



How Agencies Can Get Clients (and Keep Them Happy) with User Testing



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INTRODUCTION

Being an agency has its own set of challenges. How do you write a convincing proposal without access to a prospective client's analytics? How do you prove your concepts when your client's opinion always trumps yours? How do you launch solutions with less guesswork? Enter user testing (and we promise not to steal the show; we just want to help you be your clients' hero).

We believe that great tools can yield faster and better outcomes, and so do you (otherwise, you wouldn't be reading this). User testing is one of those tools that can become your secret to getting clients and keeping them happy.

In this eBook, you'll find out

- How to make your next pitch with an army standing behind you
- Tips for maintaining positive relationships with clients
- How to enhance your market research and competitive analysis
- How to reduce wasted time and deliver solutions faster
- Best practices for strategic testing
- A usability audit checklist

SECTION #1

How Agencies Can Benefit from User Testing

- 5 MAKE YOUR NEXT PITCH WITH AN ARMY STANDING BEHIND YOU
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CHAPTER #1

Make Your Next Pitch with an Army Standing Behind You



CREATE MORE CONVINCING PROPOSALS FOR PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS

“If you can put together a really compelling two- or three-minute video that shows how a client’s site is broken, and how it’s costing them money, that’s pretty powerful. UserTesting lets us do that.”

–Lance Loveday, CEO of Closed Loop Marketing

Whether you love or hate the sales part of agency work, you know it’s challenging. For starters, you don’t have access to a potential client’s analytics to find out where they’re hurting the most. You also have to constantly consider how much time you’re investing into the proposal; you need to make sure you nail it so that you don’t throw your time away. **How do you build a convincing proposal with limited access and a limited budget?**

Imagine how powerful it would be to approach a client with third-party research in hand—significant and undeniable usability issues demonstrated by real, unbiased users—as a backdrop to your proposal. The “your baby is ugly” message is important, but it will be better received from a “customer” than it will be from you. After all, when clients see someone in their target market trying to do whatever the key action is and the user can’t figure it out, is confused, doesn’t trust them, or never even finds them, it’s hard to argue with the need for a solution.

Suddenly you're not an annoying critic getting the proverbial door-in-the-face; you're the first person in line when they become ready to listen to proposals.

And all you needed were some usability studies.

What kind of usability studies? Ones that test every aspect of a client's online presence: trust, landing pages, mobile, competitive tests, social, etc. You can get results within hours, and this "usability audit" can become the foundation of your proposal for your entire scope of work.

PROPOSAL TEMPLATES

DOWNLOAD TEMPLATES FOR
WRITING YOUR NEXT PROPOSAL
WITH USABILITY TESTS.

GET NEW WORK FROM EXISTING CLIENTS

Similarly, you can run a usability audit for pitching to clients you already have. Sometimes you can get in a rut with a client and need to generate some new ideas—simply to increase the amount of work you’re able to deliver for them or to broaden the types of work you’re doing for them. A usability audit can also help you discover problems that you and your client didn’t even realize were an issue and give you more opportunities to provide greater value.

FIND PROBLEMS AND SOLVE THEM

It’s not good enough to just solve problems. You have to be able to find problems in the first place. Agencies are hired because they can not only provide solutions but also find problems. If you become nothing more than a solution-provider that never uncovers new issues and opportunities, you limit the scope of your utility and risk becoming a commodity that the client can consider replacing. Usability testing can be a great tool for revealing hidden problems and finding the problems *behind* the problems. Analytics can tell you where a problem is, but usability testing can solve the mystery of why the problem is happening.

We want people who are problem solvers, but we want people who are also problem finders. It’s a very different skill.
—Daniel Pink, author of *To Sell Is Human*

GET BUY-IN AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR YOUR PROJECT

Have you ever had trouble getting client buy-in or budget for important projects? User testing might be the solution for reaching common ground on priorities and budgets. For example, you know that mobile is important and very different from the desktop, yet clients are sometimes slow to understand just how desperate their mobile situation is—making it difficult to convince them to spend thousands on solutions for mobile. So consider letting users make the case for you. Nothing opens up the purse strings faster than a CEO seeing a smartphone user struggling during the checkout process.

User testing can help build consensus internally, too. Your clients' employees may not pass around a report (or, if they do, it might not read), but a highlight reel of customers struggling with the company's app or site will make the rounds and get the discussion going.

SHARING TEST RESULTS

We know that a lot of the value in usability testing is in sharing the results to help clients understand the user experience. So UserTesting lets you annotate your videos, create clips on the fly (no software needed!), publish a page of selected video clips, and build a highlight reel for even the busiest executives.

CHAPTER #2

Maintain Positive Relationships with Your Clients



ESTABLISH AN AGREED-UPON SOURCE OF TRUTH AND SOLVE THE HIPPO PROBLEM

You have the clients, but now there's a disagreement about what the problem or solution is. You have an opinion based on your extensive knowledge of Web design or marketing, and your client has a conflicting opinion based on their knowledge of their industry, business, and customers. So who's right?

