

1.



Activity introduction

This activity will help you explore new ideas in your design by analyzing competing products. As you continue with the early stages of design planning, it's important to keep researching to develop new insights. Part of this research is conducting a competitive audit. A competitive audit is an overview of your competitors' strengths and weaknesses. Understanding products on the market that are similar to yours can help guide your design decisions in a different direction. This is an important tool that can give you some clues about what has and hasn't been working for users.

You learned about the basics of competitive audits earlier in the certificate program, so you should already have a pretty good idea of why they're so important for UX designers. If you haven't taken

[Course 2: Start the UX Design Process: Empathize, Define, and Ideate](#) [↗] yet, take some time to review these materials on [competitive audits](#) [↗].

After completing this activity, you'll have the opportunity to compare your audit to an exemplar of a completed competitive audit to check your work. The exemplar will be provided in the following course activity.

Points to consider for a competitive audit

There's lots of information you can get from a competitive audit, but all the information may not be useful for your design planning. It's important to have a targeted approach and outline your goals for the research ahead of time. Here are five basic criteria to consider:

- . Identify your competitors.
- . Understand how your competitors position themselves in the market. For example, are your competitors targeting users in different locations?
- . Review the products that your competitors offer.
- . Examine what your competition does well and what they could do better.
- . Consider how your competitors talk about themselves.

Remember to include a combination of direct and indirect competitors in your research. Direct competitors have offerings that are similar to your product and focus on the same audience. Indirect competitors have a similar set of offerings but focus on a different audience, or have a different set of offerings and focus on the same audience. Gathering info from *both* types of competitors will help you get a better understanding of what's out there. You'll need to include three to six competitors in your competitive audit.



Step-by-step instructions

To conduct an effective competitive audit for your portfolio project, follow the instructions below:

Step 1: Access the template

To use the template for this course item, click the link below and select "Use Template."

Link to template: [competitive audit comparison template](#) [↗].

OR

If you don't have a Google account, you can download the template directly from the attachment below.

Step 2: Outline your competitive audit goals

Before you move into the details of your competitive audit, make sure to define your audit goal. Add this goal to the top of your spreadsheet in row 1.

As a reminder, using consistent language for rating competitor products can create more uniform feedback and help you “grade” competitors. You can grade competitors on a scale of:

Needs work: The app is not usable, and users aren’t getting what they need from this aspect of the app.

Okay: This aspect has some issues, but with some work, it could meet user needs.

Good: This aspect works well, but doesn’t always provide users with the necessary information easily.

Outstanding: This aspect feels consistent, and it meets or exceeds the user’s needs.

Step 3: Add your competitors to the template

You should include a mix of three to six direct and indirect competitors in your list. You can identify competitors by searching for products like yours online. Put your competitors’ names in the Enter competitor cells in column A, located on the left side of your table.

Then, to the right of the competitor’s name, record if that competitor is direct or indirect.

As a reminder:

Direct competitors have offerings that are similar to your product and focus on the same audience. Essentially, you’re both trying to solve the same problem.

Indirect competitors either have a similar set of offerings, but focus on a different audience or have a different set of offerings and focus on the same audience.

Including both direct and indirect competitors in your audit gives a better picture of the full competitive landscape. Additional general information like location, product offering, price, website, business size, target audience, and unique value proposition is listed in columns C through I.

Step 4: Add research findings to the template

The features to compare are listed across row 4 of the template. We have pre-filled the spreadsheet with common features compared in competitive audits. Feel free to add or remove features according to your competitive audit goal. Review each competitor’s website and app and insert your findings in the spreadsheet. Remember to include details like what works well, what could be improved, and whether your competitor meets the needs of their target audience.

It’s also helpful to take screenshots and link to them in the spreadsheet. These will be important to have for presenting your findings later on.

Step 5: Analyze your findings

Try to notice trends and themes.

Ask yourself: What are the similarities and differences between you and your competitors? Is there a feature that your competitors all approach in the same way? Is there a competitor that is doing something completely unique compared to the others? It’s a good idea to make note of the findings. You will use this information in your report.


Step 6: Summarize your findings in a report

After you analyze the information, it’s a good idea to summarize this valuable information in a report. The report can be generated in the form of a document, slides, a chart, or even a few graphics. If you’d like to use the document template for this course item, click the link below and select “Use Template.”

Link to template: [competitive audit report template](#)[↗].

OR

If you don’t have a Google account, you can download the template directly from the attachment below.

 [Google UX Design Certificate - Competitive Audit Report \[Template\]](#)
[DOCX File](#)

In this report you’ll:

Identify your key competitors.

Review the products that your competitors offer.

Understand how your competitors position themselves in the market.

Examine what your competition does well and what they could do better.

Consider how your competitors describe themselves.

Examine strengths and weaknesses your competitors have.

Highlight gaps in your competitors' products.

Identify opportunities for your product to stand out.