CMSC 838S: Project Materials
Searching for Airline Tickets:
A Comparison of Tabular and Graphical Presentations

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Instruction for experimenter:

Pre-experiment instructions

- Open the web pages in an web browser. Make sure the web page was displayed properly
- Set up the stopwatch so that it is ready for use
- Ask the subject to sign the informed consent form
- Ask the subject to fill out the "Background Survey" sheet
- Briefly explain the search function and information expression method to the subject
    - Only the flights on June 15 are showed.
    - All flights are from Baltimore Washington (BWI) to San Francisco (SFO)
    - How to find the flight ID of each airline company (if there are more than one flight ID, the first one is the flight ID we need)
    - How to interpret the time (relative location, 12:00 p.m., etc.)
    - How to interpret the time line (thickness)
    - How to check the price of a flight
    - How to find the location and duration of stops of a flight
- Help the subject do the warm-up exercises
    - How many flights of United Airlines are there? (answer: 3)
    - Please give the price of a flight of American airlines. (answer: 380 or 160)
    - Please give the starting time of a flight of Continental Airlines (answer: 11am, 2pm or 3pm (BWI time))
- Ask if the subject have any questions

Experiment instructions

- For each task

    - Go through the question with the subject and tell him the specified flight information to be searched, without referring to the flight schedule.
    - Ask if the subject understand the question.
    - Start the stopwatch as soon as the subject starts looking at the flight schedule
    - Record the subjective observations
    - Stop the stopwatch when the subject is done with the task, before he writes his answer.
    - Record the time completion of the task to the nearest second
    - Ask the subject to write down his answer on the question sheet
- For each question in recall test
    - Go through the question with the subject without referring to the flight schedule.
    - Ask if the subject understand the question.
    - Ask the subject to answer the question and write down his answer on the question sheet.

Post-experiment instructions

- Ask the subject to fill out the subjective questionnaire
- Thank them for spending the time to complete the tasks
- Fill out the experimenter form