Online Community:

An Insight Tool for Usability Testing and Product Innovation

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Overview

* Case Study: AT&T Interactive's YP.com and YPmobile

* Strategy: Joining the Conversation

* Community: If we build it, will they come?

* Real World Example: YP.com Home Page Redesign

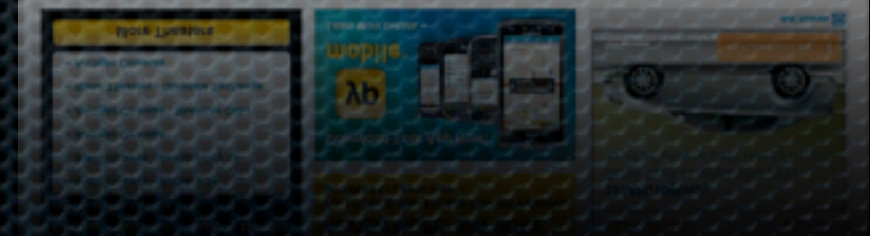* Usability: Test Early, Test Often

* Questions?

The Fine Print

YP.com & YPmobile

YELLOWPAGES.COM in transition

- Home Page Redesign
- Editorial Features
- Social Sharing

YPmobile

- iPhone
- iPad
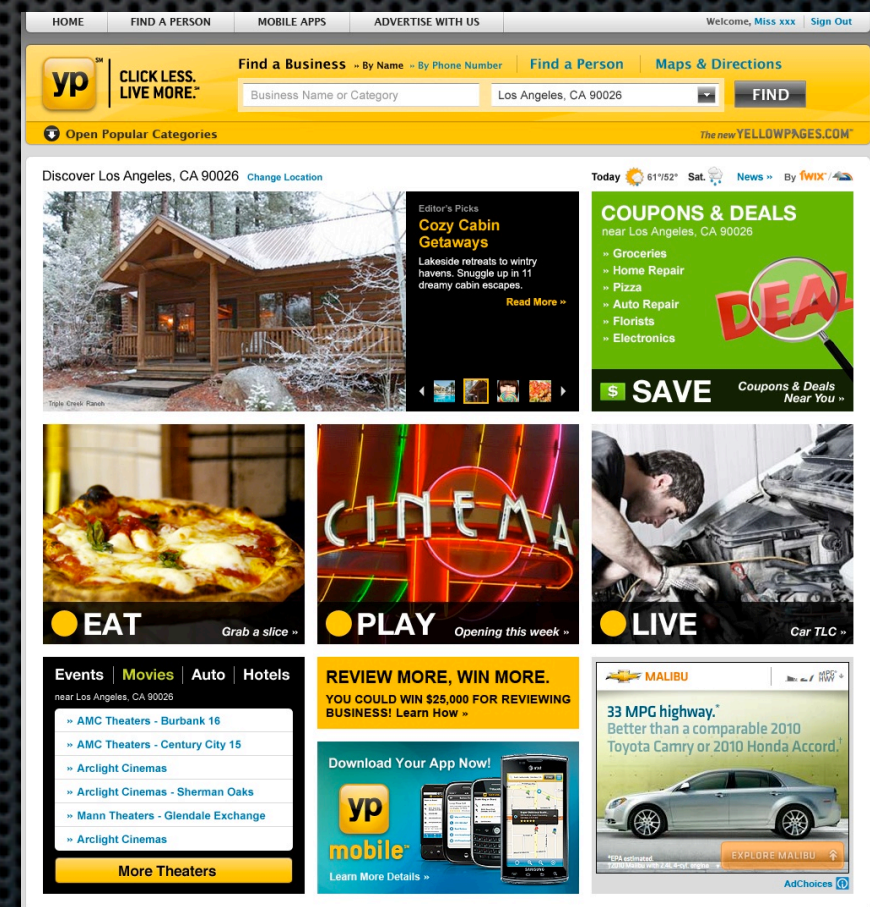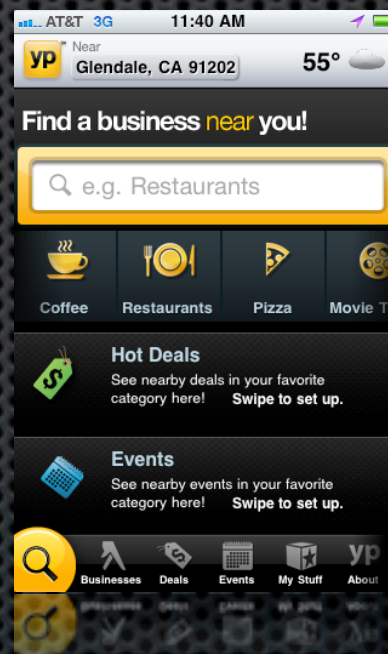
Joining the Conversation

People were talking about our products and services every day...

