Supersized! Gallery Interface

User Testing   Kelly Gorr   Summer 2012

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A fullscreen background slideshow built
using the jQuery library.

Introduction

About Supersized!

Fullscreen image gallery slideshows take advantage of the entire screen and they make photographs look even better. They are the best way to show-off photographs online, and even on a smaller screen using the full real estate of the display creates a powerful effect. **Supersized!** is a free gallery download that implements a dynamic full-screen image slideshow onto a webpage with minimal jQuery knowledge.

Supersized! has already become a popular resource for web designers, and it is one of the most popular online galleries. It is also recommended on many gallery and jQuery resource lists. As more and more of these fullscreen plugins emerge, **Supersized!** needs to remain at the top. Usability research would be the best way to see if **Supersized!** is really reaching its fullscreen potential.

Top jQuery Gallery Plugins (Aug. 2012)	Ranking*
Fancybox (fancybox.net/)	10,360
Supersized! (buildinternet.com/project/supersized/)	**10,448**
TN3 Gallery (tn3gallery.com)	31,909
Shadowbox.js (shadowbox-js.com/)	45,099

*A global ranking based on traffic stats and website analytics

The Plan

In order for a gallery slideshow plugin to be successful it needs to have the following qualities:

- Makes the images look great
- Easy to download and implement on a website
- Easy to customize

To make **Supersized!** even better an interface that allows the user to customize their gallery online could be created. It is likely that every user will have their own unique gallery needs, so having an easy way to customize **Supersized!** is essential. This study will test a gallery interface that would be integrated into the **Supersized!** website. This would allow the user to update their gallery dynamically onscreen instead of having to sift through the code. This would make the **Supersized!** audience larger because the user wouldn't have to know any a lot of code. The user could do all the customizations and then download the plugin so that it could be added to their website. Even better, if **Supersized!** were to host the galleries then the user wouldn't have to own a website at all. Anyone could use **Supersized!** The users could sign in, upload their photos, and share a link to their gallery.

The Study

Creating a gallery interface would be a great way to make the **Supersized!** plugin a better user experience. The study will consist of two parts. The first part of the study will test a paper prototype of the gallery interface, and in the second part of the study a digital prototype will be tested (designed and improved with data from the paper prototype). The paper prototype will be a wireframe version of the customization interface. It will be typed for uniformity and so that it is more legible. It will be printed on white paper and the pages will be stacked in an order that would allow for better transitions through the pages. The digital prototype will be a hi-fi version of the interface and it will be interactive. It will be created from the feedback obtained during the first part of the study. It will have interactive links on all major elements of the design so that the user will have a more realistic experience. With the data gathered from the two prototypes, recommendations can be given for a live version of the gallery interface.

Test Environment

The testing will be held at The Art Institute of Seattle, in Seattle, Washington. The testing will be done in the computer labs when there is minimal distractions. The moderator will be seated next to the participant in the test environment and they will be leading the testing as well as taking notes.

Part 1: Paper Prototype

The participants will be seated in front of a computer, and the keyboard space will be cleared away to make room for the paper prototype (The computers will not be used during this portion of the testing). The participants will "use" the paper prototype interface and the moderator will be in charge of switching around the pieces.

Part 2: Digital Prototype

The participants will be using iMacs and Adobe Acrobat to view the digital prototype. This is the standard computer set up at The Art Institute of Seattle, so participants will already be familiar with it and they will not have to learn this technology.

Moderator Role

The moderator will be in charge of the testing. They will introduce the experiment and each of the tasks to the participant. They will observe the participant as they try and complete the tasks and take notes. The moderator will ask follow-up questions at the conclusion of the session and also debrief the participant.

During the testing the moderator should make sure that the participant understands the tasks (using the testing script). The moderator must not guide the participant through any of the tasks. If the participant does not complete a task the moderator will instruct them to continue onto the next one. The answers to the tasks will be given at the end of the testing. The moderator must ensure that the participant understands the moderator's role.

Part 1: Paper Prototype

During the first part of the experiment the moderator will need to set up the paper prototype and make sure that all the layers are in order. They will be in charge of "animating" the paper prototype, and they will need to be really familiar with the prototype so that they can quickly and seamlessly transition through different layers.

Part 2: Digital Prototype

During the second part of the experiment the moderator will need to bring the digital prototype to the testing and make sure the prototype is set up and ready for the participant to start using.

Reporting Results

The study will be used as the final project for The Art Institute of Seattle's Usability Testing class (Summer 2012). The report will be formatted as an interactive PDF, which will allow for more versatility. A summary of the testing and findings will be presented to the class and the report will be shown on-screen.

The report will also be professionally printed and bound and presented as a portfolio project at The Art Institute of Seattle. It will also be uploaded to a portfolio site to demonstrate usability testing.
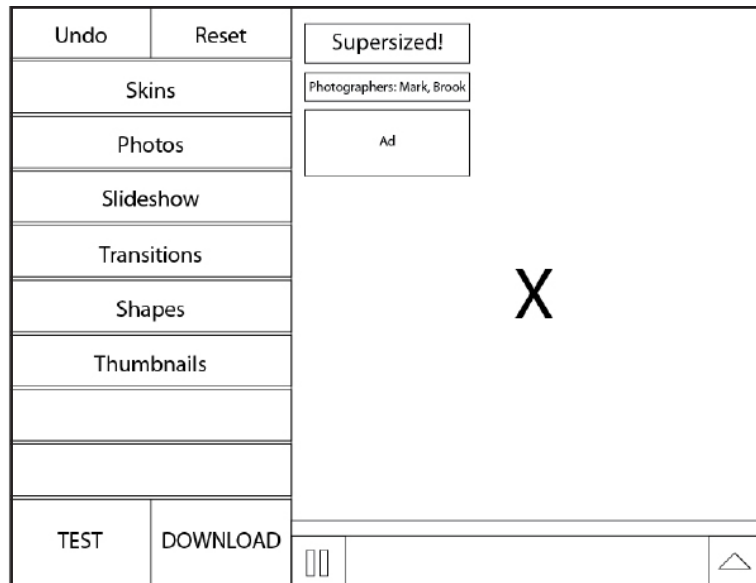
Part 1: Purpose & Objective

