

Xbox 360

Usability Evaluation Report

Version – 0.1

Axance, France

Serco Usability Services, United Kingdom

SirValUse, Germany

UserCentric, United States

Xperience Consulting, Spain

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UXalliance

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

This document reports the findings of a usability evaluation of the Microsoft Xbox and the Microsoft Xbox 360. The testing was carried out early in 2006 at the international testing locations of the UX Alliance partners. The partners and their test locations were:

- Axance, Paris, France
- Serco Usability Services, London, UK
- SirValUse, Hamburg, Germany
- User Centric, Chicago, USA
- Xperience Consulting, Madrid, Spain

1.2 Evaluation Objectives

The key objectives of the evaluation were:

- To discover usability issues of the Xbox 360
- To ascertain where issues of usability are affected by cultural differences between the different test countries.
- To establish a benchmark for usability to enable comparison of it with other forthcoming games consoles.
- To compare the Xbox 360 with the original Xbox in terms of its usability.

1.3 Findings

The main findings included:

- Overall, there seemed to be little cultural difference between users of the Xbox and Xbox 360 within the test countries. Most issues which were found in one country were found in the others.
- The main differences between countries, which affected user behaviour, surrounded the accuracy of translated text options. This was most evident in the German and Spanish testing. It should be noted that testing was conducted in the United States and Europe, and that testing in other regions, such as Asia may produce differing results.
- Many users had trouble understanding the difference between the various identities required for the Xbox 360, in particular the gamertag, offline profile and passport. These were often unfamiliar concepts to less experienced users that were not readily understood.
- The process of setting up the Xbox 360 for first time use was felt to be relatively straightforward but potentially very long, which may be off-putting.
- Core gaming functionality was well supported and while some issues were noted gaming online, these were primarily issues related to the design of individual games rather than the console. Further functionality such as playing a CD or DVD was also well supported.
- The Xbox 360, whilst recognised by participants as a more powerful, and complicated machine, performed to a very similar standard as the Xbox Classic, in terms of ease of use. This is a positive finding as a range of new features does not appear to have degraded the usability of the console.

2 Introduction

2.1 Usability and Gaming

Video game consoles are no longer used just to play video games. They have become alternatives to home entertainment centres, with capabilities of playing DVD movies and audio CDs. They also allow people to play video games in an online environment. Consequently, they have evolved from an invisible insert-game-cartridge-and-play platform to an interactive "dashboard."

Heuristics have been used for designing (Malone, 1982) and evaluating (Desurvire, Caplan, & Toth, 2004) games. Likewise, discussion of usability implications concerning communication in games has emerged (Jørgensen, 2004). However, the study of game console usability has been neglected. Therefore, our objective was to evaluate usability issues concerning entertainment consoles.

2.2 About the UXalliance

Most international usability projects necessarily involve a range of usability groups in different countries that may have varying approaches and levels of capability. This means that any international project is only as strong as the weakest link within the project team.

To overcome this clear need, we have established the UX Alliance (www.uxalliance.com). By working closely together and sharing information on methods and internal processes we can ensure that quality is maximised.

The UXalliance is the world's largest user experience network. It offers world-class project management by drawing together leaders in the user experience market across Europe, Asia and the United States.

We currently have members who work closely together in France, the United Kingdom, Germany, the United States, Spain, China and Holland as well as close working links with groups in a wide range of other countries.



2.3 Method

2.3.1 Participants

Each partner group tested twelve participants in their locale, although in the US thirteen participants were tested. All participants used both the Xbox and the Xbox 360 consoles. None of the participants owned either an Xbox or an Xbox 360. Participants' designation as novice, intermediate, or expert gamers depended on which systems they owned (if any) and how much time they spent weekly playing games.

Participants that played less than one hour of games per week or played between one and five hours per week but did not own an up-to-date video game system (i.e. PlayStation 2) were considered "Novices." Participants that played over ten hours of games per week or played between six and ten hours per week and owned an up-to-date system were considered "Experts." Participants with qualifications in the centre of the novice-expert dichotomy were designated as "Intermediates."

Of the sixty-one participants tested, twenty were Novice gamers, twenty were Intermediate gamers, and twenty-one were Expert gamers.

2.3.2 Apparatus

The test took place in a laboratory setting with a large-screen high-definition television. The Xbox and Xbox 360 Premium Edition console systems were supplied with the necessary cables and peripherals to perform the tasks. A DVD Playback Kit was available to allow DVD use on the Xbox.

2.3.3 Procedure

Seven tasks were assigned for the participants to attempt on both consoles. Each participant attempted all the tasks on one console before doing so on the second console. We counterbalanced the order of the consoles, alternating whether the Xbox or Xbox 360 was tested first. The list of tasks included:

- Task 1: Set up the system.
- Task 2: Play a game.
- Task 3: Play a game online using Xbox Live.
- Task 4: Play a DVD.
- Task 5: Save a song from a CD.
- Task 6: Prevent games rated "Teen" or above.
- Task 7: Download a game

The first task involved connecting the console to the television. However, the Xbox 360 also required selecting default settings, creating a *gamer profile*, and setting up Xbox Live. Additionally, within task four, the participants were asked to fast forward as well as skip ahead chapters without using the main DVD menu. The last task only applied to Xbox 360 and was only done when time permitted.

2.4 About this Report

The key tasks that participants were asked to perform form the chapter headings of this document.

This report presents prioritised findings and their corresponding recommendations where relevant. It also documents any issues that differed between the participating countries.

We have allocated each issue a priority that indicates its likely impact on the ability of users to make effective use of the classic Xbox or the Xbox 360. The meanings of the priorities are as follows

High

These recommendations address issues that will seriously reduce the usability of the console for most users. They should be considered at the earliest opportunity.

Medium

While not as serious as High priority items, these recommendations address issues that would reduce the usability of the console and should be considered as soon as is practical.

Low

These recommendations address issues that are more cosmetic in nature or that impact only a small number of users. They should be addressed if time and resources allow, but not at the expense of dealing with the High and Medium priority issues.

3 Findings & Recommendations

3.1 Expectations of the Xbox360

Participants were asked about their expectations of the Xbox 360. Most expected it to be 'an improvement' on the original Xbox, especially in terms of the graphics used. They also expected it to be smaller and less 'bulky'. Some of the more experienced users felt that it should be quieter than the original Xbox; the internal cooling fan of which they felt was noisy.

Those participants who knew of the Xbox 360's online capabilities expected to be able to surf the web with it (3.1.1).

"It should be possible to go in the internet, to browse the WWW"

"But then I also want to do internet stuff, like online banking"

Although participants appreciated that the Xbox 360 could play DVDs, they did not feel that this would be a feature that they would primarily use it for.

