Show Me! Guidelines for Producing Recorded Demonstrations

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Motivation

Standardization and improved designs made user interfaces easier to learn and use, however:

- Learning advanced features and understanding domain concepts remains a challenge
- For universal usability, the need for improvements in tutorial and help methods grown
- Little research about guidelines for helping users get started with new web applications
Motivation

- Animations are useful to educate users by showing dynamics of user interface actions.
- However, research shows that animation rarely has measurable benefits.
- Appears to distract users from key issues.
Related Work

Animation in instruction of user interfaces:

- Leads mainly to mimicry and superficial learning (Atlas et al, 1997)
- No significant results when animated visuals added to text (Rieber et al, 1991; Harrison, 1995)
- Confined to younger users (Wetzel et al, 1994)
- Can improve users’ performance and attitude
  - under certain circumstances
  - only for relevant tasks
  - when supported with audio and text
Three major types of interface demos on the web:

- Video movies
  - shot with video camera
  - effective at showing hardware manipulation
  - nice touch of human welcome
  - limited to small window size due to performance
Three major types of interface demos on the web:

- Video movies
- Composed animations
  - Screen shots of interface augmented with hand-made animations
  - Usually created by professionals using Flash etc.
Three major types of interface demos on the web:

- Video movies
- Composed animations
- Recorded demonstrations
  - replaying and narrating the recording of interface use
  - effective at providing help
  - simple to produce and narrate with Camtasia
Features

- Size
- Buffering
- Length
- Pause
- Seek
- Time Display
- Voice
- Text Boxes
- Click Cues
- Highlighting
Guidelines

Procedural/instructional, keep concepts short.

Tasks are clear and simple.

 Coordinate demos with text documents.

 Use spoken narration.

6. Be faithful to the actual user.

7. Highlight to guide attention.

8. Ensure user control.


10. Strive for universal usability.
1. Procedural/Instruction

No concept

- Provide steps and explanation for steps
  - *No “What is network traffic?”*
- Base script on a LIVE demo
- Pretend to be a user thinking-aloud
- Do not advertise
  - *Who cares what NetGrok means?*
2. Keep segments short

- Using same example data
- Starting with a tour of main screen.
  - *Overview first!!!*
- Using consistent starting screens
3. Ensure tasks are clear and simple

- Prepare scripts
- Avoid abbreviations
  - *No “We are analyzing data from our NIC”*
- Act out interaction and then describe changes
- Use the same data and concrete examples
  - *google.com and my local network group*
- Cut all unnecessary words
4. Coordinate demos with text documents

- Use the same structure for demo and text
- Make the demos available along with text
- Make a table of content for the demos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Text and Picture Documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating your own Treemap</td>
<td>Create your own TM3 data file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create your own XML data file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible Hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(i.e. creating a hierarchy based on a set of attributes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saving Settings</td>
<td>Save Settings and Create your own BATCH file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing the Layout Parameters</td>
<td>Changing the Layout Parameters, (algorithm, size, color, labels, borders), and Keyboard Shortcuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Color Setting</td>
<td>Color Setting and Binning for Numerical Attributes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on areas of interest</td>
<td>Zooming in and out, showing details of a node, showing the path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Filter with Dynamic Query Sliders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aggregate the Lower Levels of the Tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor changing data</td>
<td>Using Treemap to monitor changing data (Automatic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Use spoken narration

- Focus on operations, not advertising
- Find narrator with lively voice and speaks clearly
- Find narrator likely be around
- One person controls the UI and one narrates
  - Or narrating and recording separately
6. Be faithful to the actual UI

- Showing the full size user interface
- Zoom in to increase the readability
- Highlight first and zoom in
7. Highlight to guide attention

- Combine sound with visual effects
- Wiggling the cursor
- But don’t use
  - too MANY highlights
  - incessant and meaningless cursor movement
8. Ensure User Control

- Give user control to skip familiar part
  - *Use small partitions instead of a big file*

- Adding time length and progress feedback

- Provide jump back and forth between sessions
9. Keep file sizes small

- Use on-screen recording, not actual video recording
  - *Camtasia*

- Portability: try different output formats

- Provide duration and file size information

- Provide both stream and downloadable versions
  - *YouTube is your friend*
10. Strive for universal usability

- Make everything ready for the users
- Indicate that the demo has audio
- Use technologies do not require users to install software
Guidelines

Procedural/instructional, conceptual

6. Be faithful to the actual

7. Keep segments short

8. Highlight to guide attention

Tasks are clear and simple

9. Ensure user control

Coordinate demos with text documents

10. Keep file sizes small

Use spoken narration

11. Strive for universal use
Conclusions

- TreeMap 4.0 experiences: No more question on functionality
- Effective for Web service to keep up-to-date
- Good for quick tour/get user’s impression
Let’s aim for Excellent Demos!!!!!