Valuing User Experience Testing In Web App Development: An Exploratory Study of Fit Vine and VitiCanopy

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RESEARCH PROBLEM
Mobile web application (“app”) development has seen tremendous growth in the wine industry, with apps designed for various purposes and to work on multiple devices. While such tools are intended to improve wine industry practices, there has been insufficient testing to understand the effectiveness of apps from a user-focused perspective. An exploratory, qualitative, interdisciplinary study was designed to examine industry members’ experiences with two apps - Fit Vine and VitiCanopy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
What technologies (including mobile apps) do industry members use in their work?
What are users’ experiences of Fit Vine & VitiCanopy as examples of apps designed to support industry members’ needs?
• How easy are these apps to navigate?
• How do users respond to the overall look and feel of the apps?
• Are there accessibility concerns?
• How can these apps enhance work practices?

REFERENCES

KEY FINDINGS
- Regional (paddock) locations lack the internet infrastructure needed to support real-time app use
- Intuitive design is needed to support ease-of-use and (ultimately) adoption of web app tools
- Navigation elements (e.g., icons and labels) must reflect commonly used visual elements found in everyday technologies to support varied user needs and technology literacy levels
- Help features and research application/interpretation tools must be integrated into primary app design interface to support effective use
- Web apps must provide “added value” to existing daily work practices to be adopted
- User experience research must be part of prototype app design with ongoing assessment during design and post-launch phases

PARTICIPANTS SAID...
“This particular app might come into use [for] showing where...uniformity is breaking down in the vineyard. [But this app is] a big clumsy method of doing it because there’s already other stuff out there to do it that’s better.”
“And having the instructions on a different page from the page you are trying to write on [in the app is important]. So, all of a sudden you’ve gone through the instructions, ‘oh right, I’ve got to that point, now I’ve got to go back to the instructions’, read some more, then go back to the thing… Because [the instructions are] not there, it’s not user friendly.”
“I think the older you get, the bigger the payback has to be to make the effort to pick up that new technology. And the size of holding is a really big issue. I mean, rather than using an app, you should use shoes. Go and walk and use your eyes.”

FUTURE RESEARCH
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