

Older Adult Ethnography - Hunter Manzer

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to explore how older adults (70+) interact with smartphones and tablets in order to help product designers understand the opportunities and gaps related to their technology needs.

Overarching Research Questions

1. How do older adults living in today's technology world interact with smartphones and tablets?
2. What barriers exist for older adults when trying to use smartphones and tablets in their daily lives?
3. What are the prominent needs among older adults that are not currently served in the smartphones and tablets marketplace?

Stage 1: Introduction

Content

This section allows me to explain what an ethnography is to the participant and explain to them the anonymity of the process.

Opener

“First, do I have your permission to audio record our discussions and take pictures of some of your belongings and processes. All materials gathered will be kept anonymous and faces will be blurred if used.”

“Today we will be discussing how older adults use smartphones and tablets. I appreciate your contribution as your insights are valuable

“Anything and everything you wish to add is valuable. Do not feel like you need to answer anything in any particular way. All your comments and feedback are useful and worth saying.

Icebreaker

“So first I just want to start with a quick introduction, I thought maybe I might say some things about myself and you could share a couple things about you. My name is Hunter. I like to learn instruments and play music, I work in research, and I love to spend time outdoors.”

Questions

1. Do you use a Smartphone/Tablet
 - a. Do you use any other devices
2. What was your first experience with a smartphone//tablets? What prompted you to start using one? (Ask for each device separately)
3. Who or what resources helped you learn how to use them?

Purpose

To inform participants on exactly what's expected of them, to get them comfortable sharing their thoughts, and to build some rapport with them.

Stage 2: In-Depth Investigation

Content

Here I will ask the respondents to walk me through how, when, and where they use their Smartphones/Tablets in their daily lives.

Initial Question

“Walk me through your daily smartphone/tablet usage. Specifically, if you could show me around your home, and talk about when/where you use each device and for what.”

Interviewer Notes

Below are some possible topics of discussion and some notes on each topic for the interviewer. These may come up naturally or may need to be probed. Additional probing beyond this is assumed.

Along with this process, the interviewer should be collecting pictures of artifacts. These will include,

- *The respondents' devices.*
- *The locations they use their Smartphones/Tablets*
- *Any tools they use to help their Smartphones/Tablets usage.*
- *Any other situational artifacts the interview deems useful.*

The most important overarching question that should be asked for all of these topics should be:

“How does this behavior interact with their day to day lives”.

~How does they interact with the physical world around them?

~Who do they interact with?

~Do they have any trusted sources of technology advice?

With luck these topics will come up naturally. However, if they do not, they can be brought up.

- Communication
 - “How do you typically communicate with family/friends?”
 - *Take note if there is a difference between the two groups.*
 - “Could you walk me through your process?”

- *Take note of typical location, device and software used, and any barriers of usage.*
- Searching for information
 - “How might you use your devices to look up information? Show me”
 - *Take note of location and device/software used.*
 - *Pay close attention to any barriers of use.*
- Entertainment Media
 - “How might you use your phone/tablet for entertainment? Show me.”
 - *Take note of searching procedure when looking for new entertainment*
 - *Take note of barriers and frustrations when performing their process.*
- Schedule
 - “How might you use your phone/tablet to set reminders or keep your calendar? Show me.”
 - *Take note of any usage at all.*
 - *If not using, take note of which barriers may be preventing this and what they use instead.*
 - *Take photos if they use a physical alternative.*
- Shopping
 - “Walk me through how you might shop with your devices?”
 - *Take note of what their typical purchase entails*
 - *Take note of the typical situation in which they shop.*
 - *Take note of any other persons that may be involved in their buying process.*
- Paying Bills
 - “Walk me through how you might pay your bills?”
 - *Do they pay their bills online?*
 - *Take note of their alternatives if not.*
 - *Probe on barriers and what makes the process difficult.*
 - *Take note of what bills they pay online and what that process looks like to them.*
- Maps/Route setting
 - “Walk me through how you might figure out directions to somewhere.”
 - *What methods do they use?*
 - *What barriers occur.*
 - *When and where do they figure out direction*
- News
 - “Walk me through your process to get the latest news.”
 - *What apps do they use?*
 - *Do they use Social media for news?*
 - *Do they share news?*
 - *Where and When do they read/watch the news?*
- Reading
 - “If you read books on your phone, can you walk me through your process when doing that?”
 - *Do they read on their phone?*
 - *How long do they usually read?*

- *Where and When?*
- *What barriers occur compared to traditional books?*
- Social Media
 - “If you use Social media, could you show me how you use it?”
 - *What sites?*
 - *Where and When?*
 - *How does this play into their News gathering and Social Behavior?*
- Games
 - “If you play games on your devices, Could you walk me through the games you play and explain them to me?
 - *What games and why do they play them?*
 - *How did they start on these games*
 - *Do they get recommendations?*

Purpose

This is the meat of our discussion. These questions will serve as general guidelines, and will only be followed to guide the overall conversation. The majority of this section will be up to moderator discretion and what comes up naturally.

Stage 3: Closure

Content

Get any final thoughts from the respondent and wrap up the discussion

Questions

1. Are there any changes you would like to see in these devices in order to better serve your needs?
2. Do you have any additional notes you would like to add about today's discussion?

Thank participants and terminate study.

Why are you there

What do you want to observe

Add little notes on how to probe

Keep questions open ended HOW