



User Experience (UX) Testing and Evaluation

G-Cloud 15 Service from Connect Internet Solutions

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User Experience (UX) Testing and Evaluation

G-Cloud 15 Lot 3 Cloud Support

SERVICE OVERVIEW

Connect's Usability Optimisation Services are flexibly designed to help you design, test and improve the user experience (UX) of websites, intranets, mobile applications and web-based services.

Engaging stakeholders throughout, we ensure that assumptions and decisions are always evidenced, delivering truly impactful results. The services may be used either:

- To evaluate an existing UX, identifying barriers and limitations that are preventing users from getting the most from your website/application.
- When designing or redesigning a website/application, giving you confidence that it will deliver an optimal UX from launch.
- To compare the effectiveness of different UXs without needing to go to the expense of implementation.

User-centric methods include: stakeholder engagement workshops (e.g. card sort workshop, evaluating information architecture (IA), UX design, capture user personas), user journey analysis, collaborative user experience (UX) testing tools, in-person and online usability testing, wire-framing and prototyping.

Stakeholder engagement guarantees users' needs are captured, evaluated and addressed, to ensure the resultant user experience (UX) design is optimised for users' needs. Services tailored for each client.

The findings from stakeholder activities are documented along with expert review from a User Experience (UX) expert that presents evidence with clear recommendations to deliver an optimised user experience and successfully progress your digital strategy.

Delivered by our in-house UK-based team of UX experts, the service supports multi-Cloud websites, wherever they're located.

SERVICE FEATURES

A range of activities are available; we identify with you the mix of stakeholder engagement activities and usability testing services that best meet your needs to ensure your users are at the heart of the system to be created and to guarantee their buy-in.

Services include:

Business Objectives Workshop

Representative users & stakeholders collaborate to identify and prioritise key UX objectives. User personas are drawn up and key user journeys prioritised, with user barriers and functionality identified.

Card Sort Workshop

Drawing on user experience design requirements, representative users and stakeholders collaborate to label, categorise and organise information and functions of the proposed system. From this evolves the information architecture and ensures a well-considered, user-focused navigation scheme is adopted.

Outcome: Full Site Map illustrating ideal information architecture and navigational structure.

Wireframing

Wireframes depicting proposed UX layouts and components are produced for user testing and evaluation. These schematics provide the basis for low-fidelity, interactive prototyping, enabling structure and layout to be evaluated by users to assist in optimising key user journeys and improving usability.

Heat mapping

Usability issues are identified during user experience testing where users perform tasks on a prototype whilst responses are recorded. This produces an aggregated heatmap that uses colours to show concentrations of user interface activity, enabling analysis and evaluation of user journeys in practice, identifying where UX design optimisation is needed.

Applicability

Stakeholder services are suitable for all web applications, particularly channel-shift services, where the quality and satisfaction of the user experience is key to adoption and uptake - websites, intranets, extranets, mobile applications (Apps), kiosk interfaces, and for any technologies e.g. WordPress CMS, Umbraco CMS, Xamarin as well as for entirely bespoke software development.

SERVICE BENEFITS

- Stakeholder consultation outputs are reviewed by a User Experience expert and recommendations made
- On-line collaboration tools make it easy to engage stakeholders wherever they may be geographically based
- Usability testing options include on-line workshops and face-to-face user testing sessions
- Guarantees buy-in from stakeholders

- Fully embraces users' needs to deliver a system that is user-centric, ensuring delivery of the required benefits
- Valuable approach for channel-shift, where user input is essential to ensuring the shifted service is adopted
- Optimised user experience design minimises barriers to use and increases uptake

SERVICE SCOPE

A range of activities are available; clients may choose any or all to suit their requirements.

The scope of each activity and expected outputs are agreed with you at Initiation.

SERVICE CONSTRAINTS

- In-person workshops: maximum 16 participants.
- Online workshops and collaborative activities: maximum 30 participants.
- All activities, including workshops, are delivered remotely as standard; delivery at client premises may be undertaken (additional charges apply).

SERVICE LEVELS

Your service is delivered within normal working hours of 9am-5pm. A date for delivery of the workshops/activities is agreed with the client following examination of the requested scope.

