

CSE 440 Assignment #6

Video Prototype Report

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Video Process

The first task we did was sketch out the interface so we could walk through every screen and transition we would need to film. We drew the main application windows on paper and cut up notecards that we could swap in and out for the dynamic interface elements, such as buttons, list items, and graphic/textual messaging. This technique sounded like it would work well in theory, but actually complicated things in practice as we ended up with a lot of loose interface elements to keep track of. We also did not write out a script or storyboard beforehand, instead choosing to improvise and direct as we went.

What Worked Well

The paper prototype turned out to be an excellent way to develop an interface for video demonstration purposes, because it was easy to edit when necessary. This was particularly important when filming the scene where the user syncs his cell phone to his computer. Everything was going smoothly and the camera was rolling, when suddenly we realized that we were missing a key screen in our paper interface. But because it was only paper, in a matter of minutes we were able to sketch up the missing screen and continue filming.

Difficulties Encountered

One issue we encountered right away was due to the nature of the program as a desktop-based application. Conceptually, there is a significant disconnect between the process of configuring connections on the computer and the physical result of reactions being triggered in real life. Also, though our tasks each have different end results, the actual process of working through the interface to complete them was virtually identical each time. We quickly realized that just setting up connections inside the Mayhem application wasn't very enlightening or interesting to watch, so we filmed before and after scenarios to show the effects of how the application would automate things for the user. Another problem involved showing how a user would interact with the application on the desktop. We weren't sure how to paper prototype a moving mouse cursor, so we made the concession of filming it as if it were running on a touchscreen laptop. We also found out that our pile of dynamic interface elements was not the most effective means of prototyping an interface that displays on a near-vertical laptop screen. We could have solved this by taping every loose piece to the background application screen, but this seemed like a lot of unnecessary extra work. Instead, we filmed an establishing shot of the application's home screen on the laptop monitor, and then cut to a close up of the interface, which we filmed on a flat surface. This allowed us to swap the loose interface elements around much more easily as we filmed the user's hand interacting with the prototype.