

The ROI of User Research and Recruiting Tools

A Comparative Analysis

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A [study by Forrester](#) found that every dollar invested in UX brings \$100 in return—that’s a staggering **9900% ROI**.

There’s little doubt that making design and business decisions based on high-quality insights can earn you money in the long term. But we’ve got to be frank here: UX research can be *expensive*. And we’ve got good reason to argue that not every dollar spent on UXR delivers the same return on investment—a lot depends on the tools and methods you use along the way.

It’s March (almost April) 2023. And right now, against a backdrop of [economic uncertainty](#), UX research teams are stuck in a catch-22 of inflated UX demand and [researcher burnout](#). We’re asked to do more with less time, less energy, and smaller (or, at the least, more scrutinized) budgets. In turn, we’re asking our tools to do more, too.

But which tools are up to the task? 🤔 In a seemingly ever-growing landscape of UXR software (our most recent [UX Research Tools Map](#) included over 230 logos), how do you determine which tools offer the best value? Should you opt for a [layered, integrated stack made of multiple tools or a single “all-in-one” platform](#) that promises an end-to-end solution?

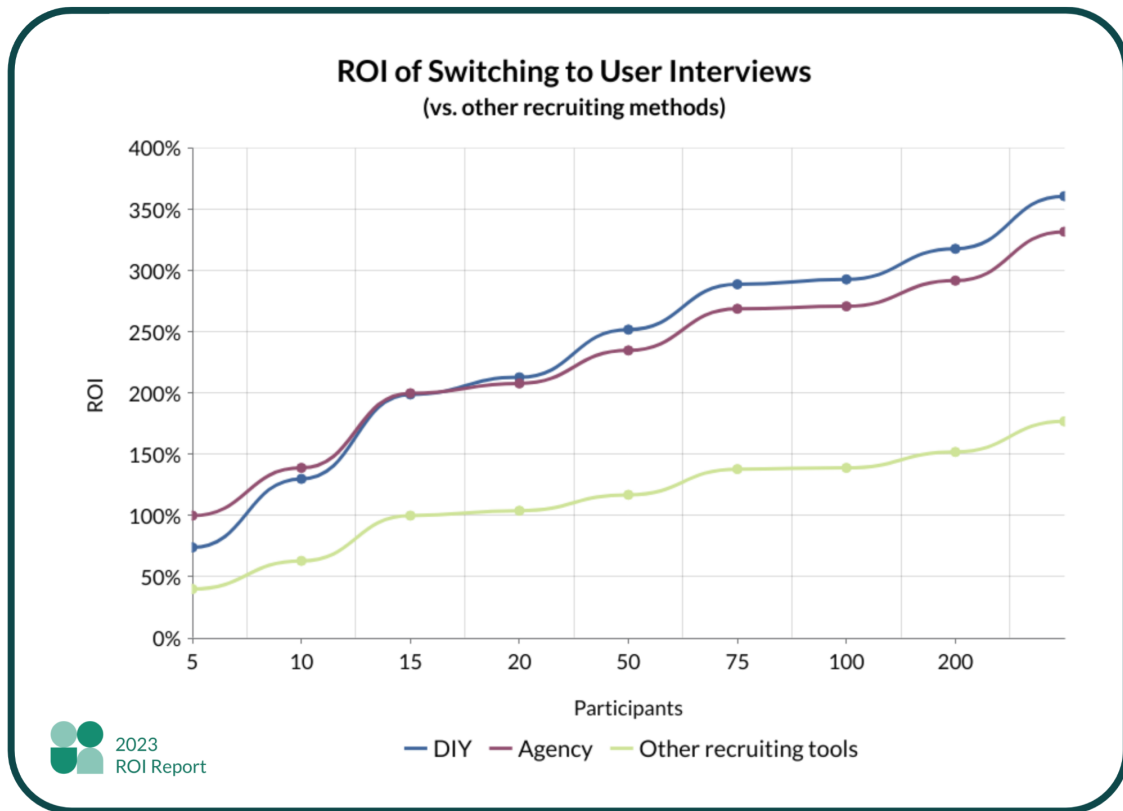
In the following report, we take a close look at the cost of different user research solutions—not just the sticker price of a SaaS subscription, but also the user cost in terms of both time and money.

For starters, we compared four methods of research recruiting (User Interviews, other recruiting tools, agencies, and DIY).

Next, we compared the cost of the popular “all-in-one” platform UserTesting against integrated user research tool kits to understand how each approach stacks up.

Inside this report:

1. Key insights and takeaways
2. Our methodology
3. Comparing different recruitment methods
4. Integrated UXR stacks vs. all-in-ones
5. What the quantitative data shows
6. Maximizing the ROI of user research with User Interviews



Key insights

✓ UI offers high ROI for targeted, low-volume recruiting

For teams that need an average of 10 B2B participants/month, UI offers an ROI of 87% and 168%. For 50 B2C participants, the ROI is between 92% and 283%

📈 UI is the most economical recruiting method at scale.

Recruiting 100 qualitative participants per month with User Interviews costs \$5,050 (B2C) to \$5,390 (B2B) less than our leading competitor, \$8,587 to \$11,787 less than an agency, and \$5,580 to \$16,452 less than DIY.

⚖️ Agencies can actually be cheaper than DIY recruiting—but they're more expensive than recruiting tools like UI.

Recruiting 20 B2B participants with an agency saves you \$810 and over 63 hours compared to DIY recruiting—but still costs \$2,268 more than User Interviews.

💰 UserTesting is more expensive than a layered stack of User Interviews, Figma, Zoom, Sprig, and Lookback *combined*.

This combination could save you \$3,505 for 10 qualitative sessions per month—that's \$42,060 a year.

👉 **TL;DR:** Compared to other self-serve recruitment tools, DIY recruiting, agency recruiting, and “all-in-one” UX research tools, ***User Interviews is the most economical way to recruit participants***—especially when integrated with other best-in-class tools in a layered UX tech stack.

👁️ [Sign up now for a free account](#) and see for yourself!

Our methodology

First, a quick note on bias.

In this report, we will be comparing the cost and benefits of User Interviews against alternative solutions. As such, we acknowledge that we are not [unbiased](#). (We—Rachell Lee and Katryna Balboni—are proud members of the User Interviews team.)

But we've done our best to be objective in our calculations, and have made an effort to present our methodology as transparently as possible. We feel confident that the numbers in this report are realistic estimates of the potential cost savings and ROI offered by each tooling option.

We hope it serves as a useful guide for teams of all sizes as you evaluate your options and helps you articulate a compelling business case for investing in the tools your team needs to do quality research at scale.

Definitions:

B2C vs B2B: In this context, B2B refers to participants chosen based on their industry, job title, or professional expertise. Both B2B and B2C participants may be screened for demographic or behavioral criteria.

No-shows: Participants who accept a study invite but never show up to the session.

User cost: The labor cost of every hour spent on recruitment, based on the average US salary of UXRs and [people who do research](#).

👉 Now, here's step-by-step progression of how our 2023 ROI report came together.

1. Defining scope

As with any research project, the first thing we needed to do was define our approach. For this report, we decided to focus on **qualitative recruiting and research**.

When we talk about the cost and ROI of User Interviews in this report, we're talking about our best-in-class recruitment solution, [Recruit](#).

We were interested in understanding not only the ROI and cost savings of User Interviews compared to recruiting alternatives, but also how layered tool stacks that include our own solution, well, *stack up* against all-in-ones like UserTesting.

But simply comparing the sticker price of each solution doesn't illustrate the full value of tools. There are all sorts of hard-to-quantify factors—like participant quality, the flexibility of a modular tool stack, etc.—that we couldn't factor into our calculations (we talk about those in the “What the quantitative data doesn't tell us” section below).

We did, however, work out some formulas for calculating the impact of time spent, no-show rates, and multiple users on the *actual* cost of each solution, which we'll get into below.

2. Gathering the required data

Given the scope of our report, we worked out that we would need the following pieces of information in order to calculate cost savings and ROI:

- Detailed pricing data for user research tools and recruiting methods
- The time it takes to recruit n participants
- Salary data for common users of UXR tools
- The average no-show rate for moderated studies

Pricing data for user research recruiting methods

Meeting this first data requirement sounds simpler than it was. For one thing, we had to work out the cost for each tool for any given number of participants. For another thing, SaaS pricing can be frustratingly hard to untangle.

User Interviews costs

The **User Interviews cost per participant** is based on the session price of the most appropriate pricing tier for the volume of participants required.

For example, if you need 12 participants on average each month, the cost per participant = \$26. That is the session price for our Essential subscription, which costs \$3,900 per year for 150 sessions (at a monthly cost of \$325 for 12.5 sessions on

average). And the cost of B2B recruiting is twice that of B2C, so the UI B2B price multiplier = 2.

Recruiting agency costs

We leaned on [some insider knowledge](#) about **agency pricing** to work out a per participant cost. We used \$100 as the agency cost per B2C participant and \$150 as the agency cost per B2B participant. (The agency B2B price multiplier = 1.5)

Competitor costs

Next, we used the published pricing tiers for top User Interviews competitors, calculated the cost for any given number of participants, and used the average for our **competitor per participant price** estimate.

DIY recruiting costs

With DIY recruiting, there's no tooling cost. **The cost of recruiting yourself** is based on time and salary estimates (see below for calculations).

Pricing data for user research tools

[User Interviews](#) is an ecosystem player; **our panel is testing tool agnostic**, meaning you can recruit participants for research with whatever testing tools you have in your stack.

Cost of user research tools

To show you what a layered solution looks like and how it compares to an all-in-one platform, we also worked out **the cost of UXR tools** for things like interviews, usability testing, card sorting, prototype and concept testing, and more. Those tools are [Figma](#), [Zoom](#), [Maze](#), [Sprig](#), [Lookback](#), [Miro](#), [Optimal Workshop](#), and [Usability Hub](#).

Cost of UserTesting

As for the all-in-one platform that we'd be pitting these layered stacks against, we decided to use **UserTesting** as our foil.





This proved... challenging. That's because UserTesting's pricing is extremely opaque. Some sites say that plans—which include use of their testing platform as well as access to their tester panel—start at \$15,000 per year, but in discovery calls and competitive research with actual buyers, we've learned that the starting price is more like \$50,000 (or higher!).

We used the \$50,000 price as the basis for our calculations. Since we were unable to find reliable information on how UserTesting plans scale, we just had to assume the same cost per month regardless of the recruit size.

Estimating the time it takes to recruit n participants

For these inputs, we made educated guesses based on the amount of user effort each recruiting method requires. Our assumption was that DIY would take the longest by a long shot, followed by self-serve tools like User Interviews and competitors, followed by recruiting agencies and built-in tester panels.

