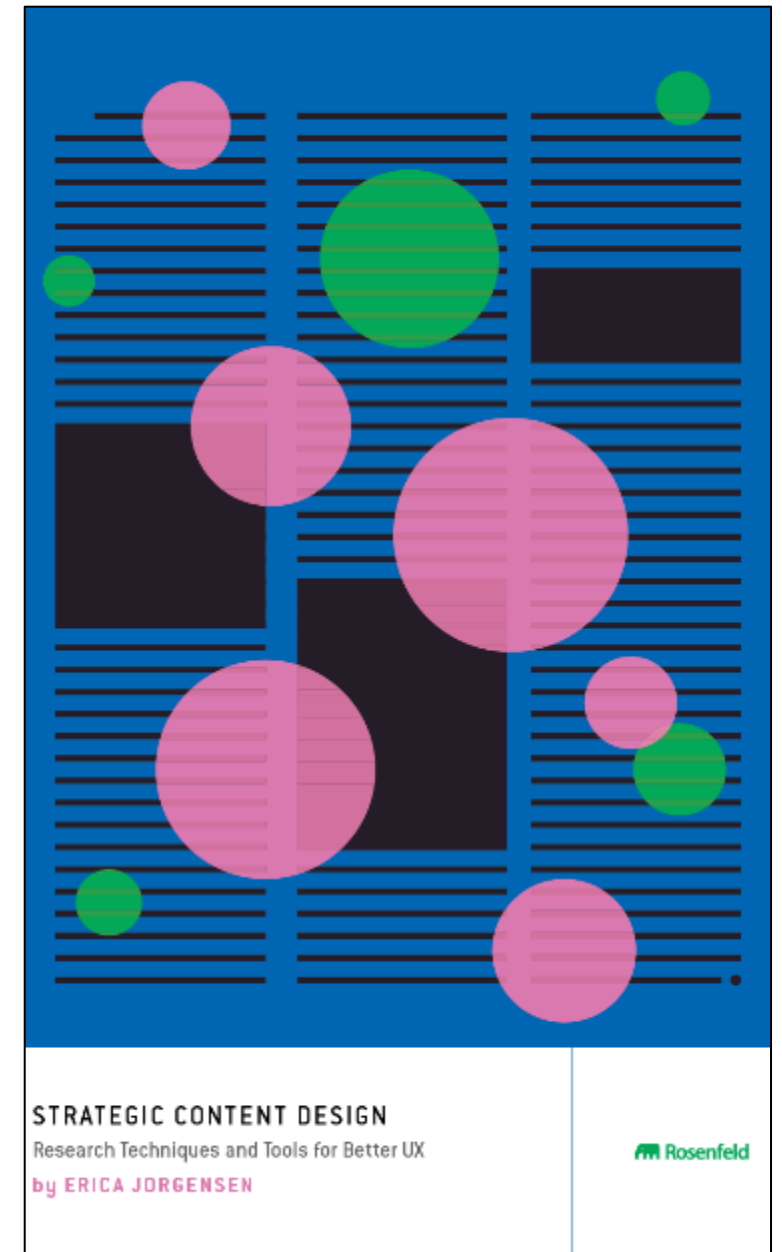


# Content design for impact & influence

**Erica Jorgensen**

Content Strategy Seattle Meetup  
4/12/2023

© 2023 Erica Jorgensen

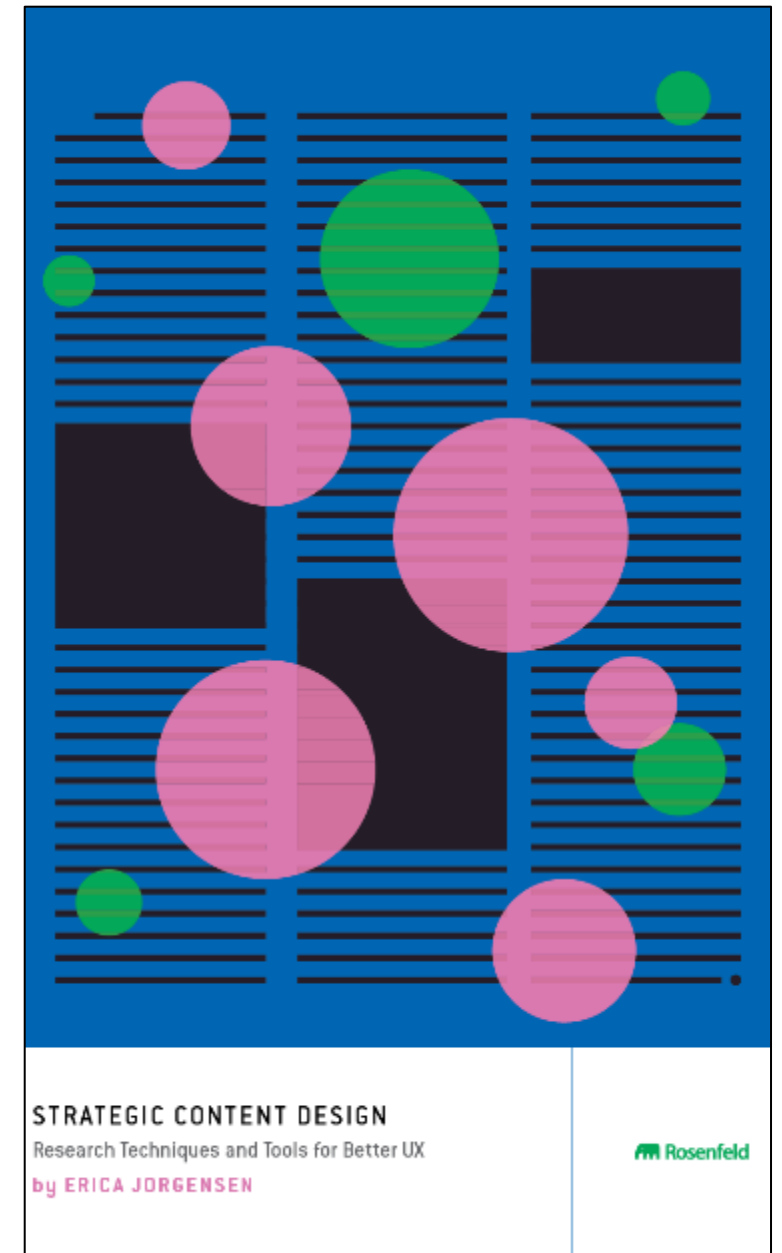


# **AKA Managing conflict within product teams =)**

