Extra! Extra! Disseminating Human Factors Knowledge Through a University Campus Newspaper
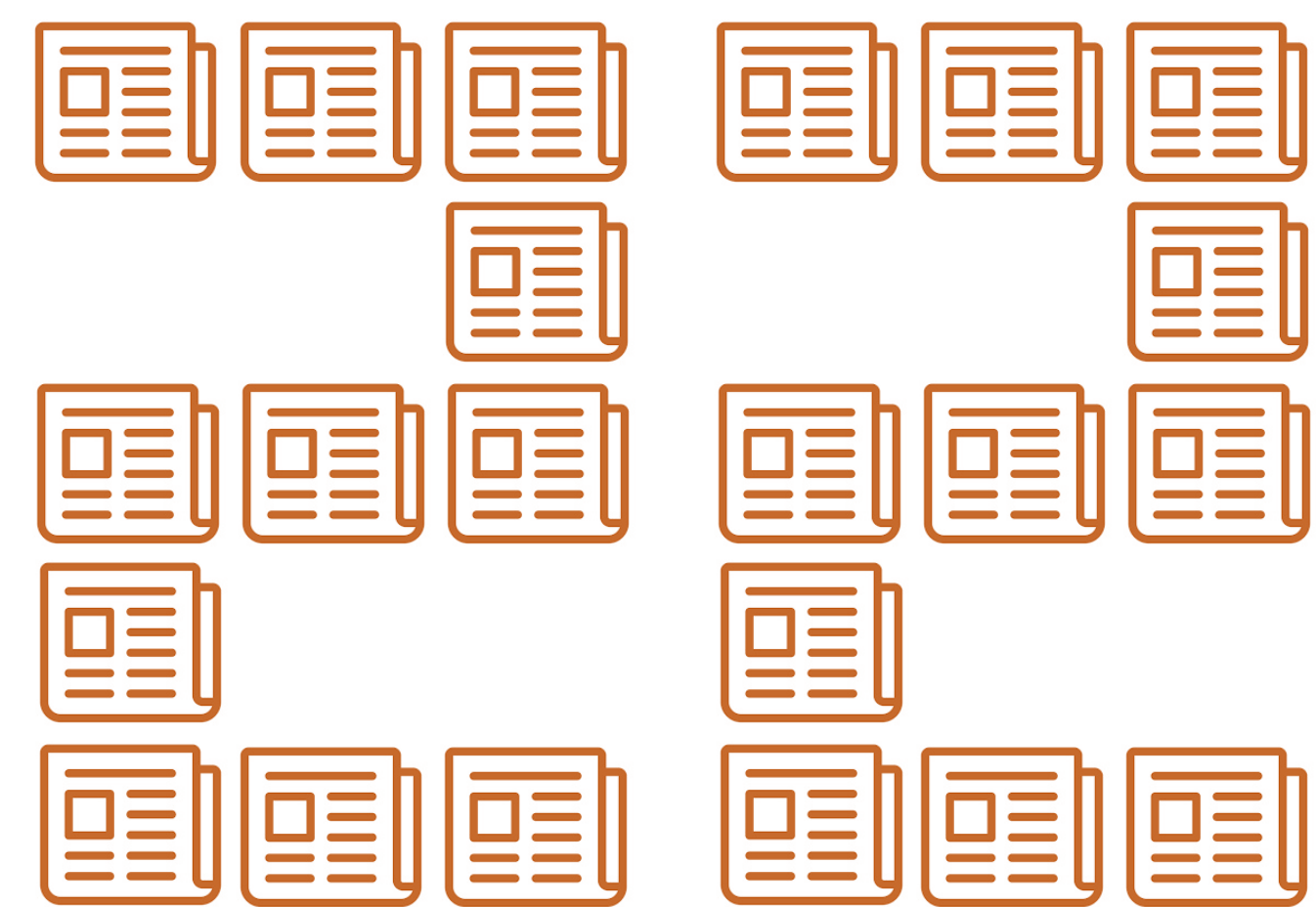
Emily Rickel, B.S., Ameer Hosein, B.S., & Barbara S. Chaparro, Ph.D.

Department of Human Factors & Behavioral Neurobiology, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

EMBRY-RIDDLE
Aeronautical University

Introduction

Students are more likely to read a campus newspaper compared to a local newspaper (Collins & Armstrong, 2008), possibly because they prefer content that contains information relevant to their academic disciplines and job prospects (Igbeka & Ola, 2010). The Research in User Experience (RUX) Lab within the Department of Human Factors and Behavioral Neurobiology at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) has taken advantage of this medium by publishing lab project findings in ERAU's student-led weekly newspaper. These findings are written in the UX Corner, a column established for the RUX Lab that investigates the usability and user experience of technologies typically used by ERAU students.

