Instructional Documentation Project

Usability Testing in Documentation Design
Discussion Prompts

- What is Usability?
- What is Accessibility
- Why does a product need to be “usable”?
- To whom does a product need to be “usable”?
- How do we know if a product is “usable”?
- What is Talk-Aloud-Protocol?
Process

- Identify your typical user
- Identify a set of questions that the typical user might be interested in as they interact with the instructional document your group creates
- Design the document
- Conduct usability test (using TAP) with one typical user. Use two/three questions from the list you started out with
- Note down recommendation of the user
- Revise document after the usability test if necessary
Audience Profile elements

- What is a Persona?
- How is the YOUR product involved in their Professional and personal activities?
- What they expect from an instructional document?
- What kind of format is appropriate for him/her?

- Identify 4 typical users and construct personas (assignment description and examples are posted in Bb.)
Evaluation of your Document
Post Test Analysis

• Assimilate the major responses of the test-takers.
• Put the major responses as a bulleted list.
• Compose a brief report on the pattern of responses.
• Categorize data based on priorities
  – High Priority: User failed to complete task
  – Moderate Priority: User found it difficult to complete task
  – Low Priority: User accomplished the task, but made recommendation to improve experience.
• Form revision strategies.
• Identify report as: Usability Test Report for...
• b) Name the product and version that was tested.
• c) Who led the test.
• d) When the test was conducted.
• e) Date the report was prepared.
• Who prepared the report.
Provide a high level overview of the test.

• Summary of method(s) including number(s) and type(s) of participants and tasks.

• Reason for and nature of the test.

• Tabular summary of performance results.
Determine Revision Strategies

- Analyze observations from the sessions
- Explore the priority observations
- Brainstorm inferences
- Examine the weight of evidence to form opinions
Sample Usability Evaluation Scenario
Finding Route Information

Task: How would you use CATA to go from the CATA Transportation Center in downtown Lansing to the Lansing Mall where you want to meet your friends at 7:00pm on Saturday night?

- Observation: Where do they go first?
- Observation: Problems?

- Probe: Any comments on that task?
- Probe: Was there anything you found confusing or misleading?
- Probe: Is it easy to locate the maps?

- Success criteria:
  - Route Info → System Map or Downtown Map or MSU Map or individual route maps (sub-nav. below main nav.) → Rt.3 westbound. Click on Westbound Weekend Times in nav. or scroll down to table. Need to get on the bus at CTC by 6:30pm to get to the mall by 7pm (bus arrives at mall at 6:55).
MSU Campus Routes

30 Spartan Village – Akers
31 Brody – Hubbard
32 Commuter Lot
33 Campus Cruiser
35 Green Line
36 White Line
37 Sparty East
38 Sparty West
39 Night Owl

Redi-Ride Services

Delhi Redi-Ride
Mason Redi-Ride
Meridian Redi-Ride
Williamston Redi-Ride

Connector Services

Mason Connector
Williamston/Webberville Connector
LCC West Campus – Lansing Mall Connector

Additional Services
• User tried the Downtown Map, System Map, and map of Rt. 10A-12A, before using the Site Map to choose Rt. 3
• User expected the information to be in the list on the Routes Information main page, since the Lansing Mall is considered a significant destination. They didn’t equate Willow with the CTC (the link was labeled Willow-Lansing Mall.
• “The question sounds so simple.” “It’s silly. I should be able to find the CTC.”
• Users didn’t immediately realize that CTC was the downtown transportation center on the maps.
Recommendations

• Include more locations in the route link name on the Route Information page.
• Include more major destinations and surface streets on the System Map, similar to those found on the route maps, e.g. major malls, AMTRAK station.
• Include a complete map right on the main Route Information page with links to the more detailed maps.
• Create a more clear indication of how the maps relate to each other, especially between the System Map and route maps. Adding hot spots to link directly from one route map to the related map might help. Also, clicking on the MSU area on the maps could link directly to the CATA/MSU map.
• Include a link to the System Map and Downtown Map on each route map page.