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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the desktop order placement experience on the [Sliced website](#). As a newly established brand and small business, Sliced was interested in gaining insight into who their target customers are while also optimizing the user experience, information clarity, and aesthetic integrity of their website with specific focus on reducing friction throughout the order placement process. Through heuristic evaluations, price testing, and remote moderated usability testing, our team aimed to answer three research questions. The questions and a summary of corresponding findings are included below:

Question	Summary Insights
Where are customers experiencing friction throughout the <u>order placement process</u> ?	Home Page ● Header and navigation bar take up too much real estate 1 out of 7 participants felt that there were too many pages categorized under the 'Learn' tab, requiring extra steps to access other pages on Sliced. 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators found the header and navigation bar to move unintuitively as they scrolled through the page. ● Small text size = low readability 2 out of 7 participants and 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators noted that the text size used made it difficult to read. Product Pages ● Form fields do not follow standard convention 2 out of 7 participants and 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators felt that the text boxes were small and misplaced. Cart Page ● Delivery & pickup details text boxes are required 3 out of 7 participants were caught off guard by the requirement to enter delivery or pickup details before advancing to checkout. Checkout Process ● Delivery fees are unclear and surprising 3 out of 7 participants did not see the Delivery/Pick up information on the Product Page and were surprised by the added delivery fee when they got to checkout. ● Kitchen Pickup address is editable 1 out of 7 participants mistakenly selected kitchen pickup when she verbalized that she would like to select delivery. They did not realize their error since they were able to edit the address on the checkout page. 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators noted the same issue. ● Delivery address must be entered twice 1 out of 7 participants and 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators expressed frustration entering the delivery address twice; once on the cart page and once on the checkout page.

Can customers easily find the <u>information</u> they need to confidently place an order on the Sliced website?	<u>Product Pages</u> Dietary Modification Options 3 out of 7 participants attempted to order a board that would satisfy more than 1 dietary restriction and expected to be able to select multiple dietary modification options. 2 out of 7 participants were disappointed by the absence of a “Vegetarian” option. 3 out of 7 participants were unsure about which products would be excluded and what would be substituted for GF, Vegan. 2 out of 7 participants expressed that they would prefer a way to indicate that they’d like <u>some</u> of the board to be modified but not all of it. Custom Order Options 6 out of 7 participants were frustrated by the lack of customizability Board Details / Product Images 6 out of 7 participants did not understand what kinds of products they could expect on their order due to insufficient Board Details and unvaried board images. 5 out of 7 participants expressed confusion around board size and scale. Of these participants, 3 mentioned that the images with the different sized boxes stacked on top of each other were unhelpful in clarifying their confusion. 4 out of 7 participants could not find the ‘Board Details’ immediately. 1 out of 7 participants expected the product images and board details to change based on their dietary modification selection. Product photos and descriptions remain the same regardless of user choice. Price increases, but no details are provided to justify the increase.
How do customers feel about the current prices for Sliced products?	<u>Price Testing</u> Size and Prices of Cheeseboards As price and size increased per cheeseboard, there was a lower purchase intent based on our price testing questions. A weighted average purchase probability was calculated for each of the products to obtain more accurate purchase intent. Participant Income Participants with a lower income (less than \$25,000 a year) were less likely to purchase across the different Sliced products. Participant Preferences Regardless of price, purchase intent also depended on participants’ preference towards items on a cheeseboard.

Overview

Background

Sliced is a newly-established, Chicago-based **cheeseboard delivery and catering service** founded by Claire Murray. As a brand and small business, Sliced is in the very early stages of development. The Sliced [website](#) officially went live on Friday, January 14th and order fulfillment began on Tuesday, February 1st.

Sliced clientele range from local customers ordering cheese & charcuterie boards to corporate and commercial clients requesting signature “grazing tables” for event catering purposes.

Though Claire’s long-term goal for Sliced is to focus primarily on large-scale event catering, her short-term (Year 1) business goals include:

1. Fulfilling small quantity cheese board orders through the Sliced website to jumpstart the business and gain traction.
2. Gaining insight into who her target customers are and what considerations they make when buying a cheeseboard.
3. Building trust and rapport with her target audience.
4. Establishing a brand identity and presence in the Greater Chicago Metropolitan area.
5. Refining her communication strategy and communicating with her audience more authentically.

Research Goals

Given that Sliced is a highly localized small business that operates solely through their [website](#), the usability of the website is a necessary condition for success. Our team worked with Sliced owner/founder, Claire Murray, over a period of 8 weeks to achieve the following research objectives in support of her business goals:

1. **Identify usability problems and opportunities for improvement on the Sliced website, with specific focus on:**
 - **Order Placement Process**
 - **Information Clarity, Visibility, Readability, and Findability**
 - **Overall Look & Feel (Aesthetic Integrity)**
 - **Site Navigation**
 - **Website Copy** (Particularly on the Home and Product Pages)
2. **Help Sliced identify who their target customers are (and are not) and any usability barriers specific to those customers.**

Primary Research Questions

To achieve our primary research objective—to identify usability problems and opportunities for improvement on the Sliced website—we formulated the following usability research questions and sub-questions around our top 5 areas of interest. Questions are organized in order of priority to address during usability testing.

Area of Interest	Justification	Research Question
Order Placement Process	For an ecommerce business, the online order placement process is a vital component of customers' experience. A smooth and efficient checkout process could be the difference between an abandoned cart and a returning customer.	Where are customers experiencing friction throughout the order placement process? - Where are frustrations and pain points occurring? - Where are users encountering errors? - Can users easily recover from errors?
Information Clarity, Visibility, Readability, and Findability	In order to confidently place an order through the Sliced website, customers must be able to readily find and understand the <u>product details</u> (i.e. board dimensions, price, and contents), <u>information</u> (i.e. cancellation policy, delivery fee, kitchen location, etc.), and <u>product options</u> (i.e. customization options, dietary modifications) they need. If the website fails to communicate the information necessary to answer customers' key questions, they might look elsewhere.	Can customers easily find and understand the information they need to confidently place an order through the Sliced website? - What unanswered questions do they have? Can customers find product options that accommodate their specific needs? - Can users understand what the current options are? - Does the Sliced website support custom orders?
Overall Look and Feel	A user's first impression of a website is often a split-second determining factor as to whether they will trust or mistrust a website ^{[7][8]} . Given that the overall look and feel of a website is the primary driver of users' first impressions ^[9] , it is important to assess whether customers perceive the current design as professional, trustworthy, and visually appealing.	What are customers' first impressions of the Sliced website? - What do customers like/dislike about the current look and feel of the website? - How are customers evaluating the credibility of the website?
Site Navigation	Clear and intuitive site navigation is essential for creating a positive user experience that encourages customers to stay on a website and browse through content. If users can't find the information they want where they expect to find it, they leave.	Does the current information architecture support intuitive navigation of the website? Can users find the information they need where they expect to find it?
Website Copy & Content	Claire's main value propositions (MVPs) for Sliced are: <u>showcasing sustainability</u> (through locally-sourced products), <u>providing "Windy City hospitality"</u> , and <u>promoting community centric experiences</u> . It is therefore important to assess whether the current website communicates Sliced MVPs effectively and authentically while conveying a voice and brand personality that aligns with Claire's vision for the Sliced brand: exclusive, modern, professional, and approachable.	Can customers clearly recognize and understand MVPs on the homepage? - Does the copy on the Homepage offer sufficient support for MVP claims? - Which MVPs are resonating / not resonating with users?

Secondary Research Questions

To achieve our secondary research objective—to help Sliced identify who their target customers are—we formulated the following market research questions and sub-questions around 4 key areas of interest: Demographics, Motivations, Preferences/Considerations, and Interests. Questions are organized in order of priority to address during price testing and usability testing.

Area of Interest	Justification	Research Question
Demographics <i>(i.e. age, gender, geographic location, occupation, income, employment status, marital status, etc.)</i>	As a newly-established business, Sliced is still in the process of identifying who their customers are. Understanding demographic trends among landed customers will allow Claire to strategically focus her marketing efforts and future ad spend on targeting demographically similar customers.	What kinds of customers/clients _____? - Does Sliced attract? - Want to place an order? - Actually place an order?
Motivations <i>(reasons for purchasing.)</i>	Understanding why and for what occasions or purposes customers place orders will help Sliced cater more directly to key use cases through their product offerings, value propositions and unique selling propositions, marketing materials, etc.	Why and for what occasions/purposes do customers place an order?
Preferences & Considerations	Knowing what kinds of products customers expect, want, and don't want on a cheeseboard will help Sliced tailor their seasonal inventory around the products that appeal most to customers. Similarly, understanding what factors customers take into consideration when evaluating whether they want to purchase a cheeseboard will help Sliced identify which aspects of their products (i.e. price, quantity, style, modification options, etc.) they might need to adjust to reduce the sense of uncertainty or risk associated with purchase.	How are customers evaluating whether they want to purchase a Sliced cheeseboard? - How do customers feel about the current prices? - What are the main barriers to purchase? Do the current product offerings appeal to customers? - What kinds of items do customers expect / want / not want on a cheeseboard?
Interests <i>(i.e. cheese lovers, foodies, health and wellness enthusiasts, event hosts, etc.)</i>	Similar to the above justification for understanding target customer demographics, interest predictors add another dimension to strategic marketing.	Do customers tend to have specific interests that might predict engagement with Sliced?

Participant Profiles

Recruitment began four weeks after the Sliced website officially went live. Since our target customer base was still unknown at this time, we recruited a diverse mix of participants across a wide range of ages, income levels, and “cheeseboard experience” levels. Our team defined *familiarity with cheeseboards* as the baseline level of cheeseboard experience required to qualify for participation. A history of purchasing, making, and/or being served cheeseboards in the past were also factored into participants’ cheeseboard experience.

On our **Recruitment Screener** (see [Appendix 2](#)), participants were asked to indicate:

- whether they were currently, previously, or have never been a Chicago resident;
- whether they have ever purchased, made, or been served a cheeseboard;
- whether they would consider purchasing a cheeseboard in the future;
- purchase intent for a variety of Sliced products.

We recruited a total of seven participants for usability testing. Given that Sliced is a local small business that caters solely to local clientele within a small section of the Greater Chicago Metropolitan Area, we focused our recruitment on current Chicago residents. Due to limited time and resources, we included two non-Chicago residents in our sample, one of whom (P3) had previously lived in Chicago for over a decade.

Those who expressed interest in usability test participation were then asked to complete a **Demographics Survey** (see [Appendix 3](#)) which included questions about age range, gender, highest level of education, employment status, occupation, marital status, household size, annual income range, zip code, and number of hours per day spent online. Our final participant pool consisted of:

						Cheeseboard Experience		
ID#	Location	Age Range	Income Level	Occupation	Gender	Has Made	Has Purchased	Has Been Served
P1	Chicago	41-50	\$100 - \$150k	Architect	M	Y	Y	Y
P2	Chicago	33-40	\$75 - \$99.9k	Sr. Scientist, Product R&D	F	Y	Y	Y
P3	Seattle	25-32	\$25 - \$49.9k	Cooking Instructor	F	Y	Y	N
P4	Chicago	18-24	Less than \$25k	Undergrad Student	F	Y	Y	Y
P5	Chicago	41-50	\$75 - \$99.9k	Associate Professor (UX)	F	N	N	Y
P6	Chicago	33-40	More than \$150k	Assistant Professor (UX)	M	Y	Y	Y
P7	Seattle	25-32	Less than \$25k	Grad Student	F	N	N	N

Participant Profiles. NOTE: P3 lived in Chicago for over 10 years before moving to Seattle.

Methods

Customer Feedback/Demographics Survey ([Link](#))

Before we began recruiting for usability testing, we created **Customer Feedback and Demographics Survey** ([Appendix 1](#)) via Qualtrics to gather preliminary data on existing customers who had successfully placed an order through the website. The survey was intended to help our team **A)** gain insight into the demographics, motivations for purchase, and preferences of landed customers so that we could potentially target a representative sample of participants with similar backgrounds for usability testing, and **B)** gather some early feedback about customers' experience placing an order through the Sliced website. The survey link was included on the Sliced Order Confirmation page (where users were redirected after placing an order), Order Confirmation Email (which users received upon placing an order), and on the Delivery Notification Text Message (sent to customers 15 minutes before their order was delivered). Three responses were fielded between February 5th and March 1st.

Price Testing (Likert Purchase Intent)

We presented participants with images and details of five Sliced products—Medium Board, Large Board, Extra Large Board, Valentine's Day Board, and the Mini Box—and asked them to rate how likely they would be to purchase each product on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Definitely would buy; 5=Definitely would not buy). Participants were presented with the same images and details included on each item's corresponding product webpage.

Price testing questions were included at the end of our **Recruitment Screener** (See [Appendix 2](#)). A total of 13 responses were fielded between February 15th and March 1st. Results and numerical conversions of Likert scale selections are discussed in [Calculating Purchase Intent](#).

Heuristic Evaluation — 2 Evaluators

Two members of our research team performed a Heuristic Evaluation using the [Heurio](#) Google Chrome Extension. Each team member independently evaluated the Sliced website against [Nielsen's 10 Usability Heuristics](#)^[1]—a widely utilized, industry-standard set of web usability guidelines. Conducting internal heuristic evaluations as a first pass usability method allowed our team to scope out and narrow down potential tasks to present to participants during the remote moderated testing phase.

A summary of heuristic violations and links to each team member's Heurio evaluation report can be found in [Appendix 9](#).

Remote Moderated Usability Testing — 7 Users

Given that 5 out of 7 usability test participants resided in Chicago, we chose to conduct remote moderated usability testing with users to help our team identify and understand the problems customers might be experiencing on the Sliced website.

Each session lasted up to 60 minutes and consisted of an Introduction and Pre-Test Interview (5-7 minutes), a Home Page Tour (6-8 minutes), three tasks and three corresponding Post-Task Questionnaires (20-40 minutes), and a Post-Test Interview and Survey (5 minutes). See **Figure 1** for a visual breakdown of our usability session schedule.

We employed the Think Aloud Method during each session by asking participants to continuously verbalize their thoughts, reactions, and impressions as they browsed through and completed tasks on the Sliced desktop interface.

