

Executive Summary

A usability evaluation of orkut, an online social networking application
<http://www.orkut.com>

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About orkut

“Orkut” is an online community that connects people through social networks. Orkut was designed and developed by a Google employee, Orkut Büyükkökten of Turkey, as a side project and has now expanded into a large private social network. Since it started in 2004 this social phenomena has attracted over 10 million members. Membership is only available to those invited into the system by current members. 73% of its member base hails from Brazil with the US trailing behind at 6%.

Orkut provides an online meeting place where people can socialize, make new friends and find people who share their interests. It is similar to The Facebook and MSN’s mySpace, in that it allows people to create their own social networks; however, it does not limit them to viewing profiles of people from their own school. Orkut also allows users to rate their own friends and have friends write testimonials for them and provides profiles for business and romantic networking.

Why orkut?

In a previous study, we chose to study the way undergraduate students at IU use the online social networking system for students – “Facebook”. We wanted to extend this study to include how people (from the same sample set) would interact with a similar (but, unfamiliar) system. Orkut was our choice for four reasons: wider reach, more options to personalize, non-familiarity to many college students, and contentious issues on its usability. We decided to conduct a usability test to observe and study the users performing fundamental (but, not unique) tasks in orkut. The steps to perform these tasks would vary by application. We wanted to see if the design of orkut enables quick and simple execution of basic tasks or renders them confusing.

User Profile

The users we selected already have experience with online networking community applications, specifically Facebook. We hope that the users’ prior experiences will mean that they are accustomed to the basic tasks performed in these applications such as editing a user profile and messaging.

Our primary sample users were students. We were interested in students who are used to different types of online collaborations (like mail, chat, oncourse, Facebook) in their everyday lives. We made sure that none of the users had used orkut before, though they might have heard about it.

We recruited them by requesting them to “help us understand a new, online system better”. The users then filled out an online-pretest survey form (<http://ocean12tech.com/i590>). The form attempted to gauge the users’ familiarity with online networking applications. We wanted to establish their frequency of use and elicit their opinions about Facebook.

There were three users all recruited through personal contacts: all females (which was incidental). Two of the females were juniors, one was a senior. The first user is a student from Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, majoring in Neuroscience and Medicine. The other two are students from IU. While one user majors in Communications and Business Management, the other is a Communications and Culture major.

The complete transcript, including the questions we posed to the students and their responses is included in the Appendix following this description.

Format of Study

We ran a pilot study of the Usability Test in order to determine the effectiveness of our approach. Due to the pilot study, we uncovered a few elements of the script that had to be altered and areas in the test where we were not prepared. In terms of preparation, we discovered that orkut uses the term “professional” where we had often used the term “business” causing the subject to be confused. Also, we referred to the name of a picture file as “BigSmile.jpg” whereas it appears on the screen as just “BigSmile”. The usefulness of the pilot study was quite helpful in catches these and similar glitches in the documentation. We also realized that the script was more useful if the moderator read it aloud to the subject. We decided that the moderator should asked questions of the subject during the study to determine his or her current thoughts as well as asking a series of debriefing questions at the end of the session. The pilot study allowed us to be better prepared for following tests of the system.

In testing the usability of orkut, we simulated an account for each subject. The simulated account belonged to a member of our team. Additional orkut members with whom the subject would interact during the test included the accounts of other members of the team such that the subject could navigate the networked community space in a fairly typical manner.

We set up the test using a wireless enabled laptop commuter equipped with Camtasia screen capture software and a microphone. The subject was asked to speak his or her thoughts as she interacted with the system. All the comments and mouse actions were recorded by the Camtasia software. The comments were transcribed and are available in the appendix. A moderator lead the subject through a script designed to approximate the setup and modification of a user account. The remaining three members of the group observed the test and took notes. The subject was asked informal debriefing questions during the test at key points after task sections. The moderator also posed several questions to the subject at the end of the test. The subject was then asked to fill out a post-test questionnaire.



Laptop and microphone view 1



Laptop and microphone view 2



Vamsi moderating with a subject



Observers behind the testing station

Figure 1: Testing Set-up

The quantitative data we captured includes:

- Mouse clicks and movements
- Time to complete each task
- Task completions
- Task failures

The qualitative data we collected includes:

- Debriefing question responses during and after the test
- Responses to posttest questionnaires
- Spoken comments during the test
- Observers' notes

Testing Results and Recommendations

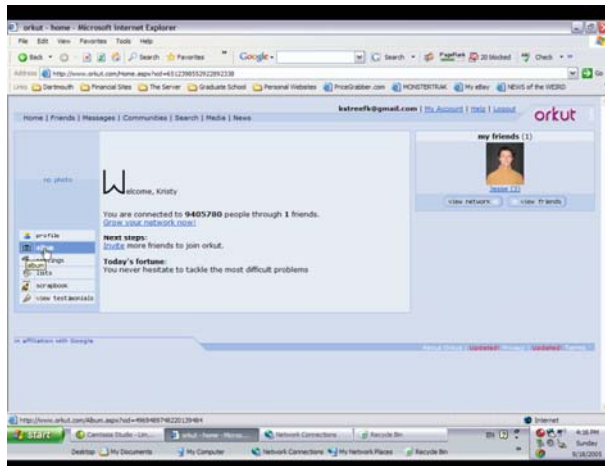
The following analysis has been based on the findings from the different scenarios and tasks that the users were asked to complete. The suggestions are a reflection of both verbal suggestions from the users themselves and also observed suggestions from the moderator and observers.

