

HCI 3/3

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Gestalt's... Stuff

Pragnanz

- We tend to see something that's complete, and see the simplest explanation possible for things
- We assume what a shape/thing is based off of its features
- How do we combine all of the other things to get a sense of cohesiveness/purpose of a particular object?
- Principle: We tend to perceive maximal simplicity, completeness, and stability in both the figure and the ground
- The various Gestalt effects can reinforce each other constructively or destructively
- Carefully consider and balance the various gestalt principles in your designs – *we need to test**

Usability Testing

- Super important so we're not making any incorrect assumptions about our users in our UI development
- Most important thing to take away is that we **should engage in usability testing**
- We want to understand how the user and the design interact
- People don't read things- even smart people
- Usability tests are...
 - Speculative, aka they seek to evaluate a proposed design
 - Structured, aka a process is created to explore the design aspect(s)
 - Objective, aka there shouldn't be any bias in what is elicited or observed from participants
- Usability tests involve people other than yourselves

Who and How

The Actors

- Testers/Evaluators (you)
 - Moderator, observer, collector, technician, artifact expert, admin
- The Design Artifact
 - Paper prototype
 - Functional prototype
 - "Completed" design
- Participants (users)

The Steps

- Seek to improve the design
- Consider time, space, cost, people
- Follow human subject protocols
 - Luckily we won't really have to do this for what we do in the class but if we're doing testing in the real world we gotta do this

- Include **real users** as participants
- Have the **real users** perform **real tasks**
- Observe participants formally
- Carefully analyze observations
- Document evidence and conclusions
- Something I missed...
- Iterate

Designing Usability Tests

- Why: Come up with a purpose, a statement of reasons for conducting the test
 - What are the usability reasons for the test?
 - What effect will results have on the course of the project?
- What: Concerns and Goals, a refinement of the purpose statement
 - What aspects of the design have raised concerns about usability?
 - What qualities of interaction/usability should the design possess?
 - Test the most critical/frequently used features (80/20 rule)
 - * You can identify lots of aesthetic problems with UIs, but there are lots of things that could be more important
 - * There will always be more than you could ever actually improve, and if that's not the case then you need different/more usability tests
 - * You want to find the **biggest usability** problems and work on those first