

Northeastern University, College of Computer Science
440 Huntington Ave, 202 WVH, Boston, MA 02115 USA
Peter Tarasewich (Principal Investigator)
Richard Conlan (Student Researcher)
Study: Improving Interface Designs to Help Users Choose Better Passwords

CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH

I have been asked to take part in the research project described below. The researcher will explain the project to me in detail. I should feel free to ask questions. If I have more questions later I can contact Peter Tarasewich [REDACTED], the person responsible for this study, or Richard Conlan [REDACTED], the student researcher, for further discussion and/or clarification.

I have been asked to take part in a study that is looking at how the user interface used when choosing a new password affects the quality of the password. I must be at least 18 years old to participate in this study.

Throughout the semester I have been using the Dropbox-Online homework submission system (<https://www.dropbox-online.com>) to submit assignments and view class announcements. During this time I have changed my password on a number of occasions, and the system accordingly stored my password for login purposes. On each password change the system also stored a Password Quality Score reflecting an estimate of the quality of my new password.

There are two ways I can take part in this study. The first option is that I can choose to allow the researchers access to my Password Quality Score when calculating results. The second option is that I can choose to allow the researchers access to my actual passwords so that they can examine them using various techniques of assessing password quality. If I do not wish to take part in either part of the study then my password data will be promptly deleted.

If I decide to take part in this study my name and all personally identifiable information will be removed from my password records, but the data I have granted the researchers access to will be retained anonymously. The researchers will take steps to make sure that the password data is not in any way associable with me.

My participation in this study is confidential. No one will be told whether or not I participated in this study or about the content or quality of my passwords. Scientific reports will be based on group data and will not identify me by name.

The decision to participate in this research project is up to me. I do not have to participate. Whatever I decide will in no way affect my grades or status as a student. If I wish to withdraw from the study before the data has been tabulated I may do so by informing either Peter Tarasewich or Richard Conlan of my decision. However, once the data has been tabulated there will be no way to determine which data are mine and so it cannot be removed after that point.

If I am not satisfied with the way this study is performed, I may discuss my complaints with Peter Tarasewich, anonymously, if I choose. In addition, I may address any concerns to Northeastern University's Coordinator of Human Subjects Research, Vivienne Conner, Division of Research Integrity, 413 Lake Hall, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts 02115, 617-373-7570.

I have read the consent form, and my questions have been answered. My signature on this form means that I understand the information and agree to participate in this study to the extent I have indicated by checking the appropriate box. I have received a copy of this form.

☐ I grant the researchers permission to include my Password Quality Score (PQS) data in the study.

☐ I grant the researchers permission to include all of my password data in the study (including my PQS).

Signature of participant

Date

Typed/printed name

Age

Sex

I have explained the study, provided an opportunity for questions, and believe that the potential subject is competent to understand the study.

Richard M. Conlan

Date