Scenario One: Updating Profile

Task	Passed	Failed	Findings
Find picture upload page	0/3	3/3	- Users could not find page to upload image into profile -All users ended up mistaking 'album' for 'profile picture'
Locate picture to upload	3/3	0/3	- Users had no problem locating images on their computer to upload into the orkut system
Upload image to profile	0/3	3/3	- All users successfully uploaded an image onto orkut, however images were uploaded into the Album not the Profile
Navigate back to welcome screen	3/3	0/3	- Quick and easy to locate the home button at the top left hand corner of the screen
Update career profile	2/3	1/3	- Users had a difficult time locating the career profile, as the tabs were not easily located -One user gave up on the task completely after searching around through every link

The overall experience of uploading an image into the users profile and changing profile information was negative. Although all of the users were able to upload an image onto their account, they were not aware that the picture was not used for their profile until later on in the session when they would see their profile next to other profiles that contained images. The following are quotes from the users throughout the process of uploading an image:

- *"I don't see anything, I went to album, oh I should have gone to profile... wait here is my album"*
- *"I'm not seeing anything about a picture or uploading (within profile)"*
- *"I don't know where you want me to find it"*
- *"Although the picture is still not up (in the profile view of main page), it told me that it uploaded"*



The subject is clicking on the 'album' link in this screen shot in an attempt to find the screen that will enable the uploading of a picture into the user profile.

Figure 2: Screen shot from the test session.

When it came to updating profile information users were confused of how to dig into the other sections of the profile and spent more time than necessary to find the links to their desired section. The following are quotes from the users throughout this process:

- *"I thought that it would be an option under editing profile, but it was off to the side, I feel like most websites have ads over there not links"*
- *"I guess I, obviously in the wrong one (profile)"*
- *"I'd probably quit the program at this point and not use it again"*

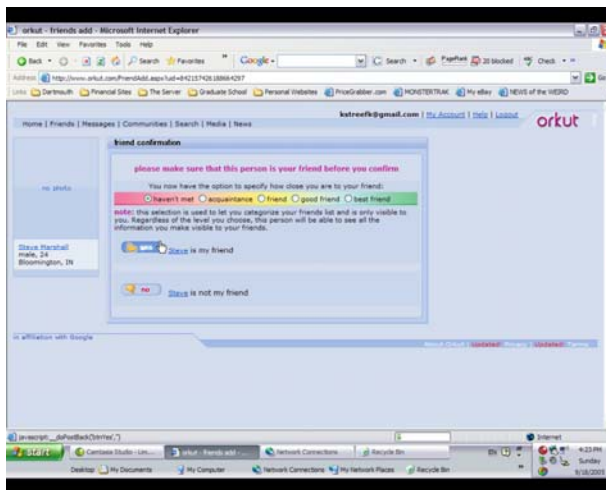
Scenario Two: Adding Friends and Joining Communities and Sending messages

Task	Passed	Failed	Findings
Search and add one of Jesse's friends	3/3	0/3	- It was easy for all three users to find a new contact and add them from Jesse's list of friends -Each user found different ways of getting to his list of friends -Some users questioned the whole rating system for friends
Explore new friends profile	3/3	0/3	-Users were able to get around the profile of a friend easier than their own - Users found; Jesse's communities, Jesse's friends, scrapbook, -Users had comments and suggestions about the layout, but like the information that was provided
Join 'Indiana	3/3	0/3	- All three users were able to quickly

University' community			determine how to join a community -All three users were aware that they had successfully joined when they saw the community's icon on the right side of their profiles.
Navigate 'Indiana University' community	3/3	0/3	- Users were able to determine how many people were members of the community
Send Jesse a message	3/3	0/3	- All three users were able to quickly and easily send a message to Jesse - All three users were aware that the message was sent successfully

In terms of searching for friends, joining communities and sending messages the feedback was overall positive. Users did not have any serious problems navigating through the tasks provided to them in this scenario. The main comments that come from users were in regards to the layout and flow of the information provided by each user. The following are quotes from the users throughout the process searching around their friend's profiles:

- *“I like how he tells a lot about himself, but the basic/list information should be first not at the bottom of the page, these should be switched and the more detailed stuff should be at the bottom”*
- *“The information is hard to read because it is so squished together”*



The subject is adding a friend to the test account in this screen shot.

Figure 3: Screen shot from the test session.

Recommendation Process

In order to determine which problems should be addressed, as a group we decided to use the affinity diagramming (Nayak 1995) to group all of the relevant findings together. We went through the observational notes of each user and wrote the main issues down on note cards; after each group member had finished compiling their own note cards we grouped the note cards into different groups that each represented a specific issue. After we had several different groupings we went through and ranked the groups in the following manner:

- 1= Severe Problem
- 2= Needs Improvement
- 3= Suggestion

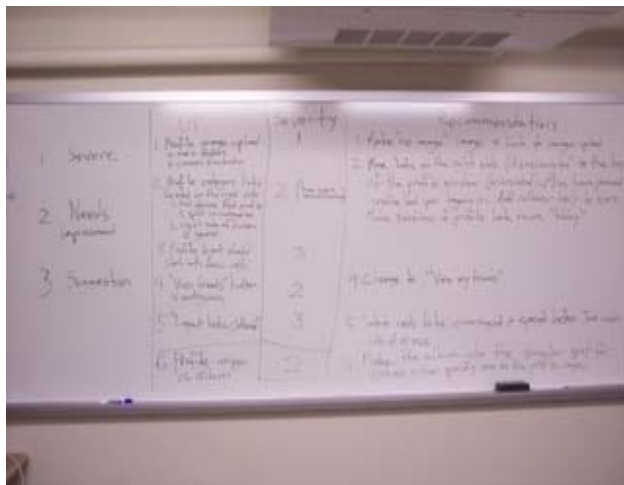
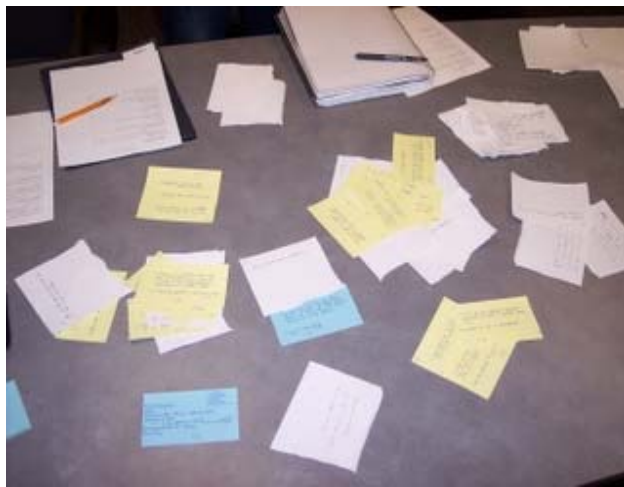


