Control | Studio Task #3 (Individual)

Due: Thursday, February 2, 2017

Goals

The goal of this assignment is to explore the balance between simplicity and flexibility.

Assignment

One of the most difficult tradeoffs designers face is balancing the needs of a broad target audience. While specialized products can be tailored to a self-consistent group, most consumer products must appeal to a wide audience. For example, imagine if Microsoft Word or Google Drive was designed specifically for college students, or only for marketing teams, or only for small businesses. Even if the product had the same core features, the interface would most likely be very different. A big part of designing products for diverse audiences is balancing power and flexibility with ease of use.

Many products that are meant to be used by a wide variety of people include multiple paths for accomplishing tasks. For example, Gmail users can compose a new email by clicking the large "Compose" button prominently displayed in the UI, but they can also use the keyboard shortcut "c". This provides a clearly labeled, easy to find solution for novice users while still providing experienced users with an accelerator.

For this assignment, imagine that you are working on the design of a geocaching application (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geocaching). Your design should be targeted at a mobile application. Imagine a specific task or feature that users might want and then sketch out two ways to accomplish this – one aimed at novice users, and one aimed at expert users. Some questions to consider as you design: Should users of different skill levels be sent down completely separate paths? What types of accelerators should be provided for expert users? How might users transition from the novice to expert interaction? How is this revealed over time as your customers use the application? Read the control design principle from *Universal Principles of Design* before you begin.

Your design may be paper-based or mocked up in PowerPoint, Keynote, Google Slides, Photoshop, Sketch, or some other graphical tool. If you choose to design your interface on paper, please scan in/photograph your design so that we have a digital artifact. Your designs should be made accessible via your individual studio project web site. You will be presenting your design in class. The presentation should include sketches of your interface and justifications for your design.

Deliverables

1. **Your design**
   Your design should be accessible online to the TAs a google doc. Please include screenshots of your design and a description of the design choices you made and the motivations behind them.
2. **Presentation**
   You must be prepared to present your work in class and lead a small discussion about your design.

Grading (100 Points)

You should not spend enormous amounts of time on this assignment.

For this assignment, you will be graded on:

- [80] Your design and written description/justification
- [20] Your presentation (if chosen to present)