Internal stakeholders might have different goals and objectives than the users do. The VP likes it, but do users?

Usability testing can be your HiPPO-killer. (Okay, not really, but it does help the person whose opinion matters most—the customer—have a voice.) You won't have to waste time fighting about who's right. You both can agree that customer behavior will determine what you do, leading you to a results-centered approach.



“The solution to this [HiPPO] problem is to depersonalize decision making, simply don’t make it about you or what you think.”

*–Avinash Kaushik,
CoFounder of Market Motive*

MYTH

MYTH: USER TESTING SLOWS DOWN DEVELOPMENT

Traditional user testing was expensive and time-consuming—something that significantly impacted the budget and the project timeline. But UserTesting is affordable and fast—so fast, in fact, that you get results in just hours. This lets you quickly identify issues, limiting the amount of development time spent on solutions that aren't going to work. Ultimately, user testing typically results in a faster development cycle rather than a slower one.

It's true that the feedback itself takes time to process; so if just watching the videos would stretch your team too much, you can even have our research team watch the videos, create a highlight reel, and make annotations for you.

PREVENT FAILURES AND AVOID EMBARRASSMENT

Have you ever come up with an idea but had no clue whether it was a good one or not? You hope your idea is good, but let's face it; you most likely aren't your client's target market. **User testing allows you to test your idea in the target market.** If it's bad, you just saved yourself the embarrassment of bringing it to your client. And if your idea is good, you'll be able to navigate questions raised during executive reviews by backing up your presentation with test results and build a business case for the more skeptical stakeholders.

User testing helps you avoid embarrassing launches, too. Testing early in the process prevents you from launching something that's going to land with a thud (in the case of a new app, for example) or that doesn't improve upon the old solution (in the case of a redesign, for instance). You'll have opportunities to iterate and get it right before launching.



User testing helps you avoid embarrassing launches by allowing you to test early so your site or app doesn't land with a thud!

It would be nice if users were predictable, but sometimes they just do weird and unpredictable things (like using the address bar to conduct a search on your website), so there's no substitute for letting real users try features out before launching.

PRIVATE PANEL AND RECRUITMENT OPTIONS

*One of the biggest criticisms of agencies is that they don't "get" the client's customers. So when you're testing, consider using a panel of users that are actually client customers. You can invite customers from your client's database to participate in a usability study (we call this a "private panel" of participants) or even use live, on-site **intercepts** to solicit visitor feedback the moment they're on your site. That's the most "real-time" feedback you can get.*

PROVE CHANGES AND ADD A QUALITATIVE COMPONENT TO CLIENT REPORTS

Testing after launch can prove the value of your work by showing positive outcomes. (It can also help you quickly identify any new problems that your changes may have introduced.) Sharing positive clips with your client and your team is a great way to celebrate what worked (we don't do this enough!) and to engender good will.

We're always swimming or even drowning in data, but qualitative feedback is often missing from our reports. It's hard to create a story around "our conversion rate increased from 2.8% to 3.5%." As long as you have the numbers to back it up, show a highlight reel of happy and excited users, of someone quickly going through a key process and saying, "Wow, that was really easy." A video like this has much more emotional appeal than the cold, hard numbers. There's something visceral about hearing a real person adulating you. Go ahead and let customers pat you (er, your clients) on the back.

CHAPTER #3

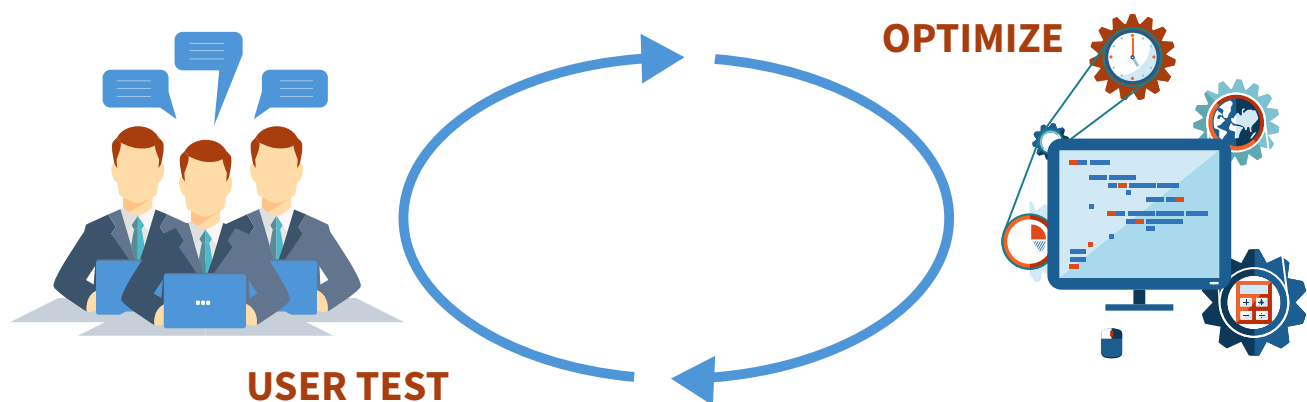
Deliver a Better Product with Less Wasted Time