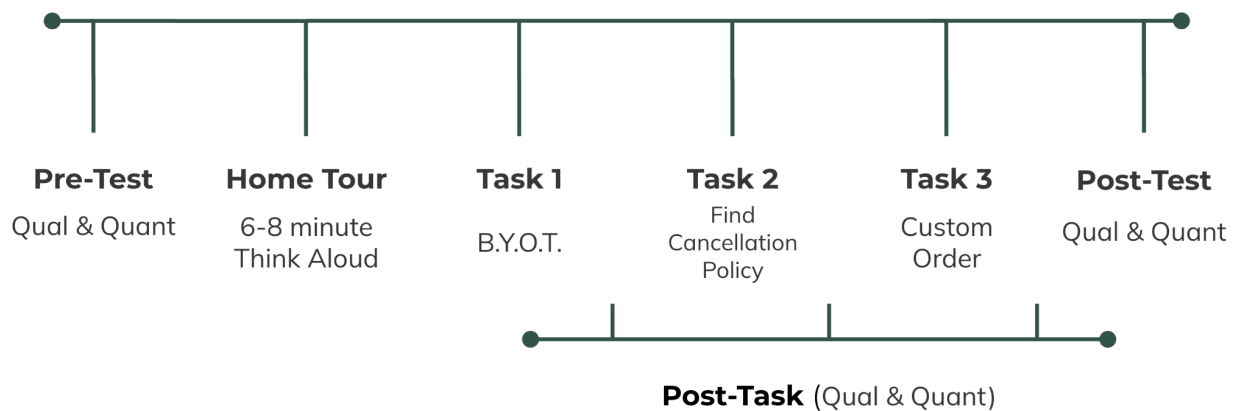


Figure 1: Usability Session Outline

Pre-Test Interview

At the start of each session, we asked participants a set of questions to verify their responses to the “cheeseboard experience” questions included on the Recruitment Screener. Participants were then asked to describe what their ideal cheeseboard looked like (in terms of what kinds of products they expect to find on it) and further elaborate on their most recent cheeseboard experience. Participants were asked a slightly different set of follow-up questions depending on whether they had purchased, made, or been served a cheeseboard in the past. See [Appendix 4](#) for a breakdown of the items included in each question set.

Homepage Tour

After a quick introduction, test participants were directed to the Sliced homepage and asked to think aloud as they scrolled up and down the page (without clicking on anything yet). We asked participants to share their first impressions as well as their thoughts about different web elements, with follow-up questions as needed.

Usability Tasks

Following the Home Page Tour, we asked participants to complete the following three tasks on the Sliced website while continuing to verbalize their thoughts as they moved through the desktop user interface. At the end of each task, we presented users with a brief post-task questionnaire to elicit more feedback and garner suggestions around how we could improve their experience on the website.

Task 1: BYOT (Bring Your Own Task)

- **START** Sliced homepage (slicedchi.com)
- **CONTEXT (Read aloud to participant)** For this first task, I'd like you to think of an event or occasion when you would want to purchase a cheeseboard. Imagine that you have plans for this cheeseboard worthy event this weekend. We can pretend we're shopping for the same event you described to me before [MODERATOR: RECOUNT DETAILS FROM PRE-TEST, IF APPLICABLE] or you can make up something completely new. Do you have an event or occasion in mind? Can you please describe your event to me?
- **SCENARIO** Let's use Sliced to order a cheeseboard for your event! You're already on the home page. Now what would you do from here? Please remember to think out loud as you go along.
- **END OF TASK** Checkout Page 2 (before entering credit card information)

Task 2: Find the Order Cancellation Policy

- **START** Sliced homepage (slicedchi.com)
- **SCENARIO** You are placing an order for an event that might get canceled due to COVID. Where would you look to find information about Sliced's order cancellation policy?
- **END OF TASK** either of the following is acceptable:
 - FAQ page: Cancellation policy
 - Checkout Page 1 or 2 (before order confirmation)

Task 3: Place A Custom Order

- **START** Sliced homepage (slicedchi.com)
- **SCENARIO** You want to order a cheese board that only contains dried fruits and soft cheeses. How would you do this?
- **END OF TASK** Contact Page (User identifies which contact method they would use)

NOTE: Our full test kit including complete usability testing script can be found in [Appendix 4](#).

Post-Task & Post-Test Survey and Questions

Participants were asked qualitative **post-task questions**, including overall impressions, what they liked and disliked about the experience, as well as whether or not they would recommend Sliced to anyone they know.

At the end of the session, participants were asked to fill out a **post-test questionnaire**, which included Likert scale questions about overall experience, site navigation, and likelihood of returning to the Sliced website. We also used this questionnaire to collect contact information to coordinate compensation with Claire.

All post-task and post-test questions and data can be found in [Appendix 5](#), [Appendix 6](#) and [Appendix 7](#).

Implementing Feedback Into a Figma Prototype

We applied feedback gathered from our usability testing sessions and heuristic evaluations into a Figma prototype. This prototype is used to visually convey our team's recommendations to Sliced.

Usability Test Schedule

See the table below for a breakdown of our usability test schedule and the team members who were present at each session.

ID #	Chicago Resident?	Test Date	Test Time & Location	Moderator	Note Taker 1	Note Taker 2	Path Tracker
P1	✓	2/22/22	1:30pm / Zoom	Annie	Petrina	Vanessa	Tabby
P2	✓	2/22/22	2:30pm / Zoom	Tabby	Vanessa	-	Alex
P3	✗	2/23/22	12:00pm / Zoom	Petrina	Tabby	-	Annie
P4	✓	2/24/22	10:00am / Zoom	Vanessa	Alex	Annie	Tabby
P5	✓	2/24/22	2:00pm / Zoom	Tabby	Petrina	-	Vanessa
P6	✓	2/26/22	11:00 am / Zoom	Alex	Tabby	Annie	Vanessa
P7	✗	2/26/22	4:00pm / Zoom	Tabby	Vanessa	Petrina	Alex

Usability Test Schedule

Findings

Price Testing Findings

Calculating Purchase Intent

Our price testing question offered five options on the Likert Scale: Definitely would buy, Probably would buy, Might or might not buy, Probably would not buy, and Definitely would not buy. These values were assigned a corresponding probability of purchase based on the “Powers of 3” rule^[2] where each response is assigned a different probability: 81%, 27%, 9%, 3%, 1%, respectively. The Powers of 3 method was chosen due to its exponential scale—as linear scales, which assign “Definitely would buy” 100% probability, might not accurately represent the change in purchase intent. A breakdown of the raw data for each of the products is shown in **Figure 3**.

After adding up all responses, a weighted average probability was calculated for each of the products, as shown in **Figure 4**. These numbers are a reference point—not an exact calculation—for Sliced to estimate purchase intent across different products, providing a foundation for future price testing during new product launches and subsequent price changes.

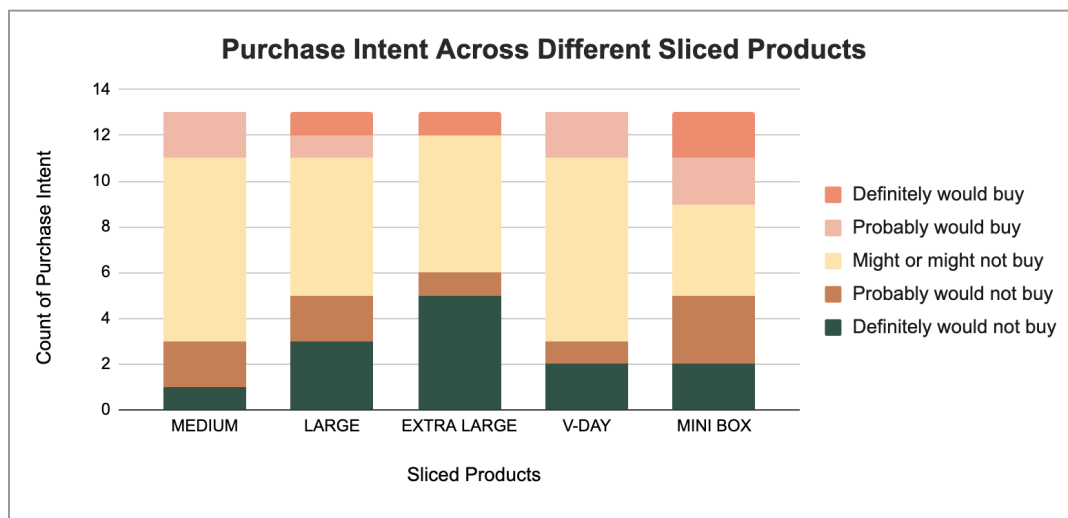


Figure 3: Purchase intent across Sliced products

Price Testing Results

Overall, the regular cheeseboards had a lower purchase intent as price and size increased, with 1 response of “Definitely would not buy” for the Medium Board, 3 for the Large Board, and 5 for the Extra Large Board. However, this difference seemed to plateau when adjusting for our Powers of 3 method—with each of the boards scoring 10.2%, 13.2%, and 11% respectively. The mini box, also the lowest priced product, had the highest adjusted probability of purchase, at 20.2%.

Examining purchase intent across participants (**Figure 5**), those at the lowest income range—students with an annual income less than \$25,000—were the least likely to purchase.

Interestingly, P6, who was at the highest income range of over \$150,000, had a relatively low likelihood of purchasing across the different Sliced products. Cross-referencing the feedback received during their session, P6 mentioned: “there's a mismatch between what I want on a cheeseboard and what [Sliced] likes putting on cheeseboards,” which could explain their price testing responses. We recognize other participants may have had similar attitudes, making the effect of a higher or lower price difficult to isolate, which is a limitation for our price testing method.

Product	Adjusted Purchase Intent
MEDIUM	10.2%
LARGE	13.2%
EXTRA LARGE	11.0%
V-DAY	10.1%
MINI BOX	20.2%

Figure 4: Adjusted probability of purchase, using the powers of 3 method

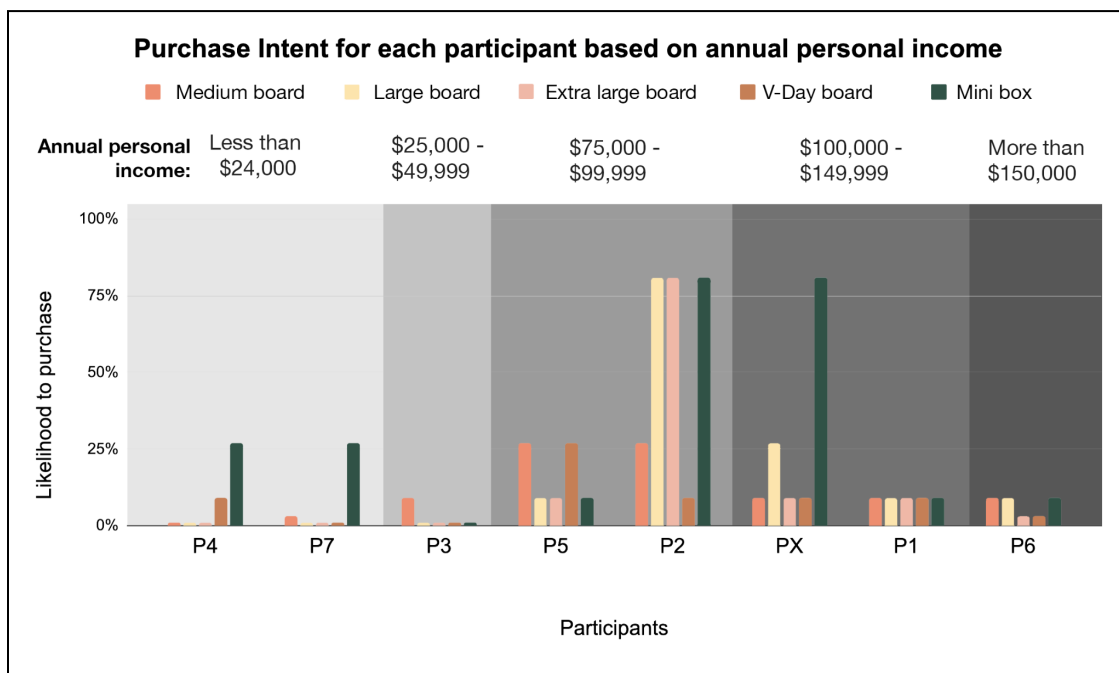


Figure 5: Purchase Intent (note: “PX” refers to participant who was a no-show)

Usability Testing Findings

Overview

Findings gathered from usability testing are organized into four overarching categories:

1. Lack of Customizability
2. Lack Of Information Clarity And Visibility
3. Problems with the Checkout Process
4. Aesthetic Integrity & Website Copy

Within each category are individual findings along with their severity ranking, research questions answered, supporting data, visuals showing where the issue occurs on the website, and our team's recommendations (when applicable). A breakdown of the number of participants who encountered pain points in each of the four main categories within the home page tour and three Tasks, in addition to the number of unique participants who encountered the issues across the entire test session are shown in **Figure 6**.

Finding	Home Page Tour	Task 1 (BYOT)	Task 2 (Finding info)	Task 3 (Custom order)	Total Unique Participants
Lack of Customizability	N/A	n = 5	N/A	n = 6	n = 7
Lack of Information Clarity/Visibility	n = 4	n = 7	n = 2	n = 3	n = 7
Checkout Problems	N/A	n = 5	N/A	N/A	n = 5
Aesthetic Integrity and Website Copy	n = 6	n = 2	N/A	N/A	n = 6

Figure 6: Task findings breakdown.

Severity Rankings

Each finding includes a severity ranking based on the number of participants who experienced a given usability issue and how seriously the problem impacted their workflow in terms of completing the task. Severity ratings take into account the number of usability test participants who experienced the issue and the number of Heuristic Evaluators who reported a violation around the issue. Findings in each section will include a rating of 1, 2, 3 or 4 where 1 is subtle and 4 is critical. Our severity ranking definitions were adapted from Dumas and Redish (1999)^[3].

- **Level 1 – Subtle:** Subtle and/or cosmetic problem, points to a future enhancement (little to no impact on task workflow).
- **Level 2 – Moderate:** Has a minor effect on usability / causes minor frustration during the task.
- **Level 3 – Severe:** Creates significant delay and frustration during the task.
- **Level 4 – Critical:** Prevents completion of a task.

