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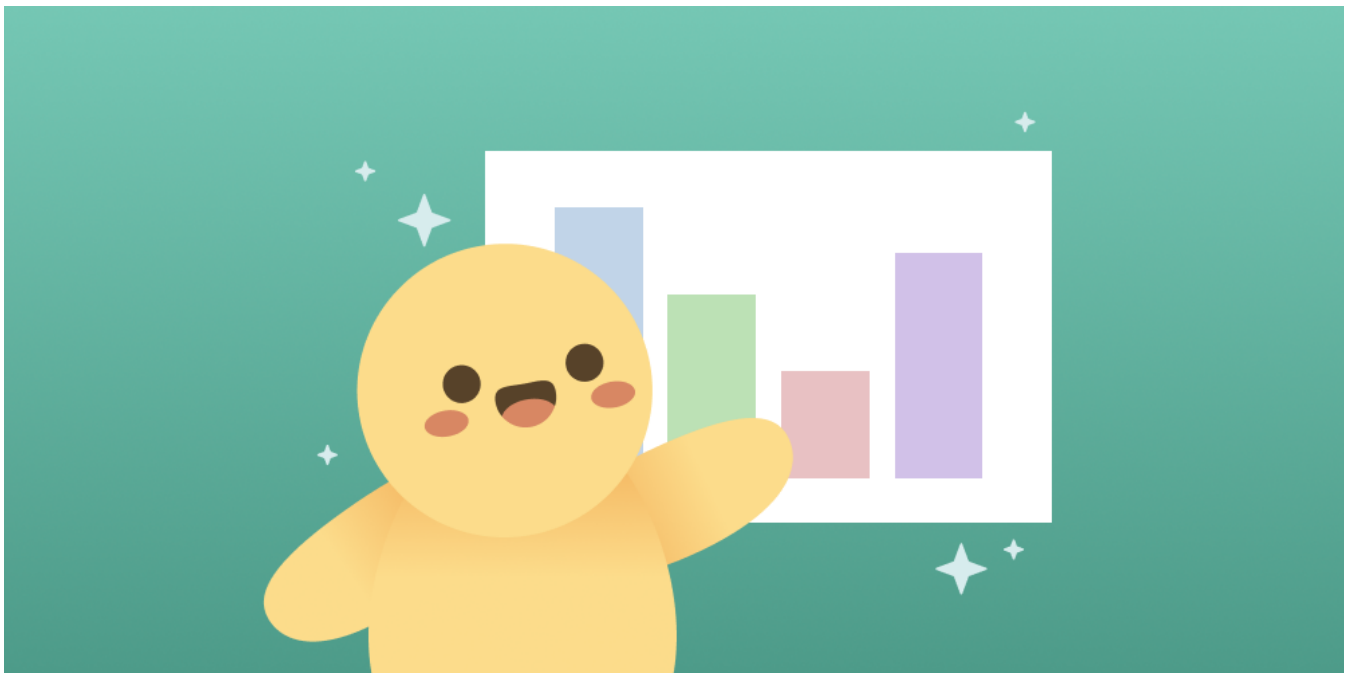


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How to share your UX research

Tips for making reports your colleagues will actually read



School has taught us to measure a report's value by its length. We're all familiar with word counts, and padding out our sentences to hit that arbitrary target. Or bumping up the font size to increase the page count.

As adults, we know that writing this way is silly. We make things as short or as long as they need to be to say what we need to say. From emails to wiki pages, we're all used to writing long-form content in our workplaces. For UX researchers, reports are a big part of our toolkit.



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for us to share results in full detail.

There are a few reasons for this:

- The results can be used to guide future product decisions, and build things that customers will find helpful
- It gives your team an opportunity to empathise with their customers
- Over time, they'll prove the value of getting early feedback from customers

Reports contain a rich variety of information. They're heavy on the text, and often use diagrams and tables of data to explain things. If your research involved speaking to customers (or test participants) then there may even be video clips of them talking about or using the product.

Writing these reports can be tricky. Here are some of the things I've learned over my career to improve the quality of my user research reports.

Remember your audience

As a researcher, your stakeholders are the other people in your organisation. In a sense, they are *your* users. The information in your report should fit their needs. Knowing how other people work means you can create reports that they'll find helpful and relevant.

For example, the designer who built the prototype you ran the tests with will want to see the full results. However, someone working in sales may be more interested in how your research affects the product roadmap.

These are some things you can do to keep your report readable to everyone in your organisation:

- **Avoid acronyms and buzz words.** If you do use one, make sure to define it the first time you use it. For example, *minimum viable product (MVP)*. You can also add