SAVE PRECIOUS DESIGN AND ENGINEERING HOURS

Usability testing is the right way to launch better, faster, and with the least amount of wasted resources. **Testing concepts and prototypes early in the process lets you quickly validate ideas** without having to wait until someone designs, codes, and launches it, and you see what happens in analytics. Instead, make a wireframe and show it to a few people. If they love it, you'll have confidence to move forward. If they're confused, you'll save time and keep costs down by re-working the wireframe *before* involving engineering.

Testing throughout each stage of your company's development process is a reliable way to keep your concepts in line with what your customers actually need and want. By integrating a **test and optimize** approach from the outset of a new initiative, you will be much less likely to run into major roadblocks and disappointing responses when you reach the finish line.

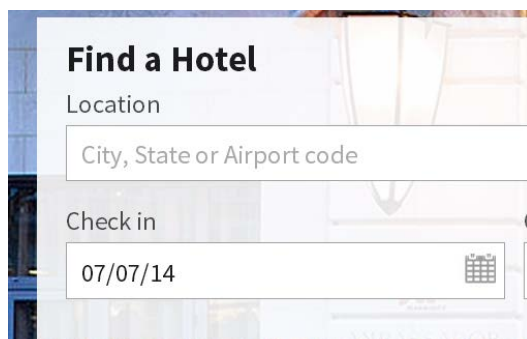


ENHANCE YOUR MARKET RESEARCH AND COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

As an agency, you're conducting market research all the time—sometimes to enter new markets, and sometimes to help your existing clients. What if you could have insider information about markets and competitors without being an insider? Good news—*you can* through competitive testing.

By understanding your client's customers, you can learn from competitors' successes and failures. You don't want to waste time and energy blindly chasing competitors' ideas or current trends; make sure that your new concepts are driven by the behaviors and opinions of your client's target market. Hear from real users what your competitors are doing right and what they're doing wrong. By testing what's being used in the market today, you can avoid competitors' mistakes, study what makes them successful, and even find insights that will help you develop more effective solutions.

HAVE USERS TRY TO ACCOMPLISH THE SAME TASKS ON COMPETITORS' WEBSITES TO LEARN FROM THEIR SUCCESSES AND FAILURES.



