

User Research and Why It's Crucial to Developing Your Product

What is User Research and How Does It Differ From a Usability Interview?

User research can be broadly defined, but the basic difference from [usability interviews](#) is that the latter is done after the product has been built and is in a usable state. Troubleshooting is performed and we give you feedback. While the actual research aspect is really what sets user research apart from usability interviews, user research is done at a much earlier stage of development. You, a UX designer, or a third party will gather information before anything gets built so that you can better understand what your end users are expecting in your product.

How Can User Research Mitigate My Risk?

You can't afford to avoid investing in user research. Even if you have an idea of what your users want, UX professionals can prevent you from wasting a lot of time and money by discovering problems early on. The results of actual end user research may surprise you and show you perspectives that you may not have thought of.

Most importantly, you need to determine your biggest risk: what could cause your product to fail, and badly at that? Working closely with different end users can mitigate risk by determining what features resonate with them and what doesn't. Then you can decide to build a click model, [followed by a prototype](#), to temper that risk if it's fixable or if our proposed solutions can give you more confidence to move forward.

Starting small also helps lessen upfront financial impact. By working with just a few end users who haven't tried your product yet, this helps refine the UX without a massive investment.

Solely Focusing On End Users

By putting user research in our hands, the tactical work with getting end users exposed to your product is off your mind. You can build on it and mitigate the risks of biased and/or unfocused research.

When you communicate your knowledge to a UX designer so they can make the connections with your product, you can focus more on the strategic aspects of your business. This focal point often detracts from the product's function and how the end user perceives it. It's not too dissimilar to an artist being incredibly intimate with their work and focusing on a minute aspect of it like shading, but they need to step back to get a better idea of what the whole composition looks like.

Nick Comito is a UX designer at Praxent and is happy to work with you at any stage of your project. Whether your concerns lie with UX, UI, usability, project management, or other aspects of app and software development, Praxent can craft a solution for your project's budget and scope.

You can follow Nick on [Twitter](#), and if you're interested in learning more about becoming more effective with technology for your business, feel free to check out our [free webinar](#).