

Session #9: User Testing/Critiques



Choose your subjects

- Results are only as good as your testers
- Do not use friends, family or coworkers due to external limitations and delimitations
- Be on the look out for anything that might cloud judgment

Before Testing

- Users must be relaxed
- Instructions must be clear, brief and in layman's terms
- Do not use terms like “usability testing” or “market research”
- Release forms need to worded simply, without confusion

How to Begin

- Before testing, get the user familiar with the environment.
- Get initial feedback before interaction
- Note the users terms and phraseology
- Make sure they know they are not what is being tested.

Choosing Tasks

- Choose Critical Tasks to perform
- Check your ego at the door
- Ask the user to suggest tasks to test as this will add importance to the user and might change your perception as to what about the site or software the layman sees as important.
- Has it changed your priorities?

Wording Tasks

- Use scenarios instead of directions
- This will add a real life aspect
- For example, “find a telephone number” is more natural than “find the contact page”
- Use “purchase a large blue collared shirt” instead of “use the search function to buy a shirt”

One task at a time.

- Too many complicated tasks can intimidate and alter how a user approaches tasks. Given two tasks, the user may rush through the first, corrupting our data.
- External functions, like reset passwords must be presented to avoid delay or mix-ups

Your Behavior: Keep Quiet!!!

- After setting up the user, back away
- Better to be silent and out of site
- The same goes for a client who wants to watch the testing.

Post Test

- Time to gather as much info as possible
- Ask for suggestions, it's your last chance
- Ask the user what they remember

Some basic closing topics

- Fulfillment: Do users feel satisfied after interacting with the website?
- Usefulness: Does the user feel like he's obtained value from using the website?
- Enjoyment: Is the experience of being on the website fun and not burdensome?
- Positive Emotions: Do users feel happy, excited, pleased, etc. when they interact with the site?

Some useful tools



Summary

- We can also use Questionnaires and Interviews, but Observation is the best.
- As classmates review your prototypes, make sure you can read through false data as their opinions are obscured by the course material. Better to have a real test, but it's the best we can do at this point