Figure 4: The affinity diagramming and severity establishment session

The following table details the major problems that were apparent through the testing of our scenarios, the severity of each problem and recommendations of how to address each problem.

Problem	Severity	Recommendation
Profile image upload -main feature -causes frustration	1	Make 'no image' a link to image upload
Profile category links located on the right side -not obvious that profile is split into categories -right side of screen is ignored	2 (two users accomplished this task after spending time searching, only one gave up completely)	Move links on the right side (disassociated) to the top of the profile window (associated). Also, have personal profile load upon logging in. Add rollover text to icons because they are somewhat unclear to some users. Make sections of profile look more 'tabby'
Profile layout -start with basic info first	3	Either start with the basic info first or give your users the option to rearrange things
'View friends' button is ambiguous, users not sure if clicking on their own friends or friend of a friend or everyone that they are connected to	2	Change to 'View my friends'
'Layout looks cluttered'	3	Content needs to be organized in a more eye pleasing manner. Too much info all at once, white space needs to be added
Profile image vs. Photo Album	2	Make the album the only spot that you can upload pictures, and within the album users can specify one image as their profile image, to avoid confusion as to where to upload profile image.

Although there were several major problems with the interface, the users did provide us with some positive feedback on the system both verbally and through their actions:

- Very Visual, can see friends grouped together
- Navigating friend's profiles is easy and information provided is relevant
- Navigating back to the home page is easy and quick from anywhere in the system
- Lots of options for customizing and usage
- Pleasant color scheme
- Messaging system is quick and easy to use

Discussion

The user base for this study consisted of three female undergraduates and therefore presents a homogenous test group. For future studies, it would be advisable to include a more diverse group of subjects including men, subjects of varying ages and nationality. The Usability Problems that we identified in this study are significant and readily apparent in this study, but a wider group of test subjects may reveal more Usability Problems. Employing supplemental scenarios that probe the functionality of orkut may generate additional recommendations to improve the user experience of this system.

We felt that this project would give us clues to the “cognitive friction” (Cooper 2004) associated with accepting another similar “complex” system. The results of this study could also be used to investigate the gaps in the existing tools, like orkut and Facebook. With further investigation we could try to make a statement on the overall social-networking concept, and where it is leading us.

References

Cooper, Alan. *The inmates are running the asylum*. Sams Publishing, New York, NY. 2004.

Nayak, Nandini P., Mrazek, Debbie, and Smith, David R. Analyzing and communicating usability data: now that you have the data what do you do? A CHI'94 workshop. SIGCHI Bulletin 27, 1 (1995), 22-30.

Appendix I: Pretest Questionnaire

1.) What is your name?

User 1: -----

User 2: -----

User 3: -----

2.) What is your age?

User 1: 20

User 2: 20

User 3: 20

3.) What school year are you currently in?

User 1: Senior

User 2: Junior

User 3: Junior

4.) What is your area of study?

User 1: Neuroscience/Medicine

User 2: Communications and Culture

User 3: Communications and Business Management

5.) Are you a member of the Facebook online community?

User 1: Yes

User 2: Yes

User 3: Yes

6.) What is your opinion of the Facebook?

User 1: It is stupid, and a waste of time.

User 2: I like it, it allows me to keep in touch with high school friends, as well as check out college friends interests.

User 3: I think that the Facebook is a good place to keep in contact with old friends from high school and a useful way of keeping in contact with other students around campus.

7.) How often do you login to the Facebook?

User 1: Once per week

User 2: Once per day

User 3: Once per day

8.) Have you ever wished Facebook had some more options? Describe what these options would do?"

User 1: No

User 2: I don't use it enough to know what other options I would like to have on it.

User 3: Yes, I think that Facebook should have the option of color and a place where more pictures can be added

9.) Have you had any experience with any other online communities such as MySpace.com?

User 1: No

User 2: Nope

User 3: Yes, MySpace, I don't have my own personal account, but my sister does, and I have looked up different people through that.

10.) What is your opinion of these other communities?

User 1: They are silly and wastes of time. I think they create a weird way of interacting with people.

User 2: It bothers me how anyone can sign up for MySpace. The Facebook is just for college students, so you know there are no creeps scamming for college girls or high school ones for that matter.

User 3: I like these other communities. I think that they are the same as Facebook, by have more options which make them more personalized.

11.) What do you know about the orkut online community?

User 1: I know that it is a Google based Facebook type thing - My boyfriend told me about it.

User 2: Nothing

User 3: Nothing

Appendix II: Posttest Questionnaire

1.) Were the tasks you performed relatively easy or difficult?

Very Easy 1 2 3 4 5 Very Difficult

User 1: 2

User 2: 2

User 3: 3

2.) In your opinion, is it easier to change your profile, join groups and send messages in Facebook?

