

SENSATIONAIL®

Site Description & Competitive Analysis

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Executive Summary

This report critically analyzes the usability of SensatioNail.com, detailing recommendations for a redesign. Recommendations consider business, user, and marketing requirements and are supported with data from comparative analysis, a card sort activity, and usability testing. An interview script, survey template, and additional testing recommendations are also included for further testing.

The comparative analysis, card sort, and usability testing show that information architecture and hierarchy are the primary barriers for users. The comparative analysis considers three gel nail polish competitors, focusing on unique aspects of their sites and noting whether they are e-commerce, have a blog, or include video content. The card sort was conducted digitally and asynchronously with five users ranging in age and familiarity with gel polish. Usability testing was conducted in person with three users who are digital natives with an in-depth understanding of technology and no experience with gel polish.

When interacting with the site, users struggle to find products and information critical for new and returning customers, ranging from how gel polish works to what nail tools SensatioNail offers. In the card sort activity, a separate set of users grouped items to match their mental models. According to the results from the card sorting activity, the hierarchy should be as follows:

Category	Items in Category
Home Page	Popular products, content such as tutorial videos and nail art examples, testimonials, UGC, starter kits and general gel polish information
About	UGC, customer service and FAQs, and return policy
Shop	Products (base coat / top coat, gel polish, remover, primer, and kits), recommended for you, and collections
Nail the Look	How-to videos, virtual try-on, nail art examples, basic information about gel polish
Account	Profile information, orders, recurring orders, wish lists / favorite products, recommended for you, return policy

Additional changes include:

- Adding a link to FAQs in the global navigation
- Using color to draw attention to products and break up the page
- Include more product photography and real images of SensatioNail polish on models throughout the site and on product pages
- Adjust margins and padding so text does not exceed 70 characters per line
- Converting to e-commerce to increase conversion
- Fix previews of UGC

Peel Off Formula



 <p>Sensational Peel Off Formula Gel Nail Polish Primer Refill</p> <p>amazon \$11.99</p> <p>View Deal </p>	 <p>Sensational Peel Off Formula Gel Nail Polish Base Coat</p> <p>amazon \$11.99</p> <p>View Deal </p>	 <p>Sensational Peel Off Formula Gel Nail Top Coat Refill</p> <p>amazon \$15.36</p> <p>View Deal </p>	 <p>Sensational Peel Off Formula Starter Kit Nude Mood</p> <p>amazon \$44.99</p> <p>View Deal </p>
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<p>Chrome + Top Coat Duo Pack</p> <p>amazon</p> <p>Walmart \$8.88</p>	<p>Chrome + Top Coat Duo Pack</p> <p>amazon</p> <p>Walmart \$8.88</p>	<p>Click Flick</p> <p>amazon \$7.99</p> <p>Walmart \$7.88</p>	<p>Double Digits</p> <p>amazon</p> <p>Walmart \$7.88</p>

 <p>Nail Shield 2-in-1 Nail Protection</p> <p>amazon \$6.34</p> <p>Walmart \$6.99</p>	 <p>Pulish Remover</p> <p>amazon \$5.99</p> <p>Walmart \$8.81</p>	 <p>Removal Kit</p> <p>amazon</p> <p>Walmart \$6.50</p>	 <p>New SensatioNail Gel Led Lamp</p> <p>amazon \$14.00</p> <p>Walmart \$19.99</p>
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Three customer testimonials for Sensational nail polish are displayed in a row. Each testimonial includes a small image of hands with painted nails, a quote, and the customer's social media handle.

- 

"Sensational is so easy to use at home. The outcome looks completely professional!"

@nails_by_sizze
- 

"I used my new Sensational gel polishes and I'm in love!"

@ylisainpink
- 

"I love that I can get salon quality nails at home using my Pink Chiffon Gel Nail Starter Kit from Sensational."

@bsty4egrimoires_160

Tag #sensational on Instagram to showcase your manicure on our site!

Get all the latest information on Events, Sales and Offers. Sign up for newsletter today.

email address

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Company Description

SensationNail is a gel nail polish brand that offers a range of products, from individually sold polishes to complete kits for the best application experience. Kits include the polish, base and top coat, and an LED lamp to cure the gel. SensationNail products come in a classic formula and a peel-off formula for easy removal. SensationNail's offerings are unique because they provide salon-quality, glossy, chip-resistant finish at home.

Site Description

[Sensationnail.com](https://sensationnail.com)

The homepage of SensationNail has a minimalistic and clean layout, displaying the latest and most popular products. The site is easy to use, with a navigation bar at the top identifying three categories to guide users in their shopping experience. The first category is 'Starter Kits & Refills,' followed by "Gel Polish," and finally, "Accessories." Each product is purchasable through either Amazon or Walmart and has a button below it that redirects the user to the product page on the respective site.

The last section of the homepage is testimonials from customers with images and #sensationnail. Unfortunately, the section is not functional, so the user sees a loading wheel that never yields results. The footer includes links to an FAQ, about page, contact information, and Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube.

The starter kits & refills page displays numerous kits and has categories to break down the results further. Subcategories include color, finish, starter sets, colors, essentials, and new products. Additionally, the results can be filtered by position, product name, price, and finish. The gel polish page lists each polish color. The starter kits and refills page includes the subcategories color, finish, starter sets, colors, essentials, and new products. The accessories page displays the four accessories available from SensationNail: a nail shield, removal kit, LED lamp, and remover. It, too, includes the subcategories color, finish, starter sets, colors, essentials, and new products, although they may not be relevant to the content of the page.

Site Design

Although the site design displays the product clearly, it is not very inviting and has somewhat outdated aesthetics. The brand colors,

black and white, dominate the page, which can have a minimalistic and calming effect but, paired with the nearly all black product packaging, made the site feel rigid and bland.