Here's a summary of our assumptions and the time estimates we used in our calculations:

- **User Interviews and other recruiting tools:** We automate scheduling, participant emails, incentive payouts, etc—but the more participants you need, the more time it takes to review recruits.
 -  **Time:** 2.5 hours for the first 10 participants, +15 minutes for every additional 10 participants.
- **DIY:** You're doing everything yourself, without an existing user panel to tap into.
 -  **Time:** 1.15 hours for every B2C participant; 3 hours for every B2B participant.
- **Agencies:** The labor cost is minimal because you're paying a premium to outsource recruiting.
 -  **Time:** 2.5 hours for the first 50 participants, +15 minutes for every additional 50 participants.
- **Built-in panel (e.g. UserTesting):** Built-in tester panels promise fast, high-volume recruitment (vs. the targeted recruitment you'd look for in qualitative studies).
 -  **Time:** The same as agencies

On teams with multiple users of UXR tools, we assumed that the workload would be partially shared, so the user cost wouldn't simply increase 100% for each additional user. For multiple users, we estimated a +25% increase in time spent for each additional user—so on a team with 3 users, the time multiplier = 1.5. If you have 8 people regularly doing this work, that multiplier = 2.75.

User cost if multiple users

$$(\text{user cost}) + ((\text{number of users} - 1) \times 0.25)$$

Salary data for people who do research

In order to understand the dollar value of each hour spent on recruiting, we needed to work out the average salary for the typical users of these tools.

To do this, we used [Glassdoor](#) to pull the average annual salary for mid-career professionals (folks with 4–9 years experience) in 9 US cities.

The job titles we searched for were: **UX Researcher, Research Operations Manager, UX Designer, Product Manager, Product Marketer**. And the cities (which we chose because they are tech hubs for which Glassdoor had enough salary data to be “confident” in their estimates) were: **Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Denver, NYC, San Francisco, San Jose, Seattle**.

Average salary of people who do research: **\$134,632 = \$64.73/hr**

No-show rate

Sometimes participants don’t show up. When you recruit with User Interviews, we automatically recruit extra participants to account for the average no-show rate. With DIY, there’s no such security—so it’s best practice to recruit additional participants in the event that some folks ghost ya.

According to data from projects completed with our platform, **the average no-show rate for moderated studies (between Q4 2022 and Q1 2023) was 10%**. That means for every 10 participants you actually need, you should recruit 11.

Average no-show rate for qualitative studies: **10%**

3. Analyzing the data

Once we had all our data assembled, it was time to crunch some numbers.

User cost

To calculate user cost we multiplied the average hourly salary by the relevant time multiplier.

$$\text{User cost of recruiting } n \text{ participants} \\ (\text{Average salary}) \times (\text{time multiplier})$$

For example, the user cost of recruiting 10 participants with User Interviews is: $\$64.73 \times 2.5 \text{ hours}$.

If we're looking at a scenario with multiple users, we have to multiply by +25% for each additional user (so for a 3 person team using UI to recruit 10 participants the formula would be: $\text{User cost} = \$64.73 \times 2.5 \times 1.5$

Actual cost

Next, we had to calculate the **actual cost** of recruiting n participants with different solutions. The actual cost includes both the sticker price for recruiting n participants and the user cost of doing the same.

$$\text{Actual cost of recruiting } n \text{ participants} \\ (\text{Sticker price for } n \text{ participants}) + (\text{user cost for } n \text{ participants})$$

The actual cost of recruiting n participants

In *actuality*, the formula for calculating the actual cost of each solution looked slightly different.

Actual cost of recruiting with User Interviews

The cost for recruiting B2C participants with User Interviews was calculated based on user cost and subscription tier pricing:

$$\text{Cost to recruit with User Interviews (B2C)}$$

(UI user cost) + (per participant price x number of participants)

For B2B, we factor in a 100% price increase:

Cost to recruit with User Interviews (B2B)

(UI user cost) + (per participant price x number of participants x 2)

Actual cost of recruiting with an agency

We used the same formula to calculate the cost of recruiting with an agency (but remember that the user's time cost scales at a slower rate and the per participant cost is higher.)

The cost for recruiting B2C participants with an agency is therefore:

Cost to recruit with an agency (B2C)

(Agency user cost) + (per participant price x number of participants)

For B2B, we factor in a 50% price increase:

Cost to recruit with an agency (B2B)

(Agency user cost) + (per participant price x number of participants x 1.5)

Actual cost of DIY recruiting:

With DIY recruiting, the user cost scales very rapidly with DIY — +1.15 hours for every B2C participant and +3 hours for every professional. For this method, we also had to factor in no-shows.

The cost of DIY B2C recruiting is therefore:

Cost of DIY recruiting (B2C)

(DIY user cost) x (number of participants + no shows)

For DIY B2B recruiting, we need add a time multiplier to the first half of that formula:

Cost of DIY recruiting (B2B)

(DIY user cost x 2.6) x (number of participants + no shows)

Actual cost of recruiting with other tools:

The formulas for our competitors' pricing get a little hairy because of differences in pricing structure. For example, one company charges for each additional screening criteria, while another bases their pricing structure on the incentive amount ([we assumed a B2C incentive of \\$80/hr and used the average B2B incentive of \\$100/hr](#) in that case).

We averaged the price per participant across competitors and used the UI user cost value to work out an *average* actual cost for n participants.

The ROI of User Interviews vs. different recruiting methods

Once we worked out the cost for n participants according to each variable (recruiting method, number of users, B2C or B2B), we could calculate the cost savings and ROI of switching to User Interviews.

First, we had to calculate out the cost savings:

Cost savings

(actual cost of recruiting n participants with UI alternative) -
(actual cost of recruiting n participants with UI)

And from there, the ROI can be worked out using a simple ROI formula:

ROI

(cost savings) ÷ (actual cost of recruiting n participants with UI)

Calculating the cost of doing user research with UXR tools

The formulas above helped us work out the cost of recruiting participants... but recruitment is just one step in the [user research process](#). [Conducting interviews](#), [usability tests](#), and other [types of UX research](#) requires additional tooling.

You probably already have some UXR staples in your tool stack; Figma, Miro, and Zoom/Google Meet/MS Teams, for example, are [fixtures in many organizations](#).

🔍 But let's say you're starting from square one. You've got no existing subscriptions. How much will it cost to assemble a tool stack that lets you conduct a variety of user research? And how does that compare to UserTesting?

To answer these questions, we needed to work out the cost of popular user research tools at different scales. That is, which subscription would you need to conduct an average of 5, 10, 20, 150 moderated studies per month?

Here's a (very abridged) glimpse of what those pricing charts looked like:

Participants												
	B2C 1 user	B2B 1 user	B2C 3 users	B2B 3 users	B2C 8 users	B2B 8 users	B2C 1 user	B2B 1 user	B2C 3 users	B2B 3 users	B2C 8 users	B2B 8 users
1	\$419	\$464	\$524	\$569	\$786	\$831	\$219	\$264	\$243	\$288	\$267	\$312
2	\$489	\$579	\$594	\$684	\$856	\$946	\$264	\$354	\$288	\$378	\$312	\$402
3	\$583	\$718	\$688	\$823	\$950	\$1,085	\$309	\$444	\$333	\$468	\$357	\$492
4	\$628	\$808	\$733	\$913	\$995	\$1,175	\$354	\$534	\$378	\$558	\$402	\$582
5	\$673	\$848	\$778	\$1,053	\$1,040	\$1,215	\$349	\$524	\$373	\$548	\$397	\$572
6	\$708	\$918	\$813	\$1,143	\$1,075	\$1,285	\$384	\$594	\$408	\$618	\$432	\$642
7	\$743	\$988	\$848	\$1,233	\$1,110	\$1,355	\$419	\$664	\$443	\$688	\$467	\$712
8	\$746	\$994	\$851	\$1,323	\$1,113	\$1,361	\$422	\$670	\$446	\$694	\$470	\$718
9	\$777	\$1,056	\$882	\$1,413	\$1,144	\$1,423	\$453	\$732	\$477	\$756	\$501	\$780
10	\$824	\$1,134	\$937	\$1,527	\$1,219	\$1,529	\$500	\$810	\$524	\$834	\$548	\$858
11	\$855	\$1,196	\$968	\$1,617	\$1,250	\$1,591	\$531	\$872	\$555	\$896	\$579	\$920
12	\$826	\$1,138	\$939	\$1,707	\$1,221	\$1,533	\$502	\$814	\$526	\$838	\$550	\$862

(We've been having dreams about rows, columns, and formulas for weeks.)

user interviews

Once we had those rates worked out, we were able to add up the costs of different tool stacks (User Interviews + Maze + Zoom, for one example. Or User Interviews + Lookback, for another).

Then, using the same cost savings and ROI formulas above, we compared different tool stacks against the actual monthly cost of UserTesting (\$4,167 + user cost).

Cost savings

$$\text{(monthly UserTesting price + user cost for } n \text{ participants)} - \text{(actual cost of doing research with } n \text{ participants with tool stack)}$$

ROI

$$\text{(cost savings)} \div \text{(actual cost of doing research with } n \text{ participants)}$$

We also calculated the actual cost of these tool stacks and UserTesting for different team sizes (1 user, 3 users, 8 users) using the following formula:

User cost if multiple users

$$\text{(user cost)} + ((\text{number of users} - 1) \times 0.25)$$

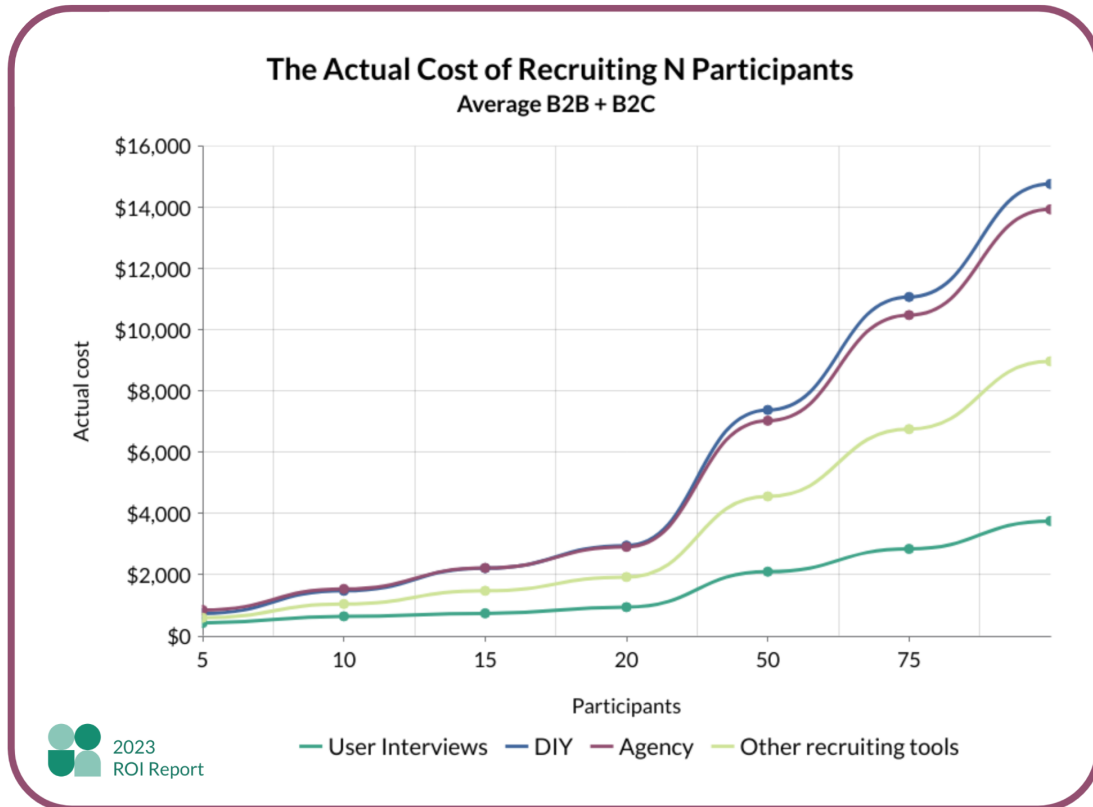
The ROI and cost savings of 4 participant recruitment solutions

Using the formulas above, we analyzed the actual cost of 4 different recruiting methods (User Interviews, DIY, agencies, and other recruiting tools), depending on how many participants a user is looking to recruit on a monthly basis.

