

Optimizing User Engagement on Paperpal Web

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Background

Paperpal is an AI driven academic writing tool that identifies language errors and provides instant, in-depth suggestions to help you polish your manuscript.

As a new user, the journey begins with creating an account on paperpal.com. The goal is to convince this user, the value of using Paperpal, and the capabilities of the platform to become a premium member.

The overall objective is to optimize the user's engagement with Paperpal, ensuring they experience its full potential and are compelled to upgrade to a premium membership.

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User Research Plan

To gain insights into the target audience's needs, pain points, and preferences when using Paperpal for writing academic papers, I propose to triangulate and use a mixed-methods approach:



User Research Plan: Methods

More details on the methods proposed

Usability Testing

Conduct usability tests on the current version of Paperpal to identify areas of friction and opportunities for improvement. This can provide direct feedback on the user experience.

Analytics

Analyzing usage data from the Paperpal app for metrics like session duration, error rate, and feature usage to understand how users are currently interacting with the application.

User Interviews

Conduct 1:1 interviews with a diverse group of current users to understand their experiences, motivations, and frustrations to provide qualitative data on their needs and pain points.

Support Data & Reviews

Analyze ratings and reviews of Paperpal on various platforms. This can provide insights into what users like about the tool, what they dislike, and what features they wish it had.

Surveys

Conduct online surveys with a larger user base to gather quantitative data on user preferences and behaviors. This can help validate insights from the interviews and identify broader trends.

Competitor Analysis

Analyze competing apps to understand their strengths and weaknesses to provide insights into what features / design elements could make Paperpal more competitive.

User Personas

Based on the insights gathered from the research, create user personas that reflect the target audience's behaviors, surroundings, characteristics, and needs. These personas will serve as a reference point for design decisions and help ensure that Paperpal meets the needs of its users.



For example, a persona might be a "Graduate Student" who writes academic papers and needs a reliable tool to help with editing and formatting.

Another could be a "Research Professor" who is looking for an efficient way to polish their work before publication.



Engagement Optimization Strategy

The strategy for engaging the user can be centered around demonstrating the value of Paperpal and its Word plugin. Some tactics and hypotheses we can explore:

Personalized Onboarding

Create a personalized onboarding experience based on their persona, to introduce key features of Paperpal. The user chooses his persona (their background) while signing up and the interface shows them around in ways conformant to their needs.

Gamification and Easter Eggs

Progressively unlock more features and win “uses” at various points in the user journey. For example, a daily check-in could earn the users a few free uses. Introduce “streaks” that unlocks more benefits and also motivate users.

Highlight Benefits of Prime

Highlight the benefits of upgrading to Paperpal Prime at key touchpoints in the user journey. This could be when the user has successfully used a feature and the upgrade could unlock more benefits.

Regular Engagement

Keep the user engaged with regular updates, tips, and personalized suggestions based on their usage patterns. This can be in-app notifications or email updates.

Improve the value I get by sending me newsletters, blog updates, case studies, productivity improvements, best practices. Prioritize this over offers and sales emails.

Prompt to Download Plugin

Once the user has engaged with the web app and seen the benefits, prompt them to download the Word plugin.

Also consider providing additional free “uses” if the user downloads the Word plugin.

Defer Sign-up

Defer sign up to a later point and encourage users to use Paperpal until they need to save their work. Let the users play with the interface to understand its capabilities. Ofcourse, to limit abusing the system, we should impose restrictions and smart limits.

User Experience and Interaction Design

User Experience and Interface Design Improvements

Focus writing mode

Focus mode emphasizes the active sentence or paragraph, enabling the user to concentrate on the task at hand.

Focus mode helps users focus on writing and enables them to stay in “flow” state, thereby increasing their productivity.

Interface Robustness

Prevent jumps / jerkiness while animating multiple items (accordion UI pattern) in the sidebar. This can be distracting for the users and would cause eye strain.

This will also help users perceive the UI as robust.

