

⇒ User Research

Why and when

WUP undertakes user research that informs the development of effective websites - at all stages from early concept testing through to established site redesign. This includes:

- User goal research – to understand user goals on a website
- Organisational research – to understand an organisation's aims and objectives
- Concept testing - to test new concepts and ideas
- Information architecture research

The appropriate research approach will depend on the question you're trying to answer but we offer:

- Face-to-face interviews
- Paired depth interviews (2 respondents)
- Focus groups
- Telephone research
- Self reporting journals
- Surveys and questionnaires – online and offline

Our approach

The approach we adopt to user research ensures the right research is undertaken to achieve client's aims combined with a process to produce agreed and actionable results.

Strategic

In order to recommend the appropriate research approach we look at your 'broader' strategic picture. What is the purpose of the research, what are you trying to achieve, how will outputs be used. With our extensive user research experience we see it as our role is to challenge client's views about their requirements, and research methodologies, to ensure all projects deliver useful outputs and provide value for money – we won't undertake a project if we disagree with the proposed approach.

Action Oriented Process

When the research methodology permits, a key element of our approach is to encourage all those in an organisation who can influence the implementation of the research to observe some of the research and participate in a discussion facilitated by WUP. During the sessions, observers are asked to record issues using cognitive mapping techniques for subsequent discussion, in order to capture their immediate reactions to respondent's feedback. Subsequently, a WUP consultant facilitates a discussion to identify the key issues. This discussion means that the client takes ownership of the research results, and develops a collective view of the issues that enables the identification of **actionable** results.

WUP consultants bring to these discussions our many years experience of strategic consulting in the private and public sectors. As the situation demands, we draw on this experience to ensure the discussions are guided by this knowledge.

How we do it

How projects are undertaken depends on the research objectives and methodologies but typically there are three elements:

- Project preparation
- Recruitment
- Conducting the research

Project preparation

We plan the research in consultation with the client so the client gets the 'right' solution - not an 'off the shelf' one. We agree with the client's project manager the key aims of the research, research methodologies, respondent profiles, research locations, timescales etc. We prepare a discussion guide or questionnaires for the research for approval by the client's project manager in advance of the research.

Recruitment

When required, we undertake our own recruitment - we do not use third parties. We believe this allows us to recruit more accurately to our client's specification, provide greater flexibility, and treat respondents in a decent and ethical way. We are experienced at recruiting respondents from a wide range of backgrounds and occupations, and with a range of experience, including respondents with visual, motor or cognitive impairment. All potential respondents undergo a detailed screening to ensure they match the respondent profile - a profile of the respondents is sent to the client project manager prior to the research session for approval. Respondents are paid a fee for their participation in the research: this ensures their participation and demonstrates appreciation of the value of their involvement.

Conducting the Research

How the research is conducted depends on the methodologies used, but typically includes:

- Preparing discussion guides or questionnaires
- Scheduling the research
- Undertaking the research
- Analysing the outputs

Outputs

The outputs of the research are dependent of the project but typically include:

- Reports
- Presentations
- DVDs of the research sessions

Client examples

WUP have undertaken a large amount of user research projects. Recent work includes:

Client	Project	Date
Orange	User research to understand users and their goals through usability testing two versions of mobile broadband web content with six testers.	April 2009
Age Concern	User research to understand users and their goals through online survey, web logs and usability testing as well as stakeholder interviews and a content review.	Feb 2008
Natural England	User research to understand user's perception of current site and user goals. This was carried out through the use of two focus groups.	Dec 2007
Avon & Somerset	User research to explore intranet users' needs from the intranet and validate the list of user goals obtained from an online survey and stakeholder interviews.	Nov 2007
Forestry Commission	User research to understand users and their goals as well as what site content is important to them. This was carried out through User and stakeholders interviews.	Oct 2007
Home Office (Respect)	Online user survey on 'Respect' & Together sites	August 2006
British Museum	Online user survey and depth interviews with 45 respondents to inform new site information architecture	August 2006

Fees

Most of our work is tailored to individual client's requirements and we quote an inclusive price for each piece of work. However, the following gives an illustration of typical costs:

- Unobserved focus group (6 participants) £4,950 (NB this fully inclusive price covers all WUP's fees, respondent recruitment and payment, observation studios, equipment hire, reports, DVDs and travel expenses etc.)
- Observed focus group/user research and facilitated debrief £5,450 (NB this fully inclusive price covers all WUP's fees, respondent recruitment and payment, observation studios, equipment hire, reports, DVDs and travel expenses etc.)
- Unobserved paired depths £500 per interview including transcripts and write ups
- Unobserved face-to-face interviews £500 per interview including transcripts and write ups
- Online survey (500 responses) £3,950 includes, questionnaire preparation, setting up, running and analyzing the survey and producing reports

Terms & Conditions

- VAT will be added to all charges at the currently prevailing rate. Payment will be within 30 days on the presentation of our invoice.
- Additional work not identified above would be charged at WUP's standard rates (£950/day for directors, £750/day for consultants, £600/day for facilitators, £250/day for support staff). Additional expenses not shown above would be charged at cost
- Cancellation of booked sessions will incur cancellation fees as follows: cancellation within 4 weeks of the session, 50% of the fee payable; cancellation within 2 weeks of the session, 100% of fee is payable
- The rates quoted assume tester remuneration of £40 plus travel expenses up to a maximum of £10. If tester remuneration needs to be greater than this for any reason (e.g. securing individuals with high time value or on short lead times) then any costs above the basic charge will be invoiced at cost.
- It is assumed that the client will invite the observers to research sessions