The first part of the usability study will be testing out the paper prototype version of the gallery interface. The format established in this beginning study will dictate many of the methods and procedure for the second study. The usability test will have the participants perform key customizations that can be done with the gallery interface. It will also test to see if the participant can perform other tasks that are essential to a successful and complete experience. The testing will give developers an overall view of the difficulties experienced during these key tasks. Ideally all the tasks will take under 10 seconds to complete (with an additional 5-10 seconds factored in for the moderator to switch the paper sheets). The goal is to design the interface so that the key tasks easy and transparent for the user.

The data collected should be measurable or observable, so useful conclusions can be obtained. The study should be designed in such a way that the tests can be repeatable and retested if necessary. With the data and feedback collected from the paper prototype a digital prototype will be created for the second part of the testing.

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Part 1: Research Questions

This will be the first customizable gallery interface designed for Supersized!, so there is a lot of freedom when considering aspects to explore. The study will look at the main tasks that the gallery interface has to offer, and how it fulfills the expectations of the participants. The study will also explore the needs and motivations of the Supersized! user and how well the gallery interface accommodates them.

The study will try and answer the following questions:

- How long does it take for the participant to complete the task?
- What paths do participants take to complete tasks?
- How closely do the user paths match the "ideal paths"?
- How many clicks does it take a user to find an item?
- How many "mistakes" are made when they are completing tasks, and when are the mistakes made?
- Can a user find an area from any starting position?

The data above is both quantitative and qualitative.

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Part 1: Participant Characteristics

The main group of people that currently use **Supersized!** are web developers. The user would need to own a website and understand some html, css, and jQuery in order to download and install the plugin. However, the new gallery interface aims to accommodate other non-web people who could benefit from a fullscreen slideshow gallery. These people could be artists or photographers with varying degrees of web experience, or even someone who is just looking for an easy way to share and display their family photos.

The participants for this study will need to be mainly web developers (since that is currently the main audience of **Supersized!**), and there will also need to be a non-web participant to see if the interface can be used by this demographic (in Part 2).

Characteristics	Participants
Web Developers	3
Total Number of Participants	**3**
Age 25-30	2
Age 30-35	1

Part 1: Method

Since this is the first analysis of a customizable gallery interface for **Supersized!** the study will try and lay the foundation for the second part of this study, but also for other research to build upon. The study will take a look at the main offerings of the gallery interface and how easy it is for the participants to navigate to key areas and use them. The data and feedback from all the users will be gathered and assessed.

This study will use a within-subject design, because this design format requires fewer participants to get results. This study format will also make for a more streamline process. In summary, each user will test all the study conditions.

A disadvantage of this type of study is user fatigue, which can set in over a long experiment. To counteract this the entire testing should be under 15 minutes with breaks given to participants that show signs of fatigue.

Introduction	Minutes
Discuss the study and the participants role Discuss the moderator's role (see page 05 for more details about the moderator)	3
Tasks	**Minutes**
Complete outlined tasks Est. 1 minutes total between tasks for a pause	7
Conclusion	**Minutes**
Debrief the participant Give solutions to any problems that the participant may have encountered Discuss with the participant any suggestions or opinions they may have about the site and also the research process.	5

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Part 1: Tasks

Below is a list of important tasks that most users will do when using the gallery interface. These are the tasks that all participants will try and perform during the testing. Each task explores a separate aspect of the gallery interface. The tasks were chosen in such a way that performing one task will not give away how to complete others.

Task 1

Change the speed of your images.

(Can the user edit the transition speed?)

Task 2

Add the following design to your slideshow:

<div style="background:#a4c639;color:#000;display:inline-block;padding:40px;">Click</div>

It is a green square with "Click" written in the center.

(Can the user add text and titles to the images in their slideshow?)

Task 3

Change the order that your images appear.

(Can the user control the order of the slideshow?)

Task 4

Remove the thumbnail preview from the gallery.

(Can the user add/remove the thumbnail preview?)

Task 5

Test the slideshow.

(Can the user test the gallery that they made?)

Task 6

Copy the URL to the slideshow.

(Can the user find and share the link to their gallery?)

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Part 1: Test Script

Introduction

Hello my name is Kelly, thank you for joining me for some Usability Testing. The testing will take approximately 15 minutes. If at any point you need a break, let me know. The first part of the testing I will give you some tasks to complete, and the second part I will ask you some questions and get your feedback about the interface.

Supersized! is a jQuery Plugin that allows you to make fullscreen image slideshows on your website. I created an interface that lets you customize your gallery online. It will let you change the color of you gallery, add photos, and much more. If you are unable to complete a task, or if you give up, don't worry! We will move on and I will give you the answer at the end of the testing. I will not be able to help you with the task other than to clarify the instructions. Don't worry if you are not able to complete a task. You have not failed, it is the design that has failed you.

