

Evaluating Metro's new mobile and user-generated content services

Metro, published by Associated Newspapers, is the world's leading free newspaper with a daily readership of over 2.6 million young urbanites, a segment highly sought after by advertisers. Keen to extend its lead and establish new revenue streams, Metro developed *MEView* and *MEmusic* allowing users to upload their own video and music content and share in the revenue from advertising and downloads. Both services are accessible through Metro's website, and *MEView*, the video service, also forms part of a new mobile service. Metro commissioned *new experience* to conduct an evaluation of the services at beta stage to identify important refinements to be made before launch.



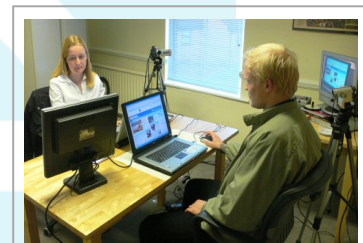
Live trial with self reporting



We recruited ten Metro readers who were also users of the mobile internet and web-based music and video services. At a briefing in our offices we instructed the ten participants to register for and use the services over five days, to download and upload some songs and videos, and to complete and post up a daily diary to a dedicated website. During the trial we kept in daily contact with participants and dealt with issues that might otherwise affect quality of data collection.

Post-trial interviews and walkthroughs

Once the trial was over participants came back to our offices for one-on-one interview sessions where we had them walk back through their experiences of using the Metro services on web and mobile. We were able to base the interviews around their real-world experiences of the services and clarify issues they had raised. We explored opportunities for improving the services and identified issues and misconceptions that might act as barriers to adoption in the real world.



Actionable findings to help ensure a successful launch



The combination of data collection methods proved to be an effective means of gaining detailed user feedback on the services. The trial and self reporting ensured the findings were grounded in real-world experiences and the follow-up interview allowed us to explore and clarify reported issues in more depth. The initial briefing ensured participants were engaged in the study; they even interacted with each other during the trial by commenting on each others' video uploads.

What Metro had to say about the research process

"Commissioning this kind of user experience research proved vital to ensuring a successful launch of Metro's new services. new experience identified many details for improvement but most importantly alerted us to misconceptions that could have impinged on the business model. This is new territory for Metro and the expertise of new experience was key for us." *Katharine King, Research Director, Metro (Associated Newspapers)*