

Case Study | Hays Recruitment

Flow helped Hays pioneer interactive mapping technology for recruitment websites, and significantly boosted relevant job applicants.

The Brief

Deliver increased business efficiency and an market leading online experience.

In the Summer of 2005, Hays Recruitment contracted Flow (working with long-time design partner Splendid) to redesign their website as part of a broader customer experience initiative to ensure that Hays delivered an exemplary level of service in line with its position as one of the leading worldwide recruitment organisations.

Key to this initiative was the creation of a new website that allowed jobseekers to quickly and easily find jobs which matched their skills and aspirations while enabling Hays staff to more effectively put forward only the best candidates for a given role. To achieve this, the new website needed to:

- Provide an exemplary online job-seeking experience
- Improve the Hays online brand presence
- Increase quality of applications for each advertised role
- Lower the number of irrelevant applications

What We Did

Redesign the Hays.com experience using user research, iterative user-centred design & evaluation.

Flow conducted lab-based experience benchmarking research with end-users as well as contextual observation of Hays recruitment consultants to identify needs not being met in the current online recruitment experience which, if addressed, would give Hays an edge over its competitors.

Four key findings were fundamental to the redesign:

- Better quality of information in job advertisement enabled applicants to better assess their suitability for a job before applying, thus reducing irrelevant applications.
- Location of jobs was a key factor for jobseekers in determining whether or not to apply for a job.
- Providing a contact person for any given job raised the level of trust jobseekers had in the application process.
- Users looking for jobs in one category had difficulty finding similar jobs in different categories.

The final design redefined the site structure to enable users to browse jobs by category instead of by Hays departments, the use of Microsoft's Live Maps technology (an industry first) to locate job ads on a map, as well as defining clear guidelines for writing effective job advertisements. A key feature not yet implemented was a similar jobs index which allowed users to find relevant jobs in other categories.

Iterative usability testing, and regular interaction with Hays stakeholders helped us refine the ideas and ensure the site's usefulness, ease of use and alignment with business goals.



Hays.com Homepage

After 5 months, Flow and Splendid delivered an interaction and visual design specification to the Hays development team to guide their implementation of the site and other supporting internal systems over the course of the next 12 months. The new site went live in January of 2007.

The Results

Up to 25% more relevant applications per vacancy.

By employing *User Centred Design* techniques to help focus the online offering on customer needs, the team were able to successfully design a new market-leading website which delivered a vastly improved and appealing experience that helped job-seekers to more easily find jobs that really matched their skills and requirements before applying.

After 6 months, the new website was generating:

- An increase in registrations with Hays from candidates calling Hays consultants directly due to contact details being made available for each job add.
- A 12% decrease in irrelevant applicants for each listed position, allowing Hays consultants to deliver better results with less effort.
- Overwhelmingly positive feedback about the ease of use and aesthetic appeal of the new site

Overall site traffic was also up 12.8%.

"Following a UCD approach with Flow helped us make real gains in business efficiency and allowed us to deliver a genuinely useful, innovative website."

Steve Williams, Web Services Director

About Flow Interactive

Flow Interactive is a leading User-Centred Design Consultancy based in Highbury, London. Founded in 1997, Flow specialise in research-based strategy and design for interactive products and services across a range of channels and platforms including PC and Web-based Software, Websites, Mobile Devices & iTV.