The site also offers very little information about the products. There is no information about the curing process, which is essential for successful results, no explanation for the difference between the classic formula and peel-off formula, and the breakpoints do not work well, making the page difficult to understand when not at full screen. More product photography would also be beneficial to show customers results and build a deeper connection to the product that a render of a bottle alone cannot achieve.

A somewhat unexpected feature on the site is the purchasing process for the products. Below each item are two buttons – one that says “Buy On Amazon” and one that says “Buy On Walmart.” Most product sites have e-commerce that allows users to purchase directly from the retailer. This redirect may confuse users and result in more clicks than necessary to buy the product.

Requirements

Business Requirements

The primary business requirements for SensatioNail include the following:

- Brand consistency and aesthetic appeal.
- User engagement.
- Building brand recognition and loyalty.
- Efficient payment processes.

Optimizing each of these points increases the likelihood of SensatioNail generating increased profit. Increased consistency in aesthetics solidifies SensatioNail, encouraging users to trust the brand while decreasing doubts about product quality. User engagement encourages familiarity with the SensatioNail, further increasing the likelihood of brand loyalty and overall feelings of trust. When users recognize SensatioNail and become loyal customers, they are more likely to continue purchasing their favorite colors and become more likely to try new products. Finally, an efficient and secure purchasing process ensures that the user will carry out the purchase.

User Requirements

The user requirements for SensatioNail include the following:

- Simple navigation.
- Clear yet detailed product information.

- Compelling product images.
- An easy checkout process.
- Mobile responsiveness.

Simple navigation allows users to find their favorite products in moments while also guiding them to discover new products they may find interesting. Clear product information helps users feel more secure in their purchasing decision without feeling like they have to work to understand the product. Including greater detail ensures peace of mind for those skeptical or wanting to know everything about a product before trying it out. Making information clear also helps build a sense of trust with the user. Compelling product images let users see what's possible with SensatioNail and what sets it apart from traditional nail polish and other gel polish brands.

Similarly to the business requirements, an easy checkout process ensures the user will follow through with their purchase and can encourage future purchases because the product is so easy to acquire. Finally, mobile responsiveness is necessary for a positive user experience on SensatioNail.com. Smartphone commerce is ever-increasing, with Insider Intelligence attributing 87.2% of m-commerce sales.

Marketing Requirements

Marketing requirements for SensatioNail historically focus on user-generated content but should consider strengthening multichannel marketing and expanding to omnichannel to reach a broader audience. It could also be beneficial to encourage users to create SensatioNail accounts to build wish lists, set up recurring purchases, keep a record of their browsing history, and save their billing and shipping information. This data would benefit the marketing team by better understanding the target audience and allow SensatioNail to launch marketing campaigns with tremendous success.

Comparative Analysis

CND Shellac

CND Shellac is a gel nail polish brand known for its chip-resistant formula with a glossy finish claiming to last up to 14 days. They have a patented formula specializing in easy application and removal without damaging nails. CND Shellac targets consumers at home and nail professionals.

Gelish

Gelish offers various gel polish products, including colors, base and top coats, and an LED lamp to cure the polish. Gelish claims to be the first gel polish packaged in a bottle with a brush for easy application, lasting up to three weeks. Gelish is available for both home and professional use.

OPI GelColor

OPI is a well-known nail polish brand with a range of colors in classic and gel polish. While this is a familiar household brand for traditional polish, GelColor is only available on the website for pros. OPI GelColor uses an LED lamp to cure the polish, which lasts up to three weeks.

	Sensationail	CND Schellac	Gelish	OPI GelColor
Unique Features	Testimonials, link to brand hashtag, redirect to third party to purchase products	Nail art gallery (need account to view step-by-step instructions), 160 shades available on the site or pdf	Themed collections with custom art inspiration, seasonal pdf publication on trends, virtual salon (customizable skin tones)	Nails by occasion (blog style), special gift products, promotions, and packaging
Design Strengths	Minimalistic, easy to navigate, strong hierarchy	Compelling photography, hierarchy in dropdown menu	Polish colors, names, and product ID's are easily identifiable	Quick view for products, closeup of color on hover
Design Weaknesses	Bland, weak breakpoints	Outdated style, margins are too large	Too many menu items in dropdown	Products load slowly

Core Features

eCommerce	X	X	X	✓
Blog	X	✓	✓	✓
Video Tutorial Content	X	X	✓	✓

Comparison

SensatioNail has a higher price point than traditional nail polish but is a highly affordable option in the field of at-home gel polish. SensatioNail is the only brand in the comparative analysis that provided the user with a direct purchase method. Unlike competitors, SensatioNail does not offer supporting content such as blogs or video tutorials that promote the product or guide users in attaining the best possible result. SensatioNail's site resembles a wireframe more than the other sites, but it is arguably easier to navigate than its competitors.

User Personas

These personas will guide us in redesigning SensatioNail's website because they help develop a deeper understanding of the target audience. By having a refined picture of who the website it being designed for, we can make informed decisions about the UX design elements that will resonate with each persona. Doing so will result in a more user-centered design that is tailored to meet the needs of our target audience, resulting in a better experience for real site visitors.

John Sandoval



"I'm so excited to celebrate Jean's birthday - I want every single aspect to be absolutely perfect and wonderful for the most spectacular person I've ever met."

Age: 46
Work: Full-time chemical engineer for an auto company
Family: Married, no children
Location: Brewster, NY
Education: Bachelor's Degree

Scenario

John loves two things in life: his wife and being a chemical engineer. Jean's 50th birthday is coming up and he wants to surprise her with something huge to celebrate. Part of his plan is a surprise party with all her closest friends and a customized gift basket to kick off this trip around the sun. They've been married for 23 years and John knows what Jean likes but wants to introduce her to something new that she can explore. Jean has been experimenting with fun nail polish and nail designs lately so John wants to find a fun and unique product for her. He knows she hates waiting for the polish to dry and, as a chemical engineer, is concerned about the chemicals in most brands. He wants to buy SensatioNail for Jean because there's no dry time and it doesn't include the "big 5" chemicals.

