

Abstract

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Assessing and Testing The Usability Of Arabic News Websites

As the Online News websites are widely spreading and becoming part of our daily life, enough attention should be paid to make news websites more appealing to readers. The Online News Websites should be well designed and must be very usable especially that most companies place their ads on these sites, which in turn generates revenue to news websites and help them sustain their positions. Problems and politics in the Arab countries in particular have lead users to start following News online on a daily basis. However, these websites still have a number of limitations especially when news is published in Arabic. This has called a need to understand, evaluate and test the problems facing these Websites, in order to propose a prototype and introduce a road map for these Websites to follow. In this study an experiment was designed, where respondents were divided into two categories, those who were familiar with the News Websites, and the other category were users who were not familiar with the Arabic News Websites. A total of 50 participants were ed for this study, where each website was tested by 5 users and each user tested only one website. The total numbers of the tested websites were 10 websites. The observation method was used during the experiment and the think aloud technique. In order to choose the websites that were examined was according to their ranking on Alexa.com. Then a model was developed to test the usability, appearance and functionality, search, trust and timeliness and their effect on the user experience. After developing the model users were given 7 tasks to perform, each task tested a variable from the model. The users performed the experiment using the Loop11 usability-testing tool and then the websites were further analyzed using the SortSite tool. The study showed that there were significant relationship between the usability, appearance and functionality, search, trust and timeliness with the user experience. After conducting the experiment a prototype was developed, where it eliminated the problems that faced the users while performing the experiment.