

Who is my target audience (the users)?

- Anybody and everybody
- Specific subset of user/consumer (i.e. for industry specific sites)
- Internal users (i.e. for internal facing sites)

Answering this allows us to construct a site that is better tailored to the user. This can include language used, location of pages and where/when information is provided.

What are the user's goals when coming to this site?

- Conduct consumer research (usually about a product/service)
- Make a purchase
- Contact someone
- Learn more about a subject (blog posts, videos, etc.)
- Find out more about the company in general (location, story, etc.)

Knowing what the user wants to do on the site can help the UX designer customize the experience to better serve them. These questions can be answered through discovery user research, by the client or both.

What are the company's goals for this site?

- Increase e-commerce
- Increase traffic/time on site
- Generate leads (i.e. contact information)
- Build content/reputation as an industry leader

Knowing the goals during the discovery and planning stages will allow the UX designer to customize the experience to better accomplish them.

Note::** The user's and company's goals should match up pretty well. If they do not align, the company needs to reassess what they are trying to do as opposed to what the user wants. At the end of the day, a UX designer *should**** lean toward the needs of the user over the wants of the company. We are the advocate for the user, who doesn't have a voice at the table, rather than a Yes Man for the company. Nine times out of 10, this is not an issue, as both wants and needs should match up; however, in cases where a UX designer has to decide whose side to take, they will keep the user's best interest in mind.

UX Questions continued



Why?

This is the #1 question a UX designer should ask, and they should ask it as often as a toddler. This question works both for the company and the user. Why do you want this content here? Why are you focusing on this or that? Why do you think this would be effective? Why did you visit the site? Why did you navigate there? Why did you leave without exploring any pages?

A UX designer should be armed with as much information as possible to construct a site, and asking why to really get to the root of the request or mindset of the user is the best tool we have.

What content will live on this site? What content is developed/what needs to be developed?

- E-commerce
- New pages for new initiatives
- Blog posts/videos/infographics
- About us/company details

Content is KING. It helps a UX designer to construct a site in a way that makes sense, and also allows for more accurate designs. The earlier content can be developed and delivered, the better the end product will be. Ideally, content is ready to go before a sitemap is even created.

UX Tips::

- Always get a thorough explanation for decisions being made, both by the company and the user. Ask “why?”
- The user is always right (this might be harsh for a company to realize).
- Don’t assume you know your users, their motivations or needs. More often than not you don’t, and your site will be ineffective.
- Testing and research should be your best friend – it will save time and money if done correctly.
- Measure twice, cut once – you’ll be in better shape if your site launches later than expected but was well thought out and implemented rather than rushing to get a site launched by a certain date. Would you rather move into a new house that finished on time but had a leaky roof and no running water? Or would you wait a few weeks and move into a 100% finished, tested, and approved one?
- Not every user will be 100% satisfied with a newly designed site, but the majority should be.
- Know what content you need and what needs to be created.
- Have all of the key decision-makers involved throughout the process. Nothing is worse than “running something by so and so” and then having big changes made deep into the calendar. If their opinion matters, they should be involved from day one.

UX Questions continued



- Make decisions carefully. The further into a project we get, the harder it is to adjust the site structure and design. Take a few extra days if necessary to make sure everything is accounted for and all the appropriate people have seen it.
- Trust us. The recommendations we are making are meant to help improve your site and meet the goals you have set. We understand that the client is always right, but we hate when we have an “I told you so” moment. We don’t do this for our own egos, we do this to better your company.
- Be honest. UX designers have thick skin and we won’t cry if you disagree with an approach. We’d rather have a conversation around something than an email saying “we don’t like this” without context.