

Ask Indiana Prompt User Test Analysis

Platform: UserTesting.com **Ordered by:** Joseph Plahitko **Date:** February 26, 2026
Participants: 20 Indiana residents **Starting URL:** <https://www.in.gov/core> **Device:** Desktop (all participants)

Study Purpose

Evaluate the effectiveness of the Ask Indiana AI chatbot’s system prompt by testing how well it responds to common resident queries — assessing response quality, trust, organization, and user satisfaction.

Participant Demographics

Attribute	Breakdown
Age Range	23–64 (mean ~38)
Gender	11 Male, 7 Female, 1 Non-binary
Residence	All Indiana residents
Web Expertise	12 Advanced, 8 Average
Employment	14 Full-time, 3 Self-employed, 3 Student/Part-time
Income Range	<\$19,999 to \$200,000+

Tasks & Scenarios

Participants were asked to interact with the Ask Indiana chatbot using three prompts: 1. “How do I renew my driver’s license?” 2. “How do I pay my property taxes?” 3. “I just moved to Indiana. What do I need to do?”

Key Metrics

Task Completion & Efficiency

Metric	Task 1 (License)	Task 2 (Taxes)	Task 3 (New Resident)
Mean Time (seconds)	77.8	52.1	50.5
Median Time (seconds)	47.5	44.0	49.0
Mean Clicks	2.5	2.1	3.1
Pages Visited	1.0	1.1	1.0

Success & Difficulty

Metric	Score
Task Success Rate	95% (effectively 100%)
Task Difficulty (1–5, 5 = very easy)	4.95 (median 5.0)

Overall Usefulness Rating

Rating (1–5)	Count	%
5	14	70%
4	5	25%
2	1	5%

Mean: 4.6 / 5.0 | Median: 5.0

Likelihood to Defer to Traditional Search (1–5, 5 = very likely to use traditional search instead)

Mean: 2.85 | Median: 2.5

Most participants would prefer the chatbot over traditional search for future queries.

Response Quality Assessment

Did the response match expectations?

19 of 20 participants said Yes. Select quotes:

"It surpassed my expectations by including a trove of information, WITH citations!"

"Yes! It exceeded — I like that it was broken into easy bulleted steps without jargon."

"These were bold and categorized in a way that it was easy to read a lot of text. Very lucid."

One dissenting voice:

"No, it did not provide me a link to DMV... this is a modified search, nothing more."

Detail Level

Assessment	Count	%
Just right	15	75%
Not detailed enough	2	10%
Fine/Adequate	2	10%
Slightly too much	1	5%

Trust

20 of 20 participants trusted the information. Reasons cited: - Official .gov website source (10 mentions) - Citations/links provided (7 mentions) - Matched personal prior knowledge (3 mentions)

Organization

20 of 20 participants found the information clearly organized. Praised elements: - Bold headers and hierarchy - Bullet point formatting - Clear step numbering - Logical grouping of related info

Overwhelm

19 of 20 said the responses did NOT feel overwhelming. One noted: "the list just kept growing and growing."

Tone Preference

Tone	Count	%
Neutral	9	45%
Formal	7	35%
Friendly	4	20%

Participants favored a **neutral** tone for a government chatbot — professional but not stiff, approachable but not casual.

Follow-Up Questions: The County Gap

A key finding emerged from the property tax task. The chatbot provided general information about paying property taxes but did not ask the user's county — which is necessary to provide actionable, location-specific guidance.

- **20/20 confirmed** the chatbot did not ask their county
- **~14/20** said they would NOT expect automatic location detection (privacy concerns)
- **Consensus:** The chatbot should ask for county/location when the answer is location-dependent, rather than auto-detecting

When should the chatbot ask follow-up questions?

Top themes from participant responses: 1. When the answer varies by county or location 2. When it needs more info to personalize the response 3. At the end of a response to clarify or narrow down 4. When the user has asked multiple questions on the same topic

Format Preferences

Preferred Format	Count	%
Checklist	12	60%
Current format (bullets/summary)	4	20%
Short summary	3	15%

Preferred Format	Count	%
Checklist + detailed explanation	1	5%

A majority preferred a **checklist format** — actionable, scannable, and trackable.

Top Improvement Suggestions

Suggestion	Frequency
Ask for county/location to personalize responses	8
Ask follow-up questions instead of dumping all info	4
Provide inline links within text (not just at bottom)	3
Larger chat window / less scrolling	2
Multi-language support	2
Quicker response time	1
Make it the default search experience	1

Key Findings

Strengths

1. **High usefulness** — 4.6/5.0 mean rating, 70% gave maximum score
2. **Total trust** — 100% of participants trusted the responses, driven by .gov domain and citations
3. **Clear organization** — Universal praise for bold headers, bullets, and hierarchy
4. **Low cognitive load** — 95% said responses were not overwhelming
5. **Preferred over traditional search** — Most users would not defer back to standard search

Opportunities

1. **Location-aware responses** — The chatbot should ask for county when answers are location-dependent (e.g., property taxes, BMV locations)

2. **Conversational follow-ups** — Users want the chatbot to ask clarifying questions rather than front-loading all possible answers
 3. **Checklist formatting** — 60% prefer checklist-style output for multi-step processes
 4. **Inline source links** — Place citations within the response body, not only at the bottom
 5. **Tone calibration** — Neutral is preferred; current approach appears well-calibrated
-

Summary

The Ask Indiana chatbot scored exceptionally well across all measured dimensions. Users found it easy to use (4.95/5 difficulty), highly useful (4.6/5), universally trustworthy, and well-organized. The primary opportunity for improvement is adding conversational follow-up questions — particularly asking for location when the answer is county-dependent — to deliver more personalized, actionable responses rather than comprehensive but generic ones.
