

SKYPE FOR CONSUMERS

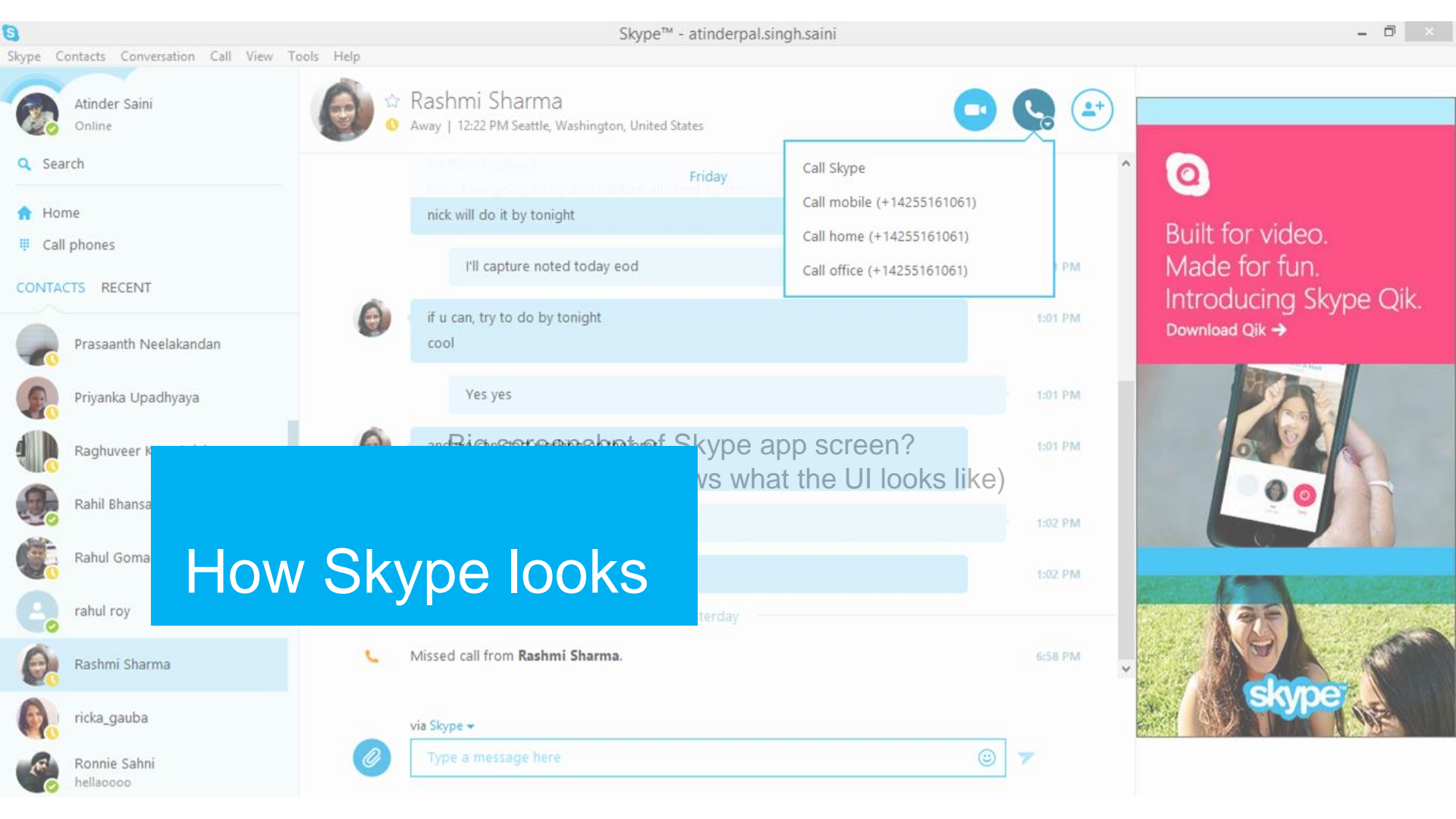
Evaluating the Windows Desktop Experience


Usability Study


Skype for Windows PC


March 2015


Atinderpal Singh, Nick Anderson, Rashmi Sharma





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Atinder Saini
Online
- 


Search
- 


Home
- 


Call phones
- CONTACTS RECENT
- 


Prasaanth Neelakandan
- 


Priyanka Upadhyaya
- 


Raghuveer K
- 

Rahil Bhansa
- 

Rahul Goma
- 

rahul roy
- 

Rashmi Sharma
- 

ricka_gauba
- 

Ronnie Sahni
hellaoooo



☆ Rashmi Sharma
Away | 12:22 PM Seattle, Washington, United States



Friday

nick will do it by tonight

I'll capture noted today eod

Call Skype
Call mobile (+14255161061)
Call home (+14255161061)
Call office (+14255161061)



if u can, try to do by tonight
cool

1:01 PM

Yes yes

1:01 PM



and the screenshot of Skype app screen?