Here's what we learned 📌

User Interviews is the most economical recruiting method at scale.

Take a look at the chart below. You'll see that the actual cost of recruiting 5 to 10 participants is somewhat similar, regardless of which method you choose—but the cost rises sharply for all but User Interviews as the size of the recruit increases.



If you're **recruiting with an agency**, it will cost you \$7,037 on average (B2B + B2C) to recruit 50 participants. For 100 participants, you're looking at \$13,944. For 200 participants, a soaring \$27,710 on average.

If you're **recruiting on your own**, the average (B2B + B2C) cost of recruiting 50 participants comes out to \$7,387. For 100 participants, you're up for \$14,774. And if you decided to recruit 200 participants on your own (😬), those user hours could add up to \$29,548.

The average (B2B + B2C) monthly cost of **recruiting with our leading competitors** is \$4,562 for 50 participants, \$8,977 for 100, and \$17,809 for 200 participants.

Meanwhile, with User Interviews, the monthly cost of recruiting 50 participants comes out to \$2,102 (B2C+B2B), including the user cost. For 100 participants, you're looking at \$3,757 on average; for 200, you can expect to pay \$7,069.

In short, as the size of your recruit increases, you'd be spending thousands of dollars less with User Interviews than you would with an alternative solution.

User Interviews Cost Savings and ROI vs. Other Recruiting Methods

(Averages B2B + B2C)

Participants (n)	User Interviews (actual cost)	DIY cost savings	Agency cost savings	Competitor cost savings
5	\$424	\$314 (74%)	\$425 (100%)	\$171 (40%)
10	\$643	\$834 (130%)	\$894 (139%)	\$402 (63%)
15	\$740	\$1,476 (199%)	\$1,484 (200%)	\$738 (100%)
20	\$944	\$2,011 (213%)	\$1,968 (208%)	\$984 (104%)
50	\$2,102	\$5,285 (252%)	\$4,935 (235%)	\$2,460 (117%)
75	\$2,846	\$8,234 (289%)	\$7,644 (269%)	\$3,915 (138%)
100	\$3,757	\$11,016 (293%)	\$10,187 (271%)	\$5,220 (139%)
200	\$7,069	\$22,479 (318%)	\$20,641 (292%)	\$10,740 (152%)
300	\$9,615	\$34,707 (361%)	\$31,878 (332%)	\$17,010 (177%)

Now let's look at how this breaks down for B2C and B2B recruiting. (Remember that the actual cost includes user cost/time).

Actual cost of B2B recruiting

Let's say you need to recruit 20 B2B participants in an average month. With a competitor solution, you're already looking at nearly \$1,000 in extra recruiting costs compared to the amount you would pay with User Interviews. With an agency, you can expect to pay an additional \$2,200 for the same recruit. And DIY-ing it could run you over \$3,000 in extra costs.

The Cost of B2B Recruiting

Comparing the actual cost of 4 methods

Participants (n)	User Interviews	DIY	Agencies	Other recruiting tools
5	\$512	\$1,046 (+\$556)	\$987 (+\$475)	\$661 (+\$150)
10	\$798	\$2,136 (+\$1,338)	\$1,812 (+\$1,014)	\$1,177 (+\$379)
20	\$1,194	\$4,272 (+\$3,078)	\$3,462 (+\$2,268)	\$2,192 (+\$998)
50	\$2,727	\$10,680 (+\$7,953)	\$8,412 (+\$5,685)	\$5,222 (+\$2,495)
100	\$4,907	\$21,360 (+\$16,452)	\$16,694 (+\$11,787)	\$10,297 (+\$5,390)
200	\$9,269	\$42,720 (+\$33,450)	\$33,210 (+\$23,941)	\$20,449 (+\$11,180)

Actual cost of B2C recruiting

The story is similar for B2C recruiting, although you'll notice that the DIY approach fares better here in terms of ROI. Not *great*—but better.

That’s because recruiting general consumers is much less time consuming than trying to target by occupation or professional expertise—especially at scale. Still, you can expect to pay roughly \$1,600 more for a 20-person B2C recruit than you would with User Interviews; for 100 participants, your additional cost may be over \$16,000.

The Cost of B2C Recruiting

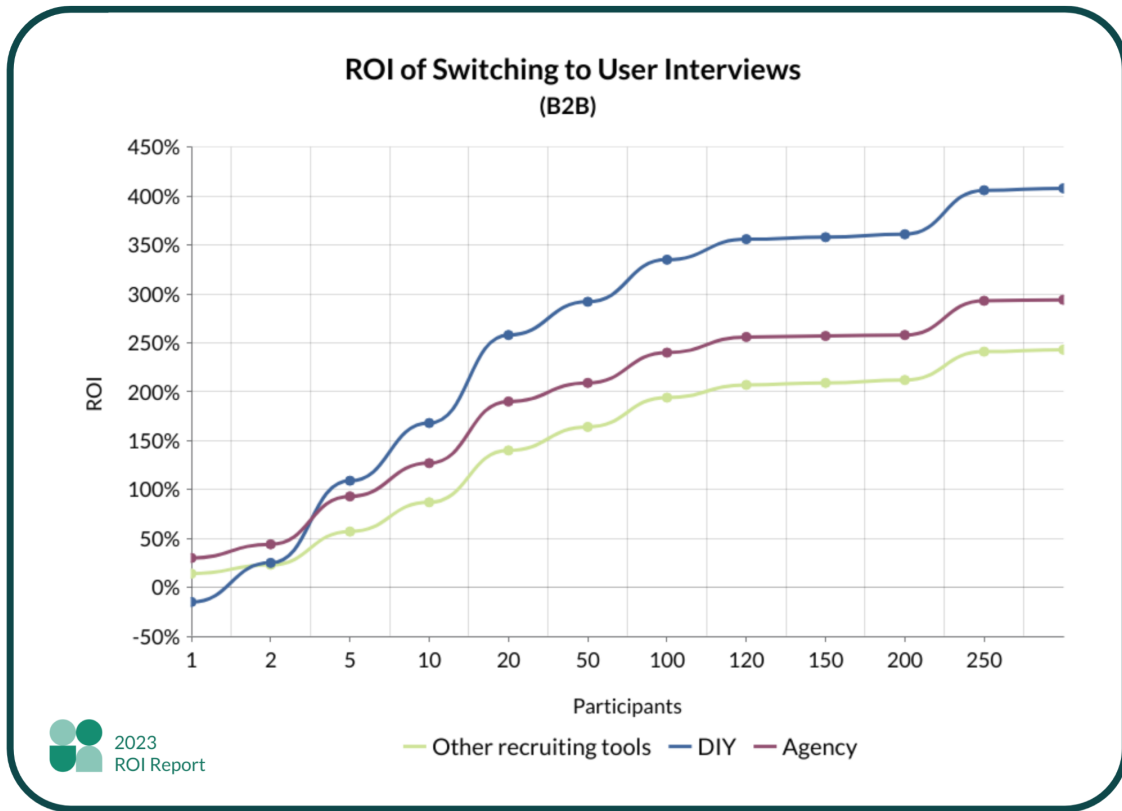
Comparing the actual cost of 4 methods

Participants (n)	User Interviews	DIY	Agencies	Other recruiting tools
5	\$337	\$409 (+\$73)	\$712 (+\$375)	\$529 (+\$193)
10	\$488	\$819 (+\$331)	\$1262 (+\$774)	\$913 (+\$425)
20	\$694	\$1,638 (+\$943)	\$2,363 (+\$1,668)	\$1,664 (+\$970)
50	\$2,075	\$4,094 (+\$2,617)	\$5,662 (+\$4,185)	\$3,902 (+\$2,425)
100	\$3,857	\$8,188 (+\$5,580)	\$11,194 (+\$8,587)	\$7,657 (+\$5,050)
200	\$4,869	\$16,376 (+\$11,507)	\$22,210 (+\$17,341)	\$15,169 (+\$10,300)

The ROI of User Interviews increases as recruit size scales.

As your recruiting needs scale, DIY, agency, and competitor methods all offer diminishing returns.

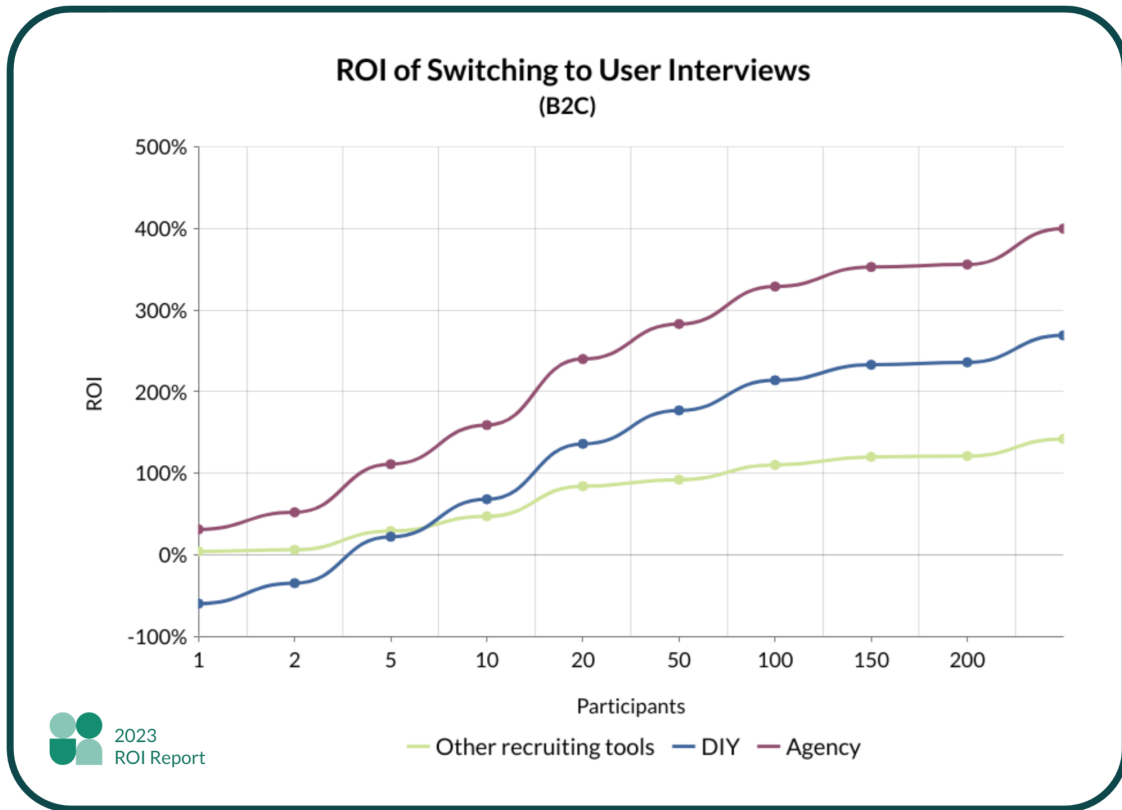
Let’s say you need to recruit 20 participants in a month. Making the **switch from DIY recruiting to User Interviews** results in an ROI of 258%. The comparative ROI increases to 292% for 50 participants, 335% for 100 participants, and so on. This isn’t too surprising since DIY recruiting is so expensive compared to most tools.



