

The HEART Framework

Wondering how to choose the right user experience (UX) metrics for your product?

The HEART methodology is a great place to start.

Designed to help improve the UX of software, this framework was originally developed by Google's then Lead UX Researcher, Kerry Rodden.

Its purpose? To help organizations evaluate any aspect of their UX by focusing on a few key user metrics. Then quantifying those metrics to objectively evaluate them.

Let's take a look at the metrics that make up the acronym, and break them down:

Happiness	<p>These are attitudinal measures, typically focusing on how users feel about your product.</p> <p>Measures such as satisfaction, visual appeal, ease of use, and likelihood to recommend.</p> <p>You'll likely record satisfaction through a survey, user reviews, etc. It's worth noting that any change to a product can result in an initial drop in happiness, though this may not have long-term implications.</p> <p>It's worth looking at these metrics in the long term to gather the best data for decision-making.</p>
Engagement	<p>How frequently are users interacting with your product? And how often are they coming back?</p> <p>This can be measured in several ways: the number of visits per user per week, session length, or on certain key activities, like listening to a podcast per day.</p> <p>The right metrics to focus on when determining the specific level of user engagement can vary from product to product.</p>

Adoption	<p>This looks at how successful your product is at attracting new users, and how many complete the onboarding process and become regular users.</p> <p>Adoption is measured by the number of new users over a period of time or the percentage of users who are using a new feature.</p> <p>It can be the case that sales and marketing can overcome UX problems, leading to a large increase of new users over a short period.</p> <p>However, in the long term, a poor UX is likely to discourage new users as they read reviews and speak to peers, etc.</p>
Retention	<p>This is measured by churn, as it comes down to keeping your existing users for x amount of time.</p> <p>You need to look at the percentage of users who are coming back to your product and staying. However, the time that they stay could be indefinite for products with long-term utility.</p> <p>This means you'll need to look at other time scales to work out where user drop-off is more prevalent. Then you can tackle the specific UX problems that are causing this drop-off.</p>
Task success	<p>This is where you need to ask if users can achieve their goals or tasks quickly and easily.</p> <p>Task success is measured by focusing on how long users take to complete tasks and how many are completed. Essentially, you're looking at the efficiency and effectiveness of your users, as well as the error rate.</p> <p>Examine the time users spend on given tasks and determine whether the process can be improved. Look at the percentage of successful completions of a task once it's started.</p>

Steps for using the HEART Framework

- **Set goals** – Narrow down your goal list, as it's not always practical to focus on every aspect of the HEART framework. For example, focus on task success when you want users talking about how easy your platform is to use.
- **Define signals** – It's important to map goals to related user actions. This can show you whether or not you're on track, and what behaviors or attitudes would indicate your goal has been met or failed.
- **Choose metrics** – It's important to distill signals into trackable metrics. You can then monitor these metrics in a real-time dashboard. For example, the registration rate would be a great trackable metric for adoption.

Let's take a look at a HEART framework example using GSM (Goals, Signals, Metrics):

	Goals	Signals	Metrics
Happiness	Users are satisfied with your platform and find it fun and easy to use.	Strong response to surveys, positive feedback, and great user ratings.	The number of high-rated reviews, net promoter scores, and satisfaction ratings.
Engagement	Users enjoy the platform and stay engaged.	User time spent on the platform is increasing.	The average session length and frequency, and the number of page views.
Adoption	More users onboarding and seeing value in the platform and features.	The number of signups and downloads rising.	Signup, registration, and download rates. Feature adoption rates.
Retention	Users remain loyal to the platform,	Returning user data is positive, with more	Churn and subscription renewal

	returning to complete key actions.	users staying active, and renewing subscriptions.	rates.
Task success	Users are accomplishing their goals quickly and easily.	Users find and view more content, and finish tasks faster.	Task completion, search exit, and crash rates.

This HEART framework can be extremely useful, especially as a prioritization framework when you have more requests for features and enhancements than your cross-functional team can handle in a given timeframe.

It can be a fantastic framework for measuring more effectively and better prioritization of development efforts. It may not necessarily be the right framework for your org, depending on your current situation, but if you have success with HEART, share the love!