User Tests: One Intranet Team’s Experience

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Introduction

- Background
- What We Did
- Impact on Our Re-design
- What We Learned
Re-design Objectives

- Reduce “time to find”
- Provide information at a glance
- Improve logical arrangement of content
- Eliminate icons
Phase 1. The Test

• Content labels & organization
• Paper-based
• 8 participants, 1 observer
• Pre-test

Phase 1. Results

• Patterns revealed
  – Label meaning
  – Arrangement of content
• Jargon discovered
• Prior knowledge
Phase 1. Changes

- Eliminated jargon
- Added a category
- Item level to top of menu

Phase 2. The Test

- Prototype
- Observe use
- 11 participants, 3 observers
- 16 questions
- Debriefing
- Pre-Test
Phase 2. Changes

- Menu size/format
- Scrolling news
- Tutorial
- Hot Links
- Deepened menu
Phase 2. Changes

- Multiple access points
- Category overhauls
- Menu label changes
- Alpha order
- What it’s called vs. what it is

Phase 3. The Test

- Repeat format
- 9 participants, 3 observers
- Same questions
Phase 3. Results

- Compared “time to find”
- Analyzed against Phase 2 changes
- Layers added confusion
- Test artificiality/prior knowledge/form of question
- Product name/product description
Observations & Recommendations

• Testing is imperative
• Not too few - not too many
• Bite your tongue and learn
• Artificiality of test

Observations & Recommendations

• Good will
• Marvel at human diversity
• Perfection is impossible - but insights are invaluable
“Remember, the new design is simply the prototype of the next design.”
Jakob Nielsen

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