

Reflection



Human Technology Interaction 3

During this project I chose to conduct research in the field of recommender systems. As industrial designer I had developed major interests in helping people to become happier and more satisfied. I think technological systems can help to achieve this, but therefore these systems have to intelligently interact to the user. Via researching about recommender systems I believed that I could learn how systems interact with people. Since these recommender systems can find human preferences, I would also like to apply it in my own designs. My own designs have to be able to adjust to every unique individual to optimally achieve happiness and satisfaction to my users. In this research project I expect myself, as designer, to help with designing the interface and possibly with a few other elements in order to realize a proof of concept. Therefore I believe I might learn to apply my just developed skills in this field. Next to that I believe I can learn a lot about the process of a conducted research such as how to obtain quick results and draw sufficient conclusions. Due to these activities I expected that major individual developments would be in becoming more aware of conducting research. In the project I mainly helped with building the proof of concept. Due to lack of knowledge in programming the backend of the service, we as group became dependent on one individual member of our research group. During the backend programming, I could make some more improvements in the interface. I, with another member, tested the interfaces. I learned how minor details in the system could change in people's behavior and that therefore we had to continue the research very carefully. Although, due to lack of time, we did not adjust all small details and had to only test elements which actually did matter with answering our research questions. This approach of setting some elements prior to others was still very new to me and might help me while conducting upcoming other research projects.

In the next phase we got our actual test realized online. While sharing this test in our networks, we could immediately saw some rough results. Via that online database we were really integrated in the user study. For me this was the first test without my presence and therefore I could really see what the users did without my influences.

In the database I also saw some effects which the interface might have. For instance that the questionnaire, which was visualized as very long and boring, something what could not be prevented at the end, was not finished by multiple users. By obtaining such detailed data I really felt I got to know how the users thought. That made it really interesting for me as a future designer of such systems. I learned how such a detailed storage of user events can really help to find improvements in systems to satisfy the users a lot more in the end. For this research we possibly could have tested this interface more in detail and maybe with such a database to get some more sufficient and useful results for the initial research question.

For the next time I hope to get more insight in obtaining results and learning to draw conclusions from that. This is something other members of the group did, since they had more skills with that and since we had not that much of time. In this project I learned how to apply my just developed skills, but for the next time I want to be more involved in parts I have a lack of competency. This might help me to, in the future, be able to conduct similar researches by myself. This in order to eventually apply all aspects of such a research to improve my own designs.