# CONDUCTING USER RESEARCH INTERVIEWS

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# INTERVIEW PLAN

## USER RESEARCH GOALS

- Determine what information users expect to be provided during booking
- Find which criteria of a hotel search is most important to users
- Understand why users choose to book a hotel with specific websites

## USER RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What information about their trip do users already have before they search for a room on a website?
  *Find which fields users can readily fill out when searching for a hotel*

- Are users searching for a room on more than one hotel's website?
  *Identifying competition*

- What do users find appealing about other hotel websites they search on?
  *Find what is compelling about the competitors and what they are able to offer their customers*

- How are users filling out search functions on a hotel's website?
  *Determine what fields should be included for the user's initial search*

- What are the most important criteria to users when choosing a hotel for their trip?
  *Determine how search fields should be arranged in order of importance*

- Are customer ratings and feedback an important factor in choosing a hotel?
  *Determine additional filters that could be added into the search results page*

- Why do users return to the same hotel's website for future bookings?
  *Find what features of the hotel's website are creating a great experience for users*

- At what stage in the booking process are users interested in booking packages such as flight/car rental/hotel?
  *Determine at which point during the booking process to offer package options*

- What do users find valuable about rewards programs?
  *Determine appealing aspects of rewards program to emphasize*

- When does a user decide they would like a more expensive hotel vs a less expensive option?
  *Find the optimal point to offer luxury options during the user's hotel search*

# HYPOTHESES

## Users may

- Initially want a broad search, such as searching for location and date first.
- Abandon their search when they become too frustrated rather than seek customer support.
- Judge prices against competitors before making their final booking decision in order to find what is most valuable to them.
- Only book more expensive rooms if there they feel it meets their personal quality standards
- Only look amenities as a way to filter down their results

## INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is Jessica Kainu and I am a user experience designer. I have been researching websites that book hotels. I have been doing this in order create a better booking experience for users like yourself.

I'd like to thank you for taking time out of your schedule to meet with me today while we discuss your hotel booking experiences. The interview today will take between 10-15 minutes but do not let that stop you from expanding on your answers. If you do not have an answer to a question, please let me know and we will move on. Through this interview I will be taking notes. This is so I can remember important details from our discussion.

Your information from this interview today will only be used for qualitative study. Your answers today will aid in a project for my client's website. The information you provide today will be kept in a safe secure location and will not be sold to any third parties.

Today our session will be videotaped. You should have received a consent form that acknowledges your participation for this interview and gives me permission to video record this session. If you agree to this please sign and date the form and email it back to me.

## THE WARM-UP

- What is the last trip you went on?
- Why did you choose that destination?
- What did you plan before you started looking for a hotel?

## THE BODY

- What do you already know about your destination?

- What are reasons you decide to travel?

- What part does a hotel play in the scope of your trip?  How important is it overall?

- What websites do you visit when you search for a room?

- What do you like about the sites that you search on?

- Before you start your hotel search, what information do you already have about your trip?

- Can you give me a step-by-step process of how you would go about booking a room?

- What are the top three most important things to know when searching for a hotel room?

- After you've found a few hotels you like, how do you narrow down the results?
- Can you list those for me in order of importance?
- If we take the top three, could you tell me why those are the most important?

- What other features or amenities do you like to see in a hotel room?

- It's common that hotels offer reward or frequent use programs.  Which programs are you a part of?
- What is valuable about these programs to you? / Why don't you join them?

- What other methods have you used to choose a hotel?
- Why do you use those methods?

- Can you tell me about a time you were unable to find what you were looking for on a  website?
- What did you do when you couldn't find what you were looking for?

## THE COOL-DOWN

Those are all of the questions I have for you today.  Did you have any questions pertaining to this conversation?

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## THE WRAP-UP

That's all I have to discuss, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to speak with me.  I hope you have a wonderful day.

# INTERVIEW SUMMARY

## ANN

Gender:      Female

Age Range:  20-25

Occupation: Farmer

Does not typically stay in hotels, stayed in them 12-15 times on her trip.  Utilized campgrounds for her biking trip.

She has not used any of Marriott's digital properties in the last 6 months

The interview happened over Skype while Ann was in her apartment.  It was very quiet and relaxed with ample time for her to think about her responses.  She did not have to rush to another appointment.

**Brief Narrative of Interview**

Ann referenced the website Yelp often when searching for hotels on her cross-country biking trip.  She like using a 3rd party website in order to read reviews which, apart from price, were most important to her.  She felt comfortable answering all questions.  She was frustrated when she was not able to find a price immediately.  If there was not price or phone number she would move along to the next hotel option.

## DAVID

Gender:      Male

Age Range:  30-35

Occupation: Financial Analyst

Stays in hotels one to two times per year

He has not used any of Marriott's digital properties in the last 6 months

The interview happened over Skype while David was in his home.  It was a quiet environment where David could concentrate on his responses.

**Brief Narrative of Interview**

David referenced Trip Advisor, Hotels.com, and other third party sites he used when he was searching for his cabin rental on a past vacation.  Comments and reviews of the hotels he was looking at were important in order to make sure their room was clean.  He was concerned with price and what the location had to offer such as canoeing and tubing on the river.  He is not a part of any hotel rewards program but utilizes rewards his credit cards gives to him.  The only way he would directly contact a hotel was by calling to see if they had a better deal than what the 3rd party site advertised.

# DOUG

Gender:        Male

Age Range:   25-30

Occupation: Web Designer

Stays in hotels once a year

He has not used any of Marriott's digital properties in the last 6 months

The interview happened over Skype while Doug was in his apartment.  It was a quiet environment where Doug could concentrate on his responses.

**Brief Narrative of Interview**

Doug's trip involved moving to a new location where he would need to book a hotel room since the drive was too long for one sitting.  He utilized Google for cheap hotels where he found third party sites such as Hotels.com and Travelocity for booking.  He went with whatever had the best prices.  While searching for a room, he wanted pertinent room information available to him where he would not have to click through many pages.  Price and dates were the most important search criteria to him.  He was willing to sacrifice good reviews in order for price.  Chains of hotels that he's stayed at before were also a way he decided on which hotel to choose.