



Usability Evaluation Trends in Ibero-American Countries

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Usability evaluation is a major area of human-computer interaction (HCI) in both academia and industry. According to Nielsen, on the Web, usability is a necessary condition for survival.¹ If a website is difficult to use, people leave. If a homepage fails to clearly state what a company offers and what users can do on the site, people leave. If users get lost on a website, they leave. If a website's information is hard to read or doesn't answer users' key questions, they leave. We conducted a survey in diverse Ibero-American countries of both academic institutions and software development companies to determine how usability evaluation is performed, taking into account methods, techniques, software tools, and usability laboratories.

Usability Evaluation Status in Ibero-America

Usability means making products and systems easier to use and matching them more closely to user needs and requirements.

The ISO 9241-11 standard provides guidance on usability, defining it as

*the extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a specified context of use.*²

Usability is about the following:

- Effectiveness—can users complete tasks or achieve goals with the product—that is, do what they want to do?
- Efficiency—how much effort do users require to do this (often measured in time)?
- Satisfaction—what do users think about a product's ease of use?

As determined in prior work, although experience levels with the usability discipline in most Ibero-American countries are not as vast as in other regions (such as the US or UK),³ some studies have shown that usability—also known as UX design (for user experience)—is an emerging area in the region.

There is significant participation of Ibero-American researchers in recognized workshops and journals, but it is rather difficult to identify usability experts in this context.

To have more information about this aspect, we ran a survey focused on aspects related to academia, research, and industry in countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Chile, and Peru. The survey asked about four aspects related to personal information: name, type of organization at which the respondent is working, whether this work is in academia or industry/software development, and how long the person has worked in usability. We then requested information about what usability evaluation techniques were used and about the equipment used to develop usability evaluations. Finally, our survey asked about some of the main problems with understanding the usability concept and its scope in the software development process.