Human-Centered Design for Secure Communication: Opportunities to Close the Participation Gap

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Simply Secure
Agenda

Prelude
Introducing Simply Secure
Listening Tour
Emerging Findings
Conclusion: Close the Participation Gap
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People outside the security community think “secure communication” is...

... anti-doxxing?

... a bitcoin startup?

... for doctors and lawyers?
“Secure communication” isn’t a broadly understood term
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Prelude

**Introducing Simply Secure**

Listening Tour

Emerging Findings

Conclusion = Close the Participation Gap
Simply Secure bridges the gap
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Activities:

11 one-hour semi-structured individual interviews with thought leaders

1 salon: semi-structured group (2 hours, 7 people)

9 in-situ conference conversations
We [human rights lawyers] just have to deal with it and not complain about [tools] being difficult.
We engineers are smart and good and solving problems, but we just don’t know what people need.
I used to say users are not my problem, but actually *all* the problems are user problems in crypto.
There’s no point to delivering tools to the corporate market.
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Conclusion: Close the Participation Gap
We asked for successes but heard about snake oil.
Usability ≠ user experience ≠ visual interface design
Difference between lab & real world use
Missed opportunity to consider corporate IT as an influencer.
Emerging Findings: Other Issues

Useless to sell tool as “more secure” without other benefits

Fixing bad defaults is a priority

Tribal identity and shunning outcasts who make mistakes
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Conclusion: Close the Participation Gap
Opportunities to close the participation gap and encourage diverse group of stakeholders to participate in the usable security ecosystem:

1) Motivate lay-user adoption
2) Build a shared vocabulary
Motivating lay user adoption

Individual users need to be ambassadors to incentivize their friends to join them on secure tools.

Evangelizing may require technical knowledge.
Create a shared vocabulary

Designers don’t speak crypto, and cryptographers don’t speak design

Increasing literacy about design can change how tools are developed
The listening tour will be an ongoing activity as Simply Secure connects a community of people engaging with usable security from diverse backgrounds.

Stay tuned to our blog & newsletter for more.
Thank You

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