



UX RESEARCH

Practical Exercises

Exercise 1

Lesson Goal: Recognize the basic concepts that apply to user experience (UX)

Look at the website for the top furniture company in your country. Benchmark the website based on the following criteria:

- **Visibility of system status:** Does the system keep users informed about what is going on? Is feedback given in a reasonable time? How many of the following features do you see: progress bars, hour glass, breadcrumbs, confirmation messages.
- **Match with the real world:** Does the website use language appropriate to the intended audience? Look in navigation labels, section titles, and website content.
- **User control and freedom:** The easiest way to find out if your website complies with this point is by asking – Where am I? How did I get here? How do I get back to where I came from? Look out for ‘Go back’, ‘Undo’, ‘Remove from Cart’, and ‘Close Window’ buttons.
- **Error prevention:** It is important that your website has clear labels and shows which items need to be selected or filled out so that errors don’t happen in the first place. Examples: displaying which fields are mandatory, form validation, giving clear instructions during checkout.
- **Aesthetic and minimalist design:** Elements of the design should not obstruct the website’s function, they should work together and not distract from the actual message or call to action required. Examples: reducing clutter, clear call to actions, no annoying flashing eye-candy.
- **Help and documentation:** Items such as help icons, clear labels, and advanced searches help a great deal.

Exercise 2

Lesson Goal: Recognize the roles played by business and users in user experience

Choose three websites which offer web-based services and that you visit regularly. Looking at each website, identify the business model it works from. You can choose from:

- ↗ Subscription: if so, is it a new or an established business?
- ↗ Premium: if so, are any features unavailable until you pay for them?
- ↗ Free: if so, can you identify some ways the organization generates revenue?

Now try to complete some actions on each site. Can you identify the value exchange taking place? What are you as a user offering? Data? Content? Conversation? Money? Goods? Services?

Finally, consider is the value exchange clear enough? Are you thanked and rewarded?

Exercise 3

Lesson Goal: Recognize how you can plan your user experience project

An Australian bank is experiencing a high home page bounce rate and user drop-off on its website. You are working as a UX executive with one other colleague on your team. The IT manager has given you two months to present him with research on the UX of the bank's website. Taking the persona you create of yourself, you should:

- Create a schedule that provides enough time for recruiting, testing, analyzing, and integrating results.
- Describe your objectives: What are the knowledge gaps you need to fill?
- Identify your hypotheses: What do you think you understand about your users?
- Outline your methods: Based on time and manpower, what methods should you select? User group, online survey, or interview?

Exercise 4

Lesson Goal: Use techniques to analyze and research user behaviour

You have developed a map and transport app targeted at elderly people with memory issues and/or bad eyesight. It is usually accessed by people when they are in a dilemma or lost. You often send text messages when the weather is bad to encourage usage. This winter the app has experienced a big increase in downloads, however usage and revenue from the app has not increased in line with this.

To determine the success of your app UX, identify:

- What behaviors does the app aim to encourage?
- Is the behavior within the app or in the real world? Or both?
- What motivation does the app leverage? Is it intrinsic or extrinsic?
- What triggers does the app rely on? External triggers (such as emails, push notifications) or internal triggers (natural occurrences that urge someone to use the app)?

