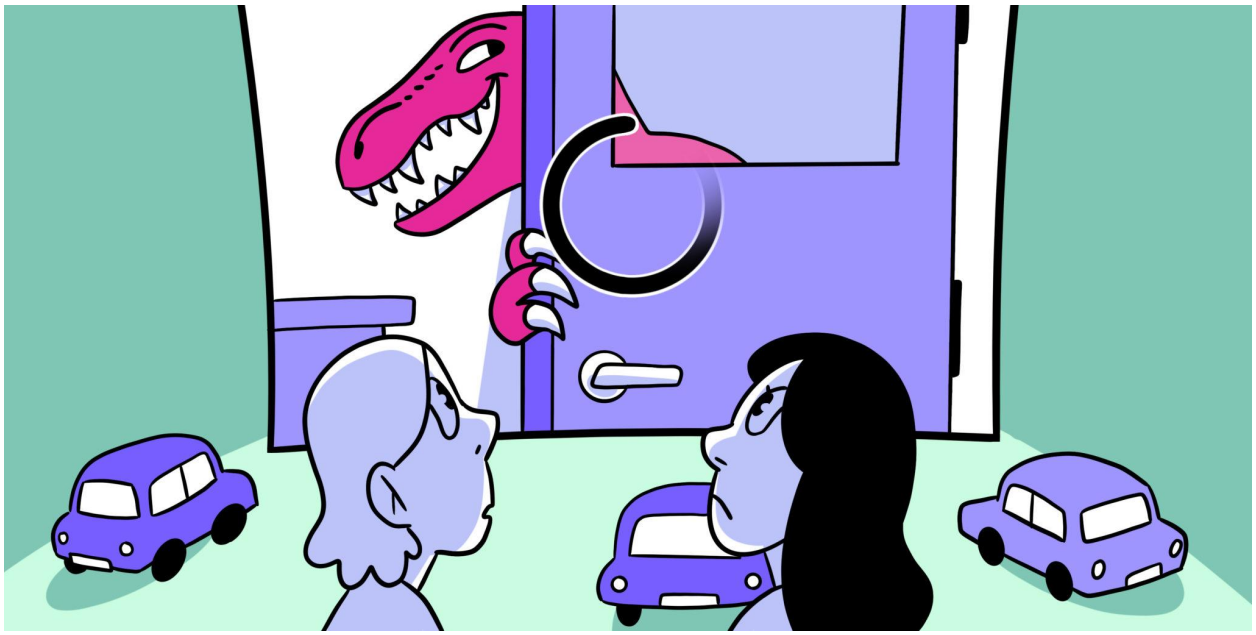
Helio Guides

Video Flow Tests

JUNE 2022



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Introduction

Validating a user flow early on in a new design is crucial for most designers. The validation comes from getting customers to use their new flow, either in a coded or clickable prototype. When it's really important to get user reactions to a specific flow, knowing whether they can successfully navigate it or not doesn't cut it when you're trying to make confident decisions. This is where the power of video comes into play. By creating a video of a navigation flow with your new designs, you can allow participants to

watch and focus on the pathway itself, instead of giving them a pass or fail designation on whether they completed a task.

Why Video?