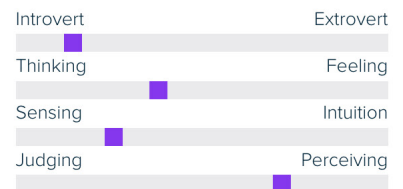
Goals

- Purchase something his wife will enjoy for her birthday and continue to use for years to come
- Find a gift that isn't too expensive to include in a larger gift basket for his wife's 50th birthday surprise
- Get a product without the "big 5" toxic nail polish chemicals (DBP, toluene, formaldehyde, and camphor)

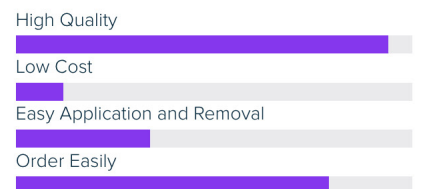
Expectations

- Gain an understanding of what makes SensatioNail unique
- Details on how it works and how to use it
- Guide on which products to buy for beginners, which products are necessary vs recommended for application
- Easily find popular colors

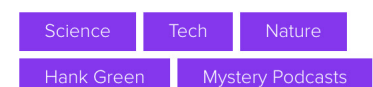
Personality



Goals



Interests



Rachel Graham



"I adore the look of a fresh manicure but don't have the time to go to the salon ever week or two - it's just too much to keep up with!"

Age: 28

Work: Budget analyst for medium size accounting firm

Family: Dating, 2 older siblings

Location: Woodland, WA

Education: Bachelor's Degree

and MBA

Scenario

Rachel loves her new job and is proud of herself for acquiring the position but the intense hours and move across the country have been hard on her. She's been trying to engage more in self-care but tends to be picky and has struggled to find products she likes. She loves when her nails have that freshly manicured look but doesn't want to spend the time at the salon. She also finds herself frustrated with painting her nails at home because she is still stuck waiting for them to dry while she could be doing other things.

Because of Rachel's apprehensive nature, she's hesitant about SensatioNail. She fears the gel will damage her nails because she's heard friends complain about gel polish being problematic. She saw that SensatioNail is infused with oils including avocado and vitamin e but still doesn't know if she wants to risk it.

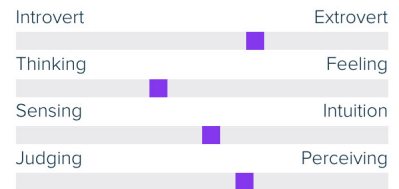
Goals

- Nails that will look great in the office and on the weekend but take as little time as possible
- Save time and money by not going to the salon
- Never have a day when her nails aren't painted – even if they're simple

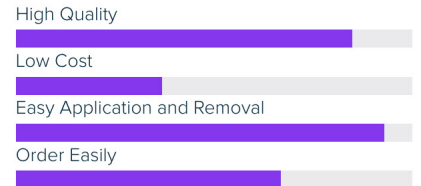
Expectations

- Easily order SensatioNail and have it arrive quickly so she can get started trying it out
- Be able to return it if she is dissatisfied
- Quickly and easily order new colors or accessories
- Color out of the bottle is always an exact match to what is shown on the website and box

Personality



Goals



Interests



Sarah Johnson



"I love nothing more than being a mother but I'm trying to do a better job of keeping up with the things I love these days."

Age: 33

Work: Part-time Assistant Manager @ Large Retailer

Family: Engaged, one child

Location: Chesterfield, SC

Education: High School / GED

Scenario

Sarah's number one priority is her daughter, Millie. Her fiancé Andrew ties in second with her many creative outlets ranging from large DIY endeavors to fun nail art. Millie is six and in preschool, giving Sarah more time to herself to spend on her crafts and with Andrew but she's still constantly on the go. When she doesn't have her hands full with being a mother, Sarah works part time as an assistant sales manager for a large retail chain. Lately, it feels like she never has time to do her nails because they instantly get smudged as she moves from task to task. Sarah's mother uses SensatioNail and recommended that Sarah give it a try because the gel polish cures under the LED light, instantly leaving you with fully hardened and extra glossy nails.

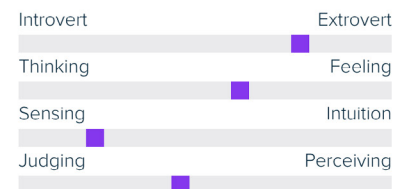
Goals

- High-quality and long-lasting manicure
- Cost effective (compare to traditional nail polish, compare to salon)
- Quick dry so she can get back to spending time with her daughter
- Kid friendly nail polish

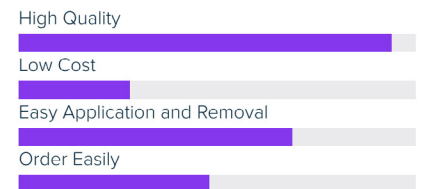
Expectations

- Easily re-order colors she's purchased in the past
- Find new colors that fit her personality quickly

Personality



Goals



Interests



Research question

In what ways can we update the interface to increase purchases and email sign ups while building trust with the user?

Interview

Hello! Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. I'll be asking you about your relationship with nail care products, focusing on both traditional and gel nail polish. Your feedback is very important so, with your consent, I would like to record this interview, so we adequately capture all of your thoughts. Is that okay? (Wait for response. If yes, continue. If no, thank them for their time and dismiss them.)

Great! Let's get started with some basic information about you:

Icebreaker

- What is your name and where are you from?
- Did you have any trouble getting here?

