WHAT IS CHOICE OVERLOAD?
When given many options to choose from, people often find it harder to make a decision, are less satisfied with their choice and more likely to regret it, compared to when there are fewer options.

Advances in technology mean that we are presented with more choice than ever…

HOW TO STOP CHOICE OVERLOAD

1. **Partition and sort**
   - People want choice. Providing options, but guiding choice, preserves autonomy while helping people to navigate their decision making. To do this, partition the options into two sets, one with the most attractive options and a second with those remaining. Then sort the options in each set according to your audience’s preferences.

2. **Consider your audience’s expertise**
   - Satisfaction with a choice depends in part on how much knowledge the person thinks they have about the topic in question. Paradoxically, people who believe they have greater knowledge prefer fewer options, whereas people who believe they have less knowledge prefer more. This is because larger sets contain more information, which is excessive to knowledgeable people, but helpful to less knowledgeable people.

3. **Practice gratitude**
   - When we are given many options, we tend to mull over what could have been if we’d chosen differently. This can stop us from appreciating the good that comes from the decision we have made. Taking the time to reflect on the good that comes from our decisions can help us to feel more satisfied with our choices.

4. **Create choice closure**
   - Use physical acts of closure to signal that your decision is complete and shouldn’t be revisited. Actively remove rejected options from sight, e.g. close a menu after deciding what to eat. Such physical acts stop us from comparing our chosen option with others that could have been.

If you’re creating choice for others…

There are lots of cognitive biases that influence people’s behaviour in predictable ways. We design digital experiences that work with these biases, rather than against them, to change people’s behaviour for the better. Learn more at Bestatdigital.com

Best at Digital's Behavioural Insight Tips

**CHOICE OVERLOAD**

The feeling of being overwhelmed or paralysed when given a large number of options to choose from…

Choice overload can make us procrastinate over important decisions, like deciding which retirement option to select… and it can lead us to be dissatisfied and wonder what might have been.

BAD BITS #4

If you’re a chooser…

1. **Partition and sort**
2. **Consider your audience’s expertise**
3. **Practice gratitude**
4. **Create choice closure**

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