

Personas for Feedback Acquisition

The following 4 personas represent different types of users' behaviours in relation to feedback acquisition in software application. Table 1 shows the components of each persona.

Table 1 Persona components used within this work.

components	Description
Identity	Includes a fictional name and a picture of the persona. It also includes a short statement/status describing the overall persona's attitude to feedback acquisition (i.e. anti-user of the application)
Profile	A description of basic demographic information such as age, gender, profession, etc.
Goals	Indicates persona's goals of providing feedback.
Behaviour	Describes persona's behaviour and attitude to feedback acquisition in software applications.
Culture Suitability	Indicates the persona's suitability to Middle Eastern or Western culture. <i>Note (culture suitability doesn't restrict a personas to a certain culture. It just gives a slight and initial indication of its potential suitability to that culture)</i>

Linda



Profile: Privacy tolerant and socially ostentatious
Age: 20
Gender: Female
Job: Undergraduate student
Socially affected to give feedback: Yes
Culture Suitability: Middle Eastern-like

Statement: "Giving feedback is a social and community experience and it helps to feel among others".

Goals: Impact the software with her feedback + raising others awareness about the used software + being socially recognised.

Behaviour to feedback:

Linda is an undergraduate university student and spends a great deal of time on her computer studying as well as heavily social networking (i.e. Facebooking). **[Discouragement]** In general, she is not a big fan of the idea of dull and typical feedback requests and reminders coming from software applications.

[Motivation] However, she gets interested in replying to feedback requests when the feedback requests socially motivate her to do so (i.e. by making her socially recognized for her helpful feedback). This is perhaps due to her likeness of social networking and the time she spends socialising with others/friends on the internet which made her motivated towards socially enriched feedback requests. Generally, Linda is positively affected by the following social factors to give feedback:

- **Volume of already given feedback:** She gets enthusiastic to give feedback when there is low number of feedbacks already given on a software. She believes it's helpful to increase the number of given feedback which will then result in other users having a better and richer idea about the software.
- **Visibility and similarity of other users' feedback:** Linda also gets more interested to give feedback if she is able to see other users' feedback on the software first and then having the option to accept/reject to give feedback.
- **Social recognition:** Since Linda appreciates social networking and gives it a great deal of her time, she likes to be socially recognized for her given feedback which she believes could help others and make her socially popular.
- **Feedback acquisition as a social activity:** This social factor also makes Linda motivated to give feedback as well as engaging with software. For example, she gets enthusiastic to feedback requests when she is able to visualize how her social friends are rating a certain software and how their feedback influenced the trend in her community.

[Method] In addition, Linda prefers to be approached for feedback by using hints and tips to gather her feedback (e.g. by telling her that she can go to a feedback centre for this purpose and leave her feedback) or by using an online method as a second option (i.e. popups while she is using the software). **[Privacy]** Interestingly, Linda does not mind to be implicitly reached for feedback (e.g. implicitly collecting information about her software usage)

Figure 1 First person named Linda

Mark



Profile: Passive and stingy
Age: 50
Gender: Male
Job: Business man
Socially affected to give feedback: No
Culture Suitability: Neutral

Statement: *"I find it problematic, hindering and unprofessional to send me any kind of feedback requests. If I'm not happy with something I will go to their website and complain right to them".*

Goals: Get my voice heard when I need.

Behaviour to feedback:

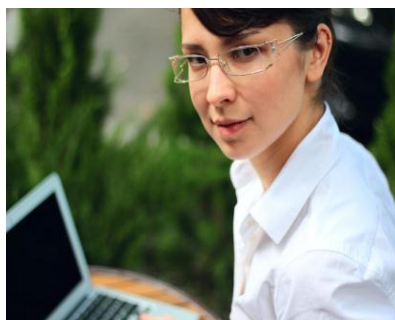
Mark is a business man and he spends a lot of time on his computer working on his business. He holds a very negative view about feedback request coming from software applications. He does not have the time to be responding to feedback request due to his heavy workload.

[Discouragement] Mark thinks feedback request coming from software applications can waste his time and he doesn't tolerate to be asked for feedback at all (whether it's online or offline feedback request). In fact, he thinks that feedback requests that interrupt him while he is working are an impolite way to get information out of him. Since Mark doesn't tolerate to be asked for feedback at the first place, he is not affected by any social factors to give feedback at all (i.e. social recognition does not make him happy to give feedback).

[Method and Motivation] However, Mark believes that there should be a channel for him to deliver his opinion whenever he likes by making him able to submit his feedback on a voluntarily base and without being proactively asked by the software (i.e. through a contact us form).

Figure 2 Second persona named Mark

Amy



Profile: Impact seeker
Age: 29
Gender: Female
Job: School teacher
Socially affected to give feedback: No
Culture Suitability: Slightly Western-like

Statement: *"The benefits of my feedback are always not clear to me as a user."*

Goal: To consider her feedback and see the impact of it on the software.

Behaviour to feedback:

Amy is a school teacher and spends a great deal of time on the internet reading and researching educational related topics. She is not a big fan of the idea of being asked for/reminded to give feedbacks by software applications.

[Discouragement] She does not believe her given feedback is going to be considered or lead to any changes/improvements on the software. She does not even get influenced or motivated by any social factors to give feedback (i.e. visibility of others feedback on the software doesn't really make her want to give feedback).

[Method] However, sometimes she can be tolerant to online feedback request (i.e. showing her a feedback popup dialogue while she is using the software).