SERVICE OUTPUT

Subject to range of options purchased, outputs include:

- User Testing Report, identifying outcomes and their distribution
- Aggregated Heat Map, resulting from analysis of user input clusters
- Recommendations Report, detailing how to optimise your UX, based on evidence
- Full, optimised Site Map, with optimal navigation schemes

USER SERVICE INTERFACE

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Reports and findings are delivered as PDF documents, viewable on any suitable device.

CLIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Identify and invite workshop delegates
- Provide workshop venue (if not held remotely or at Connect)
- Supply digital project objectives for discussion

SERVICE MANAGEMENT

The service is managed using Connect's internal management processes and subject to ISO9001 quality standards.

Your own **Project Manager** will look after your service who you can telephone and email at any time.

CHANGE REQUESTS

Requests for Change can be made using our ISO 9001 certified Change Management process.

BACKUP/RESTORE AND DISASTER RECOVERY

Any data held on Connect's infrastructure is backed up daily and can be restored to any day within the past week, any week within the past month and any month within the past year.

Backups are stored in a fireproof safe in a separate physical building.

DATA RESTORATION / SERVICE MIGRATION

All data collected is returned to the customer.

FINANCIAL RECOMPENSE MODEL

Payment is based on delivery of the Workshops/activities and delivery of agreed Reports.

ON-BOARDING & OFF-BOARDING

On-boarding and off-boarding are fully supported by a named, dedicated Project Manager, who provides a point of contact for the customer throughout service delivery.

On-boarding

Orders can be placed by email (gcloud@connectinternetsolutions.com) or by phone (0151 282 4321), referencing the G-Cloud 15 Service Name.

The order will be activated on receipt of a Purchase Order or signed Sales Order.

Payment Milestones and responsibilities under the Shared Responsibility Model are agreed on placement of order.

Client signs off at each milestone; Connect invoices client for payment milestone.

Off-boarding

Off-boarding occurs on delivery, by Connect, of the Recommendations Report.

All data collected is returned to the customer.

TERMINATION

Each party may terminate the service by giving the other 30 days written notice.

Purging And Retention

Following cessation of the service Connect purges data in accordance with IL2. Discs are overwritten using an appropriate tool.

Retention policy is for a maximum of 12 months.

SERVICE ASSURANCE

Connect is registered with the ICO as a data controller for its own personal data. We are GDPR compliant for client personal data where we act as Data Processor. Connect's information security management system is ISO27001 accredited. Our staff are routinely vetted; enhanced vetting is optionally available.

ISO 9001 CERTIFIED QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (QMS)

Delivery of this service is managed within our ISO9001 certified delivery processes.

Process flows are described within our QMS as controlled documents, denoted as Flow Charts with outputs from each process well defined. Adherence to quality standards and industry standards are embedded, including conformance with Open Standards.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous Improvement is fundamental to, and evident in, all our operational processes, facilitated through adoption of a well-structured Plan-Do-Check-Act method for service delivery, whereby:

- In response to a client commission, a course of action is planned.
- Client approval (sign off) for the plan is obtained prior to executing the plan.

- The work completed, along with outcomes, impact and consequences are reviewed; lessons learnt are recorded centrally within our ISO 9001 process documented feedback.
- Acceptable outcomes are documented in our technical repository for future reference.
- Lessons learnt are reviewed by our Service Manager quarterly where recommendations are made for relevant teams and/or Senior Management
- Our Quality Manager reviews the processes and their outcomes at a company-wide level to ensure alignment, resulting in maximum consistency.

This approach ensures we continuously approve through:

- Making incremental stages, which are more sustainable
- Engaging our staff who are directly involved in service delivery, to ensure best practice informs decisions
- Engaging our client, to better reflect client needs
- Effective management and mitigation of risk, through making less disruptive changes.

SECURITY

- By not using subcontractors, all aspects of cybersecurity are handled in-house by our expert teams, ensuring consistent standards, accountability and direct oversight.
- Zero Trust principles ensure every user, device and connection is verified, minimising risk from bad actors, threats & DoS/DDoS attacks, while maintaining secure, controlled access.
- A least-privilege approach ensures data is accessible only to users in roles where necessary, minimising risk and maintaining strict control over information and system access.
- Manual systems monitoring performed by our Operations team; 24/7/365 automated systems monitoring via a proven combination of systems.
- Our implementation teams follow the OWASP Top 10 to address the web security risks, ensuring our code is resilient, vulnerabilities are minimised & your website maintains protection against common cyber threats.
- We utilise guidance, best practices and threat intelligence from the National Cyber Security Centre to strengthen our defences, manage risks & implement robust cybersecurity measures.

