The Holden Prototype

1 Aim of this evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to test the whether our prototype satisfies the users or not and what is the real performance of our prototype. Based on the purpose, our aim of our prototype is to provide the users with satisfying experience when they are using our prototype and encourage them to share it to others. In addition, we also expect users to learn more about the history of Holden Car and Australian car industry after visiting our website.

The main criteria of the evaluation are lists in the following: Firstly, testing if the users can find the information by their interests in time. Secondly, testing if the users know the basic functions and know which part they want to move. Thirdly, testing if the system provides them with proper interface for them to view. For an incomplete or half-completed project, it is important to invite potential users to use our current product and tell us whether the current functionalities are useful or not. According to the feedback provided, we are able to find the shortcomings of our current product which helps us to improve our product. Therefore, testing the current project frequently plays an essential part in a successfully project. The methodology we use is to hold face to face interview session, the researcher follows the procedure in the evaluation scripts (Appendix) to gather and record the information from both the answers and the behaviors of the participants. The assistant tools include the web-based prototype, one information sheet which helps the participant to understand the evaluation and the purpose of the application. The scale of the evaluation is small but with target and potential audience involved.

Overall, the process of evaluation provides the participants with a brief introduction and clear view about the application. The process during the evaluating period is beneficial for the later change of the prototype. The feedback can be gathered in details, some are useful to give the team with an overview about how our audience look like. However, the drawback is the small scale of the audience may not appropriately reflect on the behaviors of all the target audience, which may be not valuable.

2 Data from observing the user evaluation

2.1 Summary of the observation data

When directing the participants processing through the evaluation script, their facial expression, mouse control behavior, as well as verbal communication were recorded by the observers. There are five sets of data, which have the value of further discussion, being summarized.

Participants click on the safe area of the screen when they are reading the introduction article. Safe area, in this case represents the part of the webpage that participants do not expect any reflection before they mouse clicking there. When the participants see the webpage for the first time, although the instruction has given enough direction for the participants to understand the design, when reading the article, they are likely to click on the area where they feel safe.

Before following the instruction process, when demonstrating the initial screen to participate, they are firstly attracted by the car image on the webpage, and it takes a

while for the participants to find the function button on the far right of the page to do the step one in instruction.
When the location of information buttons changes in the following screen, all participates ignore the function button bar. When directing participants to the article introducing Holden car development, participants feel resentment towards long article reading. Observer recorded that participants are complaining about the readability of the words, including the background colour, which made the article looks boring and difficult to read.

Although we have instruction states some buttons are designed for clicking, participants drag the button by mouse. For example, the timeline function requires participants to click on the ends of the timeline for changing car years, whereas participants were using their mouse to drag that button. Arrows around the car image indicate the way of rotating the image, whereas participants are still hoping to drag the car image to change the visual orientation.

As the purpose of this designed prototype is to introduce the history of Australian car producing industry, when participants go through the instructions, they are able to hold a correct expectation of what they can learn by reading this webpage. Not the engineering technique, but the history of development.

2.2 Discussion of the observation data

Those data collected from participants are closely related to the features of the designed prototype, and it reveals the problem of prototype design.

The behaviour that participants have a safe area of the screen in their mind tells that in our prototype, the functions given to participant by triggering the button is clear and obvious. However, since participants do not realize the tire and gear in the car image is also clickable until interviewer give the instruction, they were not expected that the clicking on those areas would have live feedback. The unclearness of information expression would cause users missing out the important information that they supposed to learn and understand.

The attractiveness of the car image indicates that the introduction article is less attractive to the participants. With regards to such behavior of participants, the designer could consider putting the important information pieces around the car image, to make sure the basic information like car name & year is not ignored by future users. Also, the ignorance of function button bar that changes location in the initial and following screen warns that designer should seriously consider when modifying the design structure of the webpage.

The comment towards article readability tells the designer that the motivation of reading a large amount of information should be guaranteed. First of all, the background color of the article should make the reader relax, to avoid tiredness of reading articles on screen. Secondly, when gathering the information into a long article and expect the user to read, the designer should consider the risk of the user are not interesting in reading the article and miss out important information.

The design should take user past experience into consideration. The reason that some user wants to drag the car image to change direction is in most of the car display

website, the way to change the direction of a car image is to directly drag the car image. The designer should have the better understanding of the current trending of webpage design. Also, for the timeline function, since the past experience of using timeline function, the designer should avoid the misleading to the users by taking the design that has the different use in others place.

The purpose of this prototype has been identified correctly by the participants. This demonstrated our design has clear insinuation that users will learn the history of Australian car development. One of the reasons that the design is leading users to the introduction of history is the timeline function. After the participants see the function that can change time, all of them asked if the website is about the history of Australian car development.