Search and Go

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Table of Contents

Section 1: Identification and Requirements 2

Background Environment 2

What the System Will Be Used For 3

System Constraints 3

Our Personal Constraints: 3

Sport Chek’s Constraints: 3

Identification 4

Expected Users 4

Work Context 4

Concrete Task Examples 4

# Section 1: Identification and Requirements

## Background Environment

Our group is a part of Dr. Maurer’s research team in the ASE lab. In the lab we are currently working on the Brigade project, a system that will create a multi-surface prototype to support an immersive retail environment and will allow users to interact with product information across different devices, such as tabletops, iPhones and wall displays. The idea behind that project is what inspired our idea for this classes project. We will scale the Brigade project down and implement an interactive information kiosk for a retail environment. The retail store that we have chosen to make our system for is Sport Chek. Sport Chek is the largest Canadian retailer of sporting goods with locations all across Canada. We chose Sport Chek because of its store size and variety. A large store with a lot of variety is more difficult for customers to navigate and it is difficult for the customers and employees to find products quickly. Currently, Sport Chek employees use a text base system that runs on Windows 2000 to look up product information. These systems are slow and only accessible to the employees. If a customer wants information on an item they must seek the assistance of an employee. The systems used for searching are the same systems used for purchasing items and are located at the cash desks. This means that if all the tills are being used to ring people’s products through, the customer must wait for a computer to become available for the employee helping them to use. The current system also requires the search criteria to be very specific, the employee needs to know the products exact name or the “UPC” code. Employees at Sport Chek say that, most often, if they do not have the product name or UPC code it is faster to manually search the store for the item. This is why our system is coming in. The goal of our system is to enhance the customer experience and to help employees work more efficiently.

## What the System Will Be Used For

Primarily our system will be used for quickly searching for items and view product information. With our system customers and employees will be able to quickly check product information such as availability, location, description, ratings and reviews, price, sales and similar items, users can browse categories such as sale items and customers can request the help of an employee. The main purpose of our system is for the users to access desired information fast and efficiently. The system will not be used to completely replace the current system because it is not intended to work as a checkout till. Our system is intended to be running on computers placed throughout the store for speedy access. The general expectation of our system is that users will be able to access product information fast and easily. In other words, our system is expected to be more efficient to use to search for products than the current system and more efficient than manually searching the store.

## System Constraints

### Our Personal Constraints:

We as a group face various factors that will constrain our system and limit the design. As per the course requirements, we will be developing our system in C# using Visual Studio 2010 therefore our system will only be able to run on a Windows computer. Since this is a course project we have no budget so we are limited to the resources we can access for free, such as the computers in the tutorial room. We are also limited by time, we must have the project done by the due dates.

### Sport Chek’s Constraints:

If a company as large as Sport Chek brought in our system they would have much different constraints on the system that would limit the design. They would have to have a large enough budget to install a few kiosks in all their locations. It would have to be compatible with their database and it would have to be implemented in both English and French since they are a national retailer.

## Identification

### Expected Users

Our expected users can be broken down into two groups:

1. Customers
   * + Adults and Teenagers
       - New customers
       - Returning customers
2. Employees

### Work Context

### Concrete Task Examples

Our tasks were collected in a few ways. First we went to a few Sport Chek locations. At each location we observed how people shop in the store as it currently is in order to see what kind of people come in and their shopping patterns. We then talked to a few customers and asked them how they liked the store layout, if products were easy to find and what kind of information they would like to see in a system like the one we are making. We also spoke with employees, asking them about the current system and what they thought would be useful for them. Next we went to Chapters because they have an information kiosk very similar to the system we are making in place at there locations. Again we first observed how people interacted with they system noting typical behaviors, difficulties and expectations. Then we talked to the customers and the employees asking them how they liked the system, how it could be improved and how easy they found it to use.

We used our findings from our observations and the feedback we gathered from talking to users to create the following task examples:

1. Task:
   * + Willard is an older man looking to buy a pair of runners that his granddaughter recommended to him. He has the name of the company and a picture but does not know any other product information. He finds a kiosk and types in the name of the company and specifies “shoes”. He finds the right style and sees they are in stock in his size. He then requests the assistance of a sales associate. When the sales associate arrives he notes the shoe style and size then takes Willard to the shoe section, retrieves the shoe from the back storage and gives them to Willard to try on. Willard likes the fit so he takes the shoes to the front of the store and pays cash for them. Willard knows how to work a computer but he is not very “tech savvy”. He also does not like to spend a lot of time shopping.

Discussion:

* This is an example of a routine task, as validated by a Chapters employee and observations. At Chapters many people come into the store and immediately go to a kiosk to search for an item. Many people also do not have exact information. Sport Chek employees also validated this task as routine. Many customers come in and want to know specific information like size and availability and they require assistance.
* Willard is an example of a typical user. He is familiar with computers but not necessarily proficient with them. He knows what he is looking for but not all the specific information. He wants to accomplish his task quickly.