



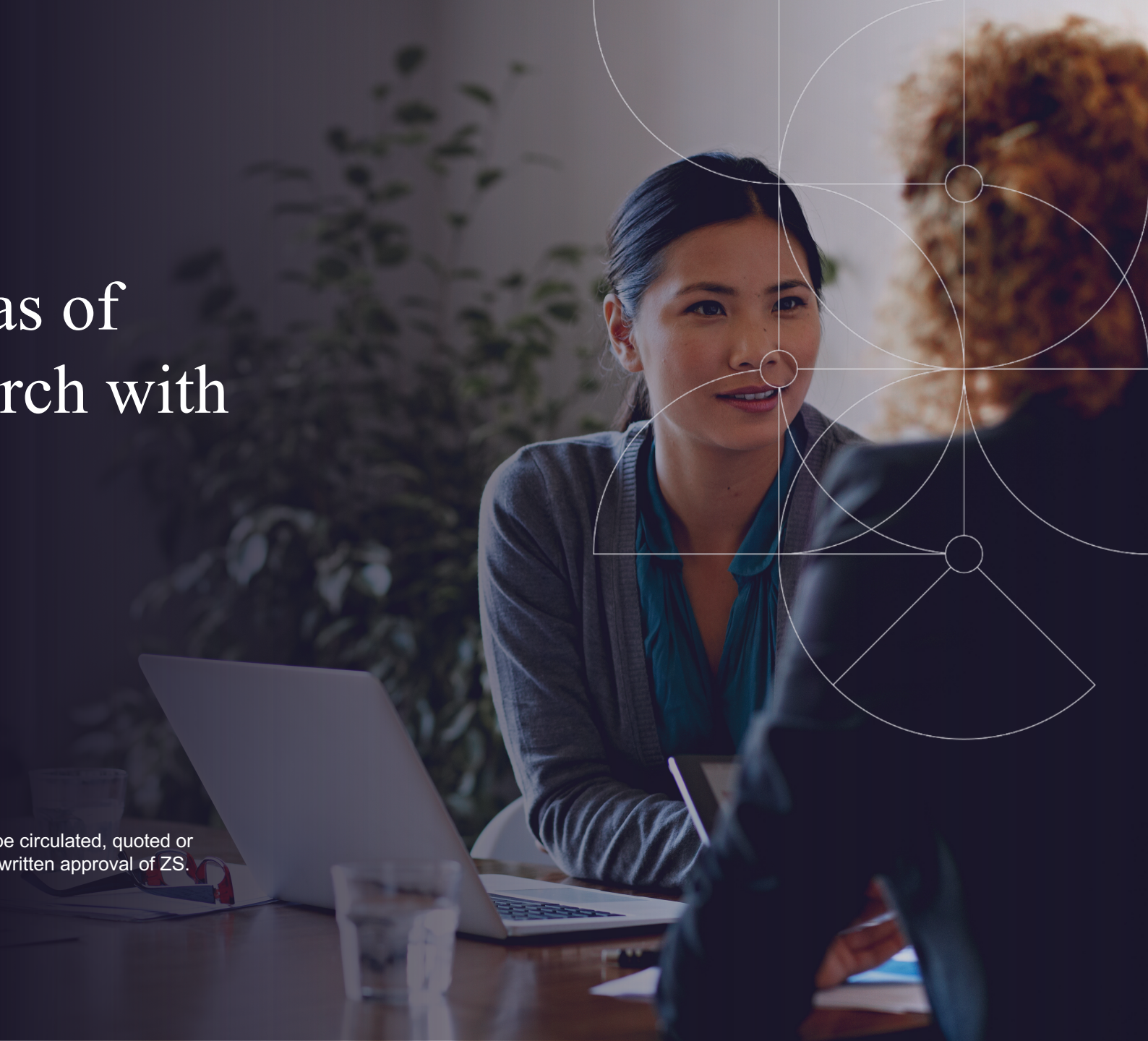
The Joys and Dilemmas of Conducting UX Research with Older Adults

Advancing Research 2022

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Impact where it matters.



Hello!



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- 03 Maximizing the joys and avoiding the dilemmas
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01

Older adults and technology – getting to the truth

Myth: Everyone 65+ is 'old', and we can assume what they need

Old age is divided into nuanced segments and our societal understanding of age is constantly changing



