dscout

Approach AI with Confidence

15 Things UXRs Can Do Today

In our article, _GenAI Adds Tension to UXR—But Can Also Bring Opportunity_ we explored three tensions of being a UXR in a GenAI world:

Pace: Keeping up with tightening development cycles

Focus: Being torn between usability and exploratory research

Priorities: Being torn between growth and ethics

Here, we highlight 15 pieces of advice for navigating these tensions. Keep them handy as your organization explores the possibilities for GenAI and adopts this new technology.

Pace: How to stay quick and authoritative to keep up with fast timelines

1. Adapt your methods to be more iterative

Break research down into bite-sized pieces as much as possible, and deliver as often as possible.

- Read this Applause post on how to build an application test plan.
- If you're using a tool like Diary, report on each part individually and sequentially.
- Use tools like Express to get scrappy, quick-hit findings.

2. Use AI tools to scale your practice*

Researchers are torn on this as a tool, but some of our experts have been using ChatGPT to help with some of the more tedious elements of the research process:

- Transcription
- Generating SPSS or Excel prompts to speed quantitative analysis
- Brainstorming question ideas
- Summarizing interview data
- First drafts of survey or interview questions

When implementing AI in your practice, please be careful with your company's data and user PII. Read up on your company's policy about data sharing and never give PII to a non-secure LLM.

3. Stay up to date with how GenAI is evolving

Watch the AI news in your field closely and keep teams updated on what you discover.

- Take workshops or watch YouTube videos on how LLMs work.
- Experiment with ChatGPT to see how it works, and see what it's good at and bad at in your personal experience.
- Experiment with new GenAI tools in your field to understand what UI choices are being made by others.
- Attend engineering meetings and stand-ups to get a sense of how the technology works and what open questions they still have.
- Be aware of the potential risks or ethical concerns behind building and utilizing GenAI models and bringing them up when relevant.
- Read up on other organizations' previous research on human-centered AI to get ideas on what to study and how.

- Send your designers and product planners these resources, too! Consider sites like [Google: AI Guidebook](#) and [Lennert Ziberski: "UX of AI."](#)

4. Put yourself in the decision-maker room

Be courageous (or even pushy) about being in GenAI strategy meetings. Don't wait for a polite invitation—ask to be there, and believe you will prove your worth once you're in the room.

Focus: Staying strategic and persuading the importance of research

5. Introduce user stories and hypotheticals

Product developers might be overly focused on their "ideal" user experience and the benefits of their project, and overlooking strategic risks. Use your knowledge of your user base to ask, "Have you thought about this?" as often as possible.

6. Resurface existing foundational research

Go back through your repositories to find old insights that might be relevant to the GenAI push. Bring them to your meetings with builders and leadership.

7. Run low-lift exploratory research

Do this to get interesting tidbits and pique interest for bigger exploratory projects.

8. Conduct secondary research

Don't settle for just your primary focus. Also, take a look at human behavior and GenAI.

9. Get efficient with evaluation

Develop new templates for testing the usability and accuracy of GenAI products to streamline your process. Then, democratize usability processes in your organization.

Priorities: Defining org values and advocating for ethical use of AI

10. Establish what "ethical" means to you and your organization

Create guidelines that you can advocate for, rather than just telling people "no." Other

companies are starting to brianstorm guidelines, which you can use as a starting point:

- Nokia Bell Labs: "Responsible AI"
- Service Now: "Five Considerations for Building AI Trust"
- Axios AI: "Nutrition Labels"
- Microsoft: Responsible AI Principles and Approach
- IBM: AI Ethics

11. Operationalize your guidelines and socialize them aggressively

What does success look like from an ethical point of view? What do products need to have before they can ship? What can't they have? Make sure your organization knows the answers to these questions.

12. Make a business case and user case for ethical design

Remind your leadership that lack of ethical consideration can lead to issues with brand integrity, and ultimately losing user trust.

Let the users speak for themselves. Run research about perception, expectations, fears or impacts to socialize in your organization. Qualitative data is one of your most powerful tools. Use dscout to source quotes and impactful video reels about the potential human impacts of AI.

13. Find allies across the organization

There may be others across your org who are also feeling nervous about speaking out. Build a support network—even if it's informal—and keep each other in the loop about GenAI practices across teams.

14. Get legal on your side

Nobody has more practice in being a wet blanket! GenAI has implications for data privacy and liability that makes practice and development a potential legal issue. Partner with your legal team to get extra firepower when you have to say "no" to something.

15. Consider your involvement with ethics

Very few of us are trained ethicists, though our community does have plenty of people who are (Google PAIR, UX of AI, HmntyCntrd to name a few). First though, be intentional about how much your company needs you to play this role, and how comfortable you are doing so.

If you do want to play that role and don't feel prepared, use stipends or programs at your work to train your team on showing up as ethicists. If you don't, identify the people who will (engineering, legal, marketing, product) or advocate for a formal ethics role to be added to your organization.

When developing AI, it's important that issues of responsible design, bias, unintended consequences, data privacy, transparency, and other considerations are part of the process—whether UXR takes the lead on that or not.

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We're developing GenAI tools that work with you (not in place of you)

See how dscout is approaching AI technology and get a sneak peek of the tools we're building to support fellow researchers.

Read all about it