- Software updates are fully managed by our in-house Operations team, allowing you to focus on continuous improvements that advance your strategic goals.
- Regular vulnerability scans performed by our Operations team alert us to potential security risks, enabling prompt remediation before they can be exploited and ensuring your website remains secure and resilient.
- We apply critical security patches, including zero day and those addressing recently-discovered vulnerabilities, within 48 hours of release. This rapid response mitigates risks and strengthens protection against threats.
- A routine maintenance window (3rd Tuesday of each month) aligns with typical software releases, ensuring regular updates and enhancements to our infrastructure, keeping software up to date and systems secure and optimised for maximum performance and reliability.
- We implement the futureproof TLS 1.3 protocol (with fallback to 1.2 in the short term) to ensure stronger encryption for all data in transit, reducing latency whilst maximising security.
- We maintain up-to-date encryption ciphers to ensure that in-transit data benefits from current best practices and remains resistant to emerging threats.
- We utilise HTTP Strict Transport Security to force browsers to connect securely, preventing accidental unencrypted access and enhancing protection against attacks like protocol downgrade.
- Additionally, we implement server-level encryption at rest as standard, safeguarding all stored data with industry-standard protocols to ensure maximum security and protection against unauthorised access.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY MODEL

The Shared Responsibility Model will be agreed collaboratively between the buyer and supplier, and will be defined in line with the final scope and configuration of the core and any ancillary services provided.

INFORMATION ASSURANCE

This service operates at IL0, IL1 and IL2.

Confidentiality

The technologies and techniques we employ include:

- Firewalls operating in failover behind which all live services sit
- Restricted access to servers

- Use of secure FTP for data transfer
- Use of secure certificates

Passwords are not stored either electronically (except in the encrypted form on the server) or on paper, apart from the administrative server password, which is stored in a sealed, signed envelope in a secure location for use in a disaster recovery scenario.

Integrity

Our processes ensure error-checking is performed through data processing and management. Our approach includes the use of XML and validation of data against appropriate schemas.

Availability

Services are provided from Connect's secure data centre which is powered by two ring mains, one of which runs on an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) that is also backed up by a generator. We feed power from both supplies to kit installed in racks.

CERTIFICATIONS

Demonstrating our commitment to security and quality, we hold the following certifications:

- ISO 27001:2022,
held uninterrupted since 2009
- Cyber Essentials,
held uninterrupted since 2015
- ISO 9001:2015,
held uninterrupted since 2003
- ICO registered uninterrupted since 2002
- NHS Data Security and Protection Toolkit assured



SOCIAL VALUE

Our delivery of social value is structured, measurable & aligned to the UK Government's Social Value Model.

Ensuring outcomes are monitored, continuously improved & lasting, we embed social value into contract mobilisation, workforce practices & service delivery.

Through the four missions below, we demonstrate how we deliver practical, positive impact.

MISSION: KICKSTARTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

To create sustainable economic growth through fair work, skills development & strong local supply chains, we:

- Create and sustain secure, permanent jobs, paid above the Real Living Wage, with clear routes for progression and professional development
- Have driven regional economic growth through £25m+ inward investment since incorporation and prioritising local suppliers
- Maintain fair, transparent & inclusive working practices, supported by employee engagement, wellbeing initiatives & regular reviews of workforce feedback
- Develop and nurture talent via apprenticeships, graduate roles & continuous skills training
- Strengthen ethical supply chains through prompt payment, modern slavery safeguards & fair working standards
- Collaborate with SMEs, VCSEs & third-sector organisations to grow diverse and resilient local economies

MISSION: MAKING BRITAIN A CLEAN ENERGY SUPPLIER

To accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy through responsible operations and digital innovation, we:

- Embed sustainability into delivery through our industry-leading 'Coding for a Greener Planet' initiative and energy-efficient digital solutions
- Measure, monitor & continuously reduce the environmental impact of our digital infrastructure to drive positive carbon reductions year on year
- Operate under a clear Carbon Reduction Plan, actively working towards Net Zero by 2050
- Power our operations using 50% green energy and energy-efficient premises and infrastructure, with an unwavering commitment to increase renewable usage
- Reduce emissions through digital-first delivery and sustainable travel policies
- Work collaboratively with our clients through engagement and co-design to deliver low-carbon, environmentally-responsible solutions aligned to their objectives