As of January 2020, 22 articles written by the RUX Lab have been published through the column online and in physical copies of newspapers that are distributed across campus (The Avion Newspaper, 2020).

Benefits

Through this publishing medium, student researchers can:

- Practice utilizing the scientific method
- Gain exposure to industry UX/usability methods
- Supplement knowledge and skills learned in class
- Apply skills in a fast-paced, collaborative environment
- Learn how to present findings to an audience with a limited background in Human Factors

Additionally, the general university community benefits from:

- Exposure to current topics, technologies, and methods used within the Human Factors domain
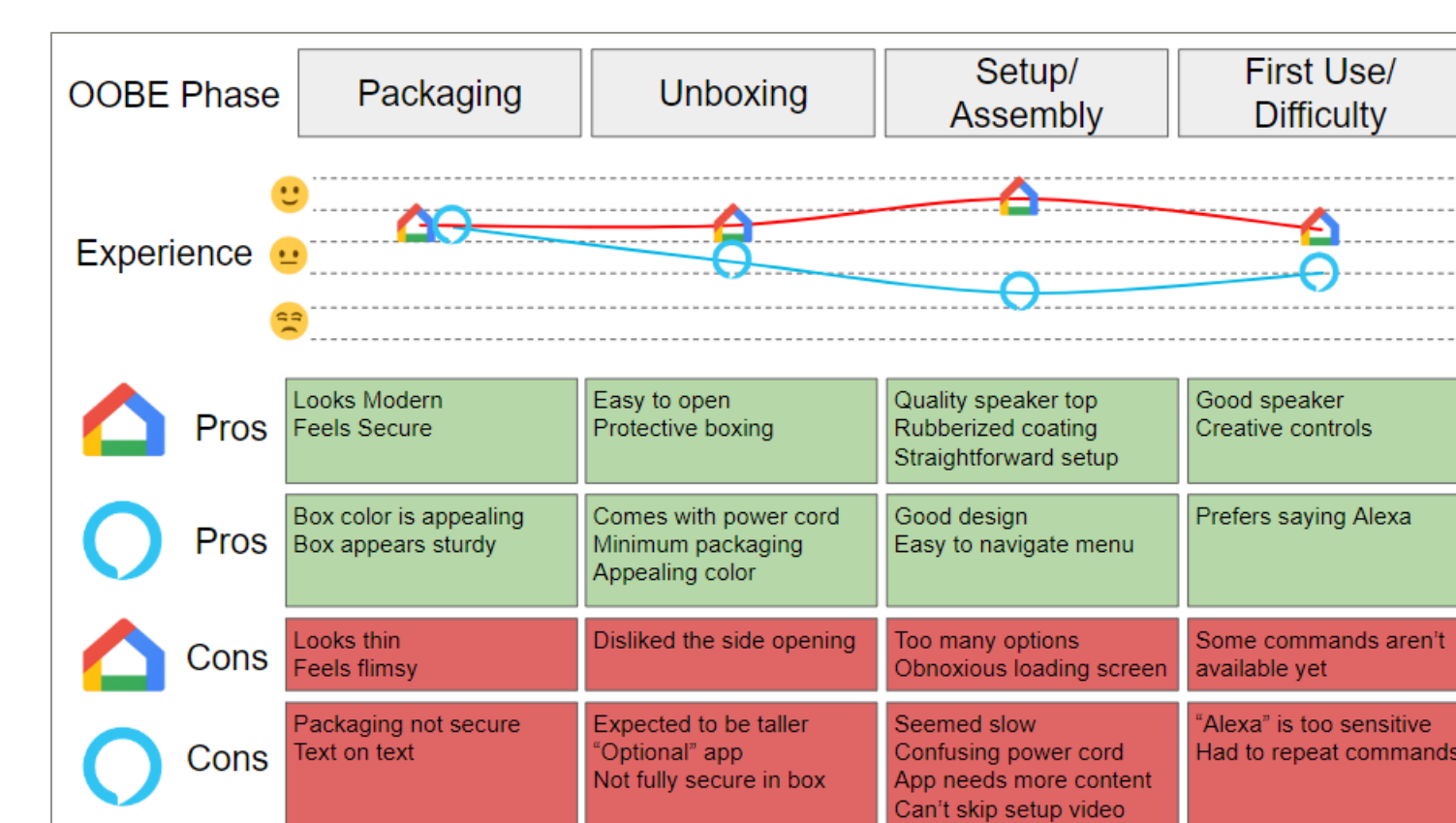- Understanding how trends and technology influence their academic and personal life

