Date: May 5, 2015
From: Dani Nordin
Re: Usability testing results: Video Section

Background

This study was conducted to determine user responses to the Video section on HBR.org.

Study logistics

- Test was run with 8 users (4 mobile, 4 desktop).
- All participants were average web users, over age 30, making $40k and up annually. Additional screening questions are available in appendix.
- All participants were from the US, UK and Canada.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. How do users find a video they want to watch?
2. How do users respond to the functionality in the Video section:
   a. Sharing a video?
   b. Finding a video from the list?
3. Are there differences in response on larger vs. smaller screens?

Key Findings

POSITIVES:

1. All users were able to find the Videos link on larger screens.
2. Most users were able to find a video that interested them.
   a. "These are all really interesting topics, and things that I could definitely use within my own group." (P3, Desktop)

USABILITY ISSUES (MOST SEVERE TO LEAST SEVERE):

1. **Of the 8 sessions that were completed, tests on smaller screens took almost twice the time of desktop sessions. Much of the extra time was related to the task of finding videos**.
   a. P6 took approximately 3 minutes, and went into two different topic pages, to find the video section.
   b. P5 scrolled down the entire home page and initially thought the Partner Center was the video listing.
2. **Within-section navigation was difficult to find and use on smaller screens**.
   a. P6 was observed inadvertently starting the video playing when hitting "Browse All Videos."

    b. When clicking on a topic in the dropdown, both P5 and P6 could not see the list of videos underneath the category list.

    c. P7 and P9 appeared to assume that the "Browse All Videos" link was a sorting function rather than navigation, and instead used the carousel to navigate.

3. **The amount of scrolling required to find videos from the home page was problematic, especially on smaller screens**.
   a. "wasn't easy to find... I would have expected something at the top of the masthead, so to speak." (P3)
   b. "Digital Articles, that may mean a video..." (P2)
   c. "The first time I came here, I really really struggled because the learning annex of it needs to be a lot clearer." (P4)
   d. P9 went straight to the menu: "I'm looking particularly for leadership and career topics; none of these menu items stand out to me." She followed up with a search.

4. **Partner Center Ads for webinars were confused for video content.**
   a. P5 was observed describing the Partner Center (which contained 4 links to webinars) as if it were the videos section. (https://www.usertesting.com/videos/xHMnwtDGYXbYIdTLZdo5Uw/clips/663187)
   b. "Again, these seem to be all articles... there's a webinar." (P6)
   c. P5 and P6 both assumed that the webinar ad at the top of the screen was a video.

5. **Users couldn't find an easy way to save or share video content.**
   a. "I guess I could attach it to one of those [social] sites." (P2)
   b. "I guess if my friend was following me on Twitter, I could do it that way." (P3)
   c. P4 was expecting functionality similar to Youtube's "watch later" list (which would be in line with our current "Save" functionality).
   d. "I don't see anything on here that would let me save it for later... I'm having a really hard time with this website." (P6)

6. **Users expected to see an "email this" option for videos.**
   a. "I think it's quite difficult to do what you want... I couldn't find a good way to email the video to a friend, I couldn't find a way to save the video for later..." (P5)
   b. "Normally, I would see a little envelope..." (P6)
   c. "I would add a mail this link or a favorite link so you could favorite it and come back later because there's no way to do that." (P7)
   d. "I can't find a way to quietly send it... personally, I like to send things through email." (P9)

7. **Some users expected to see videos in the topics pages.**
   a. "I see that they're mostly articles, so what I'm going to do is go back into your dropdown and go to All Topics..." (P6)

8. **Lack of thumbnails or imagery in video listings made finding a relevant video challenging for some participants.**
   a. "There's a lot of good information here free of charge, but it's hard when you have to fight through it all... it gets quite hard to read because it's like the volume being turned up on everything." (P4)
   b. P2 was observed scrolling up and down the video list several times, trying to find the title of a video she had just found.

