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Evaluating Online Support for Mobile Phone Selection:
Using Properties and Performance Criteria to Reduce
Information Overload

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Information Science
in
Information Systems
at Massey University, Auckland,
New Zealand.

Chun Chieh Yang
2008
Low Risk Notification Statement

This project has been evaluated by peer view and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University’s Human Ethics Committees. The author of this research is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Ethics & Equity), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humananethics@massey.ac.nz.
Abstract

The mobile phone has been regarded as one of the most significant inventions in the field of communications and information technology over the past decade. Due to the rapid growth of mobile phone subscribers, hundreds of phone models have been introduced. Therefore, customers may find it difficult to select the most appropriate mobile phone because of information overload. The aim of this study is to investigate web support for customers who are selecting a mobile phone. Firstly, all the models of mobile phones in the New Zealand market were identified by visiting shops and local websites. Secondly, a list of all the features of these mobile phones was collated from local shops, websites and magazines. This list was categorised into mobile phone properties and performance criteria. An experiment then compared three different selection support methods: A (mobile phone catalogue), B (mobile phone property selection) and C (mobile phone property and performance criteria selection). The results of the experiment revealed that selection support methods B and C had higher overall satisfaction ratings than selection support method A; both methods B and C had similar satisfaction ratings. The results also suggested that males and females select their mobile phones differently, though there was no gender preference in selection support methods.

Keywords: Mobile phone, information overload, mobile phone properties, mobile phone performance criteria, mobile phone selection process satisfaction
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# Table of Contents

Low Risk Notification Statement .......................................................................................... i
Abstract ............................................................................................................................. ii
Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... iii
Table of Contents .............................................................................................................. iv
List of Tables ................................................................................................................... vii
List of Figures .................................................................................................................. x

Chapter 1: Introduction ..................................................................................................... 1
  1.1 Background ........................................................................................................... 1
  1.2 Problem: Information Overload ........................................................................ 5
  1.3 Topic and Scope ............................................................................................... 6
  1.4 Purpose of Study ............................................................................................... 7
  1.5 Outline of Study ............................................................................................... 7

Chapter 2: Literature Review ............................................................................................ 9
  2.1 Mobile phone features and user satisfaction ..................................................... 9
    2.1.1 User satisfaction dimension ................................................................. 10
    2.1.2 Design features of mobile phones ....................................................... 12
  2.2 Mobile phone regarded as a fashion statement .............................................. 13
    2.2.1 Mobile phones as a fashion image ..................................................... 13
    2.2.2 Consumer perception and reception .................................................. 14
  2.4 Previous related work in mobile phone selection ............................................ 18
  2.5 Existing mobile phone online shops ............................................................... 21
    2.5.1 Telecom online store ......................................................................... 21
    2.5.2 Vodafone online store ....................................................................... 22
  2.6 Performance measurement models .................................................................. 23
  2.7 Dependent variable ......................................................................................... 26
    2.7.1 Satisfaction with the mobile phone selection process ......................... 26
    2.7.2 Satisfaction with the mobile phone selected ....................................... 27
  2.8 Independent variable ....................................................................................... 27
  2.9 Conceptual framework .................................................................................... 28
  2.10 Research question ......................................................................................... 30
  2.11 Hypotheses .................................................................................................... 31
    2.11.1 Research main question ................................................................. 31
    2.11.2 Research question B ........................................................................ 32

Chapter 3: Method ......................................................................................................... 34
  3.1 Pilot study ........................................................................................................ 34
    3.1.1 A complete list of mobile phone features and database ..................... 34
Chapter 4: Results

4.1 User background

4.2 Mobile phone properties

4.3 Criteria importance ratings

4.4 Selection support method results

4.5 Summary

4.6 Conclusions

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Research findings

5.2 Implications of the results

5.3 Limitations

5.4 Future development
5.5 Research contribution

References:

Appendix A: Pilot study survey questions

Appendix B: Results of pilot study

Appendix C: Background questionnaire

Appendix D: Performance criteria ratings

Appendix E: Post-test questionnaires
List of Tables

Table 2.1 Criteria, sub-criteria and descriptions of mobile phones (Isiklar & Buyukozkan, 2005) ......................................................................................................... 19
Table 2.2 Priority weights in the AHP decision tree (Isiklar & Buyukozkan, 2005) .......... 20
Table 2.3 System performance goals in the WOSP model (Whitworth & Zaic, 2003) ..24
Table 3.1 A list of mobile phone features in the current market ........................................ 37
Table 3.2 Flexibility performance criteria........................................................................... 40
Table 3.3 Capability Performance Criteria ........................................................................ 40
Table 3.4 Connectivity performance criteria...................................................................... 41
Table 3.5 Reliability performance criteria ............................................................... 41
Table 3.6 Usability performance criteria ......................................................................... 42
Table 3.7 Extendibility performance criteria .................................................................. 43
Table 3.8 Entertainment performance criteria ................................................................. 43
Table 3.9 The minimum and maximum values of mobile phone features ...................... 44
Table 3.10 Example of talk time rating ........................................................................... 45
Table 3.11 Descriptive statistics of flexibility feature ratings........................................... 46
Table 3.12 Correlation of flexibility feature ratings (N=105) ............................................ 46
Table 3.13 The final list of flexibility criteria performance ............................................. 47
Table 3.14 Descriptive statistics of extendibility ratings ................................................... 47
Table 3.15 Correlation of extendibility feature ratings (N=105) ....................................... 48
Table 3.16 Descriptive statistics of reliability feature ratings ........................................ 49
Table 3.17 Correlation of reliability feature ratings (N=105) ........................................... 49
Table 3.18 The final list of reliability performance criteria ............................................ 50
Table 3.19 Descriptive statistics of connectivity feature ratings ...................................... 50
Table 3.20 Correlation of connectivity feature ratings (N=105) ....................................... 51
Table 3.21 Descriptive statistics of usability feature ratings .......................................... 51
Table 3.22 Correlation of usability feature ratings (N=105) ............................................ 52
Table 3.23 The final list of usability performance criteria ............................................. 53
Table 3.24 Descriptive statistics of capability feature ratings ......................................... 53
Table 3.25 Correlation of capability feature ratings (N=105) .......................................... 54
Table 3.26 Descriptive statistics of entertainment feature ratings .................................. 54
Table 3.27 Correlation of entertainment feature ratings (N=105)................................. 55
Table 3.28 The final list of entertainment performance criteria ...................................... 56
Table 3.29 Descriptive statistics for performance criteria ............................................... 56
Table 3.30 Correlation of performance criteria ratings .................................................. 56
Table 3.31 The new capability features list ................................................................. 57
Table 3.32 Descriptive statistics of criteria performance feature comparison.................. 58
Table 3.33 Correlation of performance criteria feature ratings ............................................. 58
Table 4.1 Chi-square test by gender differences ............................................................. 74
Table 4.2 Chi-square test by experience differences ...................................................... 76
Table 4.3 Criteria importance ratings .............................................................................. 77
Table 4.4 Paired-sample t-test for criteria importance .................................................... 77
Table 4.5 Criteria importance ratings by gender ............................................................ 78
Table 4.6 Kruskal Wallis chi-square by gender differences ............................................ 79
Table 4.7 Criteria importance ratings by experience level .............................................. 80
Table 4.8 Kruskal Wallis chi-square by experience differences ....................................... 80
Table 4.9 Efficiency by selection support method .......................................................... 81
Table 4.10 Kruskal Wallis test for Efficiency ................................................................... 82
Table 4.11 T-test for Efficiency differences between methods B and C .............................. 82
Table 4.12 T-test for Efficiency differences between methods A and B ............................. 82
Table 4.13 T-test for Efficiency differences between methods A and C ............................. 83
Table 4.14 Usefulness by selection support method ......................................................... 83
Table 4.15 Kruskal Wallis test for Usefulness .................................................................. 84
Table 4.16 T-test for Usefulness differences between methods B and C ............................ 84
Table 4.17 T-test for Usefulness differences between methods A and BC ......................... 85
Table 4.18 Ease of selection by selection support method ................................................. 85
Table 4.19 Kruskal Wallis test for Ease of selection .......................................................... 86
Table 4.20 T-test for Ease of Selection differences between methods B and C ................... 86
Table 4.21 T-test for Ease of Selection differences between methods A and B ................... 87
Table 4.22 T-test for Ease of Selection differences between methods A and C ................... 87
Table 4.23 Ease of use by selection support method ....................................................... 88
Table 4.24 Kruskal Wallis test for Ease of use .................................................................. 88
Table 4.25 T-test for Ease of use differences between methods A and B ............................ 89
Table 4.26 T-test for Ease of use differences between methods AB and C .......................... 89
Table 4.27 Satisfaction by selection support method ....................................................... 90
Table 4.28 Kruskal Wallis test for Satisfaction .................................................................. 90
Table 4.29 T-test for Satisfaction differences between methods B and C .......................... 90
Table 4.30 T-test for Satisfaction differences between methods A and BC ........................ 91
Table 4.31 Confidence by selection support method .......................................................... 92
Table 4.32 Kruskal Wallis test for Confidence .................................................................. 92
Table 4.33 T-test for Confidence differences between methods B and C ........................... 92
Table 4.34 T-test for Confidence differences between methods A and BC ........................ 93
Table 4.35 Intention by selection support method ............................................................ 94
Table 4.36 Kruskal Wallis test for Intention .................................................................... 94
Table 4.37 T-test for Intention differences between methods B and C .............................. 94
Table 4.38 T-test for Intention differences between methods BC and A ............................ 95
Table 4.39 Software performance means by gender and selection support method .... 96
Table 4.40 Kruskal Wallis chi-square by gender differences ................................. 96
Table 4.41 Software Performance means by experience and selection support method 97
Table 4.42 Kruskal Wallis chi-square by experience differences ............................. 98
Table 4.43 Summary of statistics analysis (N = 60) (ns = not significant) ................. 102
List of Figures

