

SOUPS 2005 - Discussion

Topic: Valuation and Context

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Defining “Context”

A “social production” that includes the outcome of an activity, social setting, place, time, a set of roles, a set of activities, institutional arrangements and user goals.

Context of a user

- Should include
 - Motivations of the user and the organization if applicable
 - Risks to the user
 - Expectations of the user and the organization if applicable.
 - List of values the user attaches to the context

Context – Never singular

- People often share a context, and this is a standard human to human way to interact

Example: When we tried to define the context of the meeting for the discussion topic, we realized that the physical location was shared, but the goals for attending and other “production” qualities were different for different people. Some people knew each other already, some had met at the conference and talked, some didn't know each other at all.

- Humans are good at thinking about physical context, less good at understanding the virtual context.

We, as researchers, need to make virtual context easier to grasp.

- Humans function in multiple contexts at the same time, and those context's goals are often in conflict.

Possible Values

Economic values were not discussed.

- Time
- Cultural aspects (social rank, acceptable behavior)
- Individual efficiency (versus reliance on others for solution)
- Protection

Possible Values (continued)

- Embarrassment
- Capability
- Security
- Trust
- Faith/Confidence
- Overloaded attention (more than the user can handle, so they make choices)
- Ease of use

Methods for measuring value

- Ethnographic studies
- Report back to users about their actual behavior, individually or as a group
- Cultural probes
- Diaries (where the user records observations)

Caveat: ACM/ CHI may not consider self-reported data as a rigorous enough experimental design)

More Methods

- Requirements analysis – Take the time to understand the requirements and boundary conditions.
- Process analysis and re-engineering
- Education / Infosharing – involve security experts, code developers and usability engineers in system development

What to measure

- Perception versus reality
 - Does the user's perception match their actions?
 - Continue with a larger group?
- Negative vs. positive intention
 - If the user has positive intentions, what are the values
 - If the user has negative intentions, what are the value measurements
- What drives the user's perception? Does it change? Can it be changed?