9. **Auto-play on videos was distracting for many participants.**
    a. "No, I don't want to play it…" (P5)
    b. P3 was observed several times trying to stop the video from playing, and said he was going to "pin" the video for later.
    c. "all right, I'm going to stop the video because I wanted 'Browse all Videos…' there we go." (P6)
10. **Inability to skip video ad was distracting and frustrating for participants.**
    a. "I'd like the ability to skip this ad. It's a really long ad. It's like a 30 second ad for a 3-minute video." (P7)
11. **Ad placement above video summary was distracting on smaller screens.**
    a. "If I hadn't scrolled, I wouldn't have noticed that, because it's a bit disjointed."

Recommendations

INCORPORATE VIDEOS MORE SEAMLESSLY THROUGHOUT THE CONTENT EXPERIENCE.

Consider adding videos to:
1. Topics pages
2. The home page
3. Search results
4. Articles related to the topic as an in-content callout

By interspersing the content throughout the experience in this way, we enable users to find video content organically without relying on specific navigational elements.

ADD SAVE/SHARE FUNCTIONALITY TO VIDEO CONTENT.

The same functionality available to articles, e.g. saving, sharing, collecting content in specific topics, was also expected with video content. This was independent of the user's experience with the functionality on hbr.org; two participants specifically referenced functionality that was available to them via YouTube.

Add save/share functionality directly to video content; in particular, users referenced the ability to email to oneself or a friend in multiple sessions.

REDESIGN THE VIDEO SECTION TO CONSIDER SMALLER SCREENS FIRST

While users on larger screens were generally able to find and use the video content, those on smaller screens encountered challenges that effectively blocked their ability to find and consume videos. To improve this experience, the video landing page, the navigation of the video section, and the look of an individual video need to be reconsidered with a "mobile first" approach.

Appendix

PARTICIPANTS

1. A total of 8 users (4 desktop/4 mobile) participated in the study.
2. All participants were above the age of 30, and made over $40k per year.
3. All were average or advanced web users.
4. There was a mix of gender, country and devices/browsers.
5. There was a mix of managers working in corporate environments, small business owners, and consultants.

TEST PROTOCOL

Introduction
Before starting this test, think about a recent challenge you've had to deal with in work or business.

Tasks

1. Please tell us a bit more about you. What is your current job role? What types of challenges do you deal with in your everyday work? [Verbal Response]
2. Now, tell us a bit about your relationship with Harvard Business Review. [Verbal Response]
3. HBR.org regularly produces videos on leadership and career topics. Please try to navigate to the location where you would expect to find videos on this site.
   a. Did you complete the task successfully? [Success: Yes, No]
   b. Overall, this task was: [Rating Scale: Very Difficult to Very Easy]
4. If you don't see a large video starting to play, please scroll down to the gray footer near the bottom of the page and select "Video" from the "Selected Formats" list.
5. Please take a moment to look around this page. What are you looking at? What do you think you can find here? [Verbal Response]
6. Take a moment to think about a challenge you've been facing with your colleagues. See if you can find a video that may help with that. You may stop the video at any time after finding it.
7. Let's say you wanted to watch this video on your tablet later tonight. How would you save it so you can find it later?
8. Let's say you wanted to send this video to a friend of yours. How would you do that?

ADDITIONAL SCREENING QUESTIONS

Screener Question #1
What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Multiple Choice Options:
- Some high school
- High School Graduate
- Some College (Include users who select this answer)
- College Degree (Include users who select this answer)
- Some Post-Graduate Work (Include users who select this answer)

- Post-Graduate Degree (Include users who select this answer)

Screener Question #2

Which of these best describes your job title?

Multiple Choice Options:
- Owner/Partner (Include users who select this answer)
- CEO/President/Chairman (Include users who select this answer)
- Executive Management (EVP, SVP, GM, Managing Director, Administrator) (Include users who select this answer)
- Vice President/Director (Include users who select this answer)
- Senior Manager/Department Head (Include users who select this answer)
- Manager/Supervisor (Include users who select this answer)
- Administrative Assistant
- Consultant (Include users who select this answer)
- Educator
- Full-Time Student
- MBA Student (Include users who select this answer)

Screener Question #3

Which of these best describes the industry in which you work?

Multiple Choice Options:
- Entertainment (Include users who select this answer)
- Financial Services (Include users who select this answer)
- Government
- Healthcare (Include users who select this answer)
- Design/Technology (Include users who select this answer)
- Education/Not-for-Profit
- Professional Services (Include users who select this answer)
- Not Currently Employed
- None of the above