

March 20, 2007

To: Carrie Damschroder

From: Jane and John Doe

Subject: User Test Report for Photoshop CS Instructions

The following memo is a user test report pertaining to our instructions for how to restore a photograph using Adobe Photoshop CS. When creating our instructions we decided that our target audience was going to consist of CSULB students who are considered to be novice or beginning users of Photoshop CS. We wrote the instructions with the mentality that each student reading the step by step document has the basic knowledge necessary to operate a computer. Specifically, our instructions focus on using the patch tool to fix blemishes on skin, replace one face in a photograph with another, and replace the eye layers of a photograph. Our goal is to successfully guide students who have no prior experience with Photoshop CS through the aforementioned photo restoration techniques.

USER TEST OBJECTIVES

We performed a user test report to determine how well our instructions were written. This test was also performed to check if the visual aids included in our instructions were helpful or misleading; plentiful or scarce. The goal is that by testing our instructions on individuals who are unfamiliar with Adobe Photoshop CS, we can better determine what improvements need to be made so that our instructions can clearly communicate and guide our readers through restoring a photograph.

METHOD

Since our target audience was beginning users of Photoshop CS, we found three students who had no prior experience with the program, but had used a computer before. The three test subjects were Torie Wohlwend, Aaron Johnson, and Matthew Loftstrom—all undergraduate students. The user test was conducted on Thursday March 15, 2007. To ensure that each test subject was tested using the same machinery, the test was conducted on a single Sony Vaio desktop computer with the current edition of Adobe Photoshop CS. The Sony computer was located in apartment number 236 residing at 225 West Third Street Long Beach CA, 90802. Each test subject was given forty minutes to follow a preliminary copy of the instructions to the best of his/her ability, and was encouraged to make revisions as they saw fit. The test subjects were instructed not to ask any questions during the test, but instead make notes on the instructions where they encountered a problem. During their respective tests, each user was observed and simple notes were taken regarding their attitudes and overall body language. After the test was completed, each person was given the following questionnaire to fill out: (See Next Page)

- 1- How helpful were the instructions?
- 2- Did you have any problems? If so, what section (s)?
- 3- How easy were the instructions to follow?
- 4- Were the visual aids helpful? Were there enough?
- 5- Was there too much/too little information/visual aids?

RESULTS

The responses from each individual test subject were strikingly similar, so this made it quite easy to establish what aspects of our instructions needed revision. Each user was able to successfully perform the restoration techniques presented in our instructions with only minor difficulties. Torie stated that she would have preferred a visual aid be added to part two “How to Open Your Saved Picture,” but all together found the rest of the visual aids helpful and well placed. Aaron concluded that the instruction placed as step two in part two which said to “Select Fill” was unnecessary. Aaron also found step two in part three to be unnecessary stating that, “there is no need to click OK after selecting to duplicate layer.” Matthew said that the wording of step four in part four was unclear, and suggested that the words, “Hold the curser down” be changed to, “Hold left mouse button down” instead. All three students suggested that we added how to load a picture file at the beginning of each set of instructions to eliminate the need to flip back and forth within the document. Also each student found step four in part three to be unclear. Aside from these minor discrepancies, Torie, Aaron, and Matthew were all pleased with the instructions and felt that they were helpful, and were all pleasantly surprised that beginners such as themselves could learn how to restore a photo in less than forty minutes.

CONCLUSION

This user test proved to be an extremely helpful task. By exposing students who were completely unfamiliar with Adobe Photoshop CS to our instructions, we made sure that if at any point our instructions were unclear these students could not simply overlook the mistake and find a solution themselves, but would have to inform us so that we could fix it. Also, the use of beginning level students was helpful because we now know that if students who have never used Photoshop before can accomplish what our instructions set out to do, then anyone can accomplish the same. All problems called to our attention were assessed and the proper revisions made.