



## What users think of B&Q's new responsive site

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Last month, B&Q unveiled [a new responsive website](#), as part of a £60m redesign of its website and backend systems.

The new site was [reviewed by David Moth earlier this month](#) and to follow this up we decided to get some feedback by asking users to test the site, using whatusersdo.

A mix of desktop, mobile and tablet users were asked to perform two tasks on the site. The first was a targeted shop to find internal door handles and go through the purchase process up until payment.

As the new site prominently features sections titled 'Inspiration' and 'Projects', the second was to gather ideas for updating a room of their choice.

So what did the users think of the site?

### First impressions

First impressions of the desktop site were positive with users describing the bold design as neat, clean and colourful.

However, some mobile users found it confusing at first as they expected to be able to see product type categories up front whereas these are within [menus behind the hamburger icon](#).

Also, **one or two found the home page too long to scroll down** with the items featured on this page a little random.

### Adding items to the basket

Once into the main tasks the site supported locating specific items quite well. Some users preferred to search, whilst others browsed to the item via the menu items but all were able to find what they were looking for.

Adding an item to the basket from a results or category page **caused a little confusion for some as it is not possible to specify the quantity**. For this it is necessary to go into the [product detail page](#). However, some users did not realise this and assumed it was necessary to adjust the amount in the shopping basket page.



## Poor content structuring

However, off the beaten track of a targeted shop, the users began to encounter serious difficulties. **The site has some fundamental issues in the underlying [information architecture](#)** which means that casual browsing for ideas and inspiration is a very poor experience.

On looking for information to help with a room update, most users navigated straight to the **inspiration** section but from here the user journey is very muddled.

## Inspiration



### Interior autumn style for your home

Here at B&Q, we've got brand new décor collections that will lend themselves to your personality or preferences - just choose which one best suits you and your home; or mix and match our latest ranges for an eclectic look.

[View article](#)

### Latest Articles



#### Preparing for guests this Christmas

Christmas is the perfect time to add a little sparkle to your home,

### Popular Articles

- ▶ Cooke & Lewis Carisbrooke Taupe
- ▶ Getting down to business with

### Featured Articles



It is little wonder users struggled as the set up of these pages is poor. The inspiration landing page has one main image and style suggestion then three further headings: 'Latest Articles', 'Featured Articles' and 'Popular Articles'.

These are not the sub categories users are likely to find helpful. **For the user it is not important how this content is divided up internally**; if you're looking for ideas you're more likely to be thinking in terms of style types – e.g. contemporary, country, traditional – not how recent an article is.

The inspiration menu does have other style categories under room type sub categories but these can only be accessed after clicking into the main style suggestion, which you may never do if you don't like that look. **There is no information scent to lead you on.**

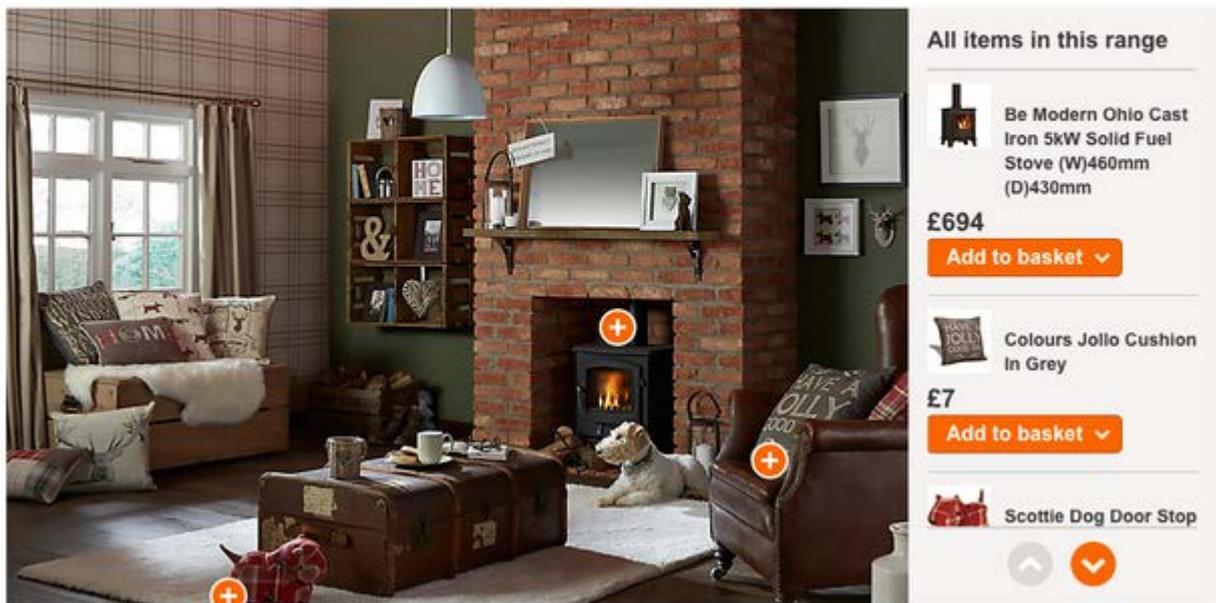
## Muddled navigation paths

Compounding this poor categorisation of content, there is **multiple cross pollination** of 'articles' across the categories which makes navigating through it and trying to make sense of it almost impossible.

