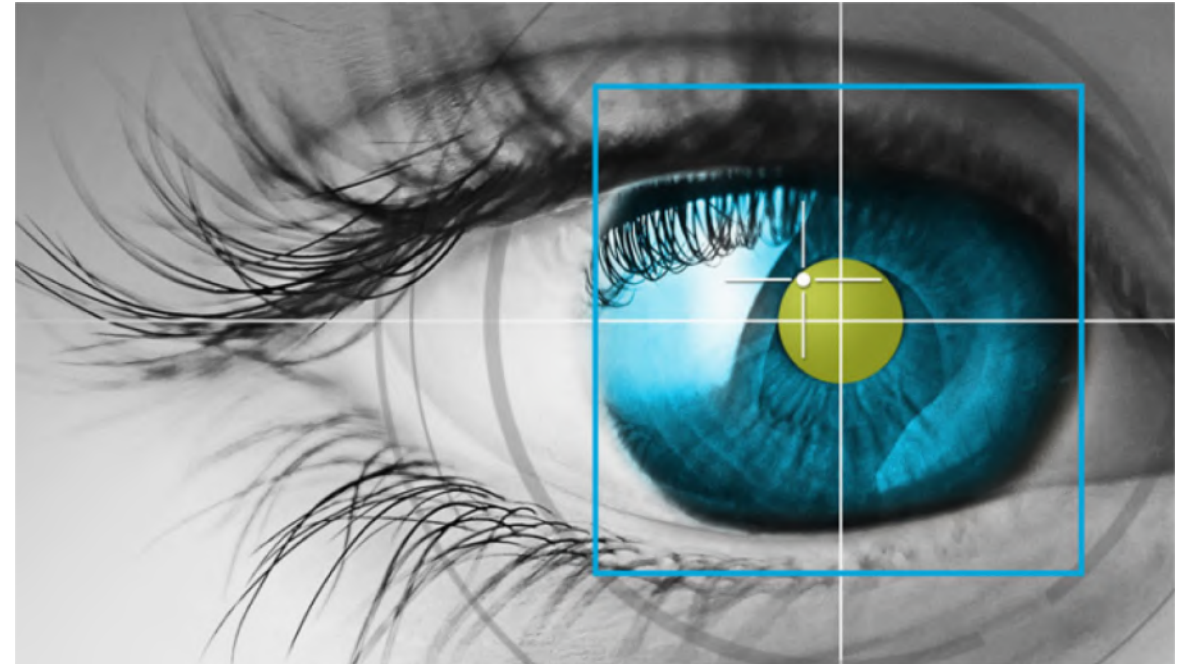


THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE WELLBEING OF THE OLDER POPULATION:

CREATING MORE INCLUSIVE WEBSITE DESIGNS FOR ALL AGES

Dr Rosy Boardman



DR ROSY BOARDMAN

Senior Lecturer of Fashion Business at The University of Manchester

PhD in Fashion Marketing & Management.

Research focuses on digital innovation in the fashion retail industry.

In particular, how technology can be used to enhance the customer shopping experience and improve social & environmental sustainability.

Specialise in eye tracking technology and qualitative research methods.



ONLINE SHOPPING MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Online retailing has grown rapidly because of its convenient nature, savings in travel costs, and the broader range of products that can be bought.

More people are now shopping online than ever before.

Covid-19 has accelerated the need for fashion retailers to have an effective website design / e-commerce offering.

‘Digital Divide’ decreasing.

