



User Experience Research Overview

Sachs Insights – *the art of research*

Founded in 1987, we are a qualitative research consultancy with a passion for discovery.

Our research practice areas:

- **Brand** – To capture the rational and emotional equity in brands and harness it to help shape communications, products, and experiences.
- **Innovation** – To identify opportunities for products and services based on unmet consumer needs.
- **User Experience** – To guide the conception and development of interactive products and services that are intuitive, appealing and support overall marketing goals for a brand.

Close Up: User Experience Research

Q. *When do you engage consumers in website development?*

A. *Ideally, at the very beginning.*

Two main categories of user experience research:

EXPLORATORY

- Ethnography
- Contextual Inquiry
- Website Optimization Groups
- Benchmarking
- Team Brainstorming

EVALUATIVE

- Iterative Usability Testing
- Build and test; build and test

Requirements
Analysis

Initial Designs/
Prototypes

Development

Testing

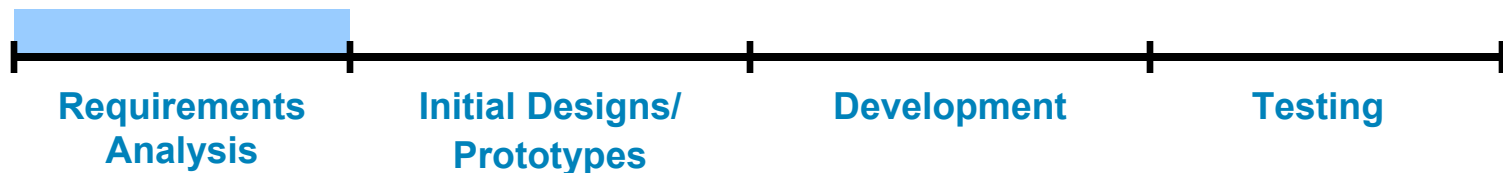
Website Development Timeline

Ethnography

Q. What role does ethnographic research play in web development?

A. Gain insights into current behavior, expectations and unmet needs in a real world environment.

- **Ethnography:** (in-home, in-store, or in-office) This method provides an understanding of online and off-line behavior, defines the role the web plays in your category and uncovers opportunities for new features and content. This reveals the competitive landscape and identifies where your brand can differentiate itself.



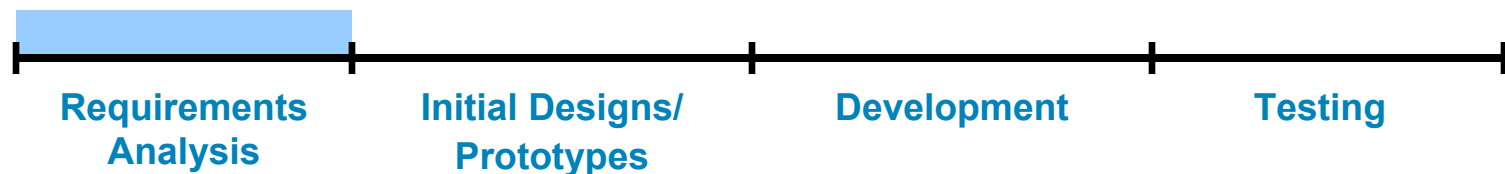
Website Development Timeline

Contextual Inquiry

Q. What role does contextual inquiry play in web development?

A. Gain insights into current behavior, expectations and unmet needs in a real world environment.

- **Contextual Inquiry:** (in lab) Consumers keep diaries of their online category/media usage prior to sharing their experiences in an in-depth in-lab interview. This creates a vivid picture of their online activity within the context of their real lives, and provides input for features, content and channel integration.



