

Heuristic evaluation offers long-term positive results

Challenge:

- Limited information made it difficult to pinpoint customer issues with a new dishwasher

Approach:

- Applied behavioral science expertise to identify customer painpoints and define real recommendations
- Took a collaborative approach to set priorities and execute primary recommendations

Results:



Positive online review comments increased



Customer star ratings improved from 3.6 to 4.3



Long-term positive impact affected entire product line

When early warnings and low ratings indicated potential issues with a newly released dishwasher, a national retailer's product development team jumped on it. Online customer reviews said the control panel was confusing and hard to understand, and provided little to no detail, making it impossible to pinpoint the problem, much less solve it. To help them better understand customer painpoints, the product team asked D2 to "evaluate the operation of the dishwasher and the ease and understandability of using the buttons."

Our approach

Applying customer behavior expertise, we conducted a heuristic evaluation on a similar model, with the understanding that relevant recommendations could be applied to other dishwashers featuring a similar control panel and functionality. As part of the heuristic, we analyzed available data, researched competitive designs, and reviewed alternate panel mockups from the product team. We shared key findings with the product team, provided actionable recommendations, and collaborated on priority efforts.

Several updates to both the dishwasher and related communications were ultimately implemented to improve usability and overall customer experience. The control panel itself was redesigned for a clean, fresh, intuitive look. Product features, such as the number of cycles, LEDs, and sound indicators were improved. New on-product labels with information about features were added, faulty error codes were fixed, user manuals were expanded to include more information, and user-friendly FAQs were created.

The results

Newer dishwashers showed **positive comments** about the control panel, indicating that it was intuitive, easy to use, convenient and had great controls. **Star ratings also improved from 3.6 to 4.3** between the first and second model. Five years later, product managers continued to recall the project and its **long-term positive impact across an entire product line.**