**Erica Jorgensen**

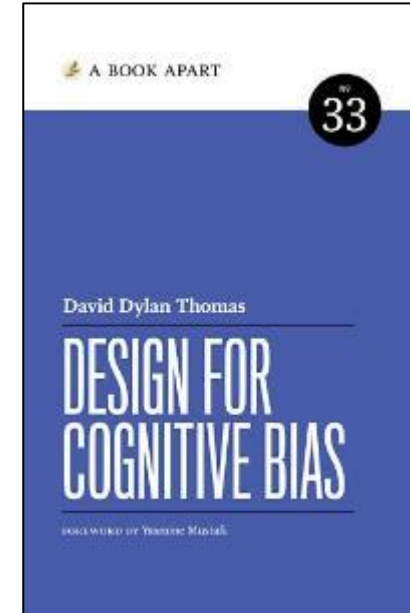
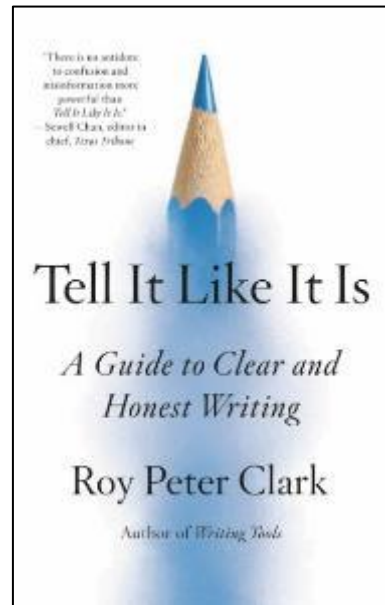
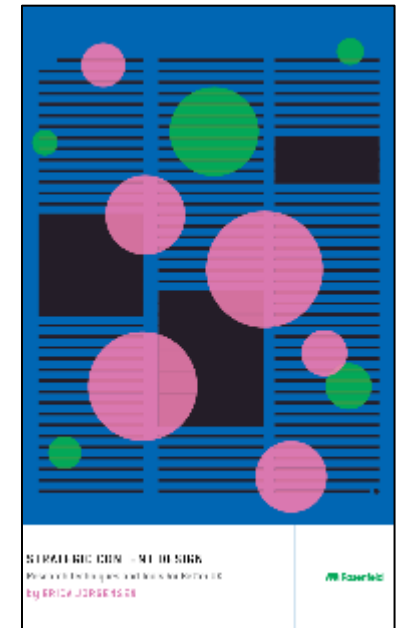
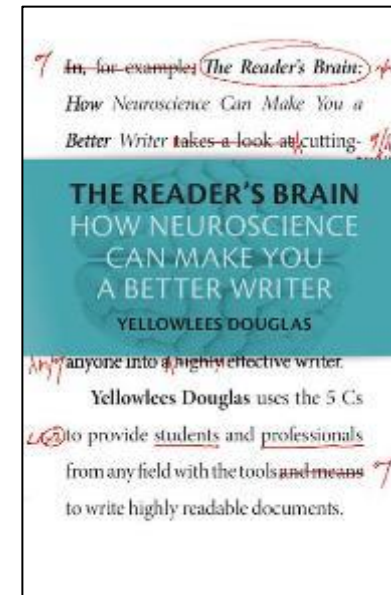
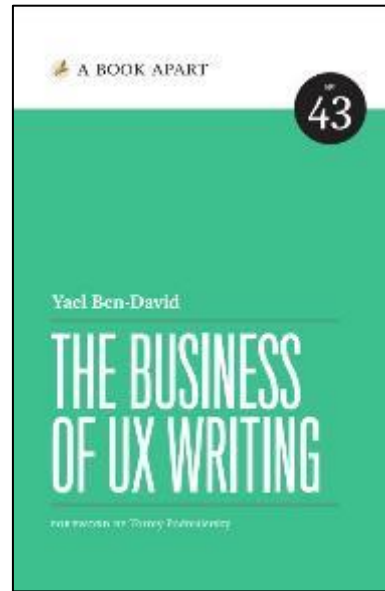
Content Strategy Seattle Meetup  
4/12/2023

