USABILITY INSPECTION

• Sometimes called heuristic evaluation or expert evaluation
  [Nielsen, 1990]

• Overview of process
  * Does not use actual users
    * Expert user interaction designers (not on user interaction design team) assess specific user interaction Web site design by determining guidelines violated and supported
  * Based on findings, experts recommend modifications to improve usability of site
  * Typically 2 or 3 expert designers
    - First, individually assess design of site
      - Take notes
      - Watch especially for first impressions
    - Then assess together
      - Compare notes
      - Look for common problems
    - Gives diversity of opinion, yet is efficient and cost effective
ASSESSING A WEB DESIGN VIA INSPECTION

• Some suggested categories for inspection of Web site
  * Availability and accessibility of needed information
  * User-centered wording
  * User-centered control
  * Consistency
  * Error prevention
  * Feedback
  * Honesty
ASSESSING A WEB DESIGN VIA INSPECTION

• Specific guidelines for category: *Availability and accessibility of needed information*
  
* Is important information available?
* Is important information easy to find?
* Are pages/frames organized into good "sight bites"?
* Are frames used effectively and efficiently?
* Is text laid out attractively and effectively?
* Are color/graphicsanimation used appropriately?
* Are layout, graphic, and text components easily "scan-able" by user?
  
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USABILITY INSPECTION

• Reporting results
  * List guidelines used in inspection
  
  Does the design give good user feedback throughout?

  * For each guideline
    - Give specific examples of design violations (and excellent examples of support!)

  Message resulting from clicking twice (about 5 sec. apart) to request information: "Processing; do not make duplicate requests"

    - Give explanation and screen image (if available)
    - Give suggestion for redesign (if appropriate)
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• Reporting results
  * List "Top 3" (or 4 or 5) suggestions for modifications
    - To give biggest improvement in usability
    - Based on most frequently visited screens, screens with most usability problems, guidelines most often violated, minimum resources to make changes
USABILITY INSPECTION

• Advantages

  * **Probably single most cost-effective method to improve usability** [C. Kreitzburg, Cognetics Corp.]

  * Provides design team with perspectives and experience of independent expert designers from outside development team

  * Complements usability evaluations with users

• Disadvantages

  * Does not use real users

  * Experts may not know application in depth

  * May find "false positives"

  * May find higher proportion of lower severity problems