User 1: Yes

User 2: Yes

User 3: Far easier

3.) Do you think you could redo the steps of these exercises better and faster given a second try?

Yes, definitely 1 2 3 4 5 No, I would still be just as lost

User 1: 1

User 2: 2

User 3: 3

4.) Did you enjoy using orkut?

Yes, a lot 1 2 3 4 5 No, not at all

User 1: 3

User 2: 3

User 3: 4

5.) List some aspects of orkut that you like/dislike. You can mention anything such as features you liked or simply the colors and layout.

User 1: I liked the business vs. personal, 2 profile system

User 2: I liked how you could use the program for a business aspect -> contacting people. The setup is different than Facebook, so it took a minute to get used to it.

User 3: Like: more personalized, more to write. Dislike: Kept shutting off

6.) When you were navigating through orkut, did you feel like you knew what section you were in and how to get back to where you came from?

Yes, it was clear 1 2 3 4 5 No, I was lost the whole time

User 1: 4

User 2: 1

User 3: 3

7.) What do you think of orkut as a tool for building social spaces?

Very effective 1 2 3 4 5 Ineffective

User 1: 4

User 2: 2

User 3: 4

8.) Based on everything you've done so far, how would you rate the overall experience of using orkut?

Loved it! 1 2 3 4 5 Hated it!

User 1: 3

User 2: 3

User 3: 4

9.) If you were to pick 3 best & worst things about orkut (of what you have seen), what would they be?

Best:

User 1:

2 profile system

Colors were nice

User 2:

Contact People

User 3:

Personalization

Groups were visual

More options

Worst:

User 1:

Picture uploading confusing

Friends adding confusing

No way to tell if profile updated (i.e. there were no change in fonts, couldn't look at my profile)

User 2:

N/A

User 3:

Slow

Not straight-forward

No doughnuts

10.) What were your overall impressions of the 'online social networking' concept?

A.) its weird! How can one be online and social at once?

B.) that's a great idea! Its redefining the way we collaborate.

C.) what online? What social? What networking? I want donuts.

User 1: A

User 2: B

User 3: B

Would you invite your friends to orkut?

User 1: No

User 2: No, I wouldn't join it because none of my friends are on it. It would be pointless for me at this point and time.

User 3: No

Additional questions or comments:

User 1: N/A

User 2: N/A

User 3: N/A

Appendix III: Observer Data

1. Find a page to upload image

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1		X	-User hit the settings thinking that the picture would be there -‘I don’t see anything, I went to album, oh I should have gone to profile, wait here is my album -User uploaded picture to album not profile
2		X	-‘I’m not seeing anything about a picture or uploading’ -Uploads picture into album -Goes into ‘edit profile’ but fails to locate the image link
3		X	- ‘ I don’t know where you want me to find it’ -Searching around, randomly clicking on links to see where it could be -Uploaded image to album

2. Find BIGSMILE on your computer

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1	X		
2	X		-Easy to browse for picture on computer
3	X		

3. Upload image to orkut

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1		X	-Image uploaded successfully but not in the correct place -User noticed that image was not in the welcome screen so she is unsure if she actually uploaded it or not
2		X	-Put image in the album but not in profile -‘although the picture is still not up (in the profile view of main page), it told me that it uploaded’
3		X	- Uploaded image to album not to profile - User noticed it wasn’t in her profile information but was frustrated and didn’t know how to fix that

4. Navigate back to welcome screen

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1	X		-Found it easily
2	X		-Quickly found button to get back to main screen
3		X	- Easy to find

5. Find 'career skills' section

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1	X		-Went to profile, and found the button on the right hand side
2	X		- Went to profile → edit profile → professional - Scrolled up and down the main profile page looking for 'professional' as an option in that edit menu, was not looking for a button to edit a different profile -I thought it would be under editing profile, but it was off to the side, I feel like most websites have ads over there'
3		X	- Was able to get to profile easily -Scrolled up and down on main profile edit page looking for a career section but didn't see the buttons on the right side - 'I guess I'm obviously in the wrong one (profile)' → user went back to main screen to see if a different profile existed - 'I'm computer illiterate' - Brute forcing it – no idea where it is located

6. Update 'career skills' section

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1	X		
2	X		-User wasn't aware that profile had finished updating right away because there was no change on the screen
3		X	- User was unable to figure out where this section was and stopped looking - 'I'd probably quit the program at this point and not use it again'

7. Search and add one of Jesse's friends

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1	X		-Clicked on 'friends', clicked on 'Jesse', found friends easily and added Jesse as friend
2	X		- Clicked on 'Steve' → 'add as friend' → rated him - User had some doubts on which links to click on
3	X		- 'maybe I am doing one thing right' - Did it fairly well, did not both to adjust the friendship level when adding the friend - Tried adding a friend that was already added and realized this

8. Explore their profile

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1	X		- saw Jesse's communities, read profile information
2	X		- Found the scrapbook, and was somewhat unsure of what it did - 'the scrapbook must be something like the wall on the Facebook, like where friends can write messages'
3	X		- 'I like how h tells a lot about himself, but the basic/list information should be first not at the bottom of the page, these should be switched and the more detailed stuff should be at the bottom' - Thinks the layout of information is backwards

9. Join the 'Indiana University' community

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1	X		- Found it easily and found 'join' button on left side - 'it says 'are you sure you want to join this community' so I have to click 'join' again'
2	X		- IU → join → confirm - When asked how the user knew that she had joined, she pointed to the IU icon at the right side of the screen where the communities were listed
3	X		- Several server crashes throughout this task, user understood it was the server but asked moderator for confirmation - Knew that she had added community from the icon on the home screen

10. Navigate the 'Indiana University' community

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1	X		-Able to identify how many members were part of the community -While looking at members the user realized that she did not have a photo on her profile
2	X		
3	X		

11. Send Jesse a message

User	Passed	Failed	Comments
1	X		- Clicked on his profile, clicked on envelope - 'now it is showing me the message'
2	X		- Jesse --. Send message → type → send -No issues finding anything or sending the message
3	X		- jesse → message → type → send -Went right to Jesse's profile and was able to send message

Appendix IV: Transcripts

Transcript of User 1
Thursday, September 15

S: Ok, ah, now that you've logged in, can you describe for us what you're looking at and what you are expecting.