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.1.1	Participants expected to be able to surf the internet easily on the Xbox 360.	Consider increasing the ease with which users can surf the web with the Xbox 360. This may also benefit from additional control devices, such as plug-in keyboards and cursor controllers as on screen keyboards can be difficult to use for long periods of time.	Low

3.2 Setting up the Xbox 360 (Hardware)

Introduction

Participants were asked to set up the Xbox 360. Its constituent pieces were packed in the box that it came in. Generally, participants spent little time reading any instructions on the box. Even the inexperienced busily began opening the packaging and connecting the items.

Connecting TV cables

A common approach was to connect the Xbox to the TV first, then connect the Xbox to the power supply. However, a large proportion of participants across the test countries were confused by the number of TV cables. The Xbox 360 includes a cable with audio and video connections for both a normal TV screen and a hi-definition screen. Consequently there are many cables to choose from, which confused some of the participants (3.2.1). Other users were able to work with the cables due to the colour coding, but were not able to identify what the high-definition cables were for and so were unsure whether they had successfully completed hooking up the television or not.

"Do I have to put them all in somewhere?"

One participant in particular did not even realise that she had made a mistake, despite a black and white screen.

"That's going to change when it comes out [to the market], isn't it?"

Connecting the Gamepad

Some also struggle getting the Gamepad (controller) started; some participants would have failed to do so without help. Being a wireless controller, it required switching on before it would connect and work with the console. Despite the central 'X' button (the 'on' switch) having a sticker on it to draw users' attention to it, it was unclear how long to press it for (3.2.2). Also battery insertion was not explained in the quick reference guide (3.2.3). Most of them agreed that it would be better if the controller connected to the system once the Xbox360 were switched on.

"It looks like the power button but it obviously isn't!" (after repeatedly pressing the correct button too briefly)

Connecting the power

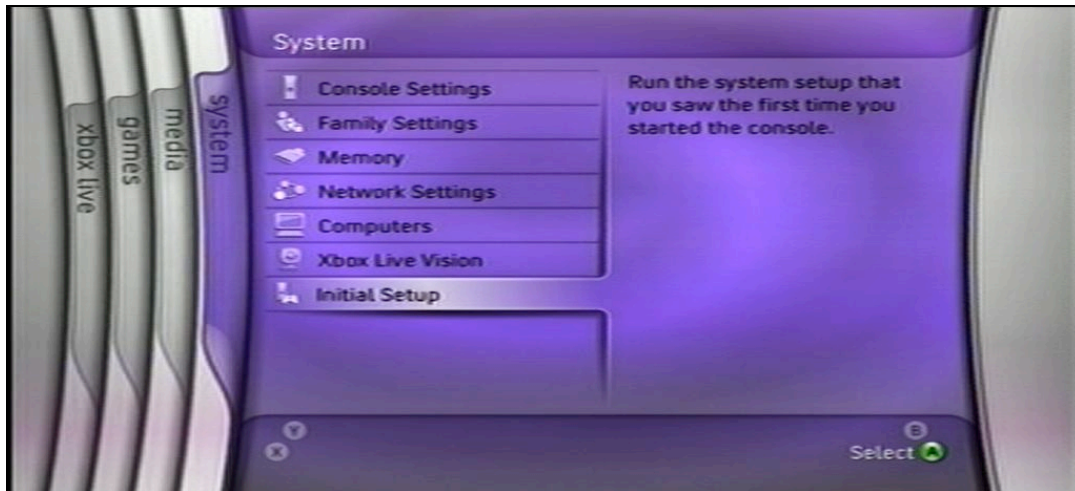
Some users have problems hooking the Xbox to the power supply as thought that it was a straightforward process. Users tried to connect directly the Xbox to the power supply without hooking the AC adaptor first.

Comparison against the Xbox Classic

Overall, the process of setting up the Xbox Classic was more straightforward, as it contained fewer leads and connectors, and the controller was not wireless. This sums up the issue that designers face: the Xbox 360 has more features than the Xbox Classic. Therefore, it seems only logical that it may be more complicated for users to set up. Yet at the same time, gaming platforms need to be as accessible as possible to a wider audience.

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.2.1	For the participants, particularly those with less experience of gaming consoles, the number of AV cables to choose was daunting.	Colour code all input and output cables.	Medium
3.2.2	It was unclear how long to press the 'X' on the Gamepad.	Indicate the duration of the press on the sticker next to the button.	High
3.2.3	Battery insertion was unclear	Consider identifying the method of battery insertion in the Quick Reference Guide.	Medium

3.3 Initial Set Up (UI)



Initial set up involve selecting the language, locating the Gamepad and setting up a player profile

Introduction

Once the hardware was connected, participants were asked to complete the set up process. This involved turning the console on, setting the language, locating the Gamepad and setting up a player profile.

Language settings

Most users were able to select the appropriate language, however some users in Germany struggled because they expected the language settings in “initial settings” and because they did not read the explanation next to the option (3.3.1).

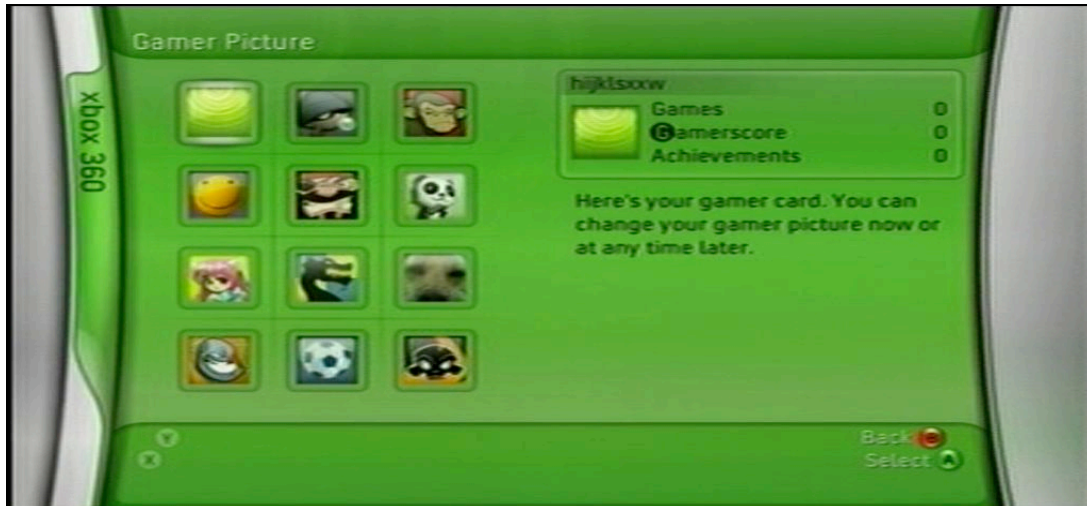
Most of the users in Germany thought that “settings” was a better label for the “configuration” tab. In the UK, it is known as settings.

In general, this task was performed with no problem and the users rated it very positively.

