

Prototype User Interface for Studying the Effect of Suggested Tags and Autocomplete on Tagging Behavior

ABSTRACT

We built a prototype social tagging UI that can enable and disable suggested tags and autocomplete features. We ran a pilot study to determine the suitability of the prototype for studying how these UI elements affected tagging behavior. We did not find a significant effect for these UI elements in the pilot study, but we did find prototype utility. This poster reports on the design of the prototype and makes suggestions for designing adaptable user interfaces for social tagging experiments.

PILOT STUDY

Each participant in a pilot study ($n=20$) was presented with a series of 16 photographs from Flickr's 100 Best page in a random order. The autocomplete and suggested tags features were toggled on and off. The pilot study did not find a significant effect for the UI elements, but the design of the tagging UI proved promising.

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BUILDING A TAGGING UI WITH SUGGESTED TAGS AND AUTOCOMPLETE

We used JavaScript, PHP, HTML, CSS, and MySQL to build an adaptable tagging user interface. We used jQuery to build the autocomplete UI elements and custom logic to display the correct UI elements and photograph for each experimental event. The screenshots below show four of the 16 photographs and all four experimental conditions.

Image to tag:

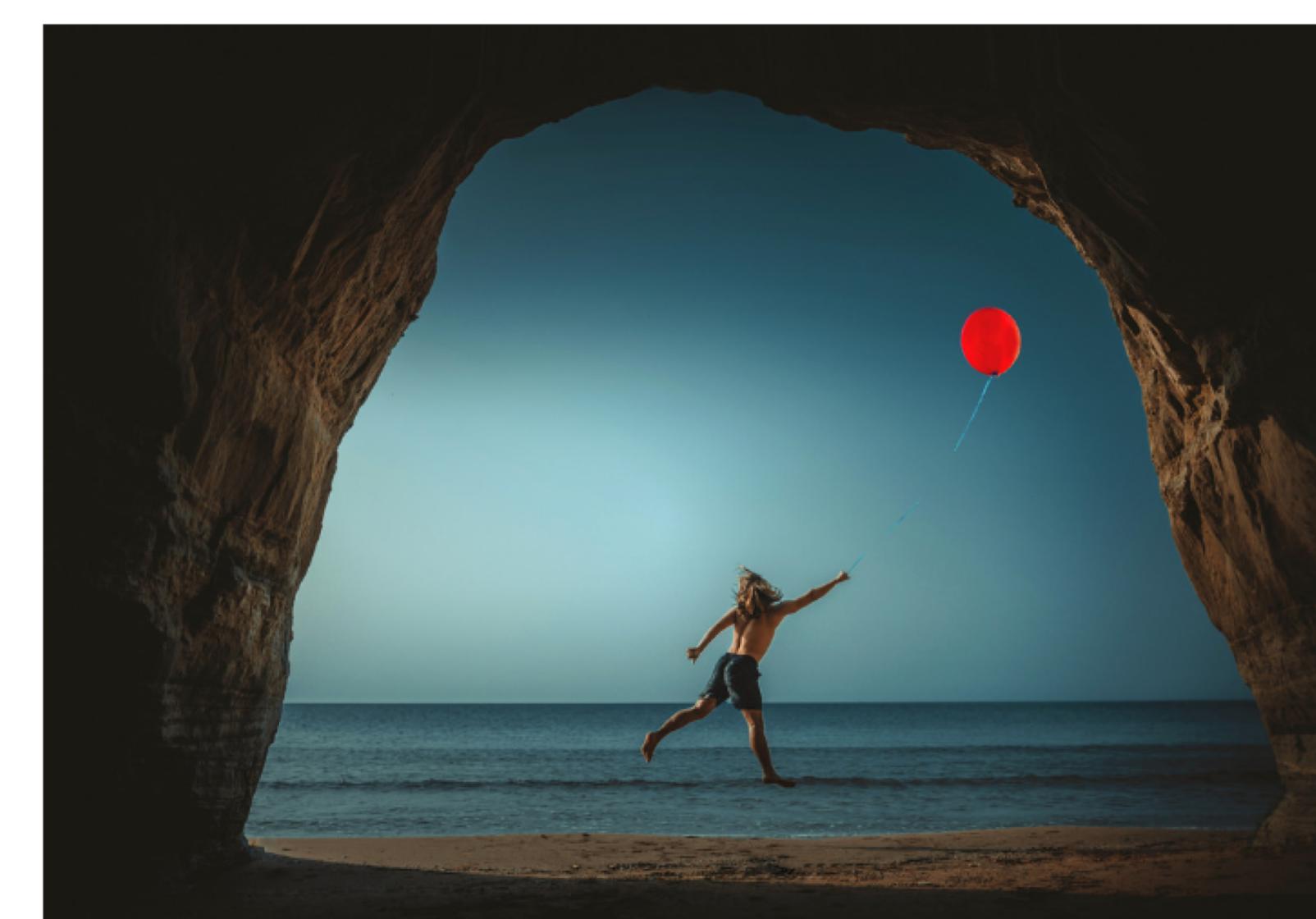


Figure 1. Suggested tags on and autocomplete on.

