

Research Findings

DDS 2.0 Impact on Brand Perception

FEBRUARY 2021



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PARTICIPANT DATA,

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Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THIS PROJECT

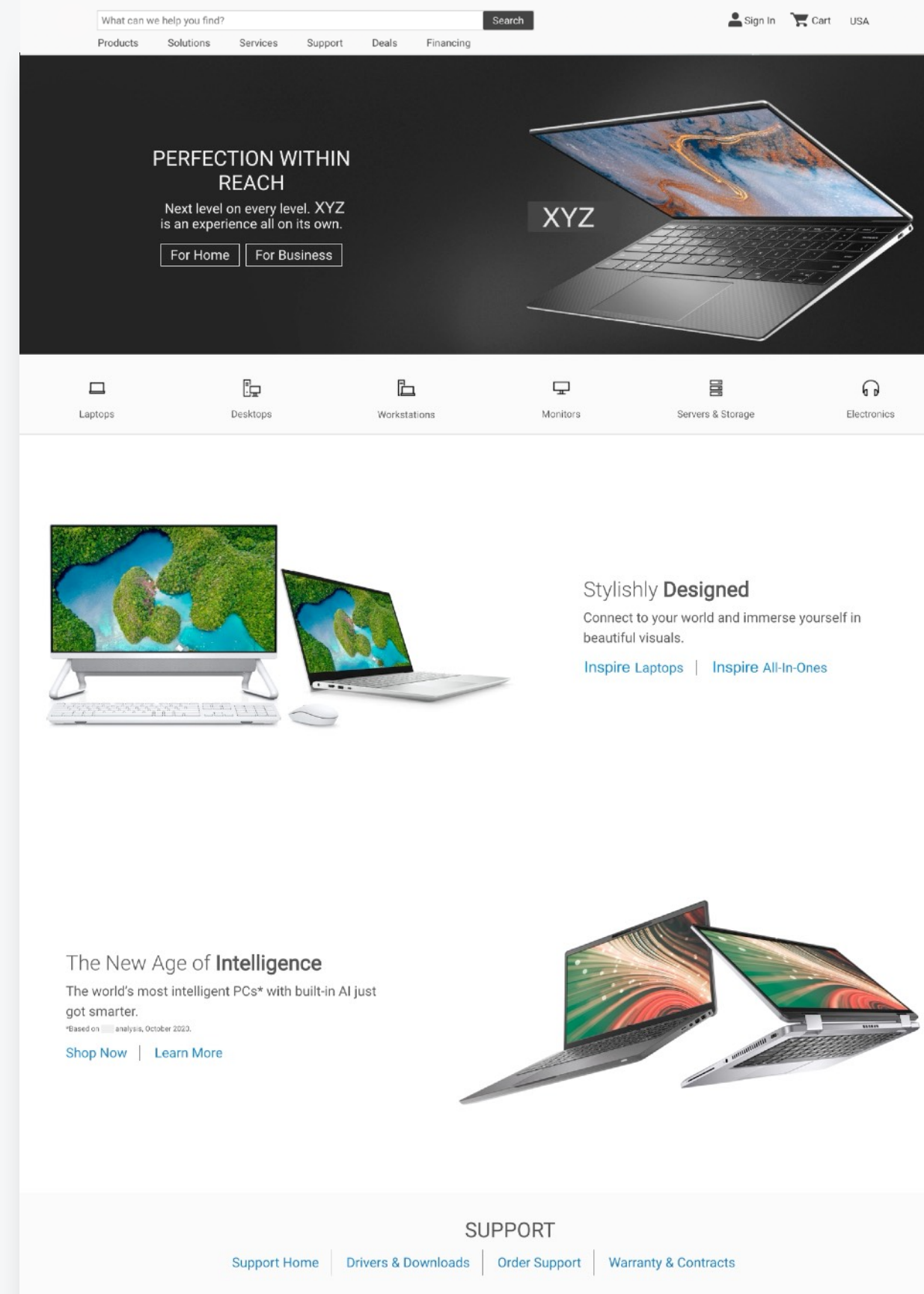
Background:

Dell is currently evolving their design system in order to create a unified customer experience. The aim of this research is to ensure that as the design system evolves, the experience continues to align with Dell's brand values.

Areas of Inquiry:

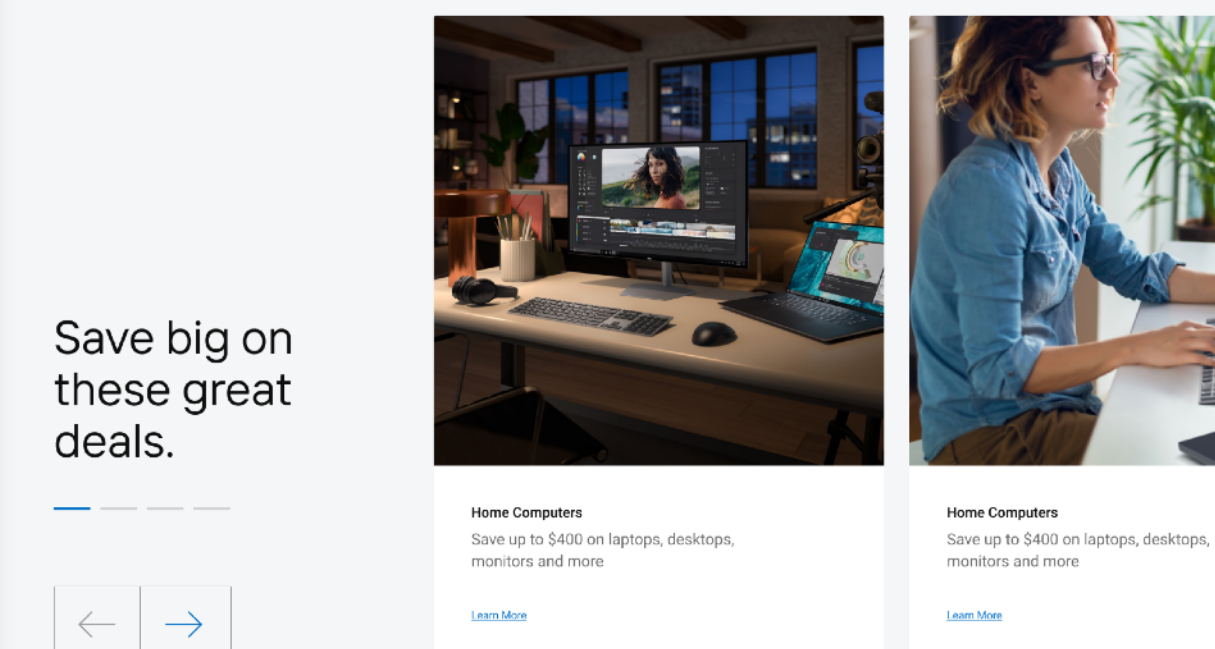
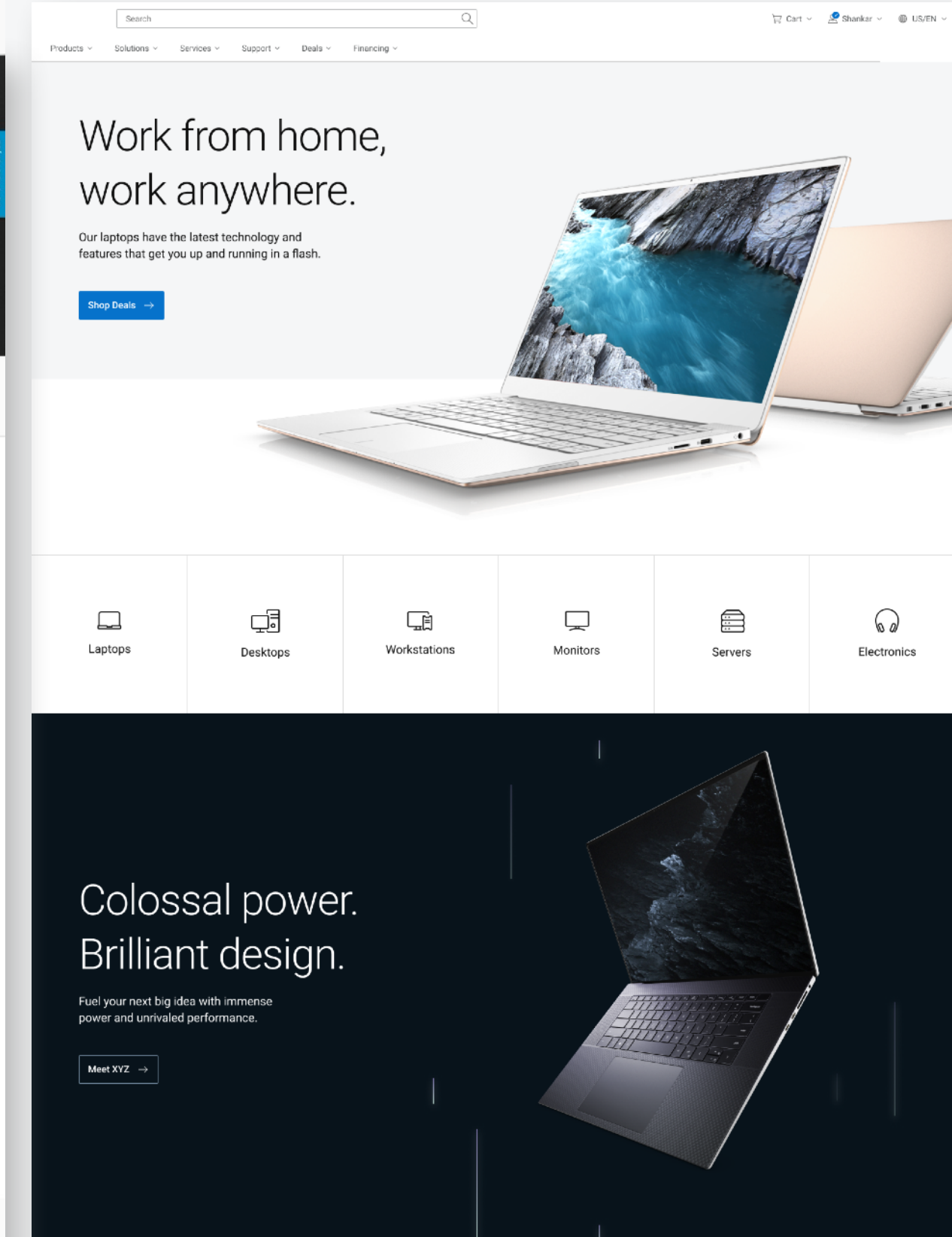
- Determine DDS 2.0's **brand impact**
- Gather **customer feelings and perception** about pages with DDS 2.0 design system applied
- Uncover DDS 2.0's **strengths and weaknesses**

