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Usability & Sociability

CT434: CSCW

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Learning Outcomes

- After attending this lecture and reading the additional literature, you should be able to:
 - Explain the concept of usability and sociability in on-line community
 - Understand how to design for usability and sociability

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Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) → 1-1

Computer Supported Collaborative Work (CSCW) → Small group

Virtual Community → Large societies

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On-line community definition



- On-line communities have a **purpose** are supported by **technology** and are guided by **policies**
- Community is a process
 - Community develops and continuously evolves
 - Technology is static
 - Community developer = major of a new town

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Basic dimensions

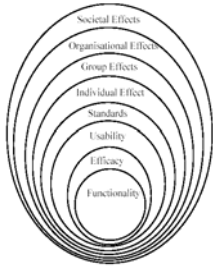
- Usability
 - Human-computer Interaction
 - appropriateness of the software design for community member s' tasks and the community's purposes.
- Sociability
 - Social interaction
 - appropriateness of the social policies and plans for guiding social interaction

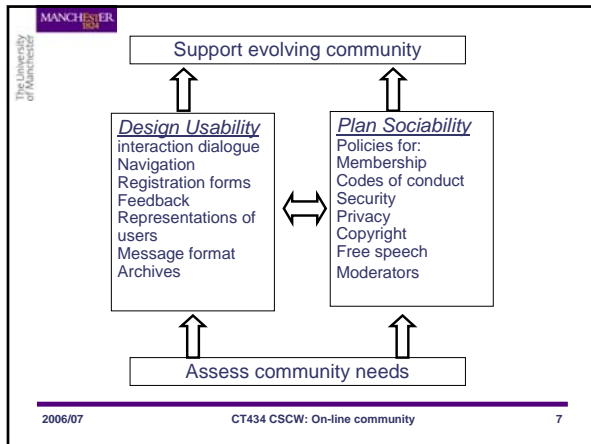
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Evaluation dimension



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- Community-centered development approach**
1. Assessing community needs and analysing user tasks: requirements analysis
 2. Selecting technology and planning sociability: community needs are mapped to technology. Sociability is planned at this level.
 3. Designing implementing and testing prototypes: in this stage the overall conceptual design is planned. Communication tools are incorporated within web-pages in an iterative design.
 4. Refining and tuning sociability and usability: usability and sociability testing
 5. Welcoming and nurturing the community: this stage involves seeding the community.
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- Basic dimensions**
- Sociability
 - Purpose
 - People
 - Policies
 - Usability
 - Tasks
 - Users
 - Software
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Purpose

- Clearly stated goals attract people with similar goals
- Shared social identity
- Similarities
- Stable community with less hostility
- Set up expectations

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People



"On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog."

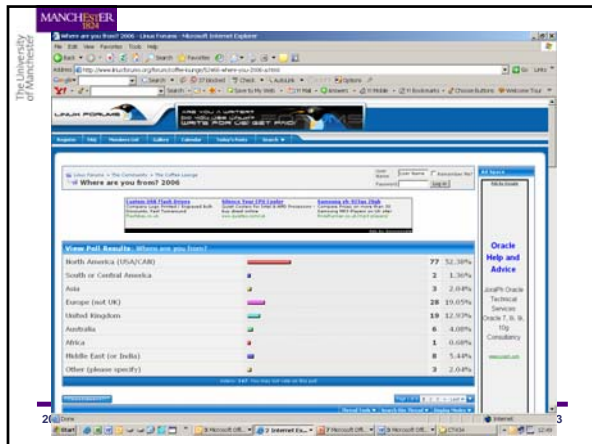
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People

- Moderators and mediators
 - Managing the list
 - Editing texts or formatting messages; Filtering messages
 - Being the expert
 - Opening questions to generate discussion
 - Fight flaming
- Professionals
 - E.g., drkoop; Microsoft
- Lurkers
- Participants
 - Critical mass
 - Virtual identities

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Lurkers

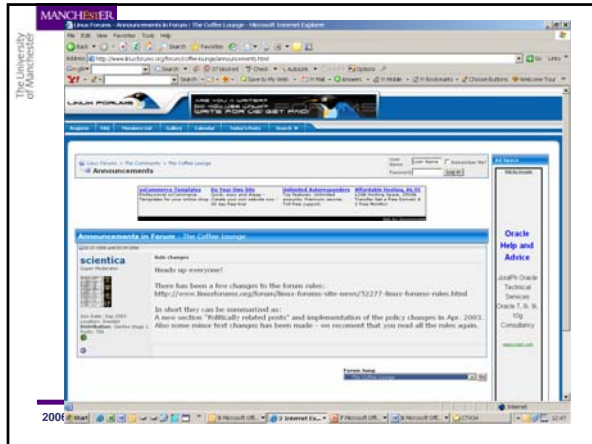
- Someone who does not participate (100:1)
- Reasons for lurking: (social loafing and diffusion of responsibility)
 - Lack of understanding of the community
 - Personal factors
 - Efficiency: Posting takes times
 - No personal/practical needs
 - No community requirement
 - Structure of community
 - Privacy; Safety
 - Involvement; Community responsiveness
 - Value of posting
 - Interaction mechanism
- Solutions:
 - Workspace awareness -IBM Babble system.
 - Reward participation, assign roles, reputation management

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Policies

- Requirements for joining,
- style of communication among participants
- accepted conduct
- repercussion for non-conformance

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Legal requirements

- Privacy
- Security
- Copyright protection

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Netiquette

- Net-speak acronyms
 - LOL; BTW; FYI; IRL; IMO; IMHO; TIA
- Emoticons
 - ;-) ☹ ☺ :-}

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Checklist for S & U

- Why should I join this community?
- How do I join or leave the community?
- What are the rules of the community?
- How do I read and send messages?
- Can I do what I want to do easily?
- Is the community safe?
- Can I express myself as I wish?
- Why should I come back?

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How to use the checklist

- Why should I join this community?
 - Usability:
 - Does the community have a clear and meaningful name?
 - Is there a clear description of the community's purpose?
 - Is the content attractively presented?
 - Will the site be updated regularly?
 - Sociability
 - What title and content will communicate the community's purpose effectively and attract people?

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Summary

- Usability –
 - ease of use –
- Sociability
 - ease of social interaction
- Community centered development approach
 - design approach focused on usability & sociability

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Further reading

- Preece Chapter 3; 4; 7; 9

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