**ONLINE ACTIVITY 7: Creating User Model**

**Objective**

1. Design a user model in User Centered System Design(UCSD)
2. Evaluate interactive systems using Nielsen’s Heuristics

**Materials**

* Personal computer
* MS Word

**Background**

Atakan(2006), To understand UCSD, you first need to understand the people who will use the systems. One way to do is through the concept of user modeling. A user model is a psychologically valid way of depicting the people who will use the systems, and whose needs and preferences will be considered when designing those systems.

**Procedure**

1. Look for two existing websites and do the following:
2. Identify possible expected users of the said websites
3. Evaluate the designs of the two websites according to Nielsen’s Heuristics. Justify

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria (Based on the 10 heuristics of design evaluation) for website 1.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **WEBSITE NAME: Shopee** | | | | | |
| **URL:** [**https://www.shopee.com**](https://www.shopee.com) | | | | | |
| **Area of Evaluation** | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| 1. **Visibility of System Status**  * - The system design provides appropriate feedback like message prompts in response to user actions. * The message prompts are clear, visible and understandable. |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Shopee provides clear feedback such as loading icons, order status updates, and success messages after actions like checkout. | | | | | |
| 1. **Match between the system and the real world**   - Used words, phrases and concepts according to users’ language rather than system oriented words and computer jargons. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | The system uses familiar shopping terms like “Add to Cart” and “Free Shipping,” which match real-world shopping experiences. | | | | | | | |
| 1. **User control and freedom**   - The system design provides ways of allowing users to easily “get in” and “get out” if they find themselves in unfamiliar parts of the system. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Users can easily cancel orders, go back to previous pages, and exit sections without confusion. | | | | | |
| 1. **Consistency and Standards**  * - The colors, text, labels, buttons and other elements in the design are uniform from start to finish**.**   - Text and icons are not too small or too big.  **-** Menus and other features of the system are arranged and positioned in a consistent way. (For ex. If your website has navigation buttons on the top under the page title on one page, the users will automatically look there for the same features on other pages. |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Shopee uses consistent icon styles, button placements, and navigation layouts throughout the site. | | | | | |
| 1. **Error Prevention**   - The system design provides an automatic detection of errors and preventing them to occur in the first place.  - Idiot proofing mechanisms are applied |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Shopee prevents errors with confirmation prompts and disabled buttons until all required fields are filled. | | | | | |
| **F. Help users recognize, diagnose and recover from errors**  **-** Error messages and the terms used are recognizable, familiar and understandable for the users. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Error messages like “Payment Failed” are shown in simple language with suggestions to retry or check settings. | | | | | |
| **G. Recognition rather than recall**  **-** Objects, icons, actions and options are visible for the user.  - Objects are labeled well with text and icons that can immediately be spotted by the user and matched with what they want to do. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**   |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | | Icons and functions are visible and labeled clearly, such as cart, wishlist, and chat features, minimizing memory load. | | | | | | |