For example, in the Bedrooms section within 'Popular Articles' there is a link 'Interior Autumn Style for your home' which does not show you a specific bedroom style but instead takes you back to the main feature on the Inspiration landing page - an Autumn style living room.

## Interior autumn style for your home

Here at B&Q, we've got brand new décor collections that will lend themselves to your personality or preferences - just choose which one best suits you and your home; or mix and match our latest ranges for an eclectic look.



Understandably our users found this frustrating.

## Unhelpful content

Furthermore, the content itself, once users got to it, was not found to be particularly helpful and tended to mostly concentrate on décor items such as cushions, pictures and door stops.

**Overall this section failed to live up to users' expectations** and was not a guide for how to makeover a room in a certain style.

It did not even state which paint is featured in the images which would have been both obvious and easy to include.



## Further navigation confusion

The repeat content and confusing navigation was also prevalent in the projects section.

This means that **there is little distinction between the projects and inspiration section** making it difficult for users to understand where to go for certain types of information.



## Projects



Radiators - new heat through your home

[Go to project](#)



Plan your loft project with a little help from B&Q

[Go to project](#)



Painting rooms the right way

[Go to project](#)



House painting, doing it properly

[Go to project](#)



Dealing with rain and flooding



Seasonal Garden Maintenance



Making your home safe and secure



Update your doors and finish a room

For example, following a link to 'The annual kiddie bedroom update' takes you to a page with general text about this subject which doesn't do much to get you started.

Clicking on the 'Ideas' link beneath this takes you over to the 'Inspiration' section. Users were expecting the 'project' section to provide more along the lines of a step by step plan but since there is already a 'Help and Advice' section in the top level of the navigation I'm at a loss to understand what the purpose of this section is as currently it just adds to the confusion.

## Text design

The text itself is **far too dense and lengthy** as the example below shows (which is much worse on a tablet or a phone). I doubt anybody is going to read all of this through and I am surprised that this continues to be an issue after having been highlighted as [something to avoid in web design for so long](#).



Ideas	<b>Planning</b>	How to
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Transforming the kids' bedroom can sometimes seem like a never ending task - especially if you're trying to keep up with their 'hobby of the month'. Best thing to do is keep the walls to a neutral colour, that way you can update the soft furnishings as quickly as they update their taste.

This space needs to be their personal haven, a place where they can escape to relax (or if they've been sent there!); a room that can help them concentrate if they've got homework but also let their creative juices flow as they grow and mature. It sounds like a handful doesn't it? Well, fear not, because this room is where you and your DIY skills can become really creative and get the little 'uns involved, too - an extra pair of hands is still an extra pair of hands, no matter how small!

Storage is key in a place like this as tidying up needs to be done with minimal effort; so shelving or storage units and boxes are your friends. The open cubed storage can work nicely, too, as it will allow them to showcase their achievements or items that they love, but can act as a little hideaway for bits and bobs as our colourful boxes fit in perfectly whilst adding bold hues and areas of interest to the room.

Flooring is also important in this area, hardwood is a smart option as it's easy to clean and wipe up any spills. Kids bedrooms really don't have to be as daunting as they seem to be - once you've flung open the windows and started airing them out, the whole thing becomes a piece of cake.

## Barriers to purchase: unlinked product images

Inspiration and ideas are all very well but the ultimate goal is to get people to buy products. The unguided task here revealed areas where the site failed to support this.

In this clip the user has come across an image of garage shelves which he likes the look of in an article about decluttering a garage. He tries to click on the image in order to view the details and price but it is not even linked.

## Purchase process

Once into the purchasing pages the process was fairly standard however there was one area which tripped most users up which was the password entry.

### Welcome

The image shows two side-by-side forms for user authentication. The left form is titled "Sign In" and includes a "Required" asterisk. It contains the text "To continue with your order, simply sign in below." and two input fields: "Email address" and "Password". A "Forgotten your password" link is located below the password field, and a "Sign In" button is at the bottom right. The right form is titled "New customer" and also has a "Required" asterisk. It contains the text "Simply complete your details below and click 'Continue'." and three input fields: "Email address", "Create password", and "Retype password". A "Continue" button is at the bottom right.

As David Moth predicted, [forcing registration in order to make a purchase](#) was not popular and to add to the frustration users initially failed to enter a valid password.



There is no visible instruction by default as this is behind a tip icon and so no user entered the minimum characters allowed first time.

## Conclusion

I'm guessing that currently most purchases either online or in store are pre-planned where the customer knows either precisely or roughly what they want. This site supports that task reasonably well.

However, if B&Q's business case is also based on increasing its customers range of purchases by becoming a place for advice and inspiration for decoration as the main navigation items would suggest then this site is falling short.

If it was my £60m I would have expected a more polished all round experience for all that money.

Link: <https://econsultancy.com/blog/65692-what-users-think-of-b-q-s-new-responsive-site#i.14a51hw1dvqfnr>