

Design for Interaction – Lab 4: Analysing Interactive Interfaces

In this workshop you are to analyse two interactive interfaces – the Glasgow Libraries catalogue and the book section of Amazon.

Glasgow Libraries catalogue: <http://libcat.csghlasgow.org/>

Amazon: www.amazon.co.uk

You should write up your analysis in electronic form using the file Analysing Interactive Interfaces.doc (available on Moodle) as a template. The tables in the file will expand as you type in the content – you are expected to enter more than a word or two! When you have completed the task, you should discuss your analysis with a lab demonstrator. Remember also to keep a copy of the file for future reference and possible inclusion in your assessment portfolio.

Purpose of site

Each of these sites has a purpose – think of what this is and write down a few sentences for each to describe it.

Features of site

Each of these sites has a number of features – spend some time exploring each of the sites to identify these. List these.

As an example feature, each has a search facility – compare and contrast these. For example, you can search for a book on each. How do the search criteria differ? What information can you search by? What information can you enter? What information do you get back? What does the interactive system do to help you? Which do you think is better?

You can order a book from Amazon. Can you order a book from the library?

Usability goals for each site

How well do the sites satisfy the usability goals of good interaction design? Review each site in terms of the six usability goals described in lecture 2 (the slides are available on Moodle to refresh your memory). Include in the table a comment on each. Can you try and quantify your responses by giving a score out of 10?

Usability Design Principles

Do the sites appear to have been well designed in terms of the usability design principles? Add comments to the table for each principle on each site. Again, look back to the notes if you need a refresher on what the terms mean.

If you wish to explore these concepts further – especially if you plan to use this exercise as a part of your coursework portfolio – you should view at least one other example of a catalogue-based website and carry out a similar analysis using the same criteria.