Task 1

Change the speed of your images.

Task 2

Add the following design to your slideshow:

Click

It is a green square with "Click" written in the center.

Task 3

Change the order that your images appear.

Task 4

Remove the thumbnail preview from the gallery.

Task 5

Test the slideshow.

Task 6

Copy the URL to the slideshow.

Conclusion

1. Provide answers to any of the tasks that the participant was
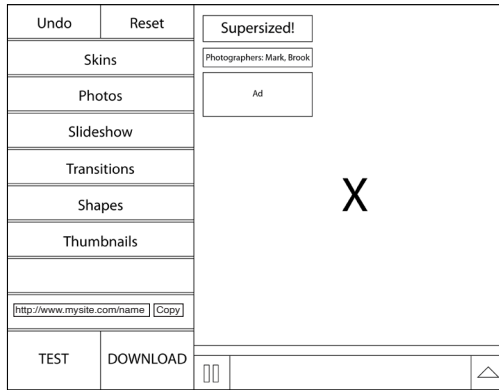
unable to complete.

2. Receive information about the tasks (qualitative).

Were the tasks easy to complete?

- Did the task results make sense?

- Is there anything that could be changed to make your job as a

    web designer easier?

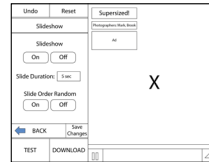3. Thank the participant for doing the study!
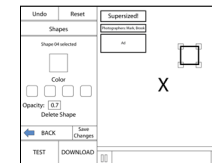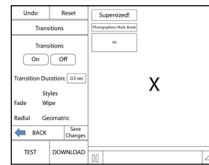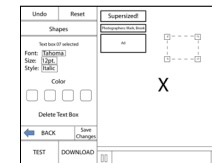
Part 1: Paper Prototype

Skins

Photos

Organize Photos

Slideshow

Transitions

Shape Edit

Shapes

Text Edit
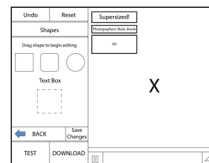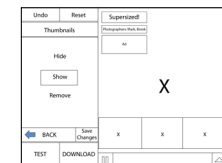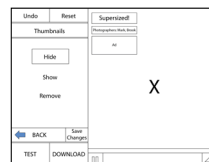
Show Thumbnail

Thumbnails
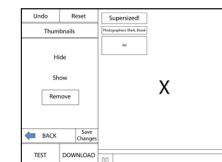
Remove Thumbnail

Part 1: Paper Prototype

Supersized! Gallery Interface

User Test Plan   Kelly Gorr   Summer 2012

Date: _____

Location: _____

Participant Number: _____

Experience: _____

Age Range: _____

Task #____

| **Start:** 00:00	**End:** 00:00
Path:	
Total Clicks:	
Total Errors:	
Notes:	

Part 1: Data to be Collected

The moderator will organize the data at the end of each session so that all the sessions can be compared. Templates will be created ahead of time so that the data can be filled in quickly and efficiently. This will also standardize the way the data for each session is collected. The data collected for Part 1 and Part 2 of the testing will need to be the same.

The data will be both quantitative and qualitative. To make it easier to compare to future studies, the testing will try and collect quantitative data when possible. The main quantitative data that will be collected relates to click counts, and the amount of errors when searching for an item. The amount of time taken to perform each task will also be recorded.

Qualitative data will also be collected by the moderator during the course of the testing. The main participants tested will be web designers so they have used galleries before and know what they want to see in one. The paper prototype will be a good opportunity to try out the better qualitative suggestions.

Part 1: Results

Graph 1: Time

Graph 2: Errors
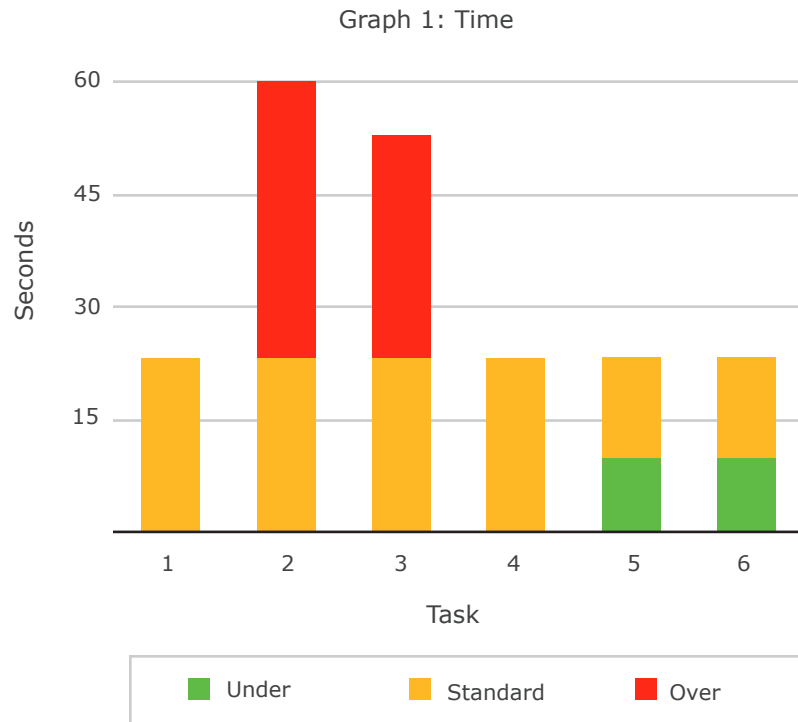
As discussed in Part 1: Purpose and Objective, all the tasks should take under 10 seconds to perform (with 5-10 seconds added to account for the moderator switching around the pages). At 20 seconds this is the standard (in yellow). If a task is finished faster than the standard it is displayed in green, and if it goes over it is displayed in red.