T: I'm looking at the welcome screen for orkut. It has settings for profile, album, settings, list, scrapbook. I can see friends. It's telling me how many people they're connected to.

S: any expectations of whether you're going to like this or not, just by the overall appearance of the front page?

T: No, it just kinda looks like Facebook.

S: Ok, ah, We can go ahead and add your picture to your profile. So, ah, start from the welcome screen and if you could just navigate to the link that will get you to upload screen for the picture.

T: ok, so I hit settings

S: ok

T: thinking that the picture would be here

S: I don't see anything about pictures. I'm going back to the home. Going to album, oh profile, no actually I'm going to profile, oh no wait, I found it, upload photo. Under my album.

S: ok, um, so go and go to that and you're going to select a photo from you my pictures folder called bigsmile dot jpg.

J: That's actually under my computer...[unintelligible]

T: ok, so I clicked upload, and now there's a picture of Piglet.

S: alright, so you're back at the home screen?

T: yes, ah no, I'm back to the home

S: ok, ah, how'd you figure out, ah, where to go to upload a picture

T: um, I picked settings first, thinking that settings, it seemed like common sense, but, it wasn't there, so then I clicked album, because it had a camera, because I was looking for a picture, but I think album is a weird name, like I wouldn't have thought if it had just said album to look there to upload a picture, [it]'s just cause it had the camera.

S: and, ah, how were you aware that you successfully uploaded the picture?
[unintelligible]

T: ya, uh, it displayed, I don't see it on the welcome screen though....so I'm not really sure

S: did you have any issues navigating back to the welcome page?

T: no

J: Were our instructions unclear, umm, for uploading the picture

T: ya, like I thought I would just go when I went to upload, that I would go to a folder called my pictures and in there it would be bigsmile dot jpg, but you had to go the my computer, archemedes, and it's not bigsmile dot jpg, it's just bigsmile

K: were our instructions clear on [unintelligible]

T: what do you mean?

K: like, um, how did you interpret, um, how did you interpret starting at the welcome screen, navigate to the link that will bring you to the upload screen

T: oh, that, that was clear

V: it says adding a picture to you profile, so, do you see the picture?

T: I'm clicking profile to see, and I don't see anything, no

S: so at this point, you're still not positive that you did in fact upload the picture?

T: no [laughs]

S: ok, now we'll move on from that. And, ah, we're going to get in to updating your business profile. So will you please navigate to your business profile, and then find your career skills section

T: go to the business profile?

S: go to your business profile and find your skills, career skills section

T: ok, I went to profile and I see general now, I'm looking for business. I don't see it. Oh, professional? Is that business?

S: ya

T: ok. Ok, so I'm on professional.

S: ok, uh, based on your amazing performance at your job this summer you decide to add the following to your career skills: great social skills

T: ok, so I typed great social skills, can operate heavy machinery and capable with pen or sword...in the career skills

S: ok...uh, you can now update your profile. Can you tell from the screen now that your profile has been updated?

T: It's still thinking

S: Sorry

T: That's ok. Umm...well what I wrote is in there. So I guess it's there.

S: ok, uh, can you also add the following information. Attending Yellow Brick College, with a major in early...early modern English.

T: ok, and then just hit update?

S: Yes. Can you ah, give me a brief description of the path you took to find business [unintelligible]

T: I went to the, um, profile, my profile and on the main screen there's personal like section, and then there's a big empty space like in the middle, and on the right it says professional, and there's a little man with a tie, so I, I clicked on him.

S: let's go ahead and add friends. Can you go to search through Jesse's friends

T: ok

S: and find a contact to add

T: I'm clicking on friends, clicking on Jesse. And...what am I supposed to do?

S: Just find one of his friends that you'd like to add...it's going to be a business contact.

T: umm, ok so I'm viewing his friends and I see Vamsi with a picture and next to it is Steve Marshall. And when I click on Vamsi,

S: you can go ahead and add Vamsi to your friends.

T: add him to friend?

S: yes

K: go back to friends. He's already his friend. Go back to Steve.

T: oh, ok. Add as a friend [clicks], so I'm adding Steve as a friend.

S: alright

T: you now have the option to specify how close you are to your friend? I'm just going to leave it as friend, and click the thumbs up yes that Steve is my friend.

S: now you and your friend are in a social network, ah, spend a little bit of time exploring his profile...see what interests he has and what he [unintelligible]

T: ok, um, clicking on the little man with the tie, seeing where steve went to high school, his college, his major, his communities, I clicked on that, and I see that he is a member of Indiana University

S: ok, ah, what kind of information did you intend to find in his profile? What do you think of the way that information is presented?

T: ummm, it kind of looks like a personal ad. As opposed to just getting like, information, 'bout hobbies and quotes and things. It's kinda like, I'm Caucasian, I speak English, it's very straightforward, more professional.

S: What are you looking at, the professional section right now?

T: No, I'm looking at the personal, the general, and on the professional one, I can't get to it, ah, here it goes, ya, it's very basic information, high school, college major. I guess I was expecting more information.

