



Services Profile

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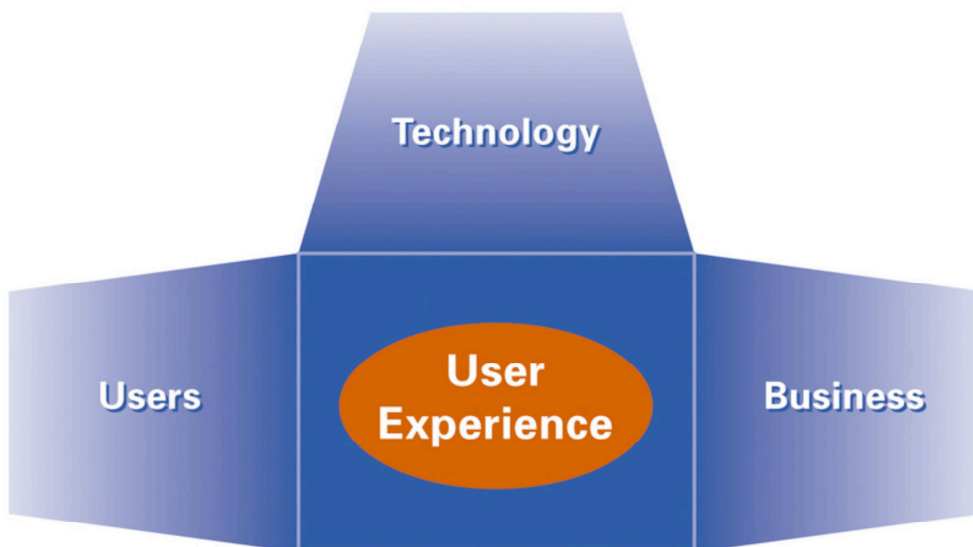
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Why use UX Research?

We can help you create a superb online experience for your customers, increase sales and decrease development costs. Understanding your customer's reactions and experiences on your website or software system, and how to improve it in line with best practice, will help your business.

With so many differing opinions on how to improve the ease of use of websites and online systems, objective expert advice that's independent from the development team or business owners can be critical to the success of your project.



About UX Research

UX Research is dedicated to improving the User eXperience. This is a new consultancy based in Sydney Australia, led by John Eklund, one of Australia's most qualified and experienced usability practitioners. UX Research provides independent and objective advice for making systems simple for customers to use and effective in achieving business goals. We undertake most forms of **usability**, and can offer specialised services such as **accessibility**, **eyetracking** and **web analytics** through select alliance partners.

Who needs UX Research services?

A small sample of the types of clients we deal with:

- Managers of e-business systems in the services sector, launching or updating an online application/ management process who want to be certain their customers will find it easy to use
- Corporate bodies with websites that have grown in an unplanned way, who wish to rationalise the appearance and structure of their sites
- Business managers of Medium to Large enterprises who increasingly want to allow their customers to transact directly with them via online
- Developers wishing to offer their clients independent testing as a part of their development methodology.

The UX Research approach

Methods

All UX Research services are fully customised to meet the individual needs of the client, adapting different methods and approaches to achieve the desired result in the available timeframe and budget. Most of the services described can be delivered in two to four weeks, depending on project size. We use a variety of methods to deliver services, including:

