Can AI Build a Trustworthy Website?

Exploring Credibility and First Impressions on a Home Improvement Website

Research Plan

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Study Overview

This study explores how people perceive a home improvement company after viewing a screenshot of its website, including what information shapes their impressions.

Houzz research provides background for the study. Among 2,866 registered Houzz users surveyed in 2024, recommendations or references (64%), experience with projects of similar scope (47%), and licensing (26%) were among the top three factors respondents selected when hiring professionals. These findings concern hiring priorities; this study examines website impressions.

Factor	Selected
Recommendations or references	64%
Experience with projects of similar scope	47%
Pricing within their budget	39%
Licensed professional	26%
Availability	17%
Personality fit	17%

Source: Houzz survey findings.

Study Objectives

- Evaluate whether the website builds enough trust and confidence to encourage prospective customers to contact the company or request a quote.
- Measure perceived trust, qualifications, professionalism, and expected work quality.
- Measure willingness to contact the company and request a quote.
- Identify website information that participants say influenced their impressions.
- Explore whether ratings differ by previous contractor experience and future hiring plans.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- Does the website answer customers' questions, establish credibility, and give them enough confidence to contact the company?
- How trustworthy, qualified, and professional does the company appear?
- How confident are participants that the company would deliver quality work?
- How likely are participants to contact the company or request a quote?
- What information influences their impressions?
- Are previous contractor experience and future hiring plans associated with ratings?

Method

An unmoderated online survey uses Google Forms. Participants view one screenshot of the J.S. Brown & Co. website and rate their impressions using five-point scales.

Background questions ask about previous contractor experience and plans to hire a contractor within the next 12 months. An optional written question asks what influenced their impression.

Participation is voluntary. Previous contractor experience is not required. The recruitment target is 50 responses.

Expert Review of the Lovable Prototype

In addition to the survey, the researcher will review the Lovable-generated home improvement website prototype to identify opportunities to improve clarity, credibility, accessibility, and usability.

The review will examine navigation, service descriptions, project examples, company background, trust information, and ways to contact the company or request a quote.

Screenshots will be annotated to show the issue, explain its potential effect, and recommend improvement. These annotations will be included in the results decks.

Review observations will be identified as researcher assessments. Connections to survey findings will be made where supported by participants' responses. The review does not measure task success or validate usability with participants.

Survey Invitation

This prompt was shared on LinkedIn and Facebook. Respondents were not paid.

What information shapes people's trust in a company

I'm conducting a short UX research survey about impressions of a remodeling company's website. You'll review a screenshot and answer a few questions. You don't need experience hiring a contractor to participate.

Please take the survey here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSehT0ZK12tnlYx_sYwaI1l0QPAlVZtsHSJf_gZtb7RLhNfO3A/viewform?usp=publish-editor

Analysis Plan

- Report counts and percentages for each rating, alongside median ratings.
- Compare ratings by previous contractor experience and future hiring plans where group sizes permit.
- Explore associations between perceived trustworthiness, qualifications, professionalism, expected work quality, and willingness to contact the company or request a quote.
- Group written responses into themes and report how many participants mention each theme.
- Treat statistical comparisons as exploratory and report uncertainty.

Limitations

- Participants are self-selected and may not represent potential customers.
- The study evaluates one company using one website screenshot.
- A screenshot does not capture the experience of navigating a working website.
- Stated willingness to contact the company may differ from actual behavior.
- The study cannot establish that particular website elements cause trust.

- Small participant groups may limit comparisons.
- Houzz findings provide background rather than a directly comparable benchmark.