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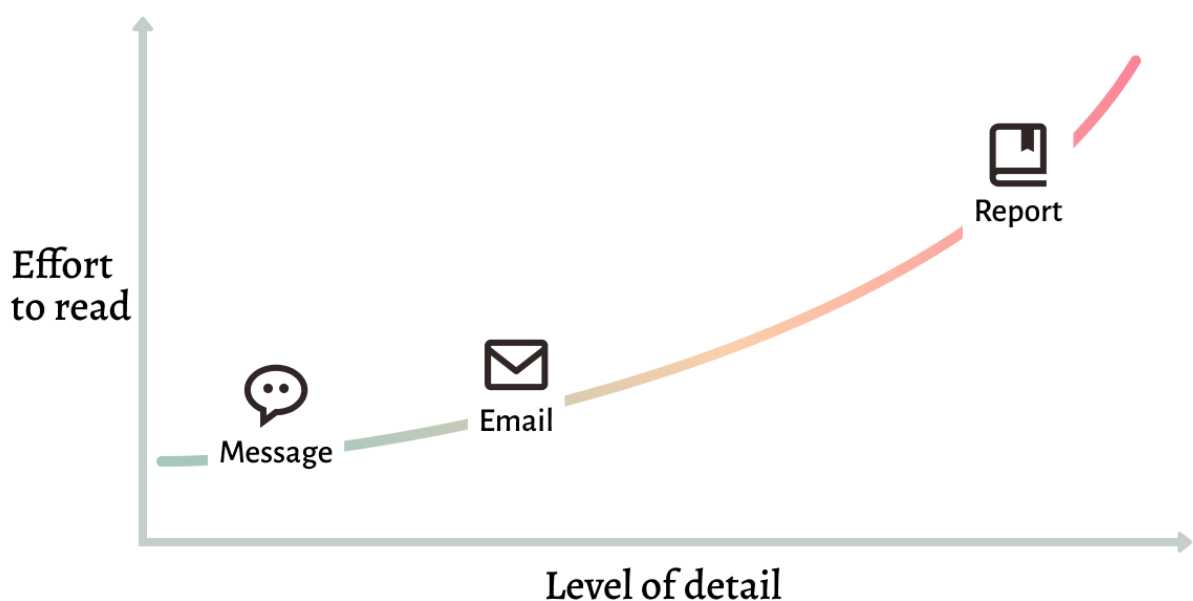
- **Check that it will be readable.** Can you read it on both desktop and mobile? Do all the links go to the right places? Do you need access to a specific tool to see the results?

Understanding who you're sharing your findings with and why will make things easier for you. Write with your audience (your colleagues) in mind!

Make your findings digestible

Realistically, not everyone is going to read your whole report. Your colleagues are juggling their workload, the toll of the pandemic, and everything else on their minds. Their attention is overloaded. Getting them to go through everything is a big ask, even if it is relevant to their work.

But not everyone needs every detail of your research. When communicating with other people in your organisation, selecting the best medium is always an important decision. In general, richer media formats will need an increasing amount of effort to read.



Reports are dense. They contain a feast of evidence and analysis, which makes them difficult to read in a glance. Lighter channels like instant messages are ideal for sharing



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Creating the right outputs is the key to getting people's attention. These are some formats that have worked well for me in the past.

Slack posts

This is what the majority of people in your organisation should be seeing. It's the smallest amount of helpful information someone could take away from your study. Sharing the highlights in this way makes your research results more visible to more people.



Amy 6:42 PM

Hey all! 🌟 Just wanted to share some insights from our recent user testing session.

Background: Only 34% of our users can find their bookmarks from the home screen. We designed a [prototype](#) with an alternative layout to see if we could improve this number, and tested it with eight of our existing customers.

Key findings:

🌟 80% of people we tested were able to find the bookmarks on the new design.

💡 Some test participants suggested adding a search function, as it's something they expected to see there.

🕒 The most popular reason for bookmarking things was to save things for later when they have more time.

We're planning to implement the new layout over the coming weeks. We're also going to do more research into a search function, since it's something that's been asked for for a while now. You can [read the full report here](#) if you'd like to see more details. Thanks! 🚀

An example of a Slack message you could share in a company-wide chat.

You can see here what I mean by 'key' information. There's a brief introduction, the key discoveries, and why this information is going to be useful to the organisation. I've even used emojis to break down the findings. If your tool allows it, you can include photos and videos to support your message.

This post should be enough to get someone curious about the full report. But people are busy. Sometimes, a paragraph or two is enough to be helpful, so it's fine if this is all they see of your research.

Report summary

The first page or two should summarise the whole of your report. This means that if someone only had time to read these pages, they'd still know about everything your research covered.

Your summary should at least cover these points:



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- Your core findings from your study
- What you're planning to do with the new insights

Depending on what your findings were, it may be good to include images here too. Or a graph that summarises a key point. You could link to other parts of your report too, to help someone find the parts that matter the most to them.

You can go into more detail than the Slack post, but it should still be snappy. Someone's made the time to open the report, and the least you could do is give them what they're looking for.

Analysis and evidence

I tend to assume that most people won't get this far. However, some people do like to drill into the details themselves. I've found that sharing all the gory details with stakeholders can be both helpful and persuasive.

In the full report, you can include all of your evidence. Things like video clips and direct quotes from participants, which can be immensely powerful. You can also take the time to explain why you made certain recommendations.

This collection of evidence can also be handy when your team makes product decisions in the future. You can fall back on your old findings to give you an idea of what things you can work on next.

Choosing the right way to present your information takes some trial and error. Make time to learn which methods work best for you and your team!

Pay attention to your content

Whatever outputs you end up using, there are things you can do to improve their quality.

- **Tell a good story.** I've written about [storytelling in design case studies](#), but you can



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- **Highlight key details.** If someone is skimming your report, you can draw their eyes to the places you want them to look. For example, I like to use colour coding and emojis to capture sentiment in quotes.
- **Create diagrams.** Using graphs and images can get points across better than words. If you're not confident with your design skills, use tools like [Canva](#) to make simple graphs.
- **Make your words clear.** You can use tools like [Grammarly](#) and a [Hemingway editor](#) to make sure your words are easy to read.

Telling people about the things you've discovered through your research is exciting. The way you share it should be a great experience too.



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