1:01 PM

... what the UI looks like)

1:02 PM

1:02 PM

1:02 PM



Missed call from **Rashmi Sharma**.

6:58 PM

via Skype ▼



Type a message here



Built for video.
Made for fun.
Introducing Skype Qik.
Download Qik →





Study

Research questions

How readily can users accomplish core communication tasks using Skype (voice calls, video calls, IM exchanges)?

Is it easy for users to create new social experiences (find contacts, share content)?

What are common mistakes or difficulties in using Skype?
How do users resolve them, and how easily?

Where do users find application experiences delightful?

1	2 ABC	3 DEF
4 GHI	5 JKL	6 MNO
7 PQRS	8 TUV	9 WXYZ
*	0 +	#

Study

Quick findings

The good

1. Everybody was successful at most voice and video calling
2. Easy and engaging instant messaging
3. Photo and file sharing were pleasure points
4. Install and setup successful for all participants

The not-so-good

1. Difficulty finding people on Skype by name or profile information
2. Voice messaging difficult for most participants
3. Most participants had trouble identifying screen-sharing presenters
4. Some participant uncertainty about aspects of file/photo downloads and resharing
5. Minor but consistent feedback about notifications UI

Study

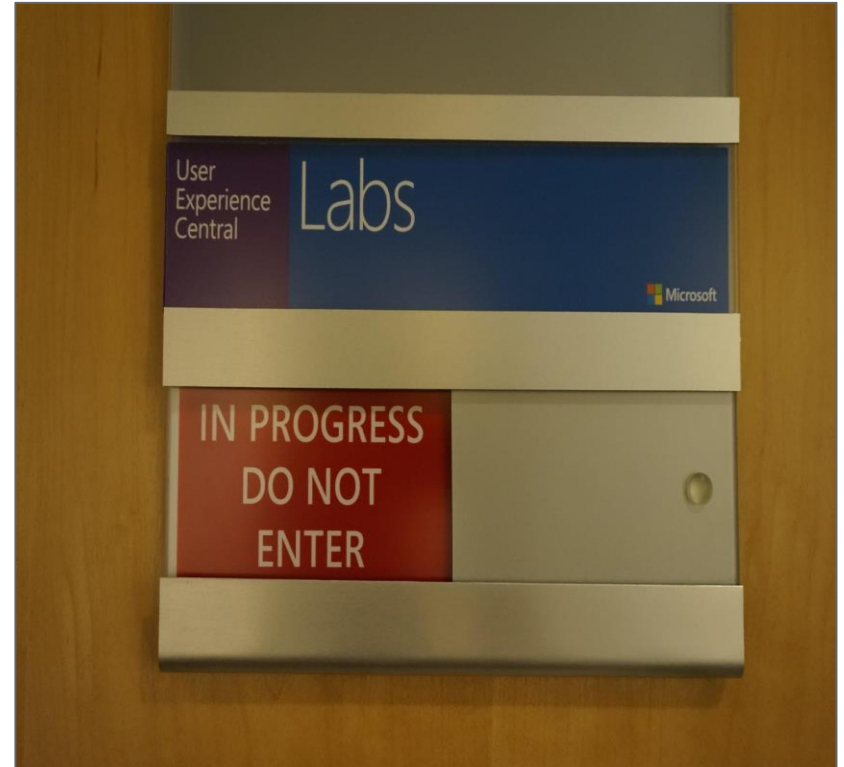
Materials and methods

Experience outcomes (XO)

- Microsoft usability testing framework for evaluating task outcomes across product functionality areas
- Likert scores for user-perceived ease or difficulty, perceived time, confidence

We added:

- Heuristic evaluation before test
- Observation and opportunistic evaluation during task testing
- Interview questions at exit, based on session



Study

Personas

Aadi: Socially enthusiastic user with goals around expanding his/her social experiences and engagement. Age 18-28, enthusiastic and engaged with technology. “Young adult, focused on education.” Likely student.



