

Web Site User Testing

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I. Checklist of Tasks

1. Define the objectives and population of the study – what do you want to learn, and about whom?
2. Determine the date, the location, and the staff who will observe.
3. Arrange for the recruiting of participants (the testers):
 - Pull the data on your population – this may take more time than you anticipate. Be sure to include data you need to achieve the desired balance (e.g., class year, degree, major, etc.)
4. Write the invitation, the confirmation letter, the reminder, and the user testing guide.
5. Recruit the testers:
 - Send the invitations two weeks before the date of the user testing.
 - Send the confirmation letter immediately upon receiving each RSVP – *make sure you confirm only people who give you the desired balance.*
 - Send the reminder two days before the user testing.
6. Conduct the user testing.

II. Sample Invitation – by E-mail

Dear [NAME],

As you may know, the Stanford Alumni Association web site is the main gateway for alumni resources and services online. To make it more useful and user-friendly, we are now re-designing the site – and looking for alumni to test it and give us their advice and suggestions.

So I'd like to invite you to spend an hour in the Alumni Center with me and the SAA online team on Thursday, February 5, from 6:30pm - 7:30pm. The observations and opinions you share with us as you test the site will be instrumental in shaping the new design. (It doesn't matter if you're a member of the Alumni Association or not.) A light dinner will be provided, I think you'll find it enjoyable, and there is plenty of free parking near the building.

To ensure that everyone's opinions are heard in full, we are testing the site with just a few alumni at a time. So if you'd like to participate, **PLEASE REPLY TO THIS E-MAIL IMMEDIATELY, BEFORE THE GROUP FILLS UP.** I will promptly get back to you with a confirmation. Thanks.

Jerold Pearson, '75
Director of Market Research
Stanford Alumni Association
650-723-9186

III. Sample Confirmation Letter – by E-mail

Dear [NAME],

Thanks for accepting my invitation to test the re-designed Alumni Association web site on Thursday, February 5 at 6:30pm. Please accept this note as confirmation that a space has been reserved for you.

The testing will be done on campus, on the second floor of the Frances C. Arrillaga Alumni Center, which is located at the corner of Galvez Street and Campus Drive. There is plenty of free parking near the building. A map and directions can be found at:
<http://www.stanfordalumni.org/aboutsaa/saamap.html>

Please try to arrive fifteen minutes early so we can get started - and finished - on time. It will only take an hour, and a light dinner will be provided. So please come hungry. As I mentioned in my invitation, the observations and opinions you share with us as you test the site will be instrumental in shaping the new design, so your thoughts and suggestions will be of great value. I also think you'll find the session enjoyable.

In order to ensure that everyone's opinions are heard in full, the testing is being limited to a small number of alumni. Because you accepted my invitation, your participation is anticipated and I am counting on hearing your thoughts. So please don't forget to put it on your calendar.

Thanks again for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or e-mail me. I look forward to seeing you on the 5th.

Jerold Pearson, '75
Director of Market Research
Stanford Alumni Association
650-723-9186

IV. Sample Reminder – by E-mail

Dear [NAME],

Just a reminder about the user testing of the re-designed Alumni Association web site this Thursday (February 5) at 6:30pm.

The testing will be done on campus, on the second floor of the Frances C. Arrillaga Alumni Center, which is located at the corner of Galvez Street and Campus Drive. There is plenty of free parking near the building. A map and directions can be found at:
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In order to ensure that everyone's opinions are heard in full, the testing is being limited to a small number of alumni. Because you accepted my invitation, your participation is anticipated and I am counting on hearing your thoughts. So I look forward to seeing you on Thursday.

Thanks again for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or e-mail me.

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V. Sample User Testing Guide

Briefing (as a group) Approx 10 minutes

How often do you visit the Stanford Alumni Association web site?

For what reasons?

What would you expect to find on the alumni website?

What would you like to find on the alumni website?

Testing (individually) Approx 30 minutes

Initial Viewing (from home page)

First impressions?

Looking only at the home page, what do you expect to be on the site?

What piques your interest? What links are you most interested in following? Why, what do you expect to find there?

What draws your eye?

Language and Navigation

What do you expect to find in the "My Class & Reunions" section?

What do you expect to find in the "Career Connections" section?

What do you expect to find in the "Events & Clubs" section?

What do you expect to find in the "inCircle" section?

What do you expect to find in the "Stanford News & Links" section?

What do you expect to find in the "for Students" section?

What do you expect to find in the "Alumni Center" section?

What do you expect to find in the "Alumni Store" section?

Tasks

You've decided to become a member of the Association – where would you go to do this?

It's your reunion year, and you want to find out when your reunion events are happening and how to sign up – where would you go?

You want to find other alumni living near you--where would you go?

You're interested in taking a class at Stanford--where would you go?

You want to sign up for a trip to Brazil--where would you go?

You've heard there is a new alumni building on campus and you want to see it when you are on campus, where would you go?

You are traveling to New York City and are wondering if there are any alumni get-togethers going on during your visit, where would you go?

Debriefing (as a group)

Approx 15 minutes

Did the site meet your expectations?

Did you find what you would have liked to find on the site?

Does the site's overall design "feel" like Stanford to you?

How did you find the site? Useful? Informative? Interesting? Boring? Confusing? Easy to use/navigate?

What did you like and dislike about the site?

Is there anything about the site that makes you recall your own days at Stanford?

Does the site make you feel that you are part of the Stanford community?