**Transcription 5: Designer D Novice Designer Standard Pattern**

“Think Aloud”

Talk aloud 2nd October 2009

(reads)

Front second page, there’s the key pictures that are mentioned of what can be seen. Of messages from the moderator, of the announcements and send messages from the students, so I thought one way of having announcements easily visible any time that they come up would just be to have a single bar at the top. And that single bar would just remain empty until there was an announcement, and then a little icon would appear say with a light bulb and that would...

So you would click on the light bulb and that would just roll out and show the message that was be the announcement by the administrator. And you would just click it again and it would scroll back up.

And that way it wouldn’t take up much space, but it would be a visual indicator at any given time you were on the website so that they would know that there is an announcement that they haven’t seen yet. And could possibly have a history and it would be greyed out once it had been clicked on. So that you would know that a lit light bulb indicates a new message that was incoming and an unlit light bulb would indicate a message that has been read.

Um there’s also what the student is able to see at different times. So they can see multiple forums or multiple topics for discussion in the forum, then breaking down the multiple threads within the threads within the topic and then breaking that down to the multiple messages within the thread.

So the announcements are up the top. I thought there could be on the left side a similar sort of system (draws) of maybe a quarter of the page across you could have like a filing system where you've got the index tabs going down to mark off the different forums.

(draws)

And so you would have the index tab, which would slide out to show the discussions for that forum. So I'll just draw that up.
And again these would come out as index cards as well so you’d click an indexing tab to get the furthest one out to get to the discussions that are within that. (draws)

And they’d need to have their - hopefully they’d be represented with a different type of tag so that instead of so that it would be visually represented as a different type of tab that they’re going to open so that if they open any of those discussion tabs it would filter onto the screen what the message area would be the individual messages from that thread. So that the movement would sort of have options just above the tab that scroll out progressively. They could have a little receipt button just above it. To visually remove the clutter so it can get put back to just the forum listing and all that.

And standard scroll bars on the right so they can navigate between the messages. I think sorts out page two. Moving onto page three.

(Reads)

Okay going page, read it before which pages are public and private and going on for saying, having the different levels of forum topic discussion message and a home page as all different levels. I had read that the home page login could or should be separate but in the forums I was of the belief of having them technically as different pages, because of how it would be coded, so that you could link from any one of them and see your linking through to the page as it opens up. So it would open up within the same screen space, not over the top of it, but within it, so you could see the navigation. You're not going from one page and then it opens a whole new page. But having it as a visual filing system where you can see what you're doing. You would have different levels of files. But then having them open up within a designated area that you can plane above and you can more to see things. I think that would have the same navigation effect. I think people will be able to keep track of where they are. And be able to then navigate to other places easier.

And having the message system similar to up the top with the announcements. Um because the mention of having mess... ah thread updates to have that represented so that they can understand it. It would be good to have little reminders on the tabs that open up if there’s something within that to read that’s new.

Hello, any questions?

Is it okay to disagree with it?

Certainly. Just mention it, it’s all good. Anything else?
Um no, it's fine.

Okay.

I think having it a visual navigation, as well as it being text, but also having the visual component to it of the filing system allows text to be put on that so that you can see what’s going on and you can see where a change is and if you closed a level of, um. Say if you minimized one of the levels of the filing system, then you’re only seeing a higher level that there’s a new. Say you’re looking at the topic section and there’s a new message in one of the threads within that topic, then it would tell you which discussion it’s in. So you can open it up to see the discussions and there would be a note in the discussion that has the new message.

And so you could then open up that discussion to see the messages and it would take you to that message. Hard to explain how I think that works.

(draws)

And to be able to view a message at its full screen or whatever could just have a maximize button next to in the message line.

There’s mentions of encouraging discussion and feedback. Feedback seems to be one of the things from the tutor but as well as students. A simple reply button if it’s a very active forum would be used a lot and it would be covered but if a message doesn’t have any reply then to achieve one of the objectives of “ensure each message has a reply” a simple reply button doesn’t really inspire someone to reply unless they have a response that they want to formulate. And so a button of what are your thoughts, or a similar wording of an elaborated question that’s generic that will get people to ask questions or give their thoughts would probably be more appropriate for a first reply.

Also the generation of discussion and questions could more easily be inspired if there’s a question section and that would A there’s the forums listing on the left where it can go down to ten forums listed. That doesn’t necessarily take up much space vertically in that column. So that could be ...

It could go down to the tenth spot, for forums that you could be in and then it could go to questions that are being asked. And it could be a feed that constantly updates whenever there’s a new question asked related to the forum that you’re interested in. Because the forum is related to the specific subject that you are looking at. It would be questions that relate to things that you could be looking at in a broader sense than just the discussion you’re looking or the particular thread. And in a class of 30 is on at ad hoc times it could increase the
Transcription 5: Designer D Standard Pattern

likelihood of having a new question come up, both a question that someone asks. And I think anonymity in that could be a good thing, so it could just be the questions themselves.

And down the bottom of that you could just have a text box to write in and a submit button so you could ask questions as well. And that having the questions there would inspire answers to them, and that would inspire people to start new threads as well. Because they could ask the question in both spots, they could ask the question and then that could be a thread that they start to receive an answer on it or it could be set up by the moderator on another topic that’s purely a discussion of questions, or they could find their way to a related topic.

Um just putting the second point of the teaching strategies, of don’t dominate discussions, support student to student interactions. I think being able to see who’s online at any given time, so that there at the top of the screen you would have the login and logout... and a little maybe a stick figure next to that that turns red or green for any particular logged in or logged out.

And further along there could be the other users that are logged in. They could appear as other stick figures that are logged in and a grey stick figure would be a guest.

And so you can see all or maybe just a selection of the other users that are logged in. And by seeing the other users that are logged in and they can show you in the folders an indication who or how many people are in that discussion. So that you can join whatever discussion that they are in and ask questions or whatever possibly inspired by seeing that there’s another person there and that there is more of a live discussion that can happen.

Um. I guess from my own experience I’ve noted that when there’s a very large forum, and lots of topics and threads and there’s hundreds of users they tend to congregate in certain spots, and people don’t tend to stick around for very long if they’re the only person in that thread. And yet there’s high activity in a nearby thread.

Um having the again with the visual folder system, having the 0-10 forums that you need, if that’s on the far left it wouldn’t take up too much space, allowing questions an extra line. Then next scroll you’d have the topics. And if it’s expected to have 3-10 of then, even having an average of seven, again that wouldn’t take up too much space vertically.

And to have a 1000 threads in the next section along with that. That could take up a fair bit. Um. Wouldn’t have to go horizontally across, too much, and so it could possibly have a second input, ah. It could match the height vertically of the representation of the topics so the threads of topics could be the same vertical height.
And if there's too many threads to fit into one column, it could go into a few other columns, maybe two or three columns.

And with a limit of a thousand it would be probably easiest, I was thinking of a scroll bar to scroll up or down. Which could be limited if you have a forum set up, so possibly a horizontal scroll so that you could scroll through the columns. To the next part.

(draws)

Yeah, we're done. All finished.