© 2023 Erica Jorgensen

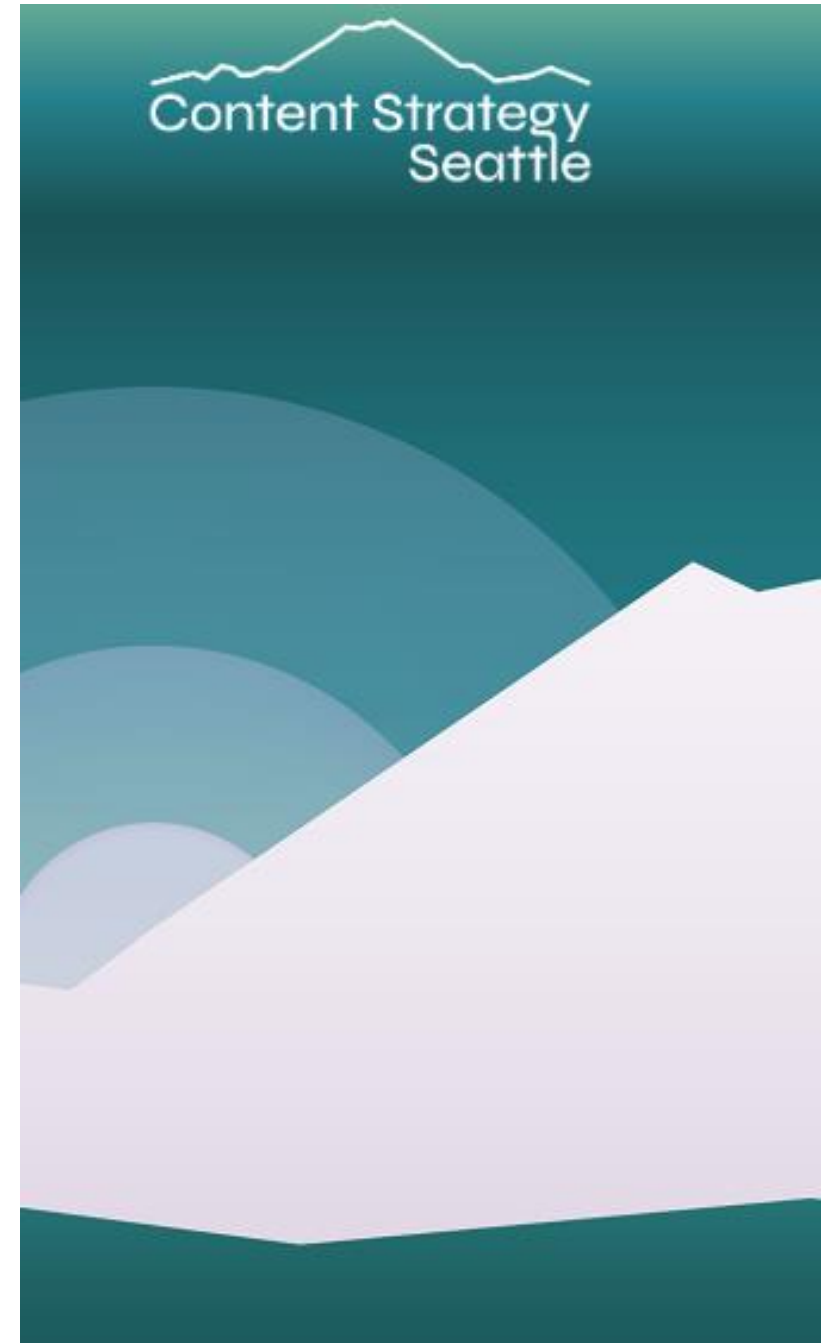


# AKA

Go buy a book =)



# CS Meetup on social media: @ContentSeattle



# What we'll cover

## **THE BASICS**

- What is content research? Why do it?
- What content should you run research on?

## **HOW TO DO IT**

- Finding time
- Working with stakeholders
- Sharing results & business impact

# Hold it right there



# GOHIO: Getting Our House in Order



# Get your content house in order

- How do you define high-quality or effective content?
- How are you analyzing or evaluating content effectiveness?
- Do you have content standards or heuristics? Do your partners & stakeholders know about them?



# Get your content house in order



# In praise of plain language



**Sarah Richards**  
ContentDesign.London

# In praise of plain language

**Content  
Design London**  
—— Readability Guidelines

# Readability Guidelines. co.uk

## Usability evidence

[Oxford Guide to plain English](#) , Oxford University Press, 2013

[Writing for GOV.UK](#), UK Government website

['Sentence length: why 25 words is our limit'](#), Inside GOV.UK, UK Government blog, 2014

['Content design'](#), Sarah Richards, 2017

['Short sentences boost readability. Nearly 140 years of research proves it'](#) A. Wylie, a collection of studies since 1880s, 2018

['Indlish: The book for every English-speaking Indian'](#), J. Sanyal, 2006. Book.

['The role of word difficulty and sentence length in text comprehension'](#), T. M. Duffy and P. K. U'Ren, 1982

['Guidelines for Document Designers'](#), Redish, J.,1981, new 2014 introduction. Online PDF.

# In praise of plain language



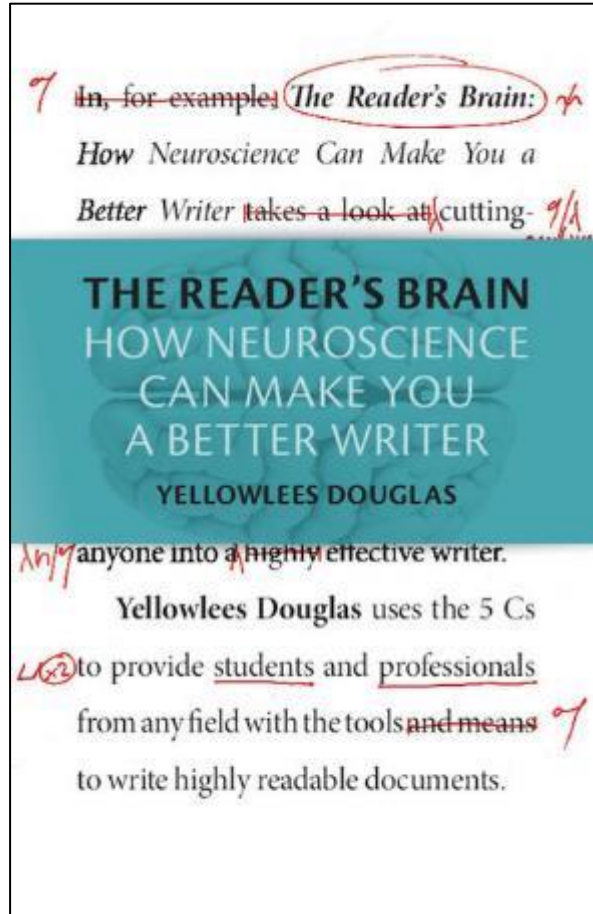
# In praise of plain language

Plain language is communication **your audience** can understand the **first time** they read or hear it.

