Assignment 6a: Use cues

**Goal of the assignment**

* To become able to distinguish use cues on a product

**Assignment**

* Select a product (suitable for describing it’s use cues)
* Make a storyboard
* Fill in the use cue table

*Story board*

Draw (or use photo’s) your ideas about how a user might use the product. Imagine he just bought the product and uses it for the first time.

Don’t make this an instruction manual, but try to feel like a first time user. What would he do first? What parts of the product will be clear and what parts are confusing? Why?

*Assumptions about use cues*

Which **featural** product characteristics (shape, colour, texture, graphics etc.) and which **functional** characteristics (product actions such as noise or movement) are probably designed to encourage the product to be used in certain ways?

And why will users observe and/or understand them? Think, for example, of your own experiences or those of other people with different products or product parts, or think of instructions from relevant literature. Tip: a probable use cue is not working when people get stuck, for example, or use the product in a different way than was intended, or when they get on fine without it because the cue does not add anything.

*Assumed missing use cue*

Try to give one use cue that is missing but in your opinion should have been included. Say *why* you think so, i.e. what possible use of the product will users probably miss or how might the missing use cue make them use the product in a way that was not intended.

*Assumed false use cue*

Indicate a false use cue if you believe there is one, and say *why* you think it may put users on the wrong track.

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| **What** in the **product** will users probably use as a usecue, and for what? | | **How well or badly** do your assumed usecues work for users? Say also **why.** | | | | |
| What is a usecue or small set of usecues? | For what? | How easy is the usecue to **perceive**? (perception) | | | How easy is the usecue to **understand**? (cognition) | |
| +/- | | and why | +/- | and why |
|  |  |  | |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | |  |  |  |
| Missing usecue | | | Why should it have been there? | | | |
|  | | |  | | | |
| False usecue | | | What is the effect of the false usecue? | | | |
|  | | |  | | | |

**Example** (camera from lecture)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **What** in the **product** will users probably use as a usecue, and for what? | | **How well or badly** do your assumed usecues work for users? Say also **why.** | | | |
| What is a usecue or small set of usecues? | For what? | How easy is the usecue to **perceive**? (perception) | | How easy is the usecue to **understand**? (cognition) | |
| +/- | and why | +/- | and why |
| colour contrast, softness and elevation of the main button | immediately find the activation | + | easy to see,  perfectly fits shape of thumb | + | fulfils expectation that there is one main place to start |
| positioning of the main button | immediately find the activation | +/- | not so easy for left-handed | + | left-handed people can still understand it. |
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| --- | --- |
| Missing usecue | Why should it have been there? |
| visible indication of how to switch photo and film | it's one of the first things a new user tries to do - and fails. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| False usecue | What is the effect of the false usecue? |
| screen moves 5 secs after photo | even in movie mode it looks like the camera might be in photo mode |