When **switching from agency recruiting to User Interviews**, the ROI for 20 B2B participants is 190%. For 50 B2B participants, you’re looking at an ROI of 209% compared to agency prices. For 100 participants, the ROI is 240%. As with DIY, the numbers just grow from there.

Compared to other recruiting solutions, User Interviews offers an ROI of 140% for 20 participants, 164% for 50 participants, and 194% for 100 participants per month.

The charts look similar for B2C recruiting 🙌



✨ The more research participants you need in a given month, the more money you'll save with User Interviews compared to DIY, agency, or alternative tooling methods. ✨

Now let's take a closer look at how User Interviews compares to each one of these methods.

Compared to other participant recruiting tools, User Interviews offers a high ROI—especially for B2B recruiting

Research teams looking to recruit between 10 and 20 participants in a month can save an average of **\$713 for B2C recruiting** and **\$719 for B2B recruiting with User Interviews** compared to the average rates of leading competitors.


 user interviews

For 50 to 100 participants, research teams save an average of **\$3,773 for B2C recruiting** and **\$4,013 for B2B recruiting with User Interviews** compared to other self-serve tools.

User Interviews vs. Other Research Recruiting Tools

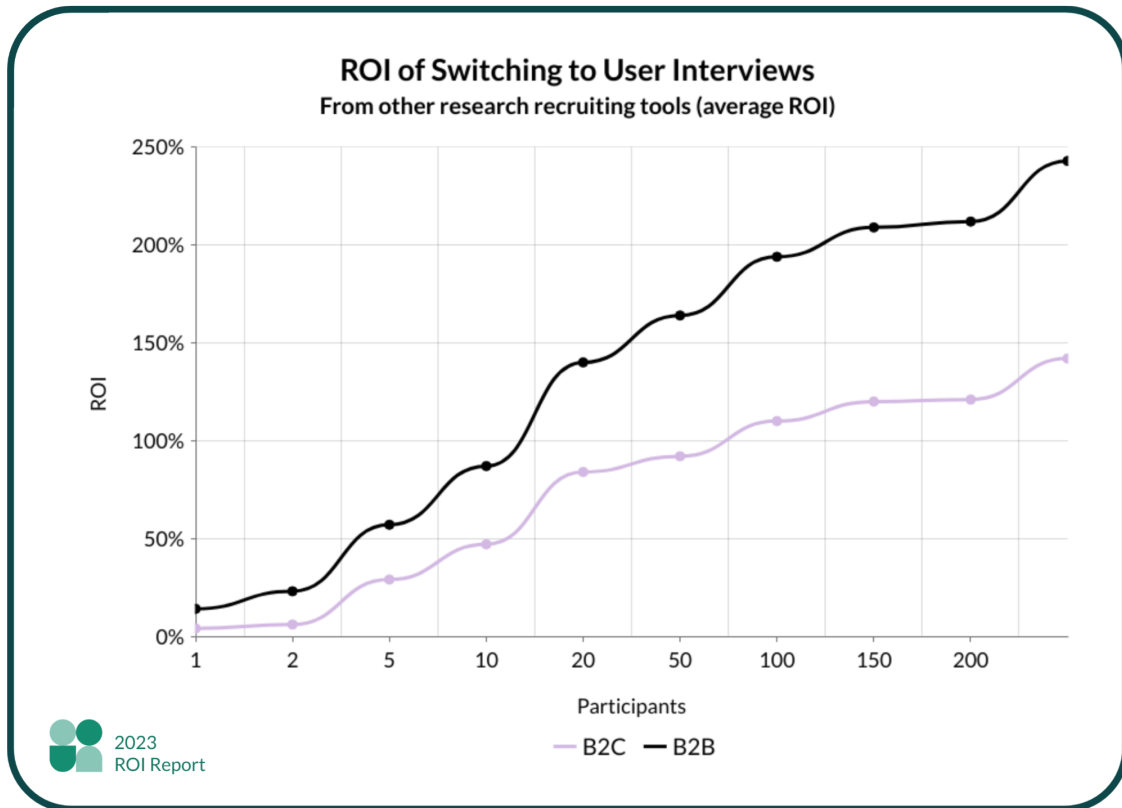
Comparing the actual cost and cost savings

Participants (n)	User Interviews (B2B)	Other recruiting tools (B2B)	User Interviews (B2C)	Other recruiting tools (B2C)
5	\$512	\$661 (+\$150)	\$337	\$529 (+\$193)
10	\$798	\$1,177 (+\$379)	\$488	\$913 (+\$425)
20	\$1,194	\$2,192 (+\$998)	\$694	\$1,664 (+\$970)
50	\$2,727	\$5,222 (+\$2,495)	\$2,075	\$3,902 (+\$2,425)
100	\$4,907	\$10,297 (+\$5,390)	\$3,857	\$7,657 (+\$5,050)
200	\$9,269	\$20,449 (+\$11,180)	\$4,869	\$15,169 (+\$10,300)

 user interviews

Teams that do a *lot* of research (like, 200 qualitative participants per month), are looking at potential cost savings of over \$11,000 for B2B and over \$10,000 for B2C.

And the threshold for positive ROI starts with a single participant (on our [PAYGO plan](#)). If you need 10 participants a month, User Interviews offers an ROI of 47% for B2C and 87% for B2B. ROI only grows as recruit size increases—for a monthly recruiting need of 300 participants, you’re looking at an ROI of between 142% (B2C) and 243% (B2B) when you use User Interviews instead of a competitor solution.



The average ROI (for 1–300 participants) of User Interviews vs. other recruiting tools is between 116% (B2C) and 201% (B2B).

 **See the cost savings for yourself.** [Sign up with a free account](#) to make the switch to User Interviews today.

DIY recruiting is labor intensive—and the most expensive option at scale

Unless you genuinely only need 4 or fewer B2C participants or just a single B2B participant, trying to handle recruiting on your own is just not the most economical or time efficient approach.

For 10 to 20 participants, research teams save **an average of \$659 for B2C recruiting** and **\$2,245 for B2B recruiting** with User Interviews compared to a DIY approach.

User Interviews vs. DIY Recruiting

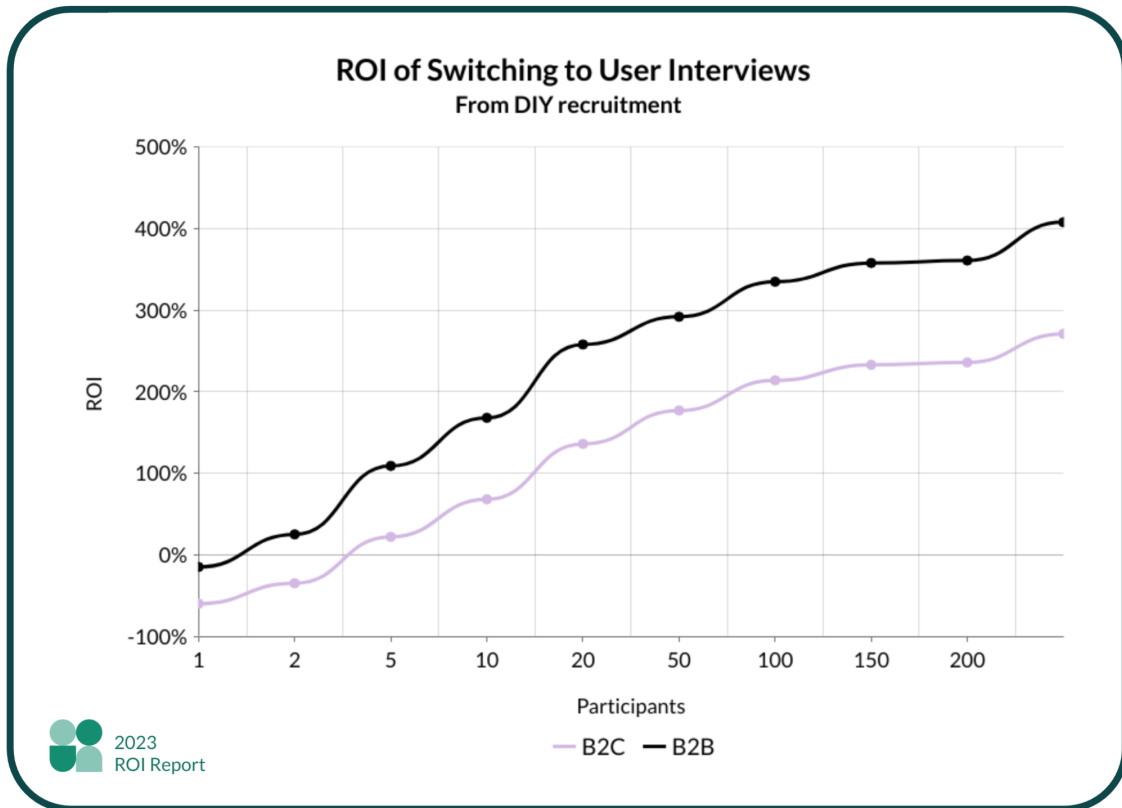
Comparing the actual cost and cost savings

Participants (n)	User Interviews (B2B)	DIY (B2B)	User Interviews (B2C)	DIY (B2C)
5	\$512	\$1,046 (+\$556)	\$337	\$409 (+\$73)
10	\$798	\$2,136 (+\$1,338)	\$488	\$819 (+\$331)
20	\$1,194	\$4,272 (+\$3,078)	\$694	\$1,638 (+\$943)
50	\$2,727	\$10,680 (+\$7,953)	\$2,075	\$4,094 (+\$2,617)
100	\$4,907	\$21,360 (+\$16,452)	\$3,857	\$8,188 (+\$5,580)
200	\$9,269	\$42,720 (+\$33,450)	\$4,869	\$16,376 (+\$11,507)

Teams that recruit between 50 and 100 participants per month can save an average of \$4,141 for B2C recruiting and \$12,281 for B2B recruiting with User Interviews, compared to recruiting on their own.


We genuinely don't know why or how you would recruit 200 participants a month on your own. But if you did, you'd be paying between \$16,376 (B2C) and \$42,720 (B2B) for every month you were recruiting. That's between \$11,507 to \$33,450 more than you'd pay with User Interviews.