Dark Mode

Consider providing a dark mode UI. Dark mode enhances visual ergonomics by reducing eye strain. This is helpful for users who are working at night and have dark mode set up as their preference.

An added benefit is that dark mode uses lesser power on modern OLED based displays.

Sidebar improvements

Consider the option of adjusting the sidebar width to display a more readable format of the content. This would also help the user see more of the heading and the paragraph / sentence they’re on.

Icon Labels

Nuanced (uncommon) icons need labels and should only be used to enhance, especially for new users.

Paperpal interface uses a few of them on the sidebar and these should be labelled, especially for new users.

Inline Editing Capabilities

Consider inline editing and inline spell-checks and the capability to switch between inline edits and sidebar. Narrow sidebar on the extreme right forces the user to move his gaze back and forth between the right sidebar and the writing section.

User Experience and Interaction Design

User Experience and Interface Design Improvements

Translation Interaction Design

Re-consider the UX for translation. Explore better ways than letting the user copy paste. This could be a form of inline text replacement. Brainstorm ideas.

Context based synonyms

Suggest better synonyms based on context without selecting and highlighting. On MS word plugin, this interaction opens up other visual elements which can be distracting.

Sample Text Button

Create a personalized onboarding experience based on their persona, to introduce key features of Paperpal. The user chooses his persona (their background) while signing up and the interface shows them around in ways conformant to their needs.

One Click Clear

One-click replace / clear for already written content is scary for most users, even though they can undo out of it.

Other UI/UX ideas to explore

- IA Writer
- Markdown support
- Scrivener / Scrapple
- Second brain note-taking
- AI-based graphs
- Obsidian / knowledge graph / “give me ideas on what to write next”

Usability Testing: Test plan

Objective

Identify user pain points

Method

Moderated usability testing

1 Task Design

Tasks which the user will perform:

- Create an account
- Edit a manuscript for 1-2 pages
- Download word plugin
- Getting nudged for prime
- Upgrading to prime

2 User Recruitment

A diverse group of participants that represent our target users, including:

- Students
- Academic professionals
- Researchers

3 Metrics & KPIs

Observe participants as they perform the tasks and collect data on metrics:

- Task completion rate
- Error rates, undo rates
- Time on task, edits / minute
- User satisfaction (post test interview)

4 Analysis & Reporting:

Analyze the data to identify patterns and trends.

Create a report that presents the findings and provides recommendations for design improvements.

Outcome

Compare results with the previous usability test and create report

KPIs & Success Metrics

User Engagement

- 1. User Activity Over Time
- 2. Session Time
- 3. Save Delta Size
- 4. Edits Per Minute
- 5. Usage Per Feature

Conversion Rate

- 1. Prime Subscription
- 2. Word Plugin Downloads
- 3. Abandonment After Free Use

