

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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