Current site ([dell.com](https://www.dell.com))



DDS 2.0

— confidential —



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT WE DID

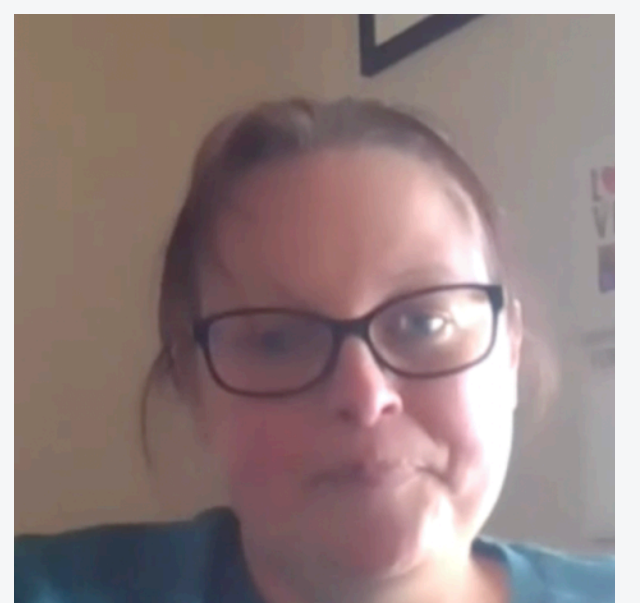
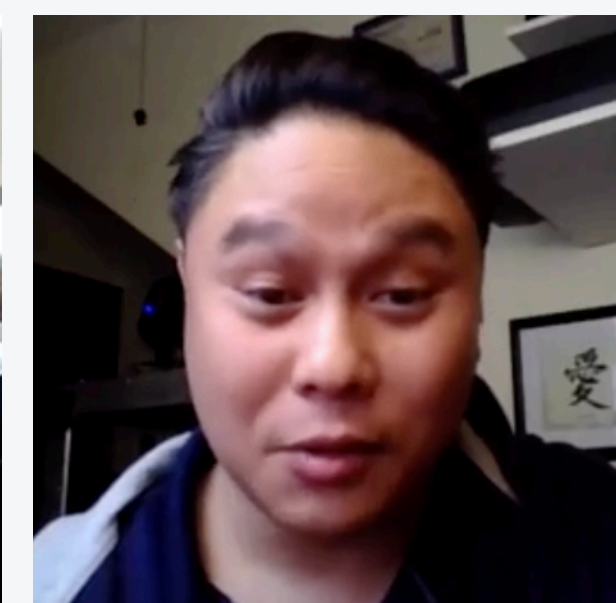
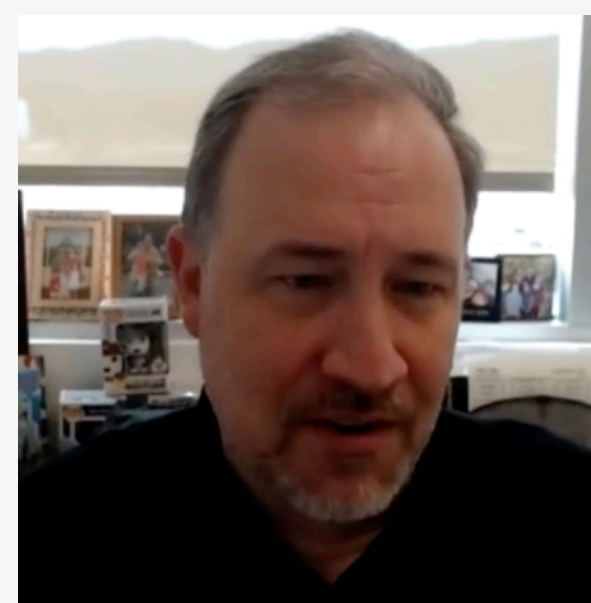
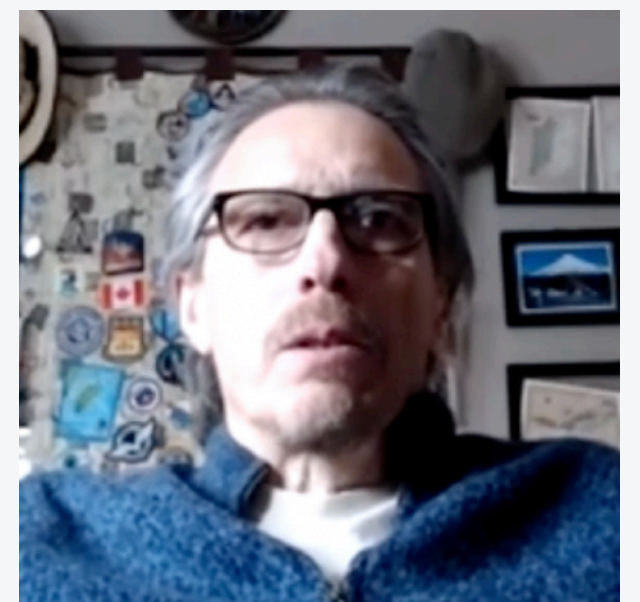
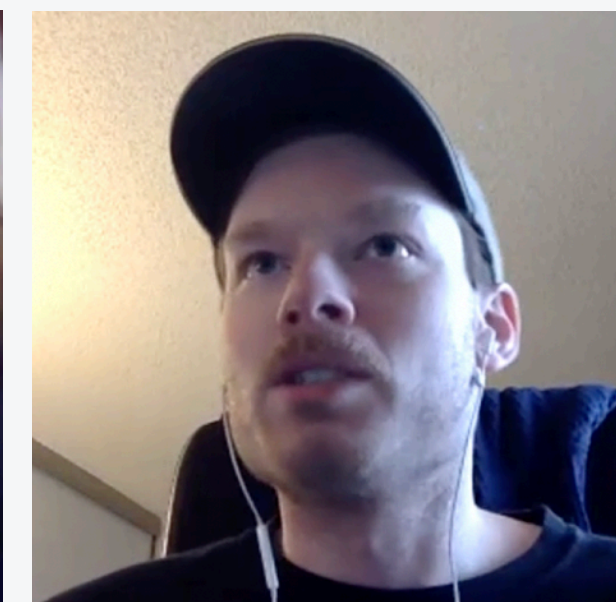
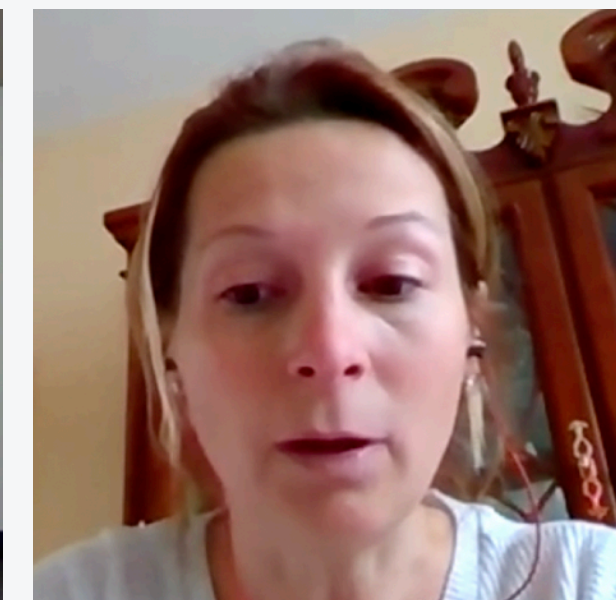
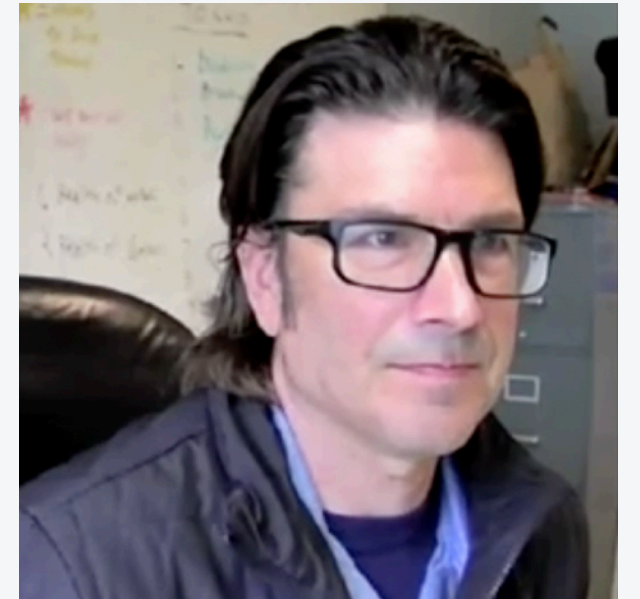
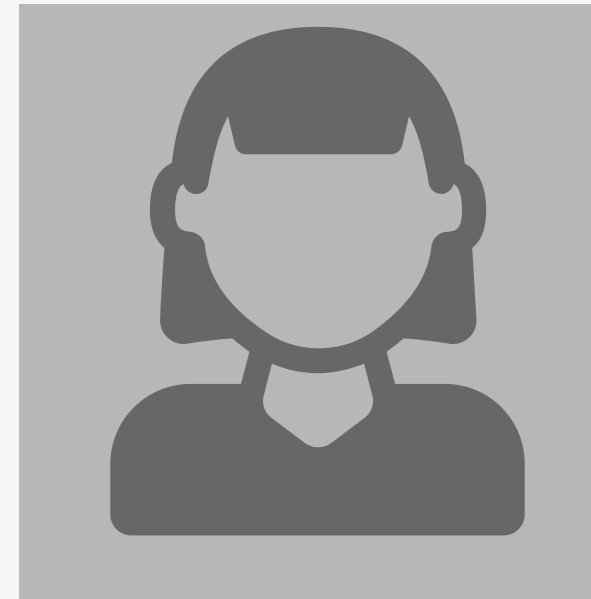
Participants

- 12 remote in-depth interviews x 60 minutes each
 - 6 consumers and 6 IT generalists
 - Varying geographies

Activities

- Discussed blinded screens from two versions of a shopping experience on [dell.com](https://www.dell.com) - the current site, and a version with DDS 2.0 applied
 - Alternated which participant saw each version of the site first to mitigate bias
 - Three screens were shown for each of the two versions - homepage, product page, and cart
- Gauged alignment with Brand values using the BERT method

— confidential —



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT WE LEARNED

DDS 2.0 felt like Dell, overall brand sentiment towards Dell + DDS 2.0 is positive.

