

James Dishman

UX 60541 User Experience Evaluation Fundamentals

Quantitative and Qualitative Measures of a Usability Brief Summary

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To begin this assignment, I ordered lunch through the Chipotle website, which I had never done before. I was immediately impressed with how easy and streamlined the process was. My order was a pre-configured menu item with a couple of add-ons, and the process of ordering and paying with Apple Pay on a computer and a phone (to verify the Apple Pay transaction) was seamless, easy to navigate, fast, and expensive. The fact that it works so well could potentially make it more challenging to develop a plan to study its usability if one were unprepared. You just study what works and how it works. It had me thinking, what is essential? Granted, all aspects of the experience are important, but what is the most significant driver of ROI? One would think ease of use is vital, but completions (and therefore sales) would be more critical to the bottom line than ease of use, or even if the order was correct.

Similarly, just seeing the data on completions, time on task, traffic maps, and click-throughs is useful, but it doesn't explain the why. I think a mixed-methods approach would be the best way to find out not only what works, but also what works for users and why. Having users order a specific combination through the Chipotle website, monitor the success rate, and then have other users conduct a

think-aloud qualitative study would yield results that highlight the best of both approaches.

For a quantitative benchmark, I think Success Rate analysis would be the most significant driver of ROI. It is an objective measurement that shows performance, not the site's or the task's perception. It is specific and measurable: did the user complete the task, in this case, ordering food? It is a directly quantifiable metric, which stakeholders like to see.

As a qualitative benchmark, think-aloud seems a good option in this scenario and could help fill gaps left by the success rate analysis. If users followed the think-aloud protocol while ordering the same thing as in the success rate study, researchers could identify difficulties in specific areas of the ordering process, how users arrived at their conclusions, and the routes they used to reach them.

Observing emotional responses to different parts of the process could yield valuable insights into how people use the platform to order food. Following Nielsen's discount usability ideas¹, you could do this study on the cheap with a small number of participants.

Shortcomings of success rate analysis: it lacks the why. Researchers know that users succeed and fail, but not how. Secondly, the data lacks context. Numbers alone are hard to interpret and assign meaning to. Third, it requires a large number of participants to achieve statistical significance. In the case of Chipotle and its website, that wouldn't be a problem, but for smaller, leaner organizations, it could be.

The fact that the think-aloud study is more objective is, in some ways, positive, but in others, negative. The rare and rich enlightenment that researchers can glean from studying a few participants could also be statistically insignificant in the long run. Researcher bias could influence the study in the wrong direction, particularly if the researcher is inexperienced. Fundamentally, thinking aloud will influence subjects' behavior. It is not their natural state. Lastly, you could just pick 3-10 subjects and have all of them be outliers. If you have a low understanding of the situation, you might not notice until it is too late.

To present this, I would use a slideshow or a report, depending on the circumstances. Success rates can be displayed as graphs and compared with past studies and previous versions of the site. Critical points and areas for improvement

can be pulled from the qualitative data from the think-aloud studies and delivered as slides or a report.

References

1. NNgroup. (2023, March 17). Discount Usability Revisited (Jakob Nielsen Keynote) [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9rPbcCC1vM>