

# Project: User Study

## **Deliverables**

User Study Report: Before class, Thursday, October 3rd

## **1 Overview**

Your assignment in this component of the project is to conduct a user study for your group's approved project idea. Your goal is to gather data that will help you develop software that solves a real need in a workable way.

## **2 Selecting Users**

To conduct your user study you will need a group of potential users for your new application. You should select people who are

- Available for regular contact
- Willing to describe how they perform the tasks you intend to support
- Willing to provide feedback on your ideas, including the prototypes you develop
- Representative of the eventual user community for your application

You should find six to eight potential users (each team member should endeavor to speak to two people). These users may not be students currently taking CS 124, and, ideally, should not be other computer science students.

## **3 Obtaining Consent**

You will be asking your users to share information with you, and to participate in a design experiment. As such, you need to develop a document that provides the following information:

- Who you are, and who is supervising you (me)
- What are studying (including what course it is for)
- What you will be asking of your participants
- Why your participants' contribution is valuable
- What risks you anticipate from participating (none)

You should also make it clear that

- Participation is voluntary (participants can withdraw at any time)
- All user data will be presented anonymously

Signed consent forms from your users must be handed in with your user study.

## 4 Conducting the User Study

Conduct your user study using contextual interviews and any additional techniques you think may be useful. Each user should only meet with one member of the team. Once you have met with your users, meet as a team and compare notes. You may use any of the techniques discussed in class to represent and understand the needs of your users.

## 5 Describe Your Results

The results of your user study will be presented in a report which includes

1. The problem you plan to address, expressed as a one sentence problem statement
2. A description of the intended user community for your system
3. A high-level description of the tasks you intend to support
4. A description of how the activity you plan to support is currently performed
5. A description of how an interactive system could help support your users

Your goal should be to present the needs of your users clearly, and to show the beginnings of how those needs could be addressed. Your report should be a concise but cogent description of your findings. The textual part of your report should be no more than four sides (not counting any diagrams or appendices). You may use any of the techniques outlined in class to describe your findings, but I particularly recommend the inclusion of scenarios and hierarchical task-analysis techniques.

As an appendix, you should include a narrative description of the techniques you used to conduct your user study, a description of how each member of the project team contributed to the user study, and copies of your signed and dated consent forms from your users.

You should not include any raw data in your submitted user study report, but you should retain all such materials for the duration of the course and be prepared to produce them on request. It is, obviously, an honor code violation to fake any user study data.

## 6 Grading

Your report will be graded on the following criteria

- Presentation (layout, readability, spelling, grammar, etc.) [10%]
- Clarity (structure, coherence) [15%]
- Completeness [15%]
- Content and insight [55%]