How to Measure UX with an Experience Quality Score

If you only measure User Experience with satisfaction scores, you miss the full picture. Combining behavior and sentiment helps teams catch issues earlier and make more strategic decisions.

The team at Pantheon noticed a lack of effective metrics to understand the user experience. Read on to learn how they started capturing richer feedback for making product decisions.

Jenna Harmon is a senior UX researcher at Pantheon, where she has spearheaded foundational UX programs that deepen everyone's understanding of developer users.

Key Takeaways:

Composite scores blend emotional and functional signals into one clear metric	Create a structure that makes it easier to switch between big-picture and detailed views	Use score changes as a signal to investigate with qualitative research

Pantheon struggled with accurately measuring the quality of user experience (UX) in their products. Traditional metrics, such as CSAT (Customer Satisfaction) and NPS (Net Promoter Score), were insufficient for capturing the real user experience and the effectiveness of design.

Jenna, along with her team, led the development and rollout of a new metric called the "Experience Quality Score" (EQ score) to solve this problem.

"NPS and CSAT scores give you something, but when it comes to determining what customers and users are actually experiencing and feeling when they are interacting with the product, they're not a good measure."

When you blend behavioral data (what users do) with sentiment data (how users feel), you get a superpower: catching issues way earlier and driving more strategic choices.

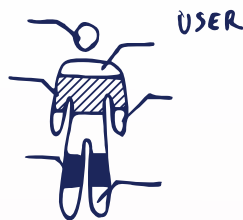# The step-by-step guide to designing your own EQ score

STEP 1

Understand key behavioral and sentiment measures

As noted earlier, the EQ score combines behavioral and sentiment measures. Let's break that down:

Behavioral

Tracking what users are doing in the product

USER

Sentiment

uncovering how users feel about their experience with the product

See steps 2 and 3 to identify how to measure this in your organization.

STEP 2

Identify critical user journeys (behavioral measurement)

Don't try to measure everything at once. Focus on 3-5 central user journeys in your product.

For example, the Pantheon team mapped out the main paths users follow in the product. Each journey included different jobs or tasks that users need to complete.

Instead of measuring every individual task, they focused on the bigger picture to avoid getting lost in too many details. To do this, they used a hierarchical structure where they grouped tasks under journeys, which kept things organized and aligned with the existing way the company talks about the product.

This structure enables the team to look at data at a high level (overall product health) or zoom in to see details about specific journeys or tasks.

Identify measurement instruments for sentiment analysis

Figure out how to measure how users feel about the product. For instance, Pantheon looked at four main areas of user sentiment for their EQ score measurement:

- Usability
- Trust
- Appearance
- Loyalty

With this framework, you can monitor changes in each area and overall sentiment trends. Teams may use tools like in-app surveys, customer reviews, and social media monitoring to gather user sentiment.

Normalize the data

This is where things will look very different for your organization than Pantheon's. Every team uses different metrics. Your sentiment metrics might be on a 1-5 or 1-10 scale, while behavioral metrics could be percentages, durations, or click rates. We recommend normalizing these to a common 0–100 scale so you can average them meaningfully.

- A CSAT score of 4/5 becomes 80
- A task success rate of 92% stays 92
- A time-on-task metric might be inverted (faster = better) and scaled accordingly

Calculate the composite EQ Score

This is where the EQ Score comes to life as a unified score. Use a weighted average formula to combine these values. This formula will give you a single experience score per journey that reflects both emotional and functional quality – great for tracking, benchmarking, and triggering deeper research.

Generic Example:

EQ Score = (Usability × 0.25) + (Trust × 0.20) + (Appearance × 0.10) + (Loyalty × 0.15) + (Efficiency × 0.15) + (Completion × 0.15)

Again, there isn't a single, universally "correct" formula for composite scores. It will look different for every company. Iterate and refine your metrics until you find the composite EQ score that best represents your customers' experiences.

Tech Company Example:

EQ Score = (Time Spent on Page * 0.30) + (Scroll Depth * 0.20) + (Share Rate * 0.20) + (Bounce Rate * -0.15) + (User Comment Sentiment * 0.15)

Retail Company Example:

EQ Score = (Product Page Usability Rating * 0.20) + (Cart Abandonment Rate * -0.25) + (Checkout Success Rate * 0.30) + (Post-Purchase Survey * 0.15) + (Customer Support Rating * 0.10)

Use EQ scores as a trigger for launching more targeted user research

With an EQ score in place to track both user behavior and sentiment, PMs can monitor scores to pinpoint areas of friction or dissatisfaction. Then, they can collaborate with designers and UX researchers on the team to reach out to users and get more detailed insights into a their experience.

Teams can use the EQ score to ground conversations with stakeholders, especially executives who need quantifiable metrics beyond revenue or churn. This connects the experience within the product to business-level outcomes and customer outcomes.

"Having a different kind of measurement based on information that we're getting directly from our customers helps facilitate better conversations about the experience that customers are having."

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