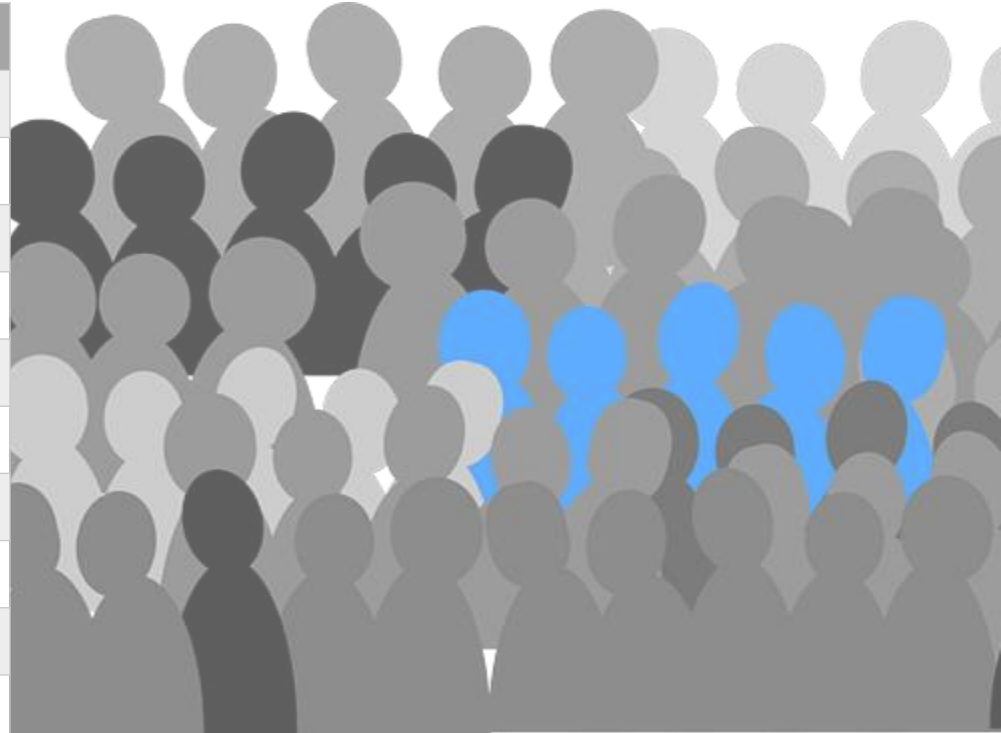
Kayo: Productivity-oriented user with goals around getting things done well and looking professional. Age 30-40, capable with technology. “Adult, focused on career.” Likely small business owner or professional.



Study

Participants

Participant	Persona	Gender	Age	Occupation
P1	Kayo	M	29	Credit analyst
P2	Kayo	M	40	Student/SBA
P3	Kayo	F	30	Support prof.
P4	Aadi	M	28	Student
P5	Kayo	M	18	Student
P6	Aadi	M	26	IT manager
P7	Aadi	M	18	Student
P8	Aadi	M	28	Student
P9	Aadi/Kayo	M	28	Sales engineer
P10	Aadi	M	21	Student



Study

Lab Setup

Test setting

Studio D - Usability labs

Participant & moderator in separate rooms

Screen mirroring for observers





Findings
The good

Findings

Voice calls

Great task success with core voice call features. All participants completed voice calls and turned on/off microphone and video during calls. (100% ease, 100% responsiveness)

Most of the participants thought it was easy to identify the speaker during a group call due to the blue outline around the speaker's image. (100% ease, 100% confidence)

Participants liked drag/drop of contacts to add people to call. (4 of 10)

“In similar applications, the images of people... go flying to represent the speaker... Highlighting the speaker with a blue outline does not distract and is easy to follow.” (P2)

[After dragging a contact into the call screen]
“That’s nice! What you got there is nice... a nice way to do it.” (P7)

Findings

IM engagement

Participants were confident about starting IM and presence cues they saw while in an IM conversation. (100% ease, responsiveness)

"I can see the <contact is typing...> popping up, which is good reflection. This feature reflected what I needed to know after sending the message."
(P8)

"<name> is typing..." helped ppts know that their contact was responding.

Emoticons were popular--participants agreed that they could "enrich IM conversations through creative and fun ways." (90%)



Findings

Sharing files and photos

All participants could easily share files in IM as attachments (paperclip icon, context menu). (10 of 10)

Ease: 80% accept file, 100% share photo

P8 liked that he could download shared files by clicking anywhere in its image, not just the download button.

ul Participant, ...



