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Call for papers: Special Issue on Mobility: Understanding mobile use and users International Journal of Human-Computer Studies

Mobility of all kinds, such as travelling, journeys, trips, hikes, visits and rides, form an increasingly important part of our everyday lives; travel distances per person have been constantly increasing worldwide (e.g., 11% in the U.S. and 12% in Europe from 1995 to 2002). Interest in mobile technology has increased dramatically in terms of both consumer demand for new devices and services and corporate investments in R&D. Services and applications for mobile messaging, browsing, information retrieval, personal information management, location-based services etc. are increasing their popularity. In parallel, we are witnessing a strengthening interest within the HCI community in designing mobile interfaces.

One problem with designing good mobile interfaces and services lies in the fact that mobility and mobile users are poorly understood. With increasing efforts on the side of technology development, in-depth inquiries of the underlying phenomenon are lacking. Mobility obviously can have both enabling and disabling effects on the use of technology, but what exactly is mobility? Which human factors shape mobile interaction and make it different from desktop-based use? What characterizes social interaction in mobility? What situational or local resources do people utilize in their activities when mobile? How do we study mobile use? Accumulating a base of knowledge on these themes would help designers to recognize false assumptions and better ground their design choices. Carefully designed mobile services can be used by users while they are mobile, in the midst of the places and people they need to communicate and work with.

This Special Issue seeks to foster a scientific understanding of the three related topics: (1) mobility, (2) mobile users, and (3) mobile use. The purpose is to provide a timely review of research efforts on the topic. The Special Issue is concerned not only with the individual user and with groups of users, but also with the larger social, organizational, and cultural contexts of the user community. Three kinds of submissions are encouraged:
- Theoretical papers should deal with descriptive or explanatory models of mobile use, user, or user community.
- Empirical papers may range from field trials and experimentation to field observation.
- Methodological papers should be concerned with such issues as how to analyze mobile interaction and how to discover the structure of user behavior.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:
- The role of personal and ubiquitous technologies in mobile user activities
- Core user tasks in mobility and mobile interaction
- Social and cultural aspects of mobility and mobile use
- Psychological resources and limitations of mobile users
- Experiences on interface designs best aligned with the characteristics of mobility
- Conceptual frameworks for understanding mobility or mobile use
- Foundational analyses of interaction during mobility
- Lessons from field trials on the nature of mobility and mobile use
- Fundamental methods and principles of user research in mobile HCI
- Principles of mobile evaluation techniques

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Submissions

Manuscripts should not exceed 8000 words. Papers should be submitted according to the IJHCS Guide for authors, and will be refereed in the standard way. All manuscripts should be submitted online. The IJHCS Guide for authors and online submission are available at http://www.authors.elsevier.com/journal/ijhcs. To submit to the Special Issue, please select Article Type "SI: Mobility" and clearly state in the "Enter Comments" section that the paper is intended for the "Mobility: Understanding mobile use and users" Special Issue being edited by Antti Oulasvirta and Stephen Brewster.
If you are a first time user of the journal's online submission tool, you will have to register yourself as an author on the system. If you have any problems with the system please contact Fred Kop, Journal Manager, at ijhcs@elsevier.com.

Important dates

Target publication date: July 2008

Timeline:

January 2007, Call for papers
30 May 2007, 1st Submission deadline
30 September 2007, Notification of 1st review
15 December 2008, 2nd Submission
1 March 2008, Final notification
1 April 2008, Final revisions due

Note that these dates are provisional, and may change in the near future.

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