M2 Interactive Usability Test

Joshua Son's Reflections

Our study on the usability of the augmented reality application was run successfully within the timeframe given. Not only had we fulfilled the objectives of this assignment, but we have been given valuable information towards our third year project. The study's aim to view the thought processes and perceptions within the intended user's mind during a standard test, allowed us to develop an understanding of the application's intuitiveness, learnability and efficiency. This reflection serves as a retrospective analysis of our study's methodology throughout different phases.

As a result of this experiment, I developed a greater understanding of the process of usability testing. I learned there were usability issues that we, as a group, did not think about and were uncovered due to our testing. Due to the amount of bugs and crashes present within the fully developed application, we were surprised the company released such a faulty app to the public. We have learnt that usability testing is crucial to ensure the successful development of our third year project application.

During our study, we were most effective during our testing and research phase. Co-ordination between members was on point and efficient, using Facebook as our main platform of communication. We divided tasks between each member equally, whilst each taking a say on content, design and organisation of our information. We have worked effectively to produce a fully referenced interactive report.

Some difficulties arose during our studies. During our testing phase, we quickly understood the difficulties of conducting non-bias test. As moderators, we tried keeping a neutral tone with our body language and only intervened when necessary, as suggested by our research in relation to our usability testing methodology: the 'think out loud' procedure. We could have moderated moderators to further lessen bias.

My main roles were a researcher, moderator and data analyst. My interests of why things happened lead to an in-depth research behind some of the behavioural responses in our findings. I would have liked to have further researched other human-computer interactions but did not want to border the boundaries of this assignment and was limited to time constraints. I found inefficiencies within my research process, scanning through page after page, looking for key points to relate to our findings. A more efficient way would have been to scan through the index or contents page, searching for headings that relate to the topic at hand. This 'depth-first' searching method may have increased the reliability of our research.

Personally, I am curious about the behind-the-scenes of a computer and programming so I decided to major in computer science as part of my Bachelor of Computer and Information Science course. This major provides an in-depth analysis of algorithms; their design, their efficiencies, their everyday uses, the way they revolutionise computing today. This curiosity to the 'behind-the-scenes' is brought through to the applied human computer interaction paper.

No ‘valuable’ experiences in the computer industry come to mind however I have a fair understanding of testing procedures from three years of biology class at high school and two years of statistics. I related that, of what I learned in science of fair testing and controlled variables, to this experiment; after all, usability testing falls under socio/behavioural sciences. Although somewhat socially awkward, I am fascinated with the field of psychology and human behaviours. How humans interact with each other and computers is something one can dwell into and become lost in the exponentially increasing information available, creating a sense of anxiety and oblivion.