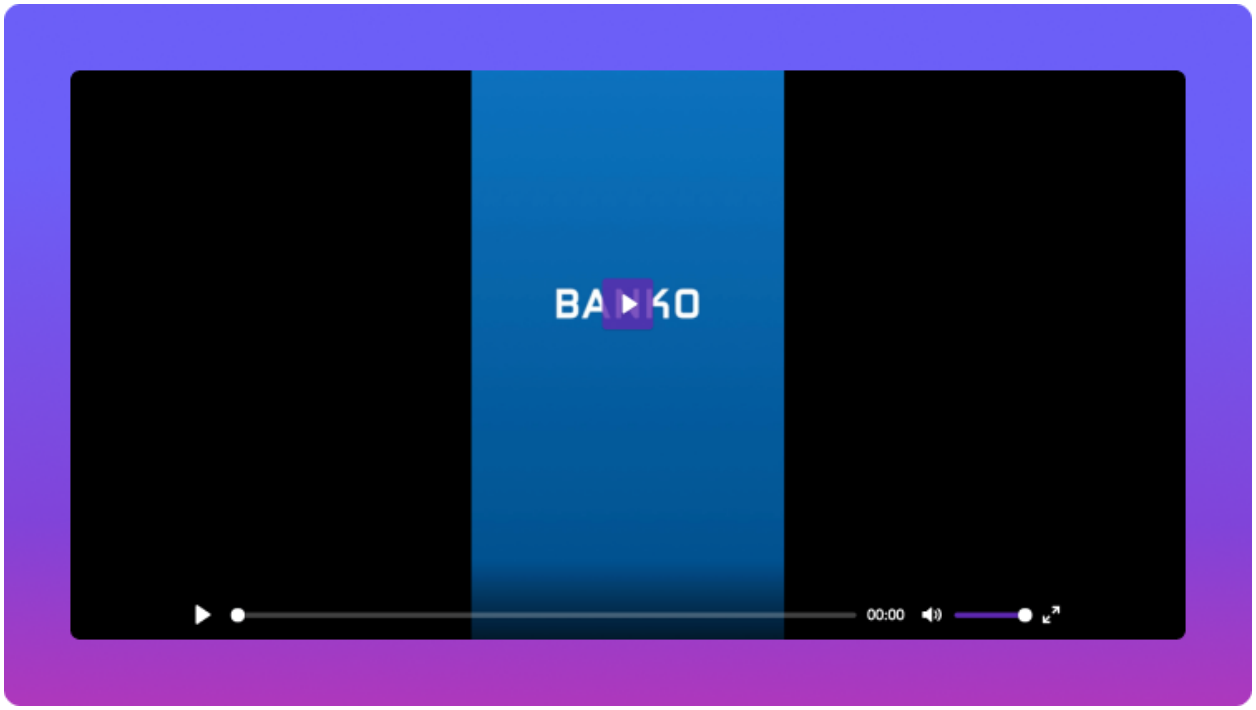
With video assets, you can stage a more thorough explanation of an idea by clearly setting up context, using analogies, or describing the intent of a flow in further detail. Knowing how users react to a flow should also explore how they react to the intent of the flow. This information can help us iterate on a design to help elicit more desired reactions from users.

The Importance of User Reactions

Usability of a design is simply not enough to be confident in making the decision to make a new element live for customers. Companies need to consider how changes will affect customer perception of their brand and the use of an app can come into play as much as visual direction and marketing elements used. Take Snapchat for example: they made a drastic change to their UI and navigation elements in 2018. While they didn't change their branding, the changes they made to their navigation structure caused an uproar in their fans and customers, causing some to completely abandon using the app altogether. The impact for them was a substantial drop off in their usage over the next year.

When and How to Use It

When gathering reactions from customers on a flow, video helps convey the intent of the user flow. You don't want to just drop a participant into the video with no context however. We recommend conducting sentiment analysis on core screens in a survey, before showing them the full video. By doing this, you ensure users pay close attention to those core moments and will follow along in the video in an easier fashion with prior context.

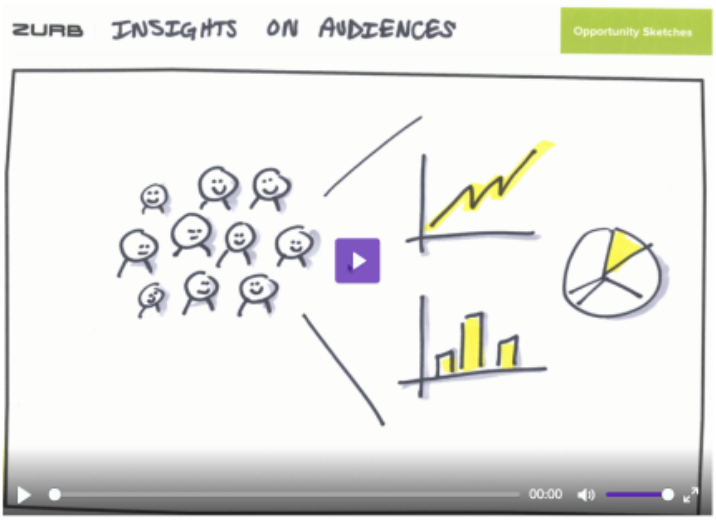


Building additional context and explaining a flow as a voice over on the video is a useful tactic as well. It helps users stay engaged with the demonstration while giving them further context to the intent. We recommend keeping this controlled as a script however - especially if you're conducting multivariate testing of different flows or want to recreate the test in an iterative approach.