...But these conversations were happening without us

If we build it, will they come?

* **Engage:** Have honest conversations about consumer interests
* **Insight:** Get real-time information while building a deep understanding of users over time
* **Influence:** Co-create to drive authentic word of mouth
* **Listen:** Provide users ownership in the process; build long-term loyalty and trust
* **Innovate:** Faster and earlier

Community Snapshot

Gender

Geo

24%

20%

20%

70%

Real World Example: YP.com

Research Objectives:

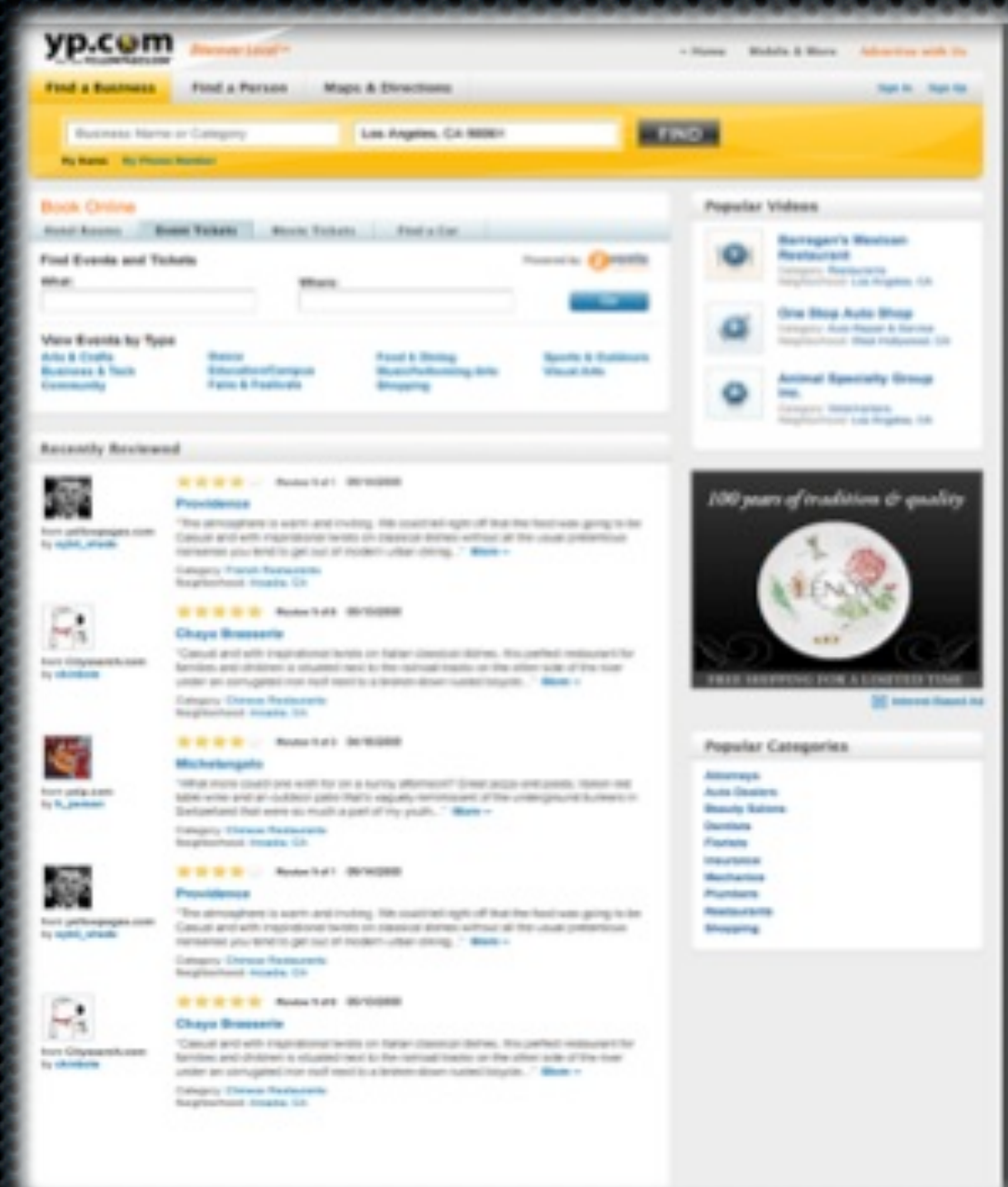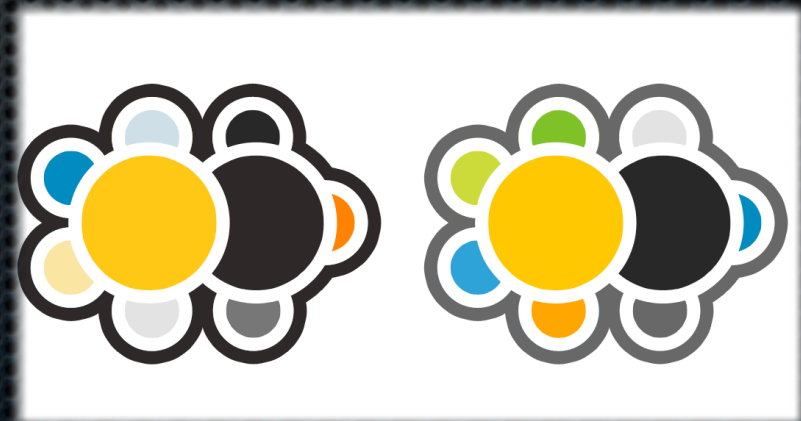- Garner feedback about a new home page redesign for YP.com, including color palette, images and functionality prior to launch

