

Chapter 53

Perceived Impacts as User Experience Components in Mobile News Making With Smartphones

Heli Väättäjä

Tampere University of Technology, Finland

ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses users' perceptions of system impacts as one of the user experience components. Findings from twelve case studies on mobile news making with smartphones are summarized, focusing on the perceived impacts of system use and system characteristics that can contribute to user's perception of system quality. The findings indicate that the perceived impacts of system, i.e., the benefits and costs, for the mobile user, activity, outcome (news and news content), and journalism are important for understanding user experience and therefore the overall evaluative judgments of the system.

INTRODUCTION

Quality-based models of user experience include descriptive qualities as user experience components. Most quality-based models of user experience, whether used as descriptive or evaluative frameworks, include pragmatic (instrumental) and hedonic (non-instrumental) qualities as user experience components (Hassenzahl, 2003; Mahlke & Thüring, 2007). In addition, emotional responses have been considered as one user experience component (Mahlke & Thüring, 2007). Quality in this chapter refers to qualitative attributes (i.e., characteristics and sub-characteristics) of a system, service, process, outcome of usage, or impacts that are verbally described by the user and are perceived, or anticipated by the user.

The impacts of ICT (Information and Communications Technology) are rarely considered and discussed as user experience components. The perceived or expected impacts can contribute to the overall evaluative judgments of the system and therefore to the consequences that are related to system acceptance, motivation for using the system, satisfaction, and usage behavior (Hartman, Sutcliffe & de Angeli, 2008;

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Hassenzahl, 2003; Mahlke & Thüring, 2007). The impacts of the adopted technology or solutions can be related to the user's situation, activity, outcome of usage, or changing user roles or practices in the application field (Väätäjä, 2014).

This chapter focuses on perceived impacts of technology as a user experience component in mobile news making. It exemplifies in the case of mobile news making the characteristics of the system that can contribute to the perceptions and descriptions of system quality, including perceived impacts. Presented results are summarized findings from twelve case studies that focused on smartphones as the enabling technology for the mobile news making activity. *Mobile news making* refers here to news making activity that takes place in a mobile context of use by using mobile handheld technology, specifically smartphones, in one or several subactivities in the news making process (Väätäjä, 2014).

Chapter begins with a review of related literature on impacts of using mobile technology in mobile work, including mobile news making. Next, the research approach is described and the summarized findings on characteristics of the system that can contribute to user experience are presented. The results on the impacts of smartphones that the participants described in the user studies are presented. Finally, the findings are discussed and suggestions for directions of future work are given.

RELATED WORK

Features of Mobile Systems Contributing to Usage and User Experience

Prior literature on mobile handheld systems reports system features and characteristics that can influence usage and user experience. These are summarized in Table 1. Small display size, cumbersome and error-prone data entry, slow speed, unavailability and unreliability of wireless connections, and short battery life are often reported as critical limiting factors in mobile use, especially in mobile work context. In addition, available functionalities are reported to affect use, the perceived fit to task, or acceptance (e.g., Gebauer 2008; Gebauer & Ginsburg, 2009; Sawyer & Tapia, 2005).

For example, Straus, Bikson, Balkovich, and Pane (2010) studied the effectiveness of mobile wireless communication technologies for law enforcement teams. They identified the following advantages of smartphones: device portability, unobtrusiveness, and multi-functionality. Participants appreciated the multi-functionality since it was undesirable to carry several multiple devices when on foot surveillance. However, every 30 minutes, a system lockout took place or reauthentication was needed. This was perceived as the greatest limitation in using smartphones. It impeded communication in operations as well as access to information in time-critical situations. Participants considered it to be risky to disengage from the situation at hand to enter a password. In addition, device ergonomics were perceived as a limitation since users were working around the clock in a variety of environmental conditions and they were frequently multi-tasking.

According to Gebauer (2008), perceived technology maturity and system quality (in terms of technology performance) can explain and predict satisfaction, use, and performance impacts. Availability of technology in different types of use contexts, portability in terms of size, weight, and battery life as well as the availability of service independent of location were emphasized. Communication and productivity related functionality appeared to be of most value especially in supporting non-routine and supervisory task profiles.

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