Group call

Saturday, February 28, 2015



Call ended, duration 03:59



Group call



Masterful Participant



Masterful Participant

“ eh. I'm 45 ”

Nick Anderson, Saturday, February 28, 2015 6:23 PM

via Skype ▾



Type a message here



Findings

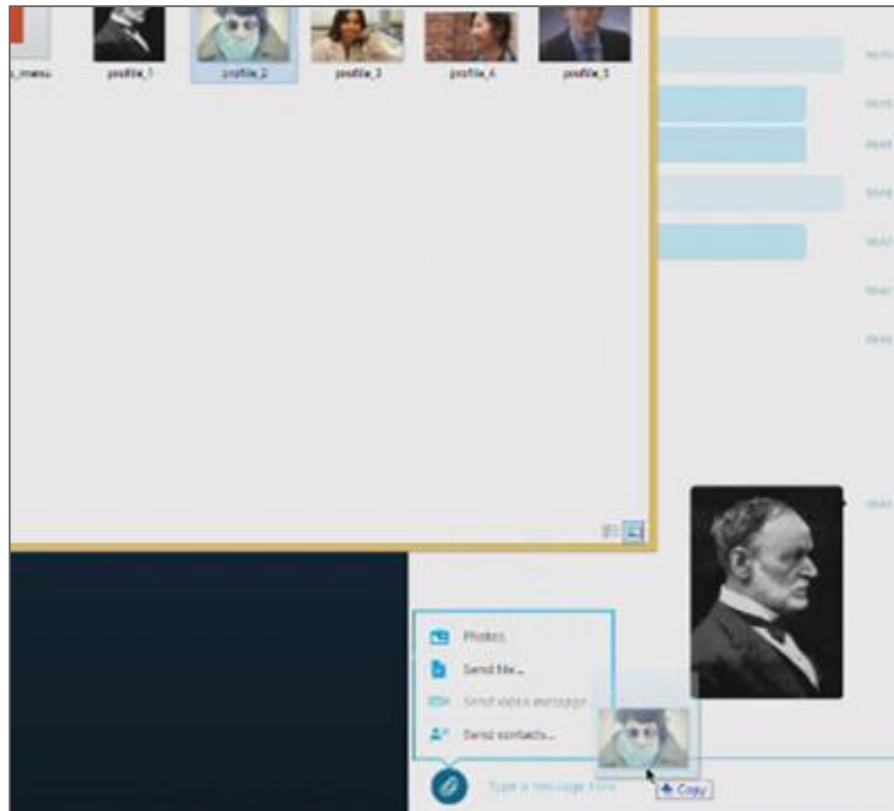
Sharing files and photos

Participants were pleased about drag and drop when they discovered it. (5 of 10 commented, 3 tried extended tasks)

6 of 10 participants dragged files/photos into the IM or call screen to share.

3 of 10 participants dragged contacts into the IM or call screen to share.

“Yeah I can drag and drop as well. That’s really nice. That makes it even easier. Just open the file folder and dragging the file directly into the call.” (P2)



Findings

Screen sharing, video message

Participants found the red border around the shared window/ screen helped them know what they were sharing.

“The window seems to take a red border and it seems to track around it when I move the window. That makes it pretty easy to tell what’s going on.” (P2)

Participants liked the ability to check the video message before sending it.

“Pretty intuitive. I actually get to watch the video message before sending it. I could click start recording and stop when I was done. The tool tip over the icons lets me know that I was accurate in recognizing the record, cancel and send functions.” (P2)



