desempregado
- Reformado
- Outro:_____

Version 1 b): English to Portuguese

Filtro: Já utilizou o website booking.com pelo menos uma vez?

- Sim
- Não

1. USABILIDADE

Por favor classifique numa escala de 1 a 5 (1-nada importante; 5-muito importante) o nível de importância que atribui aos seguintes aspetos quando compra num website como o Booking.com

1.1 Facilidade de uso percecionada

a. O website é fácil de usar.
b. A informação é fácil e rápida de encontrar no website.
c. O website é fácil de utilizar para o utilizador comum.
d. A minha interação com o site é clara e compreensível.

1.2 Facilidade de aprendizagem

a. O site fornece clareza nas palavras usadas.
b. O agrupamento de dados no site é razoável para uma aprendizagem fácil.
c. O agrupamento das opções de menu no website é lógico.
d. A ordem das opções do menu no website é lógica.

2. CONTEÚDO

Avalie numa escala de 1 a 5 (1 - não é importante, 5- muito importante) o nível de importância que atribui aos seguintes aspetos ao comprar num website como Booking.com.

2.1. Conteúdo da informação

a. A informação fornecida no website está completa.
b. A informação fornecida no website é suficiente.
c. A informação fornecida no website é eficaz.
d. O website satisfaz adequadamente as minhas necessidades de informação.

3. ASPECTOS VISUAIS

Avalie numa escala de 1 a 5 (1 - não é importante, 5- muito importante) o nível de importância que atribui aos seguintes aspetos ao comprar num website como Booking.com.

3.1. Design de informação

a. As informações no site são apresentadas logicamente.
b. A informação no site está bem organizada.
c. Todas as opções, atributos e informações do produto são apresentadas no site.

3.2. Design visual

a. Existe interação (vídeo, demonstrações selecionadas pelo utilizador, etc.) no site.
b. O site permite adaptar eficazmente as informações para minhas necessidades específicas (ex: filtros).
c. O site tem um design profissional.

d. O design do ecrã (por exemplo, cores, imagens, organização dos conteúdos, etc.) é visualmente atrativo.

e. As animações do site têm significado no contexto.

3.3. Selecione, de acordo com sua preferência, como os produtos / serviços devem ser exibidos no site:

- Eu prefiro uma organização em mosaico.
- Eu prefiro uma organização em lista.

3.4. Atratividade das cores

a. As cores no site são agradáveis.

b. Eu gosto das cores usadas no site.

c. As cores no site são apropriadas para minha cultura.

d. As cores usadas no site são emocionalmente apelativas.

e. As cores usadas no site são interessantes.

f. As cores usadas no site são visualmente harmoniosas.

g. As cores usadas fazem com que o site pareça profissional e bem desenhado.

4. PRESTÍGIO

Por favor, classifique numa escala de 1 a 5 (1 - não é importante, 5- muito importante) o nível de importância que você atribui aos seguintes aspetos ao comprar num site, tomando o Booking.com como exemplo.

4.1. Satisfação do utilizador do site

a. O site é-me visual e emocionalmente agradável.

b. O site satisfaz por completo as minhas necessidades e expectativas.

c. O site satisfaz bem as minhas necessidades.

d. Usar o site é globalmente satisfatório.

4.2. Confiança do site

a. Eu posso confiar no site.

b. Posso confiar nas informações apresentadas no site.

c. Posso confiar no processo de transação no site.

5. COMUNICAÇÃO

Indique o seu nível de concordância numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- discordo totalmente, 5 - concordo totalmente) com as seguintes frases.

5.1. Informações de contacto e ajuda online

a. Prefiro fazer compras num site que fornece contactos e ajuda online.

b. Prefiro ter informações de contato e ajuda on-line muito visíveis (por exemplo, no canto superior direito).

c. Prefiro ter informações de contato e ajuda online acessíveis apenas quando as procuro (ou seja, na parte inferior da página).

5.2. Capacidade de resposta

a. Um site com design responsivo é uma boa ideia.
b. Eu acredito que todos os sites devem ter um design responsivo.
c. Se um site não tiver um design responsivo, não farei compras nesse website.
d. Usar o meu smartphone / tablet para fazer uma compra online é uma boa ideia.
e. Prefiro fazer uma compra online no meu smartphone / tablet do que no meu computador / portátil.
f. Prefiro fazer uma compra online no meu computador / portátil do que no meu smartphone / tablet.

6. COMPORTAMENTO EM COMPRAS ONLINE

6.1. Crenças de compras online

Indique o seu nível de concordância numa escala de 1 a 5 (1- discordo totalmente, 5 - concordo totalmente) com as seguintes frases.

a. Usar a internet para fazer as minhas compras é uma boa ideia.
b. A minha opinião geral sobre o comércio eletrónico é positiva.
c. Usar a internet para comprar um produto parece-me uma ideia inteligente.
d. O design do site afeta a minha decisão de compra.
e. Preferiria comprar um produto de um site muito colorido.
f. Preferiria comprar um produto de um site com cores claras.
g. Preferiria comprar um produto de um site com cores escuras.