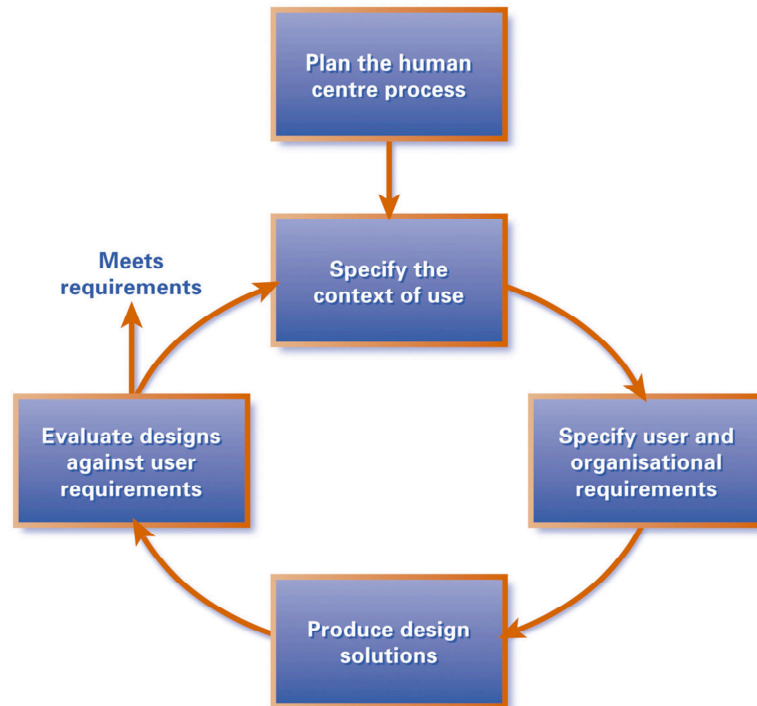
- Expert analysis against best practice or defined standards
- Surveys
- Interviews
- Task-based observational testing
- Focus groups and workshops
- Eyetracking analysis
- Click-tracks analysis
- Ad-hoc advice and review.

Process

Typically the services describe below all involve a set of steps:

1. Meeting with the client to determine business goal or problem
2. Identifying the approach that will most effectively meet the client needs and budget
3. Formalising the services to be provided in a proposal and quote

4. Working with the client in preparing materials to deliver the service, such as test scripts, questionnaires or demographic profiles
5. Delivering the service, such as testing with user groups
6. Analysing and preparing a report, with prioritised recommendations
7. Debriefing the results.

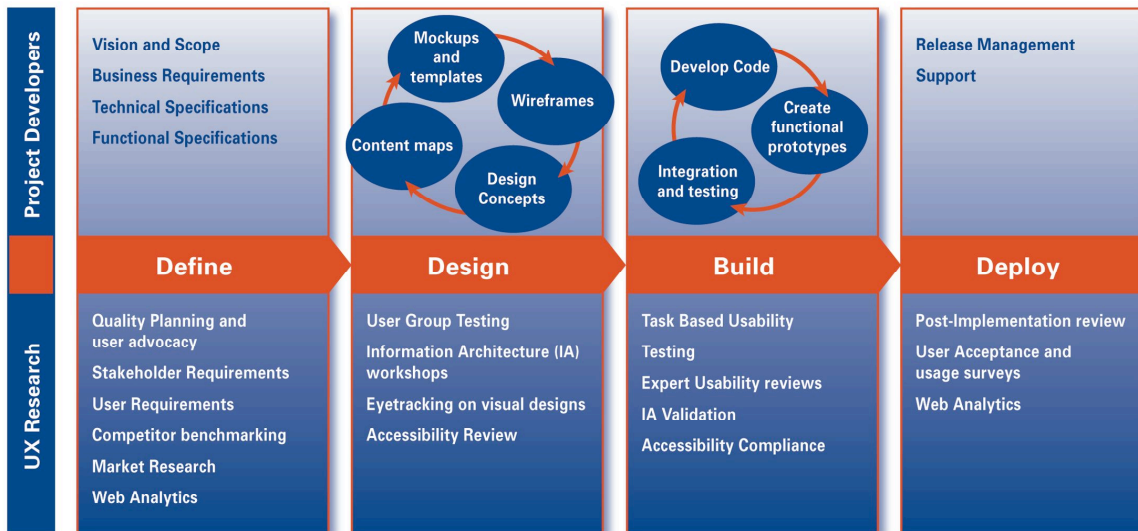


UX Research reports are useful

With prioritised and categorised issues, their severity levels explained in detail, our reports provide structured recommendations to improve systems, add direct value to development projects, saving on development effort. UX Research reports provide independent expert advice to business owners and practical guidelines for developers to make their systems easier to use.

Services

Services are aligned with the software development lifecycle, which recognises that development is iterative, particularly on the web.



Quality Planning and User Advocacy

Obtain User Centred Design Advice - assistance in integrating user testing and consultation into a development project's lifecycle to maximise customer satisfaction and acceptance, and ensure the success of your project.