Findings

The not-so-good

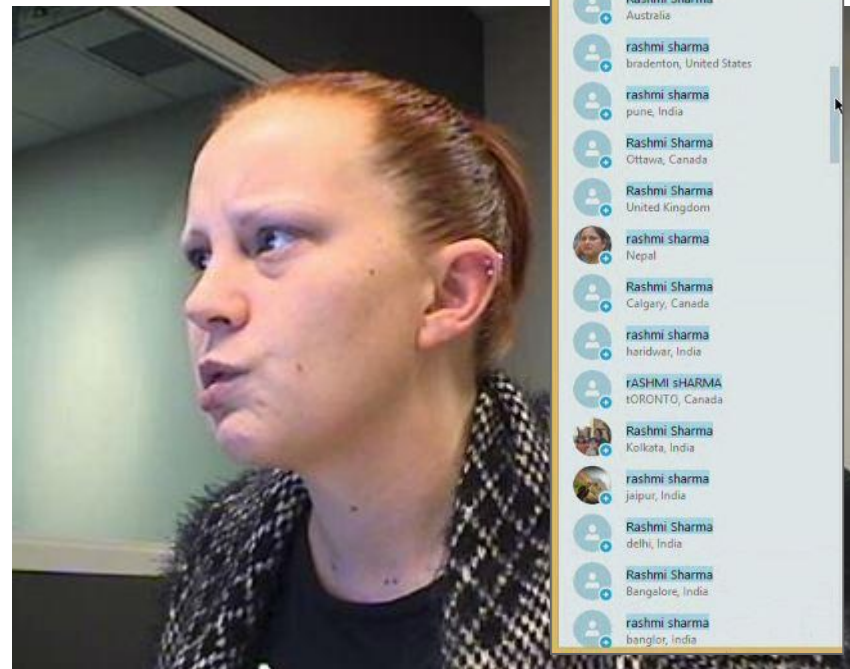
Findings

Locating people on Skype

Every participant was successful finding people by Skype ID. (10/10), but...

Every participant struggled to find people by name alone.

Most participants had trouble finding contacts by name even with additional profile details. (30% perceived time, 30% satisfaction)



Findings

Locating people on Skype

“Too much scrolling through results.” (P4)

Participants expected keyword search that included profile data in AND condition (P2, P4, P5, P7, P9)

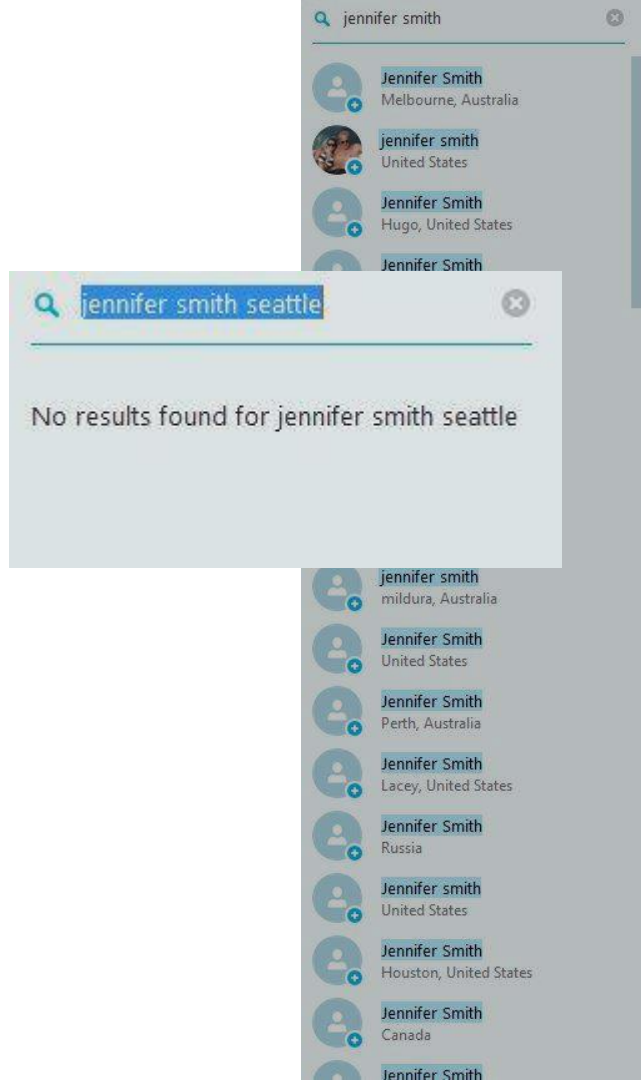
“Nobody names their kid ‘Seattle’...” (P7)

