

RFP Responder Initial Usability Test Plan

The RFP Responder application is in the early phases of development based on initial prototypes. The purpose of this test will be to gather baseline data on the initial design of the RFP Responder application and perform exploratory testing to uncover major usability issues.

Overall objectives for the study

We will gather baseline data about the overall effectiveness of the RFP Responder application. The goals of this study are to:

- Assess the overall effectiveness of RFP Responder users in completing the main application tasks.
- Assess user's understanding of the language and concepts used in the application.

Research questions

In addition, in this study will try to answer these questions:

- How easily do users add snippets of text?
- How easily do users add new projects?
- How easily do users add snippets to projects to projects and organize the table of contents?
- What language do users use to describe the key concepts of the application?

The focus of the test will be to collect qualitative data:

- The verbal protocol – the running commentary that participants make as they think aloud – will give us indicators about what participants were confused by and why.

I will also collect quantitative data:

- Errors in completing each task

Location and setup

As the application is currently only running on the development machine, testing will take place on the development machine. The development machine is a late 2007 MacBook. Testing will be performed in Chrome to make sure the JavaScript functions work. I will set up a database containing the information needed for the tests and

additional data to give an idea of what the application will look like. The database will be reloaded with the default testing information before each test.

Recruiting participants

For the first round, we will recruit 4-5 participants from acquaintances, including several participants with related technical documentation experience.

Methodology

The first round of testing will be exploratory testing. We are testing the application as currently developed. There is a single path, so we will use a within-subjects design.

The testing session will last approximately 15-20 minutes, including <5 minutes for test introduction, 10-15 minutes for testing, and <5 minutes for debriefing.

Introduction to the session (<5 minutes)

Discuss:

- The purpose of the product
- The purpose of the test; testing the product, not the user
- Some areas are not functioning; I'll let you know when you come across them
- Thinking aloud.

Tasks (15-20 minutes)

Participants will perform the following tasks:

- Add a new snippet
- Enter text into the new snippet using some of the formatting options for the text editor
 - Use your name for the title
 - Write a sentence using the default paragraph font. If you need a prompt, describe what you do for a living.
 - Create a bulleted list. If you need a prompt, enter the names of some people who work with you.
 - Change the second name in the bulleted list to a bold font
 - Enter at least three of the names as tags for the snippet
 - Save the snippet
 - Where did you expect to go after saving the snippet?
- Return to the snippet list page
- Search for snippets using text or tags
 - Snippets containing "z820"
 - Snippets tagged "product"
- Create a new project
 - Use your name for the title
 - Enter a description, such as "This is my first project."
 - Save the project
 - Where did you expect to go after saving the project?

- Return to the projects page
- Open the preset project: Test Project
- Add the History snippet (You'll have to refresh to see the results at this point)
- Place the snippets in a specific order
 - Overview
 - Super Awesome Good Corporation
 - History
 - Products
 - Z820
 - Z820X
 - Pricing Options
 - Warranty

Post-test debriefing (<5 minutes)

Discuss:

- What areas did you find particularly challenging or confusing?
- Follow up on any particular problems that came up for the participant.
- Ask about language used in application (i.e., Snippets and Projects)

Measures

To answer these questions:

- How easily do users complete the main functions of the application using the design as currently developed?
- What obstacles do users face in completing these tasks?
- What workflow makes most sense to the users?
- Does the language used in the application match the users' understanding of the product?

I will collect both performance and preference data during the test sessions.

Performance:

For each of the tasks, was the task:

- Completed successfully, without errors
- Completed successfully, with prompting
- Not completed

Preference:

- Ease of use overall
- Usefulness of terms and labeling

Results

Qualitative Indicators

- Overall layout
 - Need better affordances on menu navigation; some participants weren't quite sure that the main menu was a menu, even though they made no mistakes

- Expectations on workflow (e.g., what happens when you click Add Snippet on Add Snippet page or Add Project on Add Project page were not consistent
- Big green buttons generally provided clear call to action on tasks
- On Add Snippet page
 - Font in TinyMCE is too small to see difference in bold/not bold text; size needs to be increased
 - Participants used help text on tag field to successfully complete tag entry, so this design choice was validated
 - Half of participants were challenged by “Add Snippet” button language when asked to save
- On Project Lists page
 - One participant thought the “New Project” button was a heading, not a button; need to improve affordances for buttons
- On Add Project page
 - Half of participants were challenged by “Add Project” button language when asked to save
- On Edit Project page:
 - Need better indicator that TOC items are draggable: participants guessed that they were, but showed obvious confusion
 - Add snippet overlay needs to better indicate where to click on snippet to add to TOC
 - On add snippet overlay, users went straight to search feature, so implementing that feature is key

Quantitative Results

Task completion by user (2-Success; 1-Success with prompt; 0-Failure):

Task	User 1	User 2	User 3	User 4
Add New Snippet	2	2	2	1
Format-Text - bullet	2	1	0	2
Format Text - bold	2	2	1	2
Tags	2	2	2	2
Search by Text	2	2	2	2
Search by Tag	2	2	2	2
Create Project	2	2	0	1
Open Project	2	2	2	2
Add Snippet to Project	1	1	1	2
Order Snippets	1	2	1	1