
UX Research - Usability Testing



UX Process



Usability vs User Testing

User testing

Do users need my app?



Usability testing

Can users use my app?



Usability Testing

In a usability-testing session, a researcher (called a “facilitator” or a “moderator”) asks a participant to perform tasks, usually using one or more specific user interfaces. While the participant completes each task, the researcher observes the participant’s behavior and listens for feedback.



Elements of Usability testing

There are many different types of usability testing, but the core elements in most usability tests are **the facilitator, the tasks, and the participant**.

Core Elements of Usability Testing



Facilitator

Guides the participant through the test process



Tasks

Realistic activities that the participant might actually perform in real life



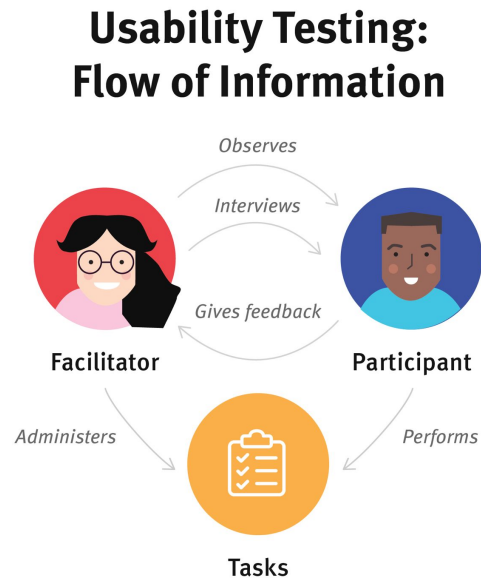
Participant

Realistic user of the product or service being studied

NNGROUP.COM NN/g

Flow of Usability testing

There are many different types of usability testing, but the core elements in most usability tests are **the facilitator, the tasks, and the participant**.



Facilitator

The facilitator guides the participant through the test process. She gives instructions, answers the participant's questions, and asks followup questions.

The facilitator works to ensure that the test results in high-quality, valid data, without accidentally influencing the participant's behavior. Achieving this balance is difficult and requires training.

(In one form of remote usability testing, called remote unmoderated testing, an application may perform some of the facilitator's roles.)

Usability Testing: Flow of Information



Tasks

The tasks in a usability test are realistic activities that the participant might perform in real life. They can be very specific or very open-ended, depending on the research questions and the type of usability testing.

Examples of tasks from real usability studies:

Your printer is showing “Error 5200”. How can you get rid of the error message?

You need to find tomorrow’s forecast, find it from the home page.

Usability Testing: Flow of Information

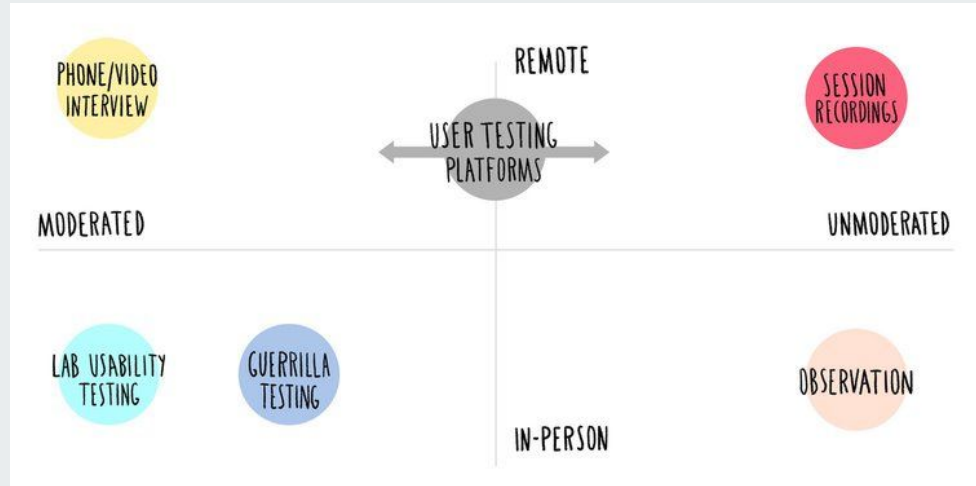


Participant

The participant should be a realistic user of the product or service being studied. That might mean that the user is already using the product or service in real life. Alternatively, in some cases, the participant might just have a similar background to the target user group, or might have the same needs, even if he isn't already a user of the product.