When to Use It

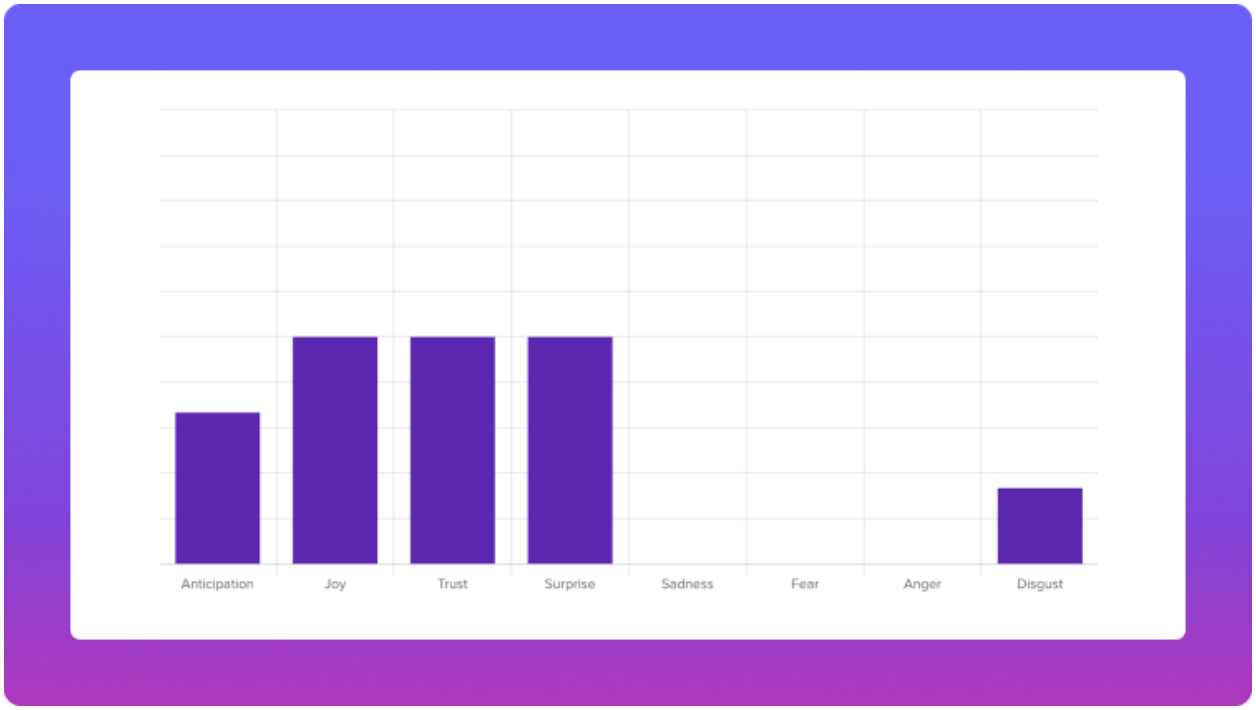
The first answer is the simplest: when you have a completed video. Maybe a feature explainer or a social media ad that hasn't been released by your company yet. Get the content in front of test participants and get feedback before it goes live.

This test type is also very effective when trying to get visceral reactions from participants using whiteboard sketches, brainstormed ideas, and conceptual interactions on a design. Applying a video asset explainer or showcasing your idea you'll understand how participants react in several different ways.



Interpreting the Data

Interpreting this data becomes very straightforward when we start to apply our testing methods. As we put together flows of screens we often want to uncover what sort of emotional or visceral reactions are elicited by customers when they are shown a flow. This compliments usability testing very well by approaching the testing from a reaction perspective and a navigation perspective for users.



Conclusion

Customer reactions to your design flows are just as important as the usability of them. Be sure to couple this type of surveying with parallel testing of the usability for each flow. While we've made a strong case here for the value of capturing your customer's reactions, usability testing is still important so don't take one over the other - conduct both! Remember that video is at your disposal for capturing user sentiment and leverage this tool as much as possible.

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