



USABILITY TESTING



WHY USABILITY TESTING?

- ✗ The number one technique for determining how usable your design is.
- ✗ ISO – International Standard Organization
- ✗ One of the most common user centered design techniques used
- ✗ Helps you connect with users
- ✗ To see if a design meets our users expectations



WHY USABILITY TESTING?

- ✗ It's better than asking users for their opinion, they actually get to play with your design
- ✗ Confirm that the design matches business decisions
- ✗ Does the design work from a technical standpoint?



TYPES OF USABILITY TESTING

- ✗ Formal testing, also known as Lab Testing
- ✗ More high fidelity designs
- ✗ More mature design feedback
- ✗ Informal or 'on-the-fly' testing
- ✗ More low fidelity designs
- ✗ Paper prototyping also known as 'Wizard of Oz' testing or 'Smoke and Mirrors' testing
- ✗ Very early design feedback



STEPS TO CONDUCTING USABILITY TESTING

1. Create a Plan
 - Scope of what you're testing
 - Detailed user tasks – the problems you're giving your users to solve
2. Conduct the test
 - Observe the issues
3. Analyse the Results
 - What did you see? What did you learn?
4. Create a test report – might include video footage, screenshots, errors observed



WHAT ARE THE OBSERVATIONS?

- ✕ Quant statistics
 - Time on Task
 - Success or Failure Rate
 - Clicks to task completion

- ✕ Qual statistics
 - Stress response
 - Changes in body language
 - Subjective Satisfaction
 - Perceived effort or difficulty



THINGS TO NOTE ABOUT USABILITY TESTING

- ✗ It's not just for you to improve your design but also as a tool for influencing your team
- ✗ Metrics help the design debate on facts rather than opinions
- ✗ 'Probability thinking' rather than 'possibility thinking'
- ✗ Observing what users do vs what they say



THINGS TO NOTE ABOUT USABILITY TESTING

- ✗ Think aloud helps you as the researcher figure out the user's 'mental model'
- ✗ Observation means following the user not leading the user
- ✗ Don't put too much emphasis on measuring which makes the user feel like they are working for you



PLANNING A USABILITY TESTING

- ✗ Context is key to figuring out the number of users
- ✗ Formative testing : 5–7 users per segment, Statistical testing: 15 – 20 users which can go up to 50–100 users
- ✗ Write down your business and user objectives so that you're clear on what you want to test
- ✗ Should be around 60 – 90 minutes and have about 10 –15 tasks



PLANNING A USABILITY TESTING

- ✗ Test scenarios to be mapped to the goals
- ✗ Add in the end states for each scenario, what you are looking out for
- ✗ Assets needed : low-fi or high-fi prototypes,
- ✗ Focus on the most important segments
- ✗ Easy to difficult tasks – orientation to



PLANNING A USABILITY TESTING

- ✗ Tasks may have sub tasks that can be included
- ✗ It should not be obvious to the users what you're testing, try not to include actual words or terms from the app/website on the test scenarios
- ✗ Your ears are open your mouth is closed for most of the time



RUNNING A USABILITY TESTING

- ✗ Always run a pilot test
- ✗ Pre-test: can get demographic or psychographic information
- ✗ Post test: get further information through interview eg subjective satisfaction
- ✗ Can capture the information on video, audio and note taking. Can use spreadsheets for comparison



RUNNING A USABILITY TESTING

- ✗ Use a monotone tonality with users
- ✗ Ask a reverse question instead of answering if your user got it “right”
- ✗ Let them know you’re listening
- ✗ Let users struggle, don’t over moderate
- ✗ Be gracious and ensure the users are comfortable



REPORTING RESULTS OF A USABILITY TESTING

X Usability attitude : User Advocacy

Instead of our design <<<< user's goals

Features and ideas <<<< Validating tasks

Engineering and marketing team wants <<<< User's Needs

Personal opinions <<< Behaviour observed

X Prioritize findings: stay focused on business objectives or technological constraints



REPORTING RESULTS OF A USABILITY TESTING

- ✗ Keep the report brief – 10 – 15 pages for your stakeholder presentation
- ✗ Best practice is to use Powerpoint or slides
- ✗ Include positive findings, avoid harsh words or tones, avoid negativity bias
- ✗ Include verbatim quotes
- ✗ Keep descriptions relevant

THE POLITICS OF USABILITY

1. **Build Alliances**
2. **Avoid confrontations**
3. **Pick your battles**
4. **Position yourself as an ally**
5. **Build trust by being completely open**
6. **Document and sell successes to management**

Source: Ralph Molich, 2000



What the user described



What marketing heard



What went into the requirements



What got designed



What development built



What the user actually wanted



“To learn something new requires interviewing, not just chatting. Poor interviews produce inaccurate information that can take your business in the wrong direction. Interviewing is a skill that at times can be fundamentally different than what you do normally in conversation. Great interviewers leverage their natural style of interacting with people but make deliberate, specific choices about what to say, when to say it, how to say it, and when to say nothing. Doing this well is hard and takes years of practice.”

—Steve Portigal, author of “Interviewing Users”