

# Evaluation of Our World midterm report

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First of all it is important to mention that the Our World concept is a very nice and interesting concept. Furthermore, the midterm paper is also a very nice reading with all its references to the text book and other sources. The report itself uses many of the text book methods, as low fidelity prototyping; DECIDE evaluation and Nielsen's heuristics for usability evaluation among others.

Nevertheless, it was cumbersome to read the whole text without being explained what the project and concept is about. The project description and conceptual model exist only as appendices which were only mentioned in the table of contents. Unfortunately, no note was made telling the reader that it is necessary to read these appendices up front in order to clearly understand the paper. Because of this a lot questions were raised while reading the paper. Questions like "Where do they get curved digital screens?" or even "Where are the movies to be shown". These questions were only answered after reading the appendices. Some of the appendix text seems actually to be very relevant for understanding the project.

As mentioned initially, textbook theories and methods have been used throughout the chapters, and we don't find any reason to criticize the methods used or why they are chosen. On the other hand we feel the paper proves that it is not enough to lean on those methods only.

These methods don't pick up on definitions of or problems with choosing a target audience. How is it possible to present the same content to six years old as to twelve years old? Either the first may not understand the content or the second may find it boring and too dull and uninteresting. It is very difficult to find content which will interest both the six years old and the twelve year old as their level of development literarily are years away from each other.

Another question we'd like to raise regarding the user definition is why has there been chosen a superficial categorization in regards to ethnicity? Why is this relevant to the project? Will a Norwegian six year old have different issues in regards to have to interact with the system compared to a French tourist child or a Moroccan immigrant in Norway? Perhaps the group members intended to dwell upon the kids' understanding of the content, but if that is the case those questions fit better in an anthropological study than in a study of user interface. The same questions can be asked in regards to the definition of users as impaired children.

A better, or more relevant, categorization of the users may be as simple as dividing the children into age groups. Then you can ask questions like weather the sound will be too scary for the six years old, weather the buttons on the globe will be placed to far up for the six years old, or weather only the twelve years old kids are the only children who are strong enough to turn the globe around.

We also found it unclear whether the system will be used or controlled by only one child at a time. If more than one child will operate the system, what will happen to the videos shown on the walls? Will they play simultaneously? Won't that result in a sound mess? If only one child will operate the system, what happens if he pushes a button twice? What will happen if the child will push several buttons in a quick sequence? These are questions which are important to answer in order to build a system that will react properly to these situations.

The chapter talking about Usability Goals mentions memorability and asks whether the children will remember how to use the system from time to time. This question sounds unnecessary to ask while the system is built in such a way that it can be used without explanations. The system is even exhibited in a place where the chance that the child will return to it within a reasonably short time period is very slim.

Another question that was raised in our discussion is whether it is necessary to use a globe at all. Why can't we simply put up different screens and buttons on the walls letting the kids play with them one after the other? This last setup will for sure be much cheaper and can also be used by more kids simultaneously. Clearly, the idea of the globe and the oval room is to create stunning visual effects, not to mention sound effects and the effect of the odour system which also is a part of the setup. Perhaps the most important question is what do these effects and gimmick add to the user experience and what do the children learn? Will they remember or learn more about the world because of this?

In chapter 3 among other things it is mentioned that a decision has been made that pictures of destroyed homes will be shown. Why not show a picture of a homeless in Oslo? It can also be a glimpse of the reality of the world? We believe images like that must never be shown in such a context. There are no explanations, no adults to explain and therefore very dangerous to show the dark side of the world we live in to so young individuals.

Later it is mentioned that the globe will be three meters in diameter. It is also mentioned that the children should be able to turn the globe around. We suggest doing a check with small children to find out whether they will be able to turn the globe and to reach all the buttons.

It is also mentioned that the globe will show real daytime and night time. Considering the opening hours of the museum, this is maybe not necessary as there will always be daylight in Europe and darkness on the other side of the world.

In regards to the setup of multiple digital screens on the wall, the question was raised whether it's not more feasible to use projectors instead. Projectors have been used in exhibitions around the world to create 360 degree effects. A question was asked if the screens will show one huge video spread out over all the monitors, or whether each monitor will show the video. A clarification of this is also important in order to understand how the floor will appear underneath the feet.

It was also felt that it is somewhat premature to decide that the monitors should be 16:9, that the software must be written in C or C++ and that the movies must be compressed in High Definition Mpg. Why Oracle? Backup of the system was thoroughly mentioned, but no discussion was made in regards to the necessity of creating a fully redundant system.

A question was raised in regards to using sub woofers underneath thick glass.

All in all the Our World idea is a very nice concept. The paper is good and has dwelled upon all the most important theories and methods explained in the course. We found some issues in regards to the system itself, but we are sure that these are all overcome-able.

Good luck!