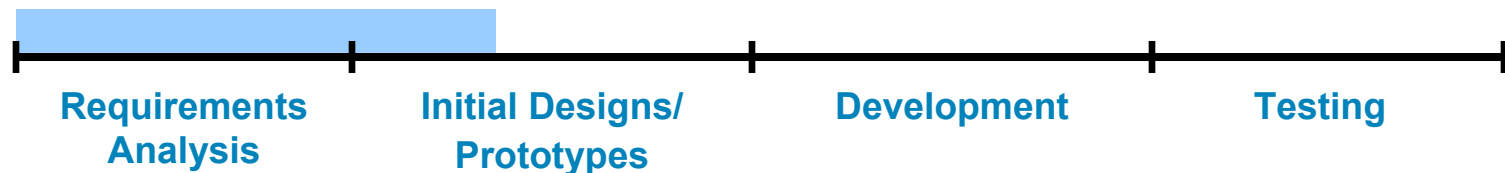
Website Development Timeline

Website Optimization Focus Groups

Q. How can focus groups be used for website development?

A. To inform brand/feature expectations, develop site structure/ language and obtain initial design input.

- **Concept Development Groups:** We divide the group into teams who design and present their ideal website, then are shown design ideas to compare with their ideal brand experience. This provides input to look and feel, messaging strategies, and information “architecture” at an early stage.
- **Taxonomy and Nomenclature Groups:** Following a homework assignment to visit relevant sites in the category, respondents are divided into two teams for a card sort exercise of site features, content categories, and products. Each team debates and then presents its categorization plan. This input creates a consumer driven site architecture and language.



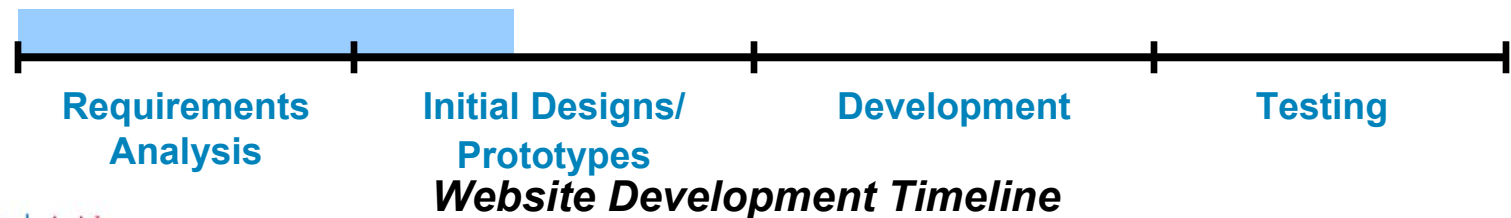
Website Development Timeline

Benchmarking

Q. How does your site stack up to the online competition?

A. Benchmarking your live site vs. competitive sites can uncover how consumers feel about your online brand experience.

- **Benchmarking:** (in-lab) Respondents explore, perform tasks, and compare features on your site as well as on several competitor's sites. This method enables you to understand how your current site compares to key competitors and identifies what functionality, content and imagery is critical for success...prior to embarking on development.

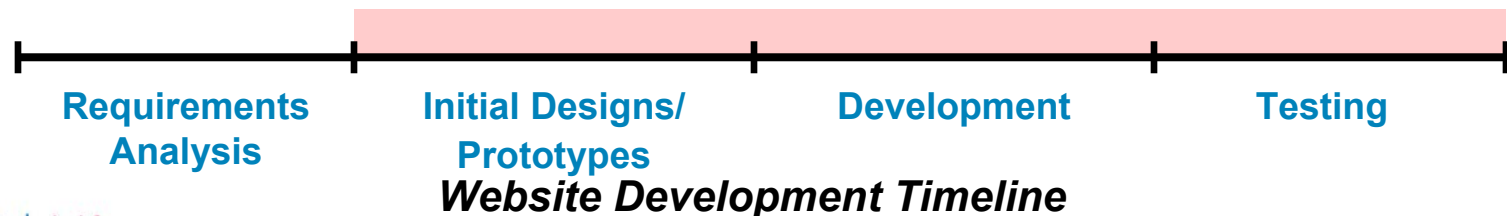


Iterative Usability Testing

Q. How do you optimize your site experience prior to launch?

A. Put the design in front of target consumers, get their feedback, revise the design, and test again.

- **Iterative Usability Testing:** (in-lab) During in-depth interviews in a lab or over the web, respondents are taken through a “guided exploration” of your site designs (anything from a “paper prototype” to a finished site). We call this practice “User Experience Research” because we test whether respondents are interested in the site as well as whether they can use it.

