




User-Centred Design

Task 3.2C Competitive Analysis

ILO	Apply an evidence-based approach to software requirements elicitation and specification.
Purpose:	Reviewing what competitors are doing (or current versions of the software) can be a very useful place to start understanding the requirements. In this task you will analyse existing software to help identify possible requirements and get ideas for improvement.
Individual Task:	Review two user interfaces that do something similar to what we are working on in the project. Identify the main features of the user interface (e.g., functionalities it offers), any gaps in what it does, and what you think it does well and/or not so well.
Resources:	<p><i>Lecture Notes:</i> Topic 02 - Researching context of uses</p> <p><i>Textbook:</i> Courage and Baxter (2005) <i>Understanding your users</i> Chapter 2 - Table 2.1</p>
To be marked as Complete your submission must have:	<p>A review of TWO different user interfaces that attempt to provide the users with the same or similar service as that described in the UCD User Interface Design Project.</p> <p>NOTE: The purpose of the software/websites reviewed MUST relate directly to the project.</p> <p>The analysis must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ brief introduction to the project ■ description of software/website being reviewed and reasons for choosing it (include name and url reference) ■ screenshots and a discussion of the pros and cons of key features of the user interfaces being reviewed ■ a comparison of the different features offered by each user interface (e.g., a feature matrix) ■ summary of recommendations (e.g., features we should have or should not have, design recommendations, etc) ■ professional presentation, including title page, proper sentences and paragraphs
<p>Quality Points:</p> 	<p>This task has quality points:</p> <p><i>0 Points:</i> The submitted work has provided required deliverables. Deliverables meet the minimum standards specified by the marking criteria.</p> <p><i>1 Point:</i> Conforms to expectations. Work competent, follows directions given in Task Guide.</p> <p><i>2 Points:</i> Work completed to a high standard. Good presentation. Shows some evidence of further independent reading (eg, reference to Courage and Baxter (2005)).</p> <p><i>3 Points:</i> Work exceeds expectations. Demonstrates excellent use of resources, mastery of techniques, insightful analysis, and excellent presentation. Professional level. Goes well beyond instructions provided in Task Guide.</p>
Optional	Submit your work to the 'Task 3.2C Integrity Check' in Canvas for plagiarism checking.

Instructions

Conduct a competitive analysis reviewing at least two other user interfaces that do something similar to what is described in the UCD User Interface Design Project.

Tip 1: Be very careful about your choice of user interface to review. As far as possible the user interface you review should be directly related to what you are trying to build. If in doubt check with your tutor. *Reviews of off topic interfaces will not be accepted for this task.*

To do this task you will need to read Courage and Baxter (2005) *Understanding Your Users* Chapter 2 (in particular Table 2.1 see below). You will need to alter this grid to list features and issues relevant to our Project.

Table 1 Courage and Baxter's (2005) Competitive analysis feature matrix

Table 2.1: Grid comparing TravelSmart.com against three competitors				
<i>Understanding Your Users: A Practical Guide to User Requirements Methods, Tools, and Techniques</i>				
By Catherine Courage and Kathy Baxter, Copyright Elsevier Inc. © 2005, Publisher: Elsevier Science and Technology Books, Inc.				
	TravelSmart.com	TravelCrazy.com	WillTravel.com	Corner Travel Store
Unique features	Client recommendations Chat board	Customer loyalty program	Travel agent on call	Personalized service
Design strengths	Short 3-step process Shows price comparison	Useful travel guides Customer and expert ratings	Shows price comparison Travel alerts and recommendations	Frequent customer program Phone access or in person
Design weakness	Must know 3-letter airport code Customer support/Help is hidden	Cluttered display with too many options Confusing search UI	Search results are inconsistent and not reliable	No web access
Customer base	2500 users	500,000 users	150,000 users	Customer size unknown
Satisfaction score	68	72	Not available	Not applicable
Requirements	Section 508 compliant Accessible on all browser types	Internet Explorer 5.5 only Flash required	Accessible on all browser types	No requirements
Core features:				
Research locations	x	x	x	✓
Air travel	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rental car	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hotel reservations	✓	x	✓	✓
Train tickets	✓	✓	x	✓
Bus tickets	x	✓	x	✓
Travel packages	✓	✓	✓	✓

To assist your reader understand the interfaces being reviewed and your discussion of them, include some screenshots of key screens (see Note below).

Note: See below for an example of how to guide the reader through the review, in particular making it clear which parts of the interface they are discussing by using 'call outs' (See example below).

How would you like to checkout?

Sign In & Checkout If you already have an account	PayPal Express Express checkout with PayPal	Guest Checkout Buy now and register later
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DELIVERY DETAILS

Email Address ✓ Good alignment of text boxes ✓

First name* ✓

Last name* ✓

Address* ✓ Good flexibility ✓

Suburb* ✗ Very clear which field generated an error ✓

Postcode* ✓

USE YOUR GIFT CARD

Gift card code

PAYMENT METHOD

PayPal

Credit Card

Card number

Cardholder name

CCV Valid to Month Year

BILLING ADDRESS

Same as delivery address

Annotations:

- Good alignment of text boxes ✓
- Good flexibility ✓
- Very clear which field generated an error ✓
- User typed in post code, but it failed to find suburb as promised ✗