With this method, the threshold for positive ROI starts at just 2 participants for B2B and 5 participants for B2C.



By the time you’ve recruited 10 participants in a month, you can expect an ROI of between 68% (B2C) to 168% (B2B). That number keeps growing as your recruit scales; for 300 participants you’re looking at a return on investment of 271% (B2C) to 408% (B2B).

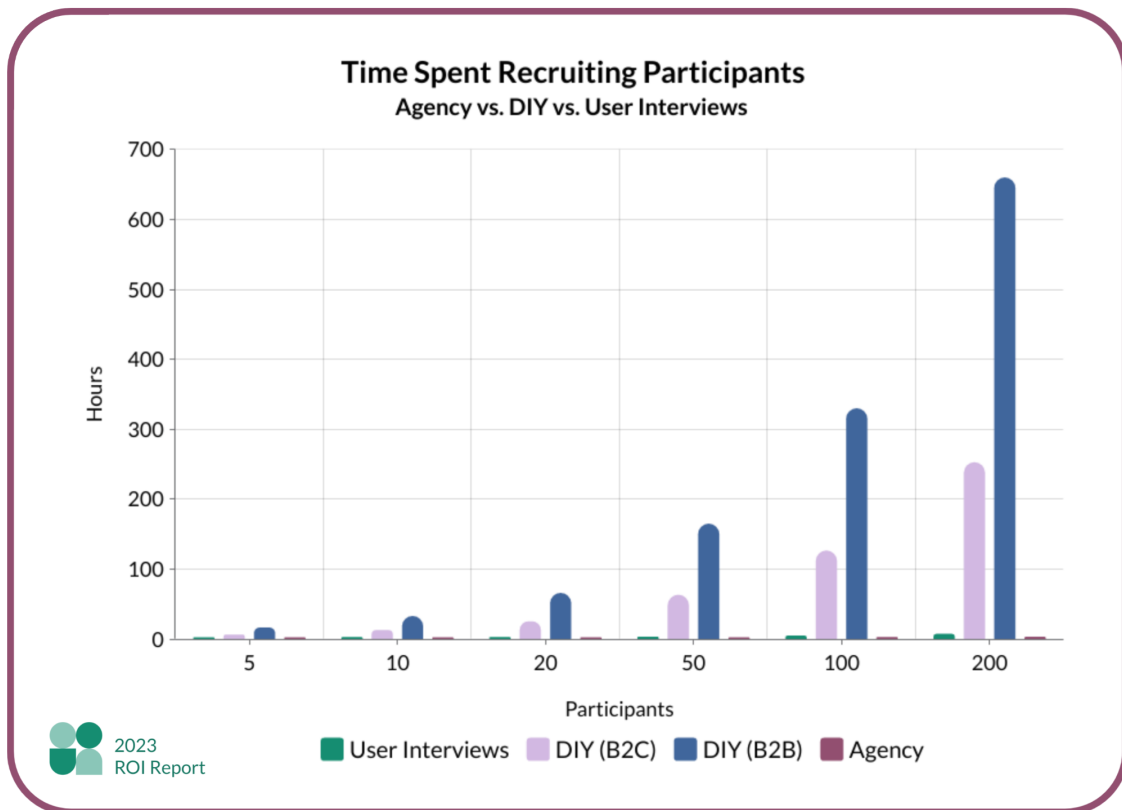
Out of the three alternatives, switching from **recruiting B2B participants on your own offers the highest average ROI of 345%**.

 The time cost of DIY recruiting


With DIY recruiting, there’s no tooling cost (well, you may want to invest in a Calendly subscription and an espresso machine, but that’s another story). The price of recruiting all boils down to the number of salaried hours it takes a user to recruit a given number of participants.

For 10 B2B participants, you can anticipate spending about 33 hours recruiting on your own.

Compare that to the 2.5 hours you'd spend with User Interviews or an agency and the downside of this method becomes obvious.



And if you plan to recruit 50 B2B participants in a month, you better not be planning to do *anything* else with your month—a 50-person B2B recruit will take you an estimated 165 hours on your own. With [User Interviews](#), on the other hand, it would still only take about 3.5 hours.

 **How much is your time worth?**

Imagine you're a product manager looking to recruit 20 B2B participants for some [continuous research](#).

Remember, the average no-show rate is 0.1, so you'll need to recruit 22 participants in total. If each B2B recruit takes up to 3 hours, that means the entire process could take 66 hours—over a week of full-time work.

According to [Glassdoor](#) salary data, the average hourly pay for a mid-career PM is \$73.20. That means that those 66 user hours will cost you (well, your company) \$4,831.

On the same salary, the actual cost of recruiting 20 B2B participants with User Interviews is just \$870—or a cost savings of \$3,961 and as much as 63 hours.

Compared to agencies, User Interviews offers a high ROI from the very first participant—especially for B2C

Recruiting with an agency can be more economical than DIY recruiting at scale, but it's still much more expensive than User Interviews or similar self-serve options.

User Interviews vs. Research Recruitment Agencies

Comparing the actual cost and cost savings

Participants (n)	User Interviews (B2B)	Agency (B2B)	User Interviews (B2C)	Agency (B2C)
5	\$512	\$987 (+\$475)	\$337	\$712 (+\$375)
10	\$798	\$1,812 (+\$1,014)	\$488	\$1,262 (+\$774)
20	\$1,194	\$3,462 (+\$2,268)	\$694	\$2,363 (+\$1,668)
50	\$2,727	\$8,412 (+\$5,685)	\$2,075	\$5,662 (+\$4,185)
100	\$4,907	\$16,694 (+\$11,787)	\$3,857	\$11,194 (+\$8,587)
200	\$9,269	\$33,210 (+\$23,941)	\$4,869	\$22,210 (+\$17,341)

user interviews

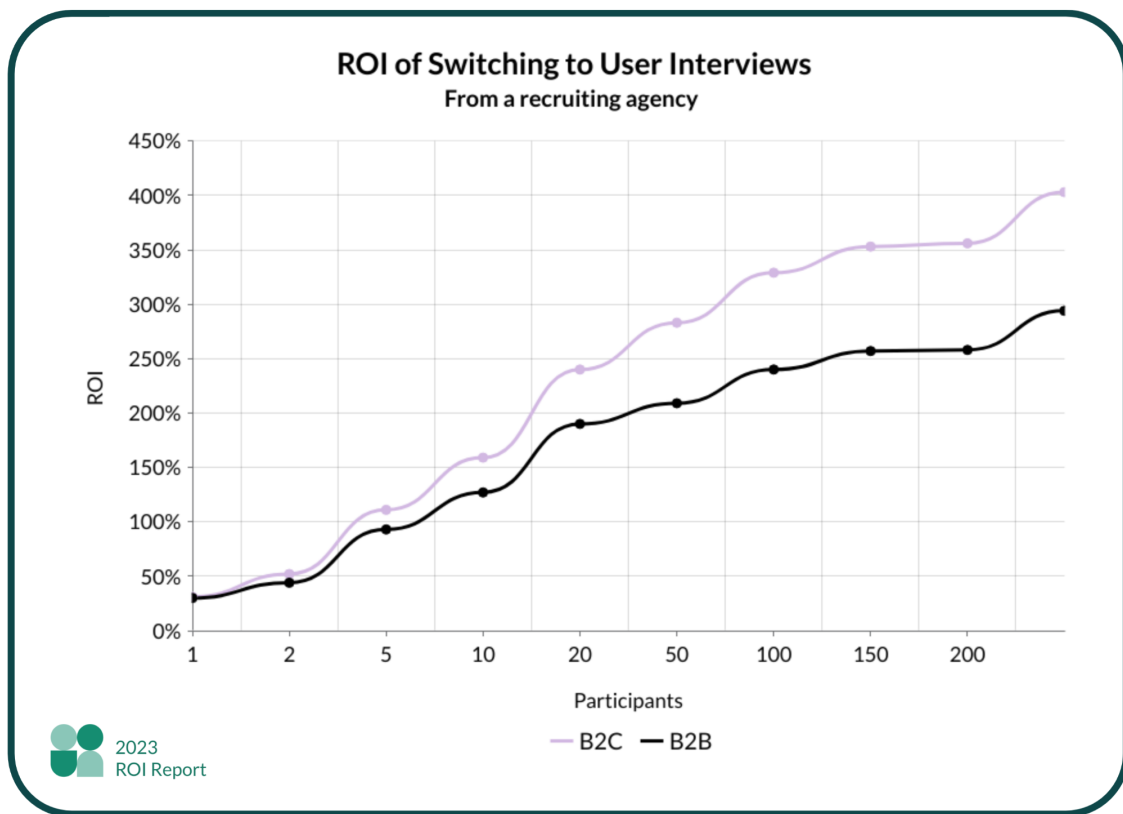
Teams that recruit 10 to 20 participants on a monthly basis will **save an average of \$1,242 for B2C recruiting and \$1,677 for B2B recruiting with User Interviews**, compared to recruiting agencies. For larger recruits of 50 to 100 participants, research teams stand to **save an average of \$6,428 for B2C and \$8,814 for B2B**.

Making the **switch from agency recruiting** starts to yield a positive ROI from the very first recruit (roughly 30%).

Teams that need to recruit an average of 10 participants per month are looking at an ROI of between 127% (B2B) and 159% (B2C); for 20 participants, the ROI of recruiting with User Interviews over agencies is between 190% (B2B) and 240% (B2C).

As with other methods, the returns scale with the volume of participants required. For 100 participants, **the ROI is between 240% (B2B) and 329% (B2C)**. And by the time your recruiting needs scale to 300 participants a month, User Interviews delivers an ROI between 294% (B2B) and 403% (B2C).

That's an **average ROI of 249% for B2B recruiting and 339% for B2C recruiting**.



Integrated UXR stacks vs. an all-in-one platform

A solid recruiting solution is just one part of the user research toolkit.

The most basic UXR stack requires a video conferencing platform (for interviews), a whiteboard/prototyping tool (for [prototype testing](#), scrappy card sorting, [moderated studies](#)), and a word document/spreadsheets (for [notetaking](#) and [analysis](#)). And a participant recruitment tool, of course.

But the more research you do, the more sophisticated your tools need to be. In addition to the tools mentioned above, a complete UXR toolkit will typically include a platform for running moderated, qualitative studies (like [card sorting](#), prototype testing, and [moderated usability tests](#)) and one for unmoderated usability testing and surveys.

Now, you might think that buying a single tool for all your research needs would be cheaper than multiple subscriptions—but in most cases, you'd be wrong.

As we found when we added up the costs for different tool stacks and compared them to the all-in-one elephant in the room (UserTesting), a modular toolkit of best-in-class recruiting and testing tools is not only a more flexible option, but can often be the more economical one as well.

⚠️ **A notes on UserTesting’s pricing:**

As we mentioned above, UserTesting’s pricing is incredibly opaque. Our calculations are based on an annual subscription of \$50,000—which, we’ve learned through discovery calls with actual buyers, is a typical starting price for UserTesting plans.

Given our limited knowledge of how their plans scale, we decided to use the same monthly price regardless of participants needed.

