

CMSI 370-01
INTERACTION DESIGN
Fall 2013

Assignment 0926 Feedback

As stated in the assignment, outcomes *1c* and *2b* max out at | for this assignment, because the class had not yet covered the full range of relevant concepts at this point in the semester.

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1a — Your work suggests some understanding of mental models (I'll leave you to determine which part of your report leans that way), but you don't use the term at all in your writing, and so the degree of this understanding is unclear, let alone your ability to relate a user's mental model to the user interfaces of the three tested systems. (/)

1b — You correctly state the chosen metrics for this study, and ostensibly use appropriate means to capture them, but you have a potential "pollutant" in your data when it comes to the efficiency metric. According to your report, there may be an imbalance of familiarity between the TI calculator and the other systems. Such an imbalance would produce unreliable efficiency times. You do point out the potential issue here, and have an opportunity to address it in your concluding paragraph, but you never do. You mention memorability, which I suspect is your way of addressing this issue, but the mixup in terminology still signals some weakness in this area. (/)

1c — You don't mention any guidelines, principles, theories, or interaction styles from the course material outside of Fitts's Law, and even then you only address half of that law (distance). Your heuristic analysis suggests a few more of these guidelines, principles, theories, or interaction styles, but you never connect them explicitly, and that is what drags down this outcome. (/)

2a — You have conducted a real-world usability study, and as a first go-round it is largely not bad. The study design appears to have a flaw with regard to prior test subject familiarity with one of the systems, and you mention the possibility of that flaw. What to do about this depends on the timing of this realization, and that is not stated in the report: if you realized this midstream, you might have been able to compensate for it by tweaking the procedure somewhat. If you realized this after the fact, you should have stated clearly what you might change if you did this study again. You do have a section to that effect, but it goes off on memorability rather than address efficiency. Finally, part of this outcome is the *prioritization* of usability metrics based on the tested application—there is no mention of this in your report. (/)

2b — As stated in *1c*, the only principle that gets an explicit mention in your report is Fitts's Law, and even then its use does not come across as very thorough. You have a very well-illustrated section comparing the information displayed by the MacBook Calculator vs. Google Calculator, but that section is dragged down by a lack of shared vocabulary from the concepts seen in class so far. In the end, that really is the main knock for this outcome—when you discuss something within a particular field, be sure to know and use the established terminology of that field. (/)

4d — There's some disappointment that you weren't able to give LaTeX a go, but that is just a personal observation and not a knock on this outcome. The lack of specific vocabulary use is the primary drag on this outcome, though not to the same degree as in *2b*, because it implies a gap in how you used the available information given in class to perform and report on this usability study. (|)

4e — You committed and pushed successfully, but (a) you sent this to a different repository (not on purpose, I know—something went glitchy with your GitHub app) and (b) you had only one commit. Between the two, it is (b) that is more severe, especially because we know that (a) is more of a learning curve issue. The very point of using version control is to allow you to make progress in distinct milestones. This was your first go so we won't be too severe, but definitely look to commit more often in future work, especially the programming assignments. (|)

4f — Submitted on time, but not exactly as specified in the instructions. (|)