**ONLINE ACTIVITY 7: Creating User Model**

**Objective**

1. Design a user model in User Centered System Design(UCSD)
2. Evaluate interactive systems using Nielsen’s Heuristics

**Materials**

* Personal computer
* MS Word

**Background**

Atakan(2006), To understand UCSD, you first need to understand the people who will use the systems. One way to do is through the concept of user modeling. A user model is a psychologically valid way of depicting the people who will use the systems, and whose needs and preferences will be considered when designing those systems.

**Procedure**

1. Look for two existing websites and do the following:
2. Identify possible expected users of the said websites
3. Evaluate the designs of the two websites according to Nielsen’s Heuristics. Justify

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria (Based on the 10 heuristics of design evaluation) for website 1.

| **WEBSITE NAME: Spotify** | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **URL:** [**https://www.spotify.com**](https://www.spotify.com) | | | | | |
| **Area of Evaluation** | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| 1. **Visibility of System Status**  * - The system design provides appropriate feedback like message prompts in response to user actions. * The message prompts are clear, visible and understandable. | **✓** |  |  |  |  |
| **✓** |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  You always know what’s happening. If you’re playing a song or downloading something. It shows right away in the interface. | | | | | |
| 1. **Match between the system and the real world**   - Used words, phrases and concepts according to users’ language rather than system oriented words and computer jargons. |  | **✓** |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  The words used are super easy to understand, like “Play” or “Search” But some icons would be confusing at first but is easy to familiarize. | | | | | |
| 1. **User control and freedom**   - The system design provides ways of allowing users to easily “get in” and “get out” if they find themselves in unfamiliar parts of the system. |  | **✓** |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  You can go back or skip songs easily. but some features are locked unless you pay for premium | | | | | |
| 1. **Consistency and Standards**  * - The colors, text, labels, buttons and other elements in the design are uniform from start to finish**.**   - Text and icons are not too small or too big.  **-** Menus and other features of the system are arranged and positioned in a consistent way. (For ex. If your website has navigation buttons on the top under the page title on one page, the users will automatically look there for the same features on other pages. | **✓** |  |  |  |  |
| **✓** |  |  |  |  |
| **✓** |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Everything looks clean and familiar from page to page. Colors and buttons stay the same which is great. | | | | | |
| 1. **Error Prevention**   - The system design provides an automatic detection of errors and preventing them to occur in the first place.  - Idiot proofing mechanisms are applied |  |  | **✓** |  |  |
|  | **✓** |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  It doesn’t really stop mistakes before they happen. Like, if something goes wrong, it doesn’t always tell you why. | | | | | |
| **F. Help users recognize, diagnose and recover from errors**  **-** Error messages and the terms used are recognizable, familiar and understandable for the users. |  |  | **✓** |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Sometimes it just says “can’t play this song” but doesn’t explain what went wrong. | | | | | |
| **G. Recognition rather than recall**  **-** Objects, icons, actions and options are visible for the user.  - Objects are labeled well with text and icons that can immediately be spotted by the user and matched with what they want to do. |  | **✓** |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Most of the main stuff is easy to spot, like playlists and the play button. But things like adding to queue are kind of hidden. | | | | | |
| **H. Flexibility and efficiency of use**  - The system design provides easy to navigate menus.  - the system does not make wasteful time of system resources. | **✓** |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  It’s super smooth to use, and it even gives suggestions based on your music taste which saves time. | | | | | |
| 1. **Aesthetic and minimalist design**   **-**Graphics and animations used are not difficult to look at and does not clutter (mess) up the screen.  - Information provided is relevant and needed for the system design. | **✓** |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  The whole look is clean and not messy at all. It focuses more on music, which is good. | | | | | |
| 1. **Help and Documentation**   **-**the system design provides information that can be easily searched and provides help in a set of concrete steps that can easily be followed. |  |  | **✓** |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  There’s a help section but you kinda have to search for it. It would be better if they had a tutorial or guide. | | | | | |
| **SUGGESTION FOR IMPROVEMENTS** | | | | | |
| One thing Spotify could improve is adding short descriptions or hints for features that aren’t super obvious, like the song queue or crossfade settings. Sometimes it's hard to figure out what those buttons do without clicking around. Also, the error messages could be more helpful like instead of just saying “can’t play this song,” it could explain why or what to do next. Lastly, it would be awesome if they had a quick tutorial when you first use the app, just to help new users understand how everything works right away. | | | | | |

