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Project 1 - Requirements, Heuristics, Qs & Keyboards

Part 1: Analysis of the old WPI page.

The purpose of this page is to direct people to the right pages of the website and to give some general information about WPI, like the address, phone number, what WPI stands for, etc. This page also has a personal touch to it. That is because the lines and the images look as if they were hand drawn and the font makes the page seem like someone took the time and did all this by hand. This is a good thing because most people were probably used to paper and pen so the page would have a familiar feel to it.

At the top, “WPI” is in big, bold, red letters while “Worcester Polytechnic Institute” is smaller and plain black which means “WPI” is meant to jump at you as oppose to the full name. The reason for that might be because the institution prefers “WPI” instead of the full name since the full name is just long to say all of it.

On the left side of the page, the image of the buildings shows a bit of history, meaning that WPI has been around for a while and that it has experience. The image also shows a different side of WPI, an artistic side, from the typical engineering and science environment since the image is hand drawn.

The different categories are laid out in a way such that priority is given to prospective students, The reason is because categories like About WPI and Admissions are listed first. For each category, there’s a bigger title in red that you can click on, e.g. Academics, and then it is followed by some text that will tell you what you will find on that page, e.g. Majors, Departments, Research, Projects, Continuing Education… That part is not clickable. This layout makes it clear for the user to figure out what page he or she will want to visit next.

Part 2: Heuristic Method Article

What is the goal of the research described in this paper?

* The goal of this research is study cost/benefits analysis to compare two user interfaces and figure out which one is the best.

What are two advantages of GOMS analyses?

* GOMS can help estimate expert user performance disregarding learnability problems and user errors.
* GOMS are also beneficial for formal modelling.

What is the main reason for using a Heuristic method?

* Heuristic method is there to find solely usability problems, problems with the interface, not the overall performance of the program.

What is a "cost-benefit" analysis?

* The cost-benefit analysis is looking at how much something would cost to implement in a program and the benefit of that feature and make a decision about whether to implement that feature or not.

Under what conditions were Heuristic Estimates better?

* It works best when there’s a running prototype of an implementation

Do they suggest relying on "relative usability estimates" or "absolute usability estimates"?

* They recommend relying on relative usability estimates because relative usability estimates have a smaller spread than absolute usability estimates.

What is meant by a "cold estimate"?

* Cold estimates means that the evaluators get a written specification of the designs, they do not get a running prototype.

Part 3: Informal usability study

1. Is Arlene Lowenstein a staff member at WPI?
   1. Did they find the answer in less than 4 minutes?
      1. Yes, both people found the answer in less than 4 minutes
   2. Did they search?
      1. Yes, both just searched, that’s why they found the answer really quickly.
   3. Was searching the first thing they tried?
      1. Yes, both people searched first
   4. How many links did they select (i.e., how many "clicks")?
      1. They just navigated to wpi.edu and searched for the name, one person immiadetely realized the result table on the side and the other person took a little bit longer to see it.
2. Are freshmen required to buy a computer before coming to WPI?
   1. Did they find the answer in less than 4 minutes?
      1. One person did and the other didn’t.
   2. Did they search?
      1. They person who found the answer in less than four minutes searched but the other one didn’t.
   3. Was searching the first thing they tried?
      1. No, both tried finding it by clicking different links.
   4. How many links did they select (i.e., how many "clicks")?
      1. First one selected about 15, second one about 20
3. Can an undergraduate have Computer Science as a Major and ECE as a Minor?
   1. Did they find the answer in less than 4 minutes?
      1. yes
   2. Did they search?
      1. yes
   3. Was searching the first thing they tried?
      1. yes
   4. How many links did they select (i.e., how many "clicks")?
      1. The first one selected 7, and the other one selected 9