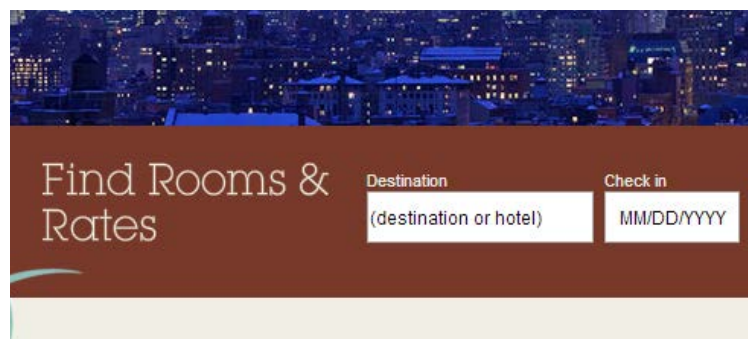
Find a Hotel

Location

City, State or Airport code

Check in

07/07/14

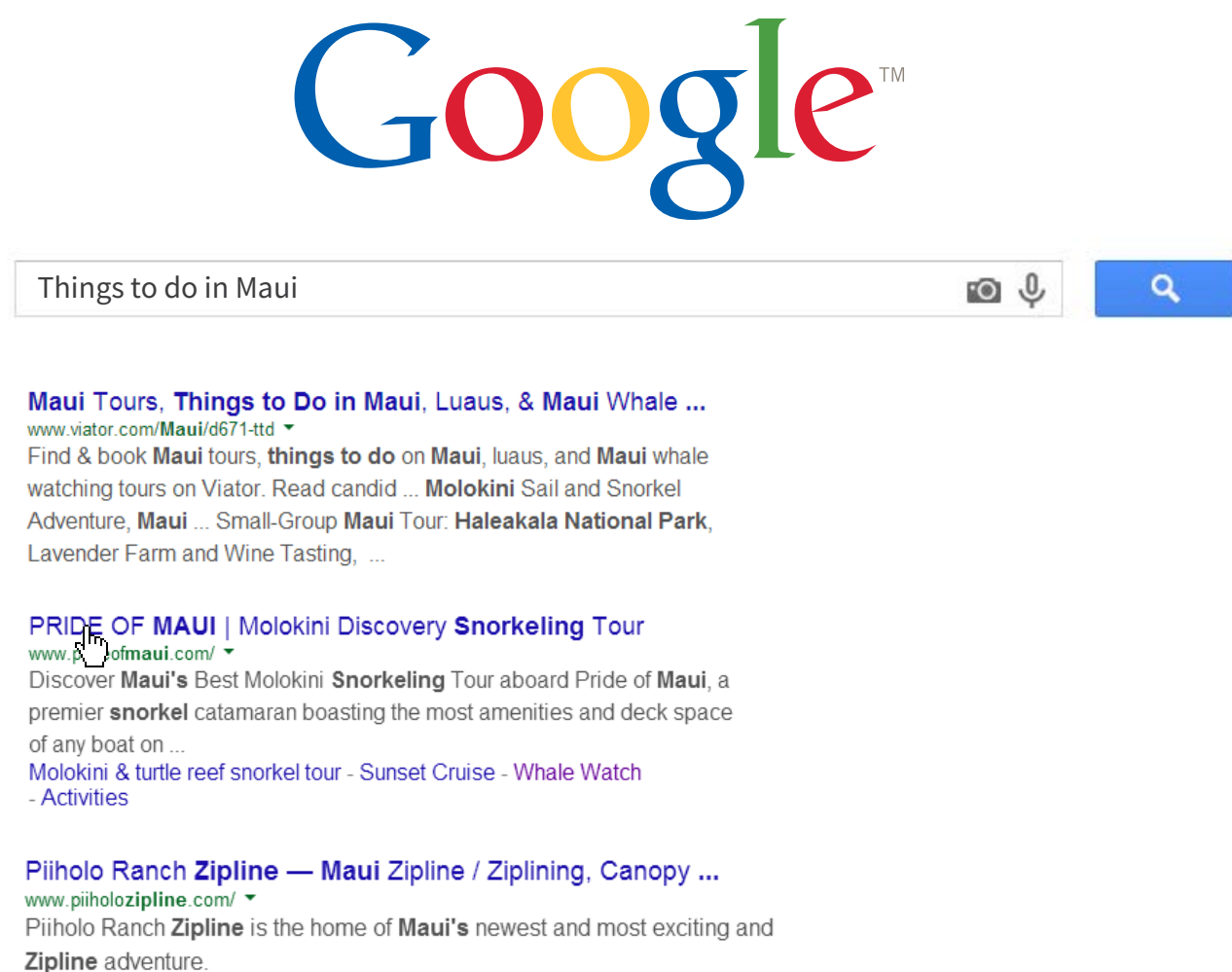


Find Rooms & Rates

Destination (destination or hotel)

Check in MM/DD/YYYY

Here's one example of what a competitive test can look like: If your client is a snorkeling company in Maui, you may want to set up the scenario with "you're going on vacation to Maui and looking for something fun to do." What keywords did your target demographic type in? Did they find your client? Maybe they clicked on their competitor instead. Why?



See someone's impression of your brand from the very beginning. Did they find you? Did they click on a competitor instead? Why did they make that decision?

REDUCE YOUR WORKLOAD

We understand that you're busy. And sometimes your marketing, UX, and engineering teams' time would be better spent on fixing problems than on finding them. That's why our **enterprise plans** come with access to an expert research team that can conduct usability studies and even watch the videos and summarize the findings for you.

PRO TIP

HOW TO TEST EARLY

We talk a lot about testing early in the process to save design and development hours, but what does that actually look like? We recommend testing your wireframes, prototypes, and even simulations.

Wireframes

Test a wireframe to nail things down—like navigation and page components—before diving into full design and interactivity.

Prototypes

Invest just enough design resources so that usability tests reveal user opinions (about aesthetics, ease of use, etc.) and behavior (regarding flow and functionality).

Simulations

In this stage, the user doesn't have to imagine anymore. He's looking at a high-fidelity, highly interactive version of your site or app. Unlike simple prototypes, simulations support gestures like swiping or rotating.