Lack of Customizability

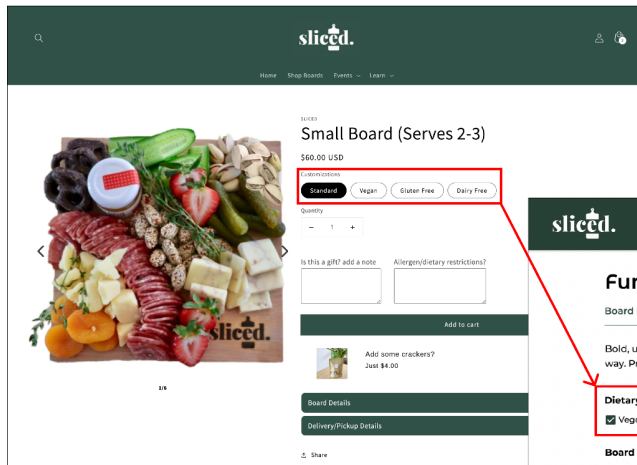
Issue 1: Dietary options are unclear and inflexible	
Severity	Level 4 - Critical
Research Question + Findings	Q: Can customers find product options that accommodate their specific needs? 4 out of 7 participants were unable to find the product options they needed for their Task 1 (BYOT) imaginary event. Of these 4 participants... • 3 out of 4 attempted to order a board that would accommodate multiple dietary restrictions (i.e. Vegetarian and Gluten-Free) and expected to be able to do so more conveniently. • 3 out of 4 participants expressed that they would prefer a way to indicate that they'd like <u>some</u> of the board to be modified but not all of it. • 2 out of 4 were specifically disappointed by the absence of a "Vegetarian" option. Q: Can users understand what the current options are? 3 out of 7 participants were unsure about exactly which products would be excluded and what would be substituted for a GF, DF, and Vegan board. Of these 3 participants... • 3 out of 3 were confused as to why the price changed for non-standard board selections and wanted more specific details about the contents and ingredients of each modified board in order to decide whether the price was justified. • 3 out of 3 expected the product images and board details to change based on their dietary modification selection. • 3 out of 3 additionally expressed frustration and confusion that the selected dietary modification seemed to affect the whole board, and there was not a way to select a board to accommodate multiple dietary needs or combine both standard and modified ingredients.
Quotes	<i>"I initially thought maybe I could do a vegetarian option because that would get rid of the meat, but there's only the vegan option and that's more than I need" — P4</i> <i>"I would like to be able to customize the board to have both real cheese and vegan cheese, assuming that there will be vegan and non-vegan people at this event." — P3</i> <i>"I don't think I've ever had a party where literally everyone was vegan or gluten free or dairy free. This is somehow mismatched to my use case, which is building something custom where I'm trying to think about multiple people." — P6</i> <i>"It was also confusing when the cheeseboard image didn't change when I changed the selections [to GF and Dairy Free]... which was annoying and made me question if this [default medium board product page] image is even representative of what I would be getting." — P6</i>

(Screenshots and Recommendations continued below)

Screenshots and Recommendations

Below are images of the current product pages found on the Sliced website (**Original**) and screenshots from our Figma Prototype (**Recommendation 1 and 2**) depicting how some of the issues and pain points noted below might be addressed.

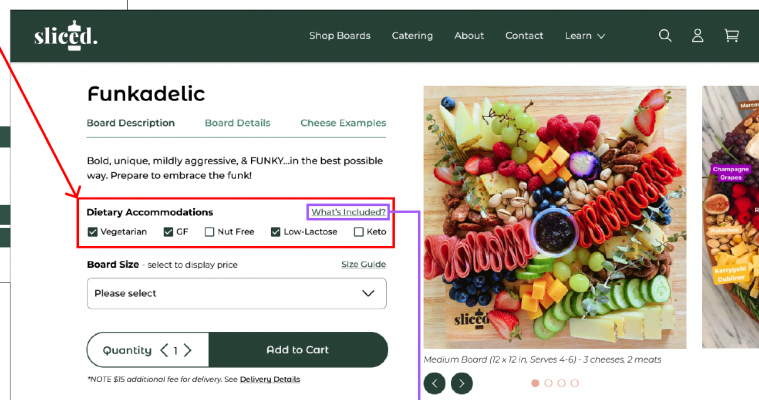
Original



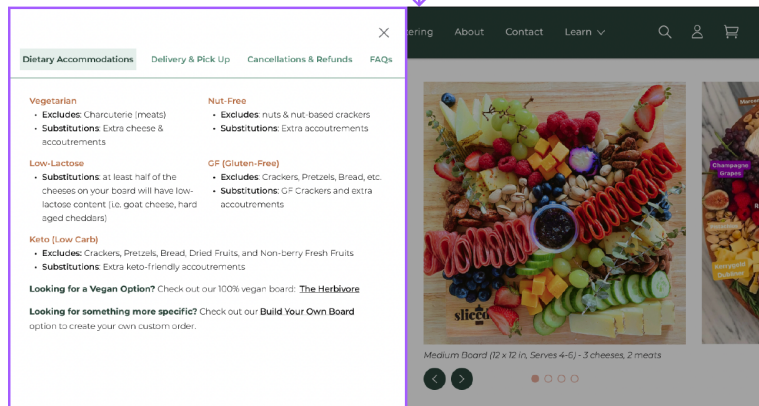
- Allow customers to select multiple dietary modifications.

- Be more descriptive in your board details section and tell customers exactly what products are being excluded and exactly what will be substituted for each modification. Eventually, Add more representative photos of what each modified board looks like on the product page and make sure the image changes depending on customer's selection.

Recommendation 1



Recommendation 2



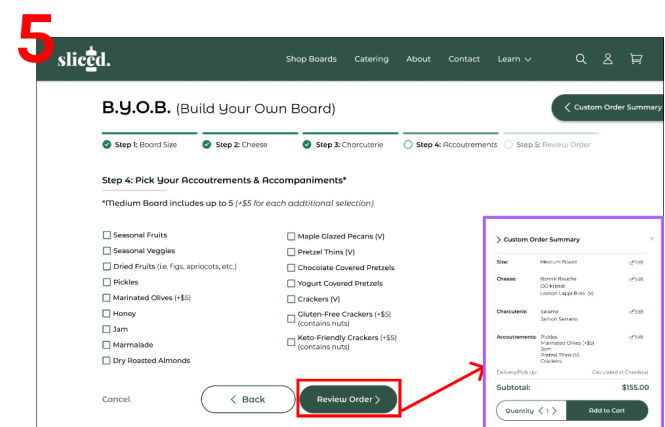
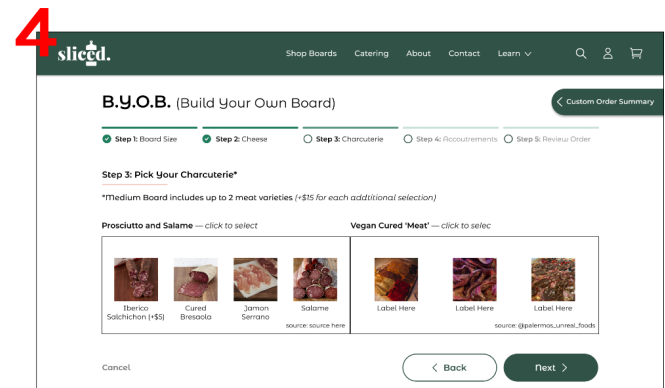
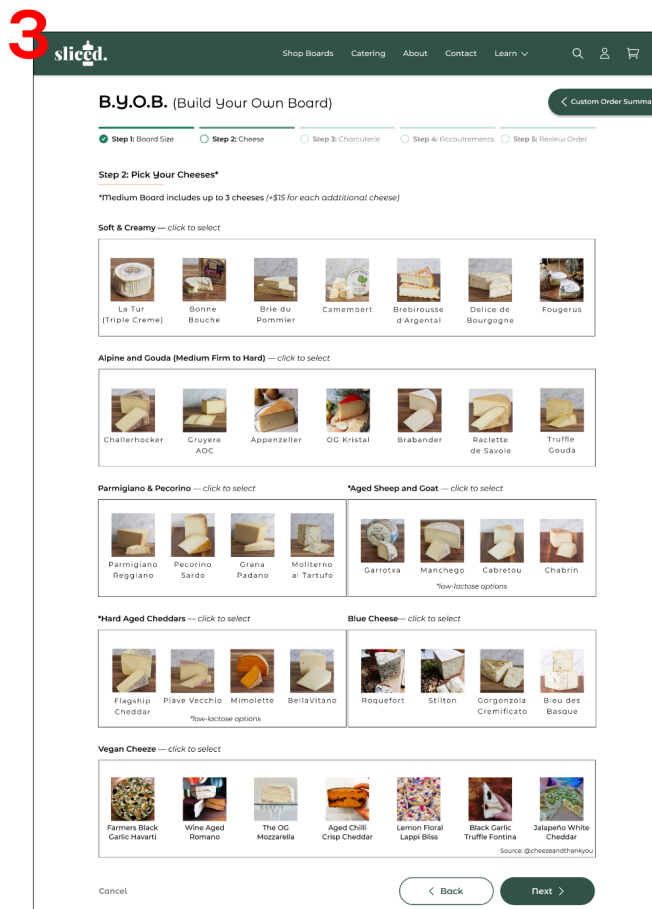
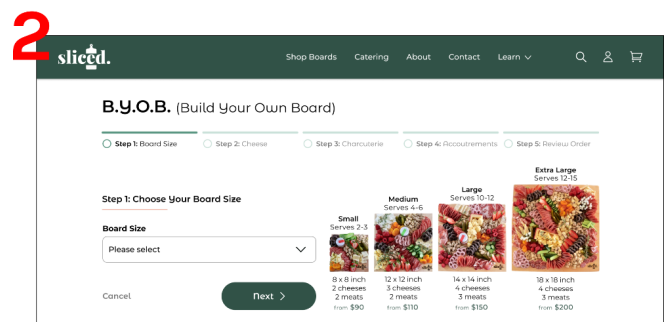
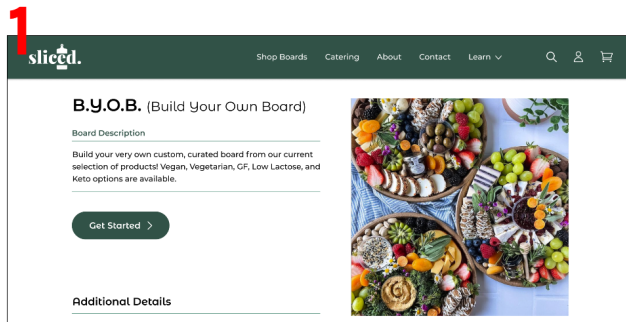
****Please note that Figma prototype screenshots are not available for every issue****

Issue 2: Participants were disappointed by lack of customizability	
Severity	Level 4 - Critical
Research Questions + Findings	Q: Can customers find product options that accommodate their specific needs? Q: Does the Sliced website support custom orders? 6 out of 7 participants were disappointed by the lack of board customizability. These participants expressed frustration during Task 1 (BYOT) and Task 3 (Order a Custom Board) when they were unable to indicate their preferences for specific types of cheeses or request that specific products be included or excluded from their order. 1 out of 7 participants were able to successfully locate “custom orders” on the FAQ page. The other 6 out of 7 participants looked elsewhere (mainly on product pages) for customization options. During Task 3, after discovering that there was no way to <i>directly</i> indicate or request specific products (i.e. goat cheese, olives, etc.) on their board, 5 out of 7 participants opted to use the <u>Allergens / Dietary Restrictions</u> textbox located on the product page to specify their custom order details. However, 5 out of 5 of these participants were not confident that these details would be seen or honored by the Sliced team and were hesitant to risk money on placing an order that relied on the information indicated in this text box.
Quotes	“I'd like to be more choosy about what ingredients are on the cheeseboards. Even getting to select broad categories of cheese and accompaniments with a yes/no would be nice, rather than these specific cheeseboards that are way too heavy on the accompaniment side and don't actually tell me what categories of cheese are on them.” – P6 “Because [Sliced] seems more like a one size fits all and difficult to make customizations, I feel like I would shop elsewhere.” – P3 “I just don't trust that they would actually pay attention to the [Allergen/Dietary Restrictions textbox] notes. I feel like my experience with online shopping for food is that when you put free text notes in boxes, sometimes people pay attention to them, and sometimes they don't. And so I would just not try to use that as a solution to this problem. At this point, I would have concluded that making a custom order is impossible <u>so this is where I'd stop.</u>” – P6 “One thing I might do is put the custom order info in the allergen/dietary restrictions box, but then they're gonna ask me to pay for it and <u>I don't want to put money down until I can know that it could be done.</u>” – P3

(Screenshots and Recommendations continued below)

Screenshots and Recommendations

Our recommendation is to create a separate “Build Your Own Board” page that allows customers to choose their desired size and customize every aspect of the board.