This graph documents all the problems or "errors" that occurred during the testing. These occurred when the participants deviated from the ideal paths.

Graph 3: Clicks
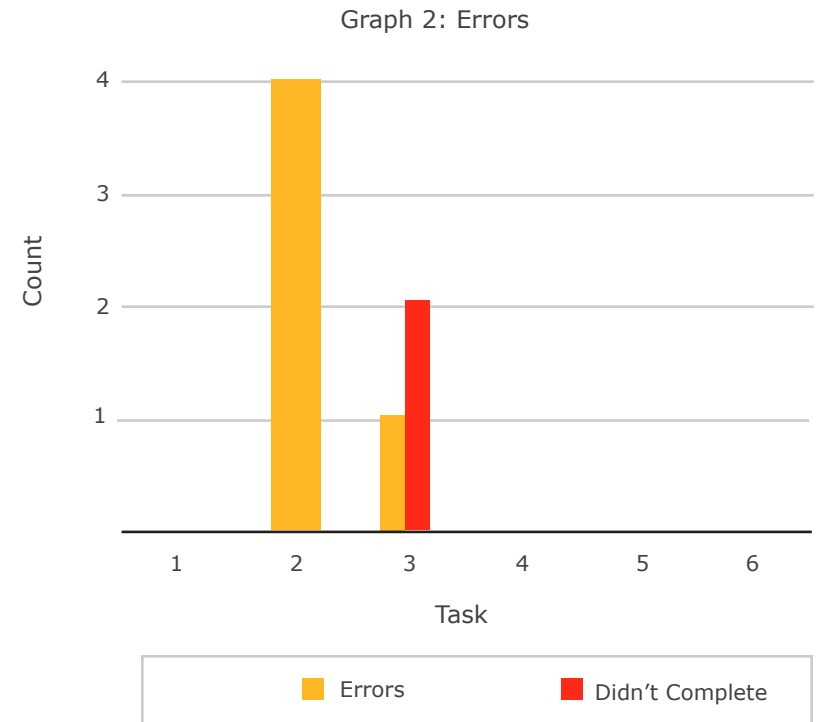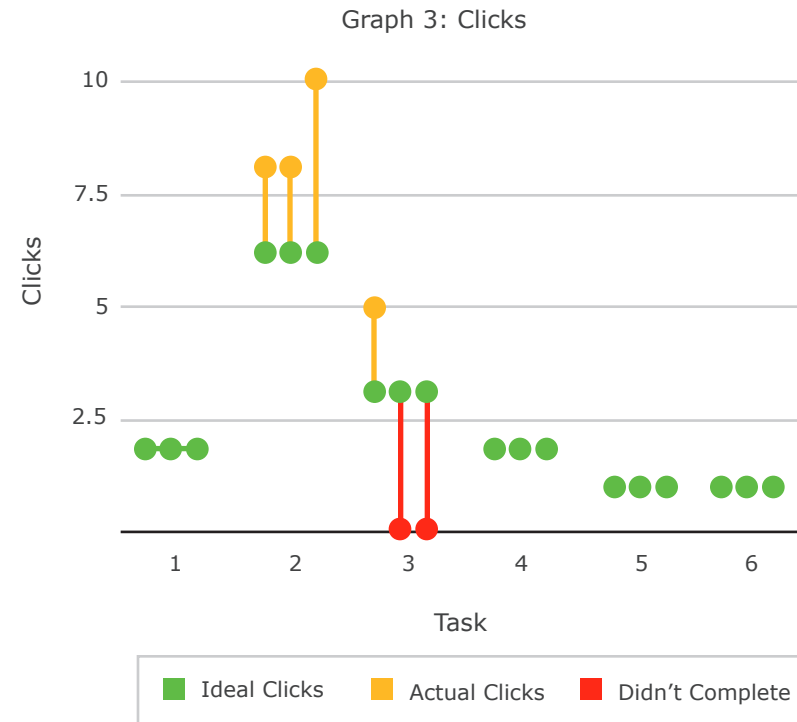
The graph shows the number of clicks done by each participant compared to the ideal (fewest) amount of clicks. If the dots do not branch off than the actual clicks was equal to the ideal.

Part 1: Conclusions

There was a lot to learn from this first part of the testing after reviewing the data. The participants were able to complete four out of the six tasks without any errors (Graph 2 and Graph 3). Also, in Graph 1 we can see that these four tasks were complete under or at the 20 second standard. The two tasks that had the most problems were Task 2 and Task 3.

With Task 2 the participants were not able to complete it under 20 seconds (Graph 1), and they also made a lot of errors (Graph 2). Also, in Graph 3 we can see that each participant went over the ideal number of clicks for this task. The main issue with this task appears to be in its main navigation title (called "Shapes"), because during the testing the participant hesitated when selecting it, or selected another title. The errors and feedback from the participants support that the participants were not expecting to also be able to add text in the "Shapes" section. Using "Shapes and Text" as the title is an alternative that could help the participants through the task.