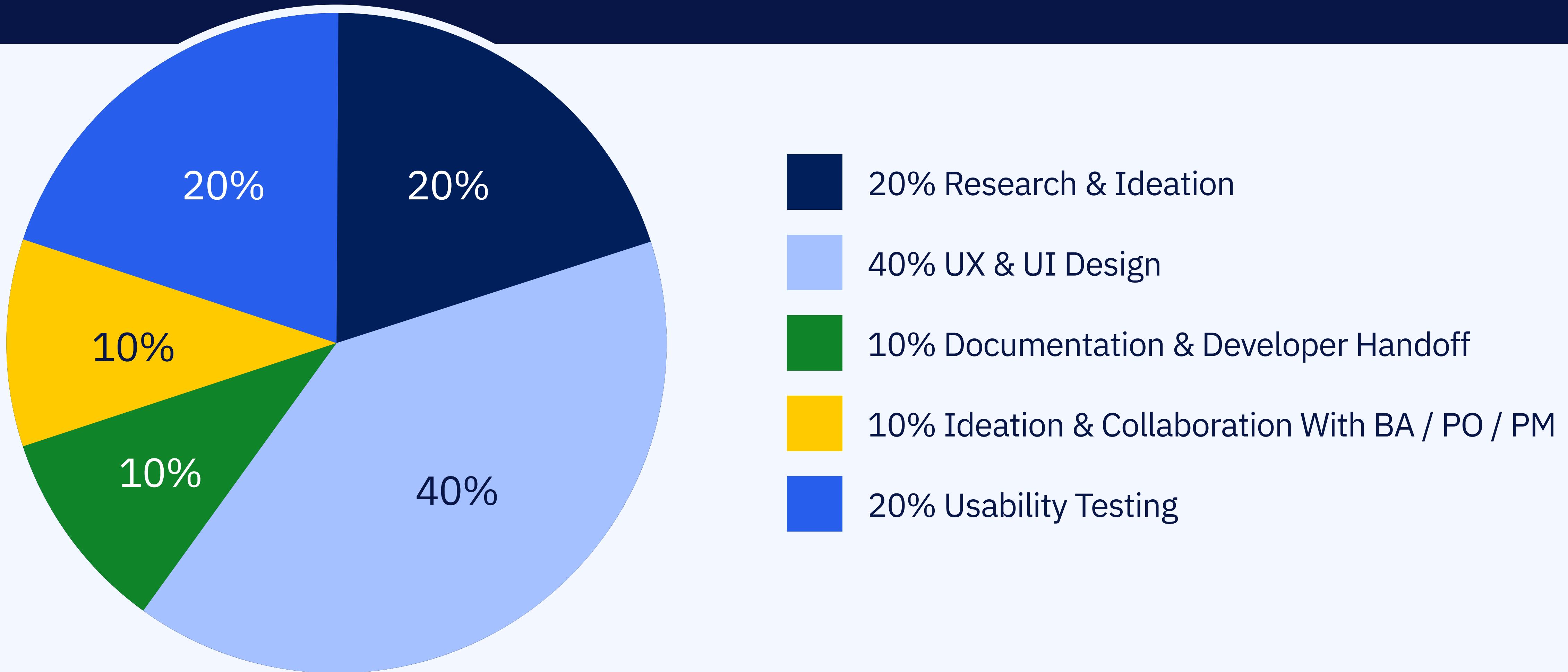
Satisfaction

- 1. Surveys
- 2. Feedback
- 3. Ratings / Reviews

Outcome

Create report with these findings. Implement and iterate

Budget Allocation & Planning



Budget Allocation & Planning

UX Research & Personas	2 Weeks
User Recruitment And Usability Testing	2 Weeks
Competitor Analysis + Report	2 Weeks
UI/UX	2-3 Weeks
Implementation (+Support FEs) (Gap)	—
Prototyping & Testing + Iterations	Ongoing

Risk Assessment & Contingency Plan

Identification of potential risks & how to mitigate them

Risk	Technical limitations	Tight timelines	Stakeholder alignment
Risk Assessment	<p>Technical constraints that prevent the implementation of design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work closely with the development team during the design phase to ensure feasibility• Have front-end engineering knowledge and background	<p>Scope creep, unforeseen issues and market updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detailed, granular project plan with buffer time for unexpected delays• Tighten scope and communicate scope changes that could potentially affect timelines	<p>Disagreements among stakeholders about the design direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involve stakeholders early in the design process and maintain open communication throughout the project.• Conduct research and present findings to support convictions and hypotheses.
Contingency Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore alternative solutions that achieve the same user goals• Fail fast and have multiple solutions and hypotheses ready	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-assess priorities and focus on delivering most critical features first• Communicate changes in timeline to all stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find compromise between stakeholders by facilitating discussions and workshops• Conduct additional user research to inform the decision

Summary

Through a comprehensive analysis of Paperpal's user experience, I've identified key areas for improvement. My design strategy aims at enhancing user engagement and increasing conversion rates.

Impact

I anticipate that the proposed UX/UI improvements will significantly enhance the user experience, leading to increased usage of the Word plugin and a higher conversion rate to Paperpal Prime.

Thank You!

please reach out me at rahulmax@gmail.com for any feedback or questions.

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