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Performance-Centered Design for Developing Countries: Emphasizing Context

by Sonia Arias

In addition to the language and cultural differences often cited in the internationalization and localization literature, developing countries also differ from more developed countries in the assumptions a US-based performance-centered designer, for example, can make in terms of the client's purchasing power, human capacity, and available infrastructure to support a new system. This article demonstrates how the process of internationalization and localization needs to go beyond the traditional functionality checklists of culture and language. This article also describes, in terms of Dickelman's (1996) three-element model, how the unique nature of developing country economic, human capacity, and infrastructure contexts has to be explicitly analyzed and incorporated into a PCD process when designing performance-centered systems for developing country users.

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ROI Calculations for Electronic Performance Support Systems

by Hasan Altalib

Due to worsening economic conditions and an increase in competition there is a growing mandate for organizations to become more efficient and streamlined. Organizations worldwide realized that their survival is directly tied to their ability to improve overall performance and become efficient. However, identifying the specific technologies or projects, which will result in a streamlined business, increased competitive advantage, reduced costs, or an improvement in production and workforce efficiency, is no easy task. Justifying expenditures and proving the value of an EPSS that will help improve the bottom line has become increasingly important. Therefore, calculating the return on investment (ROI) for EPSS implementations has become an important practice in business, industry, and, more recently,

government. Determining the ROI of an EPSS project begins with the complex practical issue of identifying what will be measured and then assigning costs and benefits to each variable in monetary terms. The challenge is in defining and quantifying the real business benefits. The most important issue that companies need to know about evaluating the ROI of EPSS is that it requires extensive up-front ROI data, which doesn't lend itself easily to the traditional ROI science, many variables come into play and many decisions must be made regarding what to calculate. Therefore, determining the ROI of an EPSS project begins with the complex practical issue of identifying what will be measured and then assigning costs and benefits to each variable in monetary terms.

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Staples.com: Focus on Usability

by Tom McCann and Colin Hynes

Staples.com is a profitable, high-profile, high-volume e-commerce website. Launched in 1998, its growth rate has increased every quarter due in part to the constant attention paid to the site ease of use via click stream data analysis, customer feedback and both internal and independent usability evaluations. This article details two case studies in which data from a variety of sources were used to identify and resolve site usability issues. Both case studies are also supported by compelling ROI figures.

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Applying Video Game Interaction Design to Business Performance, Round 2

by Ara Shirinian and Erik Dickelman

Enterprise systems and video games are seen as different software designed for different purposes by different developers. There are no apparent connections or incentives for connection between the two communities. Yet there is a fundamental common element: the human being. Successful video games address human needs for challenge and motivation at precisely the right level by embedding the competency curve into the game itself. On the other hand, enterprise tools

suffer from interface complexity, enormous costs for training and "bolt-on" support, and tremendous user frustration. This article examines the worlds of tools and games from the human perspective and suggests ways in which game design can be successfully transferred to the tool domain to mitigate the pain.

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Use and Rationale of Media Types in Performance-Centered Design

by Dave Schubert

Historically, media types in performance-centered design have been restricted primarily to static image and text-based media types. As technological speed and standardization evolve, more effective time-based, interactive, and synchronized media types become viable as intrinsic components of performance-centered design. Significant improvements within individual information processing channels may result from embedding rich media types. This article focuses on the convergent rationale and use of media within performance centered design and how that can affect user performance using real-time electronic performance support system appliance design.

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Usability Testing in Internet Time

by Catherine Brown

As the tools used to develop websites become accessible to more people, performance technologists and instructional designers are likely to find themselves designing, developing, or supporting a website for the first time. How can HPT practitioners apply what they know to make that sure their websites help, rather than hinder, the performance of the humans who use it? Usability testing is the answer. This article provides a beginners' guide to conducting usability tests to gather feedback to use in refining and improving websites. By following these guidelines, people who are new to the web development field can do a credible job of creating and running their own usability tests.