# Pro tip!

If you use plain language, *you may not need to run content research.*

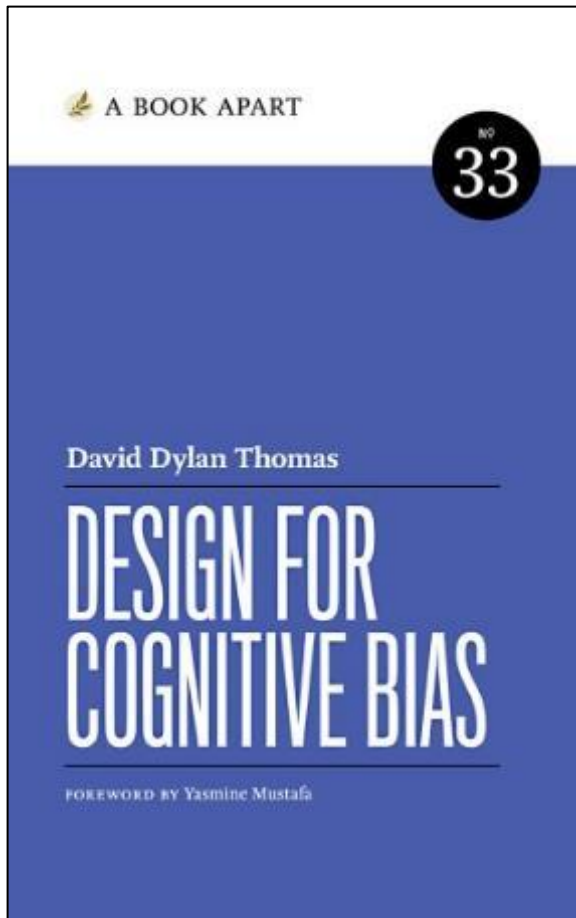
# Create clarity



Yellowlees Douglas, Ph.D.



# Check yourself



David Dylan Thomas

# Check yourself

- Confirmation bias
- Stakeholder bias
- Recency bias

# What is content research?

# What is content research?

The process of obtaining direct feedback about your content from your audience (or a proxy audience) while keeping your own biases in check as much as you can.

# What content could or should you research?

- **Terminology**  
Validate your style guide or design system guidance
- **Voice & tone**  
Make sure it's working
- **Component library/content design guidelines**  
How were they developed?

# What content could or should you research?

## **Specific user experiences**

- Calls to action
- Product & feature names
- Product descriptions
- Your most important content that's tied to revenue, customer acquisition, or customer retention or loyalty

**What is your most  
important content?**





Yep, it's that can of worms again

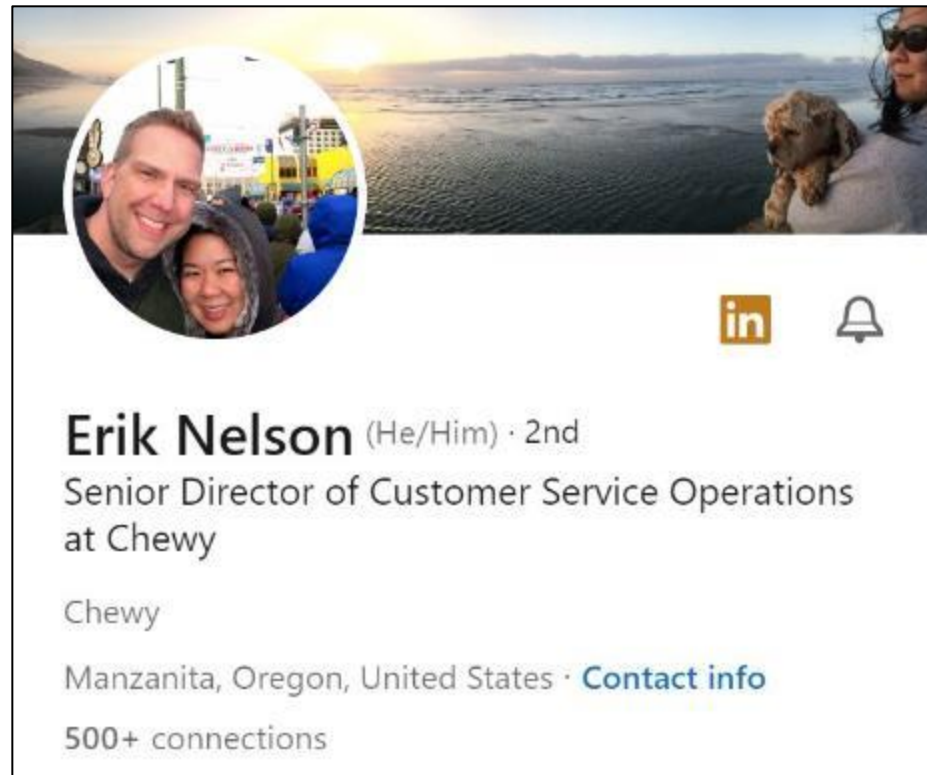


**So...how do you do  
content research?**

# A. The *scrappy* way

# How do you do it?

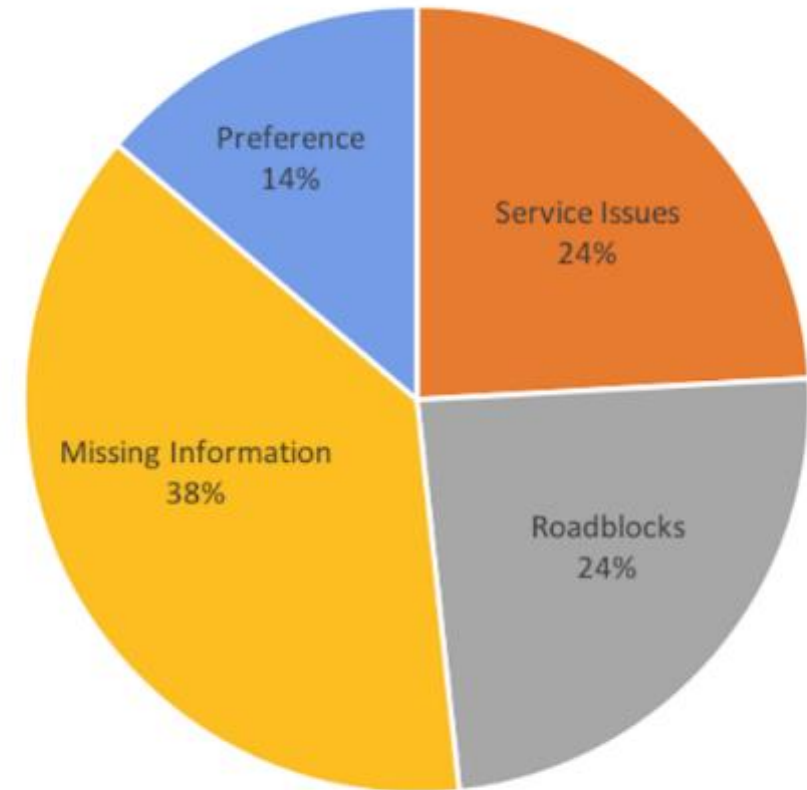
**Talk to your customer experience team!**



# Customer experience data

- Transcripts of customer service calls
- Chatbot analysis
- Voice of Customer surveys, interviews & dashboards
- Net Promoter Score\* results
- Industry reports—Gartner, Forrester, Mintel

# Customer experience + content design



<https://www.nngroup.com/articles/customer-service-omnichannel-ux/>

# How do you do it?

## Customer interviews

- Best for evaluating longer content
- Time consuming but very revealing!

