COMP 3020 Project Milestone 2: Low-Fidelity Prototypes

Now that you have had an opportunity to think a little about your problem, and to both observe and talk to people using a similar system, now is the time to start generating your own ideas. The best way to come up with a good idea is to produce lots of them, so you will start by brainstorming many designs before narrowing down. You will then select your best idea and polish it by creating a horizontal interactive paper prototype for all the major components of your system.

This milestone has many parts, some will be physical and must be handed in to your instructor ahead of the deadline, while others are submitted online. Sketches and prototypes should be hand-drawn. If parts of your handin get separated (e.g., bits of prototype fall out), you might lose marks, so make sure everything sticks together and there's a way to reidentify what goes where/which group bits belong to.

Part (a): Project Direction

You received a general project direction (an interactive item/media library with some kind of social component), now is the time to commit to your specific topic (what item/media will you be designing a library for). Take some time to reflect on why you chose this direction. Some questions to consider: what makes it interesting, what makes it valuable, what/who does it support, what niche does it fill, why does it excite you? You should also reflect on the observations you conducted to further support your choice. It's ok if you refined or slightly modified your idea and/or some details since the previous milestone, as long as the idea you propose here builds on something you discovered; take this opportunity to explain.

Deliverable: A half-page summary describing your project's topic, including justification for your choice.

Part (b): Ideation

Now that you have had time to yourself experience and observe others using a system similar to your chosen project, let's start generating ideas. The best way to get good ideas, is to get LOTS of ideas. Most of them are going to be bad ideas, that is expected, but from bulk you will get a few good ideas.

Each group member should come up with 10 rough sketches each of new interface ideas. Radical, weird, and outlandish ideas are welcome. You are aiming for variance: the ideas should be different from one another.

Deliverable: Include each member's rough sketches. These will not be marked but you are required to include them. Include pictures/scans of the sketches in your appendix. If you end up with a bunch of sketches that are essentially variations on the exact same idea, try again, because you did not do it right. Include this as an appendix.

Once everyone completes their own sketches, get the group together and work for at least an hour (probably longer…). Share your ideas, sketch new ones, and bounce off each other to move forward.

Deliverable: Present your group's five favorite ideas. Put a picture of the sketch, and a single paragraph below it, explaining why your group likes it. If you are efficient, you will draft this while you meet.

Part (c): Idea Polishing and Initial Proposal

After you complete Part A, take a few days break (a week, if you have the time). Get together as a group again and pick your favorite idea. This will be tough!! (If you are in a pinch, you can select two).

Re-sketch it neatly. Add annotations and/or provide descriptions where appropriate to help us understand what all the pieces are or why components are important.

Deliverable: Present a 1-2-page summary and overview of your idea including your pictures/scans of your polished sketches. Explain how it will work, and what is exciting or new about it.

Part (d): Low-Fidelity Horizontal Storyboards

Sketch out all the main screens and navigation for your interface as storyboards, to highlight how users will get around and find things.

- Draw and neatly organize a series of storyboards to show how a person will get around the interface and find all the important components. Hand-drawn is fine, but the drawings should be neat and organized.
- Don't worry about the exact details on the pages, focus more on how people get around and where they will find things, as well as the user experience.

Deliverable: Present a 2-3-page summary and overview of your idea including pictures/scans of your polished storyboards. Explain how it will work.

Part (e): Low-Fidelity Vertical Paper Prototype

Now you will start to develop the main interaction component of your interface. Develop an interactive paper prototype that demonstrates how people will use your system to complete major or important tasks.

While you will develop a working paper prototype, to submit it gets messy very quickly. You will need to organize or annotate it such that someone else will be able to put your interface back together and complete tasks on their own. Past groups have used envelopes, plastic sleeves, sticky notes, creative page layouts, flow charts of pictures of their prototype etc., to support this.

Deliverable: An organized set of pictures with short annotations showing all the parts of your working paper prototype. This may take up several pages – the main goal here is to show all the main components and screens as an overview. This can be in the appendix.

Deliverable: A writeup that presents your prototype, explains how it works, and extols its virtues. You will need to use annotated photos of the prototype to show the various parts and pieces and highlight how they work. This differs from the previous deliverable in that you highlight function, important components, etc. Use as much space as you want, but expect 3-5 pages.

Deliverable: All the pieces of your prototype, with annotations, labels, etc., as appropriate.

Part (f): Informal Prototype Evaluation

Get some preliminary feedback on your prototypes from at least 4 people who may use such a system in real life, and summarize their feedback.

Deliverable:

- Provide a half-page summary for each participant. **Don't use their real names.** Instead, give them a number or let them choose a pseudonym.
    - Give a 1-2 sentence introduction to the person (gender, rough age range, work or education context)
    - Summarize what worked for the interface.
    - Summarize what did not work.

- Provide a half page overall summary. What, overall, did you learn?