

USABILITY STUDY | SUMMATIVE

PREPARED BY THE ABC CO. WEB RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT TEAM

PROJECT GOAL

To design and roll out the best online pizza ordering experience in the world in time for the upcoming Super Bowl in February.
User research, with customers of this site, is recommended in order to successfully meet the project goal.

SITE STATUS: DEVELOPMENT

The site is currently in the development phase (HTML, CSS, JavaScript), and it is tied to the corporate servers.

APPROACH RECOMMENDATION: SUMMATIVE USABILITY STUDY

With the site currently in development, it is recommended that the best approach for a usability study, given the current timeframe of less than four months until launch, is a summative usability study. A summative test will generate quantitative results, identifying if the site is ready for deployment meeting the usability goals set forth, or if it is in need of improvement. As a dual benefit, the results will provide our marketing team with statistical marketing facts to promote our site.

ABOUT SUMMATIVE TESTING

Summative testing can take place during the midpoint of the product development cycle, which is currently taking place. Also known as assessment testing, summative testing looks beyond the intuitiveness of a product by:

- Examining how well a user can perform realistic tasks
- Measuring effectiveness, efficiency and user satisfaction
- Identifying specific, complex usability deficiencies in a site

WHY SUMMATIVE TESTING?

Formative testing was also evaluated for this usability project; however, due to the current project status and timeframe, a summative test appears to be the best plan of action. The reasoning for this is listed below:

- Formative testing traditionally takes place with preliminary concepts.
- Unlike formative tests, in which a user walks through and comments on screens, etc. a summative test will focus on the user actually performing real tasks at hand. This will allow detection of complex usability flaws, should they exist, which would go undetected in other less formal methods.
- A formative test focuses on the process, while a summative test focuses on actual behaviors.
- A summative test is quantitative data, instead of qualitative data collected in formative testing.

SUMMATIVE METHOD COSTS & BENEFITS

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
- Reliable data to test our hypothesis - Measures effectiveness - Measures efficiency - Measures user satisfaction - Potential to detect complex usability flaws - Potential to provide marketing team with statistical quantifiable statements - Simulates using the real product	- Expense - 12+ participants (minimum) - Time constraints, high-time demand

The benefits greatly outweigh the costs for this summative usability study. While time consuming, these individual 1:1 sessions will allow for quantifiable data from targeted customers conducting testing using real scenarios, making the expense worthwhile to not only the development team, but to the marketing team as well.

NEXT STEPS & POST TESTING

Summative testing would take place with a targeted recruitment of customers engaging in carefully crafted tasks. Each session will be recorded, and participant consent will be obtained prior to each session. Tasks will reflect real-scenarios, measured on a quantifiable scale. A summary report of results will be generated post testing. Should a complex usability deficiency arise through this research, we will insert a change request to address the issue. As this design process is iterative, additional testing is recommended going forward to further enhance the site's usability.