British Gas

Boiler Marketplace MVP

Overview
Designing a digital-first experience for a traditionally offline product.

The Boiler Marketplace was an initiative to bring the sale of boilers typically a high-consideration, offline purchase into a seamless digital experience.

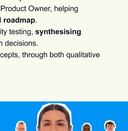
The Problem
Boilers are technical, high-cost products that most homeowners don't fully understand. Traditionally they have always been sold at the customers home, which is time-consuming and expensive and not what every customer wants. The challenge was to translate this complex, trust-heavy process into a self-serve digital experience.

My Role
- Defined the end-to-end user journey.
- Collaborated closely with the Product Owner, helping shape the product **vision** and **roadmap**.
- Led user research and usability testing, **synthesising** insights into actionable design decisions.
- Prototyped and validated concepts, through both qualitative and quantitative data.
- Continue to test and learn.

Usability testing

The pivot

1. One question per page
2. Redesign of buttons
3. Rethinking the journey



Boiler Marketplace started as a minimum viable product (MVP), to prove there was an appetite for customers to want to quote and buy online.

Data showed there was good appetite for the online experience, further reviews proved prudent to make sure the application was more reliable, which resulted in more questions and more complexity. With this in mind it was a great opportunity to run usability testing.

What did we discover

While many users believed they knew what kind of boiler they needed, they quickly became overwhelmed when faced with technical questions in the questionnaire. This gap between perceived and expected knowledge created friction.

Users were not overly engaged throughout the journey and the experience felt a little dis-jointed.

Usability conclusions

We needed to get more information across on each question and having looked at the alternatives and how the pages were starting to 'bloat' the decision was to pivot quite significantly.

The approach introduced more contextual help and educational content. This shift empowered users to make informed decisions and significantly improved progression through the funnel.

1.One question per page experience

The single question per page would allow more information to be revealed on a one to one basis, **cognitively** this was far **lighter to process** for a user. This was a potential trade-off of what maybe perceived as a longer journey. Having done some research around cognitive load and looked at similar experiences it seemed the natural path to to do some further testing and learning.

2.Redesigning the interactions

The obvious choice was to use the radio button straight out of the design system, however, it's uninspiring and not particularly touch friendly, you can increase the touch area, but you don't have the clear visual cues as a button, you also have the additional click to progress to the next page, I ran multiple tests to verify if the hypothesis stacks up...

One of many heat map tests

The above is a test I ran in userzoom, what was clear is despite the radio button being housed in a frame, people still gravitated to the radio button itself, which is small and tricky to click on when you are on the move or have motor response skill challenges.

Other observations were, in the absence of a radio button users opted to click on the illustration over the label, this was in place to help recognise the object and make the experience lighter.

Evolution of button ideas

Button anatomy

Once there was a clear direction around the button vs radio select debate, I needed to get the structure and order correct for said component.

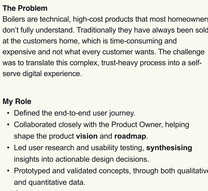
Every question didn't need the same level of detail so I decided it would take 3 different forms.

3.Rethinking the journey flow

Finally the last piece of the jigsaw was the question order. The journey was getting **longer** and **complicated**, we introduced two elements to help improve conversion, **empathy** and **goal gradient**.

The questions were more personalised and about understanding the **needs** of the homeowner, we started with really simple questions about the home and the homeowner and it got progressively harder as we asked about the boiler and then the flue. So it was split into 3 major sections before getting to the results page. This allowed the journey flow logically, once the user started and moved through the questions quite quickly they were more compelled to complete the journey and this was tied in with a simple light progress indicator.

Each question was forensically reviewed to understand both the business and user needs to keep it below 20, otherwise the volume of stakeholders and needs would mean the questions would mushroom out of control.



Helicopter

Outcomes

1. Delivered a live MVP that validated core assumptions.
2. Continued to evolve and rethink the product and experience.
3. Identified key drop-off points and implemented assisted support mechanisms.
4. Helped shape the long-term product vision and roadmap with the new PO.
5. Created a repeatable design framework for future iterations and features.

Reflection

This project reinforced the importance of meeting users not just digitally, but emotionally and cognitively. It also highlighted the need for organisational alignment when shifting from offline to online models.

If I were to do it again, I'd push for earlier cross-functional alignment on backend readiness and push for A/B testing earlier in the project.