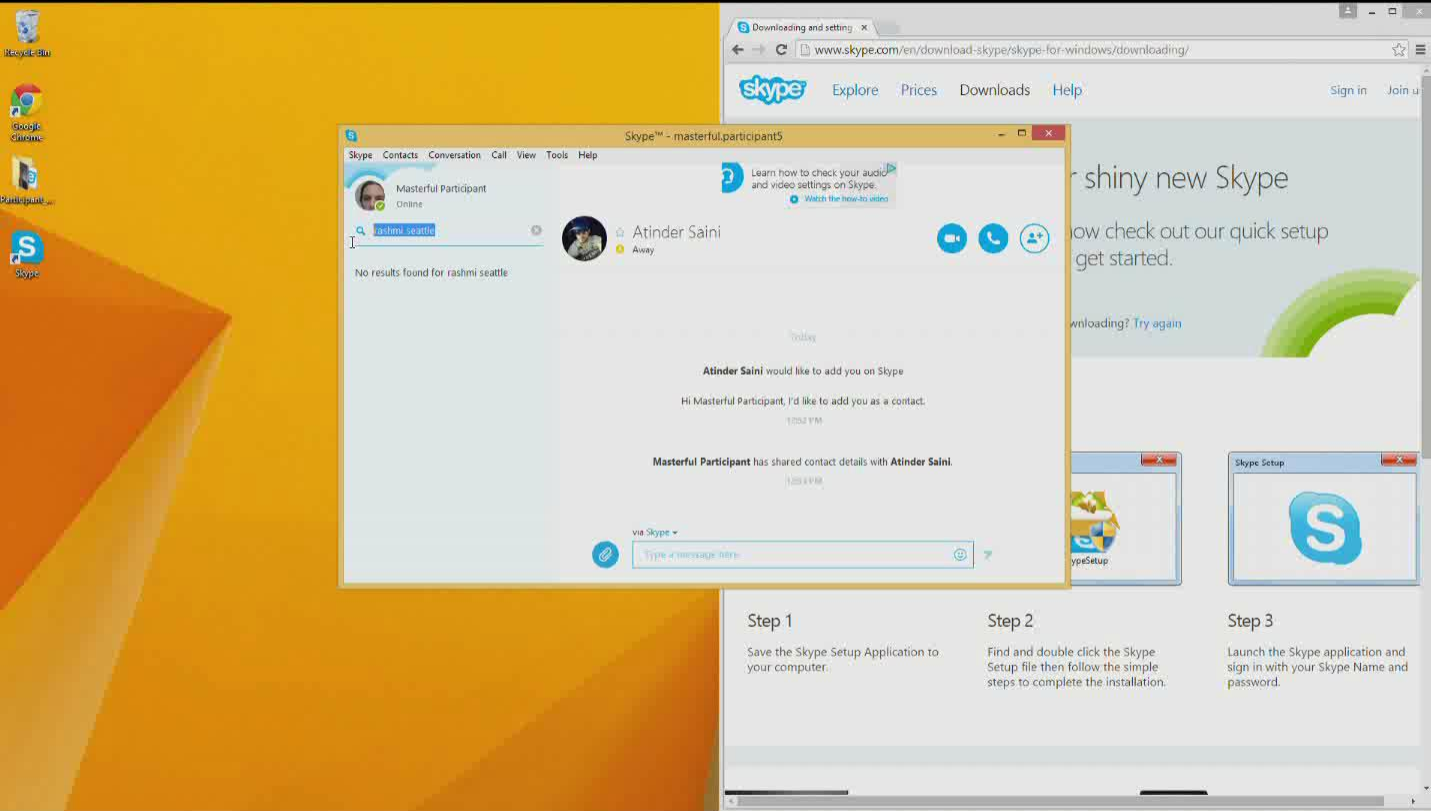
Participants wanted to filter/sort their search results by location or other profile info (P2, P4)

Recommendations:

- Provide advanced search UI (like Skype for Mac)

- Search could treat extra terms as keywords rather than proper names



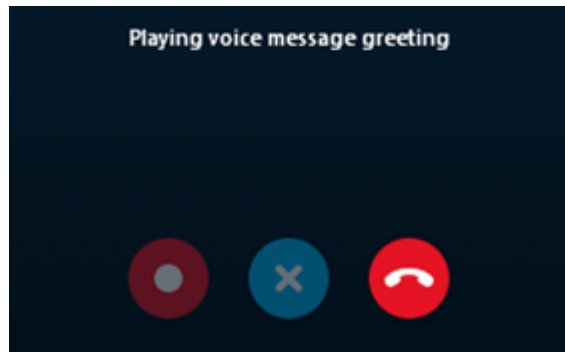


Findings

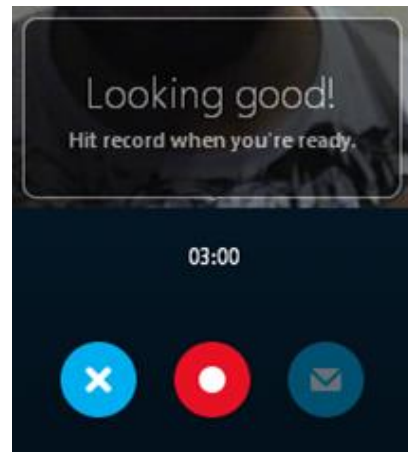
Voice messages

Low unprompted task completion for voice messages (5 of 10) and low ease scoring (60%).

- Participants tried to make voice call in order to leave voice message (assuming contact wouldn't pick up). (4 of 10)
- Participants tried video message UI to leave voice message (expecting to toggle voice/video). (8 of 10)
- Participants could not listen to their voice message before sending, unlike with video messages. (No option in UI)
- Participants expected video message and voice message UI to be consistent.