Profiles/membership (general)

One of the most confusing elements of the set up for participants was the number of different usernames they needed to register for. The process seemed to be quite long-winded for most, and during the course of getting online, participants needed to understand the need for an offline profile, a gamertag, and a passport. Frequently, participants felt that this was all too much for them.

Profile/membership (Creating an offline profile)



Most users did not understand the nature of the gamer profile.

A few users chose to create an offline profile first, rather than select Join Xbox Live, as to them it seemed 'safer' than joining. Joining implied that there would be a commitment, and possibly a financial one (3.3.2).

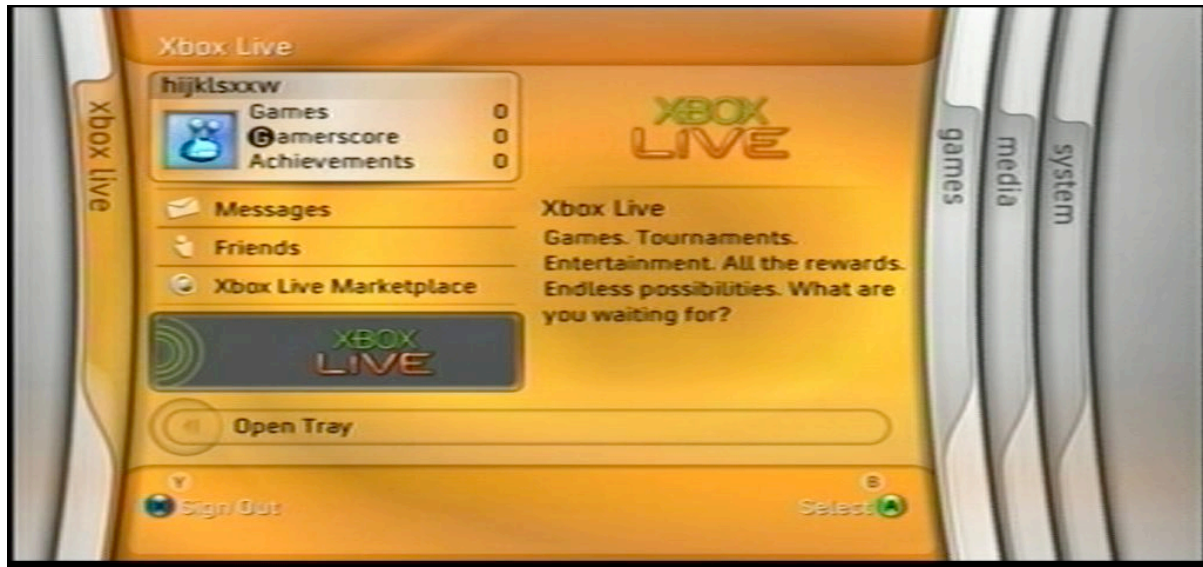
Most of the users thought that a gamer profile was something that would allow them personalise several settings on the Xbox but only a few related it to the metaphor of a PC profile. When there was more than one profile available in the Xbox 360, participants expected to be offered the choice of which one to choose when they switched on the console, as with a PC (3.3.3).

The idea of paying to join Xbox Live! was not something that more novice participants were keen to do. However, everyone expected that they would have to pay to go online. If the UI could support this initial 'safety first' behaviour of novice users, perhaps by allowing them to migrate to online gaming with encouraging text from the dashboard, and examples of online gaming, without getting in the way of their user experience too much, it may help to draw more novices in (3.3.4).

"I'm not interested in paying just to compete with people I don't know."

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.1	Some German Users struggled because they expected the language settings in "initial settings" and because they did not read the explanation next to the option	Consider placing language set up options in the 'initial settings' section.	Medium
3.3.2	Some users were wary of joining Xbox live as it implied that there would be a commitment, and possibly a financial one.	Consider highlighting the free trial to encourage users to engage with Xbox Live	Medium
3.3.3	Most of the users misunderstood the gamer profile, with only a few relating it to the metaphor of a PC profile. When more than one profile was available they expected the ability to choose and switch between them as they would on a PC.	Consider allowing users to switch between profiles more easily to reinforce the similarity of the PC metaphor and increase user understanding.	Low
3.3.4	Novice users were not keen to pay to join Xbox Live!	Consider allowing users to migrate to online gaming with encouraging text from the dashboard, and examples of online gaming, without getting in the way of their user experience.	Medium

Profile/membership (Moving from the Dashboard to Xbox Live)



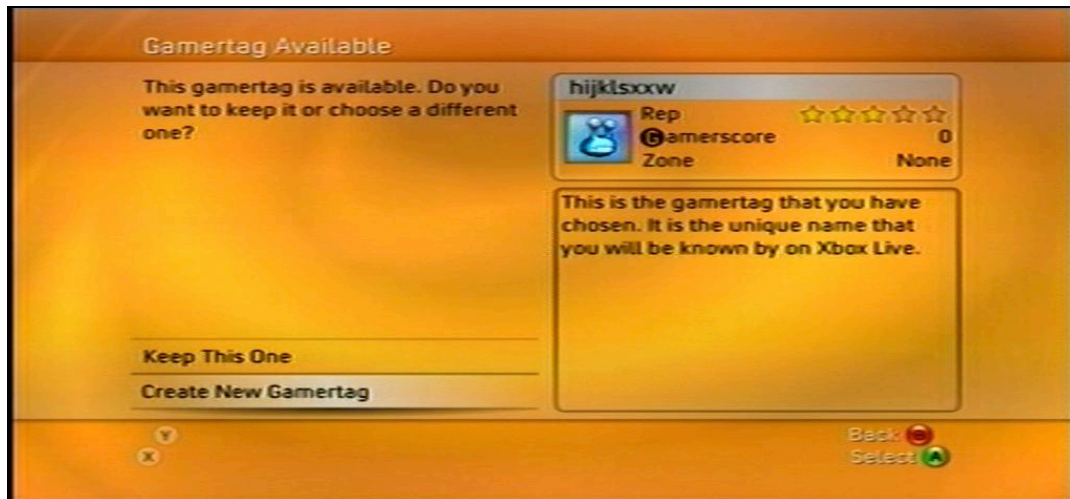
The Dashboard: The Xbox Live graphic (bottom left) was rarely seen as a link.

Many users had difficulty clicking on the link from the dashboard to go to Xbox live as the link was actually a moving graphic. It was not consistent with the rest of the links on the page (3.3.5).

Spanish users thought that they would be able to set up the internet connection under the 'system' tab. There were also some complaints that the first few screens of the Xbox Live settings were in English (3.3.6).

