



DO-IT-YOURSELF

USER EXPERIENCE KIT

jumpingelephants.ca
info@jumpingelephants.ca



DIY User Experience

Whether you have a website, mobile application, or other digital service, it is important that it's running smoothly to ensure users get the best experience possible. [Research by McKinsey](#) and others has shown that organizations that focus on a good user experience consistently outperform their competitors. If you have not had the chance to ask your users how they like your digital service or what can be improved, this might be the perfect time to fix current problems and to identify what changes you should be prioritizing in the future.

"Good design matters whether your company focuses on physical goods, digital products, services, or some combination of these."

- McKinsey, 2018

Jumping Elephants recommends two methods to help you conduct a fast and effective UX assessment:

- Heuristics analysis
- Usability testing

Heuristics Analysis

What is it?

Heuristics analysis is an evaluation of the digital interface using specific usability principles. When conducting the evaluation, we use a version of the [10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design by Nielsen Norman Group](#).

Why is a Heuristics Analysis important?

Heuristics analysis will allow you to uncover issues before you involve your users. Answering questions based on well-known principles will give you a score, kind of like a report card. The results will highlight your biggest problems and how to prioritize them.

What you will need:

- Your digital solution (ie. website, app, etc.)
- The evaluators (ideally 3 people will each go through the exercise so that you get different perspectives)
- [A heuristics workbook template \(in Excel\)](#) with questions you need to answer (45 kb)

How to Conduct a Heuristics Analysis?

1. Download and save a copy of the [heuristics workbook template \(in Excel\)](#) for each evaluator.
2. Open the workbook and read through the instructions, heuristics, and scoring legend.
3. Score each heuristic in terms of severity (each answer is scored on a scale of 0-4).
4. Write out reasons for the score of each heuristic. Try to be as specific and clear as possible for each reason.
5. Once you are finished the evaluation, review the scores and your percentage in the Results tab to identify which areas scored well and which areas need attention.
6. Develop a plan to address the problem areas.

Usability Testing

What is it?

Usability Testing is engaging with representative users (people who fit the demographic that is using your service) to see what their thoughts, feelings, actions, reactions and feedback are when interacting with your service. After only 5 or 6 one-on-one sessions, each lasting between 30 and 60 minutes, you should see patterns emerge that will point out the biggest problems with your solution.

Why is usability testing important?

Usability testing allows you to understand what actual users have to say about your website, what is working and where you are having problems. Although we typically believe that we know our users and their goals, we often miss problems (big and small) and build them into the digital solution. Doing research with just 5 to 6 users will uncover 80% to 90% of your digital solution's issues, giving you clarity on where to focus and direct attention.

Used in conjunction with the heuristics analysis, usability testing will greatly improve the user experience, and ultimately help your business succeed!

Steps before the Usability Test

1. Create the list of tasks

- Create up to 10 user tasks. These tasks should be a mix of those that are important to your business and tasks that users come to your site to complete (ex. *"Please show me how you would order 3 large t-shirts."*). You can review your website analytics to understand what people do most frequently on your website.
- Try to keep tasks shorter than 20 words.
- Do not use leading questions that lead users to an answer (ex. *"How difficult was it to find that item?"* vs. *"Can you tell me what it was like to find that item?"*).
- Consider restricting the usage of search bars for all or some of the questions as you may receive fewer insights on navigation.
- Create questions for the end to gain insights on the whole experience (ex. *"What strengths & weaknesses does this website have, if any?"*).
- Create a script to ensure that you give each participant the same instructions and tasks.
- Create a tool to capture your notes about the session.
- Do a test-run with someone before to ensure things run smoothly.

Steps before the Usability Test

2. Recruit users/participants

- Ideally, think of ways to recruit actual users of your site to participate in the usability testing. People who are not familiar with your site are good substitutes. We would generally discourage you from finding people in your organization or anyone who helped build your website/solution as they tend not be able to see the problems that exist.
- Aim for 5-6 users.

3. Select and set up an online screen sharing platform

- Services like Zoom, Skype, Google Meet and WebEx are available.
- If you want to record and share recordings (which is a great way to allow you to go back and look for patterns and key insights), please gain your user's consent first.
- Try to familiarize yourself with the software before the session, as you may need to walk the user through screen sharing, enabling audio, etc.
- Invite participants to a one-on-one session at a time that is convenient to both of you.

Steps during the Usability Test

4. Conduct the session

- Thank the user for participating and give them some information on what will be happening in the session.
- Inform them that you are not testing them, but rather testing the website and that they cannot do anything wrong.
- Ask the participant for their consent to record the session.
- Go through the tasks you have prepared, and ask the user to give a running commentary throughout the session, explaining what they are thinking, feeling, and doing. These will help your notes!
- Do not guide the user or tell them where to go. You want to see how they would navigate the website as if they were on their own, based on the task that you asked them to complete.
- Take notes throughout the session.
- Aim to finish in under an hour. You don't want to exhaust the user.

5. Finish the session

- Thank the user for their time.
- Compensate the user. Perhaps with a gift card to your business!

Steps after the Usability Test

6. Continue steps 4 and 5 for each user

7. Gather your notes and findings

- Find out what similarities occurred throughout the sessions.
- What were common strengths and weaknesses?
- Did users complete tasks quickly or did they struggle?

8. Use information from findings to update the website

- Where possible, implement changes recommended by users.

9. Repeat after changes are complete (optional)

- Create new tasks or use old tasks to see if the experience has improved for users.

Happy UX-ing!

Making changes to your digital solution based on the heuristics analysis and usability test findings will allow your business to connect better with your customers through a better user experience. We wish you luck!

At Jumping Elephants, we believe anything is possible and have made it happen. [Drop us a line](#) if you want to transform your products, services, or organization.

