

Democratizing research
without ***jeopardizing*** your job



Introduction

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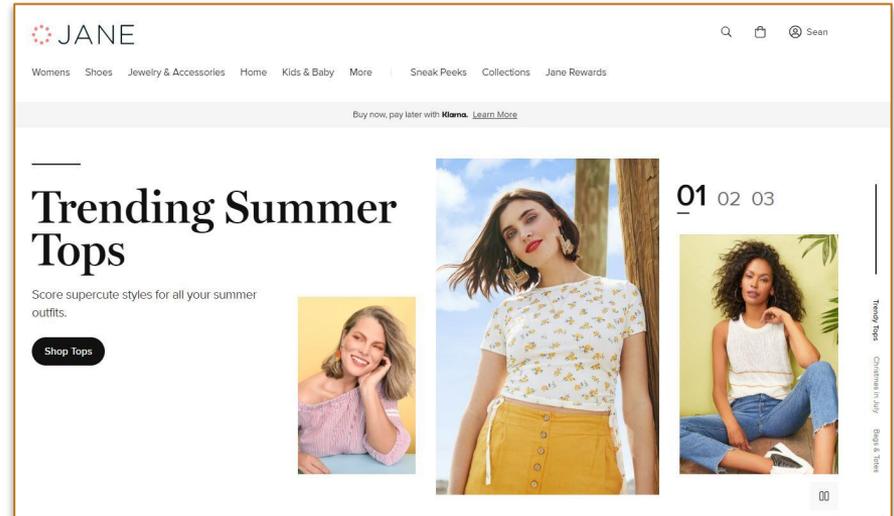
About me

- 3 yrs. user experience researcher
- Background in marketing & advertising
- Currently the solo user researcher at Jane
- Usability, surveying, competitive, and more!



About Jane.com

- Founded in Utah in 2011 as veryjane.com
- E-commerce retail, targeting women
- Products are sourced through partnerships with independent businesses throughout the US





What is democratization, and why is it important



What & why

Democratization:

Creating an environment where those who aren't researchers feel empowered to engage in the user research process.

- Prove the value of user research
- Expand research capabilities on a budget
- Build a research-minded organization



Main points

Three ways to democratize your research:

1. Build bridges across your organization
2. Delegate
3. Cover your butt

Step 1: Build bridges

Who's responsible for user research?

- ❑ Product managers
- ❑ UX designers
- ❑ Marketing team
- ❑ Interns
- ❑ Google
- ❑ A dedicated UX researcher!

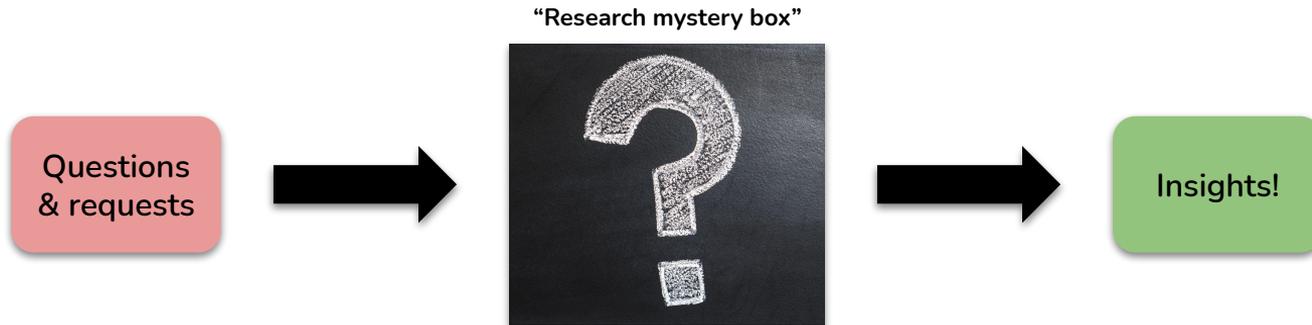


The mystery of user research

User research:

Studying your target users' behaviors to **inform** business decisions.