Planning - Format



Planning - Format

Lab usability testing



This type of usability research takes place **inside a specially built usability testing lab**. Test subjects complete tasks on computers/mobile devices while a trained moderator observes and asks questions. Typically, stakeholders also watch the proceedings and take notes behind a one-way mirror in the testing area.

A major benefit of lab usability testing is the control it provides: all sessions are run under the same standardized conditions, which makes it especially useful for comparison tests. However, these tests are expensive and usually based on a small population size (8-10 participants per research round) in a controlled environment, which is not necessarily reflective of your actual customer base and/or real-life use conditions.



Questions - Pre Test

Relating to Expertise:

How often do you shop online?

How confident are you with browsing, shopping, or other online shopping-related tasks?

Which device(s) do you usually use for online shopping?

Brand/Product Knowledge:

Have you used this site before? *This tells you about their familiarity with the brand and their knowledge of the site.*

Have you used a similar site before? *This tells you about their familiarity with competitors.*



Questions - Test

During the actual testing stage, your goal is to collect data that explains why users make certain choices while navigating the assigned tasks.

The test may be highly interactive, with the user talking through their thought process as they complete each step. Conversely, it could be silent, with users working independently and then answering questions after each task or section. Either way, questions like the ones below should help illuminate what the user is doing, and why:

- **I noticed you did _____. Can you tell me why?** Follow up on any interesting behavior you observe during the test to get a better idea of the thought process behind the user's actions.
- **Did you notice whether there was any other way to ____?** You are trying to determine why the user did one thing instead of another.
- **Which of these two approaches/options do you find best? Why?** This is useful if you're trying to determine the more appealing of multiple options.
- **Can you tell me what you think of ____?** By asking about specific aspects of the page (icons, menus, text), you will gather opinions on the design and functionality of the site and rework the confusing components.
- **How did you find the experience of using the website to complete this task?**
Ask this after every assigned task to learn how the user's experience and opinions evolve as they interact with your content:
- **What did you think of the layout of the content?**
- **What did you think of the checkout experience?**
- **What did you think of the on-page explanations?**



Questions - Post Test

After a usability test, you have one final chance to ask the user questions that haven't been covered elsewhere. This is the time to gather feedback about their impressions and opinions of your website and get a feel for the overall user experience.

Common questions during this phase include:

- **What was your overall impression of [x]?** Solicit feedback on the user's general opinion of your product. This is a broad question, so be prepared to dig deeper with the following question(s).
- **What was the best/worst thing about [x]?** Get more specific feedback about the features that make your product stand out.
- **How would you change [x]?** This open-ended question is a good way to gather constructive feedback and ideas for future iterations of your project.
- **How would you compare [x] to [competitor]?** This is an opportunity to see how different details of your website stack up against your competitors in the eyes of users.



Analyze the Data

- Organize the data
- Draw conclusions
- Compare data and findings to your objectives

User ID	Category	Task	Problem	Tag 1	Tag 2
1	Search	Find a red item	User unable to locate filter features	Filter	Confusion
1	Shopping Cart	Saving an item for later	"Save for Later" button did not work- simply removed item from cart	Broken element	
1	Checkout process	Entering payment details	Accidentally exited payment process by clicking on shipping options button	Icons	Confusion
2	Checkout Process	Entering payment details	User expressed disappointment that Paypal wasn't a payment option	Payment	Disappointment

References:

<https://www.nngroup.com/articles/usability-testing-101/>

<https://www.hotjar.com/usability-testing/>