Key Takeaways

Study intent: Learn about the DDS 2.0 design aesthetics and its impact on brand.

Result: We learned that the significant changes in language from DDS 2.0 still felt like Dell.

- When participants learned the blinded DDS 2.0 was Dell, overall it **remained positive or increased positivity** towards DDS 2.0.
- Feedback focused a lot on **content**, a key part of the experience.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IMPLEMENTATION

Successfully implementing DDS 2.0 requires partnership and iteration.

Key Takeaways

- Implementation **MUST** happen with a **build, measure, learn loop** in order to be successful.
- **DDS as a service**, with the intent to get teams to run iterative experiments.
- Templates cannot be designed at the design system level without **tight partnerships with product teams**. What is a good template for one scenario may not be a good template for another.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish a collaborative community around DDS 2.0 to build momentum.

- **Work closely with product teams** to help them understand how to apply DDS 2.0, leveraging the knowledge they already have about how their consumers expect to use their product. This system is not just a change in style, it's a **change in components and patterns** to be applied thoughtfully.
- **Empower product teams** with knowledge, tools, and resources to create and establish their build, measure, learn loops.
- **Share findings** across product teams from build, measure, learn loops so teams all move forward together.
- Continue to measure against the **baseline of Brand values alignment** as DDS 2.0 is implemented to understand consumer sentiment towards changes.
- Future iterations of DDS 2.0 should **include image guidance**, including how and when human context should be included in imagery.

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DDS Alignment with Brand

STRENGTHS OF DDS 2.0



Feels like Dell

Streamlines the content experience

Is modern and trustworthy

Guides with consistent imagery

Engages readers with strong headers

“ I’ve bought Dell laptops before, and they’ve got something about the color palette and the way they focus information in certain ways that is very Dell-specific. There is a vibe to it.

— p21

“ ... it’s spaced out in a way the I can look at information in a way that is comfortable for me.

— p13

DDS 2.0 ALIGNMENT WITH BRAND

FEELS LIKE DELL

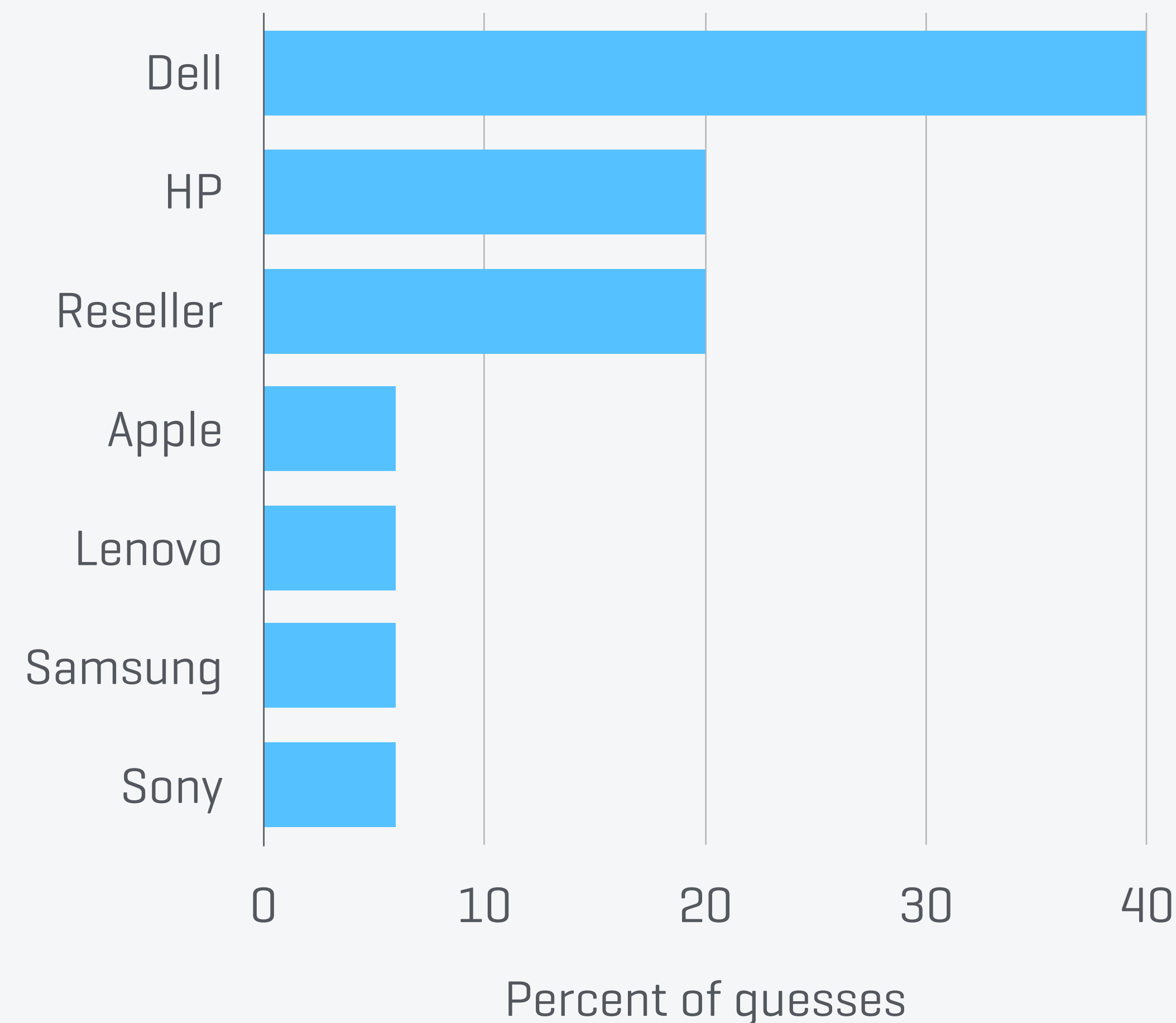
**50% of participants guessed DDS 2.0 was Dell,
75% said it felt like Dell**

After reviewing each version of the site in a blinded state, we asked participants to guess which brand they thought it was. Some participants guessed more than one brand.

Six of the 12 participants guessed that it was Dell.

The second most common brand guessed was that DDS 2.0 was for HP.

Two participants guessed it was for a reseller, one of them guessing between two resellers.



BRAND PERCEPTION

The feelings towards Dell were overwhelmingly positive.

- Most participants considered Dell to be an essential part of their digital life.
- Nearly all participants described their relationship with Dell as a **close, reliable** one that was **important, trusted, and involved** in their lives.
- When participants expressed hesitancy about the (blinded) DDS 2.0 screens, most were **reassured when they found out it that the brand was Dell**, and most stated that would cause them to increase their BERT scores.

“ If this were a new XYZ company that I don't know, I probably wouldn't buy it.

— p22

“ [Knowing it's Dell] would probably nudge me to increase some of my scores. [Dell is] more valuable to me on what they are offering. Dell is not going to sell products to you that they don't stand by.

— p15

“ Dell I'm going to buy no matter what. The format wouldn't change my decision to buy.

— p26

3

BERT Findings

BERT FINDINGS

METHODOLOGY

BERT = Bipolar Emotional Response Test



Responses are scored using adjective pairs on opposite ends of a spectrum

Adjective Pairs From Dell's Brand Values

Collaborative

- Disorganized / Guided
- Confusing / Clear

Authentic

- Misleading / Honest
- Complicated / Straightforward

Reliable

- Inconsistent / Reliable
- ~~Expected / Valuable~~*

* Participants struggled to score this pair, and the inconsistent data confirms this. We have struck this result from the overall findings.

Bold

- Traditional / Modern
- Average / Bold
- Outdated / Relevant

BERT FINDINGS

SCORE SUMMARY

Overall, the current site performed better than DDS 2.0

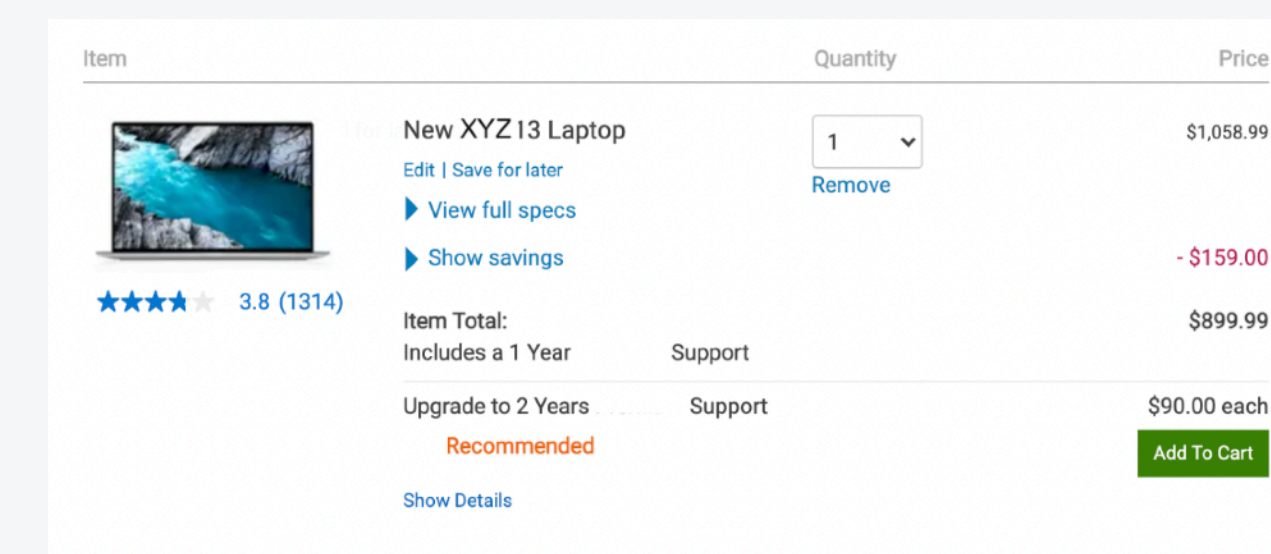
But when participants experienced the DDS 2.0 prototype first it scored more highly than the current site across every metric except reliability, where it was equal.