- ❑ Various methods
- ❑ Best practices
- ❑ Synthesize findings



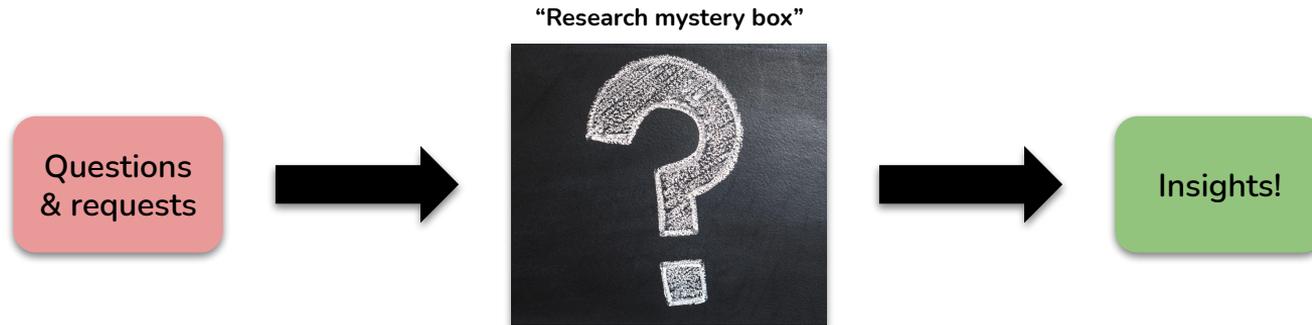
Importance of democratization

WITHOUT

- ❑ Distrust your methods
- ❑ Doubt your recommendations
- ❑ Revert to anecdotal

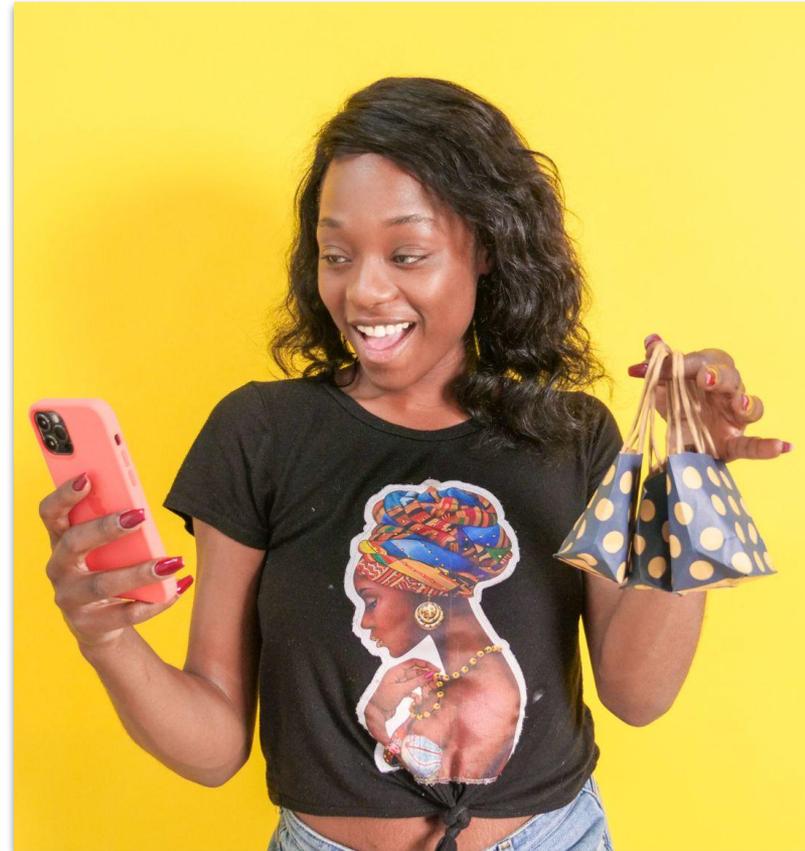
WITH

- ❑ Trust your methods
- ❑ Act on your recommendations
- ❑ Disregard anecdotal



Your customers are interesting!

- ❑ Where do they live?
- ❑ What do they do when not interacting with your business?
- ❑ How do they think?
- ❑ Why do they identify with your brand?