Lack of Information Clarity, Transparency, and Visibility

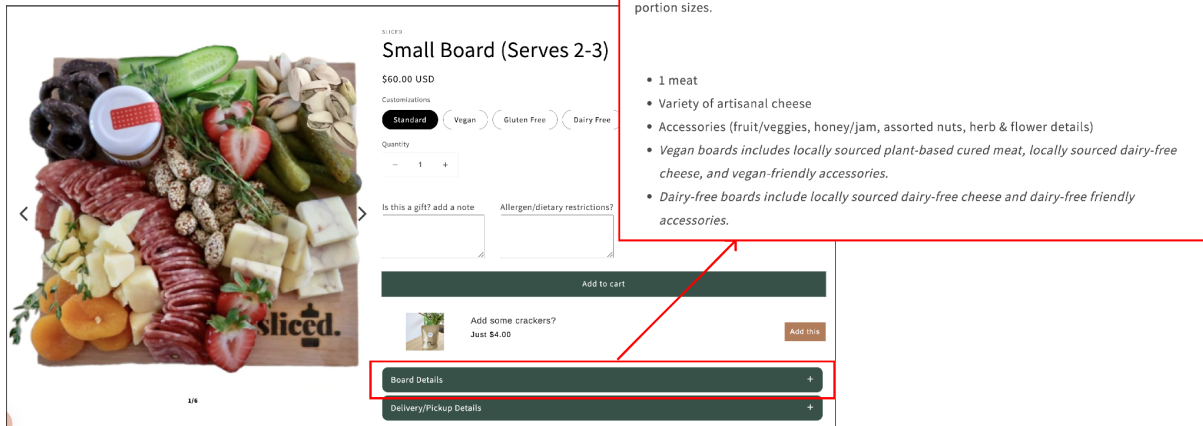
Issue 3: 'Board Details' are vague	
Severity	Level 4 - Critical
Research Questions + Findings	Q: Can customers easily find and understand the information they need to confidently place an order through the Sliced website? 6 out of 7 participants did not understand what kinds of products they could expect on their order due to insufficient Board Details and unvaried board images. Due to the lack of information about the specific contents of each cheeseboard, many participants did not understand what their order would actually come with. 2 out of 7 participants noted that the lack of board details was a deal breaker for them. These participants noted they would likely take their business elsewhere. After seeing the product images, participants mentioned that they were not sure if the images were showing the exact contents of the board. There was not much detail on the exact types of cheeses, meats, and accessories that the board would contain.
Quotes	<i>"I know I can see the picture but again, I'm wondering is this what they all look like? Is this exactly what I'm getting?" – P2</i> When clicking through the image carousel on the Medium Board product page: <i>"None of these images help me understand what products are included." – P6</i> <i>"I want to know what kinds of cheese I'm getting or at least broadly what categories of cheeses they actually include [on a board]. And these details don't really tell me any of that." – P6</i> When asked for suggestions for how his order placement experience could be improved: <i>"I would explicitly list what is on the cheese board and I would give more details on what types of cheeses will be on there. I would like representative images of the actual different categories of items." – P6</i> <i>"I can see different kinds of meat but I don't REALLY know what's in it. When they say veggies, what do they actually mean? I don't know what comes with this. What if they give me something else? Is it a random assortment? I'm a focused buyer and I want to know exactly what kind of cheese I'm getting." – P7</i>

Screenshots & Recommendations:

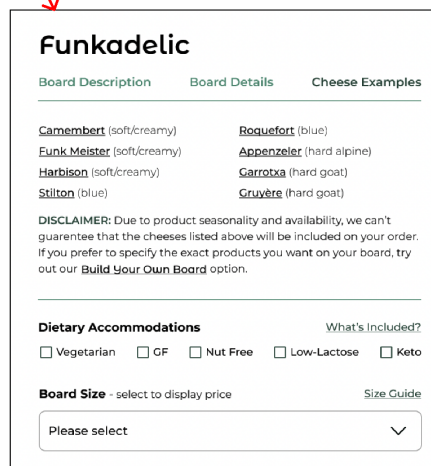
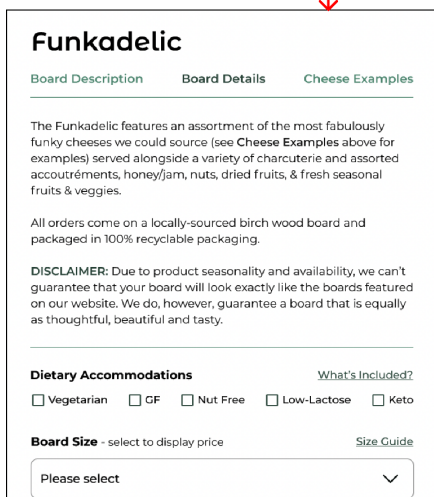
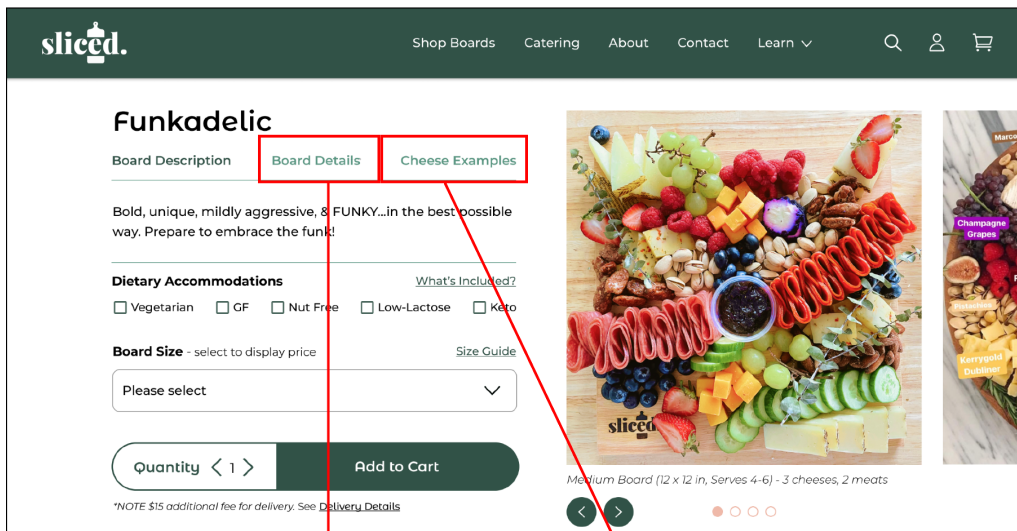
1. Include more representative pictures of what each modified cheeseboard looks like in the image carousel on each product page. Consider including different arrangements of boards so that there is more variety among photos.
2. If new photos are out of scope, include more descriptive language in the Board Details to explain what products are included and excluded, as well as which items are substituted when modifications are chosen.

Recommendation 1: Original vs. Figma Prototype

Original

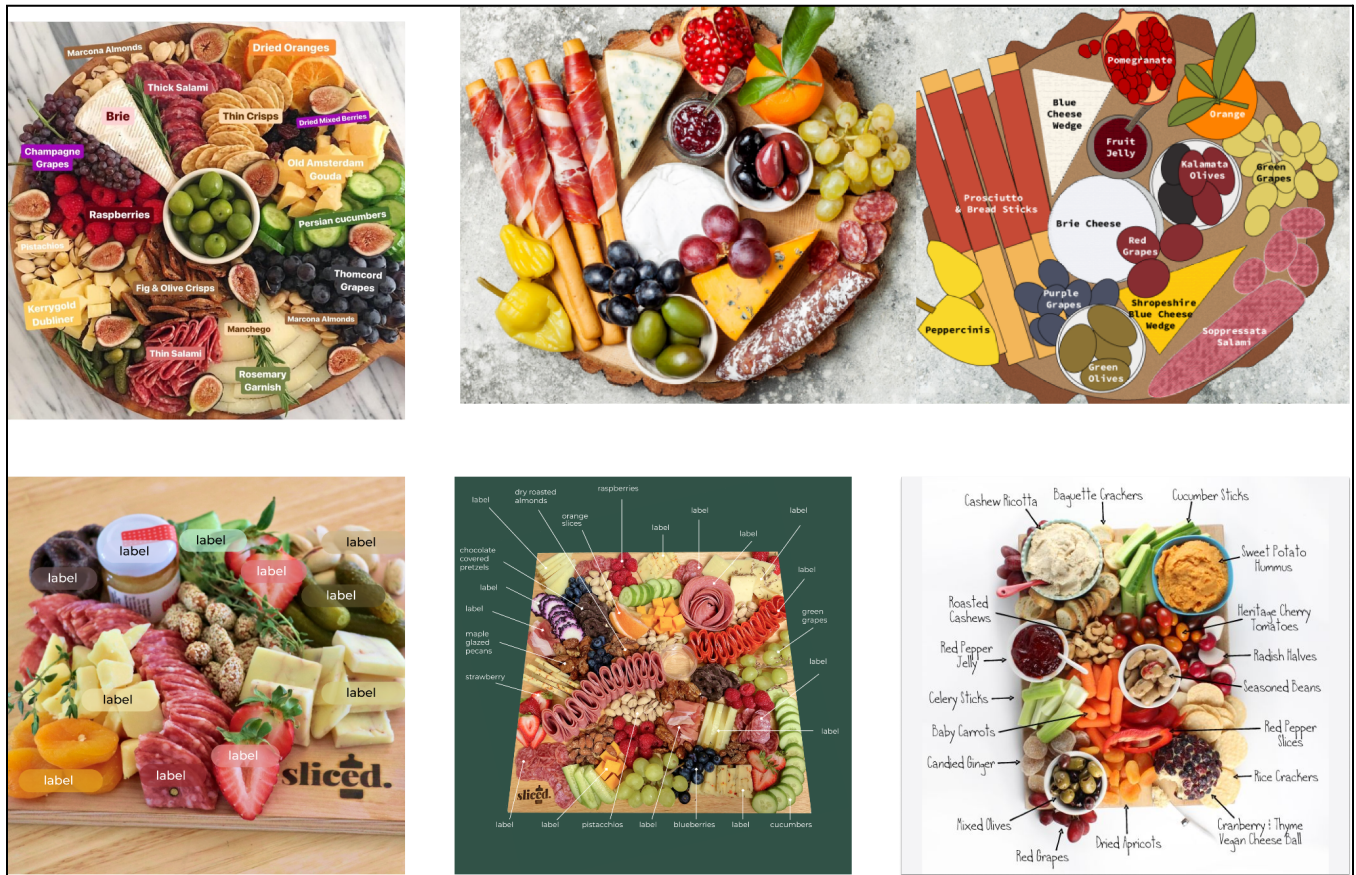


Recommendation



Recommendation 2

Consider including board photos with labels in each product page image carousel. One participant noted that something like the following would be really helpful:



Issue 4: 'Board Details' are easy to miss and hard to find	
Severity	Level 3 - Severe
Research Questions + Findings	Q: Can customers easily find and understand the information they need to confidently place an order through the Sliced website? 4 out of 7 participants could not locate the 'Board Details' section immediately, while browsing the product page. These participants were initially confused about the contents of the cheeseboard and three of them initially expressed frustration about not having any information about the boards available to them. However, after scrolling through the product page, they realized the 'Board Details' section was below. 2 out of these 4 participants specifically recommended that the 'Board Details' be placed higher up on the product page. P6 in particular had been complaining about not having any information about the board for 3 minutes before he finally found the "board details" button.
Quotes	<i>"I didn't notice this board details thing at first. I expected this information to be up here [under the product title], which I feel is where it normally is on most shopping websites. I wouldn't have even noticed this if I hadn't attempted to check out." – P6</i> <i>"Ideally, there would be a description right under the board title [such as] bullet points with what is included." – P5</i>

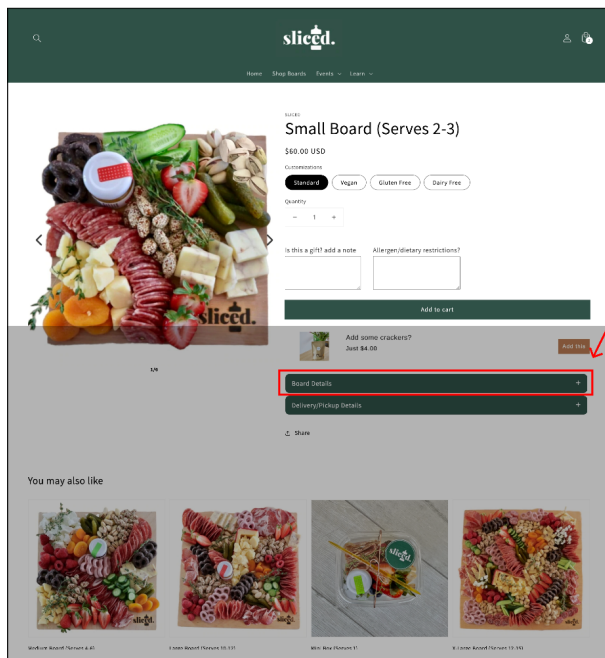
Screenshots & Recommendations

- The Board Details are likely eluding customers for two reasons:
 - The details are currently located beneath the fold when viewing the website on standard-sized desktop and laptop screens. This means that when customers land on a product page, the Board Details button is not immediately visible unless the user scrolls further down the page ([See screenshot below](#)).
 - The board details are hidden by default. Users have to click the "+" sign on the Board Details accordion button in order to display the text, which is counterintuitive.

Recommendation: Original vs Figma Prototype

- **Recommendation 1:** Have board details expanded instead of the user having to interact with the dropdown menu to access information (See screenshot below).
- **Recommendation 2:** Put the board details front and center at the very top of every product page so users do not have to scroll down for this information (See screenshot below).

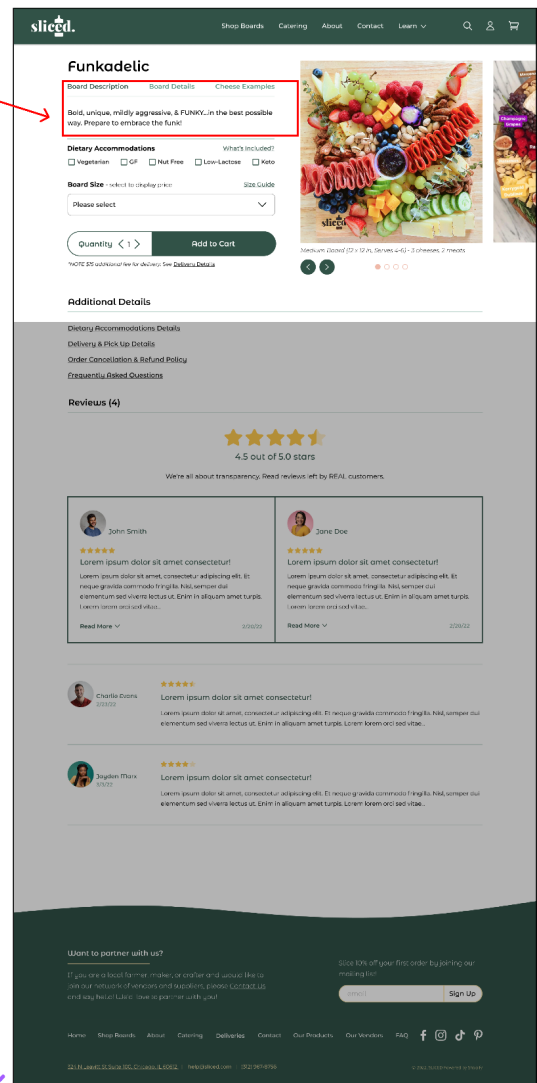
Original



Board Details

Beneath the Fold

Recommendation



Issue 5: Board sizing is unclear	
Severity	Level 3 - Severe
Research Questions + Findings	Q: Can customers easily find and understand the information they need to confidently place an order through the Sliced website? 5 out of 7 participants felt confused about the board scale and size while selecting a cheeseboard to purchase. This confusion was expressed after seeing images of the cheeseboards on the Homepage Featured Products and box size comparison image. Of these participants... • 3 out of 5 did not understand how big each board was in relation to each other, upon viewing all 'Featured Products' on the Home Page • 3 out of 5 were confused about board size after viewing a size comparison picture of boxes.
Quotes	Featured Products Section on Home Page <i>"The size of the pictures is the same...something about the scale makes them all look the same to me." – P1</i> <i>"It's very hard to know what quantity of things are on each cheeseboard because from a 1000 ft view, they all look the same because they've all been scaled to fit the same width." – P6</i> Box Size Comparison Image <i>"This image isn't communicating anything to me about the board size. What I want to know is the relative size of the board and the contents of it, <u>not the size of the box.</u>" – P6</i> <i>"It's a little confusing when I hover over all these images and see the exact same picture, and the word pointing to which size box...I still don't have a phenomenal sense of how big these boxes are because I'm just seeing them in comparison to each other." – P3</i>

