1-1-2019

User Experience Study on Distractions while Driving

Joy Robinson
University of Alabama in Huntsville

Follow this and additional works at: https://louis.uah.edu/rceu-proposals

Recommended Citation

This Proposal is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Scholarship at LOUIS. It has been accepted for inclusion in RCEU Project Proposals by an authorized administrator of LOUIS.
Project Title: User Experience Study on Distractions while Driving
Faculty Name: Joy Robinson, Asst Professor, English/VUElab
Office Address: CTC 125
Phone Number: 312-307-0991
Email: joy.robinson@uah.edu
Proposal Identifier: RCEU19-EH-JDR-02

Project Description
People struggle with painful user experience every day. A Facebook user cannot figure out how to change her privacy settings. An iPhone user finds the latest app easy but unsatisfying. An HR professional gets new software with 387 functions but none that improve how he does his job. Soldiers are issued a new radio that is too cumbersome and complicated to operate in the heat of combat. All of these people are having problems with what scholarship and industry call User Experience (UX). UX research helps producers effectively design products, technologies, and services to fit people’s needs, facilitate intuitive and productive use, and evoke positive emotions. In determining how users experience products, UX studies humans, not technology.

In this study, we seek to understand the user experience of drivers as they try to stay connected to the outside world yet remain a safe driver. We will devise an experiment using state of the art eye-tracking glasses to see exactly what users are looking at as they drive during routine everyday trips.

Student Duties
The student will devise and write up the study protocols including seeking IRB approval. The eye-tracking glasses data collection is somewhat problematic and the student will work to streamline this process. The student will be responsible for screening participants. Final participants will be monitored during the time they are in the experiment (maximum 1 week). The student will collect and download the data resulting from the experiment. The student and researcher will analyze the data. A series of written deliverables will result from this experiment. Deliverables written by the student are:

- Perpetual article discussing the study protocols and preliminary findings
- Capstone project report

UAH student blog post discussing the relevance of the glasses to the study
Student requirements
Students interested in this position need to be familiar user experience, usability, or HCI and comfortable working with data collected from interviews, surveys, and observations. Additional familiarity with collecting data from biometric devices (i.e., eye tracking devices) is helpful but not required. The successful applicant will have a good academic record and should have excelled in technical writing, HCI, or user experience classes. Due to the technical nature of the experiment, it is imperative that interested students have computer programming expertise.

Faculty Requirements and Mentorship
The student will work on site with faculty in the VUElab. Working hours will be flexible, but students will be expected to adhere to the schedule once established. The faculty member will be supervising, mentoring, and also be working on the experiment so regular contact will be vital to the success of the collaboration. Direct interaction will occur regularly to assess progress, talk about and resolve issues, and to evaluate the ongoing work. Thoughtful, detailed feedback will be provided and is expected in return. Assistance will be available, but a high level of independence and problem solving is required.

Prior Awardees
Award Year and Project Title: 2018 - Effects of Social Media Withdrawal on College Students
Tangible Contributions Afforded by the Student: Poster at the RCEU and a write up of Lab Protocols on and equipment use.
Specific Outcomes Provided to the Student: experience primary data collection, learn about research protocols and gain a better understanding UX best practices. The student will be exposed to various technical skills and technology including recording equipment, video editing, transcription of interview texts, eye-tracking and software, data analysis, and collaboration with an interdisciplinary faculty team.