

Contextual Inquiry & 1st Rough Sketches (Group)

Due: Tuesday, October 9, 2012

Overview

In this assignment you will use the **contextual inquiry** methodology to learn more about the work practices of your target customers. The interview data will help you to later perform a **task analysis** of your idea. But more importantly you will also start to **sketch to brainstorm, iterate and communicate** your design ideas to both yourself and to your teammates.

Requirements

1. Interview at least **three target customers** (no HCI classmates) using contextual inquiry.
2. Analyze new and existing tasks. **Describe three tasks in moderate detail** that users will perform with your application. There should be one each of simple, moderate, and complex tasks. **Compare and contrast** your tasks with any existing tasks. *Remember tasks do not say how to carry out the activity, but what the user is trying to achieve.* Also label each task along these two dimensions: frequency (high, medium, low) and importance (high, medium, low).
3. Brainstorm and draw 30 rough sketches of a few important screens your application will need. You'll only turn in 3-4 sketches that show the best that came out as well as a variety of divergent design ideas. All team members should participate in the sketching.

Deliverables

You will submit **two (2) copies of a printed essay** of no more than **5 pages of text** in class (12 pt. Times font or equivalent – **images are encouraged and free**, thus not counting in the page limit). Your essay should follow the outline below and will be graded using the writing guidelines on the next page.

1. Title of project (come up with something short and catchy)
2. Each team member's name, role, and a URL to an online copy of this essay.
3. Problem and solution overview (short, 1 paragraph)
4. Contextual inquiry customers (3/4 page)
 - a. Who? How recruited? Background? Skills?
5. Contextual inquiry results (1 and 1/4 pages)
6. Analysis of new and existing tasks (2 pages)
7. Three (3) tasks your application will support (one each of simple, moderate, complex)
8. Sketches of important screens—give a variety of 3-4 different ideas (not part of page limit)

Writing Guidelines / Grading Criteria

Overall writing quality (10 pts)

Make sure that your writing is easy to read. First and foremost this means making sure your writing is clear and concise. This also means using bolded section headings, liberally adding whitespace, and including images in the body of the write-up with appropriate figure numbers and captions. Refer to the figures (e.g., "(see Figure 2)") in the body of your text. Check your essay for grammar errors.

Title (5 pts)

We will grade you on the creativity and marketability of the title you come up with.

Problem and solution overview (10 pts)

This overview should be a concise statement of the problem you are tackling and a brief synopsis of your proposed solution.

Contextual inquiry customers (10 pts)

Describe the rationale behind your choice of target CI customers. For each of the three (or more) customers, give some details of their background, the environment where you observed their work, and your role as the "apprentice".

Contextual inquiry results (20 pts)

Identify high level tasks and themes that the customers shared in common in their practices. Then, note anything unique about each interview and comment on the rationale behind these events.

New and existing tasks (20 pts)

Next, you need to describe and analyze the new and existing tasks. These should be real world tasks that have details (e.g., programming your TiVo to record the Daily Show). These tasks should not have any specific relation to the exact interface sketches that you brainstorm next.

Sketches (25 pts)

Include 3-4 widely divergent ideas for what this interface might look like. These should be done on paper and rough (and then scanned in). The details do not yet matter and you can do these quickly. We just want to get you to start thinking visually and broadly about how you might solve this problem.