User acceptance test
as part of product and service development
in the **MPOWER project**

m·power

Objectives of the study

The MPOWER project (Middleware Platform for eMPOWERing cognitive disabled and elderly) aims to develop a middleware platform that facilitate communication between different types of existing technology. A graphical interface is developed by the project partners, in order to test and evaluate the functionality of the platform.

The interface contains a calendar with reminders, a message box and a contact list, and is designed for older people and people with cognitive impairment. The interface is operated by a touch screen.

Methods

A user panel, consisting of five older people, aged 78 – 88, were invited to a product demonstration, to evaluate the graphical interface, and to determine its user friendliness and usefulness. All users tried to navigate through the pages. Their opinions on visibility and size of text and icons, contrast, and operational aspects were recorded.

Results

The user panel concluded that the interface would be useful for older people, as they may visit the screen to get information and to check time for appointments or new messages. Opinions on contrasts, fonts and navigation keys were recorded as well as opinions on user friendliness regarding navigation and operation in general.

Conclusions reached

It is utmost important that older people participate in developing products that aim to serve older people with cognitive impairments and dementia, in order to address the need for user-sensitive design. The solution is undergoing testing in Trondheim during 2008.

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