



namecheap

Expert Summit

MASTERCLASS TRANSCRIPT



How UX Research Can Help Your Business

Hello. We're here today to talk about UX research, what it is and how it can help you in Namecheap's Expert Summit.

Hi, I'm Helena, and I'll be doing this talk to you guys. I've been working in UX for the past 10 years and specialized in research over the past five. I've been in Namecheap for seven months now and I'm very excited to share with you today.

I'm going to do a quick introduction, and then, I'm going to show you a few steps on how you can introduce this to your daily lives and your business. So, let's get to it.

UX research is the process of studying user behavior and deeply understanding them so you can properly respond to their needs. We do that by talking to people who would use our products or who we want to use our products. We check out what similar businesses are doing and we measure data that can be interesting to you.

So, essentially, it's a structural way to listen to users feedback and respond to them. It brings the customer's voice into decision making table, so you can be confident when making tough decisions. You'll have actual data to hold up against what are just opinions. You'll see that a better experience actually means financial gains. And you won't have to make stuff up and just hope for the best.

Talking about the real deal, it's return of investments. Well, when you understand who they are and what they need, they feel like it's a good experience and keep coming back. What I show here is a study performed by the Nielsen Norman Group, and you can find it on the website, at least it's there. It was in study with 42 different cases that showed great increase in every metric that they looked at. You can see that sales increased by 100%, traffic increased by 150, user performance and productivity, which is the feeling that they are actually accomplishing things in your website increasing by 161%. And use of a specific feature increased by 202%. So, I understand that it can feel quite challenging to incorporate this in your daily lives. But once you do, you will see results.

So, this looks pretty good, huh? How do we do it then? Well, the first thing you have to do is understand what you need to know. What are the problems you're facing? You don't feel like you know about your clients enough. You are not quite sure if you have a good idea. You think that your site maybe should perform better, or you want to make sure that your interface is working well. So, how do you figure this out? You should keep questioning your very own hypothesis.

So let's say you believe you should sell more. I think everyone feels like they should sell more. But what are the reasons? What are the bases that can make you sell more? So, does your shopping cart work well? Do you properly explain your product to the user so they're confident when making decisions? Are people actually interested in the format you're providing them? Or how can you make the buying process even easier? Well, once you have an answer to this question, you should start tracking your website. This is very important.

This is something that I keep bringing up every day in my life, which is that data can tell stories and you should start bringing them in. You can start by setting up Google Analytics or any other analytics tool really to your website. You can start getting heat maps, click maps, and session recordings for your interfaces, and there are many tools that do that too. Just the same as A/B testing whatever you're working on ever.

So, what do you track? Well, when we look at Google Analytics, you can check bounce rate, which is the rate of people who just dropped in one page of your website and then left not doing anything there. You can look at exit rate, which is the rate of people who came into your website, navigated a little, maybe clicked around, and then decided to leave. You can look at average session duration, which is the amount of time that people spend in your website. You can look at funnels, which are the flows that people take once they're in. Like, do they reach the goal immediately, or were people getting lost in the flow? You can check events, which are specific clicks in specific elements on the page, and you can compare every single information between new versus returning users. Then, we do heat maps. For that, we usually take scroll depth, which is how long people are scrolling through the pages, and click maps, which means where are people clicking exactly? This is going to tell you whether or not your CTA looks like a CTA for a final user. And then of course, A/B testing, which is comparing two versions of the same page.

Any of these metrics are going to bring valuable information to your businesses, so what I suggest is that you can take a deep look at them and define which one is going to work better for you at this point, and then starting towards getting this information.

So, after you've done that, you should define who do you want to talk to. This to me is the most fundamental part in any research project. You need to talk to the right people. So, who are the relevant people you want to talk to? Are they your own users? Are they users of similar products and services? Or are they users from a specific demographic background? Anyway, you should carefully find out who they are and reach out to them. And you can do that via email, telephone, social network, you can make surveys, or you can use third parties. There are companies and tools that allow you to recruit from their own user base. So if you have no idea where to start, that might be a good way.

