Weaknesses of an international system – how to use it?

- remote usability testing

Case study: Miles and More

About Miles&More

Miles&More is Lufthansa airlines' loyalty program – while travelling by their and their partners' planes, customers earn miles which can later be exchanged for various prizes or increased standard of their flights.

Miles&More is an integrated, multinational system available in many languages. We decided to test the Polish internet users' proficiency with this system.

Our goal was to verify the bottlenecks that were occuring during typical customer interactions with the Miles and More System.

We conducted research with Uxeria

Testing time: 1 day
Testers involved: 10 frequent fliers people
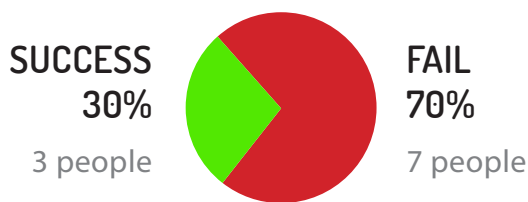**Used research tools:**

Scenario task
Users had to redeem their loyalty miles for an upgrade from economy to business class
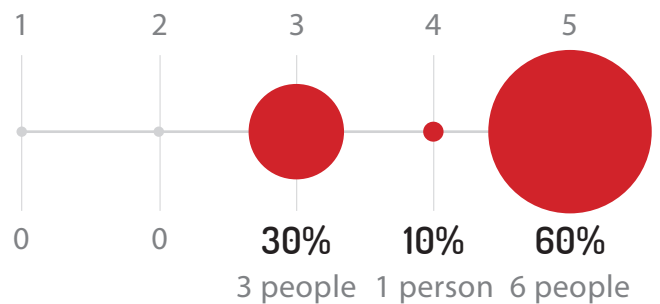
Survey
Our survey focused on the difficulty of the task presented to the users and our test users had to answer a number of relevant questions centered around around the task

● You are flying to the USA and you have already booked the tickets. You get 45 thousand miles as a gift from the Miles&More program. You know that you can use them to change your travel class from economy to business. Create an account in Miles&More (use fictional information) and try to change your travel class.
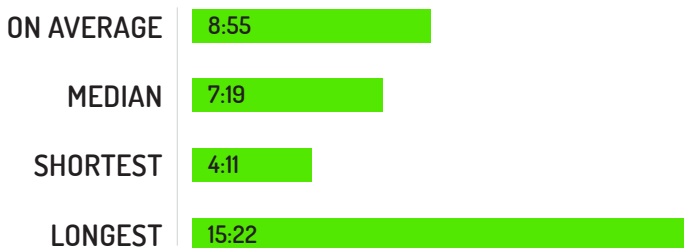
Success / fail ratio

SUCCESS
30%
3 people

FAIL
70%
7 people

Difficulty rating (1 – very easy, 5 – very difficult)

1	2	3	4	5
0	0	30%	10%	60%
		3 people	1 person	6 people

7 out of 10 people fail to achieve to task we set them of trying to change their travel class from economy to business.
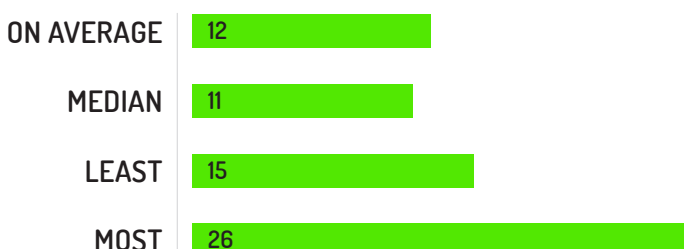
Our tests revealed that most of users have rated the task as being very difficult. The 3 people that succeeded in completing the task have rated it as being moderately difficult.

Time taken

ON AVERAGE	8:55
MEDIAN	7:19
SHORTEST	4:11
LONGEST	15:22

Our study found that the users took an average of 8 minutes to complete the task. One user spent 15 minutes on the task and eventually gave up.
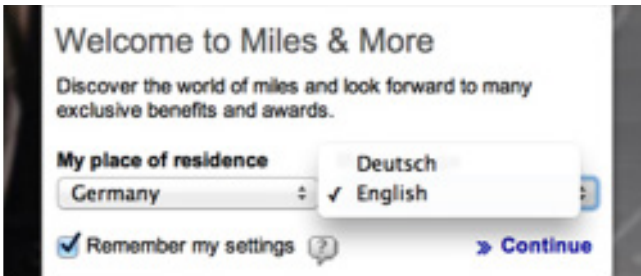
Number of subpages

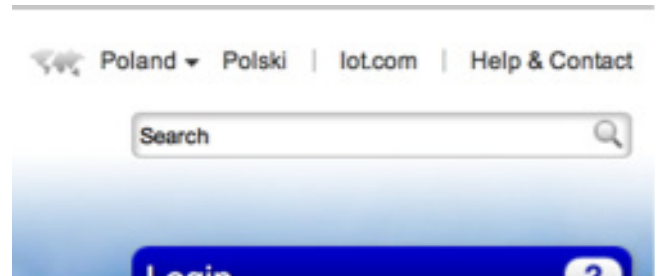| ON AVERAGE | 12 |
MEDIAN	11
LEAST	15
MOST	26

On average, users visited 12 pages, got lost and didn't know how to complete the task. The person who spent 15 minutes completing this task visited 26 subpages.

