

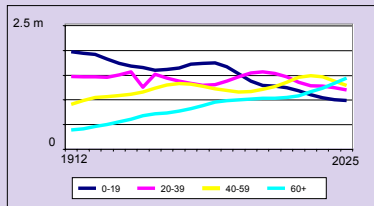
Workshop W3: HCI and the Older Population



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For more information, see <http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/utopia/workshop>

Topic

The proportion of older people in developed countries such as the UK is rapidly increasing and it is imperative to consider how technology design can meet the needs and wants of this important user group.



Population in the UK in different age groups over time

The older population presents a sizeable market opportunity for the IT industry together with a challenge to discover how new technologies can be effectively designed for this group.

Workshop Aims

- To provide a forum for academics and practitioners working in this area to meet, hear about each other's work and discuss ideas
- To promote discussion of the issues surrounding HCI and the older population

Discussion Topics

- Ethical issues
- Methodology
- Characteristics of the older population
- The varied and changing nature of the older population
- Application areas
- Characteristics of technology for older users
- Communicating with industry
- Underlying design principles

Some Outcomes from the Discussions

Ethical Issues

Some Ethical Issues

- Control – how much control does the system take and how much does the user retain?
- How do you know who is monitoring you?
- Privacy of data

Need to remember

Everyone's different with different contexts and situations

Some Suggestions

- Need to give choice to the individual. Choice in:
 - What is the real problem to be solved?
 - What is the best solution?
- Need to develop trust in the technology. This needs:
 - Time
 - The technology to be trustworthy in the 1st place.

Ethical issues in running experiments

How do we know in advance what will cause harm/discomfort to participants (e.g. motion sickness in a VR simulator)?

One Suggestion

A website of our experiences and guidelines

Methodological Issues

Participant Recruitment

Difficult + Time-consuming
There are various methods but there is a concern that participants are often self-selected.

To help overcome this:

- Need to contact more diverse groups
- Need to take more care in choosing participants from these groups

Ethics

Need to take care in explaining the research purpose without being misleading. Also need to care not to destroy confidence in IT.

It's useful to give a lengthy time for participants to chat afterwards.

Methods

We need more novel techniques:

- Innovative
- Entertaining
- Engaging

If we give more to participants, we get more out of the methods.

But we need to use trained facilitators.

Qualitative methods are very important

- More fun?
- More info?
- Less self-conscious?
- Less constraining?

Characteristics of Suitable

Technology

1. Usefulness
 2. Reliability
 3. Cost £/\$
- Usability
 - Functionality
 - Aesthetics
 - Customisation
 - Enjoyment
 - Upgradeability
 - Flexibility
 - Branding/ Market Image
 - Extendability
 - Well-integrated

Comment

Many of these issues are not specific to the older population (though some of them are – e.g. some methodological issues). By considering the older population, we remind ourselves that users are not a homogeneous group, highlight aspects like those shown here and improve HCI design for everyone.