CMSI 370 – 01

Interaction Design

Assignment 0918

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**I Introduction:**

For our project, we compared paid movie & TV show streaming services Netflix and HBO GO. We conducted 5 general tests: movie/TV show searches, video navigation, filter searches, cast & crew searches, and an overall satisfaction rating. We conducted the tests on an Ethernet connected PC and brought each user to the home page of each website to ensure there were no outside influences on results.

**II Usability Metrics:**

**Test 1: Search Movies/ TV Shows**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | t(s) | t(s) | t(s) | t(s) | Ave t(s) |
|  | Black Swan | 8.6 | 9.5 | 6.1 | 11.4 | 8.9 |
| HBO GO | Entourage | 9.7 | 8.1 | 9 | 21.3 | 12.025 |
|  | Game of Thrones | 6.5 | 7 | 6.9 | 5.6 | 6.5 |
|  | Adventureland | 5 | 8.5 | 6.5 | 6 | 6.5 |
| Netflix | Scary Movie | 5 | 7.3 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.325 |
|  | River Monsters | 5 | 6.2 | 6.5 | 4.8 | 5.625 |

We asked each user to search for specific movies or TV shows on both HBO GO and Netflix by starting on the homepage. We measured the time from start to clicking on the button that starts the movie (we didn’t measure the time it took the movie to buffer and begin, because that is more of a function of internet connectivity). When people searched for movies on HBO GO, we found that almost all people clicked on the image of the video, expecting the movie to start. But, the user has to click on the play button that appears when the mouse hovers over the image. Clicking on just the thumbnail does nothing. For Netflix, the user just has to click on the thumbnail, and the movie would start. This was the main reason why HBO GO search times were slightly longer than Netflix search times.

**Test 2: Video Navigation**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | t(s) | t(s) | t(s) | t(s) | Ave t(s) |
| HBO GO | GOT ep.6 FF to 15min | 12.2 | 8.8 | 17.3 | 3.5 | 10.45 |
|  | GOT ep.6 to ep.7 | 19.9 | 21.8 | 26.9 | 27.6 | 24.05 |
| Netflix | River Monster ep.1 FF to 15min | 6 | 7 | 5.2 | 4.8 | 5.75 |
|  | River Monster ep.1 to ep.2 | 5.7 | 6.3 | 9.9 | 3.9 | 6.45 |

We asked each user to fast-forward a TV show from the beginning to 15 minutes into the show. As shown by the time data, it took people slightly longer to fast-forward in HBO GO. We think this is the case because the time of the show only appears in the lower right hand corner of the video. In Netflix, when the user fast-forwards by scrolling the time bar, the time appears directly above it. It took some people a couple of seconds to realize where the time of the show was being displayed in HBO GO.

We also measured the time it took a user to go from the end of one episode to the next episode. We found that it was significantly faster for users to go to the next show in Netflix. This is because when one episode ends in Netflix, the user can click an image to continue to the next episode. This makes it really easy for the user to watch one episode after the next. HBO GO does not have this option, so the user has to navigate back to the episode selection page.

**Test 3: Filter Search (Movies)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | t(s) | t(s) | t(s) | t(s) | Ave t(s) |
| HBO GO | Comedy Section | 11 | 14.7 | 12.9 | 7.6 | 11.55 |
|  | Romance Section | 4.6 | 60 | 8.8 | 5.5 | 19.725 |
| Netflix | Comedy Section | 9.6 | 13.6 | 9.5 | 2.4 | 8.775 |
|  | Romance Section | 4.1 | N/A | 9.7 | 2.6 | 5.47 |

We asked each user to do a filter search on movies by genre. Filter search times were generally longer for HBO GO. The reason for this is that the user has to click on movies first, then on genres, which is hidden in the lower right hand corner of the page. People tried looking for genres at the top of the homepage. In Netflix, the user can find movie genres right at the homepage. But, Netflix has user suggested genres for the user, and some of these genres are very specific and obscure. One of our testers searched through these genres, trying to find comedy movies.

**Test 4: Cast & Crew Search**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | t(s) | t(s) | t(s) | t(s) | Ave t(s) |
| HBO GO | Black Swan | 16.8 | 18.5 | 12.4 | 15.8 | 15.875 |
|  | Hesher | 9.5 | 7.5 | 6.7 | 5.7 | 7.35 |
| Netflix | Adventureland | 9 | 11.6 | 10.5 | 11.7 | 10.7 |
|  | True Grit | 7.2 | 15.1 | 7.2 | 9.9 | 9.85 |

We asked each user to search for the full list of cast and crew of specific movies. We found that in HBO GO, the user first had a difficult time finding cast and crew, but when they learned how to do it, it was actually faster than learned Netflix cast and crew searches. This demonstrates HBO GO’s fast learnability.

**Test 5: Satisfaction (1 – 10)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  | Ave |
| HBO GO | 7.6 | 8.5 | 9 | 8 | 8.275 |
| Netflix | 8.8 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 8.2 |

We asked people to rate their overall satisfaction with Netflix and HBO GO. On average, they rated about the same. It is important to note that when people rated their satisfaction, they considered the movie selection of each service. HBO GO has more current and popular movies, while Netflix has more obscure movies. But, Netflix does have a larger selection of movies compared to HBO GO. Also, HBO GO is limited to HBO TV shows. Some people liked this because they prefer HBO TV shows to other network shows, while others found the selection limiting, as HBO GO didn’t have shows they liked.

**III Conclusion:**

Both HBO GO and Netflix scored similar ratings on overall user satisfaction. But when we look at the actual metrics, we find that people using HBO GO generally took longer to perform tasks, which suggests that HBO has a less intuitive layout. I would agree with this conclusion. For example, the user has to first click on either movies or TV shows first to be able to search for specific genres. Also, the user cannot easily go from one episode to the next.

One caveat about our conclusion is that we had a very small sample size. Our data might not be representative of a more extensive test.