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Interface and Feedback Factors in Social Bookmark Usage

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
Master of Information Sciences at Massey University

Auckland, New Zealand

September 2010

Statement of academic integrity

I declare that this research study is entirely the product of my own work and that it has not been taken from the work of others. When the work and ideas of others have been used in the study, the work has been properly cited in the text.

Signature

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who helped me to complete this research.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Brian Whitworth, whose stimulating suggestions and encouragement constantly helped me throughout the time I was researching and writing this paper.

I would like to thank my family for supporting me through this academic study.

I want to thank the students who participated in the evaluation survey and provided valuable feedback.

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Abstract

Individual bookmarks are a fundamental feature of Internet web browsers, letting users save and collect their favourite web page locations, but users cannot use their bookmarks on other computers and cannot share their bookmarks with others. Social bookmarking aims to improve this situation by letting people share bookmarks on the Internet. The term was first used by Delicious in late 2003. They not only let users store, organise and access their bookmarks online, but also let them share them with other users. Social bookmarking lets people see what sites other people bookmark under the common tags that users commonly organise their bookmarks by. This research investigates the personal and social factors affecting social bookmark usage and suggests how they work together to influence usage. The two factors investigated were: cognitive effort and social feedback. To study them, a social bookmark simulation called Bligg was created, which allowed various levels of effort and feedback to be evaluated. In the first study, cognitive effort significantly affected willingness to use social bookmarking, but social feedback had no effect. However, in the second study that controlled for reading effort, it was significant. It was concluded that cognitive effort is an enabling factor for the effect of feedback on social bookmark usage.

Keywords: Social bookmarking; cognitive effort; social feedback; likelihood of use.