How to build bridges

- ❑ Find allies
- ❑ Open-door policy
- ❑ Market your skills
- ❑ Go where the data is
- ❑ Be transparent
- ❑ Share your results
- ❑ Make research fun!



Making research fun

- ❑ Lunch & learns
- ❑ Run research on coworkers
- ❑ Invite them to participate in sessions
- ❑ Share findings in engaging ways

3:16 PM Sean Good Impromptu poll:

Have you ever used an app that lets you snap a pic of your credit card to autofill your info instead of making you type it in?

Thumbs up/down your opinion.



We asked our target demo about it, and they generally seemed to **like the feature**. But they might not use it frequently and some did express concerns about the security of their payment info.

- [Test results](#)
- [Dashboard](#)

7/9/21: Using a phone camera to add a credit card in [User Research](#)

Published 6 minutes ago by Sean Good



Added by Confluence Cloud

Step 2: Delegate



Why delegate

Delegation is about finding the **balance** between freedom and restriction.

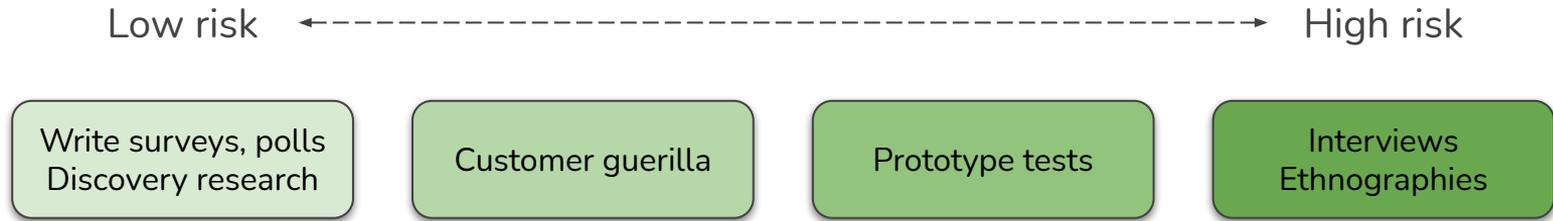
PROS

- ❑ Cover more ground
- ❑ Increase support of user research
- ❑ Create more allies

CONS

- ❑ Upfront time investment
- ❑ Decreased consistency & control
- ❑ Do you become less relevant?

What to delegate



How to delegate

1. Create & maintain guidelines
2. Train those who are interested
3. Check-in regularly



Create guidelines

- ❑ Design a roll-out roadmap
- ❑ Write a research guide
- ❑ Set expectations regarding autonomy & limits
- ❑ Make guidelines public



Training

Extra effort on the front-end will save you on the back-end

- ❑ Start with your allies!
- ❑ Teach best practices
- ❑ Let them sit in on your sessions
- ❑ Monitor & mentor their sessions



Check-in regularly

Delegation **does not** mean absolution

- ❑ Regularly check-in for feedback and advice
- ❑ Host additional trainings
- ❑ Collect & combine their insights into your repository
- ❑ Don't be afraid to correct or reevaluate your roadmap



Step 3: Cover your butt

The buck stops here

You are responsible for the research that is collected.



Limitations of research

Be very clear about the limitations of qualitative research when presenting findings.