6.2. Importância dos critérios de design
Organize por nível de importância os seguintes critérios no design do site:
- Usabilidade
- Conteúdo
- Aspetos visuais
- Prestígio
- Comunicação

6.3. Plataforma de compras online
Indique a plataforma onde você faz principalmente as suas compras online.
- Computador / Portátil
- Smartphone
- Tablet

8. CARACTERÍSTICAS DEMOGRÁFICAS

Para terminar, por favor indique:

8.1.Género

- Masculino
- Feminino

8.2.Idade: _____

8.3.Ocupação:

- Estudante
- Trabalhador-Estudante
- Trabalhador em part-time
- Trabalhador a tempo inteiro
- Desempregado
- Reformado
- Outro:_____

Version 2 a): Translated from Portuguese to English

Filter: Have you ever used Booking.com?

- Yes
- No

1. USABILITY

Please indicate in a scale of 1 to 5 (1-not important; 5 - very important) the level of importance that you define to the following aspects when purchasing in a website like booking.com

1.1.Perceived ease of use
a. The website is easy to use.
b. The information is easily and quickly found in the website.
c. The website is easy to use (in the user perspective).
d. My interaction with the website is clear and understandable.
1.2.Learnability
a. The website provides clear words.
b. Information is grouped reasonably to easy the learning process.
c. Menu options are grouped logically.
d. Menu options order is logical.

2. CONTENT

2.1 Information content

a. The information provided in the website is complete.
b. The information provided in the website is suficient.

c. The information provided in the website is successful.
d. The website meets adequately my information needs.

3. VISUAL ASPECTS

3.1. Information Design

a. The information on the website is logically presented.
b. The information on the website is well organized.
c. The website contains all product options, attributes and information.

3.2. Visual Design

a. There is interaction on the website (video, demos chosen by the user, etc).
b. The website allows an efficient information adaptation to my specific needs.
c. The website apparently has a professional design.
d. Screen design (colors, images, layout) is attractive.
e. Website animations have meaning in the context.

3.3. Please select, according to your preference, how products should be displayed in the website:

- I would rather have a mosaic design.
- I would rather have a list design.

3.4. Color Attractiveness

a. The colors in the website are pleasant.
b. I like the colors used in the website.
c. The colors used in the website are appropriate to my culture.
d. The colors used in the website are emotionally appealing.
e. The colors used in the website are interesting.
f. The colors used in the website are visually harmonious.
g. The colors used in the website help making it professional and well-made.

4. PRESTIGE

4.1. User satisfaction with the website

a. The website is visually and emotionally appealing.
b. The website completely satisfies my needs and expectations.
c. The website satisfies well my necessities.
d. Using the website is generally satisfactory

4.2. Website trust

a. I can trust the website.
b. I can trust information in the website.
c. I can trust the transaction process in the website.

5. COMMUNICATION

5.1 Contact information and online support.

a. I would rather buy in a website that provides contacts and online support.
b. I would rather have contact information and online support very visible (ex. top right corner).
c. I would rather have contact information and online support accessible only when looking for them (ex. bottom of the page).

5.2 Responsiveness

a. A website with a responsive design is a good idea
b. I believe that all websites should have a responsive design.
c. If a website does not have a responsive design, I will not make any purchase there.
d. Using my smartphone or tablet to online shopping is not a good idea.
e. I would rather make a purchase in my smartphone or tablet that in my computer or laptop.
f. I would rather make a purchase in my my computer or laptop than in my smartphone or tablet.

6. ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOR

6.1. Online shopping beliefs

a. Using the internet to shop is a good idea.
b. My general opinion on e-commerce is positive.
c. Using the internet to buy a product/service looks like an intelligent idea.
d. The website design influences my decision to shop or not to shop through it.
e. I would rather buy a product/service in a colorful website.
f. I would rather buy a product/service in a light colored website.
g. I would rather buy a product/service in a dark colored website.

6.2 Criteria importance in website design

Please rank, by level of importance the following website design criteria:

- Usability
- Contents
- Visual aspects
- Prestige
- Communication

6.3. Online shopping platform

Please select in which platform you use to online shopping

- Computer/Laptop
- Smartphone
- Tablet

7. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

To finalize, please state:

8.4. Gender
- Male
- Female

8.5. Age:_____

8.6. Occupation:
- Student
- Student-Worker
- Part time worker
- Full time worker
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other:_____

Version 2 b): Translated from Portuguese to English

Filter: Have you used booking.com website at least once?
- Yes
- No

1. USABILITY

Please indicate on the scale of 1 to 5 (1 - not very important, 5 - very important) the level of importance that you attribute to the following aspects when you make a purchase from a website like Booking.com.

1.1. Ease of use perceived
a) The website is easy to use.
b) The information is easy and fast to find on the website.
c) The website is easy to use. (User's perspective).
d) My interaction with the website is clear and understandable.