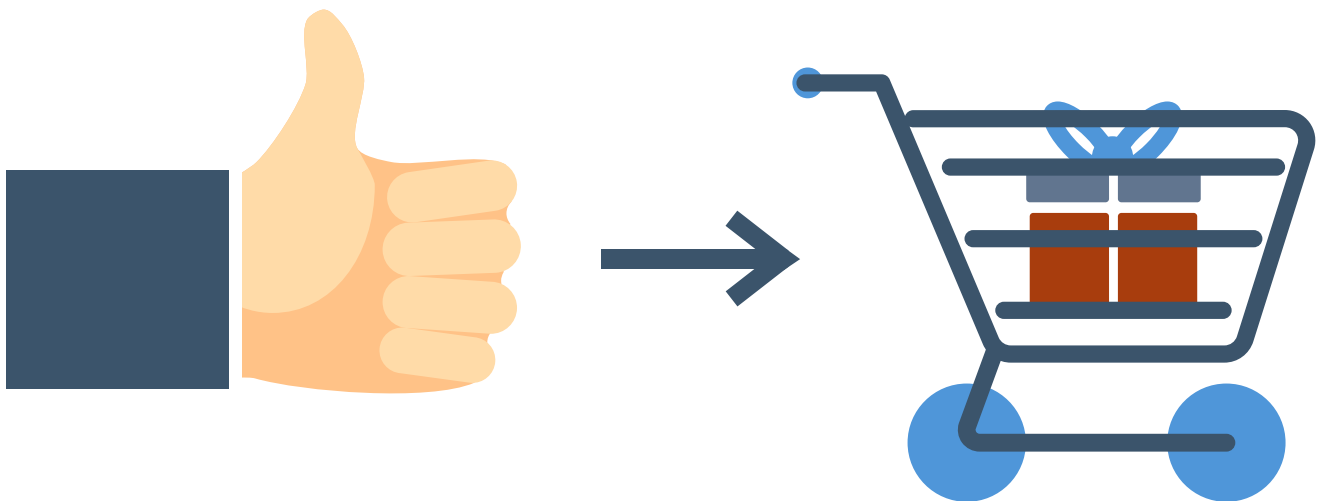
SECTION #2

How to Leverage User Testing to Deliver Value to Clients

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CHAPTER #4

Optimize the Funnel from Brand Affinity to Conversion



DEVELOP BRAND IDEAS

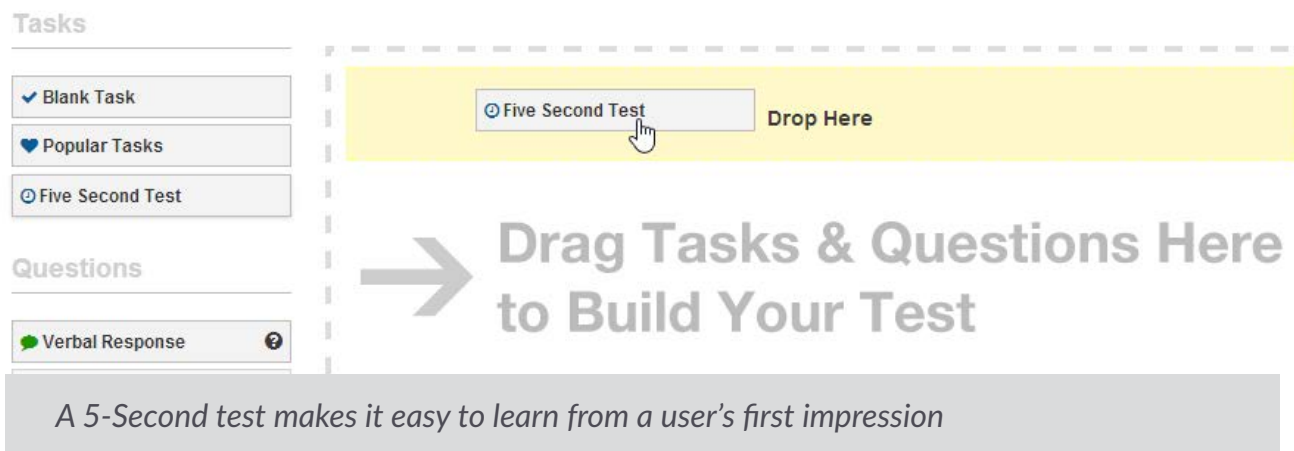
A good way to kick off marketing work for any client is to gather qualitative feedback on their current brand. Do the brand voice and aesthetics (on the home page, social pages, etc.) clearly communicate who they are and what they offer? Do users trust them?

You can also gain feedback about new brand concepts you're considering. For example: your client's brand has always been focused on women, but you're considering launching a line for men. You can get branding and messaging feedback very quickly from both the existing target market and the new target market. Will your new product line succeed in attracting the new market segment without losing the brand loyalty of the existing segment? You can test not only brand sentiment, but also new usability challenges that you'll inevitably face by having to now serve two very different groups of users.

For brand studies (and other studies), qualitative research complements quantitative research. Surveys are helpful for reaching thousands of people at once; user testing will help you learn *why* the survey results turn out the way they do and what you might be able to do to improve the survey results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Try a 5-second test with your home page where you let the participant look for just 5 seconds, and ask them questions such as what he/she remembers, who the site is for, and what the company does. (UserTesting makes it easy to add a 5-second test to any study. In fact, it takes less than 5 seconds to add it!)



