Ovo Studios UX Labs

This document describes Ovo Studios' capabilities for designing UX/Usability Labs. This document has the following sections:

- Overview
- What Makes a UX Lab from Ovo Different?
- UX Lab Services
- How Much Does a UX Lab from Ovo Cost?
- Ovo's Interview Process for Lab Design

After reading this document, we hope you will consider Ovo Studios when you build your next UX/Usability Lab. If you would like more information, please contact Rich or Scott personally or email sales@ovostudios.com.

Ovo Studios, LLC

Canal Winchester, OH USA
DUNS 60-674-3222

Scott Butler, Principal
scott@ovostudios.com
+1 330-348-1619

Rich Gunther, Principal
rich@ovostudios.com
+1 336-460-1658

Sales
sales@ovostudios.com

Overview

There are many companies that claim to be able to build UX Labs. Local audio/video contractors, systems integrators, even home theater specialists have gotten into this space with the promise of delivering purpose-built facilities that will be appropriate to task, maintainable, usable, and supported. From Ovo Studios' discussions with customers, solutions like these seldom achieve all their goals and in many cases, cost does not seem to be a predictor of success.

Ovo Studios has been selling UX/Usability Lab solutions since 1998 and UX Labs are our full time business. We support lab facilities in Asia, North America, the UK, and mainland Europe.

Customers have cost justified our solutions by calculating how much money they would save by bringing their video highlight work in-house. Even though we bring advanced degrees in Cognitive Psychology, Human Factors, and A/V industry credentials to your UX Lab, Ovo is a strong competitor when it comes to price.

Ovo is different: our proven UX Lab architecture enables us to deliver robust, flexible, maintainable, supportable, and usable UX Lab solutions that are appropriate to your user research methodology. Our labs are also extensible, which enables us to deliver solutions in increments that can grow with your practice as you move from Proof of Concept to full production.

Ovo Studios was started in 1998 when portable labs needed to be shipped using UPS Freight with Lift Gate Service and fixed labs looked like NASA Mission Control. Ovo was first to market with tape-free usability labs and continued to innovate with practical solutions like: one-click test results in HTML format; travel-friendly portable labs; fixed labs that integrated into typical office environments using standard office furniture; and logging interfaces that were designed using user-feedback from our customer base of UX/Usability professionals. If this kind of pragmatic support for methodology, infrastructure, and the job of user centered design appeals to you, please contact us at sales@ovostudios.com.

What Makes a UX Lab from Ovo Different?

At Ovo Studios, we pride ourselves on a few things:

- **Reliability and Quality:** our first labs, built for Progressive Insurance in 1998, have been running for 17 years with only minor maintenance. What's more important: Progressive runs hundreds of usability tests[1] a year in these labs!
- **Minimalist Design:** Some of our customers are initially disappointed when we install their usability lab. They say, "we thought there would be, um, more….". Then we show them everything they can do with their lab, and their fears are gone. A typical Ovo Studios usability lab fits into a rolling, half-height, under-table hardware rack. The only other hardware you'll see in the control room is a keyboard, monitor, mouse, and push-to-talk moderator's microphone.
- **Ease of Use:** From our hardware to our software to customer support, we've designed everything with user-centered design principles in mind. It was with this mentality that we incorporated customer feedback into our lab solution, constantly making it more capable, and easier to use and maintain.
- **Impeccable Customer Service:** From the design phase, to your install and training, to ongoing support, Ovo Studios is all about customer service. When you call us, you are talking to a User Experience Expert who is empowered to act to achieve a solution. We understand methodology, experimental design, and naturalistic observation. We've wrapped that knowledge into every aspect of our customer service experience.

UX Lab Services

Ovo Studios is a bid-to-bill, turnkey UX Research Lab Provider. This means that we provide the following services:

- **Pre-sales:** We will assess your requirements and give you a preliminary cost estimate and statement of work.
- **Design and Facilities:** Our design team will work with your facilities team to map out the floor plan, and then overlay audio/video, network, low-voltage electrical, and other systems on top of it. We will provide specifications for conduit, floor and ceiling provisions, one-way mirrors, even furniture plans.
- **Procurement:** Ovo Studios works with the best Audio-Video manufacturers in the world to provide high-quality, reliable hardware that will stand up to the rigors of long-term, frequent use. Our audio-video expertise allows us to procure the A/V infrastructure specific to your lab's design.
- **Installation:** Our installation technicians are trained in audio-video installation. Your lab will be installed with a few days time, and will be left in a ready-to-test state.
- **Training:** Our support staff will take you through the lab and explain how everything works. They will then do an exhaustive training on our Ovo Logger software, to include answering any methodological questions your team might have. We can even help you do a pilot study.
- **Ongoing Support and Warranty:** After your lab is commissioned, we are available to provide further training, assist with troubleshooting, or deal with any warranty issues that may arise with your lab hardware.