Image to tag:

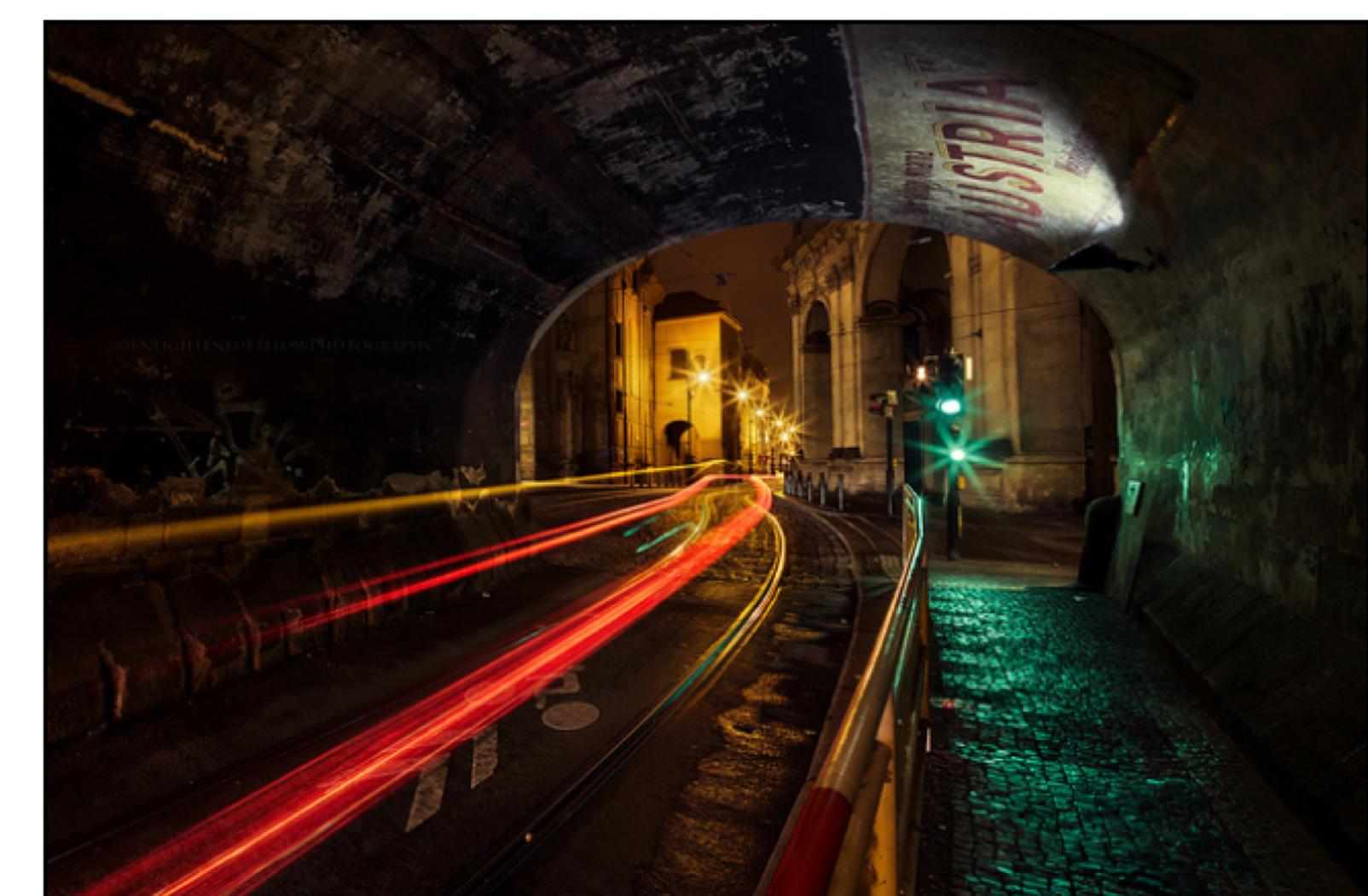


Figure 2. Suggested tags off and autocomplete on.

