

# User Interface Design & Evaluation

## PRACTICAL VIII

### Evaluation

#### **Aims:**

In this practical students will gain experience in the following:

- Reflect on their previous work
- Evaluate their developed prototypes
- gain experience in heuristic evaluation & think aloud evaluation

#### **Practical Instructions:**

For this practical get into your previous museum groups of maximum 5 students.

#### **Brief:**

### Museums and Interactive Systems

#### Evaluation

Constant evaluation is a hallmark of user-centred design. It is well known that catching problems early involves much less wasted work than only finding them at the end. It might be a good idea to perform a review of some aspects of your system at this stage.

#### Heuristics & Think Aloud

1. Using Nielsen's heuristics, walkthrough your scenarios and your prototype. Pick up anything which makes you question whether or not you have met the heuristics and attempt to design away the problem. This may be by both adding new features or removing existing ones. In the worst case, it may mean a complete rethink but if you have been careful up to this stage, that will be rare.
2. In both cases, design can often be a case of compromise. Some problems simply cannot be solved without causing other problems. In which case, make a decision of where to compromise.
3. Pick a student from another team & perform a think aloud study on him or her using your prototype; choose two tasks and let him or her do it without help; make a table and note down any issues:  
**<step> <comments> <result>**

## Visual design (just think about this for now)

Having settled on some basic layouts for the content of the system, have a think about the visual design to flesh out the details. It probably helps if you have some real content to work with. Grab some stuff off existing museum websites and work with that. It's still at the prototype stage for the moment but it gives you some ideas of the kind of content your system should accommodate.

1. Think about a unified identity to your system (which is usually also identified with the brand).
2. Could you simplify hierarchical elements by using colour and font size instead of visual elements that take up space? Or alignment?
3. Do you have images or other content to fit in? How will they fit in with the flow of each page?
4. Having got some good ideas together think about refinement. Is everything on each page "working hard"? That is, no waste of space or unnecessary or secondary functionality. Consider the affordance; can users identify how to do things? In particular, how are you cueing them to use the any novel interactions?
5. If you are feeling brave, you could think about icon designs as well but it is a difficult area fraught with problems. If you need icons, you might be better off using "off-the-shelf" designs or just borrowing existing icons from other Apps/systems for now.

## Animating the demo (individual work for the project)

In your presentation, you will need to show off the interactive possibilities of the system. This doesn't mean you have to build a motion sensing, touchscreen device! But you will perhaps need to think about an animated or interactive prototype that illustrates, at least conceptually, how things would work.

1. Go again through your interactions that you developed. Which of these do you want to present and highlight?
2. Based on the strengths of your group, think about how you are going to present your page designs. You could use a PowerPoint (or similar) slideshow perhaps augmented with VB macros, or a prototyping tool, or a full out programming language. Lo-tech but complete and polished may be much better than hi-tech and unfinished or non-functioning.
3. Plan out a script for your demo. What are you going to show? In what order? Are you going to allow people after the presentation to use your demo or are you going to just demonstrate it as a presentation? Perhaps consider using your scenarios as a way to demonstrate how the system would work or as tasks to allow visitors to work through.