Tips and Tricks for Usability Studies

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Content

- Before you start
- Buy-in
- Techniques
  - Formal Usability Studies
  - Card Sort
  - Focus Groups
- General
- Useful Resources
Before You Start

- Why are you doing this and what do you want from it?
- What data do you need?
- How are you going to get the data?
- Whose support do you need?
- When are you going to do this? Is it reasonable? What conflicts may occur?
Buy-In

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Getting and Managing Buy-In

- Communication at all stages
- Remember your stakeholders
- Visit departments, newsletters, e-mail
- Involve others as possible
- *** Don’t let them forget what you are doing and why
Techniques

- Choose ones that will give you the data you want
- Know what will be accepted
- Beta-test – across all types of participants, record data and analyze (learn the trouble spots and how to organize the data)
Formal Usability Tests

- Recording/Tracking Software
- Moderator and Recorder? Volunteers?
- Know the pages, especially if testing other libraries’ pages
- To time or not to time
- Be gentle
Card Sort

- Multiple sets of cards
- Labels vs. “write on”
- Colors
- Multiple participants per session?
- Data analysis
- Site map
- Define terms or let them ask
Focus Groups

- Small groups OK
- Respond to general library issues
- Moderator and recorder or not?
- Let them spout
- Stay neutral
General

- Participants
- Food at all times
- Room atmosphere
- People atmosphere
- Volunteers and training
- Embrace the unexpected!
Useful Resources


Thanks for Listening!

Enjoy your usability projects!

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