Featured Examples

Is This the Real Life? Is This Mixed Reality? ▼ *Informational*

Defining terms, highlighting technologies, and providing potential student use cases associated with augmented, virtual, and mixed reality (March 23, 2019).
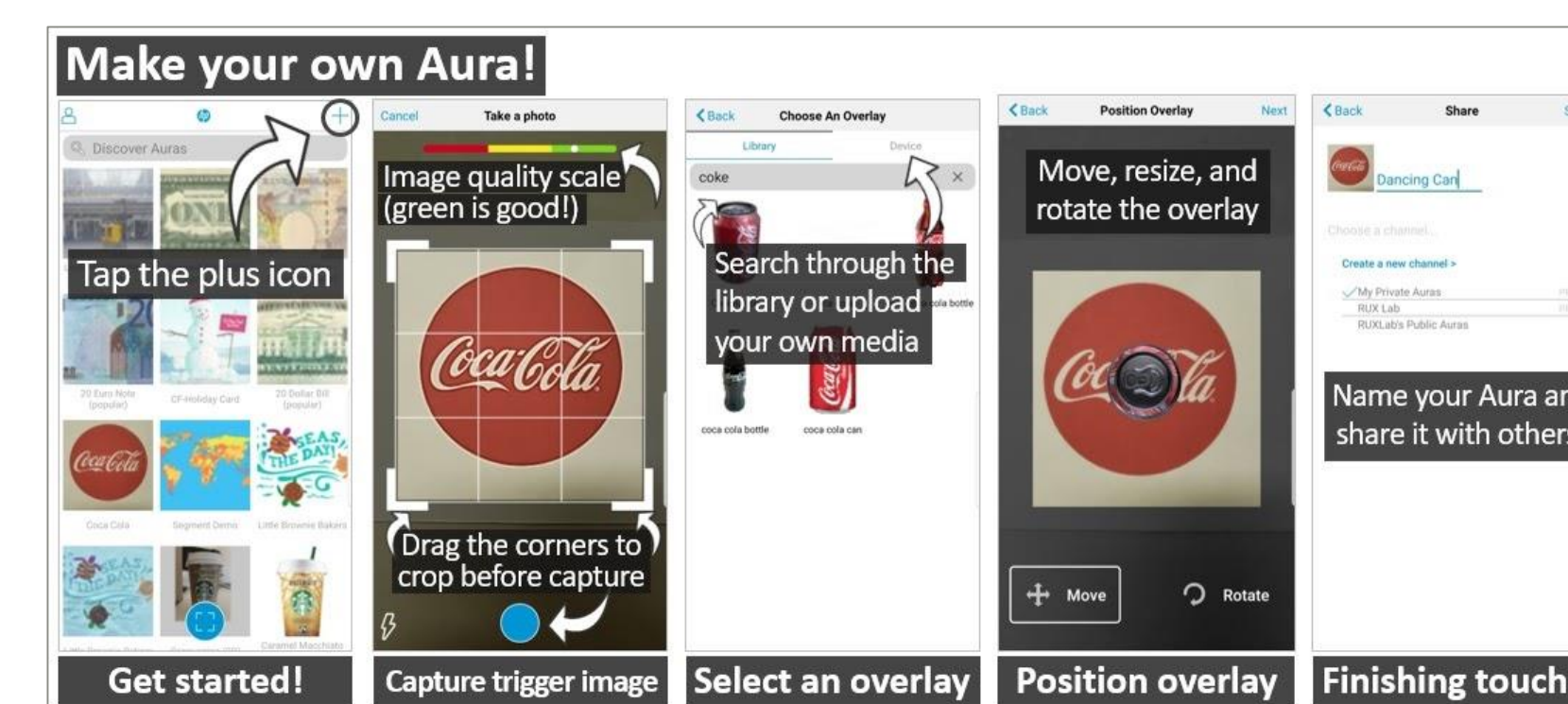
To Create a Smart Dorm: Google Home or Amazon Echo?

Comparing the out-of-box experience (OOBE) of two similar devices, summarized in an experience map (February 25, 2019).

◄ *Competitive Analysis, OOBE*

Create Your Own Augmented Reality ▼ *Infographic, Interactive*

Presenting steps and demonstrating an app that has implications in campus wayfinding (April 8, 2019).