S: ah, do you have any opinions about the way the information is presented?

T: It's all very packed together. In a very, it's just, it's kinda hard to read, like it's high school, college major, I, it's just, it doesn't seem to like flow, when you look at it, nothing really captures your attention, kind'ov it's just all in a paragraph.

S: I think we're about done with friends for now. We're going to go ahead and have you join a community. Search through Jesse's communities. And there should be a community called...

T: The Knights of Bacchus?

S: yes

T: Ok, so I see Knights of Bacchus, it gives me a description, category, the owner, type language, etc. I'm gonna hit join, it's on the left-hand side.

S: Ah, once you join the community, please navigate through it [unintelligible]

T: ok, it says, are you sure you want to join this community. So I have to click join again.

S: [unintelligible; about the screen being stuck]

T: ya, [clicks join again], [clicks a third time]. Ok now I'm back, it just brought me back to eh um, the Knights of Bacchus main page.

S: alright, uh, can you navigate through a little bit to see [unintelligible].

T: ok, so I'm clicking view members, on the upper right-hand corner. And I see Jesse, and now I see Kristy, which is me, so I just joined.

S: [unintelligible]

T: ya, I don't have a photo

S: ok, so the photo didn't come up right.

T: no

S: ok, now we'd like to, ah, send a message to Jesse. Navigate to the place where you send a message.

T: I'm clicking on his profile and underneath his picture there's a little mail, eh, envelope that says send message so I'm clicking on that. So sending Jesse a message using orkut thanking him for introducing me to the community. Ok. I'm clicking send. Now it's showing me the message.

S: Ok, so it sent.

T: ya, this is the sent box. Ok.

S: alright, ah, that's basically it for the study. What did you think of the overall system, do you think you would use it?

T: no.

S: Thank you very much. How would you rate the overall experience of uploading the picture between 1 and 5, 1 being great and 5 being terrible.

T: 4

S: Uh, for uploading pictures, can you explain the best and worst aspects that allows you to pick this rating?

T: well, um, I couldn't figure it out, and I did it wrong, and um, ya, I'm not really sure. I went to the album and it seemed like it should be there....

[Recording ends]

Transcript of User 2
Sunday, September 18, 2005

J: I'm pretty much going to read you everything, but if you ever want to read anything, everything on my script is also on your script

C: ok

J: Can I just have your name, just so

C: -----

J: Jesse

C: ok

J: alright, -----, um, just before we begin, um, you're going to be reviewing an online networking community, ah, called orkut. It was developed to enable social networks and collaboration, um, it was also made by Google, to allow users to socialize with new acquaintances like people with the same interests, um, and you're going to be exploring it using this laptop and Kristy's account. Um, and during the study we're going to ask you to complete different tasks, um, that are related to establishing social networks. So, just keep in mind that this is not a test of you, it's a test of this system.

C: ok

J: and we're going to be measuring, ah, how the web-base application works for you, not a theoretical user, so you figure out how to do things the way you normally would,

C: ok

J: you don't have to worry about how the best way to do it is.

C: ok

J: So every answer you give by that definition is right. Um, we're going to ask you to talk out loud while you're doing this, so as you're competing an action, just describe for us how you're doing it, so if you're going to sign in you'd say I'm putting in my user and name and I'm putting in my password and now I'm clicking on sign in

C: ok

J: and ah, I might ask you to just be a little more elaborate if I find you've gone a little bit silent.

C: ok, sounds good

J: and, um, we have no association with the creation of this program. It's just something we decided to test. Alright, so, if you have any questions I'd be glad to answer.

C: umm, no.

J: Let's get started

C: ok

J: So, I'm going to read for you a scenario so that we can get into the use here, you can go ahead and sign in

C: so I just click sign in here

J: ok, sign in. So let's pretend that you have an orkut account, but you've practically forgotten about it by now. Just yesterday though you were chatting with a friend who was telling you about a job contact he made on orkut and you remember your account and you decide that it's time to explore this application a bit more. So you find a computer and you navigate to the log in page, which we have done. It's been running a little slow lately, so...

C: ok

J: We're just going to bear with it. Great, um, when you first set up your account, you didn't have a digital picture of yourself on your hard drive, so you didn't post a picture to your profile, ah, but since then you've managed to get a fairly nice one and you'd like to post it so the whole world can see what you look like. Um, so starting at this screen we'd like you to navigate to the link that will bring you to the upload screen.

C: ok

J: and once you're there, determine how to access your picture through the interface.

C: so I'm trying to find a way to get the picture on...[points on screen to the profile slot for a picture]

J: exactly. And we do have a picture on the hard drive, so once you find that I'll show you where the picture is located

C: Clicking on profile

J: great, just keep on talking as you do it. And you can speak up a little bit

C: Not seeing anything about the picture, uploading the picture around here. Edit profile. Ummmmm. I'm still not seeing anything. Ya, I'm not seeing anything about uploading a picture or anything. It's just like stuff about a profile.

J: Spend a few more moments trying to find it.

C: Clicking on album. Ok [clicks on browse for opening up upload dialogue box]. It's under album.

J: so the picture is located under my pictures. And it's called BigSmile

C: ok. Alright and upload photo [clicks upload photo].

J: and once the picture is uploaded you can navigate back to the welcome screen.

C: ok

J: umm, So can you describe for me real quick how you figured out where to go to upload your picture?

C: umm, well it said album and I saw the picture thing, I thought it was just like maybe you could post a bunch of pictures on or something, not just one specific one for you profile.

J: umm hmm, umm, and how were you aware that you successfully uploaded the picture, what cues did you perceive?

