



BASICS OF USER RESEARCH



PRIMARY VS SECONDARY RESEARCH

- ✗ Primary Research: first-hand data collection from your target users.
Also referred to as *field research*
- ✗ Secondary Research: collection of data from pre-existing research materials. Also referred to as *Desk Research*



SOURCES OF DATA

PRIMARY

- Surveys
- Interviews
- Focus Group Discussions
- Observation

SECONDARY

- Offline: books, documents
- Online: articles, journals, websites, reports



ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES OF PRIMARY RESEARCH

ADVANTAGES

- Targeted : research is specific to the current question and target market; updated and relevant data
- Complete control on all factors; increasing relevance and validity
- Ownership of the data

DISADVANTAGES

- Cost involved
- Time needed: planning, conducting, analysis of the data
- Might lead to knowledge repetition if Secondary research hasn't been done



ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES OF SECONDARY RESEARCH

ADVANTAGES

- Can be done with limited time and resources
- Reduces knowledge repetition
- Gain access to a large amount of data without having to invest too much

DISADVANTAGES

- Information gathered may be outdated
- Research done in the past may not fit exactly with your current needs
- Might be difficult to ascertain the validity of the data



QUALITATIVE VS QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

- ✗ Quantitative research: generates data about the behavior or attitudes of a user indirectly, through a measurement or an instrument eg analytics tool. Uses numerical data.
- ✗ Qualitative research : generate data about behaviors or attitudes based on observing users directly eg field research. Uses audio, video, text, picture types of data.



QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

- Interviews
- Focus Group Discussions
- Contextual Observation
- Usability test studies
- Card sorting
- Diary studies



QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

- Email surveys
- A/B testing
- Click stream analysis
- Eye Tracking
- First-click testing
- Analytics



ATTITUDINAL VS BEHAVIOURAL RESEARCH METHODS

- ✗ Attitudinal: to understand or measure people's stated beliefs, what they "say"
- ✗ Behavioural: to measure people's actions, what they "do"

QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY RESEARCH METHODS ACROSS THE LANDSCAPE