Introduction

- Tell me about how you shop for nail care products?
 - Which stores or websites do you use?
 - What do you take into consideration when looking for new colors?
- Do you prefer shopping for nail care products online or in person?
 - What do you enjoy about your preferred method?
 - What do you dislike about your preferred method?
 - What do you enjoy about the other method?
 - What do you dislike about the other method?
- What is your relationship like with nail polish?
 - What are your favorite things about nail polish?
 - What are your least favorite things about nail polish?
 - Do you have a preferred brand or color?
- How often do you paint your nails?
 - Why do you paint your nails at this frequency?
 - If its infrequent, ask: What holds you back from painting your nails more often?

Key

- What do you expect to see when shopping for nail care products online?
 - How would seeing the product and packaging impact your experience?

- Would photos and videos of the product in use change how you feel?
- Can you walk me through your process for purchasing nail polish online?
 - If they have never purchased nail polish online: Can you walk me through what you might expect to do if you wanted to purchase nail polish online?
- What factors contribute to your decision when shopping online for a product you've never used before?
 - If you don't find the attributes you mentioned, do you still go through with the purchase?
- How does the availability of customer support impact your online shopping experience?
 - What forms of customer support do you prefer? (If they need examples, suggest messaging, phone calls, and FAQ pages)
 - How frequently do you utilize customer support when it is available?
 - Does frequency that you utilize customer support vary depending on the form of support that is available?
- Tell me about your experience and comfort level with gel nail polish?
 - If no experience with gel, ask: Tell me about why you have not tried gel polish in the past?
- If no experience with gel, ask: Were you aware that you could apply gel nail polish at home?
- Have you ever purchased SensatioNail products before?
 - If yes, ask: What made you want to try SensatioNail?
 - If yes, ask: Did you purchase in a store or online?
 - If in a store, ask: Which store did you buy SensatioNail from?
 - If no, ask: Did you have any knowledge about SensatioNail was prior to what you learned today?
- Where do you go to find content related to nail care, art, and polish?
 - Would you prefer to see content from a brand or from an individual such as an influencer?
 - What aspects do you think you would like about content from your preferred choice?
 - What aspects might you dislike about content from your preferred choice?
 - What aspects do you think you would like about content from the other choice?
 - What aspects do you think you would dislike about content from the other choice?

Summary

- Of everything we talked about today what stood out to you most?
 - Why do you think that was particularly memorable?
- If they haven't used gel polish before: Has your likelihood of using gel nail polish increased with the conclusion of this interview?
 - If yes, ask: What has changed?
 - If no, ask: Have any of your opinions about gel nail polish changed from prior to this interview?

Wrap up

- Is there anything we didn't talk about that you would like me to know?
- Do you have any questions about anything we talked about?

That concludes today's interview! Thank you so much for participating; we are very grateful for your time and input. Enjoy the rest of your day!

Survey

Icebreaker

Where are you from? *Gets demographic base to gauge if we should target the site toward one particular group. This matters for the designs because if users are located in areas where shopping at Walmart or Amazon is particularly popular or unpopular we can gauge whether we should keep the "purchase at Walmart/Amazon" buttons.*

Fill in the blank _____

What are your pronouns? *Gets demographic base. This helps gauge if we should target the site toward one particular group*

She/her

He/him

Gender nonconforming / nonbinary

Introduction

How do you shop for nail care products? *Helps us gauge how much time/money a site redesign is worth. If most people shop in person, then the redesign does not need to be as extensive.*

In person

Online

Both

Neither

What do you take into consideration when looking for new colors?

Helps us understand what to prioritize and how best to present the products so they are most appealing to the user.

- Brand
- Price
- Availability
- Reviews
- None of these

How often do you paint your nails? *Helps gauge if the user is an avid nail polish user and whether we should target an audience that frequently paints their nails or is looking for occasional usage. This question also sets us up for discovering what they like and dislike about painting their nails.*

- Daily
- Weekly
- Bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely
- Only for special occasions

Key

I like going to a salon because of the high-quality, glossy finish that I struggle to achieve at home. *Determine if “salon quality at-home” is an effective selling point and if we should continue to highlight it on the site. Knowing more about this is beneficial for both design and marketing.*

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

How often do you purchase new nail polish? *If purchasing infrequently, we should prioritize kits to increase revenue, if more frequently we should prioritize individual colors so users have a large selection and always have something new they want to try out.*

- Daily
- Weekly
- Bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely
- Only for special occasions

How do you feel about shopping online? *If they already have a positive association, we can likely model after popular sites. If negative association, we should focus more on restructuring the process to create a positive experience.*

- Love it
- Like it
- Dislike it
- Hate it

What do you enjoy about shopping for nail care products online? *This helps us target one attribute of online shopping and ensure that it functions well.*

- Convenience
- Selection
- Prices

What do you dislike about shopping for nail care products online? *Helps us understand pain points and ideate potential solutions such as featuring shipping promotions or including more brand photography and videography.*

- Shipping costs
- Delivery times
- Can't see product in person

What do you enjoy about shopping for nail care products in person? *Can we emulate any of this online? Creating a web equivalent to a positive in-store experience could build trust and increase conversion.*

- Seeing the product in person
- Immediate availability
- Sales associate assistance

What do you dislike about shopping for nail care products in person? *Helps gauge why users might try shopping online rather than in-store even if they generally prefer in-store and gives us the potential to cater to those needs.*

- Limited selection
- Crowded stores
- Difficulty comparing prices

I am most likely to abandon my online shopping cart because...

Identifies pain points at our most critical stage in the process, allowing us to create a better experience, gain trust, and increase conversion. Knowing what deters users will allow us to avoid and actively combat it.

- The check-out process is too long
- Security concerns
- Difficulty finding desired products
- Found better deals or prices somewhere else
- The need to create an account

What is your relationship with gel nail polish? *Helps gauge user's experience with gel which will affect what they expect from the product and the site. For example, if they hate gel, they likely won't visit the site or spend extremely limited time unless we can find a way to draw them in and build trust.*

- Love it
- Like it
- Dislike it
- Hate it
- Have never used it

What factors contribute to your decision to purchase when shopping online for a product you've never used before?

