

GUP - Graphical Presentation of User Profile

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we present a quick and easy technique to present user profiles graphically. The technique is believed to be specially suitable for communicating user data in multidisciplinary design teams. It was invented in an explorative design project focusing on future telecommunications services in department store contexts.

Keywords

Visualization, user profile, knowledge management.

INTRODUCTION

Creating user profiles as a part of user-centered design process is recommended [1],[3]. However, the ways of presenting the profiles in a such way that multidisciplinary design teams could use them effectively is left on quite a little attention.

The technique, GUP (Graphical presentation of User Profile), presented in this paper helps user researchers to visualize and present an overview of the user in a manageable way (see example in Figure 1).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

When members of a design team study users in order to understand user needs and dreams, they collect extensive amount of qualitative information. The information is collected e.g. with observations, interviews, and diaries [1], [2], [3]. Later the gathered data is interpreted together with the rest of the team.

There is not many guides on how to create and present the interpretation of a user profile. For example, Hackos and Redish advice to use linear and textual formats [3, pics 11-2, 11-3], and a text-based way to compare users [3, pic 11-1]. However, there is no exact guidance how to create a quick visual presentation of the user.

GUP uses the same idea as Jonassen & al. [4] use in knowledge management. They have proposed methods for knowledge elicitation and knowledge presentation. Election is a process of collecting and structuring knowledge. It includes card-sorting (also known as affinity diagrams [1]) and semantic proximities. Different kinds of trees and

networks are used as knowledge presentations that others can explore and use for learning [4].

Finally, the knowledge presentations will be transferred into diagrams that are based on the idea of semantic closeness and grouping. In other words, items belonging together are drawn close each other and grouped. This is also done also when using GUP for presenting user profiles.

In this framework, we will describe how to create a GUP.

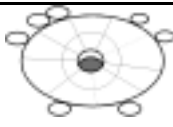
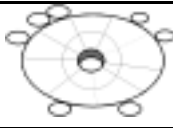

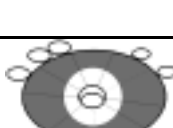
CREATING GUP

GUP technique was invented in a design project focusing on future telecommunications services for 50 – 60 year old men. The context of use was buying in department stores. The user data was collected with several user research methods, such as interviews, diaries and self photographing.




Step by step

GUP is made by those who has been most in touch with the user. The user research material is first sorted and interpreted. Then the sectors of GUP will be named, and filled with visual and textual material as described in table 1.

Table 1: The areas of the chart and their role:

Area	Contents
	User and his background: Picture of the user, his age, living area, profession, family background, etc.
	Use context: The focus of the user study, e.g. buying in department stores.
	Life sectors with descriptions: The life sectors relevant to the use context of are extracted from user data. User's own vocabulary is used for describing the sectors .
	Images related to life sectors: The pictures and text used inside the life sectors are collected during the user research by the designers or the user himself. Some images can illustrate important items and artifacts related to

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	the life sector.
	Importance of life sectors: The size of a sector describes how important it is for the user in the context of use.
	Semantic proximity: Nearness and location of a life sector indicates what other aspects of user's life are related to it. Important sector groupings are highlighted by using thicker sector lines.
	Important persons and groups: Persons and groups of people that are related to the life sectors are mentioned next to a sector with a separate blob.

FUTURE WORK

GUP technique focused on presenting user profiles graphically. In future our aim is to investigate how to transfer other user research interpretations into similar kind of easy and quick graphical presentations. Moreover, we will explore ways to link GUP with those other presentations so that all members of multidisciplinary design team can have an access to go into user's life.

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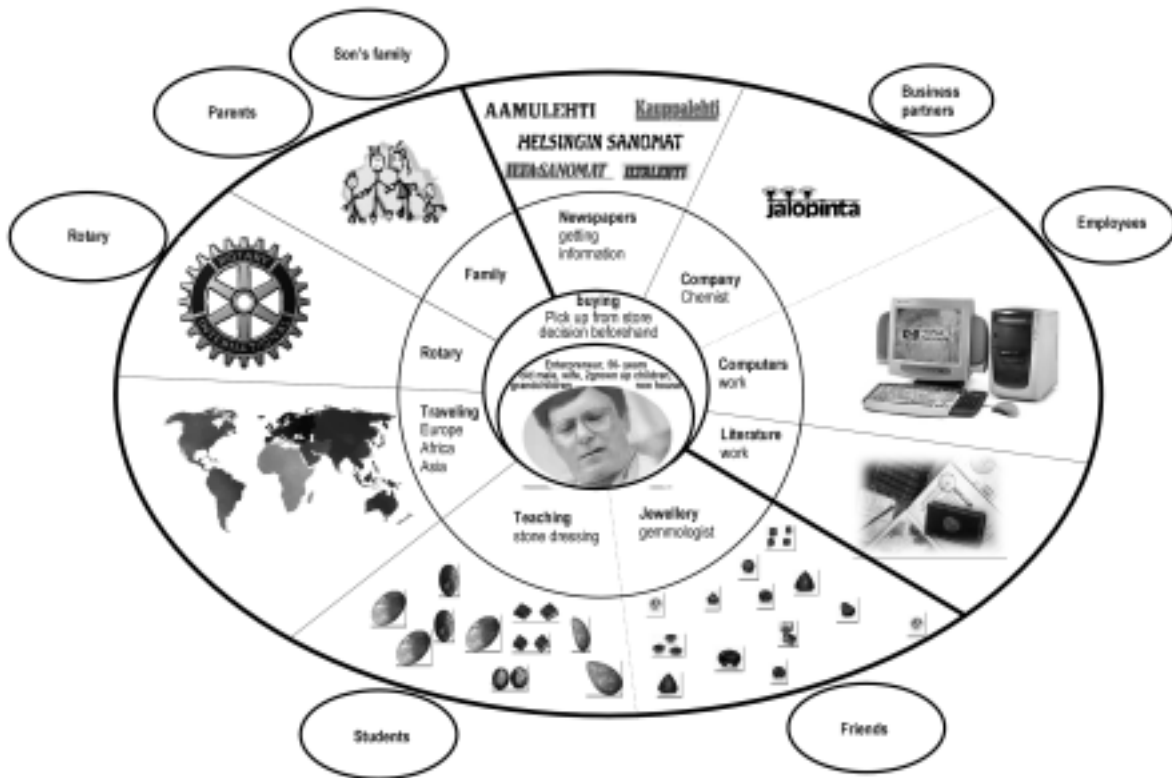


Figure 1: A GUP based on user study on middle-age men and their buying habits in department stores.