

## Case Study

### Young Digital Planet – Usability Testing May 2008

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#### The Brief

Young Digital Planet (YDP) is a world leading educational software publisher and e-learning technology and content developer. YDP was close to launching a new educational portal in the UK. YDP wished to conduct some usability testing on the site to obtain recommendations for 'quick fixes' to improve the site for its imminent launch, and for longer term improvements for the site's ongoing development.



Testers explored the site as a potential source of teaching resources. Testers undertook scenarios, using 'thinking aloud' protocols, whilst the facilitator probed to get as much feedback and insight as possible – without interfering unduly in the user journey.

The observers were 'active', writing issues on post-its as they occurred. Following the observed testing, a discussion was facilitated by a WUP consultant to agree the issues and appropriate actions.

#### How we responded to the brief

We proposed testing with 6 testers representing YDP's target audience (secondary school teachers of Maths and Science) followed by a facilitated discussion to agree issues and actions.

In order to ensure buy-in to the research results, we recommended that key YDP staff gained a shared understanding of the issues by observing users on the site. By following this with a facilitated discussion, it would allow the observers to identify the key issues and agree actions in a single day.

#### What we did

We discussed the objectives of the project with the project manager and prepared a facilitation guide to achieve these. We recruited 6 testers fitting YDP's target audiences – 3 testers tested the site unobserved, followed by observed testing by 3 testers undertaken in our state-of-the-art viewing studios, where YDP observed the testing through a one way mirror.

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#### The outcomes

Nearly 40 usability issues were identified that would have a major or moderate impact on the user experience. The research also informed thinking about the business model. During the facilitated discussion, YDP gained a shared understanding of these issues, and agreed actions that could be quickly implemented. YDP decided to make these changes and returned for some further testing before launching the site.

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*"Thanks for such an informative and interesting session. Can't wait to read the report, we learned so much."* – Martin Hibbert (UK Business Development Manager), YDP.

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#### Timing and costs

The project was conducted in May 2008 and took approximately 2 weeks to complete from recruitment to delivering the final report at a cost of approximately £6,000.