Determining what information we should prioritize on the site to increase trust with new users and encourage purchases. This question can assist in determining hierarchy of content on different pages throughout the site.

- Brand reputation
- Price
- Reviews
- Availability

How does the availability of customer support impact your online shopping experience? *Determining if users frequently need or utilize customer support and if it is a worthwhile to make customer support more prominent on the site.*

- Greatly impacts
- Somewhat impacts
- Does not impact

What forms of customer support do you prefer? *Should we include a chat widget for assistance or questions about gel polish as many users may be unfamiliar? If not, we can determine how else they like to receive assistance as gel can be confusing for first time users.*

- Messaging
- Phone call
- FAQ page
- Other: _____

Where do you go to find content related to nail care, art, and polish? *Determining which channels we should focus on creating content for and whether promoting them on the site would be beneficial. Primarily addresses if we should keep/fix the hashtag linked to Instagram on the site. Also addresses the possibility of a blog or vlog with helpful content such as getting started with gel, tutorials, and addressing FAQ's.*

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Snapchat
- Pinterest
- TikTok
- YouTube
- Reddit
- Tumblr
- Nail care brand websites

Which do you prefer as the creator of nail care content? *Once we know where they like to find content, this will help us figure out which sources they trust and are more likely to engage with. If they prefer brands, we should focus on creating our own content, if they prefer influencers, we should look into brand partners and should showcase them on the site so users are greeted by content they enjoy and trust.*

- Brands
- Influencers
- Friends and family

Seeing videos of products in action makes me more likely to trust the quality of the product. *Gauges whether we should focus on creating video content and design the site around showcasing videos (such as including loops on the landing page and accounting for accessibility, readability, and responsive for desktop, tablet, and mobile).*

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

I like when brands send me personalized product recommendations. *Will help determine if we should focus on promoting email signups and type of desired content users might be interested in receiving. If we introduce the ability to create an account we could also use algorithms to create wish lists for them to browse of products they may enjoy.*

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Summary

How likely are you to purchase gel nail polish? *Overviews user's likelihood to purchase gel nail polish at all (whether in-person or online), once again addressing how much time, effort, and money should go into a site redesign. If less likely, we know we need to really focus on the trust building aspects.*

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Somewhat not likely
- Not likely

My primary barrier in purchasing gel nail polish is... *Identifies user's main reason for not purchasing so we can minimize it to the best of our ability through a combination of design and marketing.*

- Price
- Availability
- Lack of knowledge about how it works
- Concern for my nail health

The primary appeal of gel polish to me is... *Helps us identify what users most look for in gel polish so we can show them exactly what they're looking for when they land on the site which should increase conversions and reduce bounce rate.*

- Salon quality at home
- Easy application and removal
- Longer wear time than traditional polish
- Greater possibilities for nail art

Wrap up

Do you have any additional feedback? *Addresses anything we didn't cover and gives the user a chance to voice unique concerns not covered in the survey.*

Fill in the blank _____

That concludes this survey! Thank you so much for participating; we are very grateful for your time and input.

Card Sort

The purpose of this card sorting activity was to determine how users group information related to SensatioNail.com. Doing so gives insight to their mental models which, in turn, allows us to structure the site as logically as possible based on the target audience's expectations.

Recommendations

The following is the recommended structure based on the data from the card sort. This hierarchy will influence the option in the navigation and hierarchy of content on each page.

Category	Items in Category
Home Page	Popular products, content such as tutorial videos and nail art examples, testimonials, UGC, starter kits and general gel polish information
About	UGC, customer service and FAQs, and return policy
Shop	Products (base coat / top coat, gel polish, remover, primer, and kits), recommended for you, and collections
Nail the Look	How-to videos, virtual try-on, nail art examples, basic information about gel polish
Account	Profile information, orders, recurring orders, wish lists / favorite products, recommended for you, return policy

Background

SensatioNail.com is website hosting SensatioNail at-home gel nail polish. Users will use the site to explore polishes, kits, accessories, build wish lists, and make purchases.

This card sort was competed digitally and asynchronously with five participants. The goal of the card sort is to create a more logical information architecture from the users' expectations of the site.

Participants

I reached out to eight people and had five participate. I attempted to reach people in the target audience of SensatioNail, so I focused on people that paint their nails at home and who go to salons for manicures. To ensure I reached the correct audience, I had participants complete a brief survey describing their relationship with nail polish.

Question 1 of 2

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I shop for nail care products online	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do other shopping online	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I purchase nail polish regularly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I paint my nails regularly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel informed about gel nail polish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Continue

