
Practical UX Research Methodologies: Ethnography

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Abstract

Half-Day course which utilizes both lectures and interactive activities to demonstrate the practical UX research methodology of ethnography. Experts from UEGroup, a Silicon Valley research and design company, will lead an interactive discussion and give practical suggestions for developing ethnographic methodologies including: ensuring how to get the best results, and understanding how to extend learning past the initial visit.

Author Keywords

User Experience; Research Methodologies; UX; Ethnography; Interactive

ACM Classification Keywords

Measurement; Human Factors; Validation

Target Audience & Course Benefits

This course is suitable for any person beginning to take an interest in UX research. Through both lecture and interactive activities, this course will provide practical skills for conducting ethnographies, beginning with knowing when to apply this methodology. Other topics covered include how to yield the best results both in real-time and post-interaction.

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Course Presenter:

Sarah Garcia is UEGroup's Senior Lead Researcher with a background in market and user experience research. Sarah's experience with UX research is extensive, ranging from consultancy work with Disney Interactive Media and a large-scale benchmark study with DirecTV to groundbreaking medical research for companies such as Boston Scientific and Stryker. Sarah is experienced with on screen and device usability, developing innovative testing methodologies and training while mentoring other UEGroup staff for the past 11 years.

About UEGroup

UEGroup is a User Experience and Design company in Silicon Valley that has established long term relationships with leaders in the entertainment and digital media field, medical, consumer electronics, gaming and handheld industries.

Presentation Format

This half-day course will be a combination of lecture and interactive activities, allowing the attendees to practice what they are learning and work together to uncover research findings.

General overview on how to create ethnographic research plans aimed at observing actual users in their technology saturated lives. Tips will be given for structuring ethnographic visits to allow for useful discussion and observations. Attendees will learn how to make use of diaries and other interceptive methods to augment the ethnographic visits. Reporting tips and techniques will also be discussed.

Course Breakdown

This half-day course will be broken into the following categories:

- An overview of different ethnographic approaches
- Discussing & Observing
- Extending the learning beyond the initial visit
- Making sense of the data
- Reporting

Ethnographic Approaches

- Overview of different ethnographic approaches and how to approach a plan for conducting ethnographic research.

Interactive Activities: Participants will work as a team to write up ethnographic plans for various research questions.

Discussing and Observing

- Techniques for ensuring that researchers get the most out of ethnographic visits.

Interactive Activities: Participants will practice observation skills by looking at photos of the inside of people's homes. Participants will practice discussion skills by interviewing each other.

Extending Learning

- Understanding how to extend the learning past the initial visit (follow-up diary studies, interviews, interceptive data gathering, and keeping the participants engaged).

Interactive Activities: Participants will consider different research objectives/outcomes and determine which type of follow up methodologies would be most beneficial.

Making Sense of the Data

- Practical tips for taking notes and synthesizing results.

Interactive Activities: Participants will take notes while watching a video of an ethnography and work as a group to synthesize the results.

Reporting

- Review of reporting styles that best communicate results in an easy to digest way.