Most of the participants were not able to complete Task 3 (Graph 3). The participants looked under the correct navigation title ("Photos"), but they overlooked or did not think that the "edit" button would be the correct button to click in order to advance. A more descriptive button should be used to help indicate to the user how they can change the position of their image slides.

There was some additional qualitative data that was received that could help in creating the digital prototype. One participant suggested that the "Skins" navigation title be changed to "Themes" since this menu only changes the colors, and a "Skins" menu suggests that the layout will also be changed. One participant suggested that we give the user access to changing the slideshow order in "Slideshow" and "Photos", because people might look to change it in either of these areas. Another participant suggested that some of the navigation options could be put together to reduce clutter and make the design cleaner.
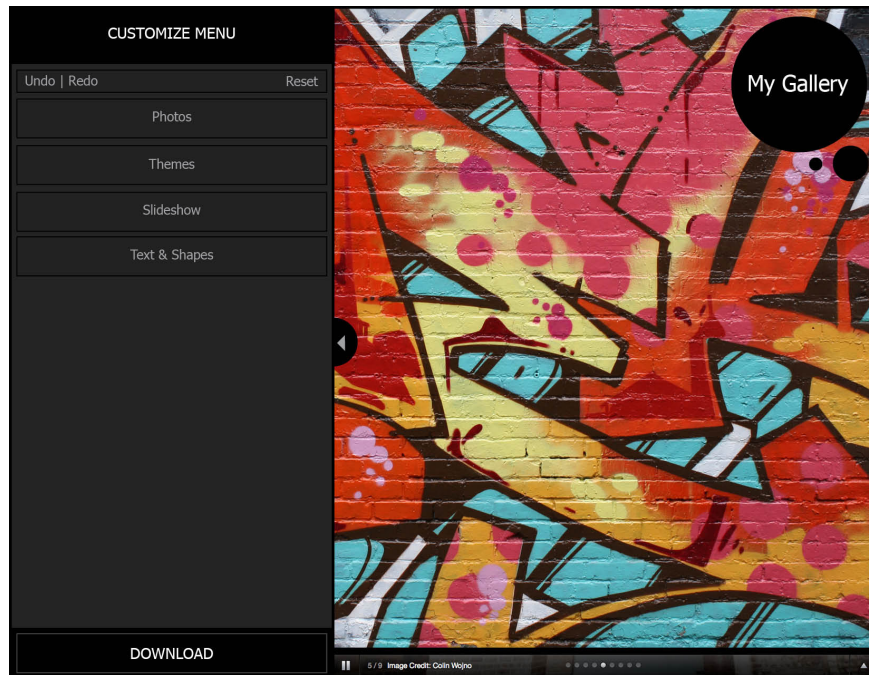
Part 2: Purpose & Objective

With the results from the part one of the testing a digital prototype was created. The digital prototype aims to improve upon the paper prototype, and lay the groundwork for a live version. If the digital prototype does not accomplishes all the objectives a third round of testing should be completed with an updated digital prototype. This next part of the testing has many of the same objectives as part one, because the goal is to design a gallery interface where the key tasks are easy and transparent for the user.

Part two of the usability test will have the participants perform key tasks that are essential to a successful and complete experience when using the gallery interface. The testing will give developers an overall view of the difficulties experienced during these key tasks. Ideally all the tasks will take under 10 seconds to complete.

The data collected should be measurable or observable, so useful conclusions can be obtained. The study should be designed in such a way that the tests can be repeatable and retested if necessary. With the data and feedback collected from the digital prototype a live version may be created.

Part 2: Research Questions

The study will look at the main tasks that the gallery interface has to offer, and how it fulfills the expectations of the participants. The study will also explore the needs and motivations of the Supersized! user and how well the gallery interface accommodates them.

The study will try and answer the following questions:

- How long does it take for the participant to complete the task?
- What paths do participants take to complete tasks?
- How closely do the user paths match the "ideal paths"?
- How many clicks does it take a user to find an item?
- How many "mistakes" are made when they are completing tasks, and when are the mistakes made?
- Can a user find an area from any starting position?

The data above is both quantitative and qualitative.

Part 2: Participant Characteristics

The main group of people that currently use **Supersized!** are web developers. The user would need to own a website and understand some html, css, and jQuery in order to download and install the plugin. However, the new gallery interface aims to accommodate other non-web people who could benefit from a fullscreen slideshow gallery. These people could be artists or photographers with varying degrees of web experience, or even someone who is just looking for an easy way to share and display their family photos.

The participants for this study will need to be mainly web developers (since that is currently the main audience of **Supersized!**), and there will also need to be a non-web participant to see if the interface can be used by this demographic. In the first half of the study the participant were only web designers, but with the improvements made from the paper prototype, the digital prototype would be a great opportunity to see how a non-web participant would fair. The digital enviromnment may also be more familiar to them than pretending with paper.

Characteristics	Participants
Web Developers	2
Non-Web	1
Total Number of Participants	**3**
Age 25-30	1
Age 30-35	2

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Introduction	Minutes
Discuss the study and the participants role. Discuss the moderator's role (see section 07 for more details)	3
Tasks	**Minutes**
Complete outlined tasks Give solutions to any problems that the participant may have encountered after each task Est. 1 minutes total between tasks for a pause	7
Conclusion	**Minutes**
Debrief the participant Discuss with the participant any suggestions or opinions they may have about the site and also the research process.	5

Part 2: Method

With Part 1 of the study complete, a lot of important information was learned from the testing process. The main format outlined in Part 1 will mostly remain the same. The study will take a look at the main offerings of the gallery interface and how easy it is for the participants to navigate to key areas and use them. The data and feedback from all the users will be gathered and assessed.