| **H. Flexibility and efficiency of use**  - The system design provides easy to navigate menus.  - the system does not make wasteful time of system resources. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Users can sort and filter results efficiently, and advanced users benefit from shortcuts like bulk order tools. | | | | | |
| 1. **Aesthetic and minimalist design**   **-**Graphics and animations used are not difficult to look at and does not clutter (mess) up the screen.  - Information provided is relevant and needed for the system design. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  While the site is colorful and engaging, it can feel cluttered with too many banners, ads, and pop-ups. | | | | | |
| 1. **Help and Documentation**   **-**the system design provides information that can be easily searched and provides help in a set of concrete steps that can easily be followed. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Shopee offers a help center, FAQs, and chat support with searchable and clear instructions. | | | | | |
| **SUGGESTION FOR IMPROVEMENTS** | | | | | |
| * **Reduce visual clutter** by limiting pop-up ads and large banners to improve focus and readability. * **Enhance error messages** by providing more detailed and actionable suggestions for fixing problems (e.g., during payment issues). * **Improve user onboarding** for first-time users with guided tips or tutorials on key features. * **Too many pop-ups** – When you open the app or website, several pop-ups appear (e.g., “claim vouchers,” “flash sale alerts,” and ads), which can be annoying and slow down navigation. *Suggestion:* Limit the number of pop-ups or allow users to disable them in settings. * **Overwhelming homepage** – The homepage is filled with banners, product tiles, games, vouchers, and flash sale sections, making it hard to focus. *Suggestion:* Add a “simplified mode” or allow users to customize what they want to see on the homepage. * **Unclear promo mechanics** – For example, “Free Shipping” vouchers often have unclear conditions like minimum spend, specific stores, or limited usage times. *Suggestion:* Show clear, easy-to-read terms beside every promo or add a tooltip explanation. * **Lag during big sales** – During double-day sales (e.g., 6.6, 11.11), the app or site can become slow or freeze. *Suggestion:* Optimize the server load or show a notification explaining delays when system traffic is high. * **Checkout confusion** – Sometimes users accidentally pay twice or click “Buy Now” without realizing the payment is already being processed. *Suggestion:* Add a confirmation screen *before* final checkout and clearly show if payment is in progress. * **Difficult to contact sellers** – Some users can’t find the “Chat with Seller” button easily, especially in mobile view. *Suggestion:* Make the seller chat button larger and always visible near the product price. * **Hard to return items** – While there is a return process, many users struggle to find it in the “My Orders” section or don’t understand how it works. *Suggestion:* Add a step-by-step visual guide for returns right next to each delivered order. * **Fake reviews and spam ratings** – Some products have good ratings but fake reviews. *Suggestion:* Let users report suspicious reviews and add a “verified buyer” tag more visibly. * **Push notifications are too frequent** – Users often receive notifications at random times (e.g., midnight) for promos they don’t care about. *Suggestion:* Allow users to set their preferred time and type of notifications. * **Language mix** – Some product listings or system messages show in English while others are in Taglish or Chinese. *Suggestion:* Make the language setting more consistent and automatically translate product details if needed. | | | | | |