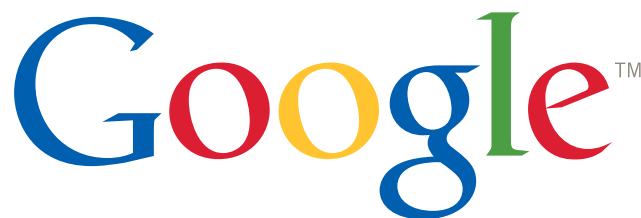
- Send participants to a page with just your logo or other branding elements, and ask them for three or four adjectives that describe your company.
- Run a study in which participants visit multiple companies, including your client and several competitors. Ask about general impressions of the companies, such as “Which of these companies would you prefer to do business with? Why?” and “How does this company differ from the others?” You might learn that certain brand distinctives aren’t coming through, or you may find opportunities that no other brands are capitalizing on in the market.

OPTIMIZE PPC CAMPAIGNS AND LANDING PAGES

You already know how many clicks you're getting and what your conversion rate is. ***But do you know why?*** It's a good idea to get several ads in front of real users (you can do this in a one-at-a-time, slideshow format or present all ads on the screen at once) and have them answer questions such as, "Which ad makes you most interested in this product or service and why?" By combining this qualitative data with your CTR data, you can start making better decisions about which direction to go with your ads and which messaging (or color schemes, CTAs, etc.) to keep or drop.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Start the test at the first point in the customer journey. This could be a Google or Bing search or an ad placement on one of the sites where you're targeting users.



Start the test from the first point in the customer journey.

- Test your ad copy and see what real users are most compelled to click on. Do the users clearly understand the message; is your messaging too soft or too aggressive?
- Look for testing opportunities within your analytics by finding pages with high bounce rates or high exit rates. But be careful—not every page with a high bounce or exit rate is performing poorly (your store hours page will hopefully have a short time on page and a high bounce or exit rate due to the user’s intent to find the information and leave). And when you test the pages with high bounce rates, see what you can learn about user expectations. Did the users bounce because they arrived at the page with an expectation that the page didn’t satisfy?

OPTIMIZE CONVERSION PATHS

User testing is one of the best ways to tackle one of most agencies' top assignments: **increasing leads and conversions**. Improving conversion rate is all about reducing friction between the customer and the destination you want them to reach or the action you want them to take. Analytics can often tell you where a friction point is occurring but not what is causing the friction. By watching and listening to users, you can find out what's stopping them from moving further down the funnel. Maybe it's a technical issue, a trust issue, or just some uncertainty ("I don't know how much shipping will cost, so I'm not sure I want to click 'confirm' yet").

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Use flow reports in analytics to learn where to start your tests. Look for high dropoff rates in behavior flow reports or backtracking in goal flow reports.
- Use segmentation in your flow reports to learn which parameters to use in your test. Is there a particular type of user having the problem? Is the problem occurring with a particular browser version or device type?
- Ask questions that explore whether lack of clarity or lack of trust is slowing users down. Rewriting some copy or including some additional trust factors (trust symbols, privacy policy, return policy) may be enough to nudge the conversion rate in the right direction.

PRO TIP

DON'T SHORT-CIRCUIT THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Usability tests are often started in unnatural places; users may be dropped directly onto a landing page that they'd never see without first clicking an ad or performing a search. It's important to begin many of your tests where your customer journey begins. If you're running 90% of your tests from your home page but only 10% of your traffic is direct traffic, you're missing out on key insights.

For example, here's a tip for improving conversions on your landing pages: start the test prior to the problem page so that the testers' expectations about the page content can be developed organically. We call it "expectation incubation."

CHAPTER #5

Maximize Engagement and Nurturing Efforts

Factors such as brand affinity, app ratings, and conversion rates often require a lot of an agency's attention, but there are some great optimization opportunities that often get overlooked.



OPTIMIZE FOR MICRO CONVERSIONS

You probably have plenty of micro conversion opportunities toward the high end of the sales funnel—whitepaper downloads, newsletter signups, webinar registrations, etc. Don't get stuck focusing only on macro conversion rates such as sales; also optimize for these micro conversions by learning why users aren't taking those desired actions more often. Is placement the issue; is the opportunity just not grabbing their attention? Is the copy not compelling? Is the CTA not strong enough? Are users just unsure of how you'll handle their personal information?

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Test the newsletter signup process: Do you users want to sign up for your newsletter? Why or why not? Is it easy to sign up?
- Test your blog: What are their first impressions of the blog? Are you asking them to subscribe, and if so, are you asking them at just the right moment?

TEST SOCIAL PAGES

Customers spend 27% of their time online on social media.¹ Social media is also one of the best ways to increase your reach through social proof if you have a consistent message and sharable content. So it's a good idea to find out what users think as they view and interact with your social presence.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Test overall impressions: What did users notice on your Facebook page or Twitter feed? What do they think the company does? What draws them to the brand, or what turns them off?
- Ask users to share a piece of content. How willing are they to share that content? Did they have any challenges finding or using the share options?
- Ask users whether there's another social network they'd be more likely to engage with you on or share content on. You'll learn a lot about the passions of your prospective customers.
- Use ["dark posts"](#) on Facebook to test your content before you send it to all your followers.