Materials

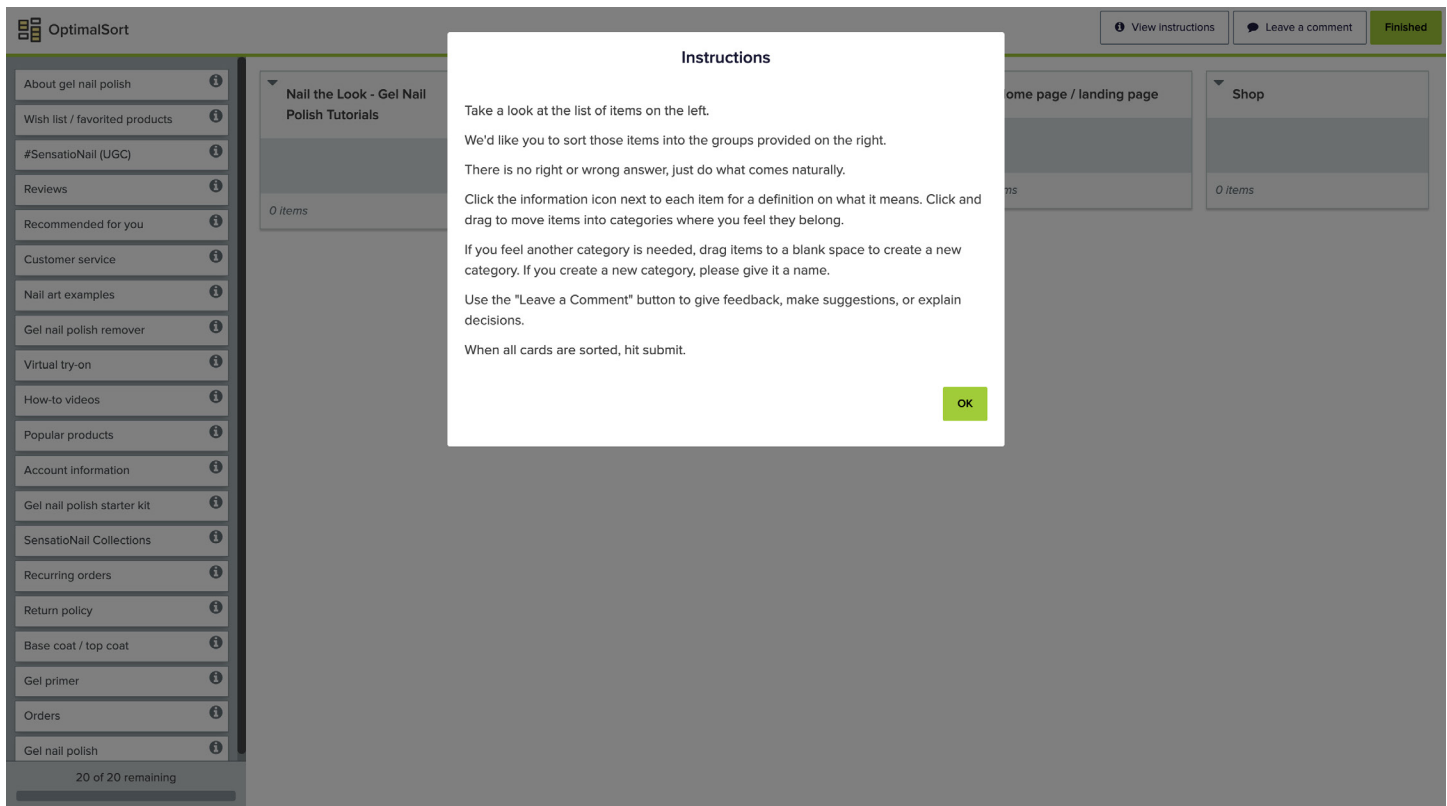
I used optimalworkshop.com to complete this digital and asynchronous card sort. Participants primarily completed it on their smartphones via a link texted to them.

Procedure

Participants received a message asking them to participate and then were able to choose whether they wanted to follow the link and complete the activity.

The card sort included three steps. First, users rated how they related to statements about nail polish and online shopping, next they selected their age range for demographic data, and then they sorted the cards.

Card Sorting



Each card included a tooltip with a definition so there was no question about what each item was. There were five categories: home page, shop, about, account, and Nail the Look – Gel Nail Polish Tutorials. Users also had the ability to create their own categories by dragging the cards to a blank space.

Recommendations

This table outlines the recommended architecture for pages on SensatioNail.com.

Category	Items in Category
Home Page	Popular products, content such as tutorial videos and nail art examples, testimonials, UGC, starter kits and general gel polish information
About	UGC, customer service and FAQs, and return policy
Shop	Products (base coat / top coat, gel polish, remover, primer, and kits), recommended for you, and collections
Nail the Look	How-to videos, virtual try-on, nail art examples, basic information about gel polish
Account	Profile information, orders, recurring orders, wish lists / favorite products, recommended for you, return policy

Standardization Grid

Each cell in this grid contains a number showing the number of times a card was sorted into a category. Higher numbers indicate more agreement among participants. These results indicate that users have a clear concept of what they expect on the shopping and account page. There is more confusion about what content should appear on the home page and “Nail the Look” which is unique to SensatioNail.

Total participants 0  5

Name	About	Account	Home pa...	Nail the L...	Shop
#SensatioNail (UGC)	3		2		
About gel nail polish	1		3	1	
Account information		5			
Base coat / top coat					5
Customer service	3		2		
Gel nail polish					5
Gel nail polish remover	1				4
Gel nail polish starter kit			2		3
Gel primer					5
How-to videos	1		1	3	
Nail art examples			3	2	
Orders		5			
Popular products			5		
Recommended for you	1	1			3
Recurring orders		5			
Return policy	3	2			
Reviews	1		3		1
SensatioNail Collections			2		3
Virtual try-on			1	3	1
Wish list / favorited products		4			1

This matrix shows how similar or far apart items are from the users' perspective. Items that are most similar are grouped along the right edge in dark clusters. Users expect to see products grouped together and information relating to their account. They are less sure of where specialized content such as how-to videos and social media content belong. The results indicate a clear separation between products and informational content and less understanding of the purpose of additional content.



Ultimately, the best way to organize the information is as follows based on the users' mental models. As expected, the 'home page' and 'shop' categories contain the greatest number of cards because users are most likely to browse on those pages. Other categories such as 'about' and 'Nail the Look' contain fewer cards because they have more specific purposes.

Usability Session

The following usability study was conducted with three volunteers, each completing five tasks. All users completed the test in person and consented to screen recording and audio recording of the session, allowing for a thorough analysis of their experiences. This study provided insight into the users' mental models and pain points when using SensatioNail.com. Descriptions of the users are below, followed by the script for the study, an analysis of the users' interactions, problem areas, and recommendations.

