

Hello

We participated in the webinar on January 18 from MAYA Design.

It is really important and challenging work you have undertaken and we are looking forward to the RFP's and the opportunity to help out.

Below are some comments, I reviewed the Test Method - Usability Rev. Draft (Nov 2010) as well as Notes for Draft 1: Usability Test Script and Notes from the Dec 14 2010 Meeting which we did not attend.

1. MAYA often works on the design of products like programmable thermostats, as such we are primarily supporting the manufacturer stakeholders. On review of the Test Method, I wondered what would come out of it that could be of value for the manufacturers - some information about how their product performed - pass or fail - that might help them do better on the next product design, and also make the cost of this testing seem more palatable?

2. On the test setup, which is covered most clearly in the Usability Test Script, I saw that the administrator is also holding a stopwatch. I would advise that Testing labs need to have a way to time the task without the participant knowing. Standing next to someone with a stopwatch conveys the wrong signal, will tend to make people nervous and feel as though they are being tested and they will have more stress/errors. We typically use either computer software that does timing behind the scenes, use the timestamps from a video camera or a person behind the mirrored glass - to make sure the test participant does not feel the stress of the stopwatch. We also often remind them "This is a test of the user interface and not a test of you or your performance" Also, rather than saying "Times up" which implies the person is being tested, our administrators often say "OK, you've given me a lot of information on that task, lets move to the next task."

3. We often come across user interfaces where there is more than one path to successfully accomplish a task (whether by design or by accident). How can this test protocol accommodate that? The way this test is structured it sort of assumes the fastest way is the best way. I think this issue will come into more light when we begin testing user interfaces.

thanks for including us,

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