¹ Experian Marketing Services Reveals 27 Percent of Time Spent Online Is on Social Networking

IMPROVE MOBILE APP ENGAGEMENT AND ADOPTION

Mobile users are notoriously impatient and easily distracted, due to both the users' physical environments and a plethora of notifications on the device. If your app doesn't make people feel engaged, they may move on to something else and never come back. Listening to users during a test lets you "hear" lack of engagement or outright boredom. Handling these problems can help you fix engagement problems, which in turn can positively affect your app ratings and improve adoption.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Avoid the mistake of applying desktop development methodology to app development. **Launching early and iterating quickly is popular for Web app development, but in mobile, you need to test early and test often before launching.**
- Users are often confused by icons. Ask questions about what they think an icon is or means and what clicking on certain buttons will do.
- Assess interest and engagement by listening closely for signs of boredom (sighs, lack of excitement in the voice) and frustration. Where engagement or satisfaction seem low, re-test with more users, and begin asking questions about how they feel at that moment.

PRO TIP

MULTI-DEVICE AND MULTI-AUDIENCE TESTING

It's important to test across multiple devices (desktops, tablets, smartphones), multiple operating systems (iOS, Android, Windows) and multiple audiences (age, Web expertise, country). Within a single study, UserTesting lets you test multiple audiences and multiple devices.

The screenshot displays the UserTesting interface for selecting participants. It features two main sections: '3 Participants Using Computers' and '3 Participants Using Smartphones'. The 'Smartphones' section is expanded, showing options for device type (Computer, Smartphone, Tablet) and demographic filters (Age, Gender). The 'Any (use highest rated)' option is selected for both the participant selection and device type.

3 Participants Using Computers

Any - Use highest rated testers

3 Participants Using Smartphones

Which participants do you want to use? Any (use highest rated) ▾

How many participants? 3

What device should they use? Computer Smartphone Tablet

Age Any

Gender Any

UserTesting lets you test multiple audiences and multiple devices.

CHAPTER #6

Improve Key Customer Interactions



ASSESS INTERNAL SEARCH

A bad internal search can quickly reduce profitability and lose customers. It kills conversions before someone even has the chance to convert. And sadly, internal search is often abysmal and largely ignored.

Find out whether customers' internal search experiences are driving them away. Look at your website analytics and compare the VPV (value per visitor) of those who use your site search to non-searchers. If the VPV is lower for visitors using the search function, you probably have a problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ask open-ended but specific questions: “Using search, try to find a pair of shoes in a color, style and size that appeals to you.”
- Test non-product keyword phrases, such as “returns.” Such searches should often be handled differently, but rarely are.
- Test ambiguous terms like “coffee table book.” Does your search algorithm “spit out” a bunch of results of coffee, tables, and books, leaving the user to wade through mostly irrelevant results; or, does it understand how to make sense of the entire phrase?

[Read “The Top 10 Ways to Improve Internal Search”](#)

[Read “Consequences of Bad Internal Search”](#)

PRO TIP

IDENTIFY THE RIGHT SCENARIOS

You have to be strategic and comprehensive when you craft usability studies. Think of things your clients didn't think of—that's why they hired you. One of the ways to do this is to identify and set up the right scenarios. For instance, take Monster.com. Their audience can range from a high school grad to a 40-year-old with 20 years of experience. The tools on the site may work for one person but not the other. Or think of a grandma trying to buy a book for her grandson, not knowing what's popular for teens, versus a college student searching the ISBN number.

You need to be able to do more than just test your website with the right demographics; you have to know the market well enough to know both who your users are and what they want to do.

IMPROVE SEASONAL SALES AND EVENTS

The holidays are the biggest time of the year for many companies. Be sure that your new messaging and landing pages match user wants and expectations. And keep in mind that these special events may draw a lot of first-time or once-a-year customers, so you cannot assume that a website or app optimized for your typical audience will perform well with this new group of users.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Determine whether your IA needs to be revised temporarily. For example, customers search for the return policy more around the holidays. Can they find it easily?
- Test the Research Online, Purchase Offline (ROPO) scenario. ROPO becomes more common around the holidays, and there are a number of questions that come up in that scenario that you may not normally face, such as “Can I buy online and return in store?” See whether shoppers can quickly find answers to their ROPO questions.

