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CRELAN

CASE STUDY

Early user testing to take the right decisions



uxprobe®

INTRODUCTION



In January 2017, the Belgian bank Crelan asked their web agency, Prophets, to completely redesign their website. After setting up expectations and requirements with their client through preparatory workshops, Prophets started a series of user tests with UX-probe.

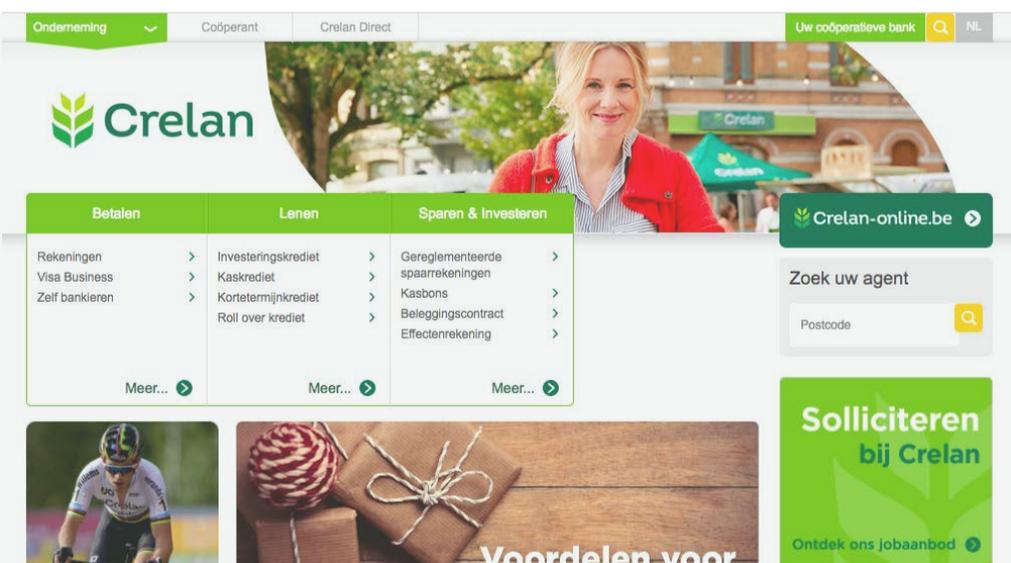
They tested competitors' websites, Crelan's current website, and a very early prototype of the structure of the new website.

Thanks to this **very early series of user tests**, they:

- » discovered that **their favorite competitors' website was very much a failure in terms of usability**, and that they should not use it as an example to follow.

- » found out that their current website, despite an outdated feeling, had **still many valuable aspects that were worth being kept**. No need for a total "from scratch" re-design.
- » experimented with a very simple prototype to solve a complex content integration and **adjusted the user's journey into a flow that was much easier to follow**.

All these learnings helped them to take the right decisions at a very early stage. These early decisions prevented them from spending a huge amount of time and money on a design that would have quite certainly proven wrong later on.



"It's important that our UX strategy is based on data and facts and not on hunches."

