

# Key findings and learning from the Refresh Test and Learn Group

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The Refresh Test and Learn Group, an at-home beta testing programme for our mobile easy-access video support product, was the final piece of work from Team 'How Do I?' as part of the Accelerator programme. After four months of running the Refresh Test and Learn Group, and 12 months working on the Accelerator Programme, both have now come to a close. Our team are busy looking at the data the programme generated and making improvements based on user feedback.

At Team 'How Do I?', we would like to take this opportunity to:

- summarise the activities and key findings from the Test and Learn group;
- highlight some of our learnings;
- express our gratitude to our group participants, and to Alzheimer's Society and their supporters.

## **Participant numbers**

17 pairs of people (one person living with dementia and a carer, partner or friend) were originally recruited for the Test and Learn Group. Recruitment was open to people living with dementia across the entirety of the UK. Seven pairs maintained engagement with the testing team to completion of the final feedbacking session.

## **How the group worked**

Once recruited, and having provided their informed consent, most members of the group were posted the Refresh product to their home. Where required, Android phones were also loaned out to test the technology. Some members received the product and demo phones through an in-person session at a location of their choosing, which was either their personal residence or the local Alzheimer's Society office. These participants were observed opening the packaging and setting up their Refresh account.

Throughout the duration of the group, a single dedicated member of the How Do I? team was in touch with participants for feedbacking and troubleshooting. Testers responded well to this and frequently proactively contacted the team by email, phone or text when they ran into difficulty. Testing, troubleshooting and feedbacking was most frequently done over the phone, with the occasional set of questions answered over email or in-person. When we undertook the sessions, we sometimes spoke to people living with dementia, sometimes spoke to their testing partner, and wherever possible spoke to them together.

Formal feedbacking was done three times. The first session focused on the packaging and onboarding process, the second on the apps themselves, and the final session helped us to understand the attitudes and opinions of the testers after having used Refresh.

## Three Key Findings

The team are still analysing the data from the group in order to provide a full picture of findings from the testing. However, some themes emerged quite consistently and clearly across the testers:

- 1) **Not enough information on planning videos and testing out the tech:** Our instruction booklet, provided in the Refresh Kit, detailed exactly how users could proceed through making an account on the Refresh Studio, filming a video, and linking it to a tag. However, the process of using the app itself was mostly straightforward for users. When observed, testers often moved more quickly through the process in the app than they did the accompanying pages in the instruction booklet. Our efforts would be better spent on helping testers with their planning, in order to good quality video content that they are happy with after filming, and which takes advantage of all the features the app has to offer.

Around 70% of testers reported that they would have benefitted from guidance helping them to think through storyboarding video content before filming it. This could also include elements like light, time of day, sound, and who might be the most helpful filming partner to engage with the actual filming. All testers who wished for more guidance on thinking the videos through before filming also agreed that it would be sensible to encourage users to create a test video before trying to create the video content properly. This would help them understand how the features, particularly the chapter building, worked, while ensuring they hadn't wasted time and effort on creating a video, only to have to re-film it.

- 2) **Time invested in user experience testing is time well spent:** As evidenced by our findings in point 1, our testers found the "user experience" of the Refresh Studio to be moderately easy overall and the Refresh Player to be easy to use. Most (but not all) of the difficulties reported in the use of the apps related to getting started with actually creating video content, rather than the way the apps have been designed. We attribute this to the extensive user experience testing we undertook to get the look and flow of the apps right. There is more information available on that [here](#) and [here](#).
- 3) **A positive response:** All members of the Test and Learn group who maintained engagement until the end of the testing process indicated that they felt the benefits from using the app outweighed the amount of time and effort to get the app set up. 100% also agreed that they would recommend Refresh to a friend, and many have already started sharing information on Refresh with friends and local dementia groups. However, these responses reflect only the views of the 7 participants who completed the last feedbacking session. It does not include feedback from the testers who were not able or chose not to participate in all of the feedbacking sessions.

Several of our testers also indicated that taking part in the group increased their confidence in trying out new technology.

## Three Key Learnings

- 1) Make no assumptions about who is and isn't open to using technology to improve their everyday lives:** It is exciting that there is a large and vocal community of people living with dementia on social media. Through their engagement on platforms like Twitter and Facebook, they are able to educate the public, express their views and make connections with others in the dementia community. In addition, many people living with dementia today have had long and celebrated careers in technology. Alongside these communities, there are many others who are not as visible, but who also stand to benefit and take an interest in learning new digital skills. Throughout our testing and recruitment, we have worked alongside many people who weren't immediately identifiable as being digitally included, "techie", or otherwise likely to be interested in trying out and testing a digital product. We now have a core group of champions who are excited to share their experiences with Refresh across both their digital social networks as well as their real-life groups of friends, colleagues and contacts.
- 2) Remote, unmoderated testing can successfully generate helpful insights and actionable feedback:** For our early user experience research, we primarily worked with people face-to-face to engage with prototypes that helped us get our final product right. However, we were pleased overall with the quality and quantity of the feedback we received through the mostly-remote Test and Learn Group. Between phone calls, photos and surveys, it is our view that we have been able to get a good picture of what has worked well for participants and what requires improvement.
- 3) Work as flexibly as you can without reducing the quality of the feedback:** It was important to us that our group was as participant-led as possible. For us, that meant that we provided as much flexibility as possible for participants as it related to how, when and for how long we got in touch. We initially created a discussion guide and line of questioning for each of the feedback interviews. We established early on in the testing that our plans for each session needed to be abbreviated, as the sessions we had planned were overly long in practice. The interview questions were amended to reflect only the most important aspects of what we needed to know at each stage. Still, the discussions over the phone were as short as 7 minutes and as long as 1hr and 40 minutes. Some testers had taken detailed notes and had much to discuss, whereas others preferred a more off-the-cuff approach. These two approaches worked well together.

## Thank you

Both the Refresh Test and Learn Group, and our Accelerator Programme experience as a whole, are now coming to an end, under highly unusual and challenging circumstances of the global outbreak of COVID-19. We want to express our gratitude to the members of the Test and Learn Group, who generously provided their time and insight in order to help us create a better

product for people living with dementia. We are also incredibly grateful to Alzheimer's Society for the opportunity and support. We are proud to have been able to work with such skilled and passionate colleagues and have benefitted immensely from your direction and advice.