# How do you do it?

## Comprehension: Cloze testing

Site activity information. We keep {1}\_\_\_\_\_ of some of the actions {2}\_\_\_\_\_ take on Facebook, such as {3}\_\_\_\_\_ connections (including joining a group {4}\_\_\_\_\_ adding a friend), creating a {5}\_\_\_\_\_ album, sending a gift, poking {6}\_\_\_\_\_ user, indicating you “like” a {7}\_\_\_\_\_, attending an event, or connecting {8}\_\_\_\_\_ an application. In some cases {9}\_\_\_\_\_ are also taking an action {10}\_\_\_\_\_ you provide information or content {11}\_\_\_\_\_ us. For example, if you {12}\_\_\_\_\_ a video, in addition to {13}\_\_\_\_\_ the actual content you uploaded, {14}\_\_\_\_\_ might log the fact that {15}\_\_\_\_\_ shared it.



# B. Using an online research platform

# How do you do it?

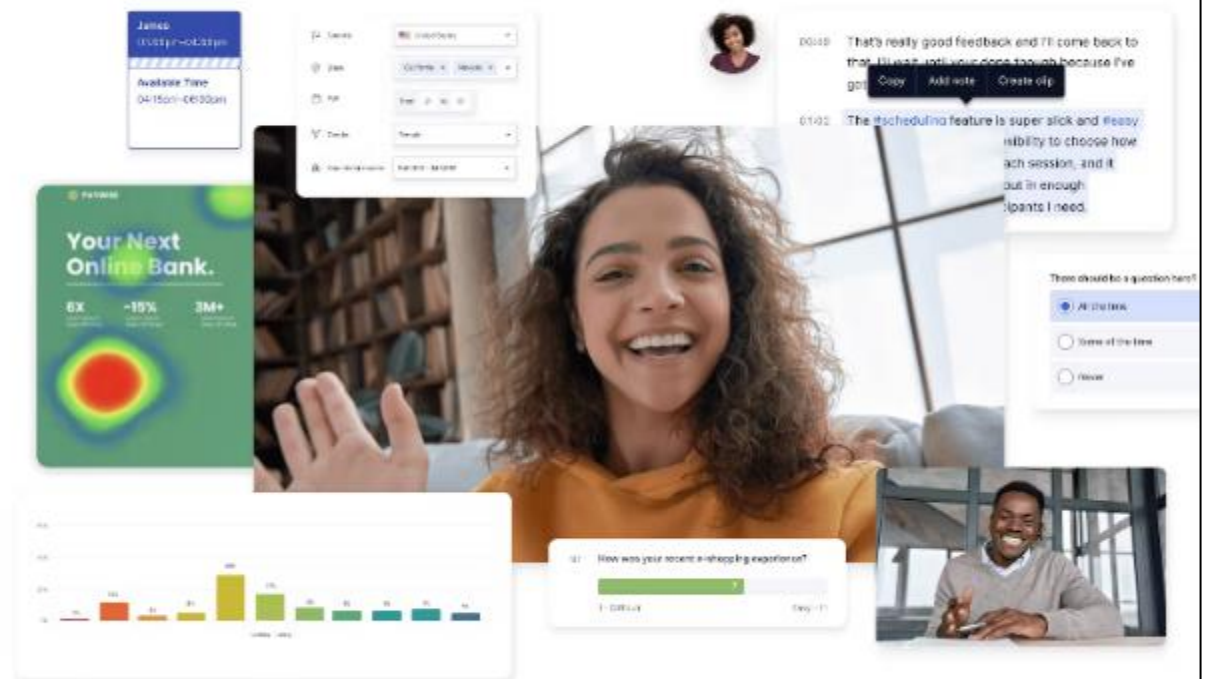
UserZoom

## UX research, done right

Empower your team with high-quality UX insights to create digital experiences that delight users and grow your business.

Contact us

Get demo



# How do you do it?

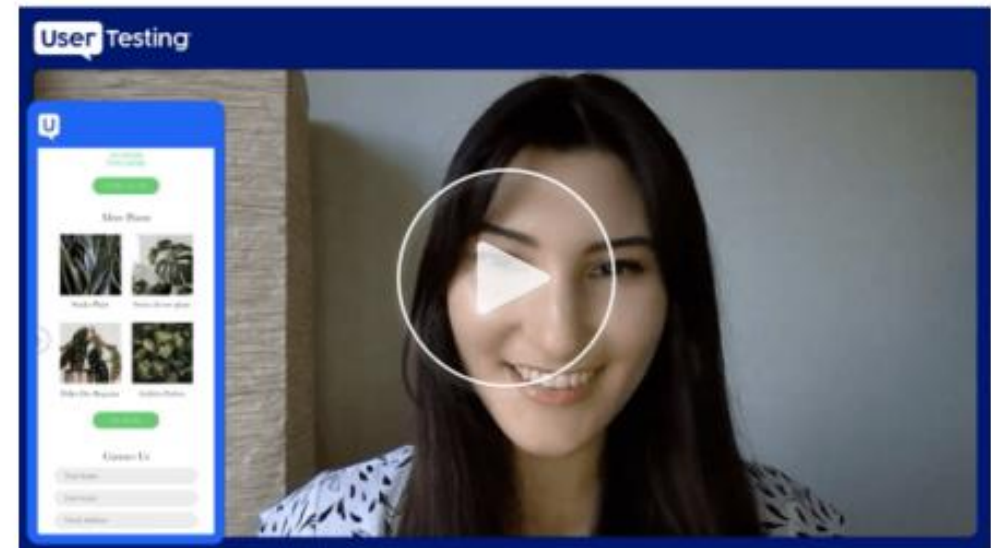
## UserTesting

### Introducing the Human Insight Platform

A video-first platform where you can see and hear the experiences of real people as they engage with your products, designs, apps, processes, concepts, or brands.