Functional problems

The way of changing the language to Polish was not clear – designers made it possible in two places – both of them working in an entirely different way.
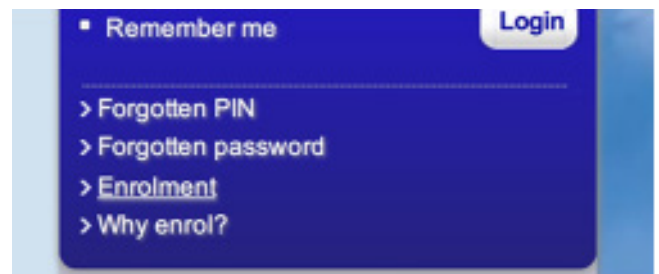

Users started on the page where it was impossible to change the language. It appeared that later it was possible, but nearly nobody found out how – since initially there was no such option, why would it be possible later?

Language options are confusing.
Entire website is in English while links "Region" and the one for switching languages are "Poland" and "Polish". Almost nobody was able to figure out how to change.

Users had great problems with understanding how to log in – mainly because of the unconventional category naming.
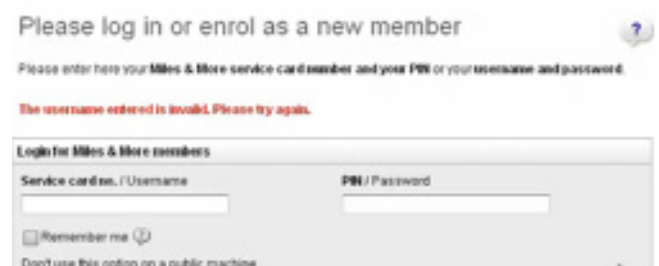

Users had problems with finding the "register" option. They have found exotic naming "Enrolment" instead.

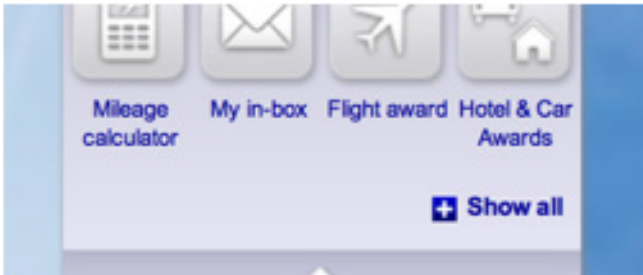On the login page users encountered various problems and pitfalls:

- There are two independent and confusing systems for the same function

- The one that requires entering a 16 digit card number is promoted

- The users that register can't find an option of log in

Logging in was often mistaken for registration.

After logging in, users had serious problems with finding the option of changing the travel class – it's hidden and almost invisible. After logging in, one of the users was looking for this option for 12 minutes in vain.
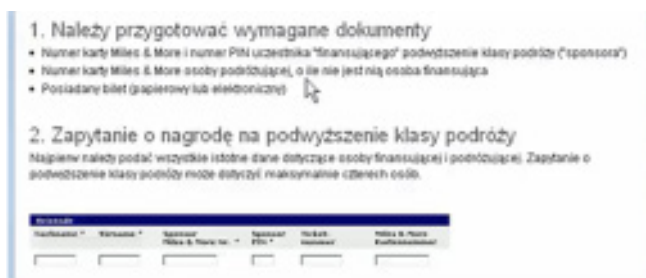

The only link to converting miles was hidden under the "Show all" link in the panel on the right.

During the tests one of the users exclaimed:

They must have hidden it on the purpose! They should pay for finding this option since it's almost impossible!

It was easier for the users to find "help" regarding the class change rather than the option to do so. The instructions were in Polish, but the screenshots were made in the German interface. It further confused the users.

Testers wandered all over the page in search for option of changing the travel class. Many of them reached the "earn miles" page and completed the flight information questionnaire in vain.

Link to changing the flight class was never noticed by the user.

It is placed where users expect to find options and additional information. Instead, links to secondary information are placed in a visible position, where users expect to find the main functions.

Furthermore, exotic naming can be found on the page: link to changing the flight class is named " Reservation of the prizes enhancing the travel class".

Summary

Airlines (like Lufthansa) realise that their targeted marketing has the primary goal of developing customer loyalty by way of the creation on any effective loyalty program. They use a coherent and integrated IT system for this purpose.

Unfortunately in this case the result is the opposite – users cannot understand the system, get lost, and performing the most basic task lowers the satisfaction and affects the reception of the brand negatively.
It was revealed in a single research that lasted one day only.

The main places that require improvement are presented below – introducing changes to these elements will greatly enhance the customer's satisfaction.