

Personas Help Understand Users' Needs, Goals and Desires in an Online Institutional Repository

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Abstract : Communicating users' needs, goals and problems help designers and developers overcome challenges faced by end users. Personas are used to represent end users' needs. In our research, creating personas allowed the following questions to be answered: Who are the potential user groups? What do they want to achieve by using the service? What are the problems that users face? What should the service provide to them? To develop realistic personas, we conducted a focus group discussion with undergraduate and graduate students and also interviewed a university librarian. The personas were created to help evaluating the Institutional Repository that is based on the DSpace system. The profiles helped to communicate users' needs, abilities, tasks, and problems, and the task scenarios used in the heuristic evaluation were based on these personas. Four personas resulted of a focus group discussion with undergraduate and graduate students and from interviewing a university librarian. We then used these personas to create focused task-scenarios for a heuristic evaluation on the system interface to ensure that it met users' needs, goals, problems and desires. In this paper, we present the process that we used to create the personas that led to devise the task scenarios used in the heuristic evaluation as a follow up study of the DSpace university repository.

Keywords : heuristic evaluation, institutional repositories, user experience, human computer interaction, user profiles, personas, task scenarios, heuristics

Conference Title : ICDL 2015 : International Conference on Digital Libraries

Conference Location : Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Conference Dates : January 26-27, 2015