

Human Centered Design : Introduction

Observing Interactions Assignment

In this assignment, you will practice paying attention to everyday interactions, design flaws, and usability cues. To do so you will observe and document three people using an everyday thing. This could be something digital, physical, or a combination of the two. Printers, TV remotes, maps, appliances, and parking meters are all great examples of an everyday thing. Pay close attention to how people interact with it. Keep an eye out for any problems they have. Are there any common difficulties? Do they make the same mistake over and over again? Another great thing to look out for are cues that previous users have left. These cues about usability usually expose flaws in the design. Taped over buttons on a remote, post-it notes, worn out buttons or surfaces in an elevator are all examples that indicate missing or misleading functionality.

• Review Criteria

Submissions will be graded on the following criteria. Each bullet is worth 1 point.

- The learner submitted a short description of an everyday thing.
- The learner submitted a description of how people interact with it.
- The learner submitted a picture of a person interacting with the everyday thing.
- The learner submitted a description of at least one usability problem observed.
- The learner submitted a description of at least one usability cue left behind by previous users.

This assignment is worth a total of 5 points.

- My Submission

- Apple TV Smart Remote

1. Provide a short description of the everyday thing you observed.

The Apple TV Remote puts one in complete control of their Apple TV. One can use your finger on the Touch surface to navigate Apple TV quickly and easily. Just *swipe left, right, up or down* or use the buttons provided for common operations. Apple TV can connect to one remote at a time, so if one wants to play multiplayer games, they will need an iOS device or controller.

2. Provide a description of how the three people you observed interacted with it.

- A Father who is highly-capable in handling all smart devices using the remote to browse between applications, watch movies and play games.
- A Mother who is digitally literate but not capable enough to quickly and seamlessly interact with some smart devices who only uses the youtube application in the TV for browsing recipes for cooking.
- A relative who is just literate enough to handle a smartphone but cannot use the remote. So, alternatively they usually use the apple remote app in their iOS device or control it using voice control.

3. Submit a picture of a person interacting with the everyday thing.



The above picture shows a person using the Apple TV remote to play an Apple Arcade Casual game.

4. Provide a description of the usability problems you observed.

Some of the common usability problems I observed were:

- While the **father** had no trouble in navigating between applications, channels or movies, he found it **cumbersome to use a TV remote for gaming**, regardless of the orientation.
- The **mother** always found the **"search"** (magnifying glass icon button on remote) **the hardest to use** as they were **not capable of searching across applications**. This meant that every time she presses "search", it loads the search of the default application rather than the current application. Moreover, **to navigate back**, she **always searches for the back button** for most of the time **before settling on "menu"** (icon button labelled MENU) after a brief moment of recall.
- The **relative** always faced **connection reset issues** when pairing between the Apple TV and iOS device, thus requiring frequent re-pairing. Moreover, she always **uses "siri"** (mike icon button on remote) **more than once to fill in any input form**.

5. Provide a description of any usability cues left behind by previous users.

Some of the usability cues I observed were:

- The father's way of using the remote can be mapped to how an expert might use the product. If such a person feels difficulty in using it for gaming, it only means that the **ergonomics of the Apple TV remote** is unsuitable for playing most non-casual games on it and thus **needs some changes**.
- The mother's way of using the remote suggests **changing the "menu" button's label to something more universal** such as **"BACK"** or a corresponding icon.
- Siri on Apple TV should be able to **pick-up non-american, vernacular dialects of English** across the world.