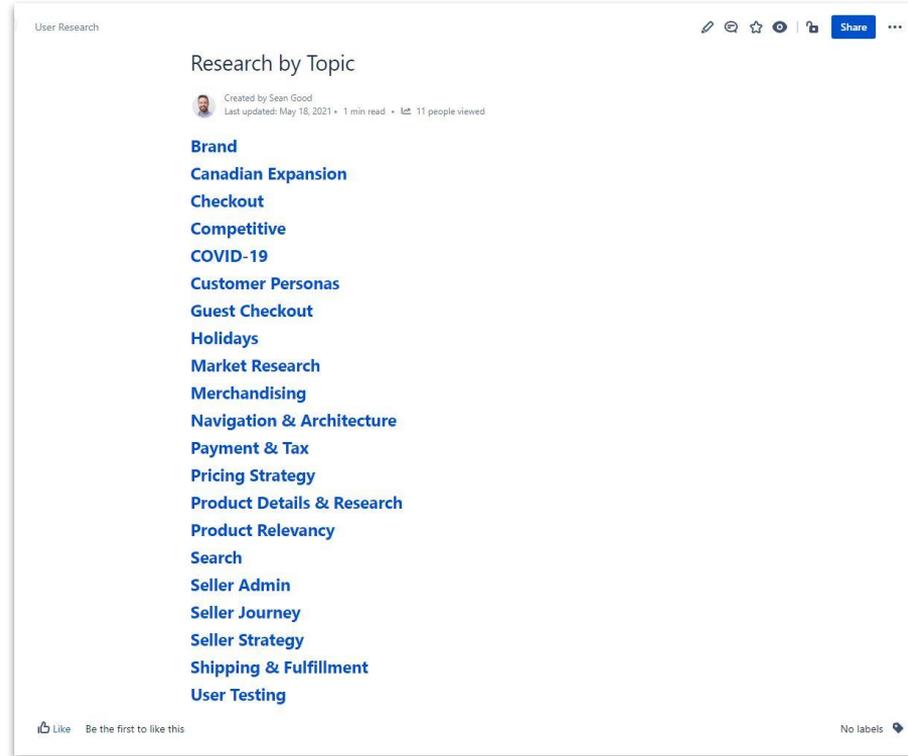
Be honest about timelines.

Keep your ear to the ground. Correct misinformation and misinterpretations early.



Keep the receipts

- ❑ Cite your sources
- ❑ Log your findings in a public repository
- ❑ Share your results publicly





Results of democratization



What & why

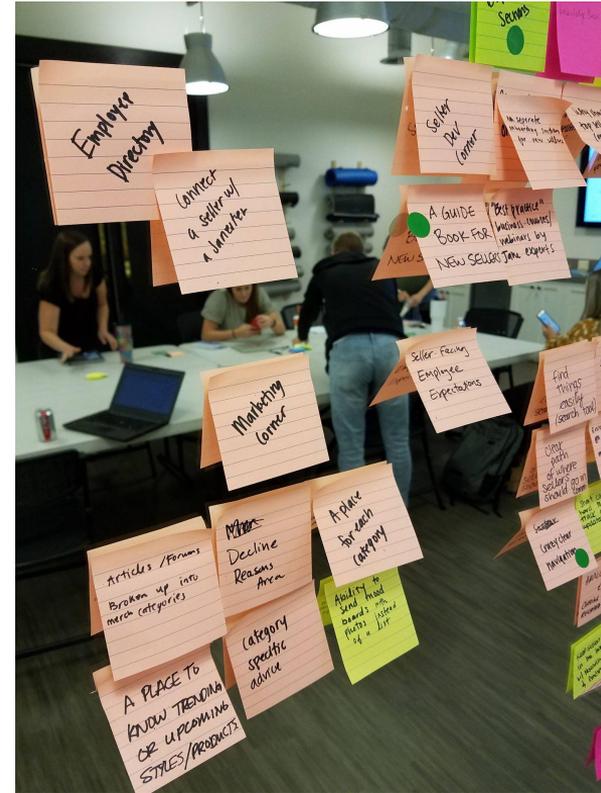
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Prove the value of user research

- ❑ Testing assumptions first has lead to better decisions
- ❑ Filled in knowledge gaps
- ❑ Applicable to the whole organization



Expand research on a budget

- ❑ Done more with less
- ❑ Set the stage for future growth



Build a research-minded organization

- ❑ People have become curious
- ❑ We think with a data-first mindset
- ❑ Watching my research effect change

WOULDN'T IT BE COOL if we knew how many of our sellers were on Etsy, and if they did better on Etsy or Jane? And by how much?

Hey! wondering if you have any research on what a customer perceives as a top-reviewed product? Wondering if there is a certain point out of 5 stars that they consider it highly reviewed.

ME AGAIN. Theory: our customer (most likely) likes sewing or crocheting or homemaking things like that. Agree or disagree?



Questions?



Thank you!

Appendix

Additional info

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- ❑ Stock image source: [Pexels](#)