MISSION: BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO OPPORTUNITY AND TACKLING INEQUALITY

To ensure fair access to employment, progression & opportunity for all, we:

- Embed inclusive design principles into the services we deliver, aligned to recognised standards and ensuring positive outcomes for users of all abilities, backgrounds & access needs
- Maintain a diverse workforce and leadership, with representation well above industry averages, including sector-leading female representation and international perspectives
- Champion inclusive recruitment and progression practices, including Disability Confident accreditation
- Support access to work for people facing barriers through local outreach, fair pay & accessible recruitment practices
- Promote equality through Living Wage accreditation, transparent pay and reward processes & fair employment commitments, with ongoing monitoring
- Invest in skills development and career pathways aligned to future skills shortages, providing clear routes for advancement

MISSION: BUILDING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES FIT FOR THE FUTURE

To strengthen wellbeing, resilience & community-driven outcomes for the long term, we:

- Reduce digital exclusion and improve access to services through the creation of user-centred, accessible & multilingual digital solutions
- Support community resilience by building digital capability and confidence through digital inclusion opportunities
- Invest in staff physical and mental wellbeing through structured policies, a healthy workplace environment & wellbeing initiatives
- Encourage active lifestyles and sustainable choices via cycle-to-work scheme, public transport use & city-centre accessibility, reducing environmental and health impacts
- Foster positive workplace culture through inclusive social activities, staff engagement & supported volunteering opportunities

- Support healthier communities by working with charities, SMEs & community groups, including free hosting and skills support to create sustainable, long-term benefit

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

Considerations for the environment and sustainability are embedded in every level of our organisation.

From our policies and practices we follow to the digital solutions we develop, we aim to reduce our environmental impact by making our business activities more sustainable wherever possible.

To comply with environmental best practice standards, we:

MINIMISE WASTE

- Offer website hosting on virtual servers to reduce hardware usage and waste
- Minimise our use of printed materials by communicating electronically wherever possible
- Reduce paper waste by following our Paper Recycling Policy
- Separate recyclable materials, food waste, and non-recyclable waste
- Recycle empty toner cartridges via a third-party specialist
- Use mains-fed water dispensers to discourage the use of single-use plastics
- Provide external visitors with glasses and reusable cups instead of plastic

USE RESOURCES SUSTAINABLY AND EFFICIENTLY

- Switch all electronic devices off at the end of the working day
- Reuse electrical equipment wherever possible
- Use second-hand kit where appropriate
- Use energy-efficient lighting for our office and data centre
- Use energy saving lighting which automatically switches off when staff are not using parts of the building
- Regularly declutter our digital drives to reduce data consumption
- Apply energy efficient screen-saving settings to all devices used in our workplace

MITIGATE AND ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- Communicate with clients electronically to reduce paper waste
- Hold virtual meetings and workshops to reduce travel
- Use carpool or public transport where meetings and workshops must be held in person
- Utilising local suppliers (where required) to reduce the impact of transport
- Encourage staff to walk, cycle, or use public transport to commute to work
- Employ people who live in the Liverpool City Region to lower the environmental cost of commuting
- Offer a hybrid workstyle where staff can work from home for part of the week to reduce travel
- Provide flexible start and finish times to help staff avoid travelling during peak times, reducing emissions, noise pollution, and traffic congestion in the city

PROMOTE SOCIAL, LEGAL, AND ETHICAL ICT

- Set annual environmental targets for energy consumption, carbon emissions, and waste
- Demonstrate total transparency around progress made towards our environmental targets
- Align with our Carbon Reduction Plan to stay on track with our targets
- Review and adapt our environmental policies in line with changes Government guidance
- Involve staff in environmental decision-making to promote a circular economy
- Announce environmental updates during the weekly staff briefing to ensure sustainability remains an everyday priority

APPLY BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES TO MAKE OUR DATA CENTRE ENERGY EFFICIENT

- Host websites from virtual servers to optimise hardware efficiency
- Encourage clients to consider shared hosting where appropriate to limit the environmental cost of having their own virtual server
- Provide weekly software and plugin updates for all of the WordPress solutions we host to improve their performance and energy efficiency

