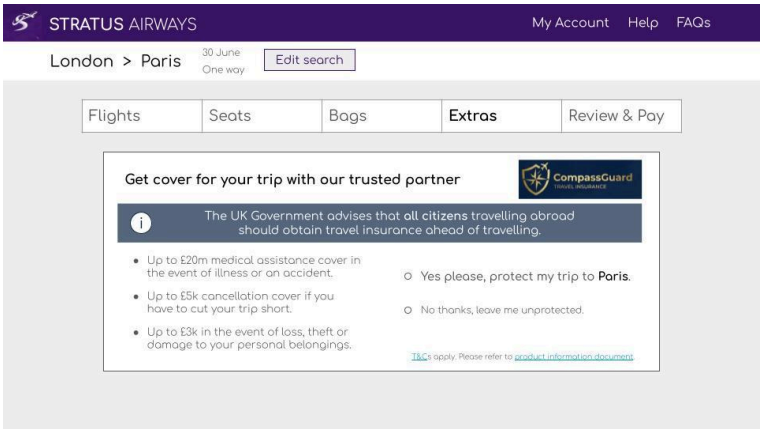
Picking a flight | **Choosing add-ons** | Check-out

3.5 Framing & sensory manipulation

'The choice architect decides how any decision-related information is described or presented to a consumer.'

'The choice architect employs visual, aural, and tactile features to steer consumers towards certain options.'



Typical design

In this example, the airline uses framing & sensory manipulation in an attempt to sell an insurance add-on. It uses multiple techniques (e.g. personalisation and confirmshaming) to persuade customers.[18]

Framing & sensory manipulation is used frequently in combination with other practices.

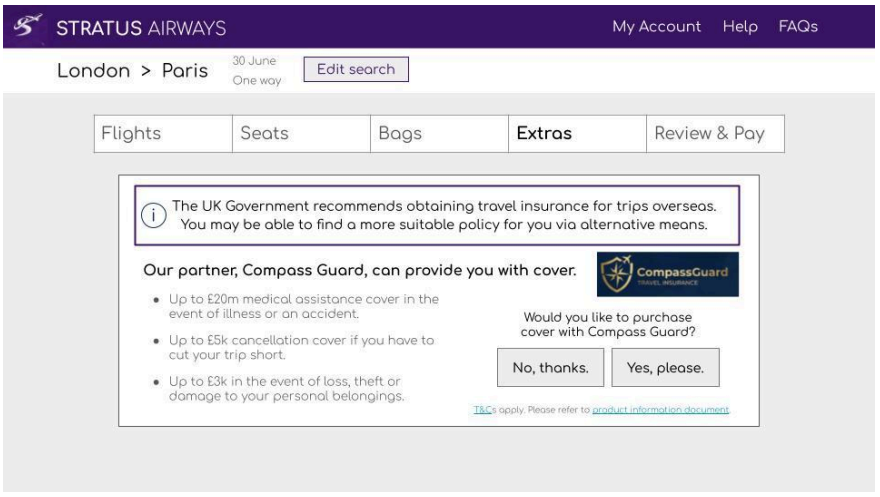
Consumer attitudes towards framing & sensory manipulation:	
Top responses	• Indifferent (31%) • Annoying (22%) • Manipulative (22%) • Helpful (21%)
Overall sentiment	Positive: 28% Negative: 38%

Consumer choice can be impacted by both the literal presentation of information and choices on a website or app, as well as the relative framing of them. These techniques can make it more difficult for consumers to act in line with their actual preferences.[19]

If consumers cannot freely choose the options that suit them, they risk overpaying or purchasing unnecessary items. Ultimately, this can undermine effective competition in the market.

Improved design

Our version focuses on presenting information in a neutral way, enabling consumers to make decisions that align with their own preferences.



[18] See Which? (2026) *Dark Patterns 2026* for a fuller explanation of these techniques.
[19] Luguri & Strahilevitz (2021) *Shining a Light on Dark Patterns*.