OBSERVATIONAL ANALYSIS

BY

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Subject of Analysis – Michael Polack
System used – Time Warner DVR

Position
Location is the living room. Mike is on a backless sofa in a laying position, resting his head on a tube-shape pillow. The TV is to his right placed on a shelving unit, which holds the cable box and other electronic devices. He places two remotes on the floor next to the sofa. One is for the digital cable and the other to control the sound through a surround sound system.

Behavior
As he lay down, he turns on the TV through the cable remote. He has a beer on the coffee table, which is not a usual activity. He drinks in front of the TV only on weekends. His hand hung over, reaching the remotes, where he places his finger on it. He presses the remotes’ buttons as they’re on the floor and occasionally lifts the cable’s remote off the floor as he continues changing channels. At times he places the remote on his lap. He takes off his socks and throws them on the floor next to the sofa. He usually takes off clothing and throws them on the floor by the sofa as he watches TV (He jokes that his wife will pick it up later). He starts by watching news on BBC. He uses the button “Guide” to search for other interesting programs and does it often. He keeps going back to the initial program he was watching – BBC – by clicking the “Last” button.
He doesn’t like to use the Up and Down buttons to switch channels because of the digital delay in the display. When he uses the Guide menu, the delay is shorter. He has a good sound system, very clear. He keeps the volume relatively high, and doesn’t change it often, unless he is speaking with someone in the room. After a while with the news channel he finally changes to MSG sports channel, again by going through the “Guide” button. He is very focused on the TV program he’s watching, while his wife is cooking in the kitchen. It is difficult to get a response from him. He mentions that he would like to