Camille Nibungco
CS 570 – HW 1

Write a short (approximately 1 page) description of the best user interface you have used and

why it is so good. What could be done to make it even better?

The best user interface I have used is Airbnb.com. Immediately off the bat, one can easily

tell what Airbnb is for, how to use it, and get examples of ideal destinations. Essentially, when

you use Airbnb, the user does not have to think, everything is inherently and intuitively

interacting with the user. As Don Norman once said, "Design is an act of communication."

Airbnb is easily able to communicate what its services are for, how to use it, and appeal to the

user's eye. Once you interact with the home page and query up a search, this is where most

home/rental places fail. The data can be too complicated and plentiful that most websites are

unable to display it in an organized and pleasing manner. However, Airbnb is one of the few

companies that are able to accomplish this task by uniformity and minimalism. While sticking to

a functional display of the map and listings, Airbnb standardizes their design down from the div

boxes and modals to the typography, which results in an award-winning interface. A user is able

to easily tell which listings are where, as well as get the important information such as the price,

seller/host, and rating. Furthermore, I think that Airbnb could improve on one major facet, which

is accessing your own user profile. This feature is their most glaring flaw which could be due to

the fact that they improved their search process to such a refined state, they lacked attention and

detail to this process flow. Personally, I find it hard to find your own ratings, settings, and

customizable profile. It takes a series of unnecessary steps and even google search to find out

what to click to get to your destination. Ideally, it should not be that difficult to identify where

your own reviews are, or how to access them. Thus this is one major improvement I believe they

could improve upon.

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c. Write a short (approximately 1 page) description of the worst user interface you have used and what is wrong with it. How could it have been made better? Why do you think it turned out the way it did?

The worst user interface that comes to mind is our very own BroncoDirect. There is a plethora of things that are wrong with it, starting with the Student Center. Right off the bat, when a student first logs in, they have to click three buttons, just to get to the Student Center overview. From there, the most frequently used actions in academics are searching for classes, checking courses, and viewing your G.P.A. When you are searching for classes, the user is bombarded with an unnecessary amount of input boxes and search filters, when only 2-3 are needed at the most. Then, to check how long a waitlist is, the user must click the name of the course, and not "select" it as one would intuitively do. To add, checking "My Academics" would have to be accessed by clicking three different locations and the navigation bar up above, does not directly display this. Without a tutorial, much of the functionality within BroncoDirect is lost due to the unorganized data and extravagant amount of clicking to get to the desired location or function. BroncoDirect turned out the way it did because the Oracle content management system is standardized for many universities across the nation. From Cornell to Indiana University-Bloomington, this same exact system is implemented in college campuses and thus every college student has accepted and learned how to use this unintuitive interface to get through university. Additionally, in order for this entire system to be updated, it would take years and years of working with the many universities and consultants who would speak on Oracle's behalf, which makes it difficult to improve upon. A lot of these interactions within BroncoDirect would be simplified by getting rid of redundant clicks, removal of data dumps, and standardized

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navigation and querying. I could go further into detail as to how BroncoDirect can specifically be

fixed, but it would take more than 30 pages.