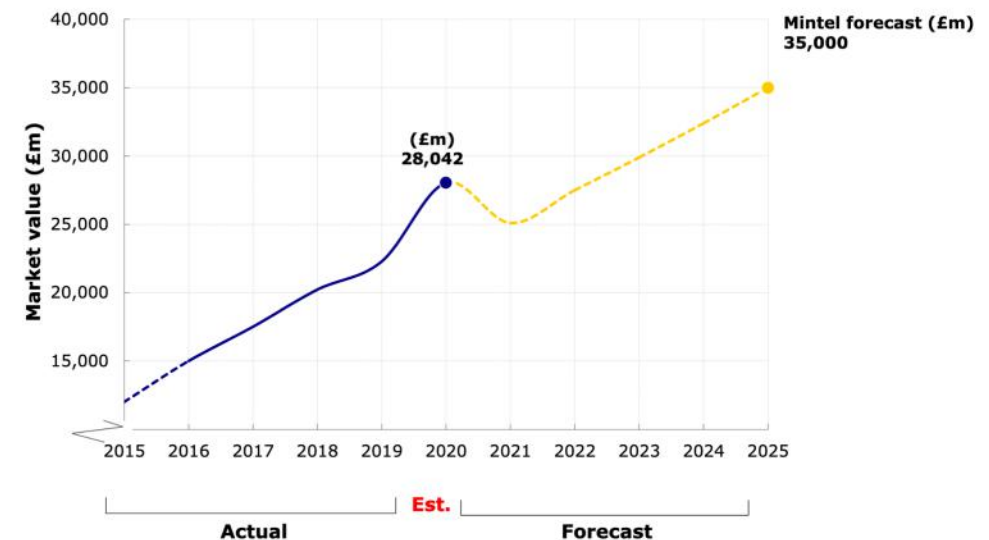
Record online sales since pandemic began

Online retail sales in the UK grew 74% year on year in January – the highest rate of growth since the coronavirus pandemic hit the UK in March 2020.

BY ISABELLA FISH
9 FEBRUARY 2021

(Drapers, 2021)

FIGURE 2: ONLINE CONSUMER SPENDING ON CLOTHING, FOOTWEAR AND ACCESSORIES, 2015-25 (PREPARED ON 17 NOVEMBER 2020)*



*Market size includes online consumer spending on men's, women's and children's clothing, underwear, footwear and fashion accessories
Source: ONS/Mintel

