

CASE STUDY · UXR-224

# Checkout Savings Comprehension Study



*Is what feels clear  
actually understood?*

*How we discovered that perceived ease and actual  
understanding are not the same thing.*

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**Bobbi Martin** · UX Researcher · Lifeway Christian Resources · 2026

# The Challenge

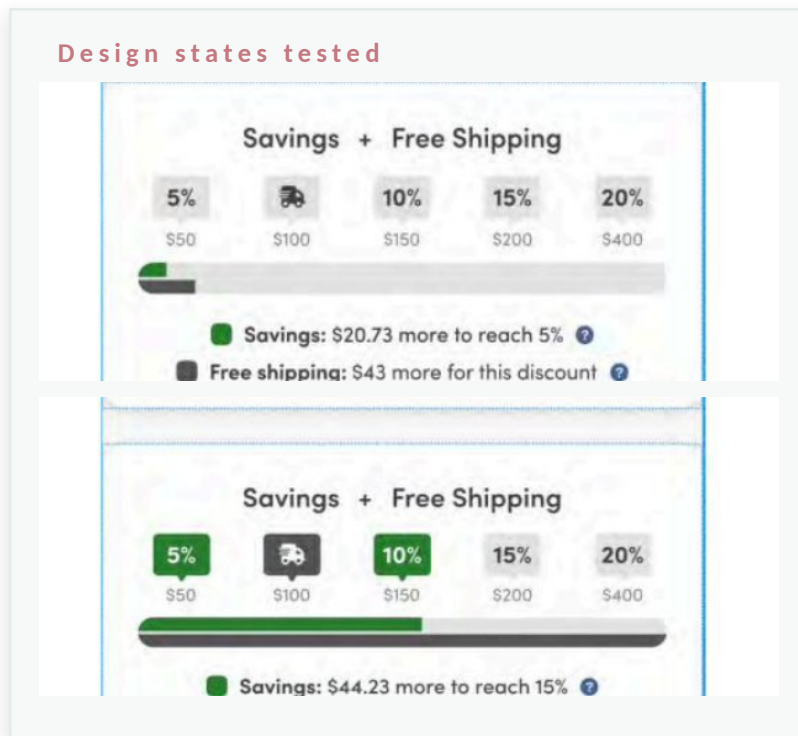
## What we were asked to evaluate

Lifeway was introducing a Savings Progress Bar to the checkout experience — a UI showing customers their current discount tier and free shipping eligibility as they built their cart.

Three design variations were created. Each communicated the same pricing system — but used different visual hierarchies, labels, and progress indicators.

*The question: would customers actually understand what the bar was telling them?*

*If users misread the pricing system, they'd face unexpected totals at checkout — eroding trust at the highest-friction point in the purchase journey.*



State 1: early cart · State 2: progress unlocked

# Research Objectives

01

## Comprehension of the progress bar

Do users understand what the two tracking bars represent — savings thresholds vs. free shipping eligibility?

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02

## Understanding of savings applied

Can users correctly identify what discounts are active and what they need to spend to unlock the next tier?

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03

## Comparative design clarity

Across three design concepts, which communicates the pricing system most accurately?

# Methodology

## Study Type

### Unmoderated Comparative Study

Participants reviewed one design and answered a structured set of questions without a moderator present.

## Methods Mix

### Quant + Qual Triangulated

Multiple choice comprehension tasks, 5-point rating scales, and open-ended questions — analyzed together for a complete picture.

## Scope

### 3 Designs Parallel

Each participant saw one design only, eliminating order bias. Results compared across groups post-study.

