

## Usability test proposal and plan.

### Contents:

- Goals and objectives;
- Sites to be tested;
- Test design;
  - o Physical setup;
  - o Participants;
  - o Procedure;
  - o Tasks (tbd);
  - o Questionnaire(s) (tbd).
- Resource requirements.

### Overall goals.

1. Diagnose problems, looking for patterns. We want to know what approaches to organizing, labeling, and presenting content work better than others so we can avoid the mistakes of the others and take advantage of what works.

2. Measure gut reactions, attitudes/perceptions:

**Visceral:** how does the site feel at the perceptual/low-level cognitive level? Is the overall, low-level affect positive or negative?

**Attitudes:** how does content presentation affects the perception of the property? How effective are those features that are designed specifically to enhance the perception of the project?

3. Measure “total engagement:” to what extent do the various aspects of the site’s design, features, widgets, etc. come together to create an environment where the users feel free to explore the content, unencumbered by poorly executed UI; where the UI fades into the background, letting the effectively conceived content engage the user directly.

### Objectives.

What we want to measure:

- Quality/appropriateness of information and presentation: how accurately does the information provided represent the property? Does the design of images, animations,

audio, etc. represent what the property is all about. Is the presentation appropriate for the kind of buyer the property is designed to attract?

- The site's matchmaking aptitude: Does the prospect feel like this could be their next home or, for investment buyers, a good investment? Can they "picture" themselves living here?
- Quantity and persuasiveness of information: does it provide the information necessary to help the prospect take the next step in the buying process? Do they know what the next step is and are they guided to it effectively?
- Organization and labeling of information:
  - o organization: is the information organized appropriately? does the organization seem logical? do the things that should live together actually do?
  - o labeling: are things labeled according to the user's mental models?

What kinds of measurable behaviors we will looking for:

- task success rates;
- spontaneous verbal comments;
- non-verbal signals (groans, gasps, etc.);
- solicited verbal and written comments.

Sites to be tested.

Tentatively:

- <http://www.iliveat.com/> (not very good: ho-hum animation, annoying music, not enough information, awkward floor plan tool, etc.);
- <http://www.watermarkresidences.com/> (great floor plan tool)
- [http://www.the-tower-residences.com/index\\_home.html](http://www.the-tower-residences.com/index_home.html) (bad gratuitous animation)
- <http://philadelphialuxury.com/clients/ritzcarlton/testv6/swfs/index.htm> (good IA)

Test design.

Setup:

1. Conducted at <Client>, Inc.'s offices;
2. One-on-one, qualitative usability test;
3. The same set of tasks to be performed across 2-3 sites;
4. Have the participants assume a persona that is as close to what they are in real life as is useful;

## Participants:

### Must-have attributes:

- must **not** to work in the field of design, programming, real estate sales or development.

### Other attributes:

- are the kind of people who may be interested in and could potentially afford the kind of living and apartments, respectively, that are being sold by the site. Optionally, this requirement could be reversed: we could test how well the site filters out the kind of visitors for whom the property is not right.
- location: could get both, the people who live in the city and who don't.
  - o Those who do can comment on the effectiveness of the lifestyle portion of the site in representing the neighborhood and the town;
  - o Those who don't can comment on how well the said portion of the site introduces them to the lifestyle. Can they picture themselves living in the town (this is different from the question "can they see themselves living in the project").

## Procedure:

- a. Pick a large, quiet room where we won't be disturbed;
- b. Brief the participants about the purpose of the test, their rights, etc. Have them sign the participant agreement form;
- c. Pre-test questionnaire: Ask them about their process for finding a place to live (or what they would like that process to look like), their past experiences with real estate buying or renting, and their expectations for the kind of sites that are the subject of this test.
- d. First task = get the participants into the mind of a potential house buyer who might be interested and have them explore the site for a few minutes; then get them away from the browser and ask them specific questions probing first impressions;
- e. The rest of the tasks will be more goal-directed: ask them to find particular kinds of information on the site, a way to contact the management, etc.
- f. Complete a brief "how was it" questionnaire after each task for each site tested;
- g. After the test is over, ask them (via a written questionnaire) about their impressions (were their expectations met, not met, exceeded, etc?). Would they recommend the site to a friend?
- h. Report the findings:
  - i. Go over the notes and recordings if necessary;
  - ii. Tabulate the questionnaire data;
  - iii. Prepare the presentation and present to the team.

Resource requirements:

- Between 5 and 10 participants. Need to screen them as a part of recruiting. Can be friends/family, but need to fit the participant profile. Also will need to compensate them
- Tests might have to be done after hours to accommodate the participants' schedules;
- A large, quiet room will be required; each test session should take about 2 – 2.5 hours; total “lab” time: about 20 hours;
- Usability professional's time:
  - Complete planning the test: 5 hours;
  - Help recruit participants: 2 hours;
  - Test room setup: 3 hours to get the equipment installed and working properly;
  - In the “lab”: 20 hours;
  - Reviewing the recordings, tabulating responses, preparing the report and presentation: 40 hours.
  - Total = approx. 75 hours.