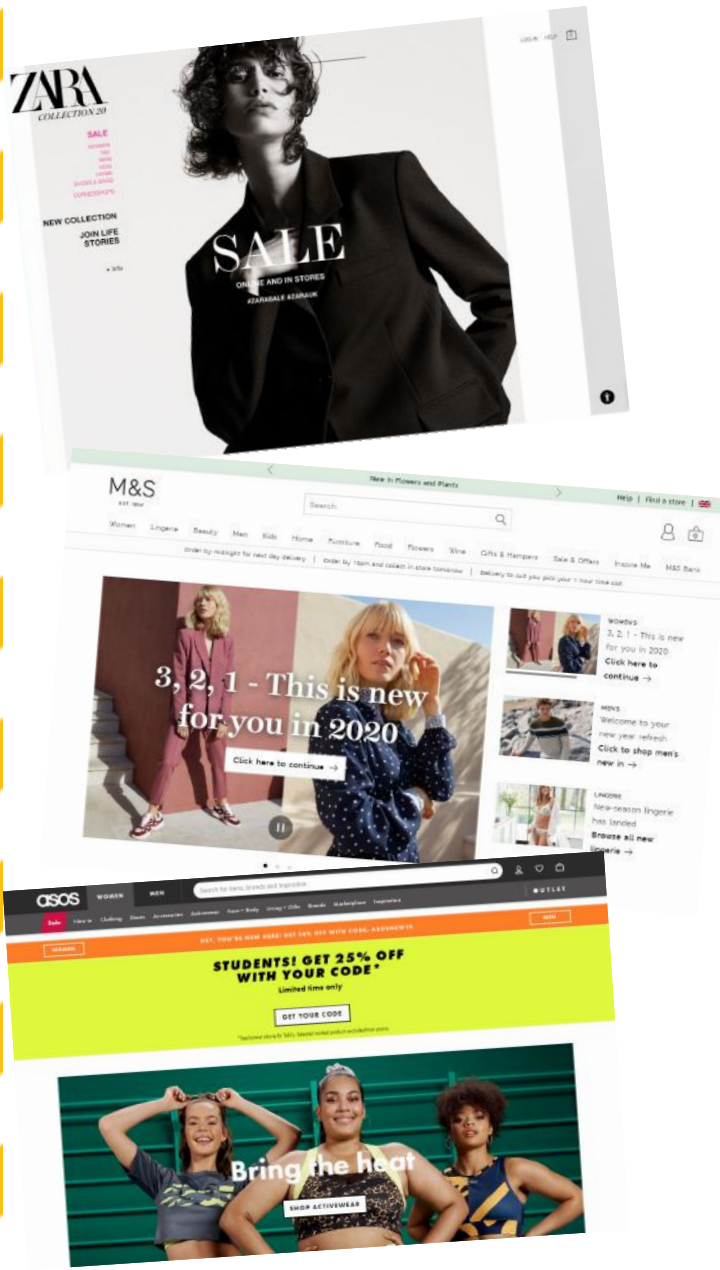
THE PROBLEM

The goal of fashion retail websites is to **support customers** to make informed **decisions** about products and to offer them a **pleasurable experience**, which encourages them to **return** (Huang, 2012).

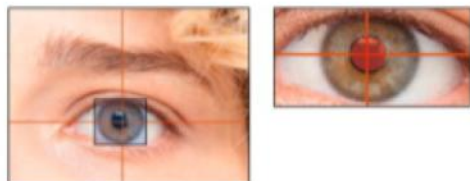
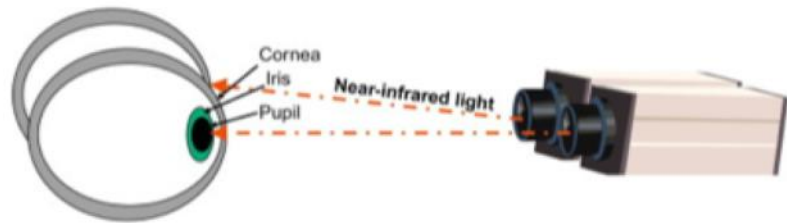
Websites designed for the convenience of the retailer rather than the consumer.

Most research into website design & online retailing based on young people (often student samples).

Need to see if the results are different for older users & if websites can be designed in a more inclusive way to make it a better experience for each age group.



THE STUDY: METHOD



- 50 Participants aged 20-70.
- All current, regular online shoppers with the fashion retailer (wide target market).
- Observed consumers behaviour when shopping on website using eye tracking technology.
- 1 hour interview afterwards about their thoughts towards the website.
- There was no time limit to try and make it as realistic as possible.

EYE TRACKING DATA ANALYSIS

Heat Maps

- Collective eye tracking data of multiple participants that show areas that have caught attention.
- **Red = Most Attention**
- **Yellow = Less Attention**
- **Green = Least Attention**
- **No colour = No Attention**