And then, why exactly did I say this is the trickiest part? Well, let's look at a fictional scenario. Let's say we want to talk to women that are over 50 years old, they are financially stable, they have college education, and they're starting new projects or businesses. And so I now introduce you to Julie. Julie is a housewife. She met her husband right after she left college and had two kids. Even though she had a few good ideas in the back of her mind, mainly her job for the past few years were to take care of her two daughters and support her husband who had a very high scale job. However, the thing is that, now both her kids are in college, her husband's taking a step back in his career, and she finally has the time to take care of a few things that she's had deeply in her heart for the past years. Very simple, huh. However, so is she.

If we just look at basic information like demographics, such as age, social class and things like that, both those women could be in the same group. And in reality, they're not. A conversation with Julie is going to be a completely different conversation that you would have with Ms Obama. And they are equally important. But asking them the same questions about how they use a product is not going to bring you good enough information. We want to talk to both of them. But it's very different to talk to Julie, who's very excited about selling her homemade soap from her living room, than to talk with Michelle, who definitely has a whole team of people working towards getting her next global impact project on the road. Keep this in mind.

I know this is a very extreme example, but this happens guys. So be mindful of this whenever you're considering who you're going to talk to you for your next project.

And then, it's time to define your method. Keeping in mind exactly what you want to know is going to help you define what will be the best way to get this information. There are a few basics like

interviews, focus groups, usability testing, either present or remote. You can do workshops, and definitely data analysis.

But how do you choose between them? So, let's say you just want to compare performances and evaluate goals. For that, we use quantitative approaches, which are our Google Analytics, heat maps, and A/B testing. This is going to bring a high volume of hard data that you can actively compare and create statistics with. And then let's say what you want to do is understand what are the people's motivations, their needs and challenges. For that, we use qualitative approaches, like interviews, focus groups, and user testing. This means you're actually going to reach out to the people you want to talk to you. We call it qualitative because it's virtually impossible to reach 5,000 people for one of these studies. It's going to take time, it's going to take effort, it's going to take you essentially sitting in front of a person for an hour and an hour and a half. So, those are going to bring us reasons that are going to justify the quantitative side of the research. Ideally, both these sides always work together. I know it can be hard, but at least try to perform one of them.

And then comes the part of asking the right questions. It's very easy to be biased when you're testing your own product. I say that because any change is exciting, and a new project can be amazing. But you're not sure how your user feels that. So, take your time to get enough context. Ask who your users are, what do they do, why would they use your product? Where and when would they use your product? And then, when you actually start asking about your product, try to go for, "What do you think?" Instead of, "Do you like it?" Or, "How did it impact you?" Instead of, "Did it help you?" When you ask a question that's either positive like, "Do you like it?" Or negative, "Don't you like it?" It can make users feel a little bit of pressure to answer one way or another and limit their answers. If you ask, "Do you like it?" They can say just, "Yes," and that will be it. Instead of you asking them, "What do you think?" This is going to make them actually consider what they're going to say, and give you their opinion on this.

And then, take your time with the results. Remember that they are your users' voices. Keep them on the table at all times. Analyze each one of them, group the similar outcomes and evaluate their relevance so you can prioritize what you're going to do next or your direction for the next two or three months. And then act on those results. It's not going to be worth it if you are not able to do anything with this information. So, remember to do what your user is asking you, of course, according to your business goals. Well, now the only thing left to do would be start over. Either because you want to evolve what you're doing, or because you want to go another direction.

You can start this process again as many times as you want. Well, research is about filling the gap. It's going to bring the right voice at the right time to guide your decision making with critical and analytics view of the problems you have. It's a chance to build empathy and bring your users' perspective first-hand. It's qualitative and quantitative, actual evidence instead of just guesswork. And it's going to be insights on the best routes and solutions.

This is what I wanted to share with you today. I really hope this helps you grow your business. I'm very happy that you stayed with me until the end, thank you, and hopefully, I'll see you soon. Bye.