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.5	The Xbox Live link was a moving graphic and so tended to be overlooked.	Adopt a style consistent with other links on the page.	High
3.3.6	Spanish users thought that they would be able to set up the internet connection under the 'system' tab and also disliked the fact that the first few screens of the Xbox Live settings were in English	If possible make initial language setting default to the country of purchase.	Medium

Profile/membership (Creating a gamertag)



The relationship between the gamertag and the offline profile name was unclear
 Users began to be a bit confused about how a gamertag was different from the offline profile name they had recently chosen when they began the set up (3.3.7). In Germany, there appeared to be issues of translation, which made this a rather confusing process. Almost 50% of participants failed to create a gamertag without the help of the facilitator. All of the participants who failed to complete this task created an offline profile that was not available online (i.e., the gamertag was already in use by another user). However, the system feedback did not explain this clearly enough and did not give comprehensible alternatives. For example, "Recover Gamertag" is localized as 'Gamertag nutzen' (meaning 'use' or 'apply' gamertag). Participants understood that they already use that gamertag offline (3.3.8).

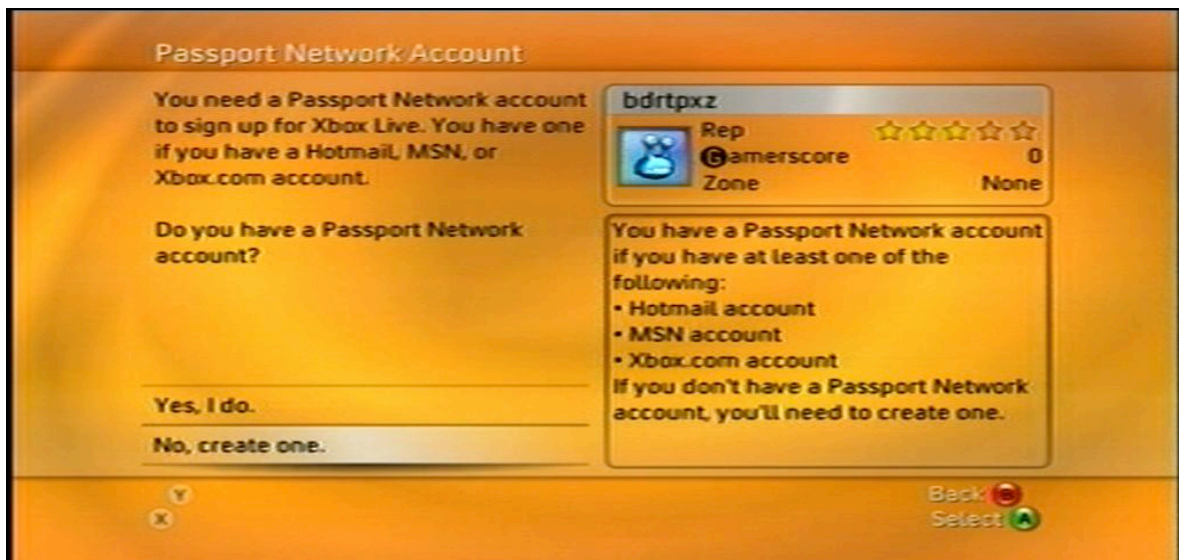
"Yes, I know that I'm already using it. Now let me apply it!"

They confirmed that they wanted to use it online, too, and were then asked to prove their identity, which was irritating to some users, as they did not understand why this was necessary (3.3.9).

"OK, this should work now— oh, they want me to prove my identity."

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.7	Users were often confused as to how a gamertag was different from the offline profile name.	Consider simplifying the profile set up process in order to clarify how these elements differ.	Medium
3.3.8	In Germany a high failure rate was noted for gamertag creation. This was due to creating an offline profile that was not available online (i.e., the gamer tag was already in use by another user). This was compounded by the lack of feedback.	Reconsider the German translation for this screen and verify it with local users.	High
3.3.9	Some users did not understand why they needed to prove their identity to change their gamertag.	If an identity check is necessary at this point, consider providing a short explanation as to why.	Low

Profile/membership (Creating a Passport Network account)



Some users were unfamiliar with the Passport Network account and how it applied to them

The system then took users to check to see if their gamertag was available, which made sense to the more advanced users. Novice users were less comprehending, but because the system was actually moving forward, they were content.

Next the system asked for a passport network. At this point users were beginning to struggle with the distinctions between gamertags, offline profiles and passports (3.3.10).

A selection of participants in Germany was not keen to carry on at this point. They felt that from here they would be committing to a service that they needed to pay for.

"See—I knew it would cost money to join this!"

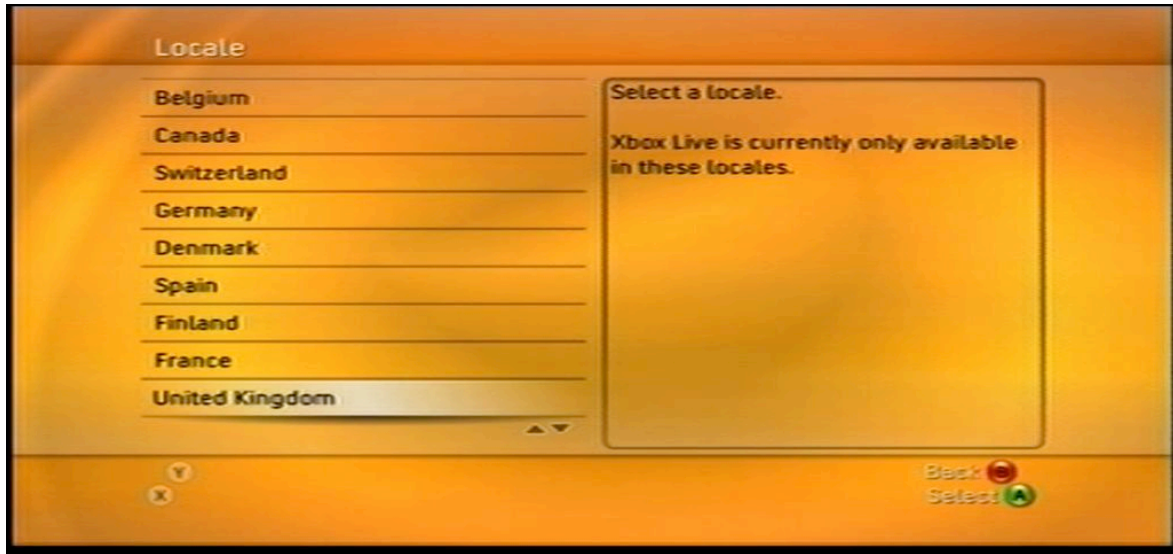
In Germany, the wording "account" and being asked for these data lets some think it's about making a contract for a paid service. (German 'Konto' for account is strongly associated with bank account.) (3.3.11).

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.10	Participants often struggled with the distinction between gamertags, offline profiles and passports when asked to create a passport network.	Consider simplifying the number of elements related to identity that must be completed.	Medium
3.3.11	In Germany, the wording "account" and being asked for these data put off some users from continuing. In German 'Konto' for account is strongly associated with bank account.	Reconsider the German translation for this screen and verify it with local users.	Medium

Setting up and playing online

The following describes the individual steps of the process that users need to go through to set up and play online.