1.2. Learning Facility
a) The website provides clarity in words.
b) The grouping of information on the website is reasonable for easy learning.
c) The grouping of the options in the website's menu is logical.

d) The order of the options on the website's menu is logical.

2. CONTENT

Please indicate on the scale of 1 to 5 (1 - not very important, 5 - very important) the level of importance that you attribute to the following aspects when you make a purchase from a website like Booking.com.

2.1. Information content

a) The information provided on the website is complete.
b) The information provided on the website is sufficient.
c) The information provided on the website is effective.
d) The website corresponds adequately to my information needs.

3. VISUAL ASPECTS

Please indicate on the scale of 1 to 5 (1 - not very important, 5 - very important) the level of importance that you attribute to the following aspects when you make a purchase from a website like Booking.com.

3.1. Information Design

a) The information on the website is logically presented.
b) The information on the website is well organized.
c) All product options, attributes and information are present on the website.

3.2. Visual Design

a) There is interaction on the website (video, demos chosen by the user, etc.).
b) The website allows an efficient adaptation of the information to my specific needs (e.g. filters).
c) The website appears to have a professional design.
d) The design of the screen (e.g. colors, images, layout, etc.) is attractive.
e) The animations of the website have meaning in context.

    3.2.1. Please select, according to your preference, how the products on the website should be displayed:
- I prefer a layout in mosaics (mosaic images).
- I prefer a layout in the form of a list.

3.3. Color attractiveness

a) The colors on the website are pleasant.
b) I like the colors used on the website.
c) The colors on the website are appropriate for my culture.
d) The colors used on the website are emotionally appealing.
e) The colors used on the website are interesting.
f) The colors used on the website are visually harmonious.
g) The colors used make the website design look professional and well done.

4. PRESTIGE

Please indicate, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - totally disagree, 5 - strongly agree) the level of agreement with the following phrases, taking Booking.com as an example:

4.1. Users' satisfaction with the website

a) The website appeals visually and emotionally.

b) The website fully meets my needs and expectations.

c) c) The website fulfils my needs well.

d) Using this website is generally satisfactory.

4.2. Trust in the website

a) I can trust the website.

b) I can trust the information on the website.

c) I can rely on the transaction process on the website.

5. COMMUNICATION

Please indicate, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - strongly disagree, 5 - strongly agree) the level of agreement with the following phrases:

5.1. Contact information & online help

a) I prefer making a purchase from a website that provides contacts and online help.

b) I prefer having the contact information and online help very visible (eg in the upper right corner).

c) I prefer having contact information and online help accessible only when looking for them (e.g. at the bottom of the page).

5.2. Responsiveness (when the content of the website fits correctly on any screen)

a) A website with a responsive design is a good idea.

b) I believe all websites should have a responsive design.

c) If a website does not have a responsive design, I will not make any purchases there.

d) Using my phone / tablet to make an online purchase is a good idea.

e) I'd rather make an online purchase on my phone/tablet than on my computer / laptop.

f) I'd rather make an online purchase on my computer/laptop than on my phone / tablet.

6. ONLINE PURCHASE BEHAVIOR

Please indicate, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - strongly disagree, 5 - strongly agree) the level of agreement with the following phrases:

6.1. Beliefs in buying online

a. Using the internet to do my shopping is a good idea.

b. My general opinion on e-commerce is positive.

c. Using the internet to buy a product / service seems like a smart idea to me.

d. The design of the website affects my decision to make a purchase or not through it.

e. I prefer buying a product / service from a very colorful website.

f. I prefer buying a product / service from a website with light colors.

g. I prefer buying a product / service from a website with dark colors.

6.2. The importance of criteria in website design

Please arrange, in order of importance, the following website design criteria:

- Usability
- Content
- Visual aspects
- Prestige
- Communication

6.3. Online shopping platform

Please indicate the platform where you most make your purchases online:

- Computer/Laptop
- Smartphone
- Tablet

7. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

To finish, please indicate:

7.1.Gender:

- Male
- Female

7.2.Age: ＿＿＿

7.3.Occupation:

- Student
- Student-worker
- Part-time worker
- Full-time worker
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other:＿＿＿＿＿

Table 4
Hypotheses results sum up.

Investigation Hypotheses	Test T hypothesis	Levene's test significance	T-Test significance	Conclusion
H1: Men and women differ when evaluating the design criteria that they believe is most important on DMO websites.	Frequency analysis with crosstabs (SPSS)			There are gender differences
H2: Women prefer lighter colors on DMO websites	H0: There are no gender differences H1: There are gender differences	.539	.540	Reject H1
H3: Women give a higher importance to easy to use DMOs websites.	H0: There are no gender differences H1: There are gender differences	.002	.000	Reject H0
H4: Men give lower importance to the learnability of DMOs websites.	H0: There are no gender differences H1: There are gender differences	.046	.339	Reject H1
H5: Men give more importance to professionally designed DMO websites.	H0: There are no gender differences H1: There are gender differences	.085	.618	Reject H1
H6: Women give more importance to trust on DMO websites.	H0: There are no gender differences H1: There are gender differences	.817	.967	Reject H1

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