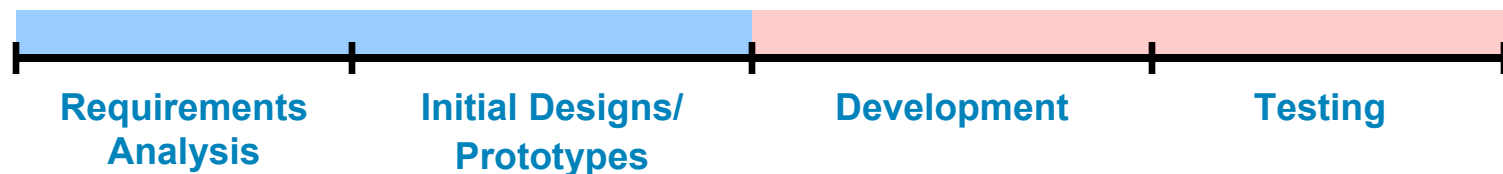


Client-Site Brainstorming Sessions

Q. Who knows the most about your consumers online behaviors and expectations?

A. Most likely – you do.

- **Client-Site Brainstorming Sessions:** Research among customers and prospects is valuable, yet it fails to mine experiences and opinions from inside the client's own organization. Client-site brainstorming sessions are deployed prior to research, during crucial development benchmarks, or at completion of research to ensure that employees' and stakeholders' deep knowledge of the consumer is factored in to site development plans.



Website Development Timeline

Sample Study Design*

Focus Groups

- **Two 2-hour groups per evening across TBD evenings**
 - Homework: Media Journal, Collage, Photo Journal or Video Diary
 - 20 minutes of offline experience in category
 - 30 minutes of nomenclature, feature comparison, or review of conceptual stimuli
 - 40 minutes of team web optimization exercises (card-sort, feature ranking, ideal website)
 - 30 minutes of early stage design assessment

Ethnography – In Home or Office

- **Two 3-hour in-home interviews per day across TBD days**
 - Media Journal or Video Diary
 - 40 minute home or office tour
 - 40 minute observation of processes
 - 40 minute offline discussion of expectations and concerns
 - 60 minute real-world computer exploration

Usability and Contextual Inquiry

- **Six to eight 1-hour interviews per day across 1 to 3 days on average**
 - 10-15 minutes of incoming mindset
 - 30-40 minutes of “task time” – enabling the exploration of key areas of the site
 - 10-15 minutes of overall reactions and anticipated use
 - Debrief at completion of each day.

** Each study is carefully tailored to address the objectives, category and brand.*

While no two studies are alike, these provide a starting point for each methodology.

Sachs Insights Deliverables

EXPLORATORY

Topline Report

- Key findings and recommendations
- Strategic and tactical issues
- 3 business days after research
- Telephone or in-person debrief

EVALUATIVE

Tactical “Matrix” Report

- “Back-room” debrief with research team on last day of research
- Summary of strategic issues
- Tactical matrix of prioritized issues and recommendations



Final Report

- Summary report for wider distribution
- Final recommendations
- Includes quotes and screen shots for key areas and insights
- 8-10 business days after research
- MS PowerPoint or Word

Video Report Additional Deliverable (optional)

- Highlight reel organized by theme and delivered on CD-ROM or DVD-R

Prototype & Stimuli Considerations

We advise our clients on how to create stimuli for research that produces answers.

The ideal research prototypes and stimuli:

- » Are scenario-driven
- » Contain features and content relevant to key research questions
- » Allow the team to observe users interacting – not “opining”
- » Include realistic data
- » Are not too much to test in one hour
- » Have a consistent level of finish (Hi-Fidelity or Lo-Fidelity)

Prototype & Stimuli Considerations

The specific type of prototype or stimuli to be used for testing depends on the development phase and research objectives.

Specific kinds of prototypes and test sites:

- » Clickthrough prototypes
- » “Broad,” “deep,” or both?
- » Benchmarking sites
- » Conceptual Phase: “Directional” Stimuli
- » Evaluation Phase: “Directional” Prototypes

Tip: When showing multiple prototypes or design approaches, always show meaningful and strategic differences across designs.

THANK YOU

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