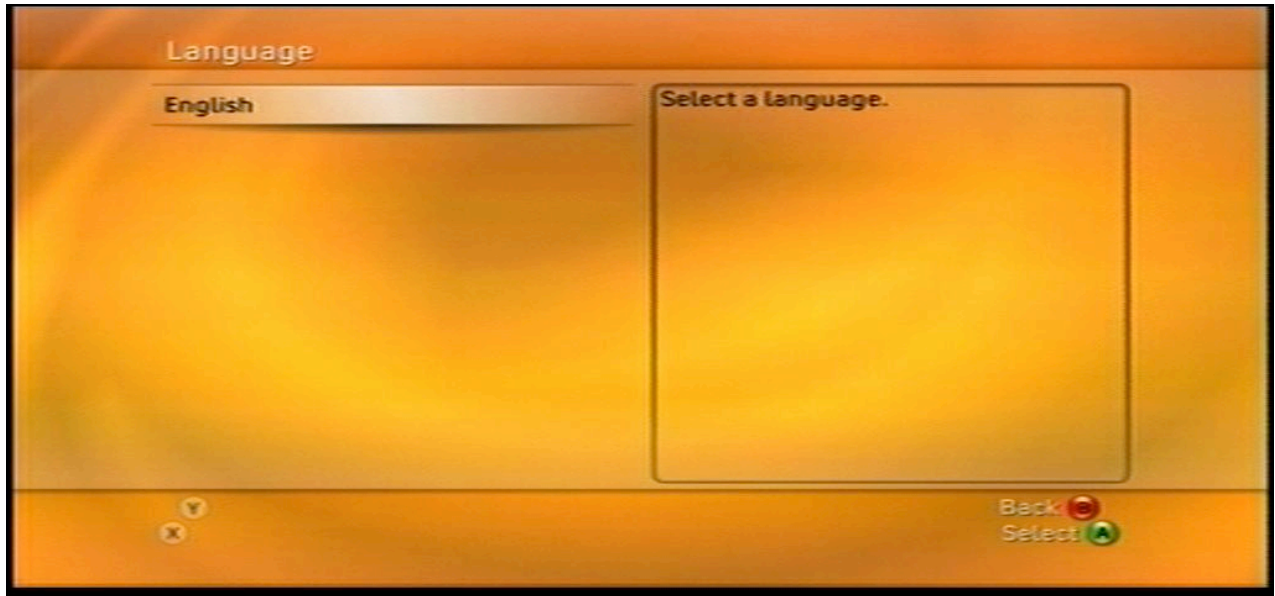
Stage 1: Locale



This stage was a seeming repetition of data entry

It was queried why the locale was required at this stage as this was highly likely to be the same locale as that entered at the offline profile stage. It was considered unlikely that anyone would be moving the Xbox between locales (3.3.12).

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.12	The need to re-enter the locale in order to set up and play online was queried as this data had already been entered at the offline profile stage.	Investigate whether it is possible to gather this information from the offline profile as a default.	Medium

Stage 2: Language

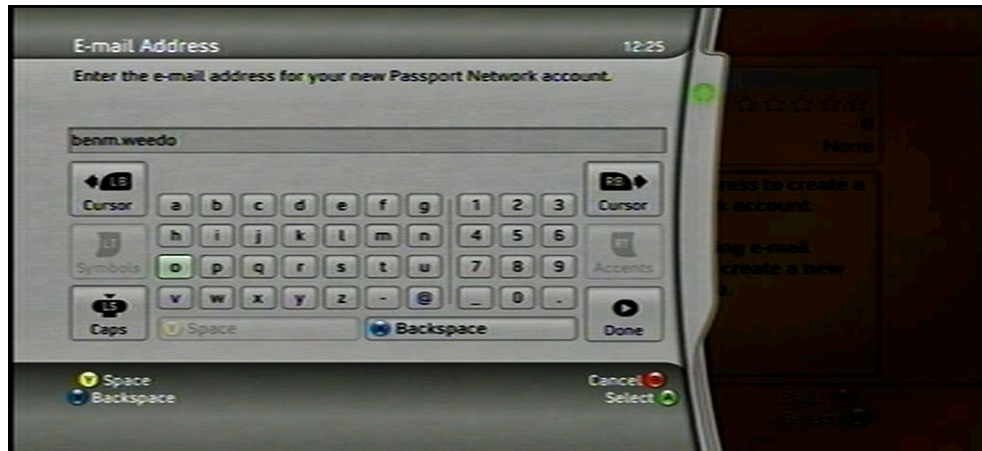
Selection of a single option only appeared unnecessary

It was noted in the United Kingdom that the only option available under the language option was English. This consequently seemed to be an unnecessary option/step (3.3.13).

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.13	In the United Kingdom the only option available under the language option was English. This appeared to be a redundant step.	Consider combining this option with another page.	Medium

Stage 3: Birthdate

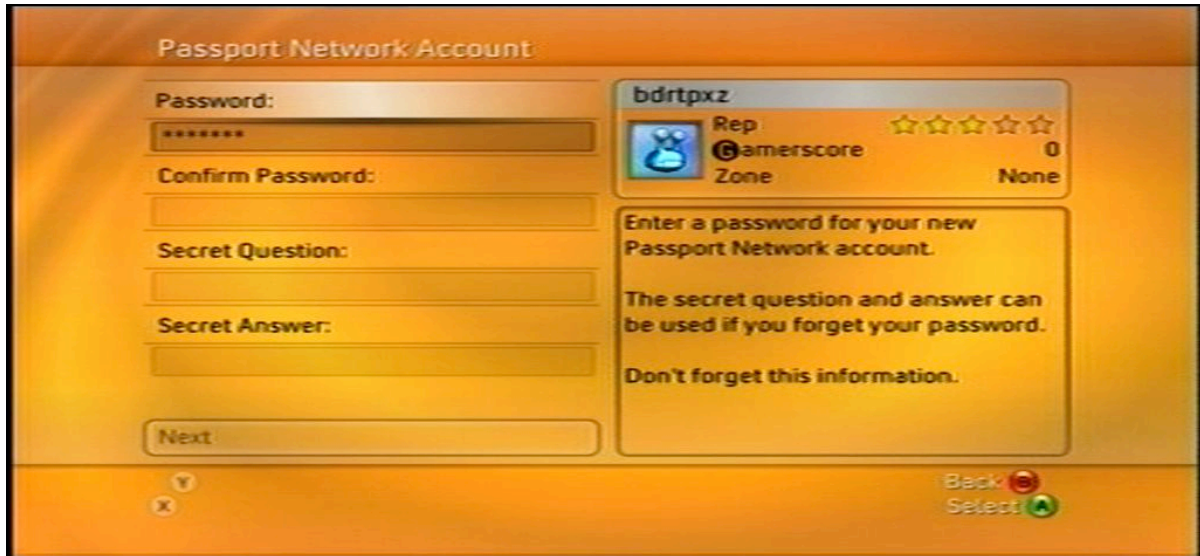
No issues were noted with this stage.