Voice Message UI



Video Message UI

Findings

Contacts and presence

Most participants thought that sending IM was the best way to determine whether a contact was available. (8 of 10 unprompted)

True even though all participants could successfully identify status cues (online, busy, away, etc.)

All ppts were able to share contacts as IM attachments, but didn't agree that it was easy. (60% ease)

Some weren't sure whether to begin the task with the contact to be sent or the recipient. (P3, P4, P6, P7)

“Starting an IM conversation is politeness” (P5)

“People are marked online even if they are away or not available for conversation” (P8)

Findings

Sharing files & photos

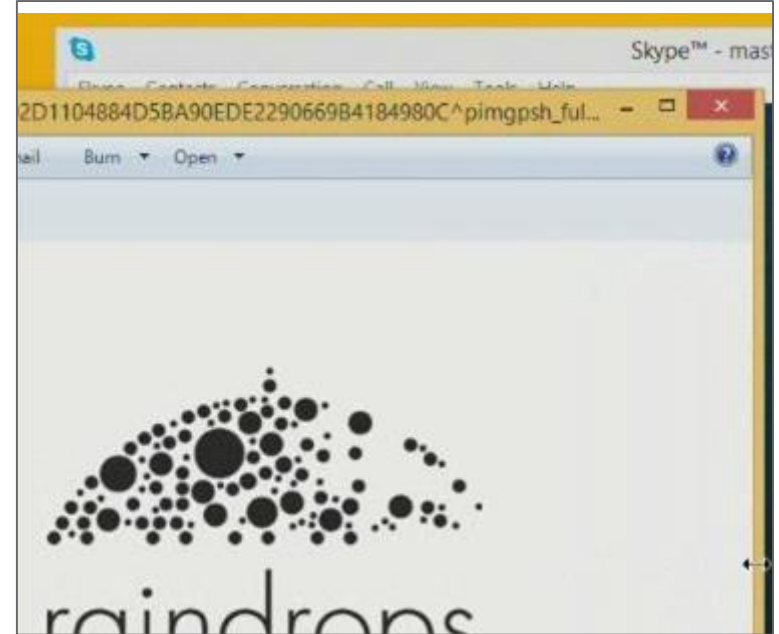
Participants were sometimes uncertain (80% ease)...

- ...Whether files had downloaded (3 of 10).

- ...Why files didn't download to their Downloads or typical folder (4 of 10).

- ...About perceived lag in download or upload when sharing (3 of 10).

- ...About “unfriendly” file names when saving photos locally (P3, P7).

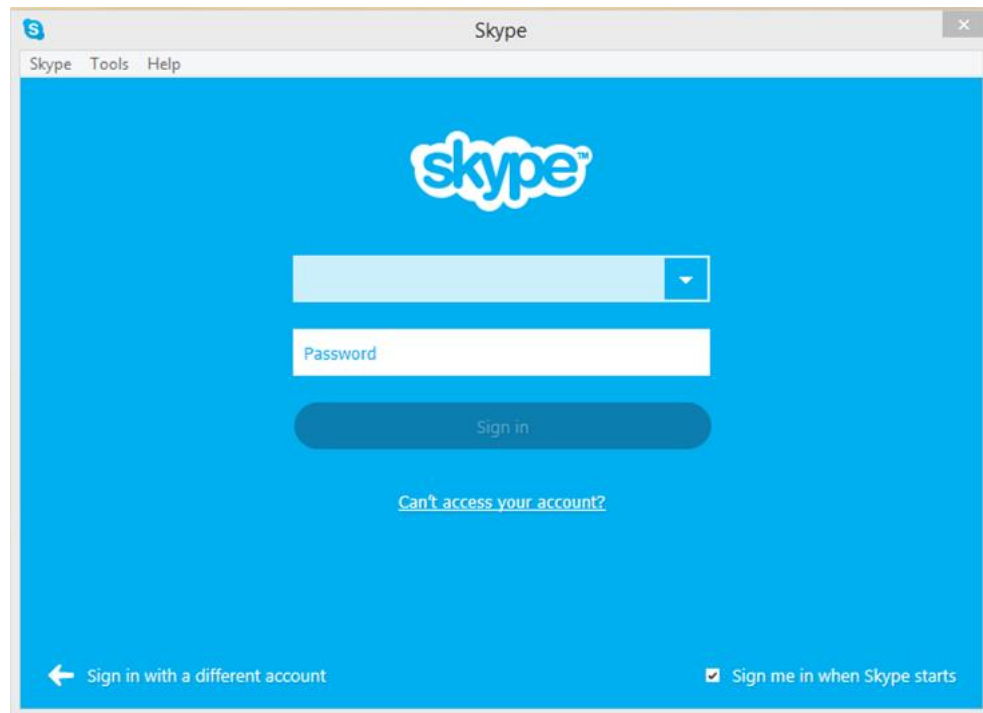


Findings

Setup & install

Most participants were not able to locate create-an-account link and reported that it wasn't very discoverable for them.