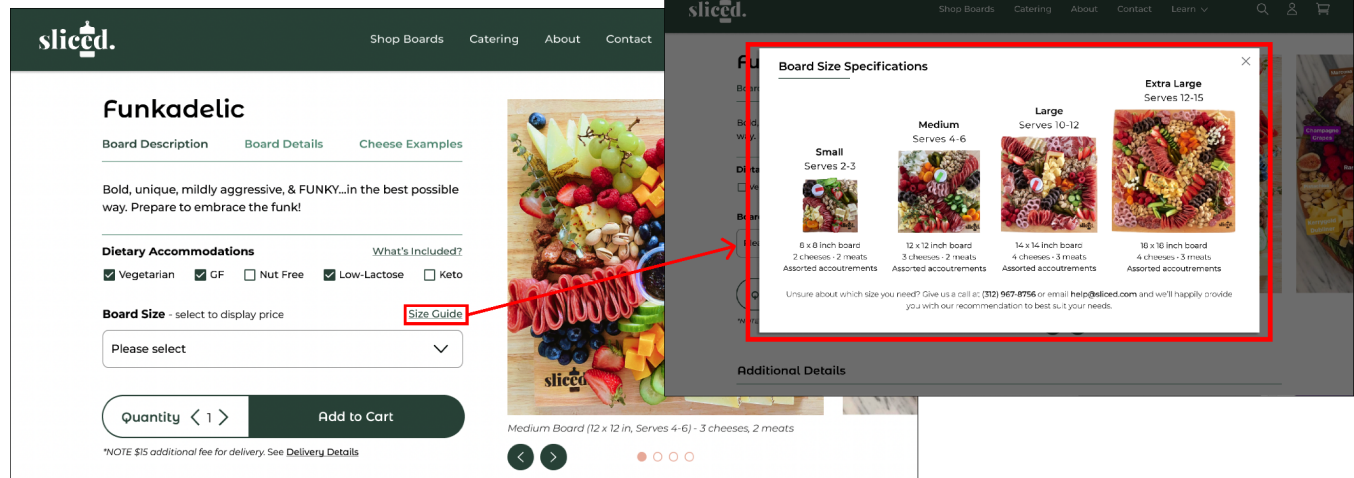
Screenshots & Recommendations

- Create a cheeseboard size guide to help customers understand the different dimensions of the board sizes. *(See screenshot of recommended changes on next page)*

Original



Recommendation



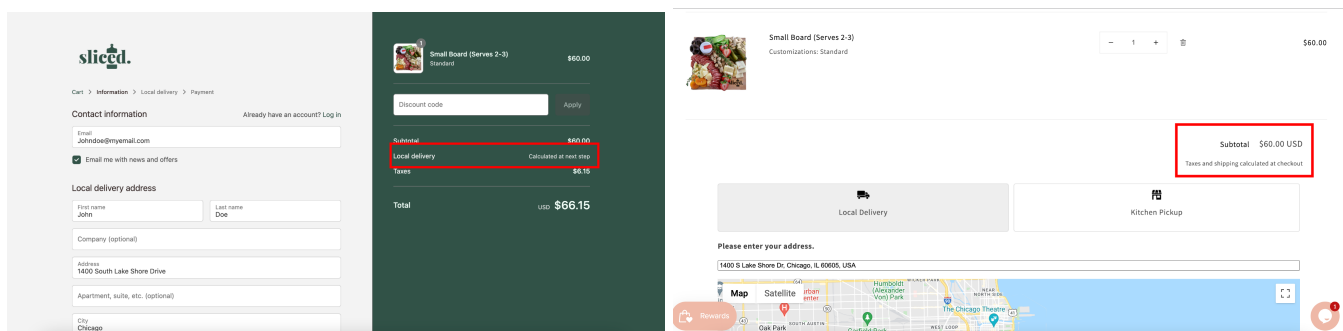
Problems with the Checkout Process

Issue 6: Delivery fees are unclear & surprising	
Severity	Level 2 - Moderate
Research Questions + Findings	Q: Where are customers experiencing friction throughout the order placement process? 3 out of 7 participants were surprised by Sliced's delivery fee at checkout. Even though fees are listed under board details on product pages, it was often missed due to placement. Additionally, price breakdowns and totals do not update with delivery fee until the final checkout page even though the address is provided earlier on in the process.
Quotes	<i>"Oh! That's the local delivery fee that got added. I gave my address previously so they could've just told me there [...] <u>The delivery fee in checkout was an extra step that was unnecessary.</u>"</i> —P7 <i>"I was obviously surprised by the shipping fee. I think, maybe that should be disclosed much earlier in the process rather than saving it until the very end."</i> —P2

Screenshots & Recommendations

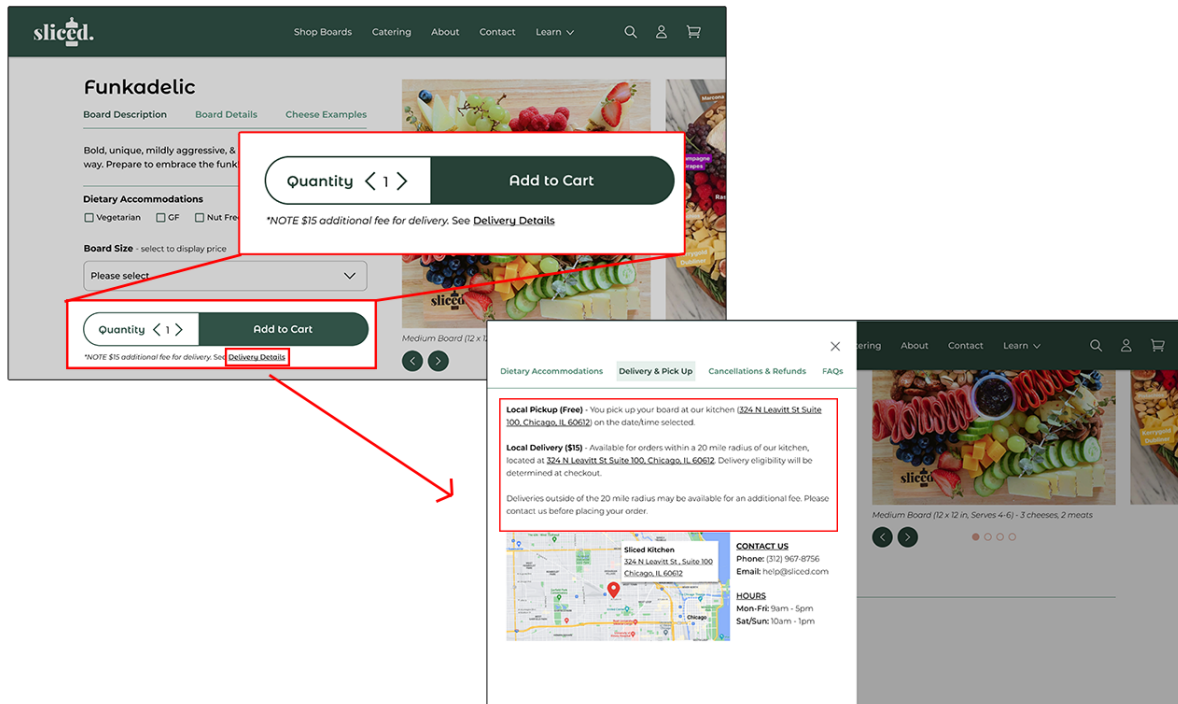
1. Be transparent about the delivery fee earlier on during the checkout process. A note about the \$15 delivery fee right underneath the "Add to Cart" button will ensure that customers are aware of the additional charge for local delivery checkout early on. Additionally, disclosing the delivery fee on the Cart page will alert any customers who might have missed the disclosure on the product page.

Original Website (Issues)

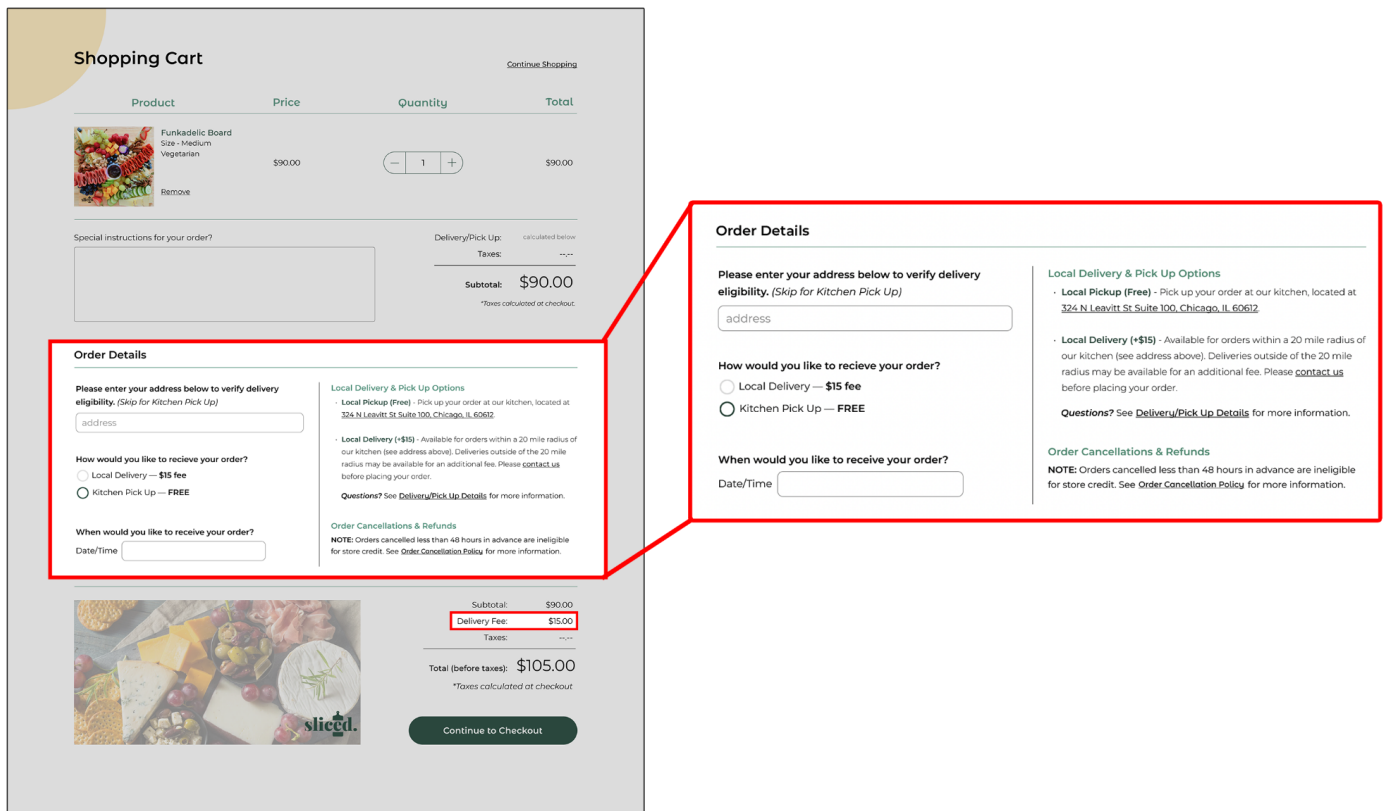


(See recommended changes on next page)

Figma Prototype (Recommendation 1)



Figma Prototype (Recommendation 2)



Issue 7: Delivery & pickup instructions are required	
Severity	Level 2 - Moderate
Research Questions + Findings	Q: Where are customers experiencing friction throughout the order placement process? 3 out of 7 participants were caught off guard by the requirement to enter delivery or pickup instructions before advancing to checkout. Upon clicking the “check out” button from the cart, customers are required to enter these instructions in a text box before proceeding. Additionally, the error and prompt only appear after clicking on the check out button, catching participants by surprise. If a customer clicks “Check out” without selecting a timeslot or leaving delivery instructions, only the timeslot error message appears. Once the customer chooses the timeslot and clicks checkout again, the error message stays the same, and thus the customer is not told the actual error, which is blank delivery instructions. These issues were also noted by 2 out of 2 of our heuristic evaluators, and were noted for violating 3 heuristics: consistency and standards, error prevention, and diagnosing and recovering from errors.
Quotes	“You want me to put that into this tiny little box? Oh wait... <u>I don't know what I'd put here.</u>” – P6 “At the bottom of the checkout it says ‘is there anything we need to know?’ I usually leave this blank, I'm surprised the field needed an answer” – P4 “I would love that to not require a response.” – P3

Screenshots & Recommendations

1. Make the response to “Anything we should know?” optional, so users have the freedom to progress to checkout without filling out the text box.
2. Alternatively, reword to clearly indicate that this is a required field.

Original Website

When would you like to get this order?

Tue, 15 Mar 2022, 4:30 PM - 4:45 PM

Anything we should know?

cannot be empty

Check out

(See recommended changes on next page)

Figma Prototype (Recommendation)

Include a 'special instructions for your order' textbox right below the shopping cart summary. Allow users to leave this textbox blank as needed.

sliced.

Shop BoardsCateringAboutContactLearn

Q

Shopping Cart

Continue Shopping

Product	Price	Quantity	Total
 Funkadelic Board Size - Medium Vegetarian Remove	\$90.00	- 1 +	\$90.00

Special instructions for your order?

Delivery/Pick Up: calculated below

Taxes: ---

Subtotal: \$90.00

*Taxes calculated at checkout.

