

Tree test

A quick method to test whether your navigation is task performant.



Time to complete:
5-10 mins

What you'll need

- Your personas or a good idea of who your target market is.
- Key pages or information that drive key actions. This maybe your 'Book Now' button, or your menu to your restaurant. It could also be a contact form, if you find that this is an effective sales channel.
- One or more participant, preferably similar to your personas. They should be unfamiliar with your website to get a more realistic test.

Running the test

1. Load up your website, but try to keep it hidden. You can use a piece of paper to cover the screen if need be.
2. Explain that you'll be asking them to point to where they think a certain piece of information will be stored. There's no wrong answer, so there's no need to rush.
3. Reveal the screen and give them your first bit of information to find. It's important to note that the first item should be your most important one, because as you ask more questions, the participant will get more familiar with your website, so the data is less valuable. To counter this, you can run the test multiple times with different people and mix the order of the questions up.
4. You should note the time it takes for the participant to make a decision as well as the response.

Quick tip: If you are thinking about overhauling your navigation, try a Card Sorting Exercise.

Highlighter test

Humans often don't read a lot of text. Use this method to reduce the number of words on your website and make it more effective.



Time to complete:
5-10 mins

What you'll need

- 2 or more highlighters. The common colours are Red and Green, as they signify bad and good with out much explanation, but you may want to ask about other emotions or values.
- Printed out screenshots of your pages or even just sections of text which you want to test.
- 1 or more participants.

Running the test

1. Place the screenshot of text in front of the participant with their highlighters.
2. Ask them, using the first highlighter, to *highlight* sections of the text that make them feel in a particular way, then *underline* the sections with the opposite feeling with the second highlighter. For example, you could test 'excitement', so ask them to highlight the words that make them feel excited, then underline the words which make them feel bored.
3. Try to leave questions until the end as you don't want the participant to over think their actions.
4. An effective improvement is to write 2 or 3 variations and run the test across all of them. A mini A/B test!

Desirability test

Using Microsoft's desirability tool-kit we can quickly understand how people *feel* when they arrive on your website.



Time to complete:
10 mins

What you'll need

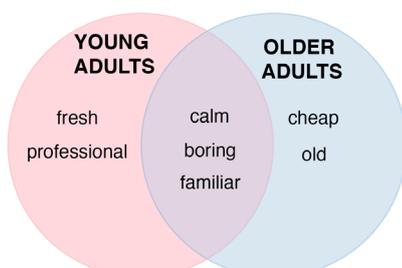
- A set of words from Microsoft's desirability tool-kit. You can print these out or just leave them on screen.
- A few screenshots of various pages on your website. The most important ones are those which people will likely arrive on your website at, as you want to make a good first impression. You can also do this test as an early A/B test for new designs.
- A number of participants, preferably people who match your personas or target market.

Prepare your words

- Which words you include depend on what you're interested in measuring. Reduce the number of words to 25 or less. Don't be afraid to add your own words to the list as needed.
- To measure aesthetics, remove any words that are only relevant for functionality, content, or performance.
- Include a variety of words: negative, positive, and neutral.

Running the test

1. Show one of your screenshots to your participant.
2. Ask them to choose a few words which relate to the image they've just seen.
3. Report the most selected words. It's best if you use percentages.
4. If you have multiple types of user participating, you can attempt to cross-reference the different types using a Venn diagram to see which words apply to both markets (see example below).



Microsoft desirability tool-kit: full word set

Accessible	Engaging	Organized
Advanced	Entertaining	Overbearing
Annoying	Enthusiastic	Overwhelming
Appealing	Essential	Patronizing
Approachable	Exceptional	Personal
Attractive	Exciting	Poor quality
Boring	Expected	Powerful
Business-like	Familiar	Predictable
Busy	Fast	Professional
Calm	Flexible	Relevant
Clean	Fragile	Reliable
Clear	Fresh	Responsive
Collaborative	Friendly	Rigid
Comfortable	Frustrating	Satisfying
Compatible	Fun	Secure
Compelling	Gets in the way	Simplistic
Complex	Hard to Use	Slow
Comprehensive	Helpful	Sophisticated
Confident	High quality	Stable
Confusing	Impersonal	Sterile
Connected	Impressive	Stimulating
Consistent	Incomprehensible	Straight Forward
Controllable	Inconsistent	Stressful
Convenient	Ineffective	Time-consuming
Creative	Innovative	Time-Saving
Customizable	Inspiring	Too Technical
Cutting edge	Integrated	Trustworthy
Dated	Intimidating	Unapproachable
Desirable	Intuitive	Unattractive
Difficult	Inviting	Uncontrollable
Disconnected	Irrelevant	Unconventional
Disruptive	Low Maintenance	Understandable
Distracting	Meaningful	Undesirable
Dull	Motivating	Unpredictable
Easy to use	Not Secure	Unrefined
Effective	Not Valuable	Usable
Efficient	Novel	Useful
Effortless	Old	Valuable
Empowering	Optimistic	
Energetic	Ordinary	

Build a persona

A common mistake is a lack of focus on websites. You can drastically increase performance if you focus on particular types of people who are valuable.



Time to complete:
30 mins - 2 hours

How to build out a persona

1. Look at your data. Who are currently your most valuable guests? What type of people have a better life time value? You can even see if you can interview a few to see why they visited your hotel. It's highly likely that you already have a good understanding of this, but if you have the time a little more research to truly understand your best customers is always a good plan.
2. Look for patterns. Is it particular age groups or nationalities? Are they first time bookers or seasoned travellers. Business or pleasure?
3. Build out a made-up biography of who the average person in this user group is. Get as detailed as you can. Designers often include many characteristics, from family relationships to technology competency. Make sure you add items around what they feel. A common addition is their 'User Needs' which will help you target known problems. There's many examples online if you'd like inspiration.
4. You may end up with a number of different types of guest. Try not to have more than 6 as you'll start to generalise your future designs.
5. Make sure you maintain the priority of which is the most important persona. The first one is your primary persona and should be who you first think of whenever you are building out a new feature or adjusting your website.

Using your persona

Companies often print out their personas and put them on the wall. Any time someone is looking at editing your website, you should ask 'What would Jane want?' or 'How does this affect Derek's path to purchase?'. By targeting these personas, you are targeting your most effective cohorts, making your hotel resonate for them.

Name

Age

Gender

Location

Occupation

Annual income

Personality (draw a line in each box)

Extrovert

Introvert

Sensing

Intuition

Thinking

Feeling

Judging

Perceiving

Reasons for travel

Photo

User quote

Needs

Methods of looking for a hotel