

Dynamic Profile Cards:

Usability Test Preparatory Document

Introduction

Profile Cards are a new UI feature for Lithium-powered communities that will allow community managers and end-users to easily preview the expertise, reputation, and contribution levels of others, while empowering all members to personalize their visual identity on the community. Unlike our competitors, Lithium Profile Cards will encompass not only a hovercard design for desktop sites, but also a responsive solution for touchscreen and mobile devices.

Situation Analysis

On July 15th - 16th, we will be conducting usability tests for Profile Cards with San Francisco Lithium employees in departments outside of Product and Development. Participants will be asked to complete several tasks with digital prototypes simulating the proposed UX of Profile Cards on Lithium-powered communities (both desktop and responsive implementations), as well as the customization flow.

Usability Test Goals

1. Assess whether Profile Cards add value to the user's experience on a community, rather than disrupting it.
2. Determine which pieces of information are most (and least) important to users when they are evaluating other community members' Profile Cards.
3. Establish whether or not users would value this feature on mobile. Assess whether the user benefits of a responsive solution outweigh the downsides.
4. Gauge whether customization is a user expectation, and whether users would care to go through the steps required to customize.

5. Compare those components users would choose to display on their own Profile Card, versus those the user would always expect to see on other people's Profile Cards, versus those the user imagines would be left to the discretion of the community manager.

Hypotheses to Test

1. Profile Cards add value to the user's experience on a community, rather than disrupting the experience or causing frustration.
2. Users appreciate the Klout data available to be displayed on Profile Cards (Klout Score, Topics, Connected Networks) and would be willing to share their own.
3. Users want enough customizability to be able to curate their own visual identity and are willing to go through the steps to customize.
4. Too much customizability reduces users' trust that other people are giving an accurate impression of their expertise and reputation.
5. Users want this feature represented no matter how they are accessing the community—desktop, tablets, or smartphones.
6. Users prefer an inline accordion as a responsive solution, rather than a modal window or simple click-through to the full profile.

Test Tasks

1. Intro to Profile Cards: Skype Community
2. User Assessment: Redfin Community
3. Customization Flow
4. Responsive Implementation

Participants

The candidate pool of internal Lithium test users has been contacted via email, and a Confluence page has been established for sign-ups: <http://confluence.dev.lithium.com/x/XapCAw>. The precise schedule for tests will proceed from the sign-ups received.

Assets

The four digital prototypes will be uploaded to Box and made accessible to all moderators.

User Stories (Reference)

1. April is a thirty-year-old professional working at a non-profit in Boston. She has recently started using Skype to speak with stakeholders and organize her contacts. After calling a potential investor earlier today, she wants to create a list for all such contacts, but she doesn't know how. Using Google, she finds a thread on Skype Community about contact lists with an accepted solution. The solution seems reasonable, but before going through the steps she wants to know whether the author is reliable. She hovers over that user's avatar, expecting to get more information, but nothing happens. Frustrated, she clicks through to the user's full profile and finds the user only just joined the community and has no kudos yet. Since she doesn't know if she can trust this user, April clicks the back button twice to restart her Google search for help.
2. Blake is a middle-aged Community Manager for PlayStation Community. He noticed a recent surge in new member registrations after a new PlayStation game, Batman: Arkham Knight, was released. Looking over the forum, he sees that a lot of the recent posts are from the community's newest members. Since he's unfamiliar with these users, he'd like a quick way to get to know them without needing to click to each individual profile and then hit the back button. He's especially excited about Klout and Integrated Profiles, and he'd like to see what range of Klout Scores and Topics are represented in the community. Again, it's too time consuming to explore each member's Klout profile separately, so he wishes he had a quicker way to preview this information en masse. Lastly, he sees spam on the community and wants to block those users' IP addresses. He wishes there were a quicker way to grab IP addresses from the forum page.
3. Callie is a twenty-something young woman from Los Angeles and a longtime member of Sephora's Beauty Talk Community. Over the years, she has earned over 8,000 "hearts" (kudos), achieved the rank of "Hall of Famer," and become one of the last remaining early members of the community. She is also very active on Twitter and Facebook, and has a Klout Score of 75. Given the time and energy she has spent building up her credibility on Beauty Talk and social media channels, she would like a way for other Sephora enthusiasts to immediately be able to recognize her expertise and reputation when they see her posts.

While she acknowledges that people can click to view her full profile, she doesn't know if anyone actually does. Moreover, she wants to be able to curate her visual identity on the community beyond her avatar and username.