Participants who saw the current site first often noted that they felt DDS 2.0 was lacking information, indicating they felt that important content was taken away from them.

This supports the hypothesis that content has a significant impact on participants' brand sentiment.

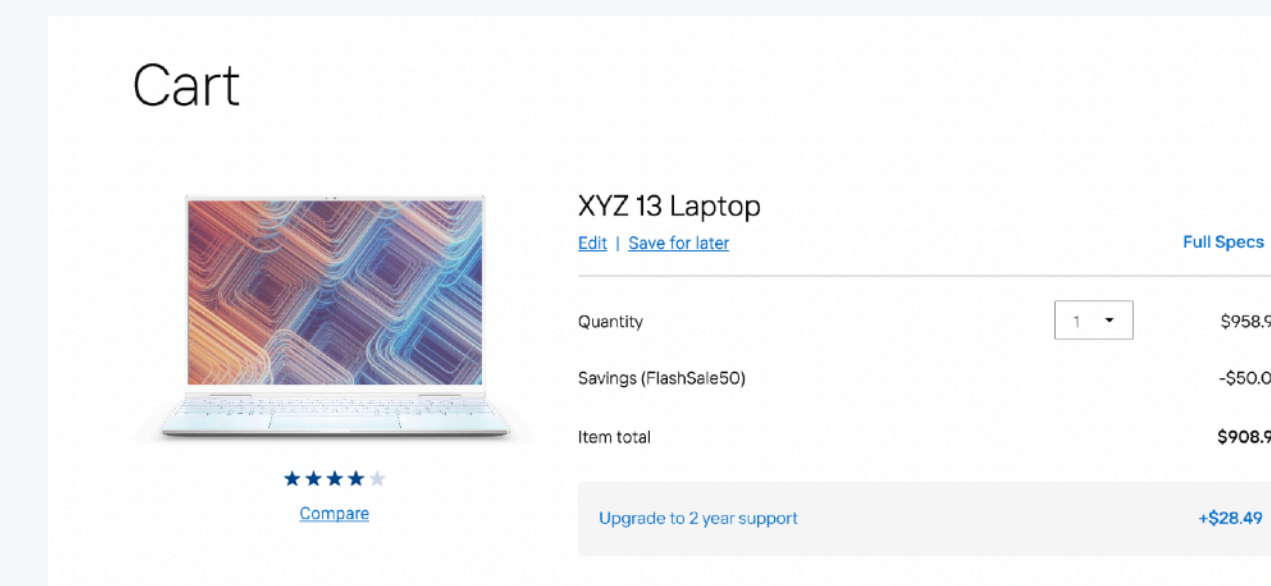
CURRENT SITE

- Collaborative ✓
- Authentic ✓
- Reliable ✓
- Bold ✓



DDS 2.0

- Collaborative ✓
- Authentic ✓
- Reliable ✓
- Bold ✗



BERT FINDINGS

SCORE SUMMARY

Participants perceived DDS 2.0 as collaborative and authentic.

The areas for improvement were around **boldness**.

This may be due to the way some participants interpreted the spectrums; some considered boldness and modernity as a negative, preferring a familiar eCommerce experience.

“ [I rated DDS 2.0 as Traditional, not Modern, because] I like the traditional way of trying to buy something; it wasn't trying to hustle me into buying .

— p12

Alignment with Brand Values

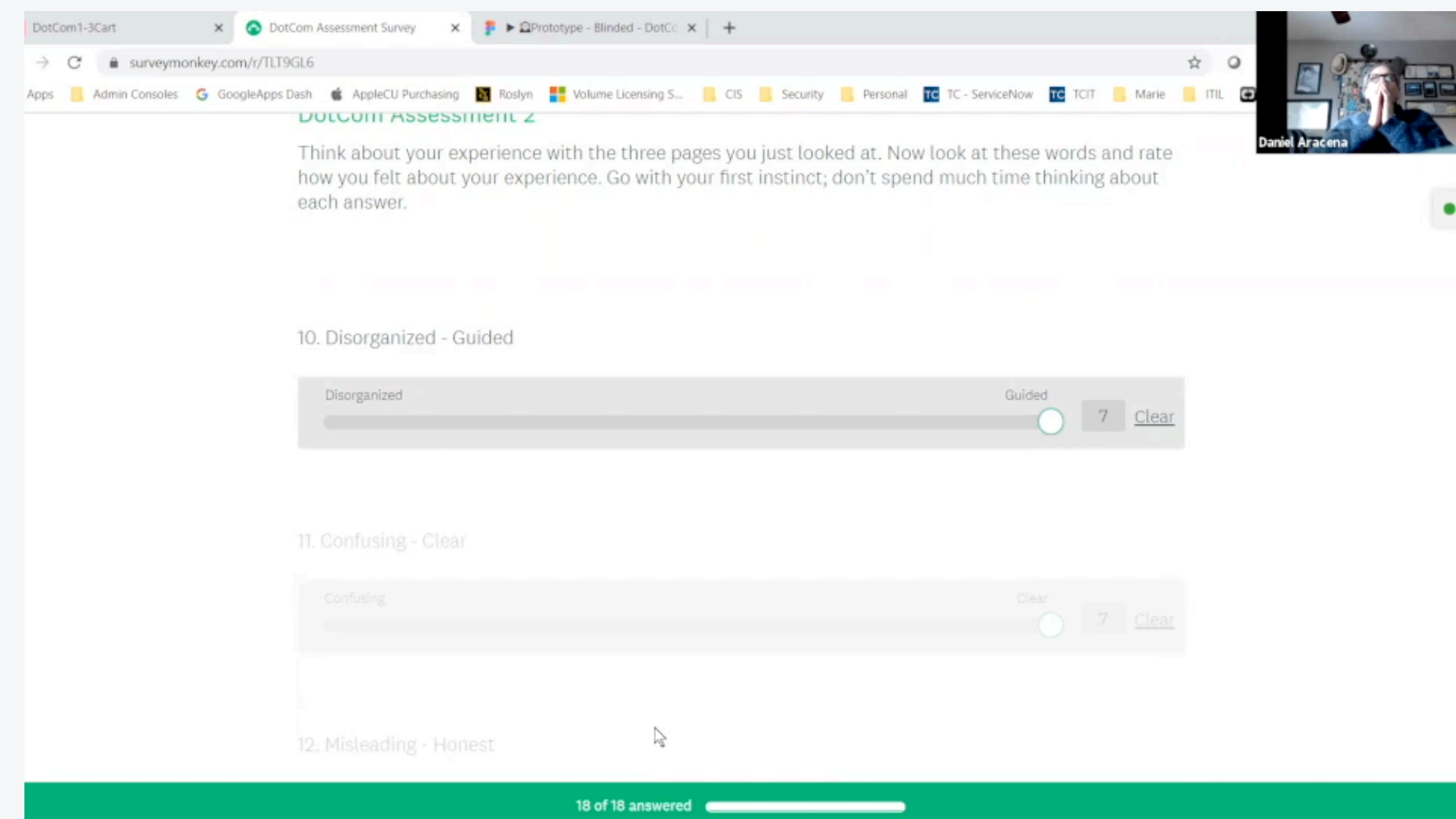


BERT FINDINGS

COLLABORATIVE

Disorganized | Guided
Confusing | Clear

Content felt **easy to understand**, and easy to read by how **organized and concise** it was, leading to high score for feeling Guided and Clear.



“ The pages were somewhat better organized, they weren't too cluttered which tended to keep me focused instead of getting lost.
— p25