- Generate thoughts from members about additional functionality and features of the revamped home page

The New YP.com Home Page
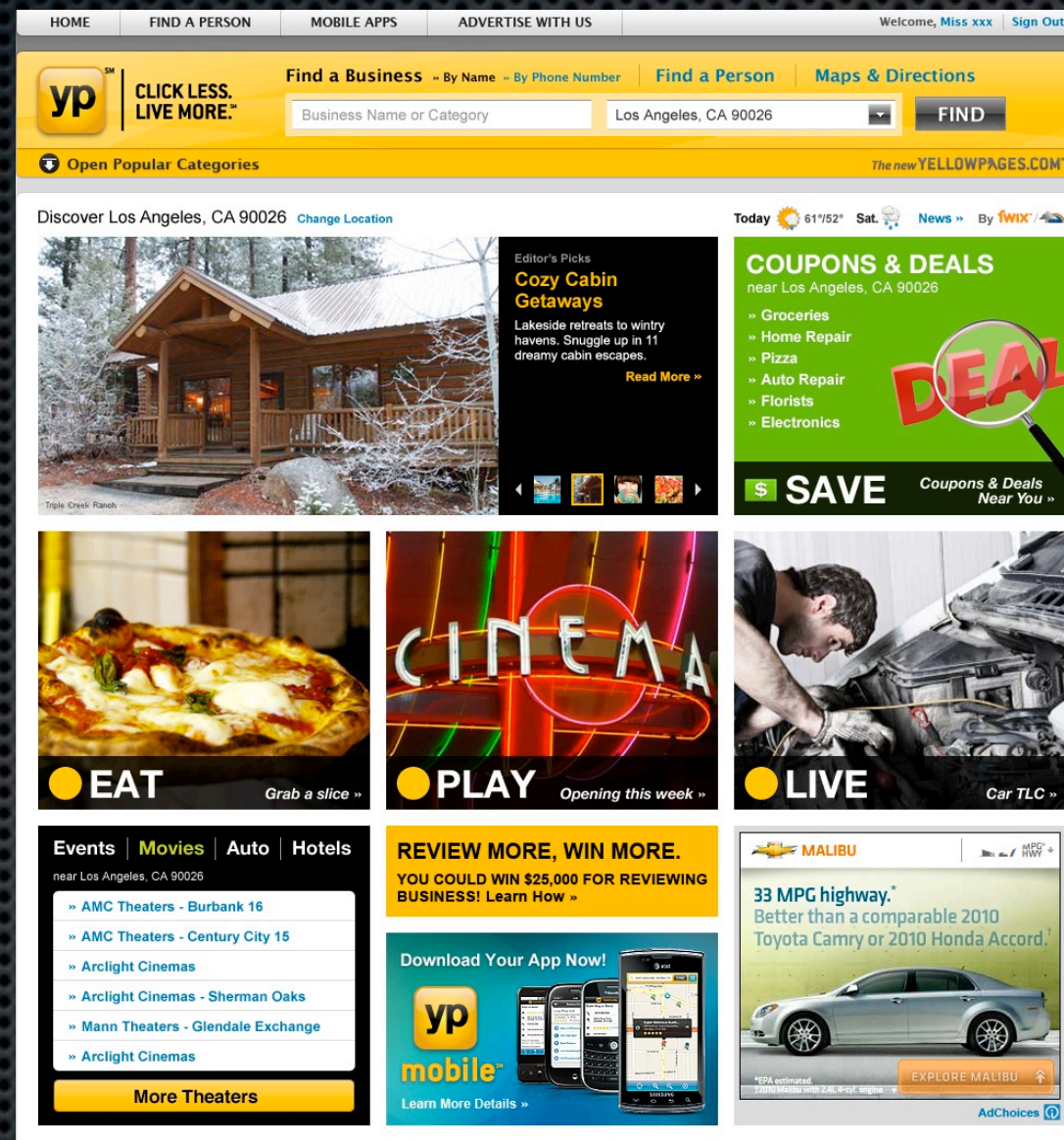
"More pictures; less text. Local weather and links to local eat, play and live. It feels cohesive and consumer friendly, as in contrast to a corporate-type site."