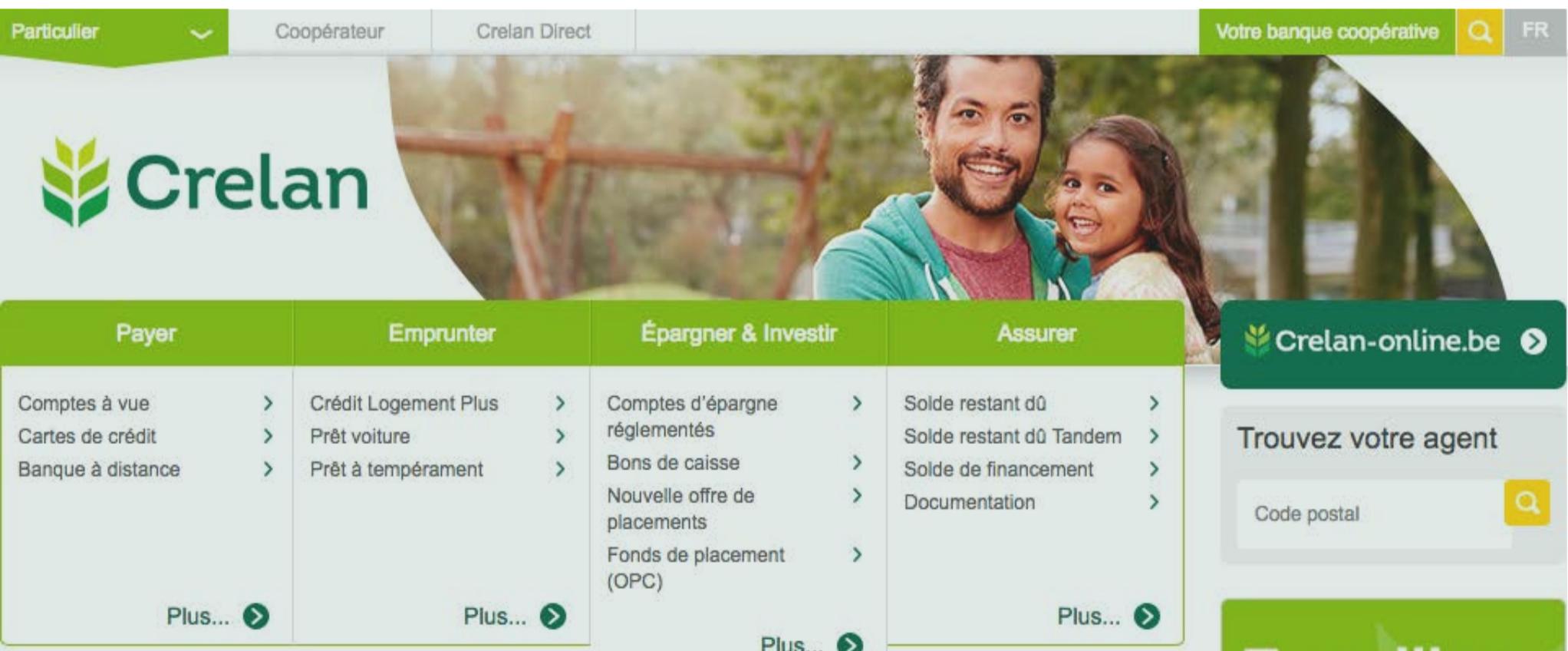
Daan Richard,
Strategy Director at Prophets

THE PROJECT

Prophets has been working with Crelan for several years now, creating marketing campaigns, and developing different design projects.

6 months ago, Crelan asked the agency to start an important new project: the **complete redesign of their marketing website**. The existing website had been launched in 2013 but was already seen as very outdated. This motivated the bank to ask Prophets to start from scratch.

Following his client's wishes, Daan organised a series of ideation workshops with the management team to explore their expectations, and to align every stakeholder on a common vision. Based on these preparatory workshops, a very simple structure of the website was established. At the same time, an extensive competitors research was conducted as well as an evaluation of the current website.



THE CHALLENGES

At Prophets, Daan, as strategy director, works very closely with the technology and UX director, Kris Van Hauwermeiren. This collaboration results in an **emphasis on real-life proofs and data-based decisions.**

In this particularly ambitious project, they wanted to be especially cautious. For a designer, it is very exciting to be asked to start a website from scratch and to come up with brand new ideas. As experienced

professionals, Prophets knew the danger behind the thrill.

Both for the first structure of the website and the competitor's research, Prophets carried out users' interviews, test panels and surveys to test and verify hypothesis and assumptions that were made during this exploratory phase. But that was not enough. They needed **quantitative and qualitative metrics to bring undeniable support to their decisions.**



