

HCI Homework 1

Contextual Inquiry

For this assignment, you'll have two options: your focus will be on designing a digital music player or designing an email program. You will need to recruit a subject user.

If you choose the music option . . .

You may observe them listening to music on their computer, or may choose to watch them listening to music with another device like a record player, tape player, radio, CD player, mp3 player, as these will also give us good data about listening to music that we can transfer to a computer application. The CI should take place wherever they listen to music (home, apartment, dorm, car, work, etc.)

If you choose the email option . . .

I'd suggest that you watch someone using something other than gmail. The CI should take place wherever they read and write emails (home, work, etc.).

Since these are not complex work applications, the interview should probably last about half an hour. You will need to take lots of notes. Video or audio recording of the session will probably help you in making the models, but they are not required. If possible, bring a camera to take a picture of the environment (and tell them not to clean up!).

After the introductions and instructions, leave things open-ended and ask them to listen to music OR read/answer/compose emails while you watch. Ask questions whenever you don't understand what they did or don't know why they did it. When you feel you've learned what you can at this point, ask to see some other tasks.

(Example: Do you ever create playlists? *(if yes)* Can you show me how to do it?)

(Example: Do you add contacts to the address book? *(if yes)* Can you show me how to add a new one?)

Deliverables

To be emailed* to keup@etsu.edu by 7:00pm on February 9th.

1. Description of user (demographic information without name – about a paragraph)
2. Summary of tasks you observed and comments the user made (1 – 2 pages)
3. List of "breakdowns" – problems that would need to be solved in a new design
4. Reflection on the method (anything surprising you learned, what was easy or difficult about CI)
5. Workflow model
6. Sequence model
7. Cultural model
8. Artifact(s) if applicable
9. Physical model (photograph or drawing)

* Artifacts or hand-drawn models may be submitted in class on February 9th.