“ It was an easy read. It was easy to understand.
— p12

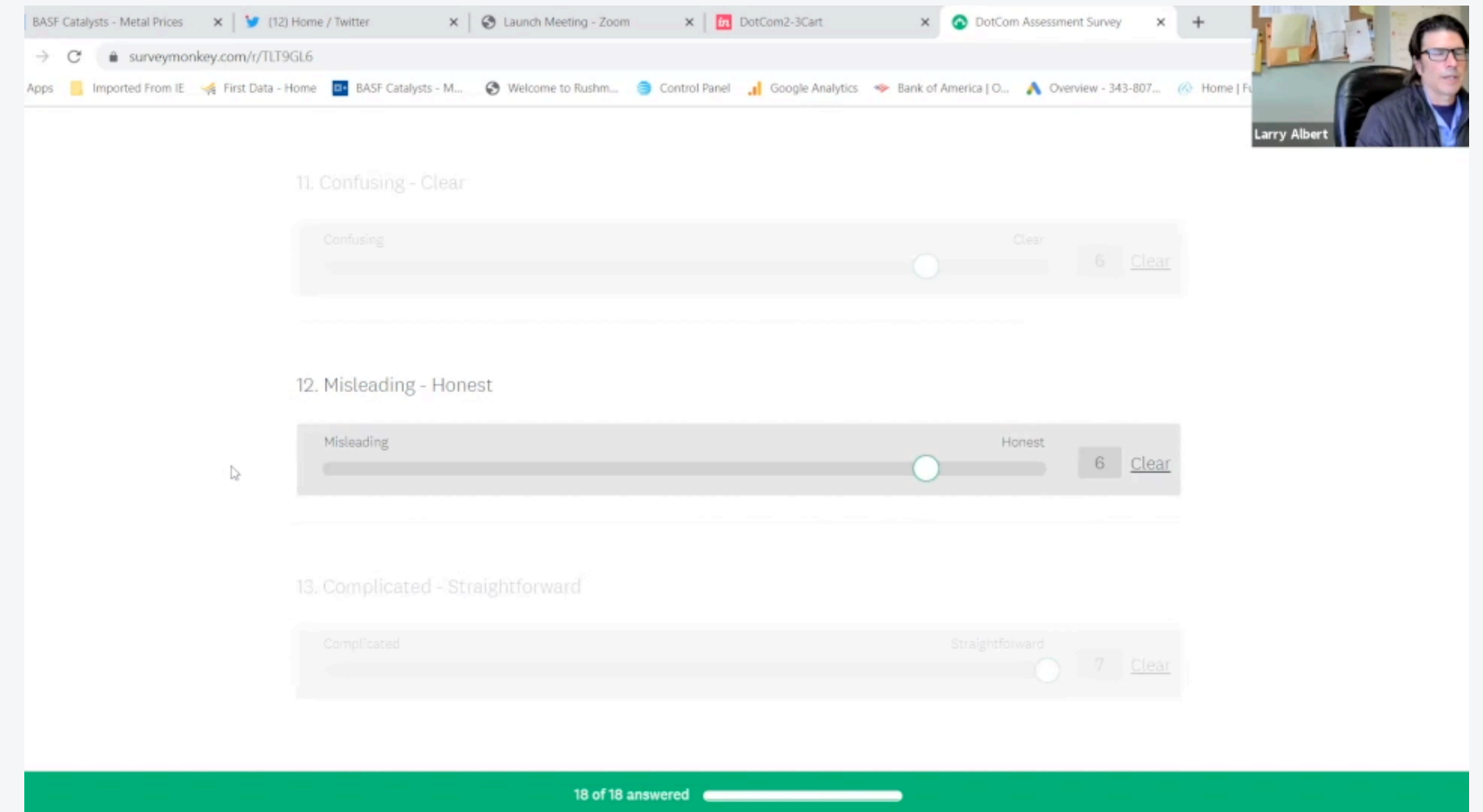
“ I don't like that I don't have that phone number and chat there, but I wouldn't have noticed if I didn't see the other one first.
— p14

BERT FINDINGS

AUTHENTIC

Misleading | Honest
Complicated | Straightforward

Consistent presentation of **pertinent information** made DDS 2.0 feel Honest. Easy and obvious page **navigation** while also being **free of jargon** made the content feel Straightforward since it was easy to understand.



“ [Overall it was] really straightforward, don't have any trouble navigating to get what I wanted.
— p11

“ There was no “fake news”, no disinformation. It was all factually honest and straightforward.
— p15

“ [Overall it was] pretty straightforward, but not super clear [because it lacked detail on the product].
— p24

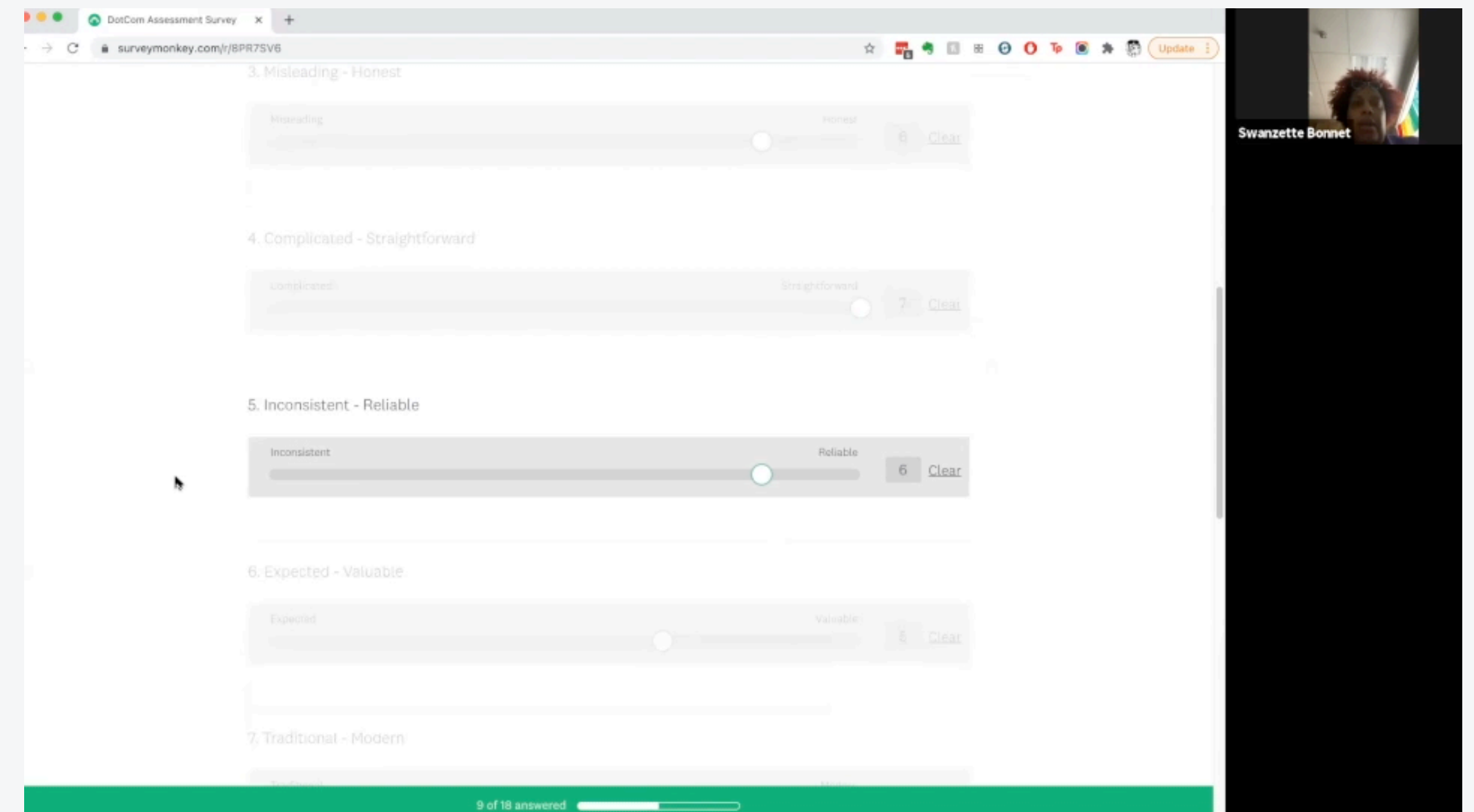
BERT FINDINGS

RELIABLE

Inconsistent | Reliable
Expected | Valuable

Consistency and lack of confusion led participants to a solid Reliable score.

While we struck the results from the Expected vs. Valuable spectrum, participants noted that the experience **met their expectations** and showcased the **latest technology** by using strong imagery.



“ *It’s reliable because it is consistent and not confusing.*

— p12

“ *[It had] lots of information, not sure if it’s for the product or the way it was presented, but it wasn’t hard to understand.*

— p16

“ *It is what I expected from a laptop website, from the experiences I’ve had.*

— p21

BERT FINDINGS

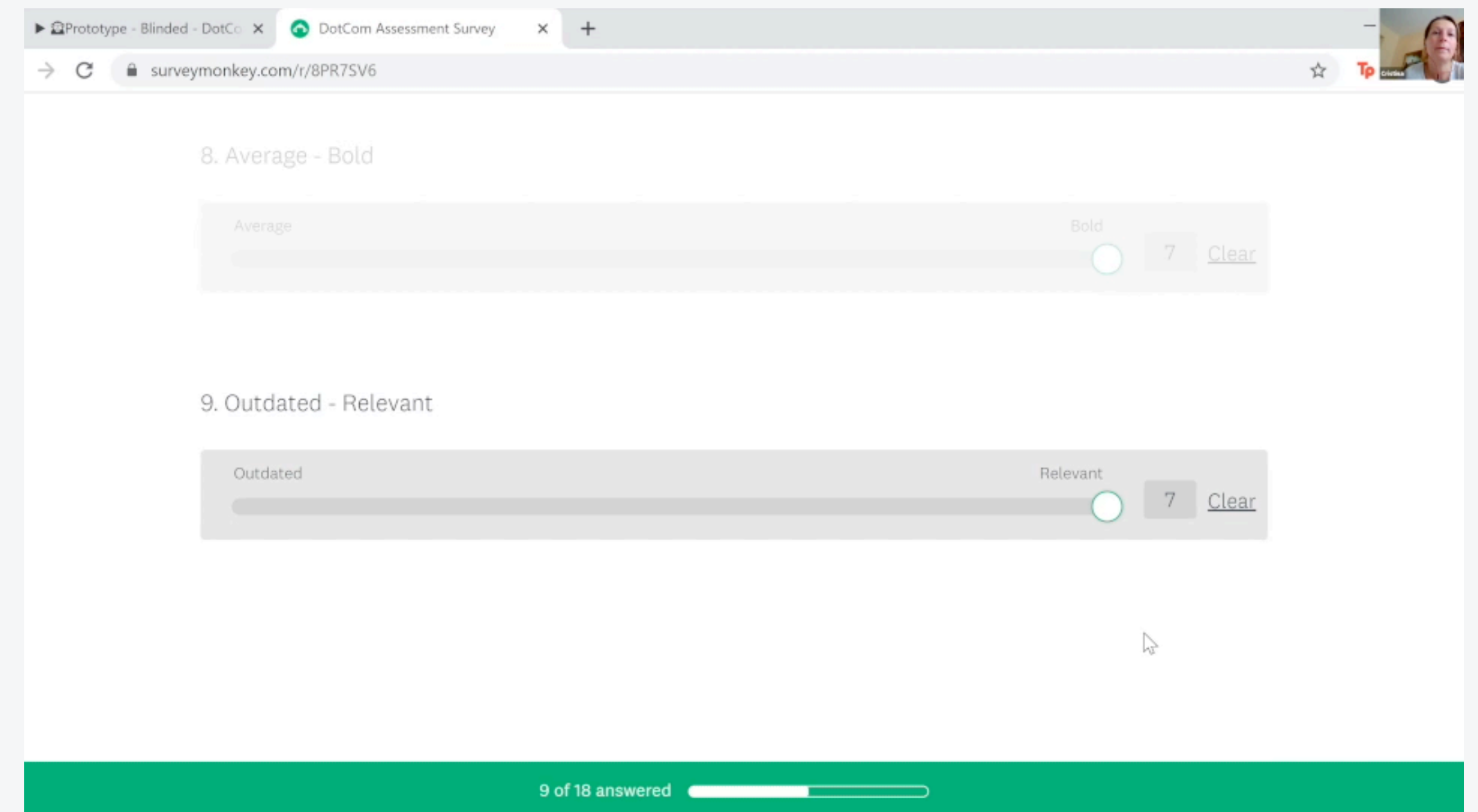
BOLD

Traditional | Modern
Average | Bold
Outdated | Relevant

Product images felt advanced and up to today's standards, and led to moderate Modern scores.