UXPROBE'S CONTRIBUTION

Competitors research

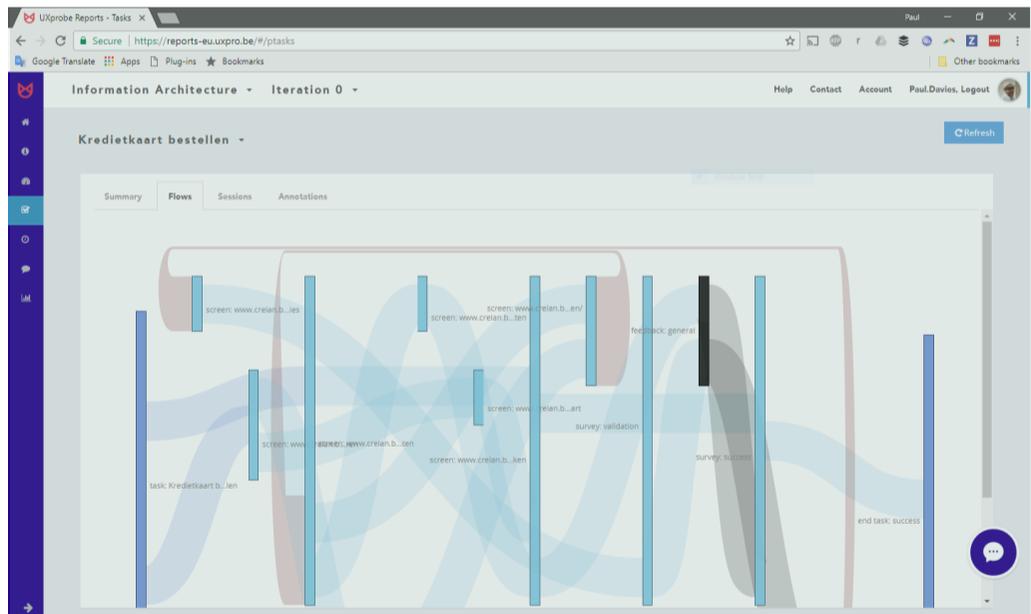
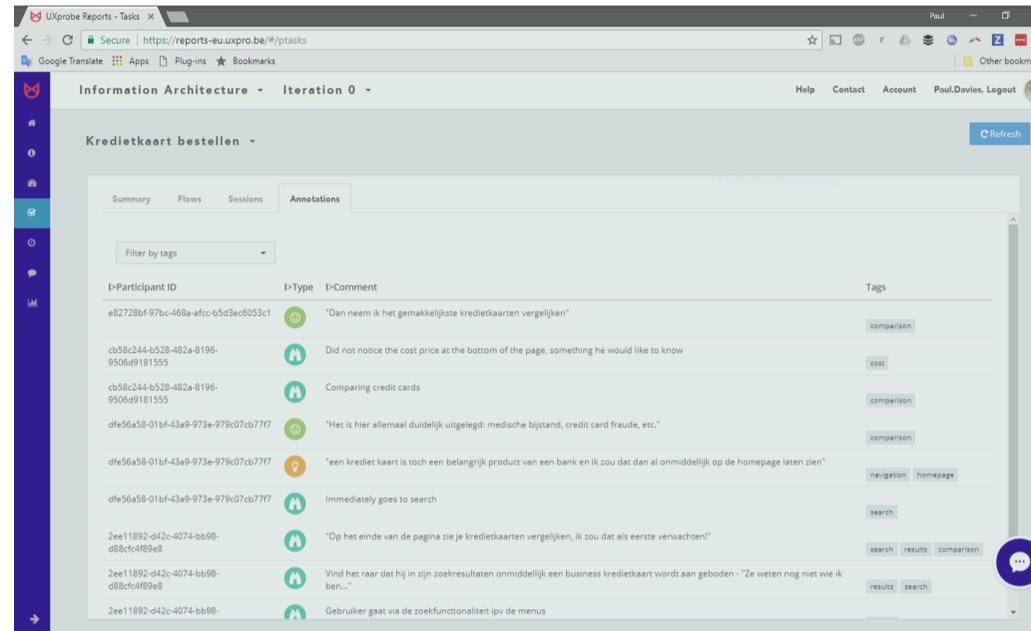
To create a first benchmark and gather ideas on best practices as well as insights on what to avoid, Prophets offered to research Crelan's main competitors. They tested the four main Belgian banking websites. One in particular was Crelan's management team's favorite.

The user tests were conducted with UXprobe's powerful user testing system, which allowed the team to quickly and easily record a small group of testers. The tests were conducted in a single day and all videos, metrics and notes were recorded in the UXprobe system.

The results of the user tests came as a great surprise: the website that Crelan was fond of, thinking it had the best design and user experience, revealed to have many flaws. Made at the very beginning of the project, this discovery prevented Crelan from investing time and money in an inspirational model that was not worth it.

Evaluation of Crelan's current website

In order to challenge the idea that everything had to be started from scratch, Prophets decided to perform user tests on Crelan's current website. The team tested



CASE STUDY - CRELAN

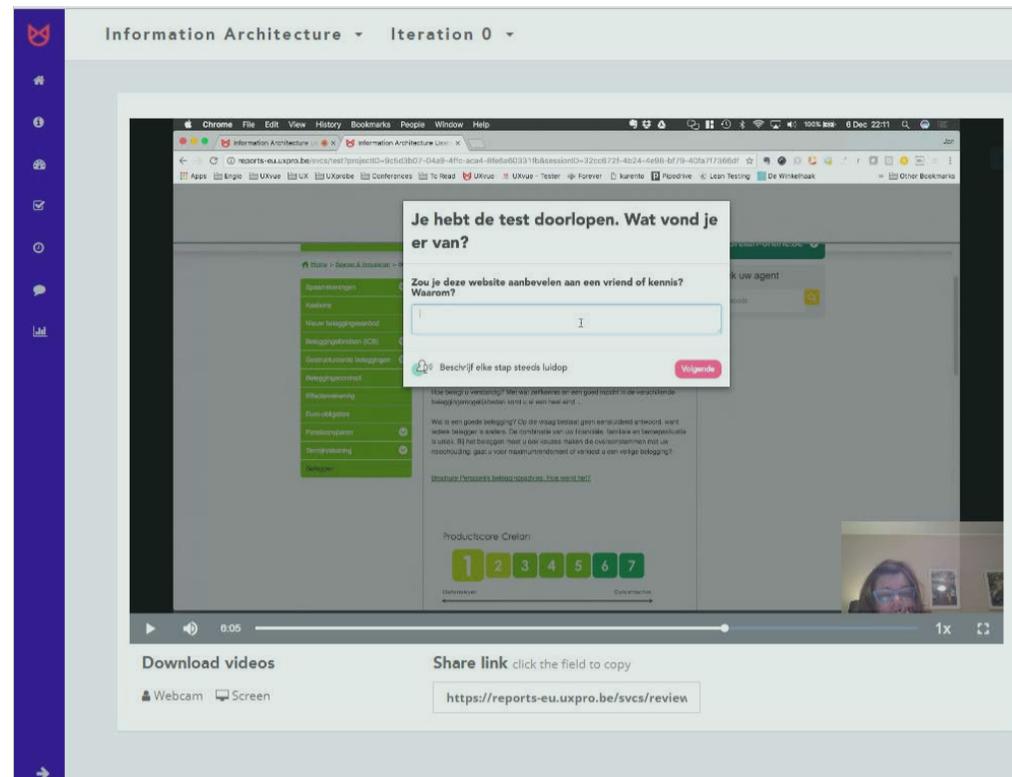
the same five core tasks that were used in the competitor benchmark tests: ordering a credit card, applying for a car loan, saving for retirement, etc.

The results of the test showed that users appreciated the no-nonsense approach of the current website. They felt comfortable with the familiarity of it, and how the experience was similar to other banking websites. No need to redesign the entire experience, what the website users wanted and needed had to be practical and functional. As such, the well received principles of the current website were kept for the new website design.

Testing the very first structure of the website

Based on the outcome of the workshops with Crelan's team and the first results of user testing, Prophets created a prototype structure of the new website. UXprobe's system allows to test even the simplest prototype. Prophets was able to observe and gather information of the routes users took during the test: understanding why users took certain paths and the points they got stuck or lost at.

The results of the usability test gave Prophets insights into the optimal structure of



the content, the priority of the respective components and methods of bundling information. This allowed them also to decide what sort of inspiring content appealed most to users.

Also, it helped them to solve another issue. From a cross selling perspective, it is interesting for banks to cluster their information in themes and key moments, instead of just offering products. During the evaluation of the current website, the users clearly expressed that the main navigation still needed to display the products and services. It was difficult to find the best approach to do so, and the user tests on the website's structure helped solve that puzzling issue by showing without any doubts what was working and what was definitely confusing the visitors.

“We have done competitor research before, but UXprobe allowed for a more structured approach.”

Daan Richard,
Strategy Director at Prophets



THE RESULTS



Prophets felt that it was necessary to perform early usability tests with UXprobe as they did not want to introduce any doubts before bringing results to the table since the concept was already worked on and validated with Crelan. Thankfully, the results of the tests showed many confirmations and areas for improvements which made Crelan highly satisfied.

By testing early, Prophets allowed Crelan to save a significant amount of time and money in 3 different ways:

- » The test on competitors prevented them from following **an example they liked and that actually revealed as a failure in terms of usability**

- » The test on Crelan’s current website showed clearly that **some parts of the existing structure and content received positive feedback from users**. That discovery had them realize that they could keep what was already good in the current website.
- » Testing on a label’s structure was a very cost-effective way to **experiment with and to improve the user’s journey throughout the website**.

The decision to conduct user research through tests early in the project has certainly minimize any future opportunity costs, and has potentially save Crelan thousands or even millions of euros in wasted development.



Crelan is a Belgian public bank, founded in 1937, specializing in granting loans to the agricultural and horticultural sector. Today, Crelan provides loans for individuals, farmers, SMEs, and businesses. In addition, investment opportunities and insurance coverages are offered as well.

<http://crelan.be/>

Prophets is a marketing and advertising agency based in Antwerp, Belgium. They were founded in 2004, and have since helped businesses to make strategic choices in the digital marketing space. Prophets have a broad specialization in marketing and communication strategy, web application development, and various other services.

<https://prophets.be/>

Daan Richard is the Strategy Director at Prophets since 2014. In this project with Crelan, Daan is responsible for the overall strategy planning and has conducted client workshops to understand the client's expectations. He has to liaise with the Technology and UX Director at Prophets, Kris Van Hauwermeiren of this project as his role is to transmit the client's expectations to the technical team. As user experience (UX) is a model with the technical and strategy aspect, Daan played an important role in the process of this project.

— HOW WE WORK

Let us show you how we work, contact our UX expert.



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