



# **Handbook of Usability Testing**

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**Second Edition**

**How to Plan, Design, and  
Conduct Effective Tests**

Jeff Rubin  
Dana Chisnell



WILEY

Wiley Publishing, Inc.



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*Dedicated to those for whom usability and user-centered design  
is a way of life and their work a joyful expression of their  
genuine concern for others.*

*– Jeff*

*To my parents, Jan and Duane Chisnell, who believe me  
when I tell them that I am working for world peace through user  
research and usability testing.*

*– Dana*





# About the Authors

**Jeff Rubin** has more than 30 years experience as a human factors/usability specialist in the technology arena. While at the Bell Laboratories' Human Performance Technology Center, he developed and refined testing methodologies, and conducted research on the usability criteria of software, documentation, and training materials.

During his career, Jeff has provided consulting services and workshops on the planning, design, and evaluation of computer-based products and services for hundreds of companies including Hewlett Packard, Citigroup, Texas Instruments, AT&T, the Ford Motor Company, FedEx, Arbitron, Sprint, and State Farm. He was cofounder and managing partner of The Usability Group from 1999–2005, a leading usability consulting firm that offered user-centered design and technology adoption strategies. Jeff served on the Board of the Usability Professionals Association from 1999–2001.

Jeff holds a degree in Experimental Psychology from Lehigh University. His extensive experience in the application of user-centered design principles to customer research, along with his ability to communicate complex principles and techniques in nontechnical language, make him especially qualified to write on the subject of usability testing.

He is currently retired from usability consulting and pursuing other passionate interests in the nonprofit sector.

**Dana Chisnell** is an independent usability consultant and user researcher operating UsabilityWorks in San Francisco, CA. She has been doing usability research, user interface design, and technical communications consulting and development since 1982.

Dana took part in her first usability test in 1983, while she was working as a research assistant at the Document Design Center. It was on a mainframe office system developed by IBM. She was still very wet behind the ears. Since

then, she has worked with hundreds of study participants for dozens of clients to learn about design issues in software, hardware, web sites, online services, games, and ballots (and probably other things that are better forgotten about). She has helped companies like Yahoo!, Intuit, AARP, Wells Fargo, E\*TRADE, Sun Microsystems, and RLG (now OCLC) perform usability tests and other user research to inform and improve the designs of their products and services.

Dana's colleagues consider her an expert in usability issues for older adults and plain language. (She says she's still learning.) Lately, she has been working on issues related to ballot design and usability and accessibility in voting.

She has a bachelor's degree in English from Michigan State University. She lives in the best neighborhood in the best city in the world.



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- Last, thanks to all the clients down through the years who showed confidence and trust in me and my colleagues to do the right thing for their customers.

**From Dana Chisnell**

The obvious person to thank first is Jeff Rubin. Jeff wrote *Handbook of Usability Testing*, one of the seminal books about usability testing, at a time when it was very unusual for companies to invest resources in performing a reality check on the usability of their products. The first edition had staying power. It became such a classic that apparently people want more. For better or worse, the world still needs books about usability testing. So, a thousand thank-yous to Jeff for writing the first edition, which helped many of us get started with usability testing over the last 14 years. Thanks, too, Jeff, for inviting me to work with you on the second edition. I am truly honored. And thank you for offering your patience, diligence, humor, and great wisdom to me and to the project of updating the *Handbook*.

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