Order Details

Please enter your address below to verify delivery eligibility. (Skip for Kitchen Pick Up)

address

How would you like to receive your order?

☐ Local Delivery — \$15 fee

☐ Kitchen Pick Up — FREE

When would you like to receive your order?

Date/Time

Local Delivery & Pick Up Options

Local Pickup (Free) - Pick up your order at our kitchen, located at 324 N Leavitt St Suite 100, Chicago, IL 60612

Local Delivery (+\$15) - Available for orders within a 20 mile radius of our kitchen (see address above). Deliveries outside of the 20 mile radius may be available for an additional fee. Please [contact us](#) before placing your order.

Questions? See [Delivery/Pick Up Details](#) for more information.

Order Cancellations & Refunds

NOTE: Orders cancelled less than 48 hours in advance are ineligible for store credit. See [Order Cancellation Policy](#) for more information.



Subtotal: \$90.00

Delivery Fee: \$15.00

Taxes: ---

Total (before taxes): \$105.00

*Taxes calculated at checkout

Continue to Checkout

Want to partner with us?

If you are a local farmer, maker, or crafter and would like to join our network of vendors and suppliers, please [Contact Us](#) and say hello! We'd love to partner with you!

Slice 10% off your first order by joining our mailing list!

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HomeShop BoardsAboutCateringDeliveriesContactOur ProductsOur VendorsFAQ

f

324 N Leavitt St Suite 100, Chicago, IL 60612 | [help@sliced.com](#) | (312) 967-8756

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Issue 8: Kitchen pickup address is editable

Severity	Level 2 - Moderate
Data	Q: Where are customers experiencing friction throughout the order placement process? 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators noted this as an issue that violates error prevention and consistency and standards. 1 out of 7 participants mistakenly selected kitchen pickup when they verbalized that they would like to select delivery. They did not realize their error, since they were able to edit the address on the checkout page even after their mistake.
Quotes	<i>"If I'm doing local pickup, this field shouldn't be called a local DELIVERY address, and should not be editable. I accidentally autofilled this with my address and got pretty confused." – E1</i>

Screenshots & Recommendations

1. Rename "Local delivery address" to "Kitchen Pickup Address" to reduce confusion when customers are checking out through kitchen pickup.
2. Make the address for kitchen pickup clearly unchangeable, so customers will not accidentally enter their own address.

Original Website (Issues)

The screenshot shows the checkout page for 'sliced.' The left side contains the 'Contact information' section with fields for email, first name, last name, company, address, apartment, and city. The 'Local delivery address' field is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow. The right side shows the order summary with items, subtotal, taxes, and total.

Contact information Already have an account? Log in

Email
Johndoe@myemail.com

☐ Email me with news and offers

Local delivery address

First name
John

Last name
Doe

Company (optional)
Kitchen Chicago

Address
324 N Leavitt St

Apartment, suite, etc. (optional)
Suite 100

City
Chicago

Order Summary:

- Small Board (Serves 2-3) Standard \$60.00
- Subtotal \$60.00
- Local delivery Free
- Taxes \$6.15
- Total USD \$66.15

Issue 9: Delivery address must be entered twice	
Severity	Level 2 - Moderate
Research Questions + Findings	Q: Where are customers experiencing friction throughout the order placement process? 1 out of 7 participants expressed frustration about the delivery address having to be entered twice; once on the cart page and once on the checkout page. 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators noted this as well, citing it as a violation of error prevention and consistency and standards.
Quotes	<i>"I already typed it before so why do I have to type the address again?" – P6</i> <i>"If I typed my address in on the cart screen, it should remember it and I shouldn't have to type it in here a second time. It is redundant and opens up opportunities for errors." – E2</i>

Screenshots & Recommendation

1. Only have customers enter their delivery address once.
2. Auto-populate address on checkout page for customer confirmation.

Original Website (Issues)

Taxes and shipping calculated at checkout

Local Delivery

Kitchen Pickup

Please enter your address.

1400 S Lake Shore Dr, Chicago, IL 60605, USA

Map

Satellite

1400 S Lake Shore Dr, Chicago, IL 60605, USA

Contact information

Already have an account? Log in

Email

JohnDoe@myemail.com

☐ Email me with news and offers

Local delivery address

First name

John

Last name

Doe

Company (optional)

Address

Apartment, suite, etc. (optional)

City

Country/Region co.

United States

State

Illinois

ZIP code

60605

Phone

Discount code

Apply

Subtotal

\$60.00

Local delivery

Calculated at next step

Taxes

\$6.15

Total

USD \$66.15

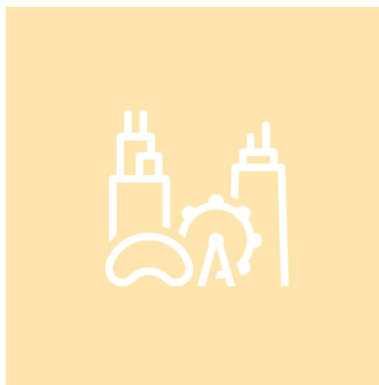
Aesthetic Integrity and Website Copy

Issue 10: Value propositions are not translating	
Severity	Level 1 - Subtle
Research Questions + Findings	Q: Can customers clearly recognize and understand MVPs on the homepage? Q: Which MVPs are resonating / not resonating with users? 6 out of 7 participants and 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators did not understand the purpose or meaning behind the three graphic images on the home page (See screenshot below). Confusion stemmed from not understanding both the meaning and the functionality of the graphics. Both participants and evaluators mistakenly thought these were hyperlinked buttons and tried to click on them.
Quotes	<i>"I have no idea what these logos/images are. Am I supposed to click on this?" – P3</i> <i>"These three images aren't really communicating any information to me. I don't know what they are, and I can't click on them apparently." – P6</i> <i>"No idea what the purpose of these graphics are. They seem out of place, and at first I thought they would be clickable." – E1</i>

Screenshots & Recommendations

1. Remove these images and replace them with web copy. If these are your main value propositions, they should be clearly communicated to customers.
2. The value proposition section should be come after the "Featured Products" section on the home page. Featured Products should come first, right below the hero section and before "Our Story" in the home page hierarchy.

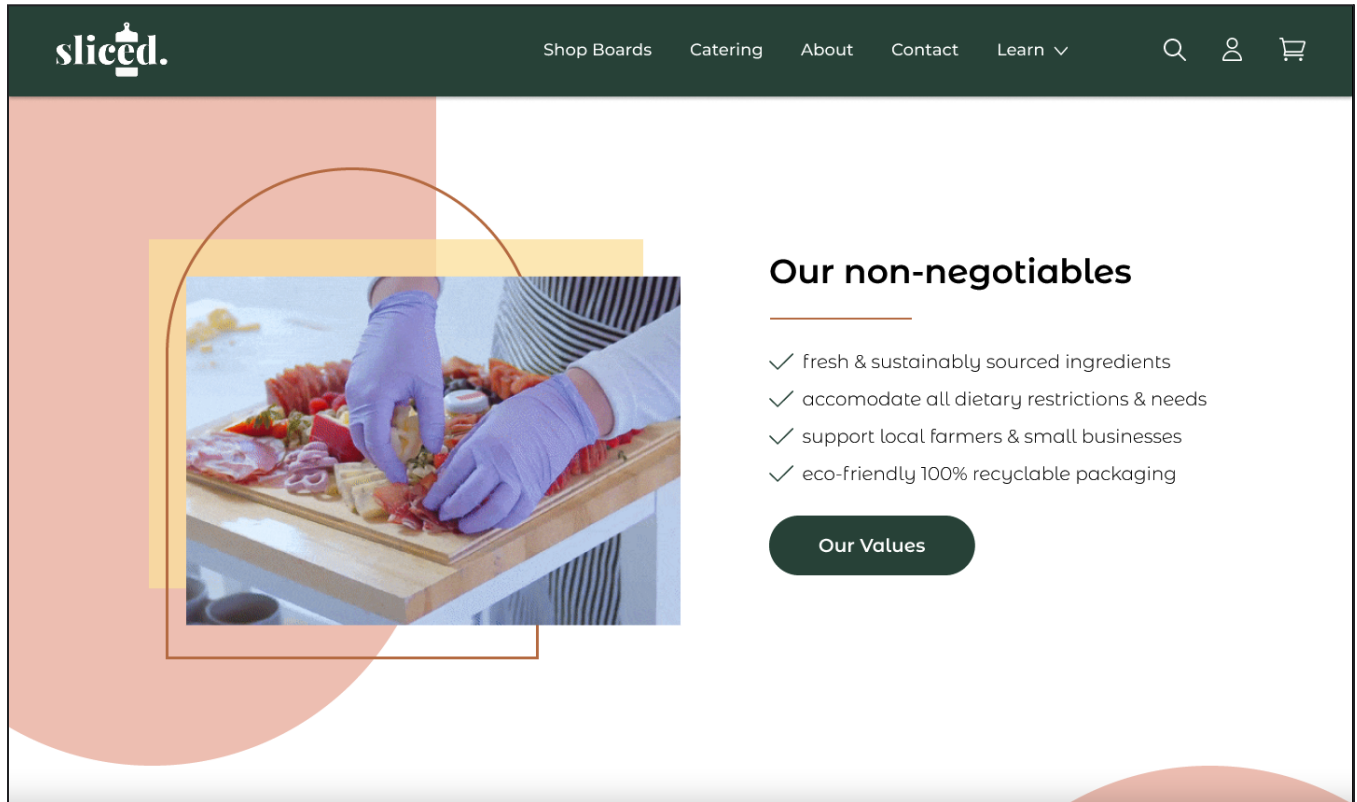
Original Website (Value Propositions)



(See recommended changes on next page)

Figma Prototype (Recommendation)

Spell out value propositions and create a separate “Our Values” page to elaborate on what your brand values are and why customers should choose Sliced over the competition.

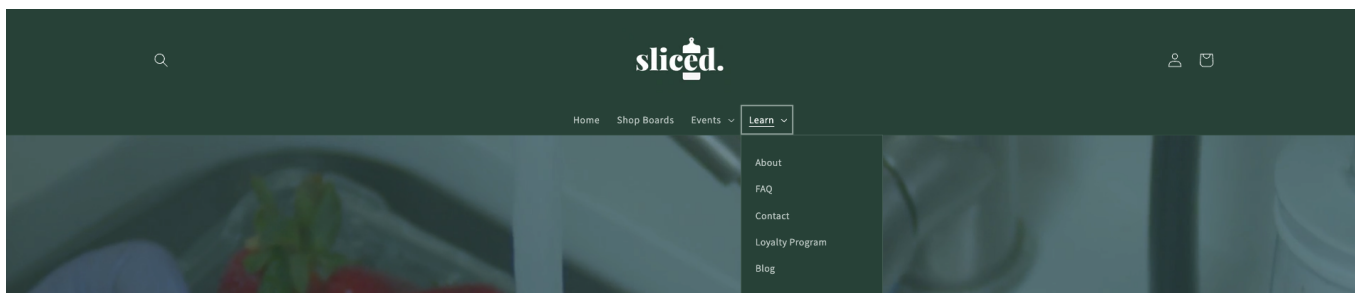


Issue 11: Header & navigation bar are taking up valuable screen real estate	
Severity	Level 1 - Subtle
Research Questions + Findings	Q: Does the current information architecture support intuitive navigation of the website? 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators found the header and navigation bar to move unintuitively as they scrolled through the page. Currently, the navigation bar disappears when scrolling down (which one participant noted they liked), but when you scroll back up, the navbar reappears. Since the navbar is so wide, it ends up taking up a lot more screen real estate than necessary, hiding elements on the page that users might have been trying to read. The navigation bar is wide enough to fit all sub-menu links currently under “Learn” in the top-level (main menu) navigation.
Quotes	“There are too many items listed under Learn. There is so much space on the header that more items can be listed in the horizontal menu. The text size is currently very small and hard to read and should be made larger and more apparent.” – E1 “A lot of tabs go under the 'Learn' tab. I feel like 'Learn' is super vague and maybe the sub tabs can be just shown on the nav bar, and it would be easier for people to access.” – E2 “I would like to see more of the links under ‘Learn’ here [in the main menu].” – P4 “Header needs to either freeze in place and come with me as I scroll or stay only at the top of the page. The way it kind of randomly comes up and down is jarring and frustrating.” – E1

Screenshots & Recommendations

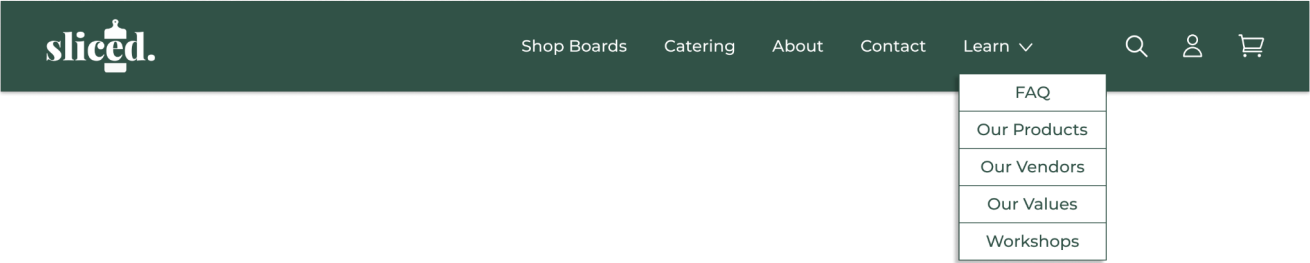
1. Increase font size and decrease navbar height.
2. Either fix the header position on the page permanently or make it hidden 100% of the time after scrolling past it – stay consistent.

