

# Popular travel brands provide poor usability and customer experience

BY SUZANNE BEARNE

POPULAR travel brands like Thomas Cook and First Choice are failing to provide a satisfactory level of customer experience, according to a usability study by Webcredible.

The usability and accessibility firm examined the websites of 20 of the UK's leading online travel agents and airline carriers, such as easyJet and Lastminute.com. It concluded that travel brands are providing a mixed level of usability, with the average score being just 51.5%.

Airlines Monarch and Ryanair ranked at the bottom, gaining scores of 38% and 40% respectively.

Trenton Moss, director at Webcredible, said, "These two low-cost airlines scored poorly in many of the categories. Their sites don't clearly

## TRAVEL WEBSITE USABILITY SCORES (%)

<b>Opodo</b>	67
<b>British Airways</b>	65
<b>Travelbag</b>	62
<b>Thomas Cook</b>	49
<b>First Choice</b>	48
<b>Ryanair</b>	40
<b>Monarch</b>	38

Source: Webcredible

provide a telephone number and their error handling was poor."

Meanwhile, Opodo was rated the most usable online travel website, scoring 67%, while British Airways was the top airline, with 65%. Online travel agency Travelbag came third with a score of 62%.

Moss said Opodo's site scored highly because of its range of functions. "Its flight search is fantastic. There's a useful calendar and it lets the user be flexible on dates."

Each of the websites within the report was evaluated against 20 best-practice measures.