Additionally, because UserTesting’s panel is predominantly consumer-based, we weren’t able to accurately compare the cost of B2B research so the analysis below is based on B2C costs. (Basically, if B2B insights are your goal, UserTesting probably isn’t your tool.)

Because of this, you’ll notice that the ROI of any given stack compared to UserTesting diminishes as the size of the recruit increases. *This most likely does NOT reflect the actual ROI, since **we believe that UserTesting costs do indeed increase at scale** in a way that, to [quote one Reddit user](#), is “hella complicated.”*

Anyway, here’s how different UXR stacks stack up.

Lightweight UXR stacks vs. UserTesting

According to the [2022 State of User Research Report](#), the majority of UX research teams utilize multipurpose, collaborative tools like Miro, Figma, and Zoom. And you can do solid qualitative research using just these tools.

For example, **UI + Miro + Figma** or **User Interviews + Figma + Zoom** offers:

- Remote moderated research
- Streamlined recruitment
- Prototyping and design collaboration
- A way to organize, analyze, and share research insights
- Collaboration and brainstorm across whiteboards

Lightweight UXR Stacks vs. UserTesting

Cost savings and ROI (%)

Participants (n)	UserTesting estimated cost	User Interviews + Miro + Zoom	User Interviews + Figma + Zoom
5	\$4,329	\$3,976 (1,127%)	\$3,980 (1,141%)
10	\$4,329	\$3,825 (759%)	\$3,829 (766%)
20	\$4,329	\$3,619 (510%)	\$3,623 (513%)
50	\$4,329	\$2,836 (190%)	\$2,840 (191%)
100	\$4,361	\$1,738 (66%)	\$1,742 (66%)
200	\$4,377	-\$508 (-10%)	-\$504 (-10%)

UserTesting cost based on an annual contract of \$50k and includes the cost of time spent on recruitment.

The costs above are based on a single user of a free Zoom Basic plan, paired with a Miro Business plan (\$16/ user/ month) and a Figma Professional plan (\$12/ user/ month). Both tools offer a free version, but the limitations make them impractical for serious UX research.

The two stacks are more or less the same, pricing wise. Combined with User Interviews, either pairing would save you nearly \$4,000 when researching with 5 participants, compared to UserTesting. For a 20-participant recruit, you're looking at a cost savings of over \$3,600.

Let's say that a UserTesting subscription of \$4,167 per month remains static, regardless of recruit size. For both of these stacks, you're looking at a positive ROI compared to UserTesting, up until a threshold of 180 participants per month.

Popular UXR stacks vs. UserTesting

Perhaps you've already got a Zoom subscription and a tool like Figma or Miro at your disposal—those costs aren't a factor here and you're just looking to suss out your options for a paired recruiting + testing solution.

Here's what your cost savings could look like:

User Interviews AND vs. UserTesting ONLY

Cost savings and ROI (%)

(n)	UserTesting est. cost	UI + Maze	UI + UsabilityHub	UI + Lookback	UI + Sprig	UI + Optimal Workshop
5	\$4,329	\$3,992 (1,185%)	\$3,917 (951%)	\$3,843 (791%)	\$3,817 (746%)	\$3,784 (695%)
10	\$4,329	\$3,841 (787%)	\$3,766 (669%)	\$3,692 (580%)	\$3,666 (553%)	\$3,633 (522%)
20	\$4,329	\$3,635 (524%)	\$3,560 (463%)	\$3,411 (371%)	\$3,411 (371%)	\$3,427 (380%)
50	\$4,329	\$2,777 (179%)	\$2,508 (138%)	\$2,508 (138%)	\$2,677 (162%)	\$2,644 (157%)
100	\$4,361	\$1,679 (63%)	\$1,679 (63%)	\$854 (24%)	\$1,579 (57%)	\$1,546 (55%)
200	\$4,377	-\$643 (-13%)	-\$567 (-11%)	-\$1,288 (-24%)	-\$667 (-13%)	-\$700 (-14%)

UserTesting cost based on an annual contract of \$50k and includes the cost of time spent on recruitment.

You'll notice that the ROI of each stack diminishes as the number of participants increases, dipping below 0% by around 200 participants per month. Generally, UserTesting caters to research teams looking for [high-volume, consumer-focused testing](#)—so if you need to conduct hundreds of user tests every month, you may find it to be a more cost-efficient option.

(Although again, our calculations don't reflect the very likely scenario that UserTesting pricing *does* scale with recruiting/testing needs).

User Interviews + Maze vs. UserTesting

By pairing User Interviews with [Maze](#), you get:

- Fast recruitment
- Interviews
- Usability testing
- Prototype testing

User Interviews + Maze vs. UserTesting

Cost savings and ROI (%)

Participants (n)	UserTesting (est. cost)	User Interviews + Maze	Cost savings + ROI
5	\$4,329	\$337	\$3,992 (1,185%)
10	\$4,329	\$488	\$3,841 (787%)
20	\$4,329	\$694	\$3,635 (524%)
50	\$4,329	\$1,552	\$2,777 (179%)
100	\$4,361	\$2,682	\$1,679 (63%)
200	\$4,377	\$5,019	-\$643 (-13%)

UserTesting cost based on an annual contract of \$50k and includes the cost of time spent on recruitment.

Compared to UserTesting and based on the rates above, you could save \$3,841 on a 10-participant study recruited through User Interviews. For 20 participants, you would save \$3,635. For 50 participants, you'd be looking at cost savings of \$2,777.

If UserTesting subscriptions remain static at \$4,167 per month, regardless of recruit size, this tool pairing continues to deliver positive ROI until you reach a threshold of 177 participants per month.

Note: Maze pricing calculations are based on the most affordable subscription for your needs. If you're recruiting 30 or fewer participants per month, you'll probably do just fine on their free plan. Otherwise, we applied a flat rate of \$75/month for their Professional tier for up to 180 participants per month, or an estimated \$150/month for a custom, high-volume plan.

User Interviews + Optimal Workshop vs. UserTesting

With User interviews + [Optimal Workshop](#), you can do:

- Fast recruitment
- Powerful qualitative research
- Card sorting and tree testing
- First-click testing

User Interviews + Optimal Workshop vs. UserTesting

Cost savings and ROI (%)

Participants (n)	UserTesting (est. cost)	User Interviews + Optimal Workshop	Cost savings + ROI
5	\$4,329	\$545	\$3,784 (695%)
10	\$4,329	\$696	\$3,633 (522%)
20	\$4,329	\$902	\$3,427 (380%)
50	\$4,329	\$1,685	\$2,644 (157%)
100	\$4,361	\$2,815	\$1,546 (55%)
200	\$4,377	\$5,077	-\$700 (-14%)

UserTesting cost based on an annual contract of \$50k and includes the cost of time spent on recruitment.

If you're recruiting 10 participants each month, you can save \$3,633 compared to UserTesting alone. For 20 participants, the cost savings are \$3,427; for 50, \$2,644.

If UserTesting subscriptions remain static at \$4,167 per month, regardless of recruit size, this tool pairing continues to deliver positive ROI until you reach a threshold of 172 participants per month.

Note: Optimal Workshop pricing is based on a flat rate of \$208/month for a single user (for 3–5 users, \$191/user/month; for 6–9 users, \$174/user/month).

User Interviews + Lookback vs. UserTesting

With User Interviews with [Lookback](#), you get:

- Fast recruitment
- Interviews
- Usability testing

Plus, [we integrate!](#)

User Interviews + Lookback vs. UserTesting

Cost savings and ROI (%)

Participants (n)	UserTesting (est. cost)	User Interviews + Lookback	Cost savings + ROI
5	\$4,329	\$486	\$3,843 (791%)
10	\$4,329	\$637	\$3,692 (580%)
20	\$4,329	\$918	\$3,411 (371%)
50	\$4,329	\$1,821	\$2,508 (138%)
100	\$4,361	\$3,507	\$854 (24%)
200	\$4,377	\$5,665	-\$1,288 (-23%)

UserTesting cost based on an annual contract of \$50k and includes the cost of time spent on recruitment.

user interviews

This stack will save you as much as \$3,843 to recruit and conduct research with 5 participants on a monthly basis.

If UserTesting subscriptions remain static at \$4,167 per month, regardless of recruit size, this tool pairing continues to deliver positive ROI until you reach a threshold of 142 participants per month.

Note: *Lookback pricing is based on the number of sessions you conduct per year. Their plans start at \$25/month for 10 annual sessions—for an average of 5 per month, you're better off with their \$149/month plan (100 annual sessions). For recruiting and research needs that exceed the limits of their published pricing tiers, we estimated a \$900/month cost for unlimited sessions.*

User Interviews + UsabilityHub vs. UserTesting

With User interviews + [UsabilityHub](#), you get:

- Powerful recruitment
- Preference testing
- Prototype testing
- Card sorting
- Surveys
- & more

UsabilityHub bills itself as the “Swiss Army knife” of UXR tools—it’s a much more affordable “all-in-one” testing platform that lets you bring your own customers.

With an average monthly recruiting and research need of 5 participants, this tool pairing will save you nearly \$4,000 a month. In the event that you’re looking to conduct user testing with 100 participants (recruited through User Interviews) on a monthly basis, you’re still looking at a cost savings of over \$1,600 compared to UserTesting alone.

User Interviews + UsabilityHub vs. UserTesting

Cost savings and ROI (%)

Participants (n)	UserTesting (est. cost)	User Interviews + UsabilityHub	Cost savings + ROI
5	\$4,329	\$412	\$3,917 (951%)
10	\$4,329	\$563	\$3,766 (669%)
20	\$4,329	\$769	\$3,560 (463%)
50	\$4,329	\$1,552	\$2,508 (138%)
100	\$4,361	\$2,682	\$1,679 (63%)
200	\$4,377	\$4,944	-\$567 (-11%)

UserTesting cost based on an annual contract of \$50k and includes the cost of time spent on recruitment.

Based on a static \$50k subscription price for UserTesting, the ROI of UsabilityHub + User Interviews doesn't drop off until your needs exceed 178 qualitative participants per month.

Note: UsabilityHub offers a free plan, but you're limited to 2-minute tests with a maximum of 15 testers. We based our pricing calculations on their \$75/month Basic plan, which comes with a 5-minute duration limit but no participant limitations. For \$175/month, you can remove this time limit altogether.

User Interviews + Sprig vs. UserTesting

With User interviews + [Sprig](#) (another [integration](#) partner), you get:

- Powerful recruitment
- Surveys
- Concept & usability testing
- In-product feedback throughout the product development lifecycle
- & more

User Interviews + Sprig vs. UserTesting

Cost savings and ROI (%)

Participants (n)	UserTesting (est. cost)	User Interviews + Sprig	Cost savings + ROI
5	\$4,329	\$512	\$3,817 (746%)
10	\$4,329	\$663	\$3,666 (553%)
20	\$4,329	\$869	\$3,411 (371%)
50	\$4,329	\$1,652	\$2,677 (162%)
100	\$4,361	\$2,782	\$1,579 (57%)
200	\$4,377	\$5,044	-\$667 (-13%)

UserTesting cost based on an annual contract of \$50k and includes the cost of time spent on recruitment.