Original Website (Issue)



(See recommended changes on next page)

Figma Prototype (Recommendation)



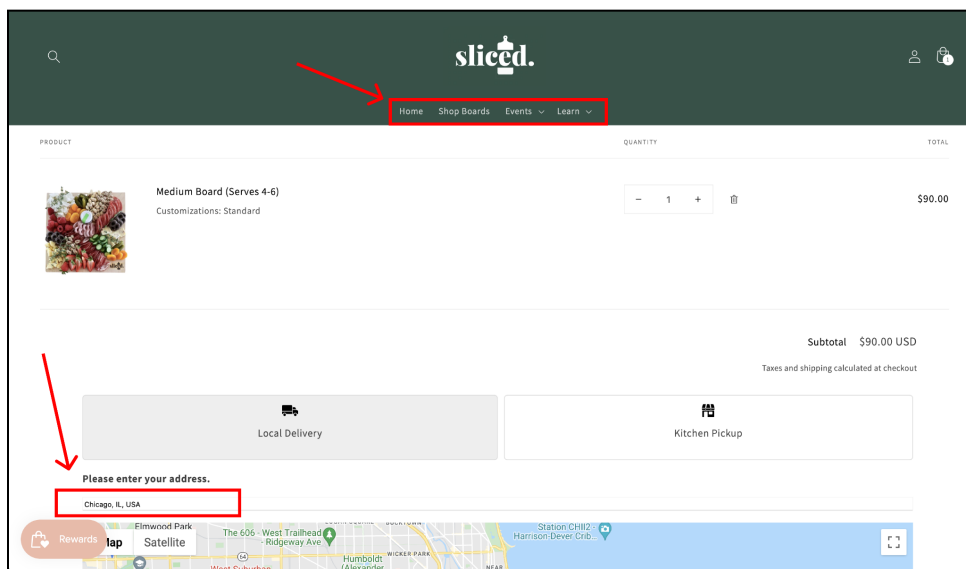
Issue 12: Small text size = Low readability

Severity	Level 1 - Subtle
Research Questions + Findings	Q: What do customers like/dislike about the current look and feel of the website? 2 out of 7 participants and 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators noted that the text size used made it difficult to read. Text size on the navigation bar, board details, as well as the cart were some of the areas participants indicated text size issues.
Quotes	<i>“There is so much space on the header that more items can be listed in the horizontal menu. The text size is currently very small and hard to read and should be made larger and more apparent.” – E1</i>

Screenshots & Recommendations

1. Increase text size by 1 - 2 pts in all areas of the website to increase readability.

Original Website (Issues)



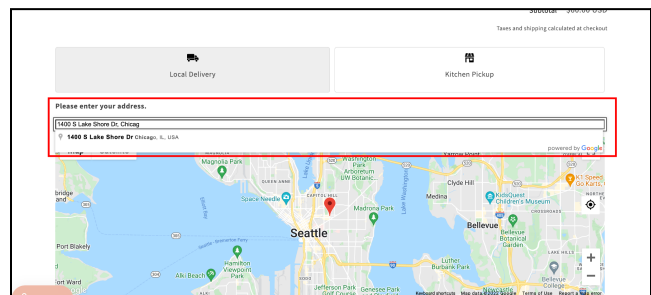
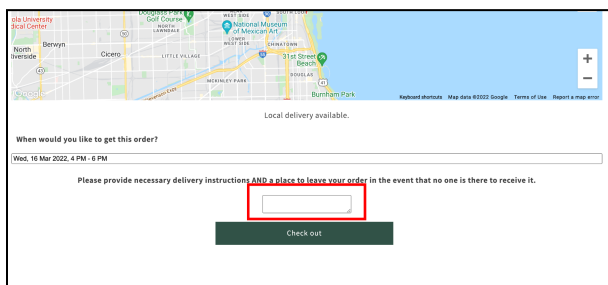
Issue 13: Form fields do not follow standard conventions

Severity	Level 1 - Subtle
Research Questions + Findings	Q: Where are customers experiencing friction throughout the order placement process? 2 out of 7 participants and 2 out of 2 heuristic evaluators made comments about the difficulty of use of various forms fields throughout the Sliced website. This includes the textboxes provided for Delivery Instructions (at the bottom of the Cart Page), 'Is this a gift?' and 'Allergen/Dietary Restrictions' textboxes (on Product Pages), and the Delivery Address and Timeslot fields (above and below the map, respectively, on the Cart Page). These textboxes and form fields— especially those on the cart page—are easy to miss due to their size and placement on the pages.
Quotes	Delivery & pickup details textbox <i>"This is a very small text box" – P7</i> <i>"You want me to put [delivery instructions] into this tiny little box?" – P6</i> Gift note & allergen/dietary restriction textbox <i>"This should be at checkout. What if I have multiple items in my cart and want them all to be gifts and have a note as a package? Do I just enter it under one item? Do I have to indicate the note for every item I add to my cart?" – E1</i> Delivery address <i>"This is a very wide and thin field that I didn't even recognize at first as the place to put my address. It could be easily missed" – E2</i>

Screenshots & Recommendations:

1. Emphasize form field sizing and hierarchy so users know to interact with them

Original Website (Issues)



What Went Well

In addition to the findings listed above, usability testing revealed several successes of the Sliced website.

A breakdown of how many participants encountered these successes for each of the 3 tasks that were tested, in addition to the amount of unique participants that encountered the successes across the entire test session, are shown in **Figure 7**.

Finding	Home Page Tour	Task 1 (BYOT)	Task 2 (Finding info)	Task 3 (Custom order)	Total Unique Participants
Cancellation Policy Findability	N/A	N/A	n = 7	N/A	n = 7
Appealing UI	n = 6	n = 2	N/A	N/A	n = 6
Positive Initial Impressions	n = 5	N/A	N/A	N/A	n = 5

Figure 7: Task findings breakdown.

Success 1: Finding the Order Cancellation Policy

7 out of 7 of our participants successfully located the order cancellation policy through the home page navigation bar, 'Learn' tab, and 'FAQ' sub-tab. Some of these participants expressed that the location of the order cancellation policy was where they expected it to be and finding it was straightforward and easy. Across the board, this task was the easiest for participants to complete.

- *"I think [the order cancellation policy location] is pretty standard. The FAQ seems like a reasonable place for it."* — P6

Success 2: Appealing UI

6 out of 7 participants enjoyed the aesthetic and color palette of the Sliced website, upon first impression. Participants specifically pointed out the logo, color palette, product photography, and home page video as aspects that they liked about the website. Three of these participants had positive feelings about the Sliced color palette.

- *"I like the green color and logo. I think that's really sharp."* — P3
- *"I like this [video] ... It's nice to see them putting [the cheeseboard] together."* — P2

Success 3: Positive Initial Impressions

5 out of 7 of our participants specifically expressed positivity towards the Sliced brand through initial impressions and reflections on using the website. The sources of having a positive

impression of Sliced stemmed from understanding the brand story, product, and connection to Chicago.

- *“I like ‘fresh and thoughtfully sourced ingredients’. It makes me feel like the board is going to be more high end and different from something I could just get at a grocery store.” – P3*
- *“It’s nice to see that they are woman owned.” – P2*

Recommendation Summary for Sliced

Based on our usability testing results, our team has identified four key opportunities for improvement to share with Sliced. We also incorporated feedback from usability test participants and heuristic evaluators into a **Figma Prototype** to illustrate these recommendations and suggestions.

Dietary Modifications

Based on the above [findings](#), 7 out of 7 participants expressed interest in expanded dietary modification options. Recommended solutions include allowing customers to select multiple dietary accommodations at a time, allowing customers to request partial board modifications (i.e., a half vegan cheese, half non-vegan cheese), and including a vegetarian, nut-free, and keto (low carb) options to cover a wider range of common dietary restrictions. If allowing multiple dietary modification options is out of scope for the business, our research team recommends more descriptive board details that illustrate to the customer what specific items are being excluded/substituted for each modification.

Board Customization

Two participants (P3 and P6) were more particular about the kinds of products they expect to find on a cheeseboard than others. Both participants explained that while some of the product images appealed to them, the lack of customizability and lack of sufficient details about the contents of each board was a major deal breaker for them. They explained that they would prefer to specify the exact cheeses, meats, and accouterments included on their order. Our recommendation is to create a separate product page—"Build Your Own Board"—that allows customers to choose the desired size and customize every aspect of the board. This would also address the above dietary modification issue.

Information Clarity and Visibility

7 out of 7 participants indicated that more product information and clarity would help them when deciding between cheeseboards on Sliced. Our recommendation is to rearrange the item detail hierarchy, with the details being placed up front and center on the product page. Product labels on the different types of cheese and other products on the board in the image carousel could help communicate what the different boards look like and what is included on each board. Another consideration to improve information clarity would be to include a size guide, with supporting descriptions of the relative scale between board sizes.

Checkout Experience

5 out of 7 participants encountered varying degrees of friction during the checkout process. Currently, delivery or pickup instructions are required for both kitchen pickup and local delivery, and can distract the purchaser from completing the purchase flow if they do not enter text into the required field. A suggested quick fix is to make these fields optional rather than required. Another common area of concern for customers during the checkout process was the unclear delivery fee based on proximity to the Sliced kitchen. The delivery fee varies depending on distance—\$15.00

within 10 miles and \$20.00 within 10-20 miles—and is not calculated until the final step of the purchasing flow. Customers pointed out that they would have preferred to have the delivery fee cost disclosed earlier in their purchasing flow.

Reflections on Current Study

What Went Well

Robustness of tasks: The home page tour and three tasks presented to participants during usability sessions were robust enough to generate a large bank of qualitative and quantitative data from which we were able to extract insights and patterns that could be synthesized into actionable recommendations. Our primary objective for this study was to identify usability issues and opportunities for improvement on the Sliced website. Taken together, the robustness of our tasks allowed us to effectively answer each of our primary research questions and subquestions. For instance, Task 1 (BYOT) provided our team with robust data as participants simulated a realistic purchase flow. While each participant approached Task 1 in their own unique way, all seven participants were able to successfully complete the purchase flow. The tasks chosen for the usability study were robust enough to generate a large bank of data from which we were able to extract insights and patterns that could be synthesized into actionable recommendations.

Participant recruitment: Because Sliced is a newly launched business with no established customer base, participant recruitment proved slightly ambiguous for our team. To add another layer of complexity, Sliced is located in Chicago, IL while the research team was located in Seattle, WA. Through the generosity of our colleagues in introducing us to their personal and professional network and connections, 5 of our 7 usability participants were located in the Chicago area. These participants had either purchased, made, and/or been served a cheeseboard at least once in the past. We thank our colleagues for offering their personal and professional network and connections as resources.

Scripts and data logging: Because the tasks varied in constraints (minor constraints to highly constrained), having strong moderation scripts and data logging materials in place were crucial for the study's success. Smaller scale pilot sessions helped the research team make final adjustments to the usability plan before user testing began.

Limitations and Future Directions

Target Customer Insights: Due to time and resource constraints, as well as the limited scope of this project—prioritizing usability over market research—our team was unable to gather sufficient data and evidence around target customer demographics, motivations, preferences, and interests. While we were able to collect some data, we did not include enough participants in our analysis to draw any generalizable conclusions or utilize descriptive statistics. We recommend additional market research and price testing in the future once Sliced has gained more traction.

Recruit a more culturally and racially diverse group: All participants filled out a demographics survey prior to their usability test. While age, gender, household size, annual income, and employment status were options, no information regarding race or ethnicity was collected. As a result, we were unable to intentionally recruit a racially and culturally diverse group of participants,

nor appropriately assess the diversity of our final participant pool. Doing so would have helped our team draw new insights and perspectives that would have otherwise been missed.

Along with expanding diversity in our participant selection, there was a missed opportunity for testing with older participants. All of our participants fell within the age range of 18-50 years old, with no testing of anyone older than 50+. Because the business is in a different state, the research team relied on network contacts vs. having an open call for residents to participate. Including participants that feel outside of the tested age range would be something we would like to improve upon in future studies, to have a more representative participant pool.

Post-task & Post-test survey distribution: Immediately concluding each task, participants completed post-task questionnaires before moving to the next section of the usability test. The post-task questionnaires were distributed in the form of a seven-point Likert scale in which participants would rate the previous task from “Extremely Easy” to “Extremely Difficult” to complete the task. Due to the nature of our remote moderated test where participants were encouraged to use the Think Aloud Method, our team is concerned that discussion with the moderator could have biased participant choices, as discussed in Rubin & Chisnell (2008)^[4]. For future tests, it is recommended that participants complete post-test questionnaires with screen-sharing turned off, and the Think Aloud Method discouraged during answering these questions to prevent the risk of bias. Another alternative method that could be worth exploring would be to distribute ratings during the task. Teague et al. (2001, as cited in Tullis & Albert 2013) notes that “participants’ ratings of ease of use were significantly higher after the task was completed than during the task. It could be that the task success changes participants’ perception of how difficult the task was to complete”^[5].

Additional Areas to Explore

Evaluating the mobile experience: Due to resource and time constraints, in addition to the research team being located in Seattle, WA, while Sliced and their customer base is located in Chicago, IL, this testing was done using only desktop devices and thus only evaluating the desktop version of the Sliced website. However, statistics show that a significant proportion of e-commerce sales are completed on a mobile device, with estimates that in 2021-2022, mobile purchasing will make up about 73% of all e-commerce sales; as recently as 2016, it represented 52.4%. This means that almost three out of every four dollars spent on online purchases will be coming from mobile, and that rate is accelerating^[6]. Accordingly, it would be beneficial to evaluate the mobile experience of the Sliced website. Mobile testing would include the same research questions and goals set forth during this study, but would ideally take place in person rather than remotely.

References

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- [3] Dumas, J. & Reddish, J. (1999). *A Practical Guide to Usability Testing*. Intellect. 324-325.
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- [5] Tullis, T. & Albert, B. (2013). *Measuring the User Experience: Collecting, Analyzing, and Presenting Usability Metrics*. 136.
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- [8] Sillence, E., Briggs, P., Fishwick, L., & Harris, P. (2004, April 25). *Trust and mistrust of online health sites*. CHI, 663-670. [\[Source\]](#).
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Appendix

1. Customer Feedback/Demographics Survey

Introduction: The following survey consists of 10 questions and will take 2-3 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, we will ask you to provide some demographic information and your preferred contact information in the event that you are selected to win a FREE Sliced Mini Box OR \$20 Sliced E-Gift Card (your choice). Drawing winners will be announced on March 1, 2022.

DISCLOSURE: Sliced is conducting this survey to get a better sense of who our customers are and how we might improve your experience on our website. The information that you provide will remain CONFIDENTIAL. Only members of the Sliced research team will have access to your responses, and the data you provide will be used solely for the purposes of understanding our customer base so that we can better serve you and our community. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering, and you may exit the survey at any time. Thank you in advance for your time!