Participants

Participant 1 - Jack

- Session length: 18:04
- Age: 22
- Gender and pronouns: Nonbinary they/them
- Familiarity with computer: digital native, extremely familiar – all waking hours
- Familiarity with brand/site: None

Participant 2 - Vye

- Session length: 10:37
- Age: 22
- Gender and pronouns: nonbinary they/them
- Familiarity with computer: digital native, mild familiarity – all waking hours
- Familiarity with brand/site: None

Participant 3 – Melissa

- Session length: 13:01
- Age: 25
- Gender and pronouns: Female she/they
- Familiarity with computer: digital native, extremely familiar – all waking hours
- Familiarity with brand/site: None

Usability Session Script

THE INSTRUCTIONS

Web browser is open to Google

Hi, *participant name.* My name is Victoria, and I will walk you through this session today.

Before we begin, I have some information for you, and I will read it to ensure that I cover everything.

I'm asking people to try using a Web site I'm working on to see whether it works as intended. The session should take about an hour.

First, I want to clarify that we're testing the site, not you. You can't do anything wrong here.

As you use the site, I will ask you as much as possible to think aloud: to say what you're looking at, trying to do, and thinking. This will be a big help to us.

Also, please don't worry that you will hurt my feelings. I'm doing this to improve the site, so I need your honest reactions.

If you have any questions as we go along, ask them. I may be unable to answer them immediately since we're interested in how people do when they don't have someone sitting next to them to help. But if you still have any questions when we're done, I'll try to answer them. And if you need to take a break at any point, just let me know.

With your permission, we will record what happens on the screen and our conversation. The recording will only be used to help us figure out how to improve the site, and it won't be seen by anyone except the people working on this project. And it helps me because I don't have to take as many notes.

If you would, I'm going to ask you to sign a simple permission form for me. It just says that I have your permission to record you and that the recording will only be seen by the people working on the project.

Give them a recording permission form and a pen
While they sign it, START the SCREEN RECORDER

Do you have any questions so far?

THE QUESTIONS

Before we look at the site, I'd like to ask you a few quick questions.
First, what's your occupation? What do you do all day?

Roughly how many hours a week altogether—just a rough estimate— would you say you spend using the Internet, including Web browsing and email, at work and at home?

What kinds of sites (work and personal) are you looking at when you browse the Web?

Do you have any favorite Web sites?

THE HOME PAGE TOUR

Okay, great. We're done with the questions and can start looking at things.

Go to the site's homepage

First, I'm going to ask you to look at this page and tell me what you make of it:

- What strikes you about it.
- Whose site you think it is.
- What you can do here.
- What it's for.

Just look around and do a little narrative.

You can scroll if you want to, but don't click on anything yet.

THE TASKS

Now I'm going to ask you to try doing some specific tasks. I will read each one out loud and give you a printed copy.

I will also ask you to do these tasks without using Search. We'll learn much more about how well the site works that way.

It will help us if you can try to think out loud as you go along.

Task 1

You have never heard SensatioNail before and don't know how gel nail polish works. Find more information about what makes gel nail polish different from traditional gel nail polish and the tools you need to use SensatioNail.

Task 2

You are interested in purchasing SensatioNail gel nail polish but are somewhat apprehensive because you have never heard of it before. Find customer reviews of products.

Task 3

You are a pro with nail polish and have been doing your nails for years. You love creating beautiful designs but want some tips and inspiration and to see what other people who use SensatioNail have done. Locate this content on the website.

Task 4

You are interested in purchasing SensatioNail gel nail polish but are very health conscious and never buy nail polish with the big five (five chemical ingredients: dibutyl phthalate, toluene, formaldehyde, formaldehyde resin, and camphor). Find out if SensatioNail is five-free.

Task 5

You've seen people on social media use small detail brushed and dotting pens and are thinking of purchasing some for yourself while looking at nail polish. Find out if SensatioNail sells these tools.

Hand the participant the first scenario, and read it aloud.
Allow the user to proceed until you don't feel like it's producing any value or the user becomes very frustrated.
Repeat for each task or until time runs out.

PROBING

Thanks, that was very helpful.

WRAPPING UP

Do you have any questions for me now that we're done?

Stop the screen recorder and save the file.
Thank them and escort them out.

Analysis

Task 1

You have never heard SensatioNail before and don't know how gel nail polish works. Find more information about what makes gel nail polish different from traditional gel nail polish and the tools you need to use SensatioNail.

The users were unfamiliar with SensatioNail or gel nail polish, so this task was very realistic for all three of them. Two users struggled to find the information before eventually locating it on the FAQ page. One user clicked on the header image and found the information about the product. The product descriptions should be standardized because another user followed a similar path but clicked on a slightly different product and found different information.

Additionally, the FAQ information should be more readily

accessible. It is currently located in the footer, and participants noted that it is difficult to find and irritating to scroll to the bottom of the page whenever they have to look for new information.

Task 2

You are interested in purchasing SensatioNail gel nail polish but are somewhat apprehensive because you have never heard of it before. Find customer reviews of products.

At first, the users navigated to the testimonials. At that point, they were allowed to move on to the next task if they felt satisfied with the prompt, but each chose to continue working to find more product reviews. Each user found where product reviews were but felt frustrated that there were no ratings. Products likely lack ratings because they cannot be purchased directly through SensatioNail's website.

One user noted that the absence of reviews for individual products could be compensated by having one location where all product reviews are listed. The user liked the ability to follow the link and see all posts using #SensatioNail and wanted something similar for reviews.

Task 3

You are a pro with nail polish and have been doing your nails for years. You love creating beautiful designs but want some tips and inspiration and to see what other people who use SensatioNail have done. Locate this content on the website.

All three users looked for this content on the homepage because they remembered seeing it in their initial look at the homepage. Users also noted social links in the footer. They all felt dissatisfied with this task because the #SensatioNail previews never loaded. One user clicked on the throbber and was redirected to SensatioNail's Instagram, where they scrolled and looked at content. This user felt the most satisfied but had to leave the site to achieve such a feeling of completion.

Task 4

You are interested in purchasing SensatioNail gel nail polish but are very health conscious and never buy nail polish with the big five (five chemical ingredients: dibutyl phthalate, toluene, formaldehyde, formaldehyde resin, and camphor). Find out if SensatioNail is five-free.