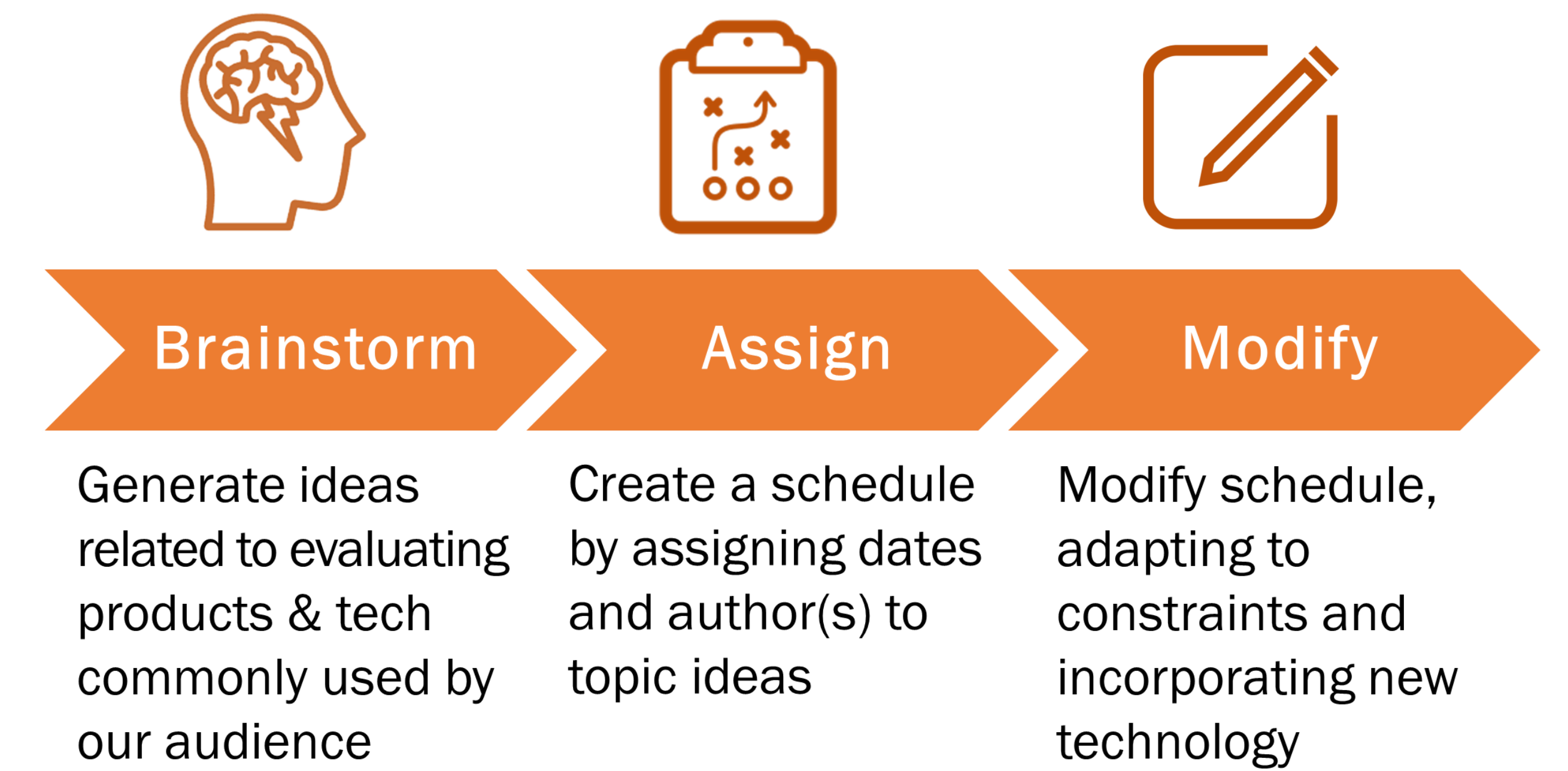### Messaging Apps: LOL or OMG? ▼ *Survey, Focus Group*

Investigating what apps and features students prefer when using messaging apps (March 9, 2019).

At the end of every article, this QR code ► is presented to query the audience for content they'd like to see in the future. Have an idea for an article? Scan now!

Process

Semester process:

Brainstorm	Assign	Modify
Generate ideas related to evaluating products & tech commonly used by our audience	Create a schedule by assigning dates and author(s) to topic ideas	Modify schedule, adapting to constraints and incorporating new technology

Weekly process:

Collect	Create	Review	Submit
Ensure data collection and analyses are complete	Write article, compile images, and develop data visualizations	Complete internal review of content and make edits	Submit all materials to newspaper

Lessons Learned

- Campus newspapers are viable outlets to increase visibility of Human Factors knowledge and methods
- Establish an internal word limit that facilitates a balance between text and important visualizations that summarize the project's main findings
- Writing for a general audience is a great skill that complements creating academic content

References

Collins, S. J., & Armstrong, C. L. (2008). U of Florida students prefer campus paper to free daily. *Newspaper Research Journal, 29*(1), 77-89. doi: 10.1177/073953290802900107

Igbeka, J. U., & Ola, C. O. (2010). Use of newspapers by Nigerian university students: The case of Delta State University, Anwai Campus. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal),* paper 358. Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/358/

RUX lab search results. (2020, January). *The Avion Newspaper.* Retrieved from http://theavion.com/?s=rux+lab