Stage 4: Email address**There was some concern as to why the email address was required**

No text on this screen to explain why it was needed, or if it needed to be a Hotmail account, or what would be done with the information. As a result there was some concern about this use of this information for marketing. An increased reluctance to continue registration was noted at this point (3.3.14).

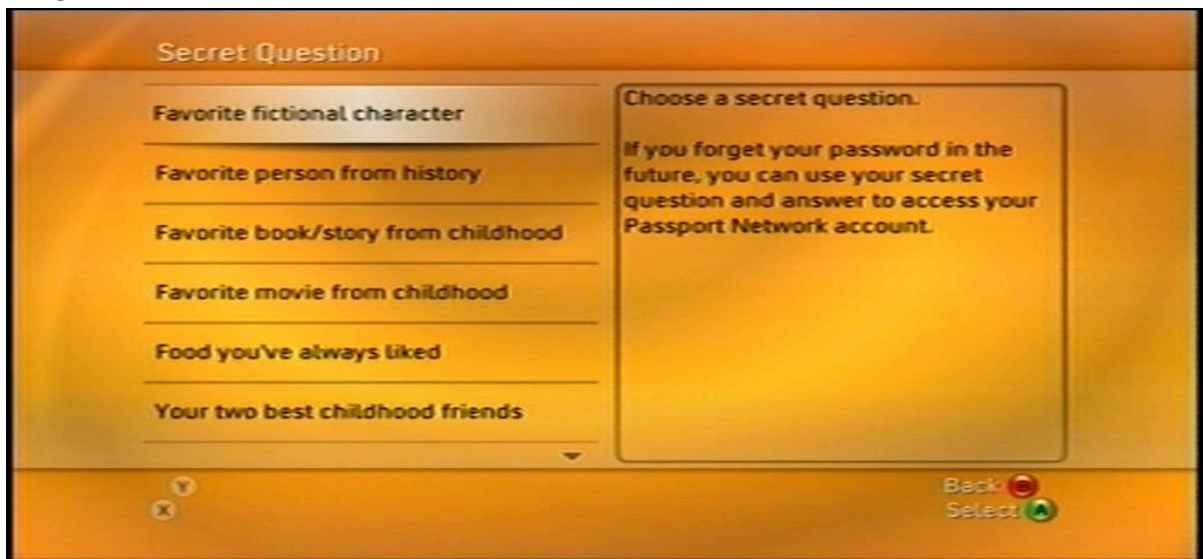
Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.14	Some users were unsure why they were being asked for the email account details and were concerned that it would be used for marketing without their explicit permission.	Provide reassurance as to the why email details are required.	Medium

Stage 5: Password



Keyboard shortcuts had become familiar at this point and were appreciated. Most participants began to get the hang of the keyboard shortcuts around this point, and commented that they were a good feature.

Stage 6: Secret Answer/Question



In Germany, if the password entered or the secret answer are 'not valid', the feedback given confuses or even irritates some users (3.3.15). This issue was not noted elsewhere. The feedback merely says that the secret answer is not valid.

"Is it not valid because it's a dessert?" (Pt 4 wonders after the system gave her feedback that the secret answer is not valid: 'Favorite dish? - Ice cream! ["Eis"]')

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.15	German users commented that the error message related to the secret answer/question was not helpful.	Consider making error messages as specific as possible to the error concerned in order to aid error recovery.	Low

Account Information Page

Users were often weary of data entry by this stage

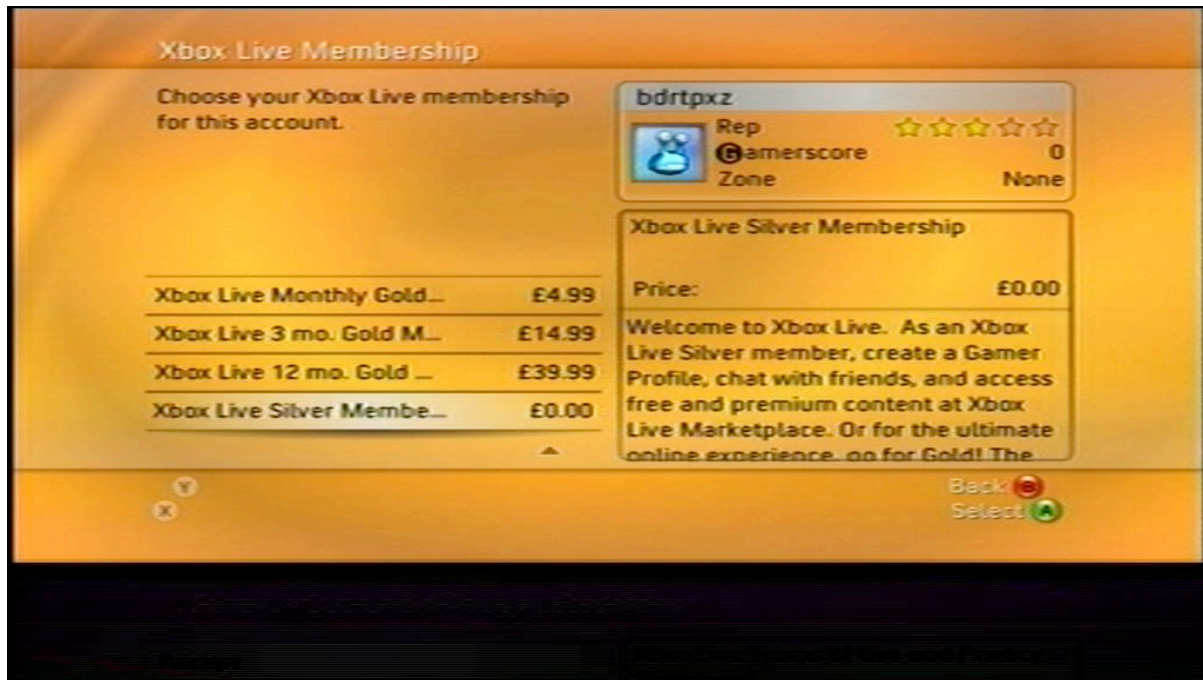
Most participants at this stage breathed a sigh when they saw there was another page of details to fill in. It seemed that the process was taking a long time.

"I hope it's worth it..."

Again, there was no explanation of what MS would do with details such as the phone number. The option 'security details' also shown on this page simply brought up a screen that said: "Xbox Live is committed to helping protect the security of your personal information. Read the Xbox Live Privacy Statement for more information" but did not give a link to this statement (3.3.16). None of the users read this. They just clicked straight through on accept, although this is typical online behaviour.