[Discouragement] This is due to the fact that she doesn't accept the idea of having her email inbox filled with feedback requests or feedback reminders.

[Motivation] She tolerates the online ones since she has the control to respond or dismiss it at only one click sometimes. In conclusion, Amy can act more positively to feedback request if her feedback is considered and she can see its impact on the software.

Figure 3 Third persona named Amy.

Jack



Profile: Privacy fanatic and generous
Age: 35
Gender: Male
Job: Researcher
Socially affected to give feedback: Yes
Culture Suitability: Middle Eastern-like

Statement: *"I think emails are good if you want someone to actually sit down and write a couple of sentences about how they feel about your service popups and other 'push' mechanisms intrude & interrupt flow."*

Goals: Impact the software with his feedback + raising others awareness about the used software + being socially recognised.

Behaviour to feedback:

Jack as a researcher spends most of his time on the computer working on his research as well as networking with other researchers. **[Motivation]** Jack believes in the power feedback in general and its positive impact. He is a very positive person towards feedback requests and reminders coming from software application. **[Method]** However, he prefers to be asked for feedback in an offline way (i.e. through mails or text messages).

[Discouragement] He believes online feedback request (i.e. popups) could somehow be intruding and interrupting especially when he is working on his research and deeply thinking. **[Privacy]** In addition, Jack is always concerned about his privacy and therefore he does not accept to implicitly collect feedback from him (i.e. tracking his usage of the software).

[Motivation] In addition, Jack is a socially motivated feedback provider and his willingness to give feedback is positively influenced by three social factors:

- **Social recognition:** He likes to be socially recognized for his valuable and trustworthy feedback which he believes could help others and raise the social awareness about the software in use.
- **Volume of already given feedback:** He gets enthusiastic to give feedback when there is high number of feedbacks already given on a software. This means to Jack the software is popular and deserves his feedback.
- **Visibility of other users' feedback:** Jack also gets more interested to give feedback if he is able to see other users' feedback on the software first and then having the option to accept/reject to give feedback.

Figure 4 Fourth persona named Jack

Interview Guide on Persona-based Feedback Acquisition

Session Opening:

At first, Interviewee was given a sheet of information that explains how the session will go, what they are expect to do, how we will use the information obtained during the session and how they can contact me for further information. In addition, a consent form was also given to each expert to assure the interviews are ethically undertaken.

Objectives of the study:

- Evaluate and refine Personas that we previously developed to initially represent users' different behaviors to feedback acquisition.
- Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of using personas to inform the design of feedback acquisition and how personas can be used?

Introduction

Thank you for helping me out. I'm interested in investigating how users behave/react to feedback acquisition from industrial point of view. In addition, this study will also explore the use of Personas as a way to help developers inform the design of the feedback acquisition methods. With you permission I would like to record the session so that I can review it later for analysis and research purposes only.

Do you have any questions regarding the information letter or the consent form?

Do you agree to volunteer?

With your permission, I'm going to begin recording now. Remember that there is no wrong answer and every bit of information you can give me is helpful.

Interview Protocol

Time of Interview:

Date:

Company name:

Company size:

Interviewee Name:

Interviewee role in the company:

Years of experience:

Persona evaluation and refinement related questions:

- Do you employ the approach of Personas in your company, even implicitly or in non-formal settings, to inform the design of feedback acquisition? If yes, then how?

The four initial personas, sent already for review beforehand, will be shown to the interviewee and then the following questions will be asked repetitively on each persona:

- According to your experience, does this persona represent a frequent, typical or considerable observed behavior of users?
- How do you comment on the design and format of the persona (i.e. style, language used, structure, readability, understandability, etc)?
- How would you modify/criticize it to make it more reflective of the behavior it represents (i.e. what does it lack, what does it misrepresent)? Please note that you may choose to split it or create an opposite version of it or add some contextual information in which such observed behavior is likely to happen.

- Can you tell us if you have seen other users' behaviors/patterns to feedback acquisition that have not been captured by the presented personas?

After each question some sub-questions could naturally emerge.

Questions related to Personas usage to inform the design of feedback acquisition

- From your point of view, do you think the previously presented personas are beneficial to inform the design of feedback acquisition and to what extent? (the interviewee will be encouraged to elaborate and give example)

- What do you think of the following statements (the interviewees will be encouraged to elaborate on their answers) :

- Personas make the design process of feedback acquisition easier in which engineers relate to human face and name instead of abstract user/customer data.
- Personas supply a shared, fast and effective form of communication among software engineers and designers when designing feedback acquisition.
- Personas describe user needs and wants with regard to feedback acquisition which limit stakeholders and developers ability to shape users to their convenience or own mental models.
- Personas help engineers of feedback acquisition to keep the focus on the limited subset of users (persona) at a time which can result in more robust design decisions.
- Personas are useful for feedback acquisition in the validation phase in which proposed designs and solutions can be reviewed and evaluated against the needs described by an individual persona.
- Personas can help developers to drive various scenarios about users' behavior to feedback acquisition.
- The created scenarios can result in a better elicitation and prioritization of users' requirements and expectations/preferences of feedback requests (i.e. primary personas can help prioritizing requirements)

- If you were to adopt personas to inform the design of feedback acquisition, what would be the development process (the stakeholders to involve, the sessions and their settings, the steps to go through and the conditions to observe) to do that?

- Generally speaking, what would you criticize about the adoption of personas to direct the design of feedback acquisition?

After each question some sub-questions could naturally emerge.