BIT113: User Interface Design

Phase 1: Project Planning

Project Planning

This is the second phase for the Interface Design Project. In the Planning Phase, your team will work to better define the site users, investigate user preferences, organize the information from the client into content groupings, design the site navigation, refine your site color palette, and create an initial site sketch.

A. Define the audience with User Profiles

Defining the audience helps to develop the experience we want to create as well as the reaction we can expect to get. We use the list of audiences that was created in the Definition phase as a basis to build and refine audience biographies and categories.

Create a list of hypothetical user biographies. Develop background information that gives each user a personality but somewhat relevant to your site goals. These background stories can be drawn from feedback of existing users as well as potential users. Focus on background related to your site purpose. Use the example below as a guide.

Example Site: *The Community Mentors site will help recruit and coordinate the efforts of senior volunteers wishing to contribute to their community.*

Example Profile:

| Name: Ester Smith |
| Description: A family-focused grandmother who is already active in her community. |
| Attributes: 65-year-old retired schoolteacher. My husband passed away a few years ago. I live in a neighborhood where more than half of the residents are retired. I have a large family, with 5 grandchildren. I never used a computer until my daughter bought one for me 2 years ago. |
| Concerns and Priorities: **How can I stay close to my family?** I care deeply about strong family relationships. I plan and coordinate holidays and family get-togethers. I never forget birthdays and anniversaries. I e-mail family regularly, keep track of birthdays and anniversaries, plan family get-togethers like Thanksgiving. **How can I contribute to my community most effectively?** I care deeply about the local retirement community. I organize and plan temple events, and organize fund raising activities, as well as social events for the retirement community. **How can I work with more young people?** I really want to interact with more young people in my life. Many of my family members live too far away to visit every week, and I like the energy and interests of working with youth and children. |
| Interests: Cooking, playing bridge, teaching Sunday school, health issues |
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B. Develop the Content and Structure and Navigation

Group the Content

It’s important to stop, and think from the users’ point of view. The structure of a web site should always be user-centered in its design, that is, content should be relevant, and timely, and navigation labels should meet the expectations of the users when they click. Use the following user-centered design method to develop and test content groupings:

1) **Branching (also called Mind Maps):**
   Write the name of the site in the center of a piece of paper. Then around the center, write everything about the site you can think of, no matter how small or large.

2) **Group the content.**
   Take every idea that was generated by branching, and group the items into related concepts or ideas. Some items may fit into more than one group. These types of items are areas that may need to be navigable from multiple points in the site, or appear as sub-navigation. Some elements may be better suited as sub-navigation under another label.

3) **Name each group**
   Take each content group and try and create a name that fits the content. Names should use language that users will understand. This name will become the label name in the navigation. This is a process that may take time to develop, should be reviewed by the client and tested by users.

4) **Prioritize the content**
   Define the priority of each element within a group as well as the priority of the groups themselves. Some elements in a group may be actual content, while others may be a certain tone or mood desired for that grouping.

C. Investigate User Preferences

*Usability Testing for Text Labels and Content Grouping*

Your team will use a **card sort method** can provide insight about labels and new ideas for content. It better simulates what a user’s experience will be when viewing the finished site.

1) Describe the purpose of the site in one or two sentences.

2) Create an index card with each proposed label on it. Display these cards to a usability tester.

3) Ask the tester what he or she would expect to get if this was a button on a web site and they clicked on it.

4) Each tester answers should be written down, along with their general thoughts. Encourage testers to verbalize their thinking during the test. Write down any key insights.

5) Explore how the testers’ expectations match your grouping of the content.
a. If the majority of testers understand the label, and the content matches their expectations, this should be considered a good name for navigation.

b. If most testers are confused, or their thoughts don’t match the groupings, then changes to the structure need to be made based on the results given by the testers.

6) Modify the labels or grouping as needed and re-test with a new user.

A **modified card sort method** to test the usability of groupings and generate new ideas for labels/navigation for each group:

1) Describe the purpose of the site in one or two sentences.

2) Provide the usability tester with the deck of content cards, shuffled so that they are no longer in groups. Have the tester to group the cards. Encourage testers to verbalize their thinking during the test. Write down any key insights.

3) Have the tester label each group.

4) Make note of the labels and groupings.

### D. Define Navigation

From the content grouping and usability testing, create a navigational structure. Prioritize the list of label names, either top to bottom, or left to right, depending on the layout of your site.

1) **Define the global navigation**
   Create a navigational flow chart or outline view, showing each unique level of the site, and using the label names as your starting point.

2) **Build a simple wireframe for your site**
   Use your final navigation model to create a simple wireframe mockup of the site main page. Each navigation option should display a new page which lists the topics.

### E. Site Design Sketches and Color Study

Each member of your team should contribute a color study and storyboard sketches for two-levels of the site. The sketches should include layout of navigation and content. Review, combine, and create a color palette and design sketch review for your site.

### F. Final Submissions for Project Planning (due week 5)

1) A complete set of User Profiles (one for each type of user described in Phase 0)

2) Summary of Usability Test Results from the Card Sort including description of key user insights content groupings suggestions and label brainstorming
3) A Navigational Flow Chart or Outline including the final content labels and a summary of the final content groupings. This can be in outline or diagram form.

4) A simple HTML wireframe mockup of the Navigation model.

5) A Completed Color Study and Design Sketch Review for your site
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### Phase 1: Project Planning Assessment Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Effort (1 point)</th>
<th>Developing (2 points)</th>
<th>Adequate (3 points)</th>
<th>Well Developed (4 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>User Profiles</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Profiles incomplete or unrelated to site purpose.</td>
<td>Additional profiles needed to define the audience and motivation related to site purpose.</td>
<td>All necessary profiles are given to define the audience. Motivation for site purpose is somewhat clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usability Test Results Summary (content groups)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Usability test results (card sort – raw data) are incomplete or the summary is unclear.</td>
<td>Usability test results do not include a sufficient variety of users or test methods (regular/reverse card sort)</td>
<td>Usability summary reflects some of the test results but does not provide key user insights or confusions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Navigation (flow chart/outline and wireframe)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Site navigation is poorly organized does not include key outcome sections</td>
<td>Navigational model clearly proposed but many categories or labels do not incorporate usability test results.</td>
<td>Navigation model complete and refined by usability tests. Flow chart/outline and wireframe are complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Sketch and Color Study</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Single sketch includes no navigational elements and/or no design reads, limited color considerations.</td>
<td>Some sketch /design read with color palette. Color study unrelated to site concept and sketches use few navigational elements.</td>
<td>Mostly complete color study and sketches, with some inclusion of navigational elements and a color palette. Design reads appropriate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project Lead:** A LEAD  
**Score:** 12/12
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