Stakeholder and User Requirements

Use a formal process to gather and document the needs of users and stakeholders, then analyse and translate these into a set of specifications. This ensures that the requirements of end users and business owners are clearly defined and delivered on in the final release.

Expert Usability Review

Conduct usability testing on prototype designs or websites by expert analysis against a set of usability standards by identifying issues and their severity, with individual recommendations for improvement. This is a good first usability test process that can be completed in two weeks elapsed time.

User Testing

Usability evaluation is conducted through methods such as one-to-one task based usability testing. Test designs with users at various stages of development – from early prototypes such as structural maps and visual designs by focus groups, through to late functional prototypes nearing launch. Identify 80% of usability issues in two to four weeks.

Information Architecture

Elicit new content structures for larger websites or validate proposed structures through user testing with techniques such as open and closed card sorting.

elearning

Determine user reactions to instructional/learning designs and find practical ways to improve acceptance, understanding and retention. Benchmark designs against best and current practice in elearning.

Comparative/Competitive Analysis and Benchmarking

Check the relative ranking of your website or software system compared with the known competition, and determine which elements of each are most liked by users, and which follow best practice.

Interaction Design and Validation

Establish highly intuitive flows from the ground up or refine existing by specifying the sequence of interactions in detail, through a process of user consultation and leveraging from best practice.

Alliance partners

UXResearch recognises a select group of independent experts who can deliver related services in a partnership arrangement. UX Research has many years experience working directly with these independent experts in specialist areas:

Eyetracking



Use advanced technology to follow a user's eye movements on screen or in any space, and analyse the data to determine the most efficient visual design to achieve the user's task, objective or preference.

Eyetracking is offered as a stand-alone service or in conjunction with usability services by Dr Peter Brawn of Eyetracker (<http://www.eyetracker.com.au>). Dr Brawn has a doctorate in visual cognition and led the establishment of the first commercial eyetracking service in Australia.

Accessibility



Ensure your websites or software systems are compliant with W3C guidelines and that designs are inclusive of the broadest audience, accommodating users with visual or other impairment.

Accessibility services are offered through Roger Hudson of Web Usability (<http://www.usability.com.au>), arguably Australia's most experienced and knowledgeable accessibility expert. Roger has conducted numerous accessibility studies, and has an intimate knowledge of accessibility guidelines and legal requirements, and can conduct expert reviews using various screen reading devices, or user studies with a range of users with disabilities such as blindness.

Web Analytics



Through a partner organisation Panalysis (<http://www.panalysis.com.au>), web analytics is offered as means of gaining an insight into your customers. Panalysis are expert in collecting and analysing server log data to gather information on patterns of

usage, signup rates, drop-out points in process flows, and provide arrange of website optimisation services. Analytics is an efficient means of benchmarking the performance of a website, determining clearly if there is a problem, and where it is.

Experience

UXResearch is a new usability consultancy led by Dr John Eklund, formerly Head of Usability at Access Testing Centre and lecturer at Sydney University, with over 8 years experience delivering usability services to corporate and government clients. John has a PhD from Sydney University in the fields of Education and Human Computer Interaction, and has delivered hundreds of projects to clients such as:



Sample projects

John Eklund has in previous roles conducted and supervised in excess of 2M in consulting services relating to improving the user experience. A sample of projects include:

- An evaluation of The usage of The Australian National Training Authority's National Flexible Learning Toolboxes, series 2 and 3
- A comparative evaluation of credit card signup processes
- Usability Testing of the Personal and Business Online banking systems for a major Australian bank
- Stakeholder and user requirements for Intranet Redesign for The Australian Computer Society

UX Research Services Description

- A review of online accommodation and travel booking processes for a major online travel website
- An expert usability review of wireframes developed for new online transactional functionality for a major telecommunications company
- A post implementation review of the Hansard and Parl-Info systems for The Australian Parliament, Canberra.

Cost of services

The cost of a UX Research usability consultant can be offset in many ways:

- Decreased development time
- Reduced redevelopment effort
- Greater customer satisfaction on release
- Increasing online signups/takeup or acceptance through ease of use.