Table 2: Evaluation Criteria (Based on the 10 heuristics of design evaluation) for website 2.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **WEBSITE NAME: LAZADA** | | | | | |
| **URL:** [**https://www.lazada.com.ph**](https://www.lazada.com.ph) | | | | | |
| **Area of Evaluation** | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| 1. **Visibility of System Status**  * - The system design provides appropriate feedback like message prompts in response to user actions. * The message prompts are clear, visible and understandable. |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Lazada shows clear loading indicators, confirmation messages for adding items to the cart, and order status updates, keeping users informed at all times. | | | | | |
| 1. **Match between the system and the real world**   - Used words, phrases and concepts according to users’ language rather than system oriented words and computer jargons. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Lazada uses familiar shopping terms like “Add to Cart,” “Buy Now,” and simple language suitable for all users, avoiding technical jargon. | | | | | |
| 1. **User control and freedom**   - The system design provides ways of allowing users to easily “get in” and “get out” if they find themselves in unfamiliar parts of the system. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Users can easily undo actions like removing items from the cart or cancel orders before processing, with accessible back buttons throughout. | | | | | |
| 1. **Consistency and Standards**  * - The colors, text, labels, buttons and other elements in the design are uniform from start to finish**.**   - Text and icons are not too small or too big.  **-** Menus and other features of the system are arranged and positioned in a consistent way. (For ex. If your website has navigation buttons on the top under the page title on one page, the users will automatically look there for the same features on other pages. |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Lazada maintains a consistent color scheme (red, white), font styles, and button placements across the site and mobile app, supporting predictability. | | | | | |
| 1. **Error Prevention**   - The system design provides an automatic detection of errors and preventing them to occur in the first place.  - Idiot proofing mechanisms are applied |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Most actions prevent errors, but occasionally vague error messages appear during payment failures, making it hard to resolve issues immediately. | | | | | |
| **F. Help users recognize, diagnose and recover from errors**  **-** Error messages and the terms used are recognizable, familiar and understandable for the users. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Error messages are generally clear, e.g., “Payment failed due to insufficient balance,” helping users understand the problem. | | | | | |
| **G. Recognition rather than recall**  **-** Objects, icons, actions and options are visible for the user.  - Objects are labeled well with text and icons that can immediately be spotted by the user and matched with what they want to do. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Icons and buttons like search, cart, and menu are always visible, allowing users to recognize options without memorizing commands. | | | | | |
| **H. Flexibility and efficiency of use**  - The system design provides easy to navigate menus.  - the system does not make wasteful time of system resources. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  The site is mostly efficient, but some menus take multiple clicks to reach specific categories, which could be streamlined. | | | | | |
| 1. **Aesthetic and minimalist design**   **-**Graphics and animations used are not difficult to look at and does not clutter (mess) up the screen.  - Information provided is relevant and needed for the system design. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  The interface can sometimes feel cluttered with promotional banners, countdown timers, and pop-ups, which may overwhelm users. | | | | | |
| 1. **Help and Documentation**   **-**the system design provides information that can be easily searched and provides help in a set of concrete steps that can easily be followed. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation**  Lazada provides FAQs and help centers, but accessing specific guides (e.g., return process) requires several clicks and could be more straightforward. | | | | | |
| **SUGGESTION FOR IMPROVEMENTS** | | | | | |
| 1. **Reduce pop-up overload:** Users often get bombarded with multiple pop-ups (discount alerts, app download prompts, etc.) that interrupt browsing; limit pop-ups to one at a time or offer an option to “Don’t show again today.” 2. **Improve search accuracy:** Sometimes the search returns unrelated items or misses synonyms, frustrating users trying to find products quickly—improve search algorithm to handle typos and common alternate terms. 3. **Clearer payment error guidance:** When payments fail, users often don’t know if it’s a bank issue or system glitch—add detailed instructions or a direct link to customer support to resolve payment problems faster. 4. **Faster loading times during sales:** During big sales events, the site can slow down or freeze, causing users to abandon carts—optimize server capacity and load balancing to ensure smooth performance under high traffic. 5. **Simplify checkout flow:** The checkout process sometimes requires too many steps or redundant confirmations, which can frustrate users—streamline checkout by minimizing unnecessary pages and allowing quicker edits to orders. 6. **Improve mobile responsiveness:** On smaller screens, some buttons and text overlap or get cut off, making navigation harder—adjust the design for better responsiveness and touch target sizes on all devices. 7. **More intuitive filters:** Users struggle with filtering product results by price, ratings, or availability—redesign filter options to be more visible, easier to toggle, and remember user preferences. 8. **Enhanced order tracking:** The current order tracking page lacks detailed updates (e.g., package scanned, out for delivery)—provide real-time status updates with estimated delivery times. 9. **Clearer return/refund policies:** Users often find the return process confusing due to vague policy descriptions—add clear, step-by-step return guides and expected refund timelines right on the order page. 10. **Personalized recommendations improvement:** Sometimes the product suggestions are irrelevant or repetitive—use better algorithms to personalize recommendations based on browsing and purchase history. 11. **Provide “undo” option on accidental taps:** Users accidentally add items to cart or wishlist—offer a brief “undo” popup immediately after these actions to prevent frustration. 12. **Customer service accessibility:** It’s not always obvious how to quickly contact customer support; adding a floating help/chat icon on all pages would provide instant assistance. 13. **Wishlist management:** The wishlist gets cluttered without options to organize or categorize items; add features for sorting or grouping wishlist items for easier management. 14. **Reduce visual clutter on product pages:** Sometimes excessive badges (e.g., “hot deal,” “flash sale,” “free shipping”) overcrowd product thumbnails—limit to one or two key badges for clarity. 15. **Add tutorial or onboarding for new users:** First-time visitors can be confused by features like LazMall, vouchers, or LazGlobal—include a brief walkthrough or video tutorial on homepage load for new users. | | | | | |