Don’t Make Them Think

User observation testing to create easy-to-use sites

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Are **YOU** responsible for this?
Session Overview

• What is User Experience?
• Why User Observation?
• How Can I Execute User Observation Testing?
What’s Your First Impression

1. Find a partner.
2. Quickly take turns bringing up a site.
3. Get your partner’s first impression of the site.
4. Jot down a few notes.
What is Usability?

"[Usability refers to] the extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of user."

- ISO 9241-11
# Usability Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnographic User Research</th>
<th>Focus Groups</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heuristic Evaluations</td>
<td>Log File Analysis</td>
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<td>Surveys</td>
<td>Eye Tracking</td>
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<td>Card Sorting</td>
<td>User Observation</td>
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Q: Why User Observation?

A: Reliable Data

“To design an easy-to-use interface, pay attention to what users do, not what they say.

Self-reported claims are unreliable, as are user speculations about future behavior.”

- Jakob Nielsen’s Alertbox, Aug 5 2001
Q: Why User Observation?

A: Dispels Assumptions

**Don’t assume** that people think the way that you do.

- Grounding is a natural assumption that others have similar information needs, behaviors and preferences as you do.
- Grounding is **dangerous** for librarians. We think differently from our users!
What is User Observation?
User Observation Testing Process

- Consider your stakeholders
- Set your goals
- Decide which users to involve
- Choose a type of testing
- Define your testing tasks
- Recruit users to observe
- Moderate sessions
- Conduct analysis
- Make change!
Consider your Stakeholders

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Users</td>
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<tr>
<td>Testing types</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Analysis</td>
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<td>Change</td>
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• Who cares?
• What do they care about?
• Is there any appetite for change?
• What data would be most likely to secure buy-in?
Set Your Goals

- What do you want to prove, disprove or investigate?
- What site or part of a site is the focus?
- Base the “problem” on real user data
- Be open to the unexpected
Decide which Users to Involve

- Stakeholders
- Goals
- **Users**
- Testing types
- Tasks
- Recruitment
- Moderation
- Analysis
- Change
## Types of Testing

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- **Measure** or benchmark the usability of a product
- **Compare** the usability of two or more products
- **Diagnose** to uncover design issues
- **Live versus Remote?**
Live or Remote
Remote testing technologies

- WebEx
- GoToMeeting
- UserVue
- LiveLook
- Adobe Connect
- Silverback
- Many more!

Excerpted from Remote Usability Testing by Kyle Soucy, Intranet Benchmarking Forum, 2010
### Define Tasks

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- Tie tasks to goals
- User defined tasks
- Scripted scenarios
- 3-5 tasks for a 30 minute session
| Stakeholders |  |
| Goals |  |
| Users |  |
| Testing types |  |
| Tasks |  |
| **Recruitment** |  |
| Moderation |  |
| Analysis |  |
| Change |  |
## Moderate sessions

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<td>• Put users at ease</td>
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<td>• Let participant speak</td>
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<td>• Lead with grace</td>
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<td>• Ask unbiased questions</td>
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<td>• Assist only as a last resort</td>
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<td>• Take detailed notes</td>
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Exercise: Practice User Observation

1. Find the same partner you worked with earlier.

2. You will each have 10 minutes to practice user observation techniques.
   - Practice the whole thing
   OR
   - Pick the parts where you want the most practice
     • Read from script
     • Tasks
     • Redirection
     • Warm up questions & follow up questions

3. Raise your hand if you need help!
Analyze Your Data

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- **WAIT!** until testing is done
- **WAIT!** before making your recommendations

- **Quantitative**
  - Time to task completion
  - Level of difficulty

- **Quantitative**
  - Trend spotting
  - Classification analysis
## Recommendations for Change

- Partner with the right people
- Pick the low-hanging fruit
- Even small changes can have large returns
- How to sell it…
- Create a findings presentation (sometimes)

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Stakeholders
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Change
Value of Any User Observation Test

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Questions?

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