Table 2: Evaluation Criteria (Based on the 10 heuristics of design evaluation) for website 2.

| **WEBSITE NAME: Philippine Airlines** | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **URL:** [**https://www.philippineairlines.com/**](https://www.philippineairlines.com/) | | | | | |
| **Area of Evaluation** | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| 1. **Visibility of System Status**  * - The system design provides appropriate feedback like message prompts in response to user actions. * The message prompts are clear, visible and understandable. |  | **✓** |  |  |  |
| **✓** |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  When you're booking or loading something, it does show it. But sometimes, there’s no clear sign it’s working. | | | | | |
| 1. **Match between the system and the real world**   - Used words, phrases and concepts according to users’ language rather than system oriented words and computer jargons. |  | **✓** |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  The words make sense, like “Book a Flight” or “Check-In,” which are familiar. | | | | | |
| 1. **User control and freedom**   - The system design provides ways of allowing users to easily “get in” and “get out” if they find themselves in unfamiliar parts of the system. |  |  | **✓** |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  It’s easy to get stuck if you mess up booking. Sometimes you have to start over completely. | | | | | |
| 1. **Consistency and Standards**  * - The colors, text, labels, buttons and other elements in the design are uniform from start to finish**.**   - Text and icons are not too small or too big.  **-** Menus and other features of the system are arranged and positioned in a consistent way. (For ex. If your website has navigation buttons on the top under the page title on one page, the users will automatically look there for the same features on other pages. |  | **✓** |  |  |  |
| **✓** |  |  |  |  |
|  | **✓** |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Most pages look the same in terms of layout, but on mobile some buttons move around a bit. | | | | | |
| 1. **Error Prevention**   - The system design provides an automatic detection of errors and preventing them to occur in the first place.  - Idiot proofing mechanisms are applied |  |  | **✓** |  |  |
|  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| **Evaluation**  You can forget to fill something and it won’t tell you until later. It should warn you right away. | | | | | |
| **F. Help users recognize, diagnose and recover from errors**  **-** Error messages and the terms used are recognizable, familiar and understandable for the users. |  |  |  | **✓** |  |
| **Evaluation**  If there’s a mistake, it just says “error” and doesn’t really say what to fix. | | | | | |
| **G. Recognition rather than recall**  **-** Objects, icons, actions and options are visible for the user.  - Objects are labeled well with text and icons that can immediately be spotted by the user and matched with what they want to do. |  | **✓** |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  The main parts are labeled well, but some features are kind of hidden in dropdowns. | | | | | |
| **H. Flexibility and efficiency of use**  - The system design provides easy to navigate menus.  - the system does not make wasteful time of system resources. |  |  | **✓** |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  It works fine, but some useful options are buried deep in the menu, especially for frequent flyers. | | | | | |
| 1. **Aesthetic and minimalist design**   **-**Graphics and animations used are not difficult to look at and does not clutter (mess) up the screen.  - Information provided is relevant and needed for the system design. |  | **✓** |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  It looks okay and is not messy, but a bit old-fashioned. A few sections feel crowded with too much text. | | | | | |
| 1. **Help and Documentation**   **-**the system design provides information that can be easily searched and provides help in a set of concrete steps that can easily be followed. |  |  | **✓** |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  There’s an FAQ, but you have to go through a lot of steps to find the answer you need. No live chat either. | | | | | |
| **SUGGESTION FOR IMPROVEMENTS** | | | | | |
| Philippine Airlines' website could be better if it showed error messages more clearly and actually explained what went wrong and how to fix it. Right now, it just says “error” without much help. It would also really help if there was a step-by-step guide for booking, especially for first-time users who might get confused. Lastly, the layout could be simpler and more organized, especially on mobile, because some buttons are hard to find and the site feels kind of crowded. | | | | | |