BEHAVIORAL

WHAT PEOPLE DO

WHY &
HOW TO FIX

HOW MANY &
HOW MUCH

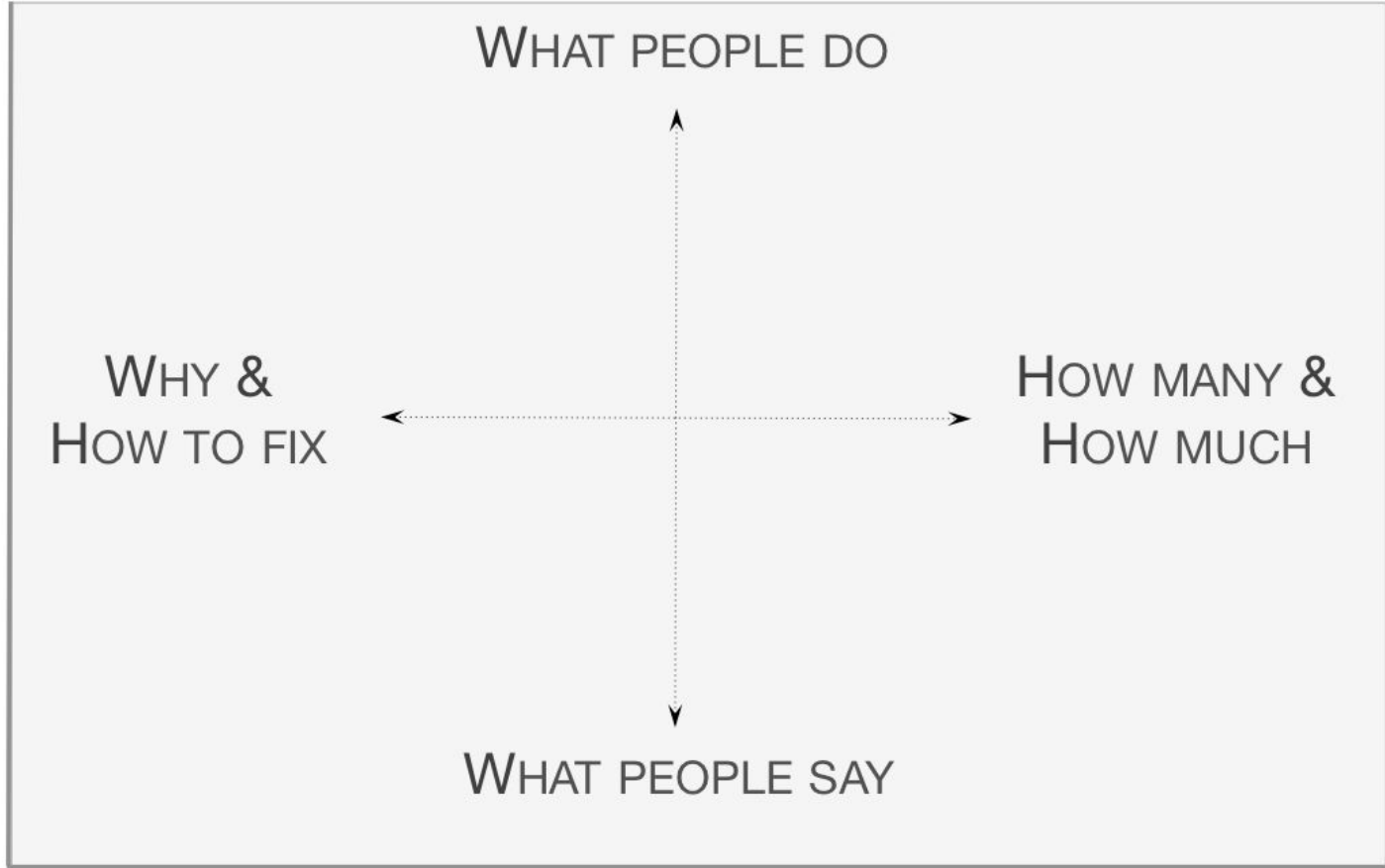
ATTITUDINAL

WHAT PEOPLE SAY

QUALITATIVE (DIRECT)

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QUANTITATIVE (INDIRECT)





BASICS OF RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS



- ✗ Your research participants must represent your target group
- ✗ How easy or how hard it is to recruit participants is based on your criteria



RECRUITING A SAMPLE OF USERS

- ✗ Must possess characteristics of the eventual consumers/users of the product
- ✗ When dealing with multiple user groups, do research with each group separately
- ✗ Some companies use recruiting firms. But even then, they need to have knowledge of the target users and their context



WHOM SHOULD YOU RECRUIT?

- ✗ There is a potential bias when research is done with employees of the business – pressure to be positive
- ✗ Deformation professionnelle – so many testers from one profession come into contact with an item they must judge



RECRUITMENT CRITERIA

- ✗ For general apps, you will generalise the criteria but in the long run may need to narrow down the scope
- ✗ Recruit participants who represent the primary target group.
- ✗ Think through the necessity of adding certain criteria that may make it difficult to recruit users



RECRUITMENT CRITERIA

- ✗ If you have a broad user group, you could recruit both 'mainstream' and 'extreme' users, this will give you confidence of inclusion of the entire target group
- ✗ Think of the minimum criteria eg age, geographical location, tech used, gender
- ✗ You will need to screen participants before involving them in the research



HOW TO RECRUIT

- ✗ Use a recruitment agency – it may be costly
- ✗ Personal networks
- ✗ Use social media ads
- ✗ Interest groups, internet groups



THE COST OF RECRUITMENT

- ✗ Make the location and time convenient for the participants
- ✗ Reward : payment, gifts,
- ✗ Expenses: food, transport
- ✗ Raffle to win prizes



BEST PRACTICES FOR QUANT USER RESEARCH

- ✗ collect objective measurements that are unbiased by the researcher's hypotheses, presence, and personality.
- ✗ Recruit a large number of participants



BEST PRACTICES FOR QUAL USER RESEARCH

- ✗ Researchers are co-creators of the results, it is not completely objective or reproducible
- ✗ Results depend on follow up questions
- ✗ Depends on subjective interpretation



VALUE OF QUAL RESEARCH

- ✗ Qualitative methods are good when you don't have a lot of information about the topic you want to research, because they allow you to be explorative.
- ✗ Qualitative methods can give you an in-depth understanding of something in ways that are impossible to reduce to numbers.
- ✗ Qualitative research methods do have the advantage in that they often require less time and fewer resources than quantitative research



VALUE OF QUAL RESEARCH

Three ways in which qualitative research can strive for objectivity:

- ✗ Through freedom from bias
- ✗ Through intersubjective knowledge
- ✗ Through being adequate to the object investigated