[See demo](#)

[Request trial](#) ➔



# Prioritize the “why”

Intuit.com tested **“receipt capture”** vs. **“receipt snap”**

= a preference test

# Prioritize the “why”

Intuit.com tested **“receipt capture”** vs. **“receipt snap”**

**Feedback:**  
Formal  
Professional

**Feedback:**  
Easy  
Understandable  
Friendly

# Types of content research questions

# Types of research questions

- Preference
- Naming
- Audience-specific
- Clarity/comprehension
- Actionability
- Completeness/Gap analysis
- Hedonic/emotional response
- Competitive analysis

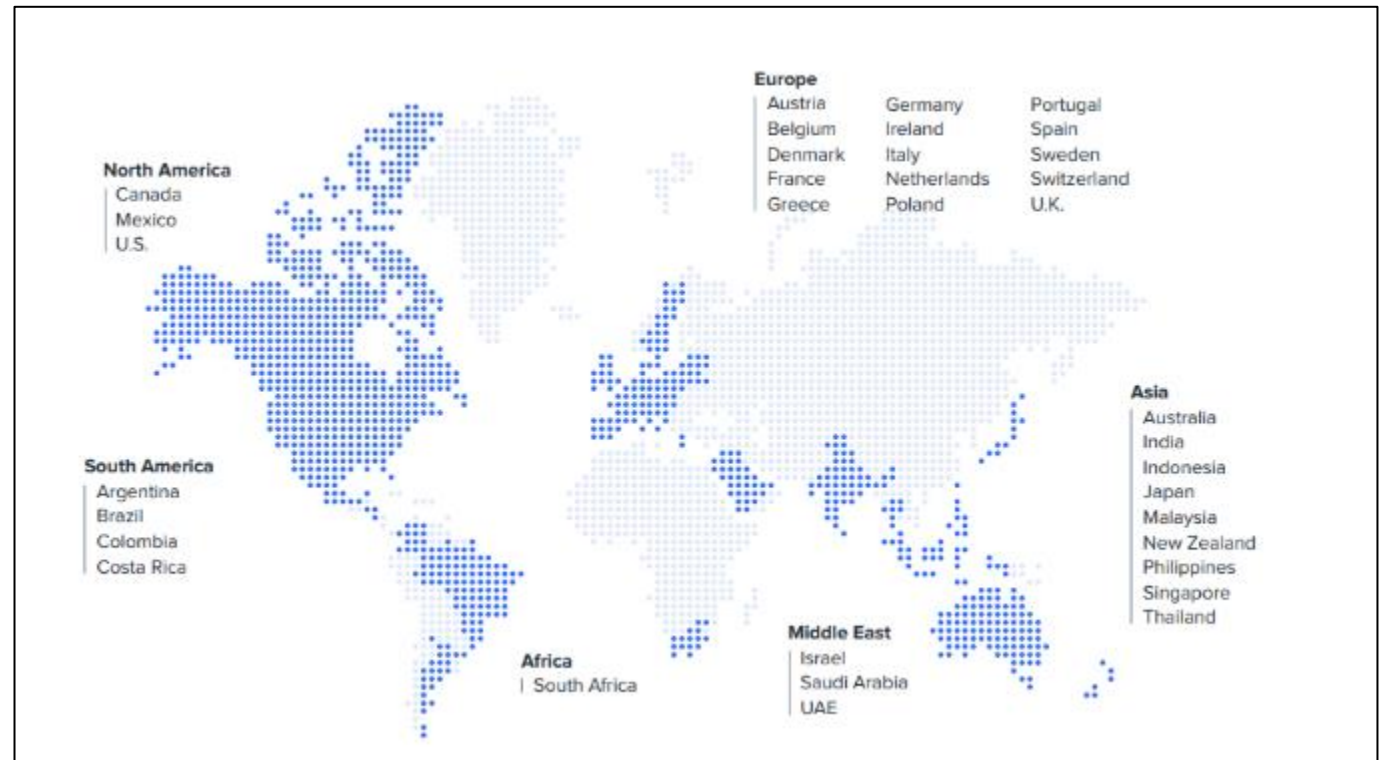
Email me for quick guide about these: [Erica@EricaJorgensen.com](mailto:Erica@EricaJorgensen.com)

# Participant diversity



# Participant diversity: DEI & content research

UserTesting's current geographic reach



# Participant diversity: DEI & content research



"What many design professionals don't see is if you have an all-white sample of research participants, you're essentially doing race work," @hmntycntrd's @albanvillamil. "You're just researching and designing whiteness." Can't address what you don't acknowledge.

#unfilteredfriday | Mar 31, 2023

# Sample content test

# Sample content test: Zipline.com



Tracey Vantghem of Zipline.com

# Sample content test setup

Which word would you use to describe the group of people who support and oversee several field locations, such as all the locations in a region? \*

- ☐ Upperfield
- ☐ Upper field
- ☐ Field leaders
- ☐ Not sure
- ☐ Other...

Tell us why you chose this answer. If you chose "Other", why would you use this word instead? Walk us through your thinking.

Long answer text

Source: Tracey Vantighem of Zipline.com, using UserTesting

# The “one-two punch”

1. Start with a quantitative question  
(multiple choice, or scale question)

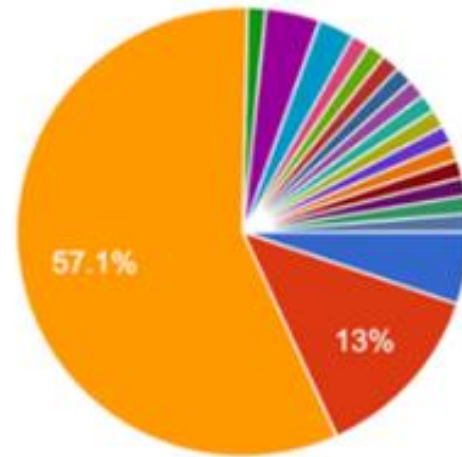
= the “what”

2. Follow it with an open-ended  
question to get qualitative feedback

= the “why”

Which word would you use to describe the group of people who support and oversee several field locations, such as all the locations in a region?