---

[1] Some practitioners misinterpret the term "usability test" to mean running a single user. Ovo Studios uses the term "usability test" to refer to the process of performing a test methodology on an entire sample, e.g., the process of putting 6 – 8 users through 10 scenarios each. This is typically a day-long affair. This distinction is important because it underscores the impressiveness of Progressive's uptime metric.

Ovo has successfully resurrected labs for customers all around the world. Besides building new labs, Ovo Studios also offers retrofit services for existing labs. We can modernize your AV infrastructure to the most up-to-date digital standards. We can layer in an Ovo Logger recording and logging solution.

How Much Does a UX Lab from Ovo Cost?

There are many, many determinants of cost for a usability lab. This doesn't apply just to our solutions, but usability labs in general. The ones we cite most often are:

- **Number of "Things" to Record.** By things, we mean computer screens, cameras, mobile devices, set-top boxes, gaming consoles, medical devices, biometrics systems, eye trackers, and the like. The more of these you need to use, the larger capacity your AV "backbone" will need to have. Ovo Studios right-sizes that backbone to your greatest common denominator, while leaving a little space for future growth.
- **Standard vs. High-Definition:** High definition cameras and distribution equipment typically cost about 3 times as much as their analog counterparts. Ovo Studios has been able to minimize this difference by using smart format streamlining, which decreases the number of switchers, splitters, and signal amplifiers you'll need. Ovo Studios no longer sells analog labs: all of our equipment uses the latest High-Definition technology.
- **Observation Space:** Some customers prefer that their observation space be small and Spartan: a few monitors, large enough for 2 or 3 test team members. Others want a large observation space that can accommodate members of the product team, clients, or stakeholders. Still others want their observation space to be multi-functional as a focus group room or interactive design space. We can accommodate any of these strategies.
- **Number of Concurrent Sessions:** While our traditional lab supports a single user at a time, we've also built facilities that can handle 8-10 users for video game playtesting, collaborative work, or digital convergence/@Home studies.
- **Bells and Whistles**: Over the years, we've had all sorts of fun things thrown at us. We designed a lab to be built into the cockpit of a 737 flight simulator. We designed a rolling lab that could be used in a surgical suite. Customers have asked for eye tracking, biometrics, simulators, custom input devices for logging, and every manner of specialized camera, microphone, or observation display imaginable. We are happy to provide advice on how best to incorporate these to achieve your end goal.

Ovo's Interview Process for Lab Design

We are often able to get from initial inquiry to a proposal with price quote and statement of work within one to two conversations with a prospective client. We can do this because we have designed usability/UX labs for many industries and we know what questions to ask.

The **Ovo Studios Lab Design Questionnaire** on the next page presents the questions we ask during design meetings. Please feel free to use this to prepare for your first design meeting with Ovo Studios.

Ovo Studios Lab Design Questionnaire

1) What kinds of products do you test?
   a. Websites
   b. Desktop Apps
   c. Phone and/or Tablet Apps
   d. Video Games (console or PC?)
   e. Medical Devices
   f. Set-Top Boxes
   g. High Resolution or Multiple Display UIs
   h. Real World Objects like game controllers or remote controls
   i. Physical environment studies, e.g. simulated kitchen
   j. Other

2) What video format(s) are used by the hardware in question #1:
   a. DVID
   b. HDMI video only
   c. HDMI with audio
   d. DVID Dual Link
   e. SDI/HD-SDI
   f. VGA
   g. Composite NTSC/PAL
   h. Other

3) Will your user/participant be working at a computer? If so:
   a. PC or Mac?
   b. How many user computers?
   c. How many monitors each?

4) Will your lab need cameras? If so:
   a. How many?
   b. Will you want a ceiling camera to capture the user's hands/desktop?
   c. How will any other cameras be used?

5) What kinds of audio infrastructure will you need?
   a. Capture user's voice
   b. Capture audio directly from user computer
   c. Listen to user room audio in a single adjacent observation/control room
   d. Distribute user room audio to more than one adjacent room
   e. Talk back to user from adjacent observation/control room.

6) What would you like to record during a user session? Possibilities include: User PC, Face Cam, Ceiling Cam, User mic, Admin mic.

7) Can you imagine wanting to record different things for different tests?

8) Do you plan to test remote users, e.g., via an online meeting service?

9) Do you need to stream test audio and video to observers who are not in lab?

10) Will you need to test more than one user at a time for your test?

11) Will you need to conduct more than one test at a time? (Usually only applies to labs with more than one user room.)

12) Can you share your floor plan for the space? (Even a paper napkin drawing will do!)

13) What is the current state of construction of your space?
   a. Blank Slate/Not Yet Built
   b. Studs, but not drywall. Ceiling grid, but no tiles.
   c. Drywall/Paint/Buttoned Up
   d. Pre-existing facility/retrofit

14) What is your timeframe for getting the lab installed?