"[Clicking the pizza image would take me] to an advertisement (which is bad) or reviews or listings of local pizza places (which is good)."

"[The images] are eye-catching, colorful and grab your attention, making you want to click on the images to explore the articles further."

"Eat obviously is self explanatory, but Play and Live are too broad terminology to really understand what sort of information would fall under these titles."

What they said...

- **71%** of members **rated their overall experience** with the community a "4" or "5" (5 being best)

- **49%** of members indicated they **logged into the community once a week**, 25% every few weeks and 21% a few times a week

- **73%** always **participated in new events** after logging in

- **48%** of members stated that being a part of the community **made them more likely to share** information about YP.COM

- **39%** of participants indicated they **referred a friend to YP.COM** for their local search needs after becoming a member

"YP.com has always been on my list of likes. Doing this community has only improved the way I think about it..."

"I think YP is trying to improve, and I appreciate that. So my opinion of them has improved also. I had just about given up on using YP to find anything prior to joining this group."

"I think it's wise to seek advice from the folks who will be using the service. I applaud your efforts."

What we learned...

- If you **ask, users will answer**

- Community can help **shape the product development** experience

- Community can **help build brand advocacy** from the inside, out into the marketplace

- **The earlier** the community is involved in the product research process, **the better** the results and takeaways for product innovation and development

The Usabilty Toolbox

* **Usability Lab :** A physical space devoted to testing whether a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a specified context of use

* **Usability Community:** Online space dedicated to augmenting / recreating in-lab product usability testing online with a larger group of users / testers.

Usa-*what?*

"The extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use."

Source: ISO 9241

Market Research	Design Research
Evaluates what larger samples says	Evaluates what smaller samples do
Asks people about concepts, opinions, and values	Observes people's behaviours
Asks a market what they will *buy*	Asks a market if they will *use*
Focuses on selling and marketing the product	Focuses on the requirements of the design

Courtesy of Stephanie Brawner

Usability and Innovation

* Get on the **front end of innovation**

* **Test early, and test often** (iterative testing)

* Establish and adhere to a **research calendar** and share process with all potential stakeholders to encourage participation

* Use online community to **help decide what to test in the lab**

* **Work closely with** Human Factors (IAs) and Visual Design; include in research planning and debrief, along with product, development and **anyone who may touch a product before it launches**

* Coordinate Usability Research efforts with Marketing Research and **share findings at both ends of the product development cycle** - from conceptualization and iterative testing to the post launch perception in the marketplace.

Thanks!

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