“Intuitively I am not seeing a “create account” option. There are no tabs that would indicate create an account. ” (P8)

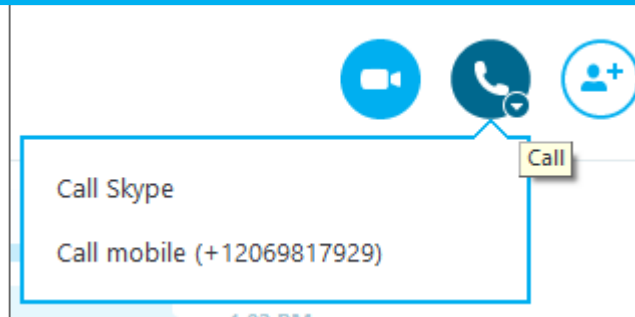


Findings

Voice & video calls

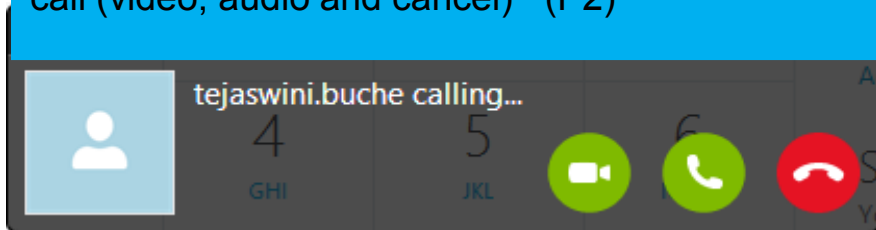
Participants had mixed reviews about “call to mobile” option. Many of them found it difficult to locate the drop-down and found it difficult to recognize unless they hovered over the icon.

“There should be some kind of clearer way of calling a mobile. Having to hover over the icon to get more information is definitely a little confusing.” (P5)



“I wasn’t sure if it was a video or a voice call. Having all three options to answer an incoming call (video, audio and cancel) ” (P2)

Participants were not sure whether the incoming call was voice or video



A row of wrapped gifts, likely for a wedding or anniversary, featuring white paper and teal ribbons. The gifts are arranged in a line, with some in the foreground and others receding into the background. The ribbons are tied in bows, and some have small tags attached. The background is softly blurred, showing more gifts and a warm, indoor setting.

Wrapping up

Findings

From individual participants

Interesting stuff participants wanted:

- Custom contact lists, sortable by availability.
- Third-party emoticon libraries, customizable video emojis, GIF support in emoticons.
- Whiteboard feature for presentation/collaborations.

Interesting stuff participants did:

- P6 considered searching for contacts through Facebook as an alternative to his difficult search experience.
- P2, P3, and P8 went to documentation to resolve some tasks. None resolved the issue that led them to the docs.
- P8 tried exploring mic calibration by hitting “?” but didn’t find any help on by using keyword help on the site.
- P8 was concerned about accessibility features for elderly/ color blind users, particularly tooltips and contrast settings. On prompt, he tried out accessibility mode but wasn’t sure he saw palette changes.

Conclusions

Recommendations/design opportunities

Contact search

- An advanced search option that lets the user specify details from a contact's profile (like current extended search in Skype for Mac)
- Smarter keyword search

Screen sharing

- Persistent visual cue to associate contact in call with presented screen
- Experiment with alternatives to “reshuffle” of contacts in call when presenter changes

File and photo sharing

- Extended drag/drop (to contact sharing?) or embedding behavior
- Visual cues when drag/drop isn't supported (dragging contacts to contacts, for example)

Install/setup

- Improve discoverability of account-creation UI

Conclusions

Learning process

Death by usability testing

We nearly signed up to test 24 participants and two products. Yipes!

Rapport with participants

Comfortable enough to have fun, show delight

Not so comfortable that participants try to please the researcher

Skyping without trying to be friends

Study design

Task order and environment effects really mattered for some XOs.

Session timing

We let delays stack up and missed a few data opportunities.

Thanks!

We appreciated help from:

Adam Smolinski

Henry Chen

Michael Berg

Worthy participants P1-10



Questions?



Thank you!

