**Introduction**

The iPlus kiosks are interactive touch screen kiosks spread across all of Bristol. These kiosks are made available to the general public and provide wide range of information such as area maps of Bristol, bus routes and timetables, nearest police station, and can even be used to send e-mails.

**Initial observations**

Since there are many iPlus kiosks placed around Bristol, we would not be able to test each one in the context in which they are placed in because of our time constraints. The location of the iPlus kiosk that we chose was on Lawrence Hill. The reason why we chose this particular kiosk is because it was in a busy location - next to two bus stops and Lidl.

Our first impressions of the kiosk were:

1) It looked sturdy and well protected.

2) The responsiveness of the touch screen was very poor - we had to press the screen hard and for at least a second before the command registered.

3) Was placed on a pavement where people walking past could easily see it.

4) The screen was slightly damaged, but not greatly as to affecting the visibility of the interface.

5) Colours used on the interface and the physical design were very eye catching.

**Task definition**

For this co-operative evaluation, we chose to perform three tasks to assess the usability of the iPlus kiosk placed in Lawrence Hill. The tasks were:

1) Send an e-mail postcard from the kiosk.

2) Find a local job in the field of media and advertisement.

3) Search for the direction to the nearest Tesco supermarket.

**Task 1 - Send an e-mail postcard from the kiosk.**

**Task status:** Successfully completed.

**Time taken:** 5 minutes.

**Task comments:** The user was quickly able to find the option to send an email from the homepage. Although the button was placed on the right on top of another button, it was still visible mostly due to its size and colour.

**Key observations:**

* The user had to press hard on the screen for the respective button to be registered by the system.
* The screen displayed a QWERTY keyboard which would suggest that it might be aimed at users who are well versed in using computers.
* The colour scheme changed upon entering the landing page for sending an email.
* Two options were clearly labelled on the left side labelled E-mail and Postcard. The E-mail option was selected by default.
* A generic layout was used for inserting the details of the recipient, sender and message.
* The screen brightness was decent and the user was able to clearly see the interface even in broad daylight.

**Task 2 - Find a local job in the field of media and advertisement.**

**Task status:** Unsuccessful.

**Time taken:** 3 minutes.

**Task comments:** The button used to access the job section of the kiosk was placed on the bottom navigation bar. This might suggest that the designers might not have wanted to put great emphasis on people using the kiosk to search for jobs.

The task was unsuccessful because the kiosk was unable to connect to the Work Train database. Work train is the company which hosts the job section on the iPlus kiosk, which might suggest the dramatic change in the user interface upon entering the section.

**Key observations:**

* The user interface of the job search landing page was not consistent with the iPlus design theme or colour scheme.
* The iPlus branding was not shown on the interface of the job search pages, except for on the bottom navigation bar to direct the user back to the iPlus homepage.
* Good options were given to filter through the job types. Some filters included - distance from the kiosk, job category, and date the job was posted on.

**Task 3 - Search for the direction to the nearest Tesco supermarket.**

**Task status:** Unsuccessful.

**Time taken:** 1 minute.

**Task comments:** The main feature of map directions that this kiosk is presenting to us wasn’t available as it was updating its database at the time of use.

**Key Observations**

* The map button was the biggest button on the menu, so users are unable to miss that service.

**Key functionalities of the system:**

* Offers a wide range of services from different third-party organisations.
* Having the touch screen function enables the system to offer users different ways of navigating through the system, i.e. you are not limited to just back, forward and QWERTY keyboard buttons.
* Offers verbal feedback to be given from the user since it has a built in microphone.
* Also system is able to withstand severe weather conditions such as rain or snow.

**Design flaws of the kiosk:**

* Cannot be accessed by children, short people or people in wheelchairs.
* Does not offer much protection from the environment - only a glass pane on the top of the kiosk.
* Whilst using the system, one of our group member felt vulnerable to passers-by because the kiosk was positioned so that the user was facing away from the public passing by.

**Main usability issues of the system:**

* The constant change of theme from one section of the system to another might confuse the user into not knowing where in the system they are.
* The screen was highly reflective.
* Wheelchair users or small children are unable to use the system since it is placed too high up for them.
* Possibly colour blind people might have trouble with viewing the interface because of the purple and white colour theme.
* The touch screen required firm presses for the input to register, which would make it troublesome for older people with arthritis or similar disabilities to use.

**Possible improvements to be made:**

* Improved touch screen sensitivity.
* Make screen anti-glare.
* Offer users more protection from the environment by building the kiosk similar to phone booths.
* Connect to third-party databases to access information.
* Offer the user to use the built in camera, since no apparent options were given at the time we used it.
* Faster load times of visuals.
* Remove some option presented on the homepage, and only show options which relate to the system’s target users.
* Offer feedback to the user when they press a button on screen.