

Briefing Document: How to collect and analyse feedback on a project

One of the most important things a multimedia agency has to do is user test all their products, and collect feedback on how well they meet the client brief, and how well they work. This is an **evaluation** process and it ensures that the final product is not only as good as it can be, but that it is everything it was meant to be for the client.

User testing can be carried out by a team of people within the agency who have experience of testing all aspects of a product. Sometimes the client will organise a team of people to carry out user testing. This happens before the product goes live. Any problems with the product should be picked up before it goes on to the website, or is distributed to the client's customers.

It is very important to collect all the feedback from the user testing and sort out any problems the users identify before the final product is released. This can be a stressful time for the agency! Collecting and analysing the feedback has to be done efficiently and in a way that allows the project manager to quickly identify any major problems. You will be collecting some feedback from friends who will look at your website before it is released to the client. You need to do this as simply as you can to make this final task manageable.

Hints for collecting and analysing feedback from user testing

- Your user testers will want you to make this easy for them. Design a simple questionnaire that asks them to give an opinion about features of your website.
- Think about the key features of your website that you would like them to comment on. This might include the design (look and feel), use of images, use of audio and video, what they think about the navigation structure, whether they can find their way around successfully, use of text (how it is written as well as how much of it there is to read) and whether it is successful in what it is meant to do.
- You might even give your users a copy of the client brief. This will show them what the client wanted from you and they can compare this with the finished product.

- One of the most effective ways of collecting feedback, which is easy for the user, is to write the questions so that respondents just have to tick a box. You can then score the questionnaire by deciding what responses correspond to high or low scores.
- Example: I want to find out whether the users liked my design. I could ask a question that says:

'The design of the website was exciting and fitted it with the client brief'

I could then give the respondent five options, which they can put a ring around. These might be:

Strongly agree Agree No opinion Disagree Strongly disagree

- I could apply a score to the responses and this would give me some quantitative data (numbers), which is an easy way to analyse the feedback. The answer I would really like here is 'strongly agree' so I would award this answer five points. I would give four points for 'Agree', three points for 'no opinion' and so on. So 'strongly disagree' would get one point.
- This would allow me to add up all the scores for this question from all my users. So if everyone strongly agreed (and I would be hoping they did!), and I had ten users, this question would score 50 points. It's unlikely I would really get such a high score, but I would know that everything above 30 (the middle answer) was good, and anything below 30 wasn't so good.
- I could look at the scores and see whether anything wasn't getting very good feedback. However, this might not tell me **why** a particular aspect of the website wasn't scoring well. To find out more about why the users didn't like something, I could put in an open ended question, giving the user space to answer. For example, I could ask:

'If you have any comments about the design of the website, please enter them here'

- This would allow me to collect qualitative data (opinions rather than numbers), and give me some idea of what people actually felt about my design.

- You will need to ask questions about all aspects of the product, so your questionnaire will be quite long. Allowing the users just to put a ring around their responses will make it easy for them to answer, though. To make sure you do capture opinions, put an open ended question in for each part of the site that you are evaluating. It may be that your users won't add anything into these boxes, but they are there just in case.
- When you have collected your feedback, it is important to act on it. You should be able to see if anything isn't working, and this can usually be fixed, for example, audio or video not downloading properly.
- If the feedback is saying something about the design, which isn't so easy to change, you should come up with a short action plan that shows what you would do if you needed to change the design. This shows that you are listening to the feedback even if you can't really do anything about it.
- One of the most important steps in your project is to make sure you evaluate your product properly and you should ask enough people to do this to make it worthwhile. At least five people should user test your website so that you can produce an evaluation report as part of the assessment of your product. In this, you can make statements relating to the scores for each of the questions, as well as quote some opinions from the open ended questions. This will make a very impressive final report, and show your teacher that you really have thought about this important final step.