CMSI 370-01

INTERACTION DESIGN

Fall 2015

Assignment 1020 (due 1022) Feedback

All applicable outcomes can now reach maximum proficiency values with this assignment.

Ed Seim *SirSeim / sirseim@gmail.com*

Notes while reading:

- Not clear what you mean by "equivalent information." (*2a*)
- I guess there was some confusion in my instructions. I used `blockquote` to indicate my commentary. It was not meant to carry over into your work.
- Nice gallery of menu examples there…although I think some commentary is in order. Menus are very similar to lists, and some of your screenshots are closer to lists than menus. I know there isn't a sharp line dividing them, but there is a spectrum of variation which I think should be addressed. (*1a*, *2a*)
- And there it is under *Typical Behavior*: "action to perform" vs. "particular item to use." Under some circumstances, the latter is thought to be more like a list. Let's see if you address this later. (*1a*, *2a*)
- Your state diagram is good for a flat menu; more needs to be done if hierarchical menus are to be involved, however. (*2a*)
- Good set of action images there—some commentary would be good though. (*2a*)
- Those variants are good, and admittedly just a start as you mentioned, but what you have is a good selection. +(*2a*)
- I do think this would also be a good section to distinguish a "menu" from a "list." (*1a*, *2a*)
- There's that "equivalent information" in the *Priority Metrics* section again. Admittedly I'm still not clear on what you mean by that. (*2a*)
- Ack, you missed the #1 thing I've been saying about menus in terms of cognitive load (thus affecting learnability and memorability): they leverage *recognition* over *recall*. That is a *huge* factor that explains this characteristic of menus. (*1a*, *1b*)
- Typos: "familir," "essenence," "manu," "compents." (*2a*)
- Scrolling is a contributor, but not the only one, to a menu's potential lack of efficiency. Again you miss hierarchical menus here. Also, even if an entire menu is visible to you, there is some delay in scanning the menu items, then targeting your choice. Compare that, for example, to hitting a hot key or typing the first few letters of a command then hitting the tab key. (*1b*)
- Presumably the last paragraph in *Priority Metrics* has to do with errors. In that area, you miss some major characteristics: first, the very presence of a menu *limits* the actions that a user can take, and that already reduces errors. Further, the *disabling* of inapplicable menu items can restrict things even more. These improve a menu's error avoidance more than scrolling and component confusion. (*1b*, *2b*)
- Under *Key Characteristics*, the *Pebble Guidelines* section needs more exposition. That comes across as generic, and not particular to how Pebble does menus. In fact, one can argue that the very *choice* of menus as the predominant interaction style with Pebbles is worth discussing here. (*1b*, *2b*)
- A Table View screenshot would be good under the *iOS Guidelines* section. (*2a*)
- I like the commentary under *Platform-Specific Instances*. They pinpoint the distinguishing characteristics of menus in these platforms pretty well. Leaves you wanting more **:)** +(*2a*)
- What, no credits/references? *You mentioned the Pebble and iOS Guidelines*. Those alone are two references already. Plus there are probably a few more lurking too. (*2a*)

CMSI 370-01

INTERACTION DESIGN

Fall 2015

Assignment 1020 (due 1022) Feedback

All applicable outcomes can now reach maximum proficiency values with this assignment.

1a — **|** …The surface characteristics of menus are covered, but the deeper notion of what it means to have a *finite*, *limited* set of choices is missed, and that was even discussed in class. This is a major miss that is enough to knock things down a notch. Plus the spectrum between "possible actions" to "possible items" (frequently viewed as a list more than as a menu) needs to be addressed.

1b — **|** …You mention a few concepts from the course, but menus are such a "poster child" for various interaction design principles that in the end, it is fair to expect more discussion. The absence of references is related to this: had you dug into the literature a bit more, you would have found *tons* of stuff to talk about.

2a — **|** …Content is fairly well executed. There are some typos, but a major omission here is the *hierarchical* menu—i.e., menus with items that themselves are menus. This affects a lot of sections.

2b — **|** …You draw some decent conclusions with what you've mentioned, but precisely because much *more* could have been mentioned in terms of mental model, principles, and theories, this aligns with *1b*.

4d — **/** …You referenced some obvious sources that you did not cite at the end, plus could have also used many more sources due to menus' near-ubiquity (as you yourself stated) in user interfaces today.

4e — You successfully issued a pull request. Commits are phased well, and messages are concise but descriptive. But…all of the commits happened on the due date! Not the best time management… (**|**)

4f — Submitted (but not started **;-)**) on time. (**+**)