Enter or select your tags here:

balloon cave water boy ocean
wat water

Image to tag:

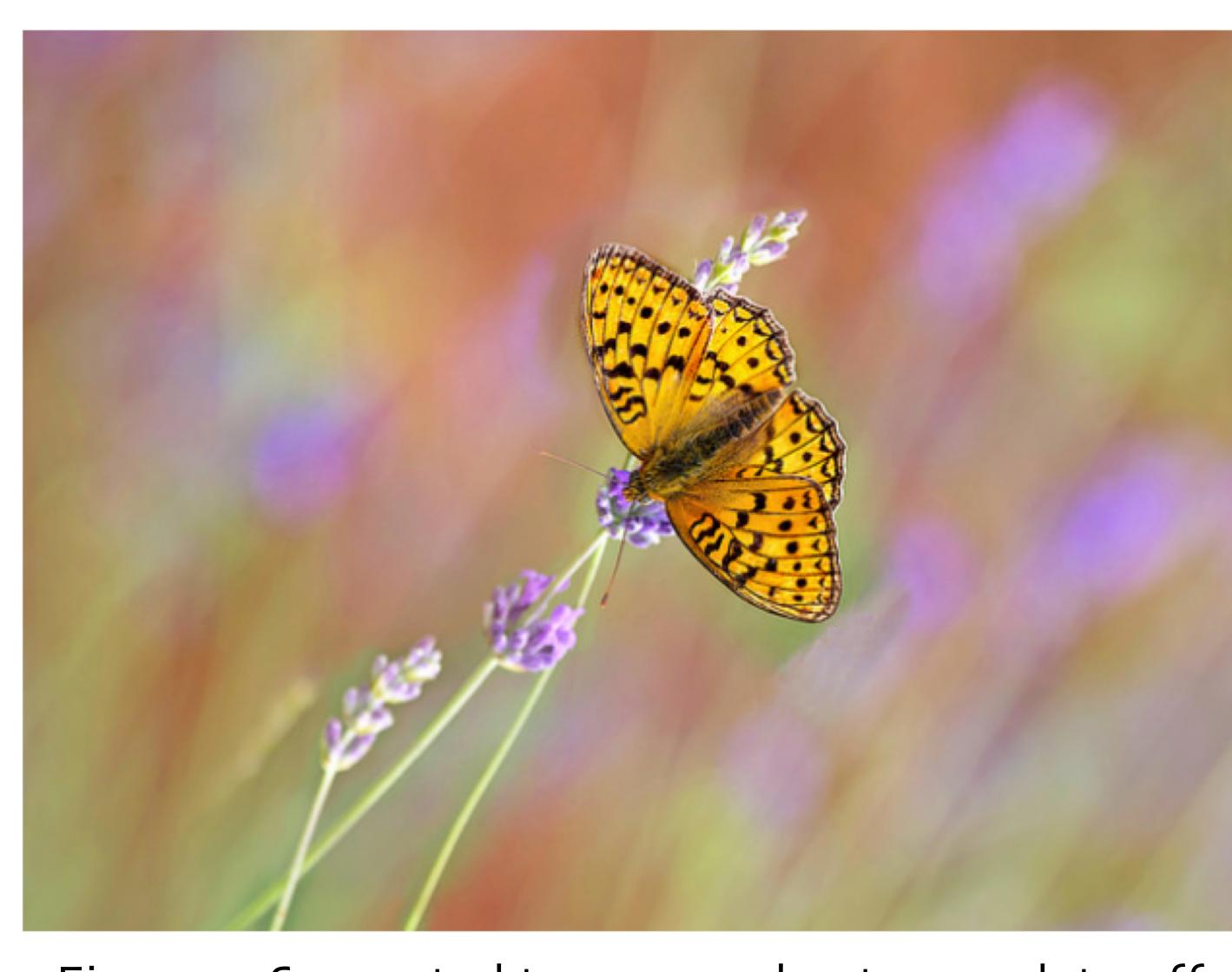


Figure 3. Suggested tags on and autocomplete off.

Enter your tags here:

tunl tunnel

Image to tag:



Figure 4. Suggested tags off and autocomplete off.

Enter your tags here:

music

CLICKABLE SUGGESTED TAGS

Suchanek et al. (2008) find that users are more likely to use clickable suggested tags. We designed our suggested tags to look like buttons and to "feel" interactive by changing shade on mouseover. Participants reported that the suggested tags UI was intuitive, and all of the pilot study participants used the clickable suggested tags at least once.

CLICK-SEPARATED TAGS

A recurring design trade-off for social tagging UIs:

- Comma-separated tags avoid run-on words like `redballoon` but require commas.
- Space-separated tags allow simple entry but result in run-on words and inconsistent uses of dashes and underscores.

We implemented "click-separated" tags, in which users enter a single tag (with or without spaces) and click "Add Tag." None of the 1738 tags entered in the pilot study used run-on words, dashes, or underscores, suggesting that click-separated tags are intuitive.

TRY IT!

<http://students.washington.edu/cholstro/tag/>

