

CS 377U Understanding Users

P1: Research: Literature & Competitive Review

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Assignment Description

Before beginning your own research for your quarter-long project, it is important to understand what others have done in your domain, both from a research and product perspective. Then your generative research and ultimate project can build on this work, rather than repeating its mistakes. Proper literature and competitive review can help you understand best practices, implications for design, and holes/gaps in existing research or products so that you can maximize your limited time to design and build a novel solution.

For this assignment, you will begin with a competitive review of existing applications in your domain. Find at least three released applications in the app store that are related to your domain of interest (for example, for Livestreaming you might check out Periscope, Meerkat, and UStream). For each app, read through both the positive and negative reviews in the app store, and any press reviews that the app has received. Identify the positive and negative features of the app and key feature requests that users have discussed. Use the apps yourself, take screenshots and note aspects of the app that are enjoyable and those that are frustrating.

You will also conduct a literature review for relevant HCI and related papers in your topic of interest. You can utilize the ACM Digital Library or Google Scholar to find papers related to your topic of interest. You should find and read at least 5 papers (often you can find other relevant papers to read in the references of the first papers you find). For each paper, discuss the main findings and implications for design that emerge. Also note any gaps or unanswered questions that emerge through your reading of this work.

Finish by defining the open research questions that you have in your domain that you will focus on in your generative research next week. For example, these can be questions about specific behaviors (e.g. How do people currently remind themselves of things that they need to do?) or questions about how things might have changed since the literature came out (e.g. How do people share photos on Snapchat compared to how they used to on Facebook or Flickr?) or questions

about problems people have (e.g. Why do people not respond to email? or What are the difficulties in finding local events?). You should have 3-5 open questions that your research next week (P2) will aim to answer.

Deliverables & Due Dates

The written assignment is due on Thursday, April 13th @ 4:30 pm with the following sections:

- **Logistics**
 - Group members' **names** and **email addresses** and **group name**
 - Your **domain of interest**
- **Lit Review**
 - A **summary of design insights** you have gained from reviewing **5 academic** papers, referencing the papers
 - A **summary of open questions** after reading the papers
- **Competitive Review**
 - A review of **3 products** published in your domain. Include pros and cons in the categories of **user needs**, **interaction design**, and **visual design**. Include **screenshots** or **pictures**.
- **Synthesis**
 - A list of **open research questions** in your domain that you will use next week when creating your research plan.

Presentations will begin promptly at 4:35pm:

- **Presentation**
 - Present a short version of your insights in class (**3 min presentation**) No more than 4 slides. Be sure to link your presentation as per the submission details below.

Submission Details

Post link to slides here: <https://goo.gl/EDY4Cn>

Please submit all materials in pdf format to this Drive folder: <https://goo.gl/kDFrPN>

(Please create a folder with your group name and upload your PDF files to your group's folder)

Grading Rubric

This assignment is graded on a rubric of 100 points. It is worth 5% of the overall course grade.

Category	Unsatisfactory	Adequate	Good	Very good	Excellent
Lit Review 30 Points	Fewer than 2 papers are presented or less than a sentence is said about each paper.	2-3 papers are presented with at least a paragraph per paper.	3-4 papers are presented with at least a two paragraphs per paper.	5 papers are presented, with at least two paragraphs per paper, but insights are lacking.	5 papers are chosen appropriately, insights are appropriate and well communicated, open questions are insightful
Competitive Review 30 Points	Only one product is covered, or only a few sentences are covered for each product.	1-2 products are chosen, or at least three of user needs, interaction design, visual design, usability, or screen shots are not discussed.	1-2 products are chosen, or at least two of user needs, interaction design, visual design, usability, or screen shots are not discussed.	3 products are chosen, or at least one of user needs, interaction design, visual design, usability, or screen shots are not discussed.	3 products are chosen appropriately - user needs, interaction design, visual design and usability/use case insights are appropriate - screen shots are chosen appropriately
Synthesis & Presentation 40 Points	Open research questions are not discussed.	Presentation is difficult to follow or research questions are not explained.	Research questions not motivated or presentation lacks at least 2 papers or products explored or does not motivate research questions.	Research questions are lightly explained or it is unclear how they follow from the work or presentation is lacking detail of papers and products.	Open research questions have appropriate focus - visual presentation has appropriate level of detail- verbal presentation is clear -synthesis follows from competitive and lit review