C: ahh, the thing down below after I clicked saying upload, said it was done, although the picture is still not up [points to slot where profile picture should be], so I don't know if I did something wrong. Try refreshing screen. No, still not there. Did I do something wrong?

J: If you'd like to try again, umm, you're welcome to. If you don't think you've successfully done it.

C: [navigates to album] Ya, it's up. Alright.

J: We'll move on to the next task. Um, so now we're going to move on to updating your professional profile. orkut is a great way to network, um, and now that you picture is up you decided you can really ramp up your efforts to impress potential employers. Right now your professional profile is empty and in order to impress employers you're going to need to show off. You learned some great skills during your internship over the summer and you want to use them to promote yourself better now. So if you could navigate to your professional profile.

C: Ok, clicking on profile.

J: and then find your career skills section.

C: um kay, clicking on edit profile. What am I looking for? Sorry, career skills?

J: yep. You want to add it to your professional profile.

C: umm.... Professional? Ok, clicking on professional. Uhm kay.

J: great, and find the career skills section, and you're going to add in there, it's on your paper, but I can just tell you, too

C: ok

J: ah, great social skills, two, can operate heavy machinery, and three, capable with pen or sword. Great and you just realize now that you forgot to add your, ah, college information, you attended Yellow Brick College, and while you were there you majored in Early Modern English.

C: ok, typing in Early Modern English. Ok.

J: so now that you've done that can you please update the profile

C: ok, going down and clicking update.

J: while that's going, can you give me a brief description of the path you took to find our professional profile

C: Ummm, Well, I thought it would be under editing just your regular profile, but the stuffs off to the right hand side where usually, I don't know, I feel like on most web sites that's where they post ads and stuff like that, so I never look over there, but I saw it says, professional, so... then I clicked update

J: great, you can find your way back to the welcome screen. Great, then we're ready to start networking as soon as we get there. Ah, since your friend Jesse Beach was kind enough to invite you to start using orkut you decide you'll see who he is networked with

C: ok

J: So, um, try to search through Jesse's friends.

C: ok, so I'm clicking on view friends.

J: and once you've found a contact you think may be beneficial to your job search, add that friend to you network.

C: ok, is there, he's already my friend though, right? What what am I supposed?

J: you're going to try to look through Jesse's friends.

C: ok...Ok, so view his friends. Ok.

J: And you're going to choose one of them and you'll want to add one of your...one of Jesse's friends to your friend's group.

C: Ok, so I'm clicking on Steve Marshall. Ok, ummm, I'm clicking on add as a friend.

J: and once the server goes through with that.

C: ok. Umm, haven't met. Then clicked on yes, Steve is my friend. Ok.

J: great, now that he's part of your social network just spend a little bit of time exploring his profile. And name for me one or two interesting things from it.

C: Umm, viewing scrapbook. There's nothing, it must be like the same thing as a wall on Facebook or something. Stuff that they have on the profile is pretty basic. There's nothing really.

J: What kind of stuff do you imagine you'd find in the scrapbook.

C: uh, I don't know, just friends writing messages. Stuff like that.

J: it doesn't look like there's too much stuff to see here, so after searching through the profile, um, you realize that there are millions of different online communities to explore and join so you decide to take a look at what communities Jesse is a member of.

C: ok. So clicking on Indiana University. Ok,

J: and what we're going to want you to do is actually join this community.

C: ok, so I'm going to click on... join. Ok, are you sure you want to join, so click on join. Ok.

J: are you sure that it's gone through, that you're joined?

C: ah, I can check my... go back. Click on home. It also says on the page unjoin...ya it shows up [on the welcome page].

J: great, so um, you want to send Jesse a message thanking him for inviting you to orkut, so if you could find a way to do that.

C: [clicks on Jesse under his picture], ok, send message to Jesse [clicks on send message],

J: and just a simple thank you.

C: ok, is that it? Ok. Click send.

J: and if you could just navigate back to the home page, and that is the extent of the test.

C: ok.

Transcription of User 3
Sunday, September, 18, 2005

V: ...orkut.com. This is something like Facebook, where you build your social networks and do lots of stuff regarding networking.

C: ok

V: ok? So, we want you to evaluate the system. And please be reminded that this is not your test, this is a test of the application.

C: ok.

V: And we did not develop this application, this application is developed by Google. So we ask to be [?] as possible, ok?

C: ok.

V: and, um, what else. Um, so we will give you the scenarios, and you just need to do some tasks, and ah, while you do the tasks we ask you to think aloud so that we know what you're thinking.

C: ok, so should I sign in?

V: yes. We assume that you have an orkut account for some time now,

C: ok

V: and you've forgotten about it, and a friend reminds you that orkut is a nice place to network...you are just logging in, ok?

C: ok

V: so, you don't have a photo of yours and you want to, and you want to add one of your photos, and your photo is in my pictures folder, you'll add it to your profile.

C: ok, so just add it to the profile? Ok, so, file, open, close, my pictures, which picture is it?

V: so my pictures, it's bigsmile

C: which one is it?

S: you're looking for html files there,

J: ya, you're going to want to add the picture through the application

C: ok, I don't know where you want me to find it, ummm, am I finding it on this program?

V: right

K: ----, you can take the time to explore and try different things

J: specifically you want to add it to your profile

C: ok, I'm just not sure where to find the picture, checking my account, this is mo difficult, Streef,

V: it's kind of slow, so don't worry about it

C: what?

V: it's kind of slow, so don't worry about it

C: [mumbles],

V: bigsmile

C: this is the one I want?

V: right

C: upload photo, ok, so I uploaded and then

V: now you would probably want to go back to the main screen

C: ok, hmmm

V: so, is your photo up?

C: no

V: so are you sure you did the right thing?

C: no

V: so, we'll continue for the second task, or ?