77 responses



# Quantitative results

*"I find Upper field confusing and when I did not know what it meant, "field" (as it relates to filling in content in a draft) refers to "the area where it is written" and "upper" makes me think of the location on the page since it's at the top. So I assumed it was "the top part of the message" and not "a group of people who are more senior"... Honestly, we don't use this and I don't fully understand the feature, so part of why I don't have a clear opinion... but if it was more clear, we might use it more!" ¶*

# 1 qualitative response (yep, it's long!)



**Summary:**

This customer was so confused by the term “upper field” that they thought it referred to the top-most part of a computer screen or phone.

# Content test results: Zipline.com

**'Upperfield' was far less common as an industry term than we assumed**

1. Only 18.2% of respondents selected *any* form of upperfield
2. 57.1% of respondents selected field leader
3. About 25% of respondents entered their organization's specific terms, such as District Manager or Regional Manager.

# Content test results: Zipline.com

Some customers expressed concern that “upper field” was classist.

*From Tracey:*

“To say these findings took the team by surprise would be an understatement. I posted the findings report to the company, and watched the head-exploding emoji reactions roll in.”

**But wait, there's more**



The change from “upper field” to “field leader” was rolled out across:

- The website
- Training documents
- Onboarding materials
- Help center articles

\$ \$ \$

Measuring impact

# Finding time

# Finding time

- Pace yourself!
- Divide & conquer
- Create a backlog of test ideas
- Incorporate content research into your sprints or work planning
- *Skip the office hours*



# Stakeholder management

# Stakeholder management

- Map research to company & content team goals (KPIs)
- Loop in UX-adjacent teams—marketing, PR, social media—if your study's results may affect them
- Use a RACI framework, it's your friend!

# RACI is not racy, it's just helpful

R

Responsible

The people who actually do the work. One or more people can be responsible.

A

Accountable

The Approver. The person who signs off on the work. Usually, only one person is accountable.

C

Consulted

The subject matter experts who are consulted and sometimes contribute to creating content.

I

Informed

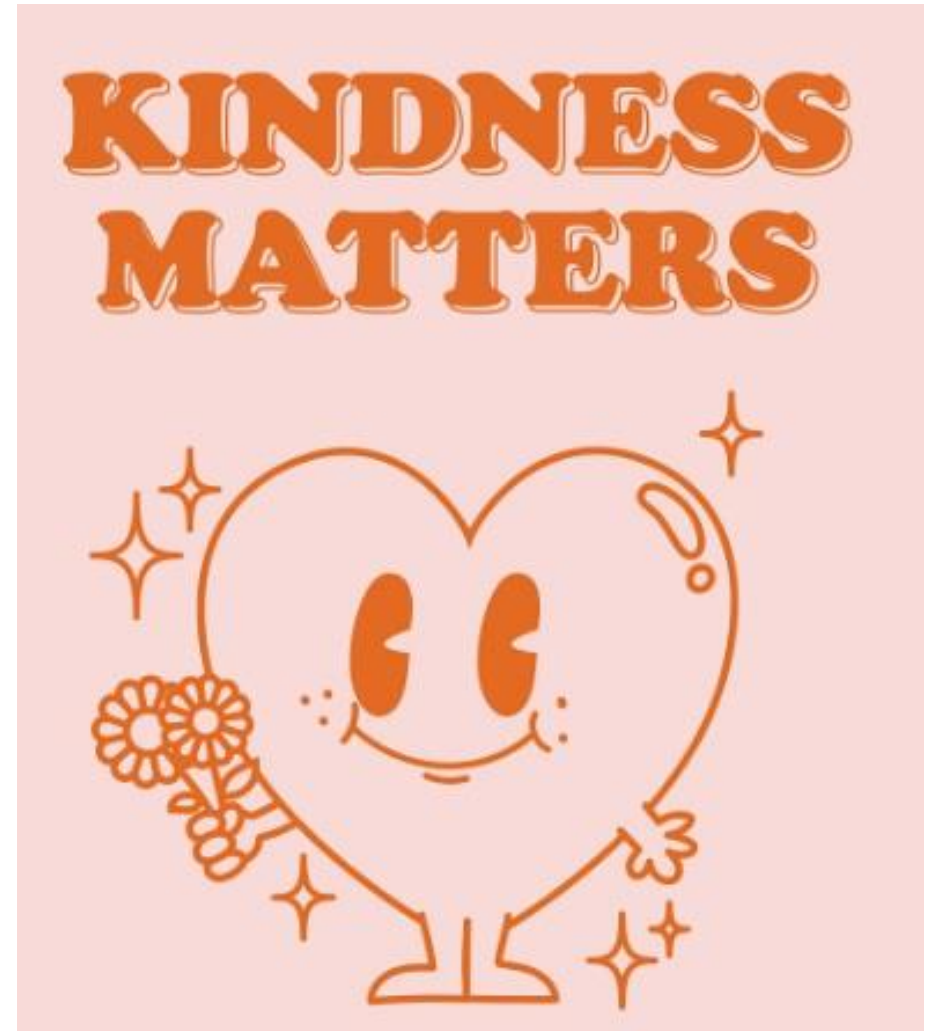
The people who are informed when a deliverable is complete. Communication only goes one way.

# Your VIP stakeholder: UXR

- Make best friends with your user researcher(s)
- Bounce test plans off them
- Make sure they're aware you're doing research

- YOU may be the person who created the content that's being evaluated via research.

So, BE KIND as you share test results.