FINDINGS: OLDER USERS SCATTERED VIEWING PATTERN



20s



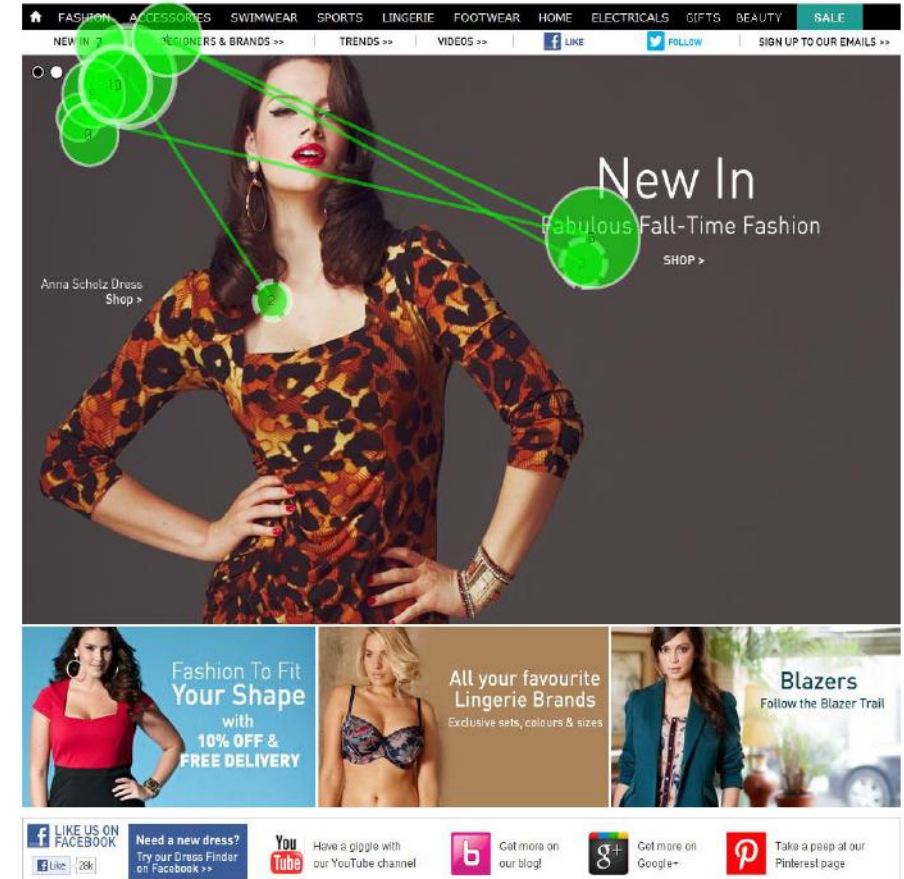
60s

FLASHING BANNER IRRITATING




Older age groups held a more negative view of the homepage banner:

'I must admit this confuses me a little bit, you know where it's flashing through? ... It's a bit fast for me.... every time I want to go on it, it flashes over to the next one... then I lose a bit of confidence then...' (60s)

“Distracting” & “Irritating”.



LIKED TO HAVE KEY STORE INFORMATION ON HOMEPAGE

 <p>My Account Sign-in to your account</p>	 <p>Store Locator Find your nearest store</p>	 <p>Start A Chat For general enquiries</p>
<p>Help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently Asked Questions Delivery Information Arrange A Return Product Recall Customer Services - 0333 777 8000 Check your service provider for charges Contact Us Accessible Site Website Accessibility Policy Accessibility In Our Stores Site Map Complaints Process Furniture Spare Parts 	<p>Shopping With Us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next Unlimited Next Credit Options Evouchers Gift Cards Gift Experiences Flowers, Plants & Wine 	<p>Privacy & Legal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cookies & Privacy Policy Terms & Conditions

Older users (60+) most positive about the information below the fold of the homepage.

Reassured that key information & contact details there if had a problem.



When scrolling down the product listings page older users' (50+) attention on products decreased



20s



60s

FILTERING BY SIZE & LENGTH IMPORTANT

- New In (8238)
- In Stock (30868) ?
- Back In Stock (93) ?
- Category ▼
- Size ▼
- Size Type ▼
- Brand ▼
- Colour ▼
- Collaboration ▼
- Personalised ▼
- Use ▼
- Sleeve ▼
- Style ▼
- Pattern ▼
- Price ▼

50s & 60s used more options to narrow down search - found menu more useful than younger users. Wanted to look at customised product selection.

Length was particularly important option to the older age groups.

Wanted to conceal more of their arms & legs. Suggests body perceptions change as people get older & tastes become more conservative in terms of length.

Capped / longer sleeves & on or below the knee for dresses & skirts were the requirements for older users.

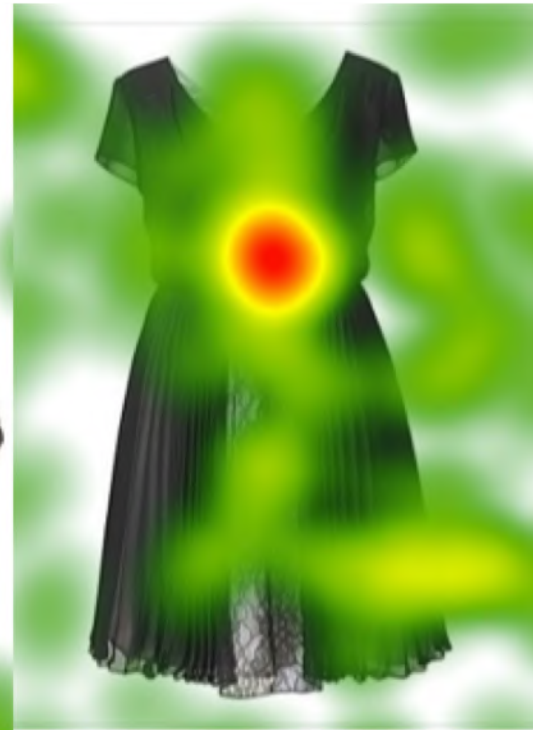
“...They categorise them by length which is vital for me because I’m not going to wear a mini skirt... it just helps me to do it very quickly so it saves time... It’s very helpful... that helps me get something appropriate” (60s).

