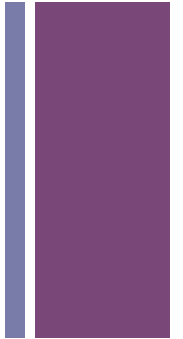




Agile Usability Testing Methods

Glenn Teneycke

+ What is Agile?



- Agile is group of software development methodologies based on iterative development, where requirements and solutions evolve through collaboration between self-organizing cross-functional teams.
- Agile methods promote a disciplined project management process that requires frequent inspection and adaptation
- Most Agile development methods involve development iterations, teamwork, collaboration, and process adaptability throughout the life-cycle of the project.

+ Agile vs. Waterfall

Agile vs. waterfall

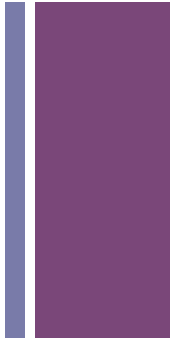
"Waterfall"



Agile

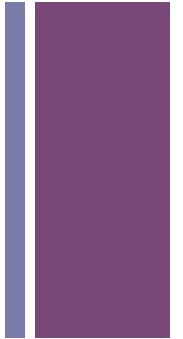


+ Reality Check



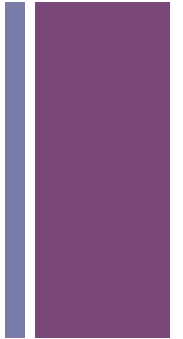
- Usability testing methodologies tend to be best suited for the traditional waterfall approach
- Increasing number of projects are a hybrid of Agile and Waterfall. They use some Agile methodologies but not all
- As a result UX professionals need to embrace some of Agile Usability testing methodologies

+ Summative Usability Testing



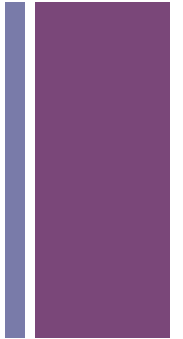
- Summative usability testing is done later in the process to help measure the usability of a component or identify problems with it
- The usability requirements should be task-based, and should tie directly to product requirements, including results from analytic tools such as personas, scenarios, and task analysis.
- Testing may validate a number of objective and subjective characteristics, including task completion, time on task, error rates, and user satisfaction.

+ Formative Usability Testing



- Done in the early stages of the project to help guide the design
- Focus is on whose goal is not primarily to find usability problems that need to be fixed, but to assess the overall user experience and understand users' reactions to different ideas.
- This can include comparative testing—that is, soliciting feedback on multiple solutions to a design problem

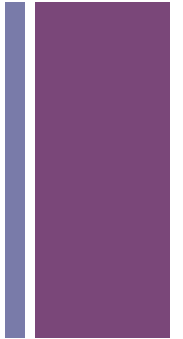
+ Formative Testing in Agile



- Formative testing is used in Agile because
 - Quick turnaround
 - Can fix problems before coded
 - Minimal reporting (team participates in testing)

- Formative testing is primarily used because it allows the opportunity to influence design direction before significant development is completed

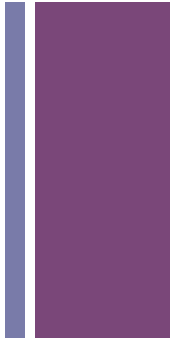
+ Typical Methods



Formative Methods include:

- Heuristic evaluation
 - Paper Prototyping of concepts
 - Thinking-aloud testing
 - Contextual Inquiry
-
- Summative Methods include:
 - Time trials
 - Task completion
 - Focus Groups

+ Summative Testing in Agile



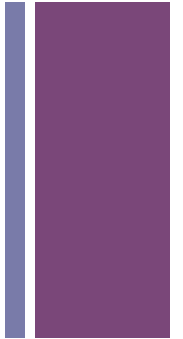
Summative testing is not used as often in Agile because:

- Creating usability reports is time consuming– even short ones
- Captures big initial problems, hides smaller ones
- Collects information that is never used



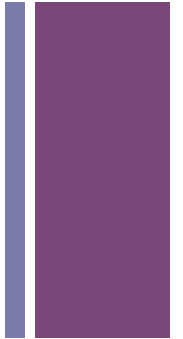
+ Agile Usability Testing Best Practices

+ Recruiting User Pools



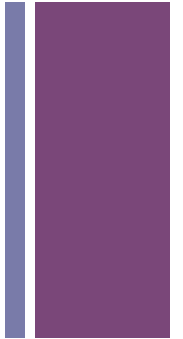
- Set Up User Pools early in the planning process
- This can be one of the biggest challenges in a project

+ User Proxies



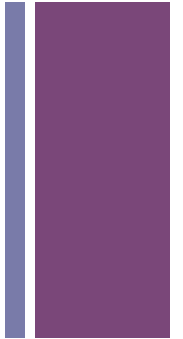
- Ideal test subjects are the actual users but getting their time can be challenging
- These can include actual users, quality assurance, help desk support, work colleagues and subject matter experts
- Use each group depending on what you want to test
- Some things need to be tested with the actual users in the real world. However some design decisions don't depend on that background. Some interactions can be tested on user proxies.

+ Number of Participants



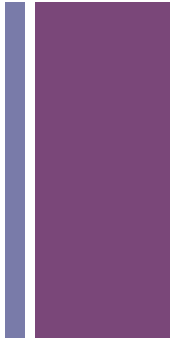
- Obstacles to usability testing include the expense and time to test users
- Based on Jacob Nielsen's assertion that you need to test a minimum of 5 users
- Testing even 1 user is better than testing none at all. interactions can be tested on user proxies.

+ Reporting



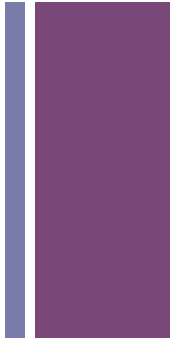
- Formative reporting usually take the format of a highlights video or excel list of issues
- Seldom do long reports
- RITE method the team sees the issues first hand

+ Contextual Inquiry



- Interviews are conducted in the user's work environment.
- The researcher observes the users do their own work tasks and discusses any issues they may have.
- In addition, the user may share past stories they are relevant to the project.

+ Summary



- Agile / Waterfall Hybrids require UX teams to adapt their approach
- Even in a Waterfall project more Formative Usability Testing should be done

+ Questions?

