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Legal Kiosks Guide: Inviting User Research Participants

This guide oulines the important facets of user experience research. Use this guide to learn about why user research is important to Legal Kiosk projects and how you can leverage user research to increase access to justice in your community.

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What is User Research?

User research is primarily about connecting the people you serve with the solution you are building. It's about understanding a problem from their perspective so that you can design and build a product for their needs. It also involves testing prototypes of a solution to make sure the experience is useful and usable.

As legal service providers, you have a close and unique perspective on the problems that bring people into your office. Conducting User Research helps us identify the missing gaps in our understanding of the problem.

When Should We Conduct User Research?

1. User research can be carried out at various stages of a Legal Kiosk project, depending on budget and stakeholder needs.

2. Early Stages: Conducting user research early in the project can be helpful with exploring the problem space and gain a strong understanding of user needs and goals. It can also help you identify existing gaps in your understanding of your users' pain points early on, which can contribute to cost savings as you can avoid developing features and solutions that might later be deemed unhelpful.

3. Towards the end of a project: You can also perform user testing once you have your Legal Kiosk website interface designed to assess whether the experience is user-friendly and accessible. By observing users in action, designers can identify whether the product meets user expectations and effectively addresses their needs.

4. Regardless of when and how often you choose to conduct user research, planning out your user research phases early is highly recommended. This ensures that you can allocate sufficient funds for user research in your RFPs and contracts.

Who Should I Recruit to Participate in User Research?

User Research can technically be done with anyone. It's always good to test an existing product or get feedback on an idea. However, the *best* participants for a User Research session are your *real* users or target audience. Real users will help us identify real problems and highlight issues that may not come up when user testing with nonimpacted groups. Typically, participants include litigants, visitors to Self-Help Centers, and people who frequent community spaces where legal kiosks are located.

How Many People Should I Invite?

Surprisingly, we don't need many participants to get clear findings. As few as 5 participants can generate very meaningful results. Since we hope to conduct multiple research sessions (before the project starts, after the first phase, etc.) and the response rate tends to be low, we ask that you try to invite at least 25 participants for a project.

How Should I Invite Participants?

Email

This will vary by organization, but we recommend you reach out to previous or existing clients that are in a stable situation. We want to make sure that we are inviting relevant responses but also that our research is not triggering to the participants. Use your judgment when deciding who to reach out to, but also remember clients can say no to participating even after signing up.

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Here’s an email template we’ve created. Feel free to adapt and use:

Hi there,

Our team is working on a new project to help our clients [describe the system or process you are investigating]. We’d like to invite you to participate in a paid research session with our team. We would love to let you see some early ideas of what we’re working on to get your feedback. We want to make sure our project is as helpful as possible. If you are interested, here’s how to sign up and what you can expect:

1. **Sign Up**
First, we’ll need you to fill out our interest form. We will ask for your contact information and some basic demographic information. This will allow us to reach out to you when we are ready to schedule a session. The information you provide helps keep our research pool diverse.

2. **Schedule a Time**
When we are ready to schedule sessions, you will get a message from us with a link to schedule a time. *You can always say no* if you are no longer interested in participating or if you don’t have the time. Sessions are usually 30-60 minutes in length. You will know how long your session will be before you sign up.

3. **Meet with a Researcher**
At the time of the session, you will join a video meeting with one of our researchers. We will give you the meeting details ahead of time. If you do not have a way to join a video meeting we can also arrange a phone call. We will go over the structure of the session so you know what to expect. This depends on the project but usually includes some open ended questions and sometimes a few activities to complete.

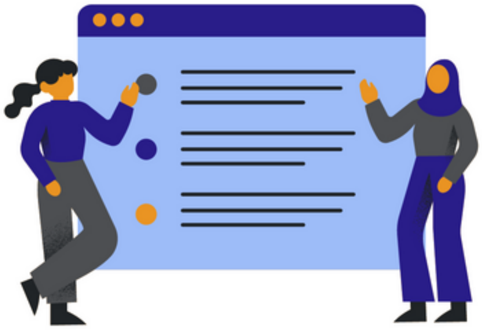
4. **Get Paid**
Yes, you will get paid! This will depend on how long your session is, but normally we compensate participants $40 for a 30 minute session and $75 for an hour. We will email you a Visa gift card. If email doesn’t work, we will find another way to pay you.

Please let me know if you have any questions about this. We look forward to your thoughts and feedback!

Best,
Your Name

Intercept

Another great way of inviting participants is to intercept clients. This means if you are helping a client in person or over the phone, you can mention the research invitation at an appropriate time. Intercepting clients is a great way to invite participants personally which tends to have a higher response rate. When you invite them, make sure to emphasize that it is not related to the issue you are helping them with, and that participation is completely voluntary.



Why Do We Pay Participants?

- When we include participants in our user research, they become part of the team. Their unique perspectives help make sure the project is targeting the right problem and addressing it in the right way. Compensating participants is our way of valuing their time and acknowledging their expertise.

- The folks we are hoping to work with have often been traumatized by the very systems we are working to improve. Compensating them for their time helps expand the research pool to a wider range of people and starts to rebuild trust in communities that have historically been impacted negatively by the justice system.

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What Next?

That’s it! After we have a list of participants to choose from, our team will reach out to them directly to set up some user research sessions. Their feedback will be instrumental in our assessment of the challenge and design of the solution.

Have Questions?

Do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns about this. Our team is always happy to help.

You can contact our Lead UX Designer, Bailey Goldenbaum, at **bailey@goa2jtech.com**

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