- Track our data centre's energy consumption using built-in monitoring features to ensure our energy output does not exceed our targets
- Recycle outdated hardware using third-party specialists
- Use motion-sensor lighting that automatically switches off when staff are not in the data centre
- Use energy-efficient air conditioning

SEEK OUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION

- Developed Coding for a Greener Planet through our internal R&D programme to ensure we can deliver eco-friendly digital solutions for our customers
- Explore new ways of making our service offering more sustainable through our ongoing R&D programme
- Monitor our total yearly emissions to identify opportunities for improvement
- Avoid early uptake of new digital technologies until the environmental cost is clear.

MAKING OUR TECHNOLOGY SUSTAINABLE

- Design and build energy-efficient websites by following Coding for a Greener Planet's environmentally-friendly design principles and sustainable coding practices to reduce the amount of energy required to host our solutions
- Offer Coding for a Greener Planet to every customer we work with
- Use open-source software to reduce the lifetime cost of our digital solutions
- Use modular components and reusable code wherever possible
- Optimise the performance of our digital solutions to reduce their data consumption

STRATEGY ALIGNMENT: SUPPORTING THE GREENING GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

The service aligns with the Government strategy: "Greening government: ICT and digital services strategy 2020-2025" as follows:

1. Sustainability is prioritised

We choose to deliver sustainable solutions for clients that empower them, wherever possible, increasing their capacity to function autonomously within the ICT and digital landscape.

Example: we have implemented 80+ solutions that equip the client via a remote interface to change high-level configuration options, enabling them to remotely exercise sustainable control without needing third party or supplier intervention.

2. Raising awareness of environmental impact

As part of our planning process, client requests are routinely evaluated for their environmental impact by our team, enabling us to routinely advise the client on the environmental impact of their preferences and propose beneficial alternatives.

Example: environmental impact assessments are created as standard during our planning phase. This has reduced environmental load of solutions by up to approx. 35% by (e.g.) reducing duplication, minimising data storage and minifying code.

3. Commitment to transparency

We commit to publishing our progress towards our climate goals, reviewed annually.

Example: We publish our own Carbon Reduction Plan along with progress against measurable targets.

Further, we perform environmental audits on our service outputs, when appropriate, to transparently demonstrate the environmental credentials of what we've supplied.

Example: Our Environmental Reports on our Deliverables now identify and report against key metrics relating to ICT use, data storage and traffic volumes.

4. Increased Responsibility

As a digital supplier delivering to best practice, we recognise our responsibility to promote and demonstrate environmental best practice in the range of services we offer and how we deliver them.

The 'Coding for a Greener Planet' Initiative

We launched this unique environmental initiative in 2023 as part of our commitment to ethical and sustainable working practices.



The purpose of this initiative is to deliver energy-efficient websites underpinned by smart, sustainable and environmentally-conscious design choices. We do this by encouraging our clients to consider the environmental cost of their ideas throughout the creation process.

This initiative will be adopted for everything we create for you. By advising you on the environmental impact of your ideas, you will be able to make decisions about your website that are informed by an understanding of how energy consumption and carbon emissions would be affected by your choices now and in the future.

G-CLOUD 15 RELATED SERVICES FROM CONNECT

Accessibility Training for Website Content Editors (WCAG 2.2)

GDPR Healthcheck

Google Analytics

Headless Content Management System (CMS)

Managed Web Application

Managed Website Migration to Open Source CMS

Off The Shelf Intranet

Off The Shelf Museum Website

Online Data Collection and Mapping Tool

Open Source Bilingual CMS Support

Open Source Bilingual Content Management System (CMS)

Open Source Directory Website

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

Umbraco CMS App Content Manager

Umbraco Content Management System (CMS)

Umbraco Intranet

Umbraco Support

User Experience (UX) Testing and Evaluation

WCAG 2.2 Website Accessibility Audit

Web Application Support

Website Migration Support

WordPress CMS App Content Manager

WordPress Content Management System (CMS)

WordPress Intranet

WordPress Support

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Annual charges payable in advance. Payment terms 15 days.

Payment options include Direct Debit (monthly payments), BACS and advance invoicing, clearly quoting customer order number and itemised costs.