

{Rags to Riches} user-test

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Summary

Jacob and I conduct our user-testing with our [prototype](#). Overall the people that we tested with understood what to do, but their main concern was how the game would challenge them and keep them playing.

The main objective of the game is to teach the user about the hidden history of Ching Shih and while we placed a lot of information about Ching Shih in the introduction, it was somewhat forgettable for the user.

Introduction

A usability test is a method of evaluating a product by testing it on users. It has many variations. A classic method would require usage of usability lab with a strictly controlled environment. The work of Steve Krug (best known as the author of "Don't Make Me Think") inspired professionals all over the world to include more spontaneous, guerrilla - like, usability testing. In this variation, the testing environment is controlled in a minimal way and any number of subjects is considered good (usually 5 - 10).

The statistical significance of guerrilla tests is not taken into account. Instead it's used as a method of broadening perspective and inspiring design. The development of usability testing software has also made, so called, remote usability testing extremely popular. It allows researchers to test without the physical presence of the subjects. Remote usability testing made the task of gathering large group of research subjects easier than ever before.

All the variations of usability testing are conducted with a group of potential users, or current users. Users are asked to complete a series of typical tasks. Usually tests are recorded and analyzed to identify areas of product improvement.

After analyzing the most basic use cases of Rags to Riches we've decided that a classic usability test is needed to provide more information about the actual usability of the interface.

We have decided to test the product with a group of 5, all of whom are actual users of the application. A group of this size is a sufficient sample size to inform us about the performance of the interface.

After thorough preparation, the test was conducted on 2/3/18 at.

User interaction with the interface was recorded and analyzed by me, which informed our recommendations for improving the overall product usability.

Goals

Goals of the conducted test:

1. To find out whether the game can be understood by those who don't know anything about it
2. Discover ways to make the game more appealing and have better replay value

Tasks

Based on our initial research and hypotheses, we've formed 3 test-scenarios and a set of tasks that were read and assigned to users during the test.

1. You are in the Maritime Museum looking at a Ching Shih piece and you notice this game on display. How inclined would you be to try it out?
2. How does the absence of a menu make you feel?
3. You've played the game. What would make you play the game again?

Results

Key Takeaways

Results of the test showed clearly that:

1. Overall the users said that they would be inclined to try a game no matter where it was placed out of sheer curiosity. It was also mentioned that the title screen, the first screen they would see to activate the game played a big part too.
2. Most users didn't have a problem with there not being a menu but it was suggested by one user that there should be a menu to make the game "feel more like a game".
3. All but one user said that they wouldn't play the game again. They said that it lacked variation and there was no incentive to play again.

Conclusion

The usability test of Rags to Riches shows that the game needs to be more developed. As with most games making the mechanics vary can make even the most simplest of games fun. Flappy birds is an example of this. It's unpredictable, simple and addictive. Though the absence of a menu wasn't a problem with most, the few who did have a problem showed the importance of one.

