SCENARIO

# Description

Scenario is a text that explains how users perform typically their tasks in a specific situation and environment through example of usage**[[1]](#footnote-1)**. It has characteristic elements such as setting (context, situation…), agents or actors, goals or objectives and plot[[2]](#footnote-2). The letter concerns sequences of actions and events such as “appearance and behaviour of the system; what people try to do with the system; what procedures are adopted, not adopted, carried out successfully or erroneously; and what interpretations people make of what happens to them.” [[3]](#footnote-3)). Furthermore, scenarios are written early and continuingly during the development process because there is a very little chance to write the right scenario the first time. In fact, they are normally developed and refined over time[[4]](#footnote-4) and, depending on the stage of the development process, they can be short or long with abstract or detailed content[[5]](#footnote-5).

The purpose of writing scenarios is that they help to identify the goals to be achieved and can be used as a source of inspiration to design possible system and organize a future usability evaluation**[[6]](#footnote-6)**.

# Benefits

* It encourages “to consider: the range of users who will use the system, the range of activities for which the system is used and the environments within which users work”[[7]](#footnote-7)
* **Cheap to generate it[[8]](#footnote-8)**
* **The technique can be used by developers with little or no human factors expertise.**
* Support reasoning about situations of use, even before those situations are actually created [[9]](#footnote-9)

# Best practices

Good scenarios are concise and answer the following key questions:

* **“Who is the user?** Use the personas that have been developed to reflect the real, major user groups” that use the future product.
* **“Why does the user” use the product?**  “Note what motivates the user to” use it and their “expectations upon arrival, if any.
* **What goals does he/she have**? Through task analysis, you can better understand what the user wants” on the product “and therefore what” it “must have for them to leave satisfied.
* **How can the user achieve their goals” with the product? “**Define how the user can achieve his/ her goal” with the product, “identifying the various possibilities and any potential barriers.”[[10]](#footnote-10)
* **Functionally decompose user goals into the operations needed to achieve them.**
* **Consider which activities should be performed by the user and which by the computer.**
* **Create an outline of the users' activities, goals and motivations for using the system being designed, and the tasks they will perform.**
* **To maintain design flexibility, scenarios should not specify what product features are used.**
* **Assign task time estimates and completion criteria as usability targets.**
* **Try to generate scenarios to cover a wide range of situations, not just the most common ones or those of most interest to the design team.**
* **Work through the scenarios fully and judge the system on that basis rather than trying to change the system half way through**
* **Scenarios are most useful when produced early in development as specific realistic and detailed examples of what a user would do, but without making any reference what user interface features that would be used. [[11]](#footnote-11).**

# Examples

### Scenario for planning a route

*Sue is going to a wedding in Yorkshire, and needs a route to drive from her home in Watford to the Church in Deepdale, and from there to the reception at Horton. She has not been to these places before. She wants to know the fastest route, and needs clear instructions as she will be travelling alone.[[12]](#footnote-12)*

*Mr. and Mrs. Macomb are retired schoolteachers who are now in their 70s. Their Social Security checks are an important part of their income. They've just sold their big house and moved to a small apartment. They know that one of the many chores they need to do now is tell the Social Security Administration that they have moved. They don't know where the nearest Social Security office is and it's getting harder for them to do a lot of walking or driving. If it is easy and safe enough, they would like to use the computer to notify the Social Security Administration of their move. However, they are somewhat nervous about doing a task like this by computer. They never used computers in their jobs. However, their son, Steve, gave them a computer last year, set it up for them, and showed them how to use email and go to websites. They have never been to the Social Security Administration's website, so they don't know how it is organized. Also, they are reluctant to give out personal information online, so they want to know how safe it is to tell the agency about their new address this way.[[13]](#footnote-13)*

## Making Use: Scenario-Based Design of Human-Computer Interactions

## Par John M. Carroll

http://books.google.ch/books?id=s-0ZuadhBBAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=fr&source=gbs\_ge\_summary\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

1. http://www.usabilitynet.org/tools/scenarios.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. p.46-47 http://books.google.ch/books?id=s-0ZuadhBBAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=fr&source=gbs\_ge\_summary\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. p.46 http://books.google.ch/books?id=s-0ZuadhBBAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=fr&source=gbs\_ge\_summary\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. libro p. 67 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Libro 67 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. http://www.usabilitynet.org/tools/scenarios.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. LIBRO p. 67 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. http://www.usabilitynet.org/tools/scenarios.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. p.46 http://books.google.ch/books?id=s-0ZuadhBBAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=fr&source=gbs\_ge\_summary\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. http://www.usability.gov/how-to-and-tools/methods/scenarios.html [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. [**http://www.usabilitynet.org/tools/scenarios.htm**](http://www.usabilitynet.org/tools/scenarios.htm) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. http://www.usabilitynet.org/trump/methods/recommended/scenarioexamples.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)