

Assignment HCI-3

Title: Contextual Enquiry

Date of Completion:

Problem Statement:

Conduct a contextual enquiry for selected product / system.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

- Understand need of contextual enquiry concept.
- Carry out contextual enquiry for selected product system.

Requirements:

Notebook and Pen, Selected group of audience, Response Records

Theory:

Contextual enquiry (CE) is a user-centred design research method, part of contextual design methodology. It is usually structured, as an approximately two-hour, one-on-one interaction in which the researcher watches the user in course of user's normal activities, and discusses those activities with user.

It defines four principles to guide the interaction:

- Contextual Interviews are conducted in user's actual workspace.

The researcher watches users do their own tasks and discusses any artifacts they generate or use with them. In addition, the researcher gathers detailed re-tellings of specific past events when they are relevant to project focus.

- Partnership: User and researcher collaborate to understand the user's work. The interview alternates between observing user as he/she works and discusses what user did and why.
- Interpretation: Researcher shares interpretations and insights with user during interview and user may expand or correct researcher's understanding.
- Focus: Researcher steers the interaction towards topic which is relevant to team's scope.

A contextual interview generally has 3 phases, which may not be formally separated in interview itself.

1) Introduction

Researcher introduces his/herself and may request permission to record or start recording. The Researcher promises confidentiality to user solicits the user on specific tasks the user will work on during the interview.

2) The Body of Interview

Researcher observes work and discusses observation with user, and takes notes, usually handwritten, of everything that happens.

3) The Wrap-Up

Researcher summarizes what user gained from interview, offering user a chance to give final corrections and clarification.

Before a contextual enquiry, user visits must be set up. The users selected

must be doing work of interest currently must be able to have researcher come into their workspace and should represent a wide range of different types of users. Contextual enquiry may gather data from as few as 4 users to 30 or more.

Following contextual enquiry field interview, method defines interpretation sessions as a way to analyze data.

In an interpretation session, 3-8 team members gather to hear researcher re-tell story of interview in order.

Contextual enquiries may be conducted to understand the needs of a market and scope opportunities. They may be conducted to understand the work of specific roles or tasks to learn the responsibilities and structure of role.

→ Limitations

Contextual enquiry is resource-intensive. It requires travel to informant's site, a few hours with user, and time required for interpreting results.

Conclusion:

Contextual enquiry is carried out for selected product system.