Clean, attention-grabbing design were the strongest attributes for the neutral Bold score.

Listed **product information** felt **up to date** and led to a solid Relevant score.



“ [It felt like a] Dell-ish format with a little more bold graphics.

— p25

“ The way the products were presented on the pages [felt relevant]. I am looking for a product with the latest technology on the market and I want to make sure I'm spending my money on something new & improved.

— p16

“ [There was] not a lot of cutting edge detail in there [to make me think it was bold].

— p24

Thanks!

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APPENDIX

Considerations for Commerce

OPPORTUNITIES FOR DDS 2.0 ADOPTION

Note: participants who saw the current site first reacted strongly against DDS 2.0.

Lack of information and customization options felt suspicious

Those who saw the **current site first**, described it as generic, disorienting, and complicated

- Implementation **MUST** happen with a **build, measure, learn loop** in order to be successful.
- Consider **DDS as a service**, with the intent to get teams to run iterative experiments as they implement significant changes.
- Templates cannot be designed at the design system level without **tight partnerships with product teams**. A good template in one scenario may not be a good template in another.

“ If it had the more cutting edge technology, they would have that information there about it.

— p24

“ I would have to take a step back and think. [Here] I have to scroll down to see the top priority specs, in the [product page on the current site] it's on the top like I'm used to.

— p25

HYPOTHESES

- **Content** is a significant component of the Dell brand, impacting **all Brand values**.
 - When participants felt like they lost information, they felt like they lost control. Once they felt they lost control, they lost trust in the site.
- **Visual content hierarchy** indicates content importance, impacting **collaboration, authenticity, and reliability**.
 - **Product customization options** were at the bottom of the page, indicating it was least important. Participants considered customization as the most important aspect of purchasing a high-value product.
- **Image selection** impacts **authenticity, reliability and boldness** of the product.
 - **Removing human context from images** for specific products caused participants to question how much they could believe the images about the product (it seemed large for a 13” laptop, harder to envision in their own space without accessible examples).
- **Warranty and support** are important aspects of the Dell brand, impacting **collaboration and reliability**.
 - **Removing phone and chat support on the cart** page caused customers to fret about how to get last-minute advice or guidance on their purchase.
 - **Warranty and support plans** consumed the majority of customization area, implying something is likely to go wrong.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve alignment across all Brand values,

- Add detailed product specs to allow buyers to go as deep into detail as they might want.
- Carefully consider placement and design treatment for key parts of the purchase experience. Over- or under-emphasizing those items at the inappropriate time sends the wrong message.
- Place product customization options high on the page to give buyers more control.
- Provide human context for products to help buyers visualize the product in their own space.

Specific to the Collaboration Brand value,

- Find the balance between feeling predetermined and overwhelming customization.
- Provide chat and phone support on the cart page to help buyers clarify any questions they may have about the product.

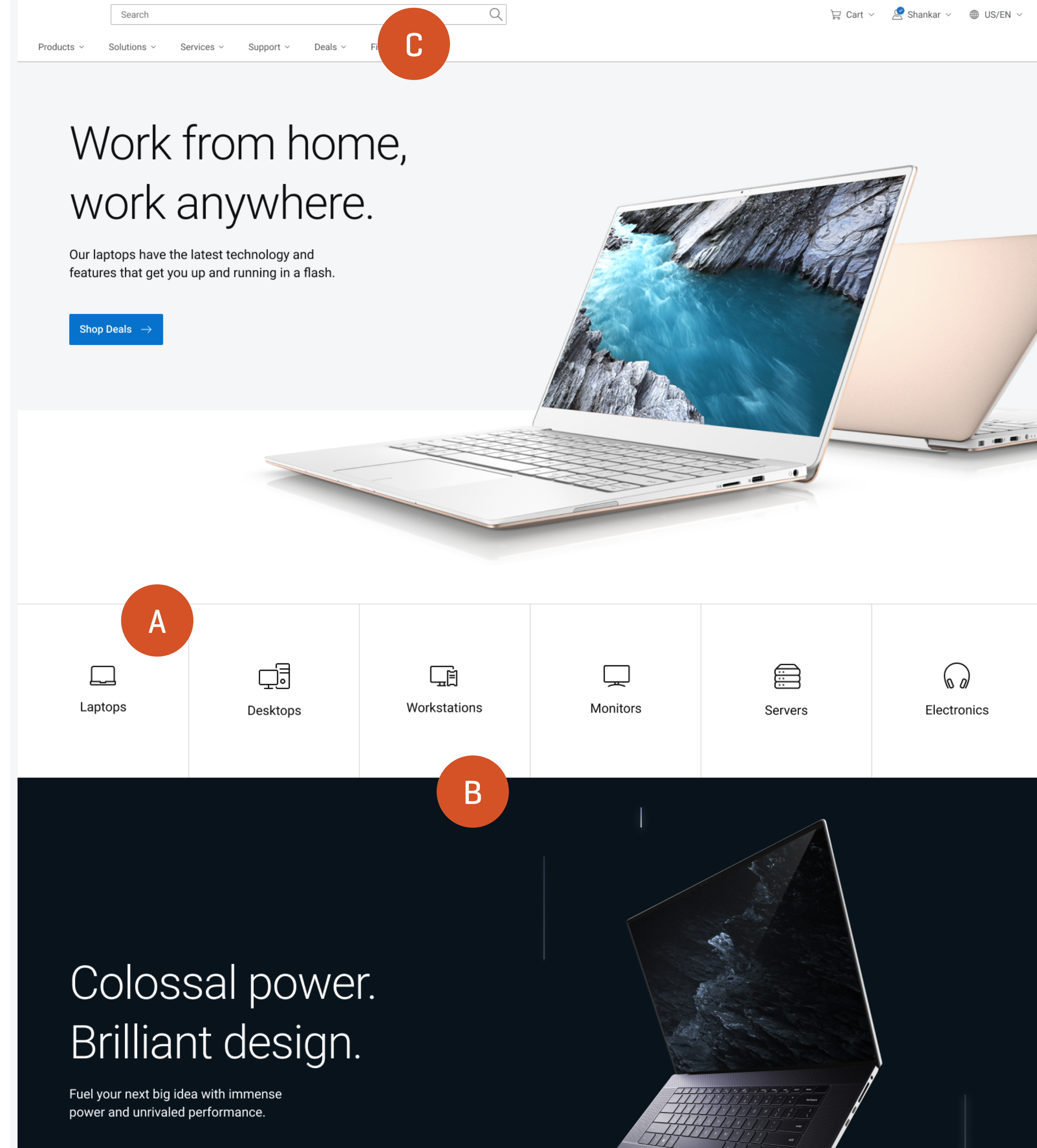
DDS 2.0

HOMEPAGE



STRENGTHS

- A. **Streamlined navigation** - The large tiles for the 6 product types drew more attention, indicating focus and not trying to overextend on products.
- B. **Good contrast** - The difference between sections helped to break up the page and draw attention further down the page.
- C. **Strong micro interaction** - The modernity of the sticky nav stood out most strongly here. Additionally, one participant in particular looked for parallax interactions as the mark of true modernity.