## STUDY TIMELINE



Feb 6  
Request



Feb 12  
Study



Feb 13  
Analysis

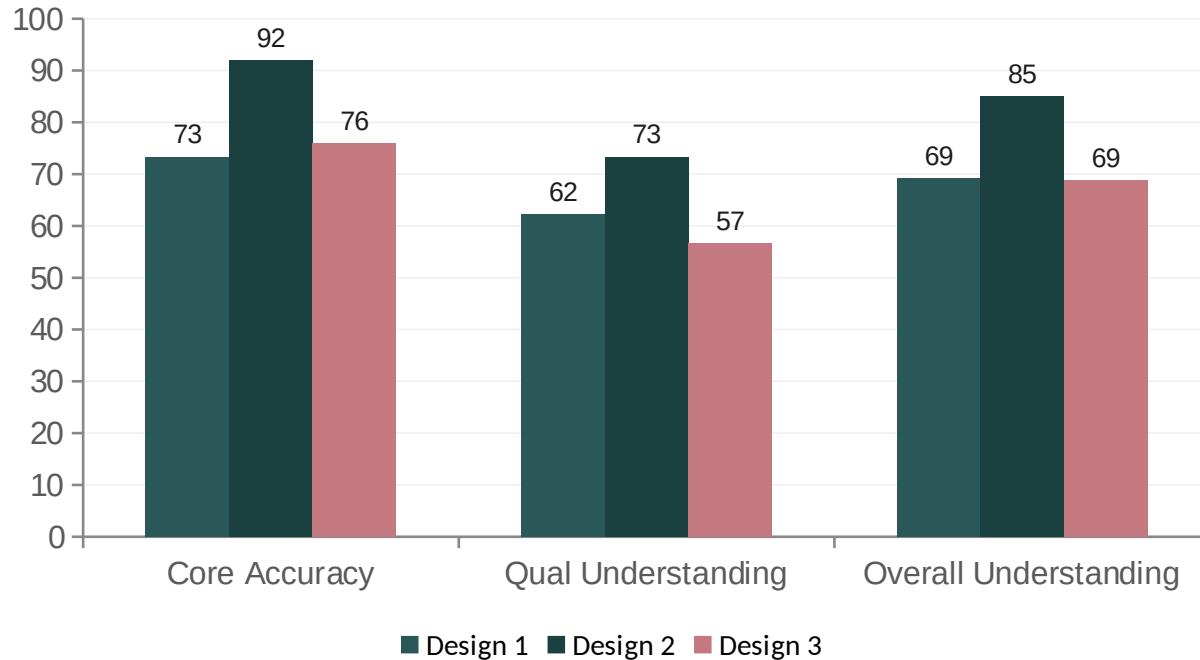


Feb 16  
Shareout

4  
days

# The Results

Comprehension Accuracy (%)



## USER RATINGS (out of 5)

### Savings Clarity

D1: 3.87

D2: 4.30

**D3: 4.50 ★**

### Ease of Use

D1: 4.20

D2: 3.90

**D3: 4.50 ★**

**Design 2 wins on comprehension**

## THE KEY INSIGHT

# Perceived ease ≠ actual understanding.

## Design 3 felt easiest

Users rated Design 3 highest on ease (4.50) and savings clarity (4.50).

## But Design 2 was understood best

Design 2 had 92% core accuracy and 85% overall understanding — outperforming Design 3 on every comprehension measure.

## The risk of optimizing for feeling

A design that feels simpler can still ship users into confusion — especially when the stakes involve pricing.

# Recommendation

PRIMARY

## Ship Design 2

Highest core accuracy (92%) and overall comprehension (85%). Grounded in evidence across all three comprehension metrics — not perception.

### Incorporate Design 3 refinements

Design 3 excelled at perceived savings clarity. Selective copy and visual elements from Design 3 can be layered into Design 2 without compromising comprehension.

### Consider a live A/B test

If stakeholders remain divided after refinements, a live A/B between Design 2 and the refined version provides real behavioral data at scale.

# Impact & Reflection

**4 days**

launch to shareout

**3 designs**

tested in parallel

**92%**

core accuracy, Design 2

**Production**

decision informed

## What worked well

- Splitting quant and qual analysis
- Screener designed to match actual Lifeway customer segments
- TL;DR summary written for exec audiences, not just researchers

## What I'd do differently

- Add a think-aloud component to capture in-the-moment confusion — not just post-task reflection
- Test a fourth hybrid design combining Design 2 comprehension with Design 3 perceived clarity before recommending A/B

UX Researcher · Mixed Methods · Research Program Lead

# Bobbi Martin

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*13+ years of UX research, design, and development experience.  
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