Debunking the myth that you can design for older adults without talking to them

65-74 yrs
Youngest-old

75-84 yrs
Middle-old

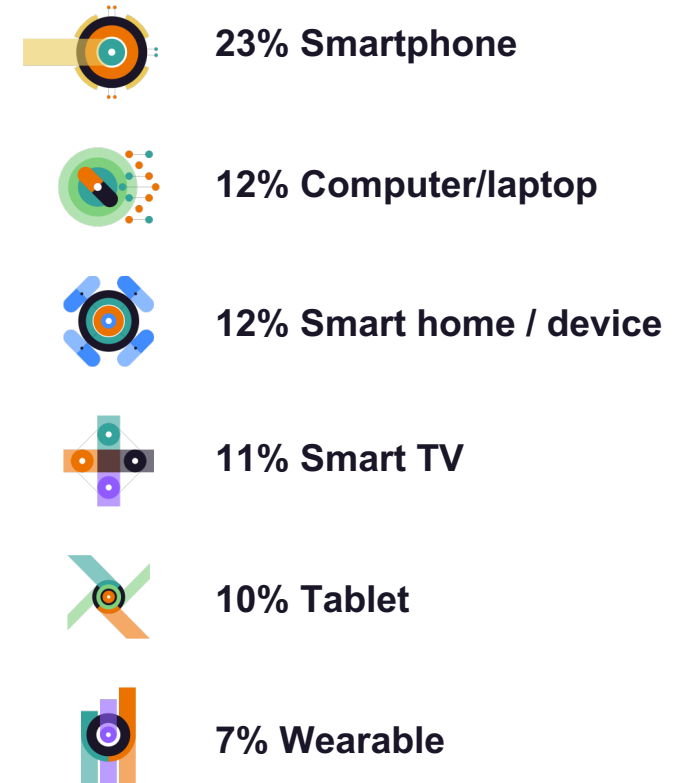
≥85 yrs
Oldest-old

Myth: Older adults do not use technology

Older adults DO use technology

77% of adults 50+ have a smartphone and in the past year, 51% of older Americans bought some tech product

Top Tech Purchases for those Over 50 in the Last Year



Myth: Ok, some older adults use tech, but they aren't a top market

"The pressure on Medicare Advantage programs to perform better under value-based models will necessitate that we shed old preconceptions that older people do not utilize technology (they do) and drive a wave of tech-enabled services combining care management and consumer-facing technology tools to enable high-value care delivery at scale."

-Providence Digital Innovation Group, 2022 Predictions

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Digital health is advancing care for conditions that are prevalent in older adults, such as heart disease, diabetes, and arthritis

AGING IN PLACE

Older adults want to stay in their homes and digital tools can help make that a safer, more comfortable option

GENERAL USE

Websites for entertainment, social media, and modern conveniences like grocery delivery are all open areas of opportunity



02

UX research with older adults

MYTH #1

Everyone has the internet
and if they don't, they aren't
our target audience



Define your target population first and adapt to their needs

- Nearly **22 million American seniors** (42% of those 65+) do not have wired broadband access at home
 - Ignoring those without the internet is ignoring inclusive design
- Digital \neq internet
 - SMS-based campaigns have been found to be successful with seniors
- Old school research methods still work
 - Mail
 - Telephone
 - In-person (socially distanced)
 - Observational research

RECRUITMENT



MYTH #2

People show-up because you sent an email



Make it easy for people to show-up and have a backup plan if they don't

- Consider if connecting to a session is intuitive or if you provided enough instructions
- Reminder phone calls or an email are still a gold standard
- Life happens - plan on non-shows or changes in schedules
 - Schedule floating / back-up participants and set clear expectations

RECRUITMENT



MYTH #3

Discussion guides and content are independent assets



Creating interview guides in parallel with content will strengthen interviews

- Content is a tool - use it to establish and strengthen rapport
 - Tone and copy should be simple, warm, and friendly
 - Health literacy
- Content impacts the types of questions we are asking and, as a result, the interview cadence
 - Research studies should be the Oprah experience, not an interrogation

PREPARATION



MYTH #4

Familiarity with
technology is the same
as fluency



Leave time for tech checks to bridge potential gaps in knowledge

- Schedule a brief tech-test separately
 - Bonus: This helps build early rapport
- Create time for tech set-up and troubleshooting to bridge any knowledge gaps
- Be clear about what software and activities are required in your screening criteria and how they will be used

PREPARATION



MYTH #5

A single, internal pilot is enough to prepare



Pilot with an actual participant and create resources to use as back-ups

- Pilot more than once and/or with a representative participant
- Create resources for yourself - detailed instructions, examples, screenshots, or troubleshooting
- Consider alternative ways of conducting the session if there are unexpected issues
 - Static images of prototypes and 'think aloud' techniques

PREPARATION



MYTH #6

You can save on interview time by doing a short introduction and debrief



Take the time to get to know your participant

- Research is about ***understanding the user*** - take the time at the start of an interview to build rapport, especially with older adults
 - As we age, we increasingly prioritize connectedness and volunteering
- Adequate debriefing time not only allows you to ask your final questions but answer theirs
- Get to know the community - Depending on your work, consider maintaining regular touch-points or return of data



MYTH #7

People will tell you if they are struggling



Not everyone will speak up and what you don't know can hurt you

- Assess accessibility early and often
 - Keep in mind the response pressures participants face
 - Attentiveness in initial interviews can give you time to iterate on issues
- Older participants may not be familiar with our assumed mental models
 - Swiping VS tapping, up VS down, left VS right - these motions are learned and may be less ubiquitous than you think



MYTH #8

If the research is going to be consistent, you should stick to the script



Employ empathy and embrace the unexpected

- Older age can be difficult, and research questions may spark deep emotional experiences
 - Consider the wording and timing of questions that might be triggering
- Plan how to address a situation where someone might feel emotional and how to honor what is happening
- Findings can come from the unplanned/unexpected





03

**Maximizing the joys and avoiding the dilemmas:
Takeaways and tips**

UX with Older Adults: Maximizing the joys and avoiding the dilemmas





04

Conclusion – Call to action

*Talking directly
with your
population will
help you create
an engaging and
effective digital
product that
stands out from
the rest.*





Thank you!

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