This study will use a within-subject design, because this design format requires fewer participants to get results. This study format will also make for a more streamline process. In summary, each user will test all the study conditions.

The testing will take under 15 minutes to complete. This is a very quick testing that keeps the participants focused with six different tasks to fit in. After completing Part 1 of the testing this time table is possible. The time is maximized, and a lot of data is gathered from each task. One main difference in Part 2 will be to give the solutions to the tasks at the completion of each task, instead of waiting until the end. The participants want to know the answers right away, and moving onto the next task is more difficult.

supersized! *jQuery plugin*

Part 2: Tasks

The tasks will remain the same in both parts of the testing to see if the results have been improved between prototypes. These are the tasks that all participants will try and perform during the testing. Each task explores a separate aspect of the gallery interface. The tasks were chosen in such a way that performing one task will not give away how another task will be performed.

Task 1

Change the speed of your images.

(Can the user edit the transition speed?).

Task 2

Add the following design to your slideshow:

Click

It is a green square with "Click" written in the center.

(Can the user add text and titles to the images in their slideshow?).

Task 3

Change the order that your images appear.

(Can the user control the order of the slideshow?)

Task 4

Remove the thumbnail preview from the gallery.

(Can the user add/remove the thumbnail preview?)

Task 5

Test the slideshow.

(Can the user test the gallery that they made?)

Task 6

Copy the URL to the slideshow.

(Can the user find and share the link to their gallery?)

supersized! jQuery plugin

Part 2: Test Script

Introduction

Hello my name is Kelly, thank you for joining me for some Usability Testing. The testing will take approximately 15 minutes. If at any point you need a break, let me know. The first part of the testing I will give you some tasks to complete, and the second part I will ask you some questions and get your feedback about the interface.

Supersized! is a jQuery Plugin that allows you to make fullscreen image slideshows on your website. I created an interface that lets you customize your gallery online. It will let you change the color of you gallery, add photos, and much more. If you are unable to complete a task, or if you give up, don't worry! We will move on and I will give you the answer at the end of the testing. I will not be able to help you with the task other than to clarify the instructions. Don't worry if you are not able to complete a task. You have not failed, it is the design that has failed you.

Task 1

Change the speed of your images.

Task 2

Add the following design to your slideshow:

Click

It is a green square with "Click" written in the center.

Task 3

Change the order that your images appear.

Task 4

Remove the thumbnail preview from the gallery.

Task 5

Test the slideshow.

Task 6

Copy the URL to the slideshow.

Conclusion

1. Provide answers to any of the tasks that the participant was
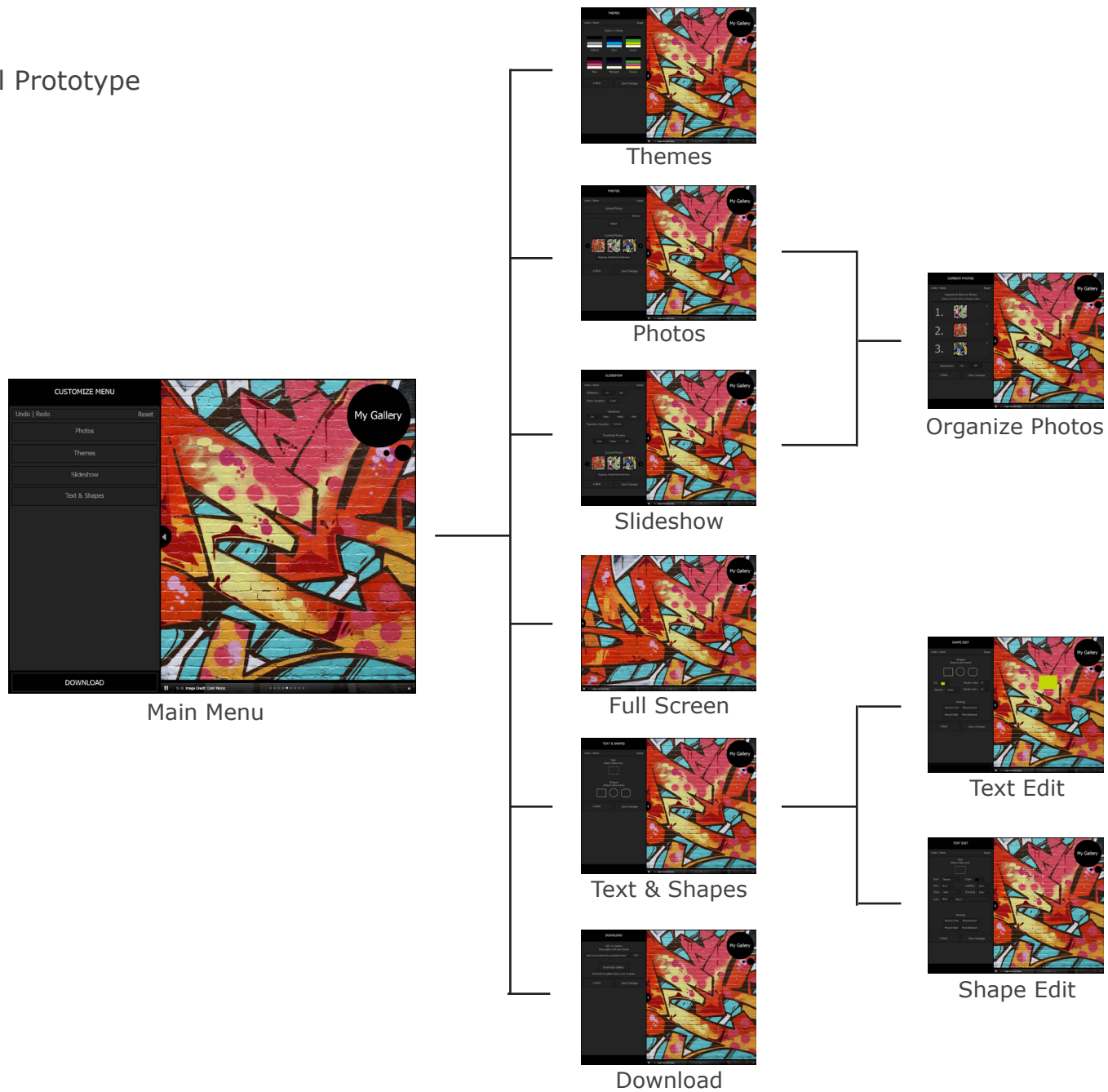
unable to complete.

2. Receive information about the tasks (qualitative).

Were the tasks easy to complete?

- Did the task results make sense?

- Is there anything that could be changed to make your job as a

  web designer easier?

3. Thank the participant for doing the study!

Part 2: Digital Prototype

Themes

Photos

Organize Photos

Slideshow

Main Menu

Full Screen

Text & Shapes

Text Edit

Shape Edit

Download

Part 2: Digital Prototype

Supersized! Gallery Interface

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Date: _____

Location: _____

Participant Number: _____

Experience: _____

Age Range: _____

Task #____

| Start: 00:00	End: 00:00
Path:	
Total Clicks:	
Total Errors:	
Notes:	

Part 2: Data to be Collected

The moderator will organize the data at the end of each session so that all the sessions can be compared. The template at the left was used in the first part of the testing and it was a great way to get note and data recorded quickly and efficiently. It will also be used in Part 2 of the testing to keep the data collection standardized and to make it easier to compare results.
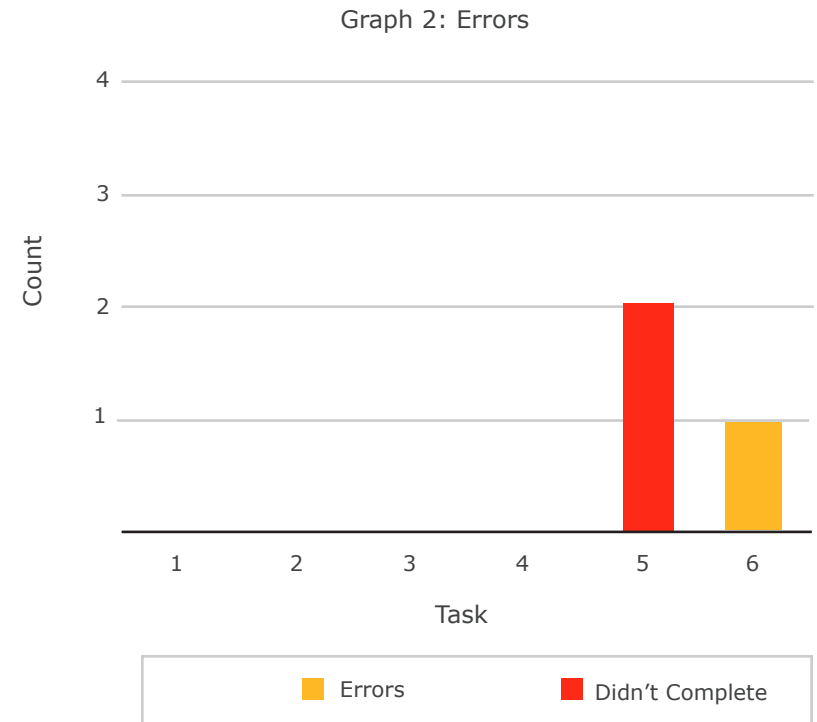
The data will be both quantitative and qualitative. To make it easier to compare to future studies, the testing will try and collect quantitative data when possible. The main quantitative data that will be collected relates to click counts, and the amount of errors when searching for an item. The amount of time taken to perform each task will also be recorded.

Qualitative data will also be collected by the moderator during the course of the testing. The main participants tested will be web designers so they have used galleries before and know what they want to see in one. Data from the digital prototype will be assessed along with the data from the paper prototype before creating a live version. All the data collected will be used.

Part 2: Results

Graph 1: Time

Graph 2: Errors
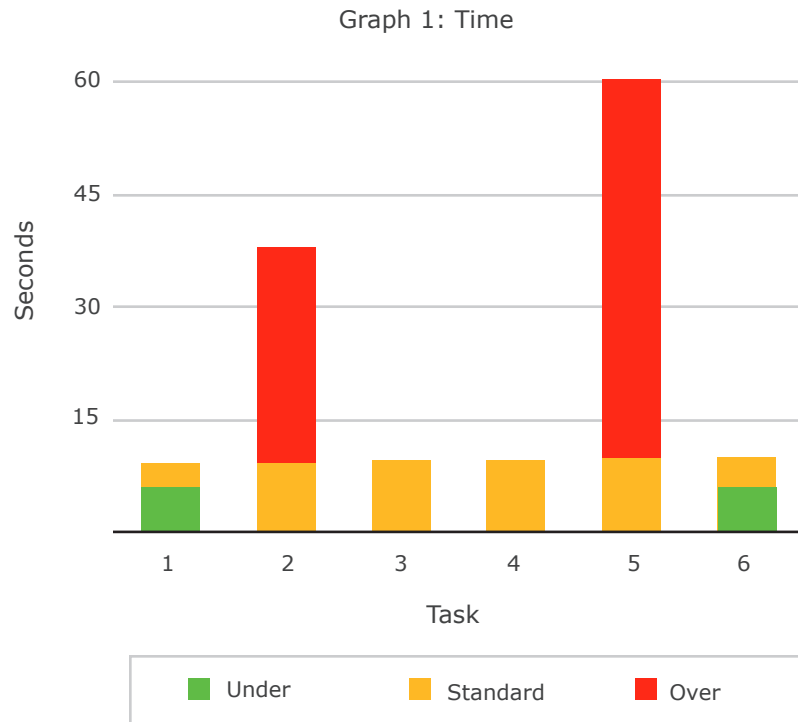
As discussed in Part 2: Purpose and Objective, all the tasks should take under 10 seconds to perform. At 10 seconds this is the standard (in yellow). If a task is finished faster than the standard it is displayed in green, and if it goes over it is displayed in red.

This graph documents all the problems or "errors" that occurred during the testing. These occurred when the participants deviated from the ideal paths.

Graph 3: Clicks
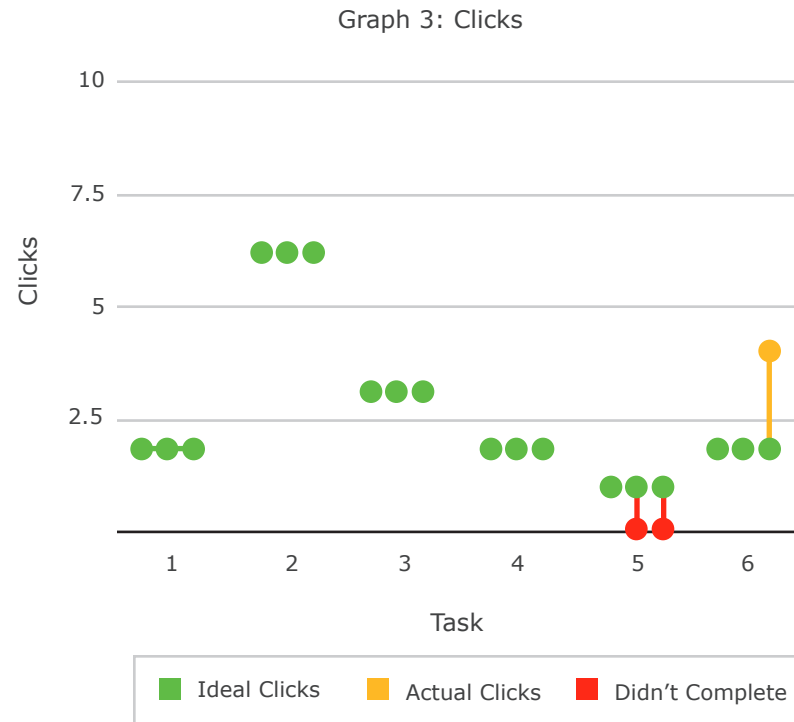
The graph shows the number of clicks done by each participant compared to the ideal (fewest) amount of clicks. If the dots do not branch off than the actual clicks was equal to the ideal.

Part 2: Conclusions

Looking over the data from the digital prototype there is strong evidence that the main problems faced in the first part of the testing have been resolved, but some new problems emerged.

The improvements made to the problem areas of the testing (Task 2 and Task 3) helped the participants successfully complete the tasks, and this is reflected in the data. With the new updates the participants were able to complete these tasks without making any errors (Graph 2). In Graph 3 it shows that the participants also used the fewest amount of clicks to complete the task.

Problems that arose during the digital prototype occurred in Task 5 and Task 6. Task 5 became the most difficult task of the entire testing process, and during Part 1 none of the participants made any errors on this task. With Task 5 there had originally been a button that said "Test", but a need to minimalize the design caused this button the be redesigned into a simple arrow. The arrow was placed on the side of the interface (to resemble a tab) so that when it was clicked the interface would slide off screen. The testing showed that

"preview" or "test" still needed to be included in the button instead of just using an arrow. Participants suggested using a large button called "Test" to click to test the gallery (this is how it originally was in the paper prototype), or put "preview" or "test" in small letters on the arrow tab.

In Task 6 the word "download" was not immediately associated with finding a link to share their gallery with. "Completed", "Finished", or "Share" were suggested in replace of "Download".

Looking at Task 2, the participants did not have any errors (Graph 2), but in Graph 1 it shows that the participants were not able to complete it under the 10 second standard. This is probably because this task has the highest amount of clicks needed to complete the task. It may not be practical to hold this task to the same time standards as the rest because it is a little more involved.

From Graph 1 we can see that the participants were able to complete Task 1 and Task 6 with ease, because the participants completed them under the 10 second standard. In Task 3 and Task 4 the participants met the 10 second time standard.

There was also some qualitative data that was collected during the testing. One participant suggested putting a link to the gallery's URL on the main menu so that it could be copied and shared easier. All participants felt that the preview button could use some text or have its own button.