1. How did you hear about Sliced? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Friend/family referral
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Tiktok
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Pinterest
- ☐ Google search
- ☐ I know the owner personally
- ☐ Other: _____

2. Please indicate how frequently you use the following social media platforms. (Select "Never" if you do not have an account)

	Never	Once a month or less	Several times a month	Once a week	Several times a week	Daily
Instagram	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
TikTok	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Facebook	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Twitter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pinterest	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Which of the following products/services did you purchase when you placed your most recent order? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Crackers
- ☐ Mini Box
- ☐ Valentine's Day Board
- ☐ Standard Board - Small
- ☐ Standard Board - Medium
- ☐ Standard Board - Large
- ☐ Standard Board - Extra Large
- ☐ Grazing Table (Event Catering Display)
- ☐ E-Gift Card

4. Did you place your order for pick-up or delivery?

- ☐ Pick up
- ☐ Delivery

5. Why did you place an order with Sliced? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ I'm hosting a small social gathering (up to 5 people)
- ☐ I'm hosting a medium sized social gathering (6-10 people)
- ☐ I'm hosting a large social gathering (11+ people)
- ☐ For myself
- ☐ For date night
- ☐ For a birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion
- ☐ For Valentine's Day
- ☐ For a company or corporate event
- ☐ For a local community event
- ☐ I just love a good cheeseboard!
- ☐ Other: _____

6. Overall, how easy or difficult was it to find the information you needed when navigating the Sliced website?

- ☐ Extremely difficult
- ☐ Somewhat difficult
- ☐ Neither easy nor difficult
- ☐ Somewhat easy
- ☐ Extremely easy

7. Please provide an estimation for how much time it took you to complete the checkout process:

- ☐ Much more time than I expected
- ☐ Slightly more time than I expected
- ☐ About as much time as I expected

- Slightly less time than I expected
- Much less time than I expected

8. Overall, how easy or difficult did you find the checkout process?

- Extremely difficult
- Somewhat difficult
- Neither easy nor difficult
- Somewhat easy
- Extremely easy

9. Would you recommend Sliced to anyone you know?

- Yes → **[BRANCHING LOGIC]** *Who would you recommend Sliced to and why?* [text box]
- No → **[BRANCHING LOGIC]** *Why wouldn't you recommend Sliced to anyone you know?* [text box]

10. Do you have any feedback about your most recent order placement experience that you'd like to share with us? How can we improve your experience? [text box]

11. What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-32
- 33-40
- 41-50
- 50+
- Prefer not to respond

12. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer to self identify: _____
- Prefer not to respond

13. Including yourself, how many people currently live in your household?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more
- Prefer not to respond

14. How many of your household members are people under the age of 18?

- 0
- 1
- 2

- 3 or more
- Prefer not to respond

15. What is your annual household income?

- Under \$25,000
- \$25,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$74,999
- \$75,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 or more
- I don't know / I'm not sure
- Prefer not to respond

16. What is your current employment status? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Full-time employment
- ☐ Part-time employment
- ☐ Not currently employed / Seeking employment
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Home-maker
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Prefer not to respond

17. Please enter your zip code: [text box]

18. Would you like to be entered into the drawing to win a FREE Sliced Mini Box OR \$20 Sliced E-Gift Card?

If you respond "yes", we will ask you to provide your name and preferred contact information on the next few pages so that we can notify you if you win the drawing. Drawing winners will be announced on March 1, 2022.

- No → **[Branching Logic] **End Survey****
- Yes → **[Branching Logic] **Continue to Q19 and Q20****

19. What is your preferred contact method?

- Phone: _____
- Email: _____

20. Please provide your first and last name: [text box]

2. Recruitment Screener Survey [\(Link\)](#)

1. Which of the following best describes you? (select one)

- I currently live in Chicago

- I have lived in Chicago in the past, but do not currently live there
- I have never lived in Chicago

[Branching Logic - Q1 Choice 1] How long have you been living in Chicago? (select one)

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 3-4 years
- 5 or more years

[Branching Logic - Q1 Choice 2] How long did you live in Chicago for? (select one)

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 3-4 years
- 5 or more years

Which of the following describes your dietary preferences and restrictions? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Vegan
- ☐ Vegetarian
- ☐ Pescetarian
- ☐ Gluten-Free
- ☐ Nut-free
- ☐ Dairy-free
- ☐ Paleo
- ☐ Keto
- ☐ None of the above (I do not have any dietary restrictions)
- ☐ Other: _____

Have you ever purchased a cheese or charcuterie board? (select one)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Would you consider purchasing a cheese or charcuterie board? (select one)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

Look at the board below. Would you purchase this board at the listed price? (Assume that each board can be customized to fit your dietary preferences.) (select one)

- Definitely would buy
- Probably would buy
- Might or might not buy

- Probably would not buy
- Definitely would not buy



Medium Board

Standard

\$90

Dairy Free

\$100

Gluten Free

\$90

Vegan

\$110

Serves 4-6 people. Please note these are snacking portion sizes.
Dimensions: 12" X 12" (inches)

What's Included

- 3 cheeses
- 2 meats
- Accessories (fruit/veggies, honey/jam, assorted nuts, herb & flower details)

Vegan substitutions

- locally sourced plant-based cured meat
- locally sourced dairy-free cheese
- vegan-friendly accessories

Dairy-free substitutions

- locally sourced dairy-free cheese & dairy-free accessories.

Look at the board below. Would you purchase this board at the price given? (Assume that each board can be customized to fit your dietary preferences.) (select one)

- Definitely would buy
- Probably would buy
- Might or might not buy
- Probably would not buy
- Definitely would not buy



Large Board

Standard

\$150

Dairy Free

\$170

Gluten Free

\$160

Vegan

\$170

Serves 10-12 people. Please note these are snacking portion sizes.
Dimensions: 14" X 14" (inches)

What's Included (Standard board)

- 3 cheeses
- 2 meats
- Accessories (fruit/veggies, honey/jam, assorted nuts, herb & flower details)

Vegan substitutions

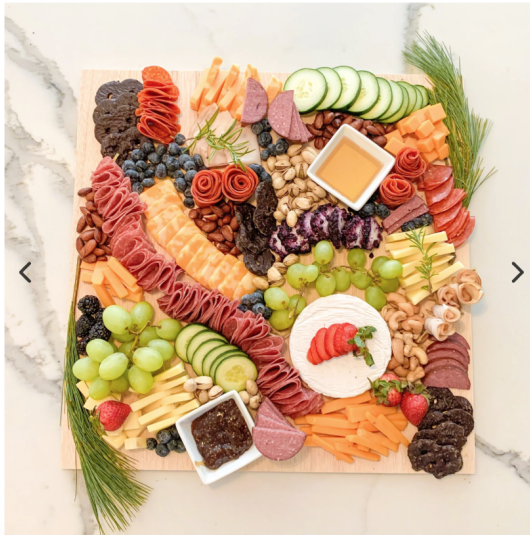
- locally sourced plant-based cured meat
- locally sourced dairy-free cheese
- vegan-friendly accessories.

Dairy-free substitutions

- locally sourced dairy-free cheese and dairy-free friendly accessories.

Look at the board below. Would you purchase this board at the price given? (Assume that each board can be customized to fit your dietary preferences.) (select one)

- ☐ Definitely would buy
- ☐ Probably would buy
- ☐ Might or might not buy
- ☐ Probably would not buy
- ☐ Definitely would not buy



Extra Large Board

Standard

\$200

Dairy Free

\$220

Gluten Free

\$220

Vegan

\$220

Serves 12-15 people. Please note these are snacking portion sizes.
Dimensions: 18" x18" (inches)

What's Included (Standard board)

- 4 cheeses
- 3 Meats
- Accessories (fruit/veggies, honey/jam, assorted nuts, herb & flower details)

Vegan substitutions

- locally sourced plant-based cured meat
- locally sourced dairy-free cheese
- vegan-friendly accessories.

Dairy-free substitutions

- locally sourced dairy-free cheese and dairy-free friendly accessories.

Look at the board below. Would you purchase this board at the price given? (Assume that each board can be customized to fit your dietary preferences.) (select one)

- Definitely would buy
- Probably would buy
- Might or might not buy
- Probably would not buy
- Definitely would not buy



Valentine's Day Board (Medium)

Standard

\$100

Dairy Free

\$100

Gluten Free

\$100

Vegan

\$100

Serves 2-3 people. Please note these are snacking portion sizes.
Dimensions: 12" X 12" (inches)

What's Included (Standard board)

- 3 cheeses
- 2 Meats
- Accessories (fruit/veggies, honey/jam, assorted nuts, herb & flower details)

Vegan substitutions

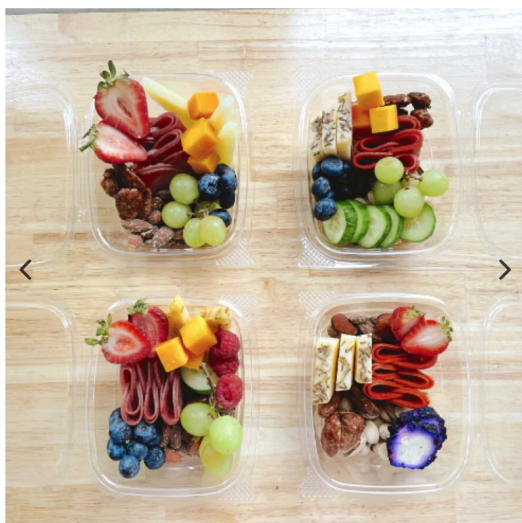
- locally sourced plant-based cured meat
- locally sourced dairy-free cheese
- vegan-friendly accessories.

Dairy-free substitutions

- locally sourced dairy-free cheese and dairy-free friendly accessories.

Look at the product below. Would you purchase this board at the price given? (Assume that each box can be customized to fit your dietary preferences.) (select one)

- Definitely would buy
- Probably would buy
- Might or might not buy
- Probably would not buy
- Definitely would not buy



Mini Box

Standard

\$15

Dairy Free

\$17

Gluten Free

\$16

Vegan

\$17

Each box serves 1 person.

Container Size: 8oz

****The Mini Box requires an order of 4 or more****

What's Included (each box)

- 2 cheeses
- 1 Meats
- Accessories (fruit/veggies, jam/honey, assorted nuts, herb & flower details)

Vegan substitutions

- locally sourced plant-based cured meat
- locally sourced dairy-free cheese
- vegan-friendly accessories.

Dairy-free substitutions

- locally sourced dairy-free cheese and dairy-free friendly accessories.

Thanks for taking our screener survey! Please enter your email below so we can contact you regarding the follow-up interview.

3. Demographics Survey

What is your age? (select one)

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-32
- ☐ 33-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 50+
- ☐ Prefer not to respond

What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer to self identify
- ☐ Prefer not to respond

What's the highest level of education you completed?

- ☐ Some High School
- ☐ High School / GED
- ☐ Associate's Degree
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree

- Master's Degree
- PhD or other professional degree (i.e., MD, JD, etc.)
- Prefer not to respond

What is your current employment status? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Not currently employed
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Home-maker
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Prefer not to respond

If you are currently employed, what is your occupation? (short answer)

What's your current relationship status?

- Single
- Married
- Domestic Partnership
- In a Relationship (not married)
- Separated
- Divorced
- Prefer not to respond

Including yourself, how many people currently live in your household?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more
- Prefer not to respond

How many members of your household are people under the age of 18?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3 or more
- Prefer not to respond

Which of these describes your personal annual income?

- Under \$25,000
- \$25,000 - \$49,999

- \$50,000 - \$74,999
- \$75,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 - \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more
- I don't know / I'm not sure

What is your annual household income?

- Under \$25,000
- \$25,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$74,999
- \$75,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 - \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more
- I don't know / I'm not sure
- Prefer not to respond

Please enter your zip code (short answer)

Approximately how many hours a day do you spend online? (short answer, whole number)

4. Usability Script (Pre-Test Interview, Tasks & Scenarios): [\(LINK\)](#)

5. Post-Task Questionnaire Items

QUALITATIVE Post-Task Survey Questions	Task 1 BYOT (Place an Order)	Task 2 Find Order Cancellation Policy	Task 3 Place a Custom Order
Did you find anything surprising or confusing as you were completing this task?	✓	✗	✓
Was there anything that didn't work as expected?	✓	✗	✓
Do you have any feedback or suggestions for how we could improve your experience?	✓	✗	✓
Is this where you expected to find this information? Why or why not? • If not, where did you expect to find this information? • Are there any other pages on the website where you would like to find this information?	✗	✓	✗

QUANTITATIVE Post-Task Survey Questions	Task 1 BYOT	Task 2 Find Order	Task 3 Place a
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	(Place an Order)	Cancellation Policy	Custom Order
Overall, this task was: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely easy ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely difficult	✓	✓	✓
Overall, completing this task was: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely pleasant ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely frustrating	✓	✓	✓
How easy or difficult was it to find the options you needed to accommodate you and your guests? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely easy ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely difficult	✓	✗	✗
Overall, this task took: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Much LESS time than I expected ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Much MORE time than I expected	✓	✓	✓

6. Post-Test Questionnaire Items

Quantitative Questions:

Overall, how would you rate your experience using the Sliced website?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Extremely pleasant ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely frustrating

Overall, how easy or difficult was it to find the information you needed when browsing through the Sliced website?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Extremely easy ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely difficult

Overall, did you find the site navigation intuitive or confusing?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Extremely intuitive ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely confusing

How likely are you to return to this website for any cheeseboard purchases you might make in the future?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Extremely Likely ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely Unlikely

Qualitative Questions

1. Overall, how would you rate your experience using the Sliced website?
2. Overall, how easy or difficult was it to find the information you needed when browsing through the Sliced website?
3. Overall, did you find the site navigation intuitive or confusing?
4. How likely are you to return to this website for any cheeseboard purchases you might make in the future?
5. What are your overall impressions of the Sliced website?
6. What, if anything, did you like most about your experience? Why?
7. What, if anything, was your least favorite part about your experience? Why?
8. Would you recommend Sliced to anyone you know?
 - IF YES: Who would you recommend it to and why?
 - IF NO: Why not?

7. All Questionnaire Data: Post-task & Post-test (Spreadsheet): [\(LINK\)](#)

8. Usability Testing Master Data Log (Spreadsheet): [\(LINK\)](#)

9. Heuristic Evaluations

Heuristic Evaluation Report (PDFs)

- [Evaluator 1](#)
- [Evaluator 2](#)

Heurio Links:

- [Evaluator 1](#)
- [Evaluator 2](#)