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For this contextual inquiry, I chose to have the users take a picture with the flash and without the flash, view the photos, and delete the photos with a manual digital camera. The product that I am using to complete this goal is a red Fujifilm FinePix F600 EXR Digital Camera. This camera has a 15x wide-angle optical zoom lens and a CMOS sensor. The camera is light weight and easy to handle for a point-and-shoot camera, but still has the capabilities to give high quality results to be SLR. It can take pictures in camera raw and jpg format, and has settings for manual, aperture, shutter speed, program, EXR, advanced, and auto. The Fujifilm camera also comes with a large size viewing screen for pictures and video on the back, so that the photographer can decide quickly if they need to re-take the shot.

For the initial interview of the users, I asked them a few questions about digital cameras, decision making, and deductive reasoning. The list of nine questions are as follows:

1. Have you used a digital camera before?
2. How often have you used a digital camera?
3. When would you find yourself using a digital camera?
4. How do you make decisions related to a digital camera such as purchasing?
5. Would anything influence your decision making?
6. How would you know how to use a digital camera, and what kind of information would you use for help?
7. Are there any other devices that you use for taking pictures?
8. Does anything influence you when picking a device for taking pictures?
9. How do you try to figure out how to use an unfamiliar device?

For this task to be completed, the users will have to press the on/off button on the top to turn the camera on. For the first picture, they will have to get the camera in focus on the object they want to take the picture of, while looking at the viewing screen on the back of the camera and press the shutter button lightly to take the picture. Next for the second picture, they will have to turn on the flash by pressing the lightning bolt button on the top left side of the camera. Then they will have to focus on the object they want to take the picture of with the flash while looking at the viewing screen. Next, they will have to press the shutter button lightly at the top once again to take the second picture and the flash will go off as the button is pressed. After that, they will have to press the green triangle play button to view the photos and get the pictures to display on the viewer screen on the back of the camera. Then press the left flower image on the circular dial to scroll through the photos. Lastly, to delete the photo they will have to press on the trash can image on the top of the circular menu, press up for ok, and then the menu/ok button to confirm deletion.

The first user is my 35-year-old fiancé Gary. He is familiar with many technical devices and uses a digital camera several times a year, so he’s familiar with using them. He mostly uses his digital camera for events with friends. When it comes to decisions about purchasing a digital camera, he looks more for the quality of the images it takes rather than the price and is influenced by the people around him at the time of purchase. Gary goes to an expert on digital cameras for help and would have them show him how to use his camera properly. He also uses a cellphone and web camera to take pictures, but mostly decides which device to use by how much time he must prepare to take the picture. His learning style is exploration style where he presses the button and waits to see what happens.

When I gave him the task to accomplish he understood what I was asking him to do and was confident that he could get the task done. He began by picking up the camera and pressing the on/off button after quickly noticing it at the top. Next, he then adjusted the settings on the camera using the circular setting dial at the top right and set it to automatic. Then he looked at the viewer screen and noted that the settings say no flash and that the flash was not on. He then proceeded to turn the camera around looking for the button for the flash, and then spotted the lightning bolt button, pressed it, and noticed that the no flash symbol went away on the viewer screen. He then pressed the shutter button to see if the flash would go off and saw that it went off at the same time. Next, he pushed the flash down on the camera, and pressed the shutter button at the top once again for his photo without the flash. Gary then pressed the green play arrow button to view his photos, pressed the trash can, pressed up to select ok, and the menu/ok button to delete his first photo. Then noticed his second photo displayed on the screen, pressed the trash can again, pressed up to select ok, and the menu/ok button to delete his second photo. He was able to successfully complete the task quickly using the digital camera interface, and used some exploration see if the flash was on and then looked over the entire camera to find the button to turn on the flash.

The second user is my 73-year-old father David. He has some technical knowledge of some devices such as a computer and cellphone but is not familiar with using a digital camera. He would chase his little hummingbird if he used a digital camera and would prefer to ask somebody who knows about digital cameras when it comes to decisions. Price is a huge influence for him when it comes to purchasing a digital camera and feels that he can get information on how to use a digital camera by asking a ten-year-old. David also uses his cellphone for taking pictures and learns by playing with unfamiliar devices which leads to exploratory learning.

David started by asking and looking for how to turn the camera on by looking for the button, and then was pleased that when he spotted the on/off button at the top of the camera and was proud that he had successfully turned on the camera. Then he tried to figure out if the flash is on by exploring the device and looking at all the buttons on the camera on all sides. He turned the zoom lever at the top of the camera around the shutter button, then realized that it was not the flash and continued to explore the camera a little confused as to where the flash was. He then tried to touch the viewer screen on the camera to see if it was a touch screen and pressed the screen twice to see if it was. He then got more frustrated with the interface by stating that he didn’t like the camera.

Even though he was frustrated, he continued to look for the flash and pressed the orange movie reel button and began recording a video. After he realized that was wrong, he tried to turn off the recording by pressing the zoom lever and then touching the viewer screen with his finger again twice. While continuing to explore the camera for the flash, he pressed the shutter button on the top and was surprised when he took a picture and then pressed the shutter button again without realizing it. He then pressed the menu button and went through the menu settings to search for the flash. After searching through all the settings on the menu list, he realized that there was no flash on the menu.

Next, he looked at the left side of the camera and successfully found the lightning bolt button. He then pressed it, but the flash didn’t go up because he had his finger on top of where the flash would pop up preventing it from coming on. He pressed it again with his finger still above the flash and concluded that it wasn’t the flash on the camera and continued to look at all the buttons. The next button he pressed was the green play arrow, which then displayed him the photos he had taken without the flash. However, he did not realize that it was the photo that he had taken, so he pressed the right lightning bolt symbol on the circular menu dial and began viewing the other photos that were on the camera in search of his photos.

My father did not successfully complete the tasks that he was given and got frustrated rather easily when he could not find what he was looking for and decided to give up. While he did manage to take a picture without the flash and view the photos, he had the most difficulty with trying to find the flash on the camera and did not realize that it pops up on the device when he had pressed the flash button. He did try exploration on the device to complete all the tasks but could not familiarize himself with the interface but did try to apply his knowledge of a smartphone to this device then realized it is not a touch screen like his phone. This shows that the interface of the digital camera is not designed well for unfamiliar users, especially the when trying to use the flash.

The camera and some of the buttons:

