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CHALMERS
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Master Thesis Project Proposal

Testing cultural sensitivity of mobile application for students' self-help

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An introduction to the domain and why it is interaction design

Interaction design represents the design of interactive products, services, or system in which a designer's focus on what users need and how users will interact with it. Users' needs empower designers to customize the product or the service (*Interaction Design Foundation*). It includes psychology and design of everyday things, models of human behavior in interaction with computers, interactive system development processes, basic principles of good design, user interface evaluation, prototyping and implementation (*Čagalj, 2021*).

"Interaction Design is the creation of a dialogue between a person and a product, system, or service. This dialogue is both physical and emotional in nature and is manifested in the interplay between form, function, and technology as experienced over time." (*John Kolko, 2011*)

Students often interact with app solutions for services such as booking of flights and accommodation or purchase of clothes and shoes. The goal of the app to be developed within this master thesis project is to provide some of these services as well as instructions, dental and hairdressing services that would be affordable to the student population. The idea is to help students to exchange services, that is to provide services and book these appointments online with each other.

The aim of this master thesis is to explore up to what extent the application for student self-help is culturally sensitive. Do students have the same needs? Hence, the main research question could be the following:

- What are the similarities and differences in the experiences of using the self-help app for Swedish and Croatian students?

The method to be applied in this piece of research would be triple diamond and usability testing with real users. The research would be carried out with students from Croatia and Sweden.

Context

Students will have the possibility to create an account on the mobile app, which will contain basic information about them. The number of services offered in the app will depend on students who are willing to participate in the project (testing phase). This app should have a schedule of bookable services that students have to have access to carry out bookings.

The research problem

The main problem to be addressed in this project is the lack of application services for the student population. In addition to studying, students often pursue a hobby or enroll in additional courses. The question is why they could not share their knowledge or skills with other students? It will be of great help if students could exchange their experiences, skills or knowledge which would save a lot of time and money. This research project will investigate this hypothesis in real life. Comparing student samples in both countries could give more detailed findings about this issue.

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

PS: What are the similarities and differences in the experiences of using the app for Swedish and Croatian students?

- RQ1: Is design of simple and understandable UI culturally sensitive?
- RQ2: Can one UI design be applied to both students' groups?

Goals and Challenges

The main goal would be to provide services between the students, especially to those who want to save money and time. These services would be presented with a number of basic pieces of information, such as name of the service, field of the service, type of the service, phone number, and email address of the student or company they work with.

An introduction to stakeholders

The focus will be on students from Sweden and Croatia who will, through their participation in a particular test, help in the realization of the prototype design. Hopefully, this will lead to the full development of the application in future.

A briefly planned working process

Research

- Learn more about the technology for designing interactive prototyping
- Learn how to use methodologies
- Literature review

Ideating

Sketching (low fidelity)
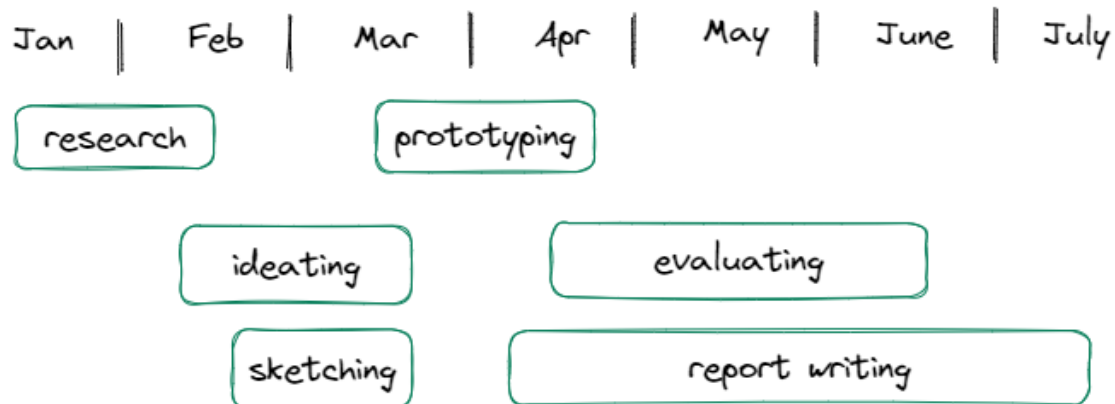
Prototyping (interactive high fidelity)

Evaluation

Iterating

Report writing

A brief time plan

The time plan of this project is visualized in the excalidraw below:

Methodology

The intention is to use design Sprint that is combined with 6 phases. Sprint includes Understand, Define, Sketch, Decide, Prototype and Validate.

Based on the phase that I am in; I will choose an appropriate design method from a selection of design methods within a phase.

A brief consideration about ethical issues that may arise in the project

In a research project, ethical considerations are important. Students will be involved in research work. Since their basic data is needed, we must take care of data protection. When testing students, there will be a questionnaire for consent that their basic data (name, age, town, country) can be used for research purposes.

References

- Interaction Design Organization: https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/interaction-design?fbclid=IwAR2EUZyOfEj5mHNyzzvn3lroJSTR1l3tF8JnPYolZhx0xVdhaq1elD0kCUk

- Čagalj M.: http://marjan.fesb.hr/~mcagalj/HCI, 2021/2022

- Kolko J.: "Author of Thoughts on Interaction Design", 2011