

By [Nickelle Sletteland](#)

Blink, a user experience research and design firm specializing in digital products and services, expands further into [San Diego](#) by adding new on-site [user research labs](#).

Blink continues to build on San Diego's rich history of innovation, and we are delighted to be growing in such a vibrant city. [National Geographic](#) recognized San Diego as a "World's Smart City," citing urban innovations such as the city's smart grid and the plug-in port, which lets ships in the harbor keep the lights on without running their diesel engines.

San Diego boasts a rich community of startups that share the spotlight with major players, such as Qualcomm, Illumina, Northrop Grumman, Marcom, and General Atomics. According to Torrey Pines Bank, the region saw more than 5,200 venture capital deals in 2018, amounting to a staggering \$103.4 billion in financing. San Diego residents understand why. The mayor and other elected officials are supportive of the innovation economy.

San Diego also features a skilled, diverse, and accomplished talent pipeline thanks to world-class institutions such as UCSD and USD, which are both ranked among the top 100 business schools internationally. [Business Insider](#) also lists UCSD at No. 3 on its list of "The Best Public Universities in America."

We specifically chose San Diego as our first full-service office outside of Seattle largely because of its size and demographics. Recruiting the right participant group is the key to impactful user research, and San Diego boasts one of the most diverse populations in the United States across language, race, income, tech savvy, and education. San Diego County has 3.1 million residents, including over 1 million Hispanics and nearly 400,000 people of Asian or Pacific Islander descent.

Over the last five years, Blink has been expanding rapidly, opening studios in San Diego,

Boston, Austin, and most recently San Francisco. Our goal is to provide state-of-the-art user research facilities in each of our locations.

About our user research labs



An interview in our new San Diego research labs.

We have 20 years of experience designing and building usability labs. Every iteration taught us important lessons about what is required to create a best-in-class experience for participants, researchers, and clients.

Our two San Diego [user research labs](#) are 18 feet by 20 feet and fully configurable. We can customize them to resemble office, medical, home, and virtual environments for testing almost anything. We also have high-quality hardware, including a variety of camera types, booms, microphones, and eye tracking systems.

Each lab includes:

- A desktop or laptop computer and your choice of browser and plug-ins
- Multiple cameras with pan-tilt-zoom capabilities
- On-screen, mobile, product, living room, and kiosk capabilities
- High-speed wireless internet connection
- Tobii T60 for eye tracking

Our research team of 40-plus practitioners have advanced degrees in behavioral science and deep experience partnering with external design and research teams. We treat every consulting situation as unique, and we craft research approaches that maximize the value of client investments.

Popular types of user research studies:

- One-on-one interviews/testing
- Mobile device and application testing
- Paper prototype testing
- Focus group studies
- Medical device studies
- In-home simulations
- On-site client observation suites

We always recommend that clients come to Blink to watch sessions live from our on-site observation suites. Of course, that isn't always possible, so we also support broadcast-grade streaming to authenticated observers anywhere in the world. The recordings are available to clients after each session.

Because studies often span multiple days, we have designed our observation suites to be an inviting and comfortable environment. There are whiteboards, plenty of Post-its, and assorted refreshments to facilitate collaboration and productivity.

For added convenience and privacy, our observation suites have a separate entrance from the street and their own restrooms. You won't find this level of hospitality anywhere else.

Each observation suite has:

- Two large TVs
- High-resolution picture-in-picture display
- Easy restroom access
- Comfortable lounge seating
- Collaboration amenities

A space for the community

CEO Karen Clark Cole interviewed for the Tacos and Tech podcast in our San Diego studio.

San Diego is a great place to innovate, and we're excited to collaborate with local meetup groups. In support of our strong community of emerging business, we host regional events in our creative and inspiring workspace. In the past year, we've hosted dozens of events, and we appreciate the opportunity to partner with such great minds.

Please come see it for yourself, [get in touch](#) to book a private tour.

About Blink

Blink was founded 19 years ago with a mission to improve the lives of millions of people. Thousands of startups, global corporations, nonprofits, and government agencies have hired Blink to help solve some of the world's toughest problems.

Our clients choose us because of our unique, evidence-driven design process. At Blink, research is woven into every project we accept. In designing new systems that run the power grid, our consultants rode shotgun in a cherry picker after Hurricane Matthew. Our team completed customer intercepts in Mexico to design a better mobile app for a major retailer. We traveled to 14 cities in seven countries to help Microsoft design a [better package for the Kinect for Xbox 360](#).