C: ummm, hold on....ya, album, um, just a moment, I don't know

V: ya, so, you definitely had a problem with uploading the photo, right?

C: ya, uh huh.

V: and, ah, assuming that that is up, we'll go on to the next task

C: ok

V: and the next task is, you have to update your professional profile

C: I have to update my profile?

V: ya, so the idea is that you start your networking process now, so, you need to update your professional profile, I repeat

C: edit profile, and

V: to be specific, you need to look for career skills, and update that

C: ok, where is career skills, career....skills [whisper]....ummm, [mumbling], ok, like am I looking for...

V: yes, you're looking for professional profile

C: ok, so I'm obviously in the wrong one then...ok, try this...profile...how do I turn this off...ummm, do you want me to fill this out?

V: um, not all of this, you're looking for something called career skills, it's under your professional profile

C: ohhhh

V: [laughs], it's not your fault, it's the application's fault

C: no, I'm computer illiterate, ok, something with lists, [mumbling], blah blah blah... forward...now what am I supposed to do?

V: you can go to the home page [chuckles]

C: [chuckles], does that mean it didn't load that page right?

V: yes, it's its fault, for the first time it's admitting that it's fault

C: ok, I'll try to figure out how to do this stupid program, this stupid profile I don't understand it

V: ok, so should we go further

C: YES, I'm failing this assignment

V: so, how did you go about finding the professional profile

C: um, I didn't find, I went to profile, I forget what I clicked, I hit edit general profile, but I couldn't find anything about the career profile there, it just gave you the general information that you find on all of them,

V: that's fine, no problem at all, so um, having given up on that, you would probably now realize that it's time to add some friends to your network and probably Jesse is a nice place to start with, he is the one who invited you to orkut, so you

C: will want to add him?

V: you will probably want to focus you emotions on...

C: Jesse?

V: Jesse

C: actually, I would probably quit the program at this point, but

V: [laughs], so what you will do is, you will search through Jesse's friends add him, ha them, to your network, so your job is to add one of Jesse's friends to your network

C: add one to my network

V: yup

C: alright, ok, so I clicked on his name, it just says stuff about him, and then...social profile... well there it is [laughs]

V: so now your job is to find Jesse's friends and add one

C: add one of his friends, so I'll click on his friends, ok, add as a friend, maybe I'm doing one thing right, ok, so, ok, I'm going to say yes, he's my friend, hmmm, I have to wait for him to be my friend...it says I have to be patient

V: yes, you have to be patient; you've already added that, so you probably go back and search for one more of Jesse's friends

C: are these people real?

V: ya

C: really? [laughs], I'm adding people I don't even know [laughs], ok, wait, ok Jesse, I view his friends, wait, I'm not viewing his friends...he is my friends

V: ya, and you should add one of his friends

C: lord...[sigh], ok, these are his friends, so I'm adding one of his friends, so I should view his friends, ok, so then, didn't I already add him?

V: yes, you have already added him

C: so am I supposed to add another one?

V: yes,

C: ok...ok, Steve Marshall, add as a friend...I've already added him

V: ok, so you've already added him also, so I guess you can't do much about it, but you might want to see Steve's profile, and uh,

C: ok, I look at one of Steve's friends and add them? Is that it?

V: ah no, you can just go to his profile and let me know...

C: I don't know why it did that, it undid me [system logged her out], ok, so...Steve's friends...these are Steve's friends

V: do you see the information that present there before you, and see if that's what you're expecting

C: ya, [mumbling], is this what I'm expecting to see?

V: um hmmm, just have a brief standing look at the profile, and see if that's being presenting the way you want, is that the way you want to see a person, a profile?

C: not really, he, ummm, do I say why? Do you want me to explain myself??

V: um hmmm

C: ok, um, well, I like how it gives, he tells a lot about himself, but I think maybe like, his, the list of information, kind of like the database where you type it in, I think that that should be first, and then give this information, because this is like the basic information and then at the bottom I feel it should

V: you feel that the introduction of the person should be at the bottom?

C: right, I think it's backwards, like this should be at the bottom

V: at the bottom

C: right, like his name, major, blah blah blah, that's just basic information that everyone looks for, like keywords and then like, you can find more out about him. Like, I like how it does that because something with Facebook is you don't really get to maybe know the person as much, you know, what they're doing right now,

V: ok, so the next thing that you do is join a community, join one of Jesse's friends' community

C: it's probably down there, ok, hold on

V: just realize that while browsing the profile of Jesse's friends, you have lost of communities you can join

C: under his communities

V: uh huh, so you join a community called Indiana University

C: ok, click on it,

V: so you just go see what kind of members in this group and you decided whether to join is group or not

C: and they just talk about different....ok, I'll join, click join...this does take a long time, server error

V: just go back

C: should I try it again in 30 seconds

V: you can go ahead, you may not care for that

C: I clicked back, I'll click it again...there we go...should I try to join it again?

V: uh huh, try again, ya

C: ok... there's no donut for me, let's try it one more time, hit join, ya I'll join, ok

V: right, so just go and check that you're part of this community

C: check that I am?

V: uh huh, you did something and you want to make sure that you got it right

C: ok, ummm, my communities, ya

V: ok, so now you're supposed to realize what a powerful tool orkut is and you want to thank Jesse for it, so you leave a message to Jesse

C: to Jesse?

V: ya, saying thanks

C: thanks for inviting me?

V: ya

C: so I clicked on Jesse. Streef I need you to sign in again [system logged her out]. So I clicked on Jesse and I'm going to send him a message. And just thank him for signing me on?

V: uh huh

C: ok, send

V: ya, you see the message?

C: ya

V: so you're done with the test, thanks a lot.