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16382

Human Computer Interaction

Q 1: What do the virtual agents do?

Ans: The virtual sales agents attempt to make the site useful. They try to encourage sales of their products. They interact with and assist the user when searching the web, game playing. Etc.

Q 2: What type of agent are they?

Ans: Typically they appear to be the animated agents.

They basically of four types

1. Synthetic characters ( Entertainment characters)
2. Animated agents ( Interface oriented)
3. Emotional agents ( Manipulated by the user to respond as the user chooses)
4. Embodied conversational interface ( Hold a conversation with the user while performing body movements and facial gestures that coincide with the conversation.)

Q 3: Do they elicit an emotional response from you? If so, what is it?

Ans:  The emotional agents are usually funny or cute for a little bit but they get annoying if I want to peruse the site at my leisure and they get sad that I am not clicking on their links.  The normal animated agents are usually irritating and seem either stupid or condescending.  The Elbot can get a little annoying and Alice appears to be pretty simple.

Q 4: What kind of personality do they have?

Ans: They are usually goofy or personable when they are animated or emotional.  The ones that I would consider synthetic characters are kind of stiff and come across as not very personable.  Elbot is easily agitated.  While Alice is very simple and rigid in her answers.

Q 5: How is this expressed?

Ans:   This is expressed by the agent jumping up and down spinning around raising their hands if they have them.  Sometimes the eyes get really big and some even made noise.  Alice says things and her eyes move while Elbot changes faces and stances to show how he feels.

Q 6: What kinds of behavior do they exhibit?

Ans: They are excited easily and sometimes unnecessarily.  The synthetic characters seemed to show little or no emotion and thus it was difficult to tell what behavior they were having.  Elbot gets wild and Alice doesn't do much.

Q 7: What are their facial expressions like?

Ans: Their eyes get big they sometimes smile or frown.  Their eyebrows raise and sink.

Q 8: What is their appearance like? Is it realistic or cartoon-like?

Ans: Most seemed to be cartoon like but a few where realistic.  In the case of Elbot he seemed to be an animated robot while Alice is a person.

Q 9: Where do they appear on the screen?

Ans:  Elbot was on top but Alice was on the bottom left.

Q 10: How do they communicate with the user (text or speech)?

Ans:  Most seemed to use text in bubbles like they were talking but a few can actually talk.

Q 11: Is the level of discourse patronizing or at the right level?

Ans: It seems like it would be patronizing to me but maybe to somebody that hasn't shopped online before it would be helpful.

Q 12: Are the agents helpful in guiding the customer towards making a purchase?

Ans: They appear like they could be but they are unnecessary. In the case of Alice and Elbot they aren't really for purchases.

Q 13: Are they too pushy?

Ans:  Sometimes but most of the time they are just this is were you go next or if you liked this then you will like this also.

Q 14: Would you trust the agents to the extent that you would be happy to buy a product from them? If not, why not?

Ans: No, I wouldn't trust them.  I would buy a product from them if I was already going to do this.

Q 15: What else would it take to make the agents persuasive?

Ans: It would take me hearing from one of them that maybe their store isn't the best place to get the item for me to trust them.  Otherwise I am always cognizant of them trying to sell me something.  If I don't really trust a sales person then how can I trust one that is programmed to be the best sales person.