PRODUCT PAGE



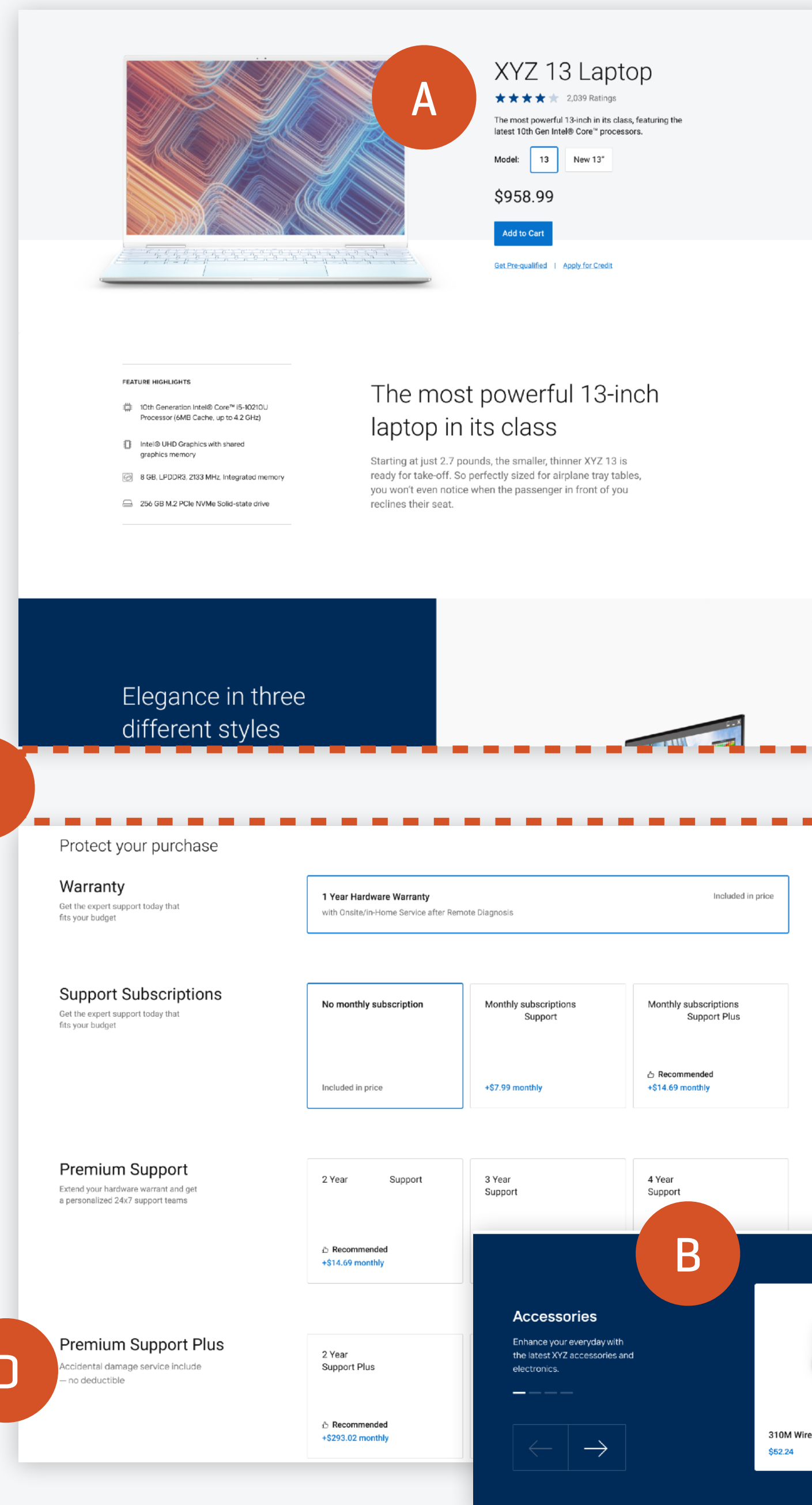
STRENGTHS

- A. **Ratings** - These redesigned layout for ratings caught participants' attention; they play a key role in building participant's confidence in the product.
- B. **Separate accessories section** - Felt like a suggestion rather than an ad to buy more.



WEAKNESSES

- C. **Poor content hierarchy** - Participants expected configuration options for upgrading hard drives and memory to be at the top of the page.
- D. **Collapsible customization options** - Participants wanted to control how much customization they saw at a time. Seeing all the options at once was overwhelming.



DDS 2.0

CART



STRENGTHS

- A. Financing** - The financing option caught many participants' attention. While most said they wouldn't use it, they liked knowing it was there if they needed it.
- B. Clear price** - The final total was clear enough to be able to understand the entire cost of the transaction, demonstrating honesty.
- C. Payment options** - Appreciated the reduced clutter for number of payment options while maintaining variety.



WEAKNESSES

- D. Missing support options** - Participants strongly preferred having phone/chat options to answer questions about their purchase.


The screenshot shows a shopping cart for an XYZ 13 Laptop. The page layout includes a search bar at the top, a navigation menu with categories like Products, Solutions, Services, Support, Deals, and Financing, and a main content area. The product details section shows the laptop image, a 5-star rating, and a 'Compare' button. The pricing section includes the item price (\$958.99), a savings of \$50.00 from a FlashSale50, and an item total of \$908.99. A 'Checkout' button is prominently displayed. The checkout summary on the right shows a subtotal of \$908.99, free shipping, and a tax of \$79.54, resulting in an estimated total of \$988.53. A 'PayPal' logo is also visible. At the bottom, there is a blue banner with the text 'EXPERIENCE The ultimate way to shop' and three buttons: 'Finance with Preferred Account', 'Price Match Guarantee', and 'Rewards'. The footer contains copyright information and links for About, Careers, Community, Terms of Sale, Privacy Statement, and Make a Payment.

Annotations:

- A:** Points to a star icon and a financing offer: "Earn up to 6% back when you finance. Free expedited delivery +\$103 (3%) back in rewards. Join."
- B:** Points to the "Estimated Total" of \$988.53 in the checkout summary.
- C:** Points to the "PayPal" logo in the checkout summary.
- D:** Points to a dashed orange box around the "Checkout" button and the "PayPal" logo.

APPENDIX

Links to Interview Protocol & Artifacts
Participant Overview
Detailed BERT Results



APPENDIX

ARTIFACTS

Test stimuli

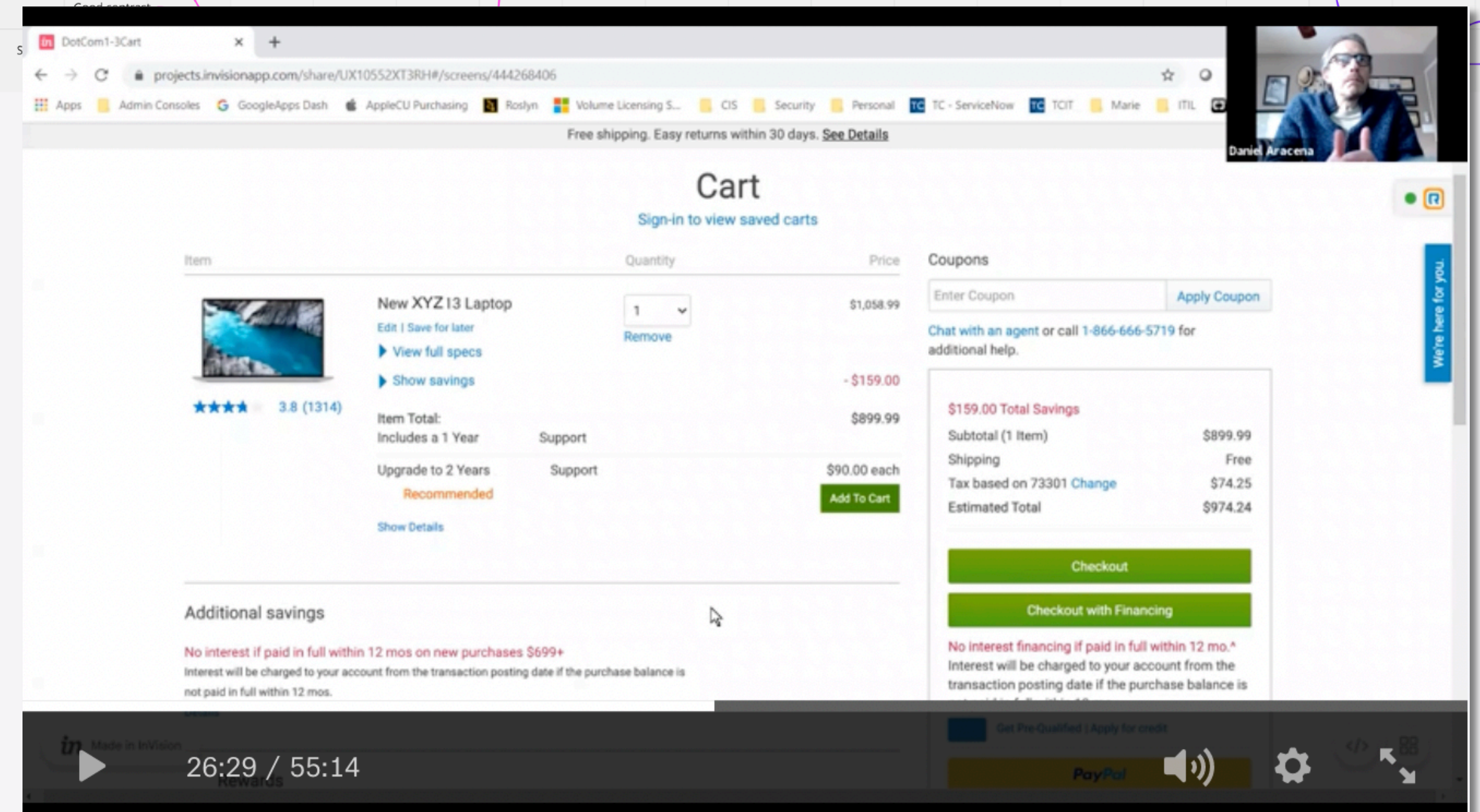
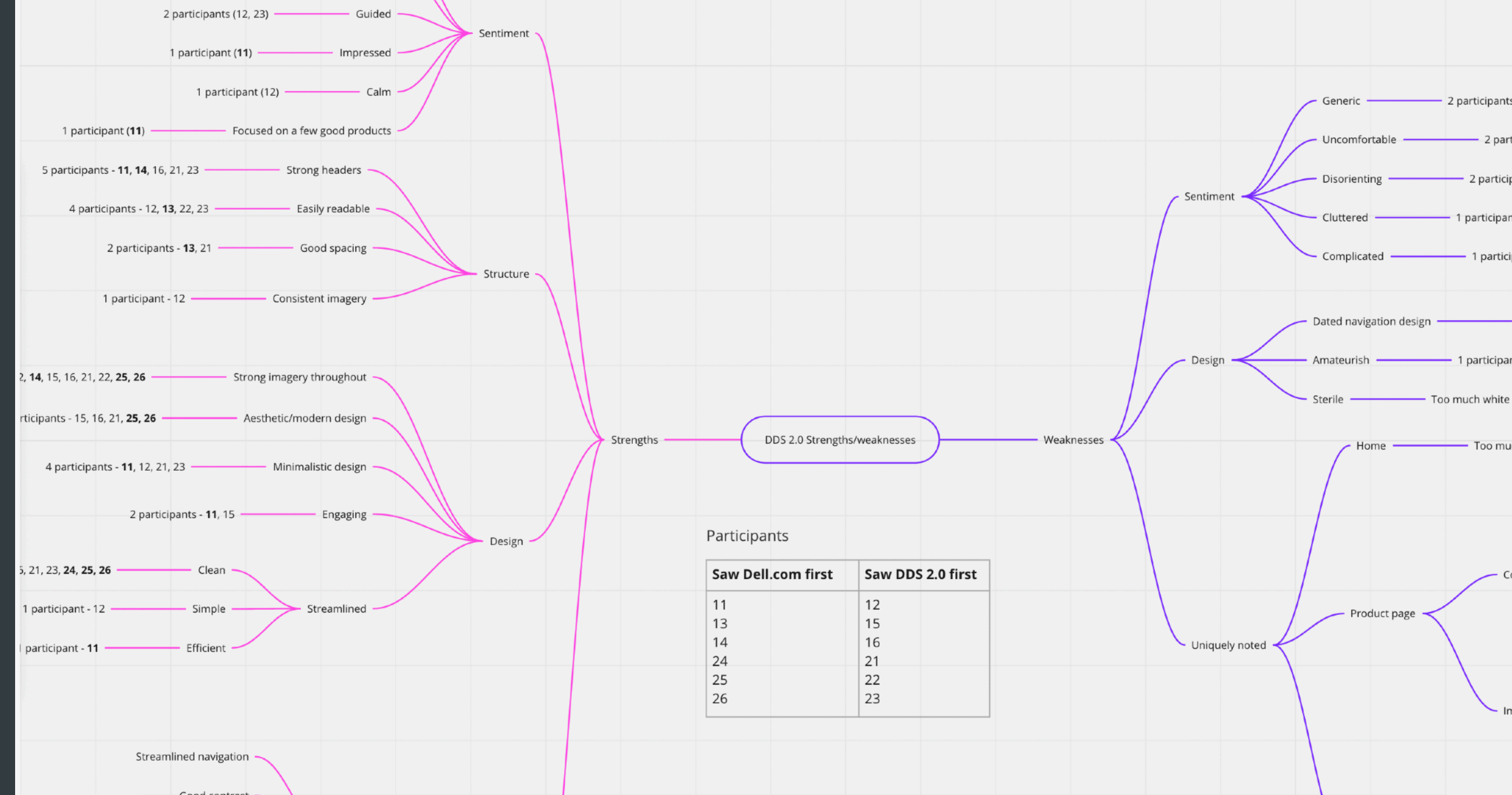
- Research protocol: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/jlgtkjjc3aag186/Protocol%20-%20Generative%20Dell%20DLS%202.0-SOW103.docx?dl=0>
- Blinded current site: <https://projects.invisionapp.com/share/UX10552XT3RH#/screens/444268969>
- Blinded DDS 2.0: <https://www.figma.com/proto/wQ3NedhpOEZR9qZ0adDLQ5/DotCom-Stimuli?node-id=2918%3A1397&viewport=1329%2C1199%2C0.062212537974119186&scaling=scale-down-width>