BOOST eCOMMERCE

Shopping cart abandonment is annoying. You've worked so hard to get users so far, and then they leave. How rude! But maybe we can't blame them; maybe your checkout process is like the squeaky shopping cart with the wheel that won't swivel. Find out why people are leaving by focusing on two main factors: **customer confidence** and **ease of use**.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ask users what security information is important to them and whether they can find it. You might find users searching for items such as trust symbols, your privacy policy, and consistent branding across multiple subdomains during the payment process.
- Ask users to find the return policy, and ask whether it alleviates their fears of buying something that they can't feel and touch.
- Test mobile checkout, paying particular attention to touch targets. Small touch targets are always annoying, but when a user is potentially entering and submitting information they've tediously entered, a single wrong-button click could mean a lost transaction.

[Read “Why Your Customers Are Abandoning Their Carts and What You Can Do About It”](#)

PRO TIP

THE ANATOMY OF A GREAT SHOPPING CART

See several best practices in action on the Home Depot's excellent shopping cart.

Read “The Anatomy of a Great Shopping Cart”

The screenshot shows the Home Depot shopping cart page. At the top, the title "Anatomy of a Great Shopping Cart" is displayed over a shopping cart icon. The page layout includes a navigation bar with links like "Tool & Truck Rental", "Get It Installed", "For the Pros", "Gift Cards", and "Help". Below this, the user's store location is set to "Lafayette, in #2034". The main cart area lists two items: a RIDGID 6-Gal. Wet/Dry Vac and a BLACK & DECKER 19 in. 36-Volt Cordless Electric Lawn Mower. Each item has a "Ship To Home or Pick Up In Store" section with radio buttons for "Ship to Home (FREE)" and "Pick Up In Store (FREE)". A yellow callout box highlights the "Shipping time estimate" for the first item. Another callout box points to the "Save for later option" for the second item. A blue arrow points to the "Product images for order verification" on the left. The bottom of the page features a link to "See the full infographic here: [The Anatomy of a Great Shopping Cart](#)".

USABILITY AUDIT CHECKLIST

Whether you're running an audit for a prospective client or looking for improvement opportunities for an existing client, this simple checklist can serve as a starting point for your test ideas.

☐ Brand/first impressions test

- Run a 5-second test for first impressions.
- Ask whether participants find the brand/site trustworthy.
- Ask users for three or four adjectives to describe the company.

☐ PPC & SEO landing page test

- Present multiple ads and ask which ad makes the user most interested in the product and why.
- Ask, "If you click on this ad, what would you expect to see?"
- Now have the participant visit the landing page and look at the page for 5 seconds. Ask, "Is this what you were expecting? Is it better or worse? How does the page differ from what you were expecting?"

☐ Mobile test

- Ask participants whether they enjoyed the app, how useful they found it, or how easy it was to get started.
- Ensure that users can use the app in a natural context; avoid artificial testing environments.
- Test how difficult it is to complete a certain task. How long did it take the user?

☐ Multi-device test: desktops, tablets, phones

- Make sure that the experience is consistent across multiple operating systems and browsers.
- Compare Time on Task and Completion Rate across multiple devices.

☐ Competitive test

- Design a test that imitates the beginning of the customer journey rather than automatically starting the customer on your client's site.
- Run a side-by-side test: your current site vs. your competitor's current site. Ask which site the users prefer and why.

☐ Conversion test

- Test micro conversions such as newsletter signup, blog subscription, and whitepaper downloads. Are users at all compelled to take the action, and is it easy?
- Use flow reports in analytics to learn where to start your tests. Look for high dropoff rates in behavior flow reports or backtracking in goal flow reports.
- Ask questions that explore whether lack of clarity or lack of trust is slowing users down.

☐ Social test

- Ask participants to look at a Facebook page or a Twitter page/feed for 5–10 seconds. Ask questions like “What did you notice? What do you like or not like? Would you like or follow this company? How would you describe the company's ‘voice’?”
- Test the sharability of content—both the testers' desire to share and the ease of sharing.

□ Internal search test

- Ask open-ended but specific questions: “Using search, try to find a pair of shoes in a color, style and size that appeals to you.”
- Test non-product keyword phrases and ambiguous terms: “returns,” “coffee table book.”

□ Checkout process test

- Ask questions that reveal how much the customer trusts the technology (do they know their information is secure?) and the company (do they know their information won’t be misused?).
- Determine whether shoppers can quickly find information that boosts their confidence to pull the trigger (return policy, privacy policy, guarantees).
- Explore whether customers feel that they’re getting a good value (for example, test the effect of the coupon code field on user perception) so they’re less likely to wander before completing the purchase.
- Test whether your upselling techniques are getting in the way or truly being helpful and ultimately resulting in a better experience and more sales.

CONCLUSION

User testing can help your agency win clients and keep clients while keeping project costs under control. It's also one of the best ways to help move your client toward a customer-centered, results-driven approach to marketing.

Your agency is critical to what we're doing. Our solution lets people find problems, but it works best in the hands of someone who understands what questions to ask and what to look for. And once the problems are identified, your clients will need you to provide guidance and solutions. Our goal is to see the Web become a better place; let's make it happen together.

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