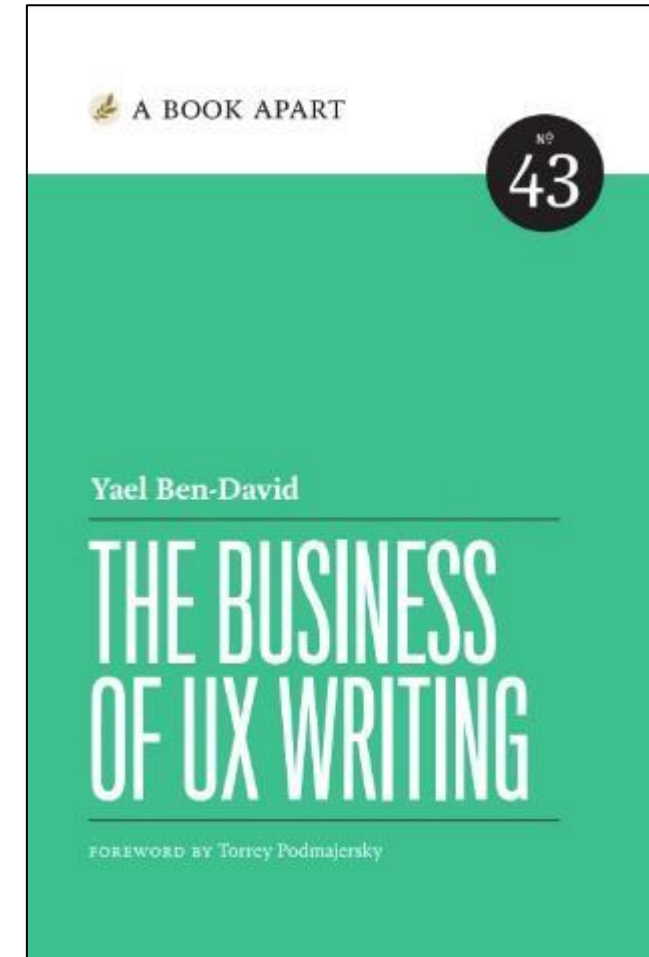


# Stakeholder boundaries



# Showing impact

# Showing impact





# Showing impact

## Use content research to determine A/B test variables

Before	After
First Name _____	First Name _____
Last Name _____	Last Name _____
Email _____	Email _____
Password _____	Password _____
Already a member? <b>Log In</b>	Already a member? <b>Log In</b>
<b>Register</b>	<b>Continue</b>

**FIG 3.1:** These illustrations show how a one-word copy change from “Register” (left) to “Continue” (right) increased revenue by 300 million dollars.

# Sharing test results & impact



## The \$300 Million Button



by Jared M. Spool

[https://articles.uie.com/three\\_hund\\_million\\_button/](https://articles.uie.com/three_hund_million_button/)

# Math for content design impact

$$\begin{aligned} & (\text{Average cost per customer service contact}) \\ & \quad \times \\ & (\# \text{ of customer service calls prevented or reduced}) \\ & \quad \times \\ & \quad \text{Extrapolated time frame} \\ & = \text{Impact your CEO will want to hear about} \end{aligned}$$

# Math for content design impact

**\$75** per customer service call

X

**100** fewer calls/month thanks to improved content

=

**\$7,500/month**

Extrapolate:

X 12 months

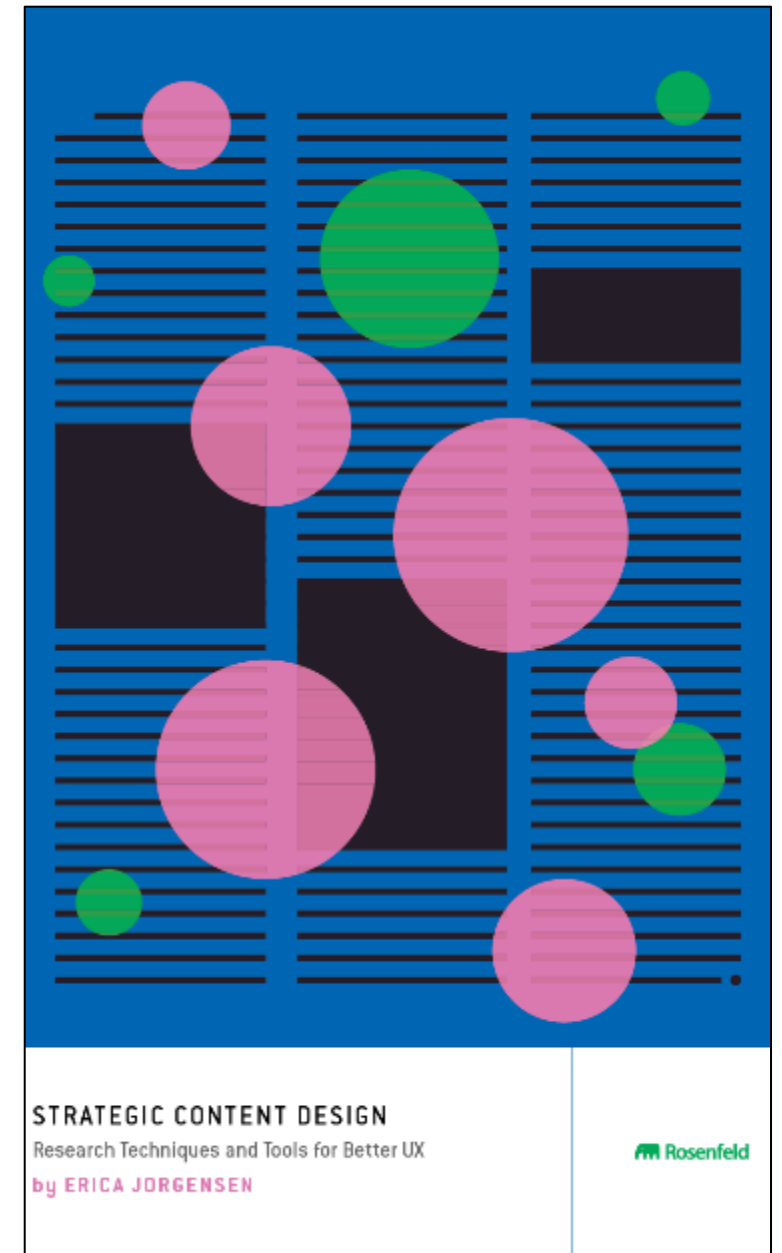
= **\$90,000/year**

= Impact your CEO will want to know about

# RosenfeldMedia .com/books

Email me for the discount code good  
through May 31, 2023.

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# Thank you!

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