

Usability Testing for Recipe Sites

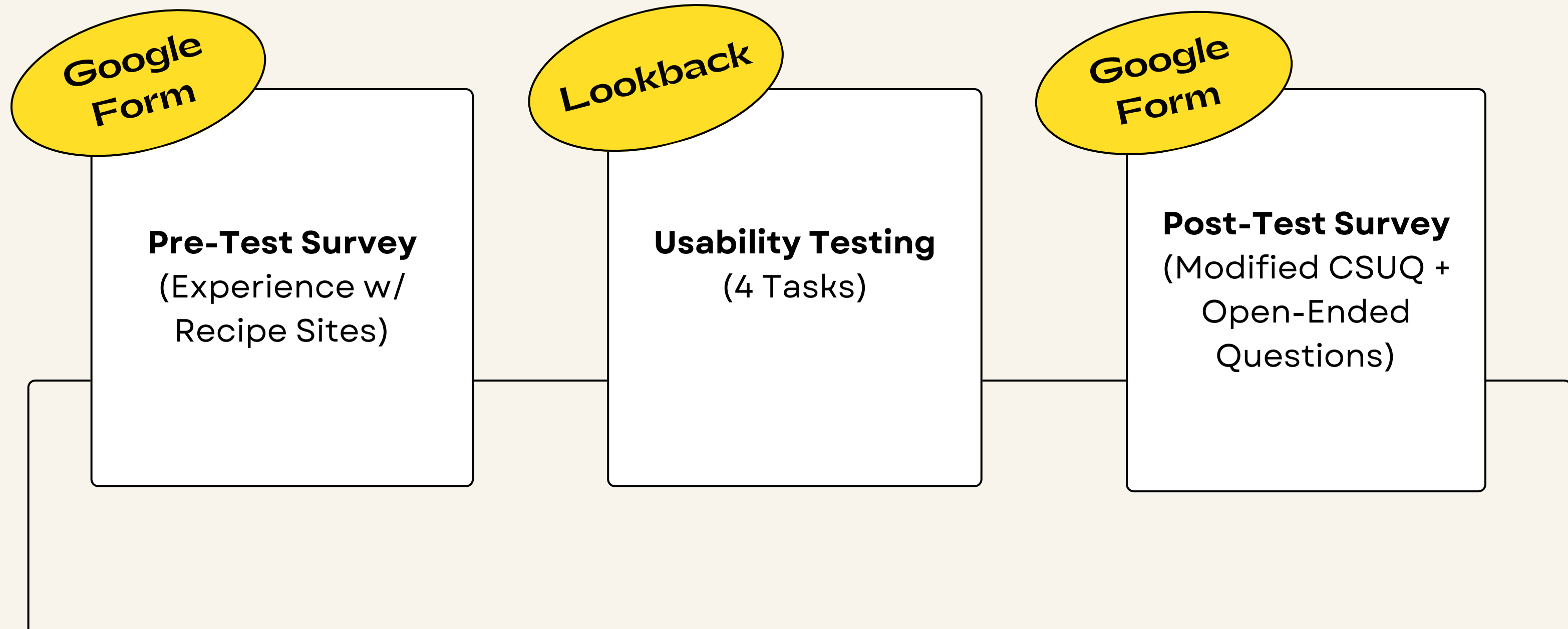
Aimée Wilkerson, Spring 2024



Sites Tested



Instruments & Procedures



Participants



User A

- 60-year old, Black Woman
- 3-5 times a month
- Uses recipe sites to find new ways to use ingredients and new twists



User B

- 33-year old, Latino Man
- 6+ times a month
- Uses recipe sites for meal prepping, leftovers, and special occasions

Usability Tasks

Task 1

First Impressions:
2 minutes on the homepage

Task 2

Specific Task:
Locate nutritional, comment, serving size, equipment, and share features on a bbq chicken pizza recipe

Task 3

Open-Ended:
Locate any vegetarian recipe with a cook time of 45 minutes or less

Task 4

Open-Ended:
Explore any parts of the website of interest

Findings: Information Design

Food Network

Pros

- Clear, distinct sections for ingredients and directions sections
- Big and bolded numbers to steps
- Variety of recipes to choose from

Cons

- Recipe information was inconsistently displayed
- Names of categories on homepage felt vague to user B (ex: “Fill up your table” and “Cooking from your Pantry”)

Budget Bytes

Pros

- Provided pricing information
- Strong visual hierarchy with bolded subheadings and border lines distinguishing sections

Cons

- Mixed feelings on information overload
 - Long texts before getting to recipe ingredients and directions
- Didn't like the limited recipes available on the site
- Had to open the recipe to see the cook time

