

CS3724 Human-computer Interaction

Web Introduction

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Topics

- The impact of the Web
- Why use the Web?
- Web user behavior
- Web usability

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The Web is Hot

- “Every fourth person on Web is buying something right now.”
- “The Internet had more users in its first five years than the telephone did in its first thirty.”
- “This month another 18 million people will go on-line.”

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The Web is Hot

- “E-mail already outnumbers regular mail by nearly ten to one.” Source: www.cisco.com/warp/public/749/ar/98/solutions/index.html
- “Every business that wants to survive is going to be a digital business.” R. Shapiro, Dept. Commerce, 6/99

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On-line Shopping



- People shop on-line (email survey by Consumer Electronics Manufacturers, USA Today Snapshots, 18 May 1999)
 - For convenience: 65%
 - To window-shop: 61%
 - To research purchase items: 59%
 - To buy something specific: 41%
 - Just for fun: 40%
 - For novelty: 5%
- Main deterrent: Security worries

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Why Use the Web?

- Example: Amazon.com
 - What user experiences at their site is #1.
 - Fundamental issue
 - Amazon was never a “bricks & mortar” company
 - Its web site is all it has
 - “One Click” feature
 - Trust (difficult)
 - Reliability of information
 - Issue: Profiling of customers (easy to annoy on the Web!)

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Are Current Web Sites Usable?

- You decide!
 - Finding information
 - Currency of information
 - Use of links
 - Layout of screens
 - Cool graphics and special effects
 - Use of color
 - Multiple browsers
 - Response time

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So Why Are Websites So Lousy?

- “We need a Web presence!”
 - *But Web presence does not equal effective, attractive Web site*
- “We updated our site last month!”
 - *But your organization has probably changed some since then*
- “We’re working in Internet/Web time.”
 - Meaning: Have to do it fast; no time to do it right.

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So Why Are Websites So Lousy?

- “Anyone can build a Website these days!”
 - *But that site will rarely be usable; most people don’t know Web user interaction design guidelines*
 - Anyone can be both author and publisher, with no review process!
- “How hard can this be? We don’t need to bother with a real development process!”

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Web User Behavior – Web Design Influences

- Most users
 - Don't want to read lots of text on-line
 - Scan first for key words and links
 - Are “casual” users, browsing a site
 - Don't browse aimlessly
 - Are interested in small part of a site
 - Are put off by sloppy layout, poor grammar, misspellings

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Web User Behavior – Web Design Influences

- Many users
 - Are annoyed by flashing, banners, etc.
 - May not be English-speaking or US citizens/residents
 - May be over 40!
 - Will get lost on the Web!

Although important, we will not address internationalization, disabilities, etc.

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Usability Problems with Web Sites

- General usability problems:
 - Getting “lost in cyberspace”
 - Selecting wrong button, link, menu item, etc. by accident
 - Selecting wrong button, link, menu item, etc., when user thought it was the correct one
 - Clicking the wrong number of times
 - Typos
 - Clicking on unlinked text or icon
 - Losing work entered into forms

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Some Questions to Drive Website Design

- In early meetings, decide and write down, answers to at least the following questions
 - Why does this project need to use the Web?
 - Who is our audience/market?
 - What are our users trying to accomplish?
 - What is our competition doing?

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Some Questions to Drive Website Design

- What are our business goals for the site?
 - Example: customer satisfaction for long-term loyalty
 - Example: to increase revenue by 20% in one year
- What are our usability goals and priorities for the site?
 - Example: fast service (e.g., to buy a book) vs. slow, deliberate interaction to avoid errors (e.g., for airline ticket purchase)

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