Even if we assume that UserTesting subscriptions remain static at \$4,167 per month, regardless of recruit size, this tool pairing continues to deliver positive ROI until you reach a threshold of 173 participants per month.

Note: Sprig pricing is based on their \$175 Starter plan. Combined with User Interviews, researching with Sprig will save you over \$3,800 for 5 participants (an ROI of 746%).

A complete qualitative UXR stack vs. UserTesting

Finally, how does UserTesting compare against a modular 5-tool stack of, say, User Interviews + Figma + Zoom + Sprig + Lookback?

Integrated UXR Tech Stack vs. All-In-One Platform

Cost savings and ROI of (UI + Figma + Zoom + Sprig + Lookback) vs. (UserTesting only)

Participants (n)	UserTesting (est. cost)	User Interviews + Figma + Zoom + Sprig + Lookback	Cost savings + ROI
5	\$4,329	\$673	\$3,656 (543%)
10	\$4,329	\$824	\$3,505 (425%)
20	\$4,329	\$1,105	\$3,224 (292%)
50	\$4,329	\$2,008	\$2,321 (116%)
100	\$4,361	\$3,694	\$667 (18%)
200	\$4,377	\$5,956	-\$1,579 (-27%)

UserTesting cost based on an annual contract of \$50k and includes the cost of time spent on recruitment.

With User interviews + Figma + Zoom + [Sprig](#) + [Lookback](#), you get:

- Powerful recruitment
- Concept testing
- Usability testing
- Design collaboration and prototyping
- In-product testing throughout the product life cycle
- Interviews
- Remote moderated research
- ... pretty much everything you need in a research toolkit.

In most cases, UserTesting costs more than all 5 tools *combined*. The cost savings of a layered solution start at over \$3,600 for 5 qualitative sessions per month. And the positive ROI of this tool stack doesn't drop off until your monthly recruiting and research needs exceed 134 participants (and even then, that's assuming that UserTesting won't charge you more for high-volume research).

Even when you factor in the cost of multiple users, a layered stack is more economical for most teams

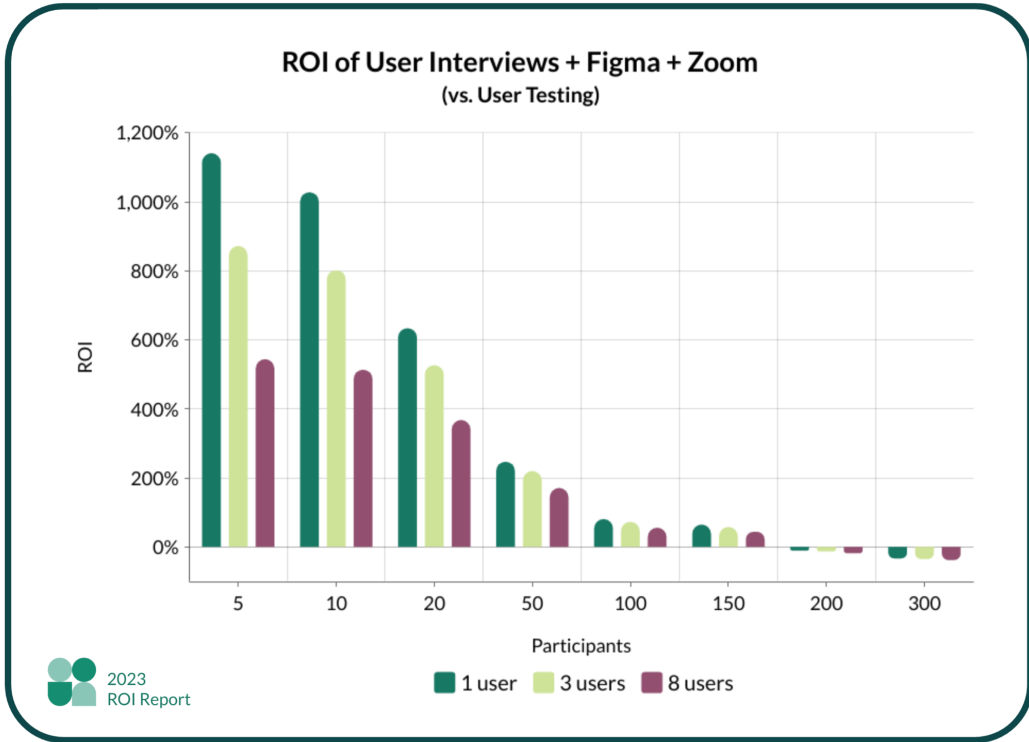
It's no great secret that many teams save money on SaaS subscriptions by sharing seats. But a single login can only support so many users. What do the cost savings of layered solutions look like with 3 users? 8 users?

Well, it looks like the ROI of layered stacks diminishes more quickly with every additional user added to your plan. And while this may be true, we encourage you to take that negative ROI toward the right of each graph with a grain of salt.

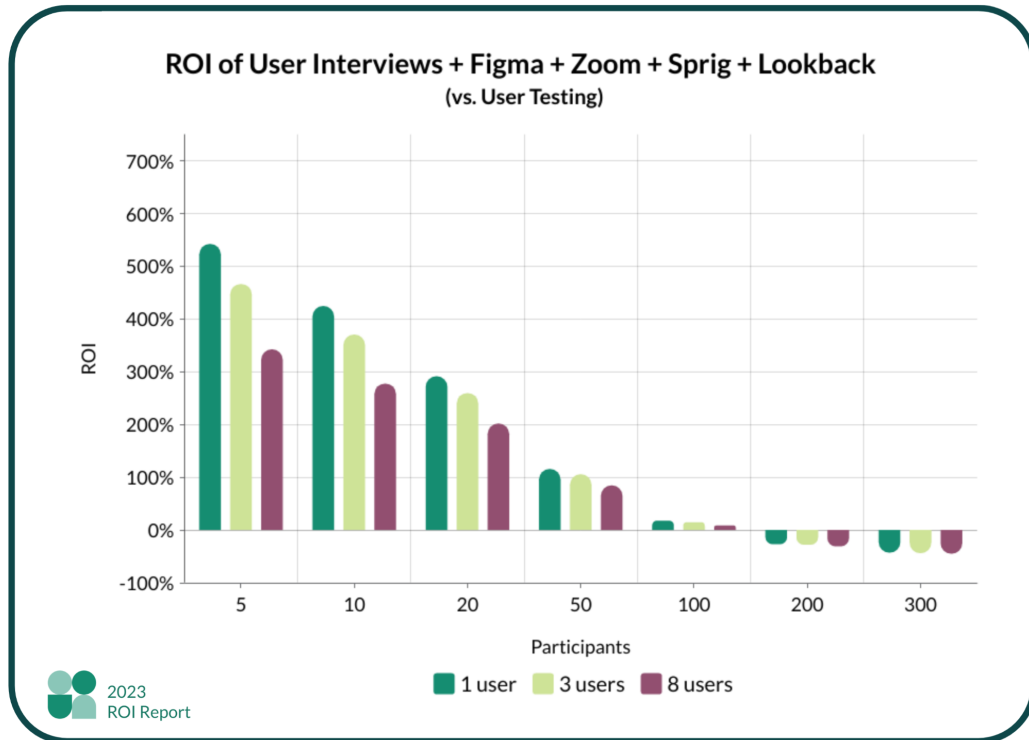
That's because—thanks to UserTesting's oh-so-mysterious pricing structure—we just don't know how costs scales with recruit or team size. In the absence of that information, we've used the same, static monthly price for the UserTesting side of things, regardless of how many people are involved. (We know we've repeated this caveat *ad nauseam*, but it really is an important factor here!)

The impact of multiple users on tool pricing

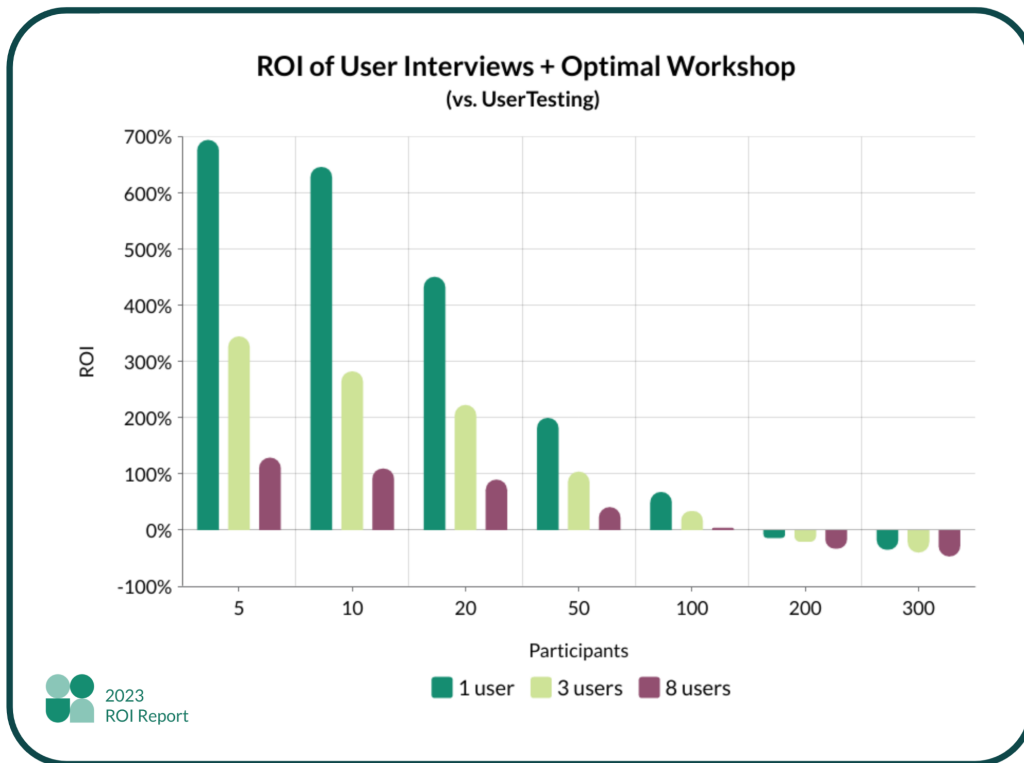
With a single user, recruiting 10 participants with User Interviews + Figma + Zoom offers an ROI of 766% compared to UserTesting. On teams of 3, this stack offers a 619% ROI. For 8 users, that ROI drops to a still-impressive 415%.



Recruiting and conducting research with 20 participants per month using a fully-loaded research stack (UI + Figma + Zoom + Sprig + Lookback) offers an ROI of 292% for a single user, 260% ROI for 3 users, and 202% ROI for an 8-person team.



Say you need to recruit 50 participants each month for a range of usability tests and moderated studies. Compared to UserTesting, User Interviews + Optimal Workshop offers an ROI of 154% for a single user, 103% for 3 users, and 42% ROI for a team of 8.



What the quantitative data doesn't show

So far, we've been talking about cost and ROI in quantitative terms. But that's not the full story. Maximizing the ROI of UX research tools isn't *just* about money.

