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Documentation Plan for Tutorial Usability Test

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Abstract

New, entry-level hires in the technical publications group will make extensive use of the software programs SnagIt and Camtasia to record video screencasts and other visual demonstrations of our online help and documentation systems. We have created a tutorial demonstrating how to capture and edit images, screenshots and scrolling web pages in SnagIt, save these assets, and then integrate them into videocasts using Camtasia which will demonstrate the functionality of our products. The objective is to help our technical writers to familiarize themselves with these applications and become comfortable integrating them into their regular workflow.

Objectives of Test

The goal of testing is to determine the effectiveness of the tutorial in providing understanding, retention and applicability of SnagIt and Camtasia to the users' actual workplace tasks. Through observation of publications group members working through the tutorial we will establish the following test points.

- Time required to complete the tutorial with exit criteria – successful completion of the tasks achieved.
- Evaluators' understanding and recall of technical terms.
- Re-reading required for comprehension.
- Clarity and understanding of screen shots and graphics
- Time required to search for information and solutions

User Profile

New hire technical writers, typically entry-level or recent graduates who may or may not have prior experience with Camtasia, SnagIt or similar programs.

Evaluation Measures

- Field testing – Testers will observe how new writers prefer working in their regular job environment. The writers will then be observed working through the tutorial in their own workspace.
- Laboratory Testing – Evaluators will perform the tasks laid out in the tutorial. Testers will collect evaluative data, including completion time, error and recovery and rereading. Following completion of the tutorial, users will complete a brief multiple-choice quiz on technical terms and solutions to typical scenarios.
- User feedback – Finally, users will have the opportunity to comment on their experience using the tutorial. These comments may cover such issues as how well the tutorial explained complex concepts, users' ease in following the steps and finding information, clarity and helpfulness of the screenshots, and users overall level of interest and comfort with using these programs on a regular basis.

Report Contents and Format

The test report will contain a summary of the usability test results and recommendations for improving the efficacy of the tutorial. In addition, we will present tables showing quantitative data collected in these tests as described above, along with a summary of user responses and feedback.