Users struggled the least to complete this task. While some first checked the FAQ page, they quickly navigated to the individual polishes and found the ingredients in the description. Users noted that there should be more emphasis on being five-free and wanted to see it promoted in locations. Because being five-free is growing in importance and popularity, it should be prioritized and promoted.

Task 5

You've seen people on social media use small detail brushed and dotting pens and are thinking of purchasing some for yourself while looking at nail polish. Find out if SensatioNail sells these tools.

Users found this task confusing because, although it asks whether SensatioNail offers these products, they felt dissatisfied when they couldn't find them. All users looked on the accessories page and slowly went through other pages when the tools were not there.

One user took advantage of the search feature, searching for the tools in the task. This user also searched for similar devices and found no results. This user was the most confident in answering the prompt, saying SensatioNail does not offer the tools.

Problem Areas

The primary problem is that the information architecture does not match users' mental models, and critical information is buried in the footer. There are also issues with social content not loading and users being unsure of what is clickable and what is not.

Additionally, there is very little substance on the home page. Users felt that essential information, such as how gel polish works and its benefits, should be prominently displayed. The users also found that products and information on the site started to blend after the first few tasks because there was so much white and few colors to contrast and almost no separating elements.

Recommendations

The primary recommendations are to redesign the navigation, add more information to the homepage, and improve the overall hierarchy of the site.

Navigation should include a FAQ page link and the ability to shop all products. Because SensatioNail's products are limited, users should be able to see everything in one place. This layout allows them to comprehensively understand SensatioNail's offering while maintaining the ability to filter the criteria and find exactly what they're looking for.

Adding more information to the homepage helps the user better

understand what SensatioNail is in a short period. Assisting the user to gain confidence in their understanding of the brand and gel nail polish also increases their trust in SensatioNail, making them more likely to purchase.

Finally, improving the hierarchy will help users find information more efficiently and promptly. In many instances, the information was available on the page, but the users completing usability testing did not see it because the hierarchy is limited, and there is little contrast. Improving hierarchy will improve the user experience because less work is needed to find the desired information.

Usability Session Recordings

Participant one, Jack: <https://youtu.be/zYIV3BQbGNq>

Participant two, Vye: https://youtu.be/9-aVtrhW_pM

Participant three, Melissa: <https://youtu.be/pgreZJ7IKF4>

Additional Testing Recommendations

The A/B testing and empathy mapping are recommended in addition to surveys, interviews, card sorting, and usability testing. Conducting these tests will give further insight into the users' mental models and find pain points that may have been overlooked in the initial research. Both methods provide qualitative and quantitative data that will help inform decisions related to information architecture and overall design. Use the data from the empathy maps to inform design decisions in the high-fidelity prototype for A/B testing.

Empathy mapping

Empathy mapping is a research tool that helps UX designers connect with users and better understand their thoughts and feelings. Doing so allows insight into the users' motivations so we can meet or exceed their needs and desires. Before empathy mapping occurs, it is vital to know who the user or target audience is. For SensatioNail, the audience is people who enjoy painting their nails and are looking for a higher-quality manicure at home. This audience will primarily be female and between 18 and 65. Users can be recruited through an agency that will ensure they meet the qualifications of the target audience.

Recommendation

To prepare, create an empathy map with four primary quadrants: says, thinks, does, and feels. Be sure to include two secondary sections for pain points and positives. When users have been recruited, have them complete tasks on the current SensatioNail site and encourage them to think aloud. While they work through the tasks, fill out the empathy map focusing on the primary quadrants.

Each quadrant is essential, so they must contain accurate and relevant information. The 'says' quadrant should include what they say aloud and be as close to verbatim quotes as possible. The 'thinks' quadrant contains what the user is thinking; pay attention to what they are experiencing that they may not want to vocalize. The 'does' quadrant includes the actions the user takes. The 'feels' quadrant describes the user's emotions and feelings about the experience.

Once the users have been interviewed and empathy maps are filled out, look through them for overlap and notable information. Recording these findings on sticky notes will be most helpful so they can be transferred from the empathy maps to a clear workspace. Next, organize the sticky notes so they are in relevant groups. Finally, use these groups to provide data to inform design decisions and implement changes.

A/B Testing

A/B testing is a method that compares two versions of a website to determine which version is better. The difference can be as slight as a different color for a particular element or as drastic as a completely new layout. One set of users is exposed to a version of the product, while another group of users is exposed to a second version. For SensatioNail, one set of users should be exposed to the existing site, and another set of users should be exposed to a redesigned high-fidelity prototype. The results of A/B testing provide data on users' clicks and metrics that call attention to pain points.

Recommendations

Before the test can commence, it is necessary to define a hypothesis. The redesign intends to clarify the information architecture so users can find what they are looking for and make purchases. Therefore, an appropriate hypothesis for A/B testing is that if we change the information architecture to align with the

results from the card sorting activity and empathy maps, then users will have a better experience and be more likely to purchase products because the site matches their mental model.

Once the hypothesis is defined, it is time to determine the metric. Because we want users to find what they are looking for and purchase products, conversions should be the primary interest. Conversions should be expressed as the percentage of users who purchase a product. This method may be challenging because the current SensatioNail site directs users to third-party sites to buy products, but it would be optimal for testing a high-fidelity prototype in which SensatioNail is an e-commerce site. Secondary metrics may include heat maps and time spent on pages to indicate where users focus or are drawn to and whether they find what they expect.

Once the hypothesis and metrics are defined, the high-fidelity prototype should be developed. The prototype should include the information architecture changes recommended based on the empathy maps and card sort activity (see Card Sort page 19) and e-commerce capabilities. When the prototype is ready, run a pilot to ensure there are no bugs and to guarantee the A/B testing tools are working as expected. When the initial testing is complete, the real testing can begin and should run for at least two weeks to ensure statistically significant data.