UX Research services are very cost-effective as we don't have the overheads of many usability organisations. The consultant who delivers the report conducts the study and manages the account, minimising administrative costs. We don't have dedicated test labs as many organisations do, which are often under-utilised (we test on your premises or hire specialised premises). Our experience enables us to offer the RIGHT level of consulting advice to your organisation – enough input to add substantial value without over-testing, leaving budget for later rounds of usability.

Ask UX Research to quote on your next usability outsource project.

Contacts

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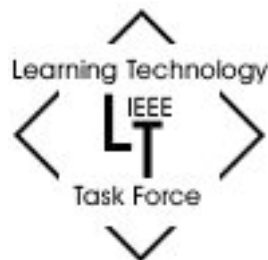
Principal consultant profile

John Eklund BSc Dip Ed MEd PhD

Formerly a teacher and University Lecturer and Head of The Usability Division at Access Testing Centre.

Doctorate in Education from The University of Sydney in the area of interface design of instructional systems, in collaboration with researchers at the HCI Institute of Carnegie Mellon University.

Has conducted a multitude of usability studies for a wide range of government and corporate clients. Is widely published and is editor to The Australian Journal for Educational Technology and Journal for Universal Access in the Information Society.



Selected Publications and Conference Presentations

For a complete list of the 75 publications from 1993 to this year, refer to the website.

Eklund (2007) *The Usability of elearning*. Presentation and workshop given to The Centre for Excellence in Enquiry-based learning, Manchester University, 17 July 2007

Eklund J (2006) Usability Testing: Is it really worth it? *Information Age Oct/Nov 2006*. p. 26-29.

Eklund J & Brawn P (2005) Experiences in Developing and Delivering a Commercial EyeTracking Service. *Paper presented at HCI International 2005, Las Vegas, July 22-28*.

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Eklund J (2005) *Making elearning work*. Keynote presentation at World Usability Day, Brisbane 3rd November 2005.

Eklund J (2004) Driving the Future of e-Learning. *Keynote Address to The Fifth International Conference on Communication Technologies in Education*. In Fenstrom K (Ed.) Proceedings of The Fifth International Conference on Communication Technologies in Education, Samos, Greece July 1-3, 2004. P. 2-13.

Eklund J (2003) Risk Reduction for Developing Quality Instructional Systems. In K Fenstrom (Ed.) Proceedings of The Fourth International Conference on Information Communication Technologies in Education, July 3-5, 2003, Samos Island, Greece. p.367-372.

Eklund J, Baker M & Lowe D (2003) Usability Evaluation as a component of the OPEN Development Framework. In Jacko J & Stephanidis C (Eds.) *Human Computer Interaction - Theory and Practice (Part I) Vol 1*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc. New Jersey. p. 459-463.

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Lowe D & Eklund J (2001) Commercial Issues in the Specification of Web Systems. *Proceedings of The Sixth Australian Workshop on Requirements Engineering*. (AWRE'2001) p.4-13.

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Eklund J (2001) Creating a Usable Website – or “How Frustrated are your Users?” *Presentation at Internet World, Sydney*. Thursday 19th July

Eklund J & Bicknell J (2001) Using Checklists for large scale website audits. In W Fowler & J Hasebrook (Eds.) *Proceedings of WebNet 2001. World Conference on the WWW and Internet*. Orlando, Florida; October 23-27, 2001. AACE, Norfolk, VA USA. p. 343.

UX Research Services Description

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Eklund J (2000) User Centred Design Principles in the development of interactive educational media *Invited Presentation to ASCILITE2000* Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour, December 2000.

Eklund J and Lowe D (2000) A Quality Assurance Methodology for the Production of Technology Delivered Education and Training. In Davies, G & Owen, C (Eds.) *Proceedings of WebNet2000 - World Conference on the WWW and Internet*. AACE. VA, USA. p. 162-169.

Quinn C, Alem L & Eklund J (1999) A pragmatic evaluation methodology for an assessment of learning effectiveness in instructional systems. In S Brewster, A Cawsey & G Cockton (Eds.) *Human-Computer Interaction INTERACT99* (Vol. II). British Computer Society, UK. p.55-56.

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