

Guerrilla UX Testing

Enhanced Networked Monographs Project
Digital Library Technology Services

What is Guerrilla UX testing?

Sometimes known as “field testing” or testing “in the wild,” guerrilla UX methods are fast, informal, and focused on qualitative insights. Guerrilla testing can help you get quick, low-cost feedback on wireframes, prototypes, and even live Web sites. Unlike formal usability testing that happens in a lab or dedicated space, guerrilla testing can take place in a public place such as a cafe or in someone’s office.

How do you do it?

- ❖ Get your prototype ready and lay out a task or two (be mindful of time!)
- ❖ Approach users at the time of testing
- ❖ Ask open-ended questions
 - What are you seeing here?
 - What do you expect?
 - What do you want to do on this screen?
- ❖ Encourage the user to “think aloud”
- ❖ Take notes or record activity
- ❖ Reward the participant with something edible

Pros + Cons of guerrilla testing



- Fast
- Low-cost
- Can apply at early stages of product development
- Qualitative insights
- Understand users’ contexts
- Break down team’s intimidation barrier to user testing



- Narrow focus of tasks/questions
- Lack of rigor
- Not quantitative
- “In the wild” context can be distracting to users
- Participants from a wider target group than you might desire

ENM case study

We wanted to get some quick feedback on a prototype we were building to incorporate a new kind of metadata into search results. We conducted a literature review as background research into user expectations about their ebook experiences, but we felt we needed to get a sense of how our particular ideas would be received by real users. We set up in the lounge area in the basement of Bobst Library and asked users to search for the term “poet” in our prototype interface. Each session took about 5 minutes and we gave users a granola bar to thank them for their time. One change we made as a result was to revise the placeholder text in the search bar.

Further resources

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Unger, Russ, and Todd Zaki Warfel. *Getting Guerrilla With It | UX Magazine*. <https://uxmag.com/articles/getting-guerrilla-with-it>. Accessed 15 Mar. 2018.

Also check out the work of JSTOR Labs!

About Enhanced Networked Monographs

Enhanced Networked Monographs (ENM) is an experimental publishing project funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. A collaboration between NYU Press and the Digital Library Technology Services (DLTS) department of NYU Libraries, ENM will provide free, web-based access to selected university press books. Expanding on work done for the NYU Press Open Access Books website, ENM will provide an enhanced reader experience website including: annotation, full-text search, and navigation via a topic map of names and concepts derived from index entries. The project will also provide data, code, and documentation, including code for the open source topic map curation toolkit made by Infoloom, the topic map data itself, and guidelines for publishers wishing to prepare EPUB files for machine reading.

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