Food Network

Vague
category

Fill Your Table



Lemon Pasta Pronto
★★★★★ 61



Salad-Stuffed Peppers
★★★★★ 10



One-Pan Pork Tenderloin
★★★★★ 5



Salmon Cakes
★★★★★ 481



The Best Scalloped Potatoes
★★★★★ 185



Beans Parmesan
★★★★★ 2



Mediterranean Baked Haddock
★★★★★ 25



Chicken Enchiladas
★★★★★ 227



Risotto with Asparagus
★★★★★ 18

Budget Bytes

LATEST RECIPES



PORCUPINE MEATBALLS
\$11.34 RECIPE / \$1.89 SERVING



MEDITERRANEAN LENTIL SOUP
\$7.59 RECIPE / \$1.08 SERVING



AIR FRYER POTATOES
\$3.60 RECIPE / \$0.90 SERVING

MORE RECENT RECIPES



UNDER \$10



CHICKEN



PASTA



ONE POT MEALS



VEGETARIAN



SLOW COOKER



QUICK



DESSERT



ALL RECIPES

Clear &
Specific
Categories

Findings: Interaction Design

Food Network

Pros

- Search functionality allowed for user error
- Sharing features on the site
- Flexibility in how to view content (videos and/or text)

Cons

- Need to do “mental math” for ingredient measurement amounts when changing # of servings

Budget Bytes

Pros

- Servings calculator limits cognitive load
- “Jump to Recipe” feature to skip over recipe information

Cons

- Not all buttons matched user expectations
- Searches were not error

Food Network

No servings
calculator

RECIPE COURTESY OF SANDRA LEE

BBQ Chicken Pizza

★★★★★ 112 Reviews

Level: **Easy**

Total: **47 min**

Prep: **15 min**

Cook: **32 min**

Yield: **4 to 6 servings**

[Nutrition Info](#)

 Save Recipe



Budget Bytes

BBQ CHICKEN PIZZA

★★★★★ 5 from 7 votes

Get the classic BBQ Chicken Pizza recipe, plus other fun toppings you can add that pair well with BBQ and make your pizza even more flavorful.

AUTHOR: [Beth – Budget Bytes](#)



SERVINGS

4 2 slices each



PREP
10 mins

COOK
20 mins

TOTAL
30 mins



Servings
calculator

Findings: Interface Design

Food Network

Pros

- High visual contrasts with off-white background and black text
- Simple fonts
- Images to help select recipes

Cons

- “Distracting” pop-up ads located within the ingredients
- Inconsistent recipe interface design

Budget Bytes

Pros

- High visual contrasts with white background and black text
- Simple fonts
- Images to help select recipes
- Clear visual hierarchy on homepage providing a decluttered layout
- Consistent recipe layout


Cons

- Delayed pop-up ads on the screen


Food Network

Irrelevant
ads

Ingredients:

- ☒ Deselect All
- ☒ 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ☒ 1/2 pound chicken tenders
- 
- ☒ 2/3 cup barbecue sauce (recommended: Bullseye Original)
- ☒ Flour, for dusting surface

Budget Bytes




Recipes + Spring Recipes Popular + Meal Plans About +

BBQ CHICKEN PIZZA


★★★★★ 5 from 7 votes

Get the classic BBQ Chicken Pizza recipe, plus other fun toppings you can add that pair well with BBQ and make your pizza even more flavorful.


AUTHOR: [Beth – Budget Bytes](#)

 **SERVINGS**


2 slices each

 **PREP**

10 mins

 **COOK**

20 mins

 **TOTAL**

30 mins

SAVE RECIPE

PRINT RECIPE

☐ **Cook Mode** Prevent your screen from going dark


INGREDIENTS

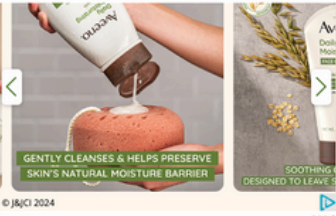
Quick BBQ Chicken*


- 1 boneless, skinless chicken breast (about ¾ lb.) (\$3.22)
- ½ tsp **smoked paprika** (\$0.05)
- ¼ tsp **garlic powder** (\$0.02)
- ¼ tsp salt (\$0.02)
- ¼ tsp pepper (\$0.02)
- ½ Tbsp cooking oil (\$0.04)
- ¼ cup **BBQ sauce** (\$0.11)

Pizza

ADVERTISEMENT







Distracting Ad
placement

Current Design 1

Unable to
change the
number of
servings

RECIPE COURTESY OF SANDRA LEE

BBQ Chicken Pizza

★★★★☆ 112 Reviews

Level: Easy Total: 47 min	Prep: 15 min Cook: 32 min	Yield: 4 to 6 servings Nutrition Info
--	--	---

Save Recipe



Mock Up 1

Servings
Calculator w/
ability to change
by typing and
clicking arrows

RECIPE COURTESY OF SANDRA LEE

BBQ Chicken Pizza

★★★★☆ 112 Reviews

Level: **Easy**

Total: **47 min**

Prep: **15 min**

Cook: **32 min**

Yield: servings

[Nutrition Info](#)

 Save Recipe



Current Design 2

Limited feedback w/
vague messaging and
lack of color that would
be a call to action



Sorry, but nothing matched your search terms. Please try again with some different keywords.

barbecue chicken pizza



Mock Up 2

Red messaging to alert to error; system recognizes spelling variations



!Did you mean? [bbq chicken pizza](#)

barbecue chicken pizza



BBQ CHICKEN PIZZA

\$5.43 RECIPE / \$1.36 SERVING

Get the classic BBQ Chicken Pizza recipe, plus other fun toppings you can add that pair well with BBQ and make your pizza even more flavorful.

THANK YOU!

Questions?