In this next section, we're going to look at some of the additional factors that can influence your decision to invest in a new tool for user research. We'll discuss the 'hidden costs' (and potential ROI) associated with:

- Flexibility and scalability of tools
- The cost of being "locked-in" to one tool
- Participant quality

The importance of having flexible, scalable software

User research is a fast-evolving field, and as a cross-analysis of our [annual State of User Research report data](#) shows, teams are scaling quickly. The tools you invest in should be able to bend, not break, as your research needs change.

Here are some of the ways we believe integrated, modular tool stacks win against all-in-one platforms:

- You're not overpaying for features you don't use or need
- Flexible pricing means your tooling costs scale with your needs
- The switching costs are far lower—you're not locked into a single platform or CS team

Let's dig into these arguments 📌

🛑 You shouldn't pay for features you don't need

All-in-one tools claim to have everything you need to conduct user research. But bundling features and solutions into a single package often means you're getting a **rigid and costly** solution, when something simpler and more flexible would have served you just as well.

With an all-in-one solution, you're often stuck with a pre-packaged set of features you might not ever use or need. Or even more frustratingly, an "all-in-one" may be missing a key feature that you *do* need to [scale your research](#). You don't have a say in

which features you want to pay for when it comes to all-in-ones—and that can cost you.

Modular tool stacks (like the ones we cover above) offer [a smarter and more flexible approach than to use all-in-one platform tools](#) because they give you more control over how you invest your resources.

Flexible pricing structure

As we've mentioned multiple times in this report, it's hard to get a good read on a "typical" subscription price for UserTesting. But according to an [online review of UserTesting](#),

"Their plans come with limits on the number of participants per study, if you want more participants per study you have to pay more. Instead they give you this annoying workaround where you can do an unlimited number of studies, which means you have to send them out in batches and then combine the data later, which can get tedious."

On top of that, you're paying for both the testing tool and their panel of testers—meaning you're locked into a fixed annual rate for all the features that come with the platform, regardless of whether you use them or not.

At User Interviews, we want to make it easy for both small and large teams to recruit the high-quality participants they need. Need 5 participants for a one-off study? You can pay as you go. Planning to do research with 300 participants a month? We've got a subscription plan for that.

Our pricing tiers scale with your needs, and become even more economical as you grow.

👉 Explore our [pricing plans for Recruit](#) or [sign up now](#) and try it out for yourself .

Being "locked in" = high switching costs

Let's talk about switching costs. Not just the monetary cost of switching from one tool to another, but also the time, stress, and frustration of being "locked in" to an all-in-one tool.

There are many [types of lock-in](#), but this definition from [Wikipedia](#) summarizes them all nicely: Put simply, lock-in is something that “makes a customer dependent on a vendor for products and services.”

When you invest in an all-in-one tool like UserTesting, you become increasingly reliant on this one tool. You’re locking yourself into a web of long, fixed financial contracts, a platform system that’s not easily replaced, and loads of business data embedded into a single system.

Trying to migrate from such a platform becomes messy—like a divorce where all a couple’s assets are tied together and nobody can remember whose grandmother gave them that beautiful coffee table.

Just ask [this one Reddit user](#):

“UT is painfully hard to use with external panels, overpriced, has critical issues with unmoderated prototype testing on mobile, and has nowhere near the feature set of its competitors... [but] I’m forced to use this platform over far superior tools and it turns usability testing (a process I really used to love) into a bit of a nightmare.”

With an integrated tool stack that supports API-ready technology, open source software, and multiple data sources, you’re less beholden to a single solution. It’s easier to walk away when the situation becomes untenable.

👉 Visit our [integrations page](#) for the full list of tools we integrate with. And if you don’t see an integration that meets your UX research needs, you can also [build a custom integration with our API](#).

High-quality participants = high quality insights

“You do research because you want to have impact. [...] If you don’t have high-quality participants, that’s kind of a non-starter [...] If you’re not talking to the right people, it’s really hard to make the right decisions.”

— [JH Forster](#), SVP of Product at User Interviews

user interviews

All-in-one solutions offer access to a large number of (typically) consumer participants, often at an attractive per-participant price.

The idea of having your tester panel and testing tool all in one place is certainly appealing. And there's no denying that the low price per tester offered by UX testing platforms is extremely tempting.

But unless your research practice consists entirely of high-volume, unmoderated testing, at some point you're still going to need to recruit high-quality participants for targeted, qualitative studies. And that's where generalist tools simply fall short—targeted recruiting just isn't their forte.

Take it from this user in [r/UXdesign](#):

"This is a common problem with usertesting.com panelists. They aren't regular users because they have essentially become professional website feedback providers over their time doing tests."

Or this review of another popular "all-in-one" that also struggles to maintain the [quality of their participant panel](#):

"If your company can avoid them, look for an alternative now. PS - Their participant panel has a really high incidence rate of cheaters too"

So what are the alternatives? You could try:

- **Cheap genpop panels** that typically limit you to doing simple evaluative tests, like surveys, A/B testing, preference testing, and more. Plus, [bad research comes with heavy costs](#).
- **Recruitment agencies**, which offer better quality participants—but are notoriously *expensive, slow, and cumbersome to work with*.
- **Recruiting participants on your own**, which is not only time consuming and expensive (see above), but can provide very mixed results in terms of participant quality.

... or you could [sign up for User Interviews](#) and start talking to the participants you actually need. Not only does User Interviews boast [a pool of 2.4 million vetted participants](#), we also offer **unmatched participant quality with flexible pricing and unbelievably fast, targeted recruiting (we're talking hours, not weeks)**. Best of all, it's [free to get started](#).

The ROI of doing research, period

If you made it this far in the report, give yourself a pat on the back. 🙌

You're now equipped to make a very solid argument in favor of the best-in-class recruiting and testing tools your team deserves.

Of course, the best way to make a business case for investing in certain tools is to substantiate the business value of user research in the first place. Namely:


- [Streamlined product development workflows](#)
- [Better conversion rates](#)
- [More revenue](#)

📖 Find more statistics on the value of user research in: [32 User Experience Research Statistics to Win Over Stakeholders](#).

Here's a summary of each recruiting method to refresh your memory 🙌


A comparison of research recruiting methods

Features	Time efficient	DIY Labor intensive	Agency Low effort	Recruiting tools Time efficient	Built-in panel Low effort
User cost					
Participant quality	High	Variable	Variable	Variable	Low
Integrates with testing tools	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
\$ of 20 B2B participants/mo	\$1,200	\$4,300	\$3,500	\$2,200	\$4,300
\$ of 50 B2C participants/mo	\$1,500	\$4,100	\$5,700	\$3,900	\$4,300
Best for B2B recruiting	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Best for B2C recruiting	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Good for small teams	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Good for enterprise teams	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓

 user interviews

And a quick review of all-in-ones vs. integrated tech stacks 📌

Layered stack	"All-in-ones"
✓ Flexible pricing structure	✗ Expensive, opaque pricing
✓ Specialized tools	✓ Comprehensive suite of features
✓ Participant quality is unmatched	✗ Participant quality is low
✓ Can be customized to support specific use cases	✗ You may be paying for features you don't need or use
✓ Minimizes dependency on a single platform	✗ Creates reliance on a single tool for all your research needs
✓ Easier to switch out tools	✗ You're locked into one solution
✓ Integrations and API support	✗ Incompatible with other tools
✓ Economical option for qualitative studies that require niche, hard-to-recruit B2B participants	✓ Can be good for high-volume consumer testing that doesn't require high testers quality

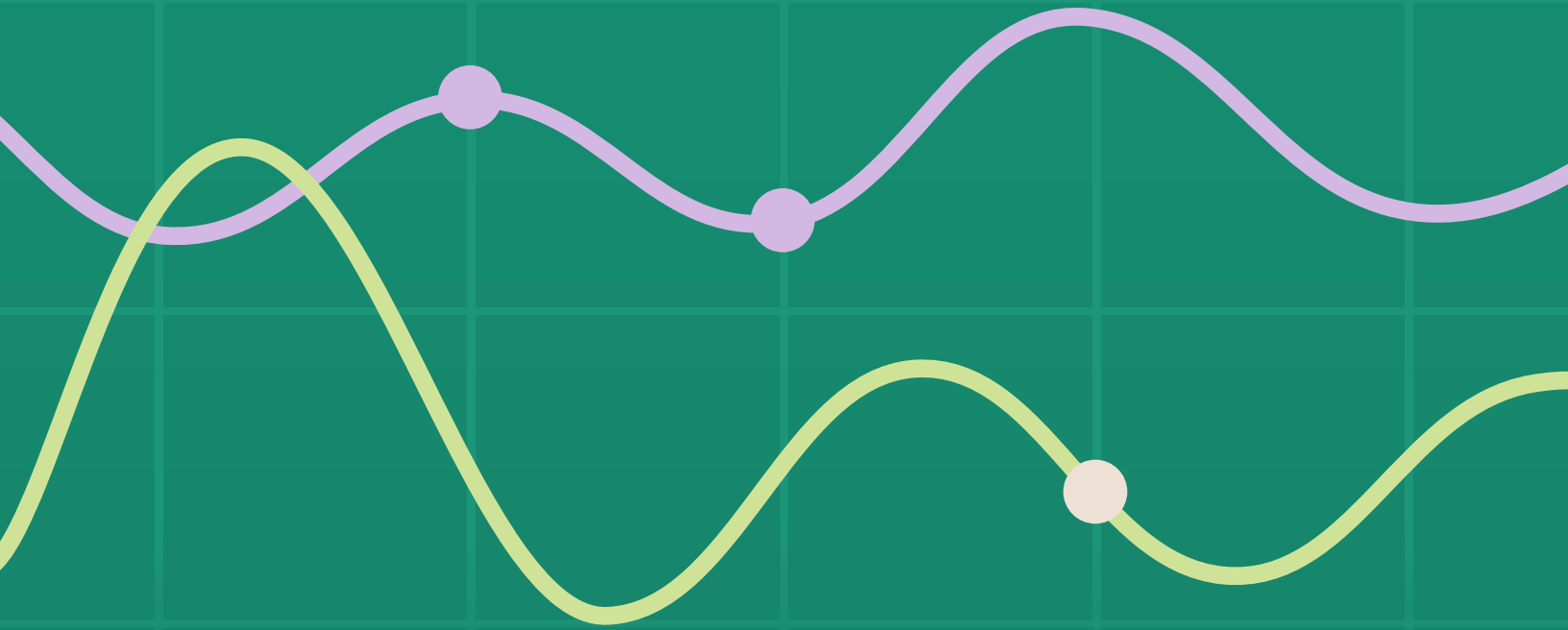
 user interviews

Maximize your ROI with User Interviews

We think we've done a pretty good job of showing how a stack that includes User Interviews can save you time and money when recruiting participants for moderated research at scale. (And that's without even talking about how we offer [high-volume unmoderated recruiting](#) and the #1 user research CRM and panel management software on the market, [Research Hub](#).)

If you care about participants quality and investing in a flexible tool stack that can grow with your needs, make the switch to User Interviews today. [Sign up for a free account](#) and start talking to participants (the *right* ones) in a matter of hours.

Have any questions or feedback? Drop us a line at rachell [at] userinterviews.com, or katryna [at] userinterviews.com.



 user interviews