On product page, 60s paid attention to mannequin image. Helpful for decision-making.

20s spent very little time looking at the mannequin image, often not choosing to look at it at all: *'I'm not bothered about that...'* (20s).



20s



60s

MODEL IMAGES IMPORTANT

- Both older & younger consumers spent more time looking at the model images
- *'I prefer the dresses on a model rather than on a mannequin... **Because you can see how they hang better, what they look like**' (P.15).*
- Emphasises the importance of including model images for retailers targeting all ages of consumers.

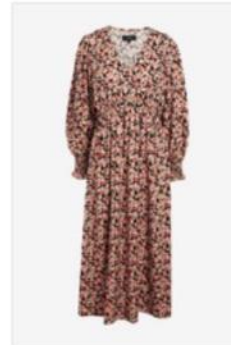


20s heat map on the model (left) and the 60s heat map on the model (right)

PRODUCT RECOMMENDATIONS IMPORTANT TO OLDER USERS - INSPIRATION

Age	% Of Participants That Looked At Suggestions
20s	50%
30s	40%
40s	80%
50s	90%
60s	100%

You May Also Like



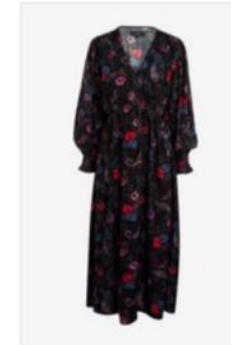
Next Animal Volume
Sleeve Midi Dress

£30



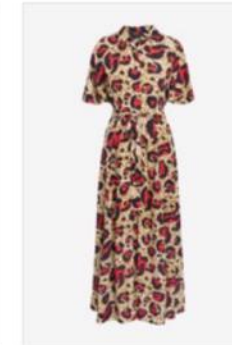
Next Black Splice
Floral Shirt Dress

£48



Next Black Paisley
Volume Sleeve Mid...

£30



Next Green Animal
Angel Sleeve Shirt...

£48



Next Black Mono
Print Zipped Midi...

£38

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

Age groups behave differently on websites and so retailers targeting specific age groups should design their website to provide the optimal online experience for their target market.

Older users take longer to navigate the website & more attention on navigational features. Suggests current design not as intuitive.

Therefore, websites targeting older users should **ensure that their navigational features are very clear and easy to use.**

Older users had more scattered viewing patterns on homepage. **Need clear design, minimal distractions.**

Older users more **irritated by flashing banners so avoid these.**

Older users **positive about the information below the fold of the homepage (e.g. contact details, delivery & returns etc) – reassuring - very important to include.**

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

On product listings page older **users' (50+) attention decreased as they scrolled down the page. More concise product selections / product listings pages needed.**

Filtering search very important to older users – want to look at personalised product selection – only look at items that meet their specific requirements.

Option to **narrow down the search by length (& size) essential for older users.**

Fashion retailers should **include model images** - most influential on consumer decision-making for all ages. **Mannequin image also important for older users.**

Important to **include accurate product recommendations** for inspiration for older users.

Findings will help improve customer experience for different age groups.

Future research plan to interview older age groups & also test different website designs.

READ OUR PAPERS...

Boardman, R., McCormick, H., Exploring How Different Ages of Consumers Shop on Fashion Retail Websites *Pending - Submission by November 2021*

Boardman, R., McCormick, H., (2019). 'The Impact of Product Presentation on Decision Making and Purchasing', *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 365-380, available at:

<https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/QMR-09-2017-0124>

Boardman, R., McCormick H., (2018). 'Shopping Channel Preference and Usage Motivations: Exploring Differences Amongst A Fifty-Year Age Span', *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 270-284:

<https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/full/10.1108/JFMM-04-2017-0036>

MANCHESTER
1824

The University
of Manchester



ANY QUESTIONS?

DR ROSY BOARDMAN

ROSY.BOARDMAN@MANCHESTER.AC.UK