Figure 1.1 Examples of 1G and 2G mobile phones .......................................................... 2
Figure 1.2 Examples of 2.5G and 3G mobile phones ....................................................... 3
Figure 1.3 Population of mobile phone subscribers (Smith, 2007) ................................. 4
Figure 2.1 Relationship model between user satisfaction and product design features (Han et al., 2004) ............................................................................................................. 10
Figure 2.2 Functional relationship model development processes (Han et al., 2004) .... 11
Figure 2.3 User satisfaction dimension in Han et. al’s (2004) investigation ....................... 12
Figure 2.4 Example of mobile phone fashion design....................................................... 14
Figure 2.5 Fashion attitudes towards mobile phones N= 100 (Katz and Sugiyama, 2005) ................................................................. 15
Figure 2.6 Result of “I would get a mobile phone just because it is fashionable.” (Katz & Sugiyama, 2006) ................................................................................................................. 16
Figure 2.7 Factors of information overload (Jinwon & Rong, 2001) ............................... 17
Figure 2.8 Example of agents that reduce information overload (Pattie, 1994) ............... 18
Figure 2.9 Evaluation procedures in Isiklar & Buyukozkan’s (2005) study..................... 19
Figure 2.10 The decision making problem’s hierarchy (Isiklar & Buyukozkan, 2005) .... 20
Figure 2.11 Example of the Telecom Mobile Online Store............................................. 21
Figure 2.12 Example of Vodafone Online Shop ............................................................. 23
Figure 2.13 Empirical model of overall satisfaction (Krishnan and Subramanyam, 2004) ................................................................................................................................. 25
Figure 2.14 Mobile phone selection satisfaction framework ........................................... 29
Figure 3.1 Priority scores of technical features when consumers chose their current mobile phone ......................................................................................................................... 35
Figure 3.2 Priority scores of technical features when consumers choose their next mobile phone ......................................................................................................................... 35
Figure 3.3 An example of transforming features into rating values ................................ 44
Figure 3.4 Example of transforming feature into rating value ....................................... 45
Figure 3.5 Homepage of selection support method A ................................................... 59
Figure 3.6 Example of search results ............................................................................ 59
Figure 3.7 Example of the specification page ............................................................... 60
Figure 3.8 Homepage of selection support method B ................................................... 61
Figure 3.9 Example of mobile phone properties page .................................................. 62
Figure 3.10 Example of search results ........................................................................ 62
Figure 3.11 Example of the specification page ............................................................. 63
Figure 3.12 Homepage of system C ............................................................................. 64
Figure 3.13 Properties and performance criteria page of system C .............................. 65