Choosing the Right Prototype Testing Method

DESCRIPTION

This job aid contains definitions of various prototype testing methods and a breakdown of testing methods suitable for each stage of the design process and prototype development.

WHEN TO USE

- Use this job aid in your prototype planning session and return to it as needed.

PAIRS WELL WITH

- Research Planning Checklist
- Choosing the Right User Research Method

PURPOSE

- To identify the types of testing methods appropriate for each stage of the design process.

HOW TO USE

- Identify the stage of the design process you are in
- Define the purpose of testing and the assumptions you want to validate
- Plan what you need to prototype to test your assumptions

DESIRED OUTCOME

- Selection of prototype testing methods for hypothesis validation.

PROTOTYPE TESTING DEFINITIONS

Concept testing: An evaluation of initial concepts such as the content and layout of new products or services.

User satisfaction testing: An assessment of how users interact with and experience both physical and digital products within a service.

Usability testing: An evaluation of user interaction and user experience with the product or service. It measures efficiency, effectiveness, engagement, and ease of use for the product or service.

Functionality testing: An assessment to ensure that each component of the product or service operates and interacts correctly within the system.

Performance testing: An assessment of the speed, responsiveness, and stability of a product or service under a given workload.

User experience testing: A holistic evaluation of the entire user journey, considering user satisfaction, emotional response, and ease of use across touchpoints.

Behaviour tracking: The collection of information about how users act to help understand user behaviour and preferences across various touchpoints within a service.

Comparative testing: A comparison of the performance of multiple designs or interfaces (for example, A/B testing).

Task flow testing: An evaluation of the flow of specific sequences of steps that users follow to accomplish a particular task across both physical and digital touchpoints.

Content testing: An assessment of the clarity, relevance, and effectiveness of information.

Navigation testing: An evaluation of the navigation and information flow within digital interfaces and how users are guided through physical products or services, ensuring intuitiveness and cohesion.

Security testing: An evaluation of a system or application for potential vulnerabilities, risks, and threats to ensure that sensitive data is protected and maintain the integrity of the software.

Accessibility testing: An assessment of the usability and inclusivity of a product or service to ensure that it can be easily accessed, understood, and operated by individuals with diverse abilities and disabilities.

CHOOSING PROTOTYPE TESTING METHODS AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE DESIGN PROCESS

To test the feasibility of your concept in the early stages, use a low-fidelity prototype, which you can sketch using the tools available to you.

Goal

To test the feasibility of the concept

Method

- **Content testing**
  - **Text clarity**
  - **Readability**
  - **Information accuracy**
  - **Error checking**
  - **Content flow**
  - **Visual layout testing**
  - **Colours**
  - **Font choices**
  - **Layout balance**

CHOOSING PROTOTYPE TESTING METHODS AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE DESIGN PROCESS

For a prototype that shows how your design can work, use a mid-fidelity prototype that shows the flow and logic of the concept.

Goal

To evaluate the functionality of your design in the early stages

Method

- **Functionality testing**
  - Feature functionality
  - Requirements check
  - Feature integration checks
  - Feature comparison testing
- **Task flow testing**
  - Ease of task completion
  - Errors in task flows

CHOOSING PROTOTYPE TESTING METHODS AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE DESIGN PROCESS

A semi-interactive or interactive product is a high-fidelity prototype, because it allows users interact with it.

Goal
To test user experience

Method
- **Navigation testing**
  - Menu layout
  - Feature connection testing
  - Page flow
  - Load time
  - Error tracking
- **User satisfaction testing**
  - Ease of task completion
  - Engagement
  - Support quality
- **Behaviour tracking**
  - In-session behaviour recording
  - Scroll patterns
- **Security testing**
  - Threat analysis
  - Data privacy check
  - Compliance audit
  - Incident response
- **Accessibility testing**
  - Screen reader test
  - Colour contrast
  - Text size check
  - Keyboard navigation test
  - Alt-text review