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.16	There was concern on the account information page as to how personal information such as phone numbers and email addresses would be used. None of the users linked to the privacy statement.	Consider providing a concise statement of why this information is being collected in order to encourage data entry.	Medium

Choosing Membership



The trial period options, which were free, were at the bottom of the list and required scrolling to see.

The full range of options for becoming a member of Xbox Live was hidden when users arrived at this screen. Users were initially hesitant to have to sign on for a service that appeared to require payment, but the option for the trial offer was hidden and required users to scroll down the list. Participants were quite cynical that this was the case, and assumed it was a deliberate ploy to coax users into signing up for a paid account (3.3.17).

"But now I have to pay."

"That means it will cost."

"They push too much to take 'gold'."

In the UK, participants then had to type in a contact address again. At this point participants were becoming very bored (3.3.18).

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.17	The free trial option was hidden below the fold on the Membership page.	Consider increasing the prominence of this option to increase a sense of trust user trust.	Low
3.3.18	UK users had to re-enter address details after having selected the appropriate membership.	Investigate whether it is possible to auto-fill details.	Low

Choosing Gamer Zone

There was some confusion about why users needed to choose a gamer zone. Some assumed that this would enable them to meet and play online with other people who had chosen the same skill level. However, some users felt it was not obvious what the consequences of choosing a certain 'gamer zone' would be. They assumed that it would determine which games would be recommended to them (3.3.19).

"Depending on what I choose here, they will recommend certain games. It's for their advertisements."

The labels and their accompanying text were as follows:

Recreation: "It's not whether you win or lose, but that everyone enjoys the game. Kick back, relax, be considerate, and have fun"

Pro: "You aren't going to settle for anything less than first place, but you respect the game and your competitors. Play clean, play hard, play to win"

Family: "You want a zone you and your kids can enjoy. No mature language, no intimidation, no super-competitive egos. In short, fun for the whole family"

Underground: "If you're not easily intimidated, the Underground is for you. Not for the faint of heart. Your battle cry: take no prisoners!"

"Some games I like to play quite seriously, and others I like to mess around on. Also, if I've just had a busy day I might want to play a game in a relaxed fashion. Other times I'd want to play the same game intently – I'd want to change that for each game I play, every time I play it."

"I don't really fit into any of these."

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.3.19	The purpose of gamer zones was not clear to some users.	Consider providing more information about the nature of gamer zones.	Low

Comparison against setting up Xbox Classic

Setting up the Xbox Classic seemed to be less complex for most users, although there were some issues that occurred across both platforms, such as the use of some expert language in parts.

The virtual keyboard was found to be harder to use on the Xbox Classic than the Xbox 360 as well, especially after users had learnt the Xbox 360 and its short cut buttons.

Whilst the business motivation to collect as much necessary information as possible on the users is clear, the process does need to strike a balance between obtaining as much information as possible, and keeping the process of registration concise. In addition, keeping users informed of *why* they need to enter the information, and what it is used should help to keep users motivated.

3.4 Going online

Some participants were asked to set up Xbox live, using an external modem and a user name and password that they are asked to imagine they have received from their ISP.

Connection via a modem

All but one of the participants who tried to connect using a modem failed. The main reason for this appears to be that they expect to be able to set up the modem connection in one particular area, such as 'system', rather than for it to be tested when they attempt to connect to Xbox Live.

The initial feedback from the Xbox 360, when users try to go online, is an error message. Users assume they are being told they have made a mistake, when they feel that they have not even had the chance to do anything wrong yet (3.4.1).

Further feedback to the users was written in highly technical language, which participants fail to understand. The general consensus is that the least technically literate people would be at these pages, and that therefore, the language should be as simple and plain as possible. PC-experienced users are mildly frustrated. Novices say they would give up. (3.4.2)

"No idea what that's all about." [giving up]

One user comment that occurred frequently was that participants were not sure when they were online. The dashboard did not give ample feedback of their status (3.4.3).

Summary

In all of these setting up tasks, we noticed that there was a large difference in success between the novice and the experienced users.

Overall, the process of setting up the Xbox 360 is perceived as easy but very long, with too many sections to complete and no possibility of skipping any of them.

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.4.1	A high failure rate was noted when attempting to connect via a modem.	Make the process of connecting with a modem as simple as possible. Consider placing modem connection set up in the 'system' area of the menu structure.	Low
3.4.2	The error messages were technical in nature and so felt to be intimidating.	Investigate whether it is possible to simplify the error messages.	Low
3.4.3	One user requested the ability to see when they were online.	Consider providing a prominent indicator in the dashboard of the current online status of the user.	Low

3.5 Finding and downloading a demo game online

Participants were asked to download a game demo. Facilitators noted which areas users navigated to first.

There appeared to be two main behaviours across the different test countries. Most participants went directly to the Xbox Live option, but a going to the Game tab of the dashboard was also a popular method, which was less clear to users.

Finding a game demo

Finding a specific downloaded game took some users longer than they would have hoped. This was mainly due to the divisions of the Xbox Live tabs and their subcategories. (3.5.1).

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.5.1	Some users struggled to find a specific game within the tab structure.	It may be beneficial to check this architecture with users.	Medium

3.6 Playing a downloaded game

Once users had downloaded the game, they were asked to imagine that they did not want to play it right away (so did not click the option to go to it immediately), but instead asked them to imagine that they wanted to come back to it in a day or so (so that they needed to search for it in the dashboard). They were then asked where they would go to play the downloaded game again.

It took participants a long time to locate the game, so that they could start to play it (3.6.1).

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.6.1	Some users struggled to locate saved games within the tab structure.	It may be beneficial to check this architecture with users.	Medium

3.7 Playing a game on the console

Games playing was perceived to be the *raison d'être* of the Xbox 360, and participants were not glad to discover that the console very well supported this core functionality.

Play a game online

Playing a game online was slightly more troublesome. However these issues often sprang from the design of the game's menu, rather than the design of the Xbox Live menus. Therefore we will not discuss them in detail in this report.

3.8 Play and copy tracks off CD

Participants were asked to play a CD using the Xbox 360 and then to copy and delete the tracks from the Xbox.

Overall, most participants completed this process relatively easily in all countries, which bodes well for the Xbox 360's desire to be more than just a games machine. However, there were minor issues, primarily of terminology, which participants commented on.

In Germany, the wording of the function ("CD rippen" – "Rip CD") was not understood by all participants, and was considered inappropriate because of its illegal connotations (3.8.1).

"My mum would certainly not understand. And to me it sounds almost illegal."

Similar issues were found in Spain. Users had difficulties understanding that "extraer CD" means rip/copy CD and therefore were unable to continue. Users agree that the adequate label in Spanish should be "copiar" or "grabar" (copy/record) (3.8.1).