Raw data

- Session recordings: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2efi8oudojv7zyi/AAA9pn9On9VDjzb4iKvnlflma?dl=0>
- Session notes: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/5swzox5knen5zng/AAAE_Z3gHK32VRNIBTVEfAe5a?dl=0
- BERT data exported from Survey Monkey: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/cqo13p4xb27f4id/SurveyMonkeyBERT-data.xlsx?dl=0>

Synthesis

- Miro Board: https://miro.com/app/board/o9J_IT-UV3E/



PARTICIPANTS

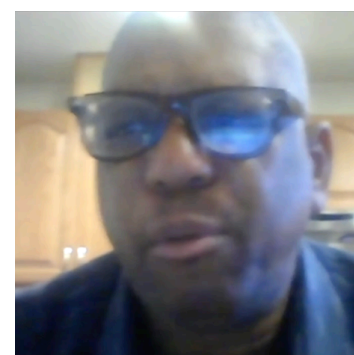
CONSUMERS

SAW CURRENT SITE FIRST

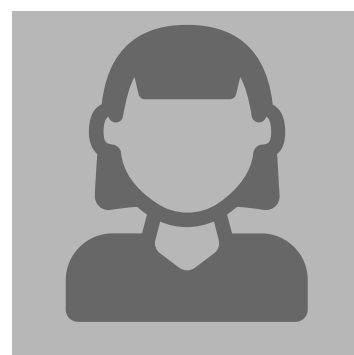
P11 / 47



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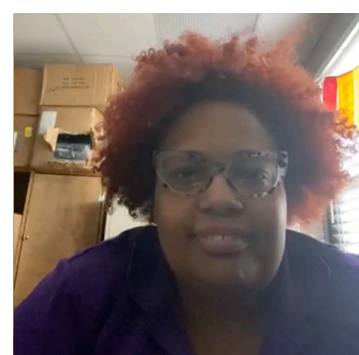


P14 / 20

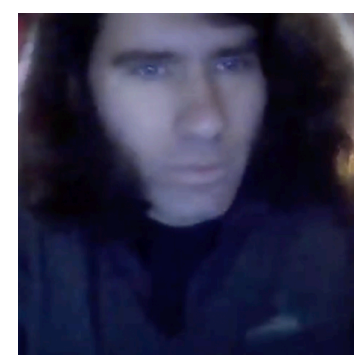


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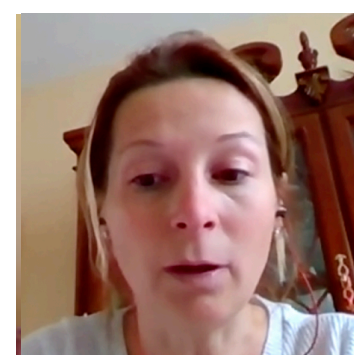
P12 / 44



P15 / 36



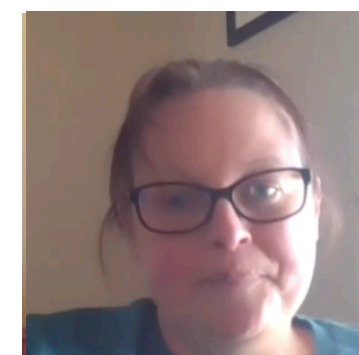
P16 / 46



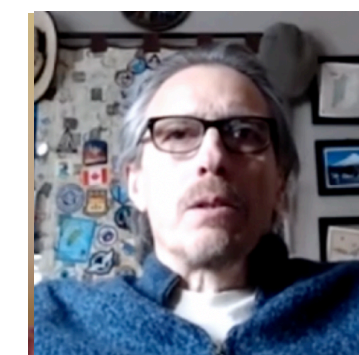
IT GENERALISTS

SAW CURRENT SITE FIRST

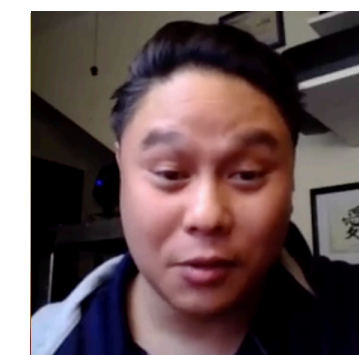
P24 / 41



P25 / 57

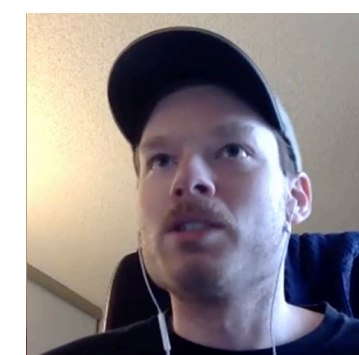


P26 / 45

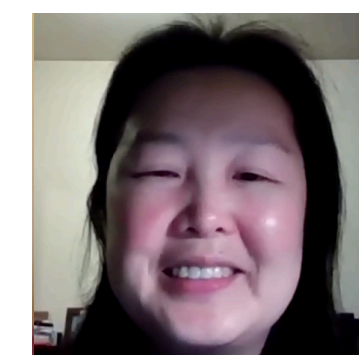


SAW DDS 2.0 SITE FIRST

P21 / 30



P22 / 43



P23 / 53

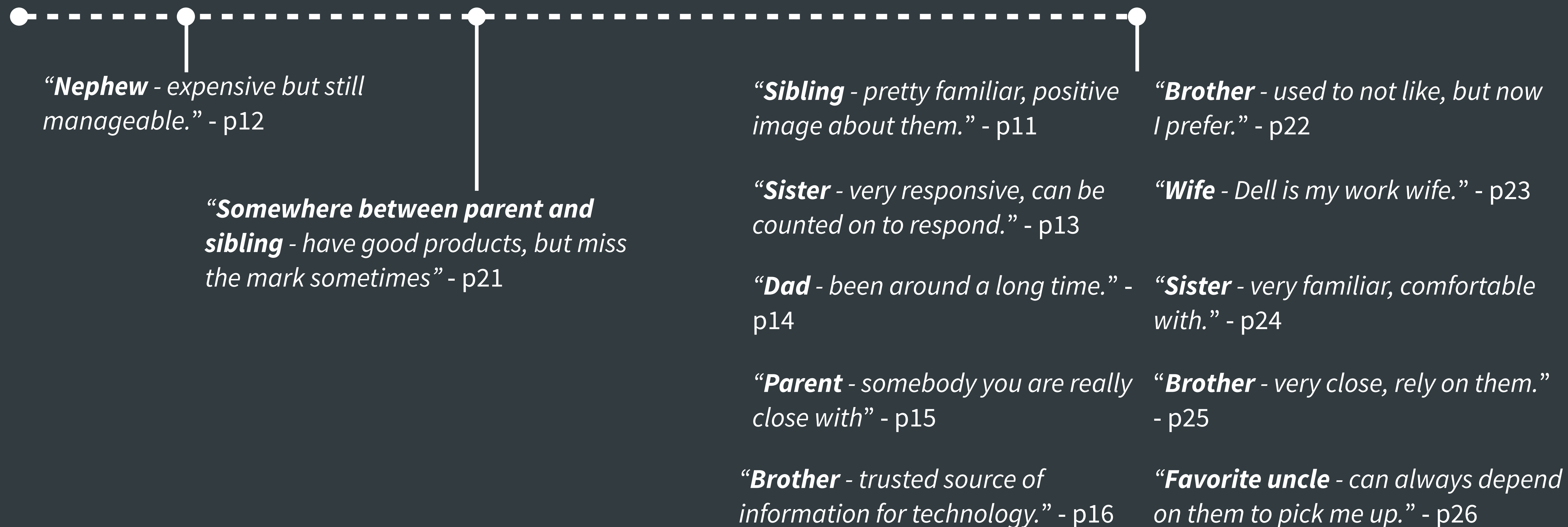


MY RELATIONSHIP WITH DELL IS LIKE MY RELATIONSHIP WITH _____

NEGATIVE

NEUTRAL

POSITIVE



APPENDIX

DETAILED BERT RESULTS

The experience on DDS 2.0 felt guided, clear, honest, straightforward, and reliable.

Collectively, participants rated the prototype experience closer to favorable facets for each scale. Likely the strong prioritization of choices contributed to that experience.

However, it seems that there are some areas that are still a bit vague, and have some room for improvement.

