Simplifying router set up pays back for TalkTalk

TalkTalk, the leading UK phone and broadband provider, recognised that there were issues with the customer experience of its router set-up process resulting in high levels of calls to technical support. Customer surveys did not identify the causes and so TalkTalk engaged *new experience* to help them understand what was going on and to support a redesign of the set-up experience.

In-home research to observe customers setting up their broadband router

We recruited 20 customers in the process of joining TalkTalk and went to their home to observe them setting up their router. We found that many customers were running into difficulties. They confused the broadband connection into their home with the wireless connection within their home. They then mixed up the different cables and passwords that related to these two types of connection. The support CD often caused customers problems because it used technical language that was confusing.

Pilot trial of simplified set-up process

After the initial phase of research TalkTalk acted on our recommendations to trial a simplified set-up process where customers received their router pre-configured for wireless use. Several hundred customers received the pre-configured router and we recruited a small subset to conduct further observational research. TalkTalk recorded reduced rates of query from the customers participating in the trial and our in-home research indicated that the process was easier although some problems still remained around connecting wirelessly to the router.

A simplified user guide and CD

TalkTalk followed our recommendation to roll out the pre-configured router to all its customers and engaged us to develop a simplified paper guide based on our research insights. We had seen that customers wouldn't follow a guide systematically so the design combined a visual overview of how the physical set up should look with a step-by-step approach to connecting wirelessly to the router. At the same time TalkTalk commissioned the development of a simplified CD that would automate the wireless connection part of the process.

A solution that has significantly reduced calls and created major savings

We then conducted lab-based testing to evaluate relative ease of set-up using the new guide and CD. The results indicated that more advanced users benefited from the paper guide and less advanced users from the CD. A decision was taken to refine and include both CD and guide with the router, and let customers choose between them. Following rollout of this 'golden solution' TalkTalk has recorded a reduction in customer queries related to set-up that has resulted in improved customer experience and significant cost savings.

What TalkTalk had to say about working with us

"Wireless router set-up is one of the first interactions customers have with us so we wanted to make sure it is a good one. *new experience* helped us to understand the problems customers were having and to build a consumer-centric approach to set-up. We have seen real benefits from the project both in reduced call volumes and more satisfied customers making it a very worthwhile investment." *D'Arcy Rossiter, Director of Consumer Insight, TalkTalk Group*