In Spain also, participants had a very low success rate for this task. The main issue was that users expected to find the "Rip CD" option in the same part of the menu structure as when the CD is playing. Few users pressed the 'B' buttons to go up one level and do this (3.8.2).

Comparison against the Xbox Classic

There were no serious issues with playing and copying tracks from a CD to the Xbox classic. Being able to "Add to Soundtrack" caused a little confusion, but only in terms of what a 'soundtrack' could do (3.8.3).

"Does that mean I can just listen to it while I play?"

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.8.1	Some German users were concerned about the terminology "CD Rippen", which had illegal connotations. Spanish users also had difficulties understanding the term "extraer CD"	Consider using an alternative local term for this feature.	Low
3.8.2	In Spain users expected to find the option to rip the CD within the same part of the menu structure where the CD was playing.	Consider including the functionality to rip the CD and play it in the same area.	Medium
3.8.3	Not all participants were clear as to what a Soundtrack was.	Consider explaining the purpose of the soundtrack further.	Low

3.9 Play DVD

Participants were given a DVD and asked to play it and fast-forward through it, to test navigation. No major issues of use were noted, which is a positive finding as the console has been able to effectively integrate functionality beyond that of gaming in a manner that was well understood.

Two users struggled, one in the UK, and one in Spain, because they did not know how to make the DVD commands disappear from the screen (3.9.1).

Overall, the lack of a dedicated DVD controller for the Xbox 360 was not perceived as an issue, and most participants felt that the controller worked well.

Comparison with Xbox Classic

Some participants asked for the remote control immediately, others began to use the Xbox Classic's controller until the facilitator showed them the remote control. However, outside of the test conditions, participants would be likely to already know that there was a separate remote control, which makes this a minor issue.

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.9.1	Two users were unable to make the DVD commands disappear from the screen	Consider making the controls automatically disappear after a few seconds or to be able to use the Y button to do so.	Low

3.10 Parental controls

Participants were asked to identify any way to prevent small children from playing 'teen' or 'mature' games.

Overall, participants navigated to the correct section easily enough, and found the option for the console settings. Although there was some concern that it may not be clear when selecting a rating, such as PEGI 16+, that it was to allow users to play games with that rating or lower, most participants understood.

Comparison to Xbox Classic

Although the US Xbox Classic had an option to set parental controls, most of the European Xboxes did not. Where they were available, no problems or issues were reported.

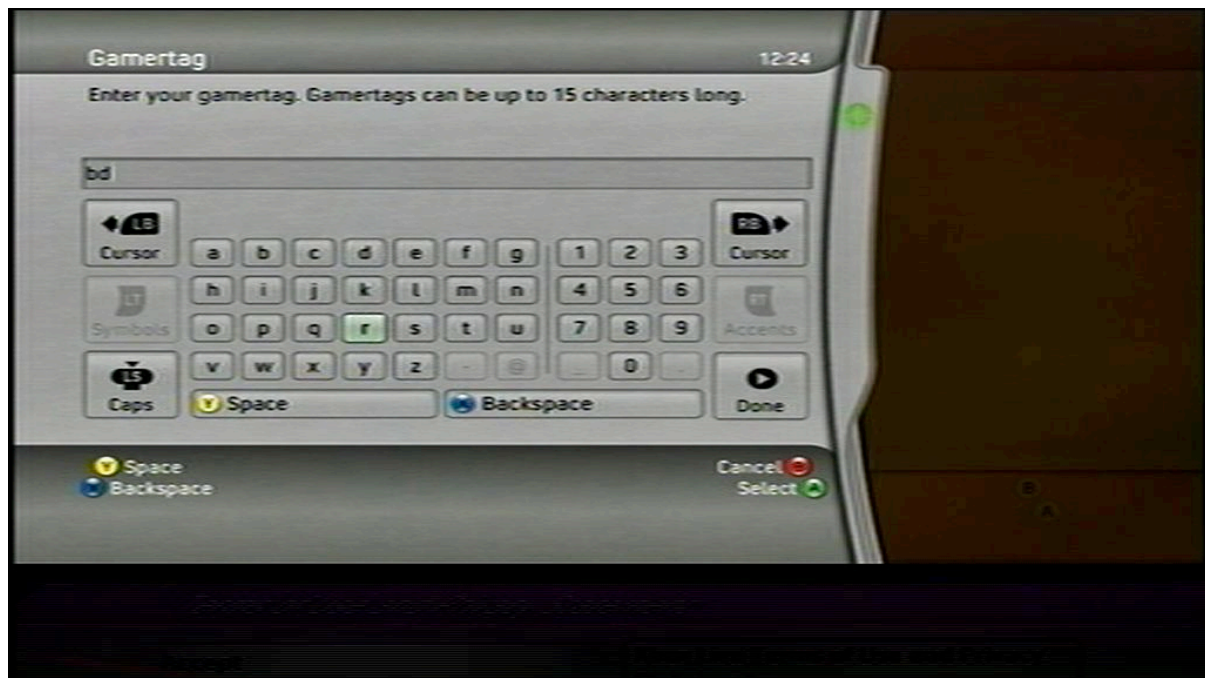
3.11 Miscellaneous Findings

This section identifies further relevant findings.

In Germany the link to the Xbox dashboard was labelled "Steuerung" (= 'control 'or 'controller'). Very few participants understood that they needed to select this in order to access what was on their console. A common misunderstanding was that it led to settings of the controller (game pad). (3.11.1)

"And that's the explanation of how to use the joystick"

Interaction with an onscreen keyboard can be a problematic area generally, however the layout of the onscreen keyboard for the Xbox 360 appeared to work well, which is a positive finding. None of the users seem to mind the keyboard had an alphabetical order, rather than a traditional QWERTY layout. The Xbox 360 keyboard was generally preferred to that of the Xbox Classic.



The alphabetical keyboard layout worked well for users.

Ref	Findings	Recommendations	Priority
3.11.1	The link to the Xbox dashboard labelled "Steuerung" (= 'control 'or 'controller') was not well understood.	Consider using an alternative German term for this feature.	Medium

4 General Conclusions

Users tended to prefer the Xbox360, mainly because it is a new video game system. Participants found it more attractive, with more innovative technology, better graphics and a greater potential. This greater potential could have made the new system more complicated to use, yet the findings from these user tests, across 61 users in 5 countries, indicate that this is not the case.

The core features of the Xbox 360 are simple and easy to use, although with the extra features of the Xbox 360, one might expect to find an increase in complexity. Switching on the controller may be a fundamental issue with the system, but it is also one that once learnt, will be remembered. More complicated features, such as going online, may also take a little time to set up, but are usually completed with little difficulty.

Overall, there were few differences between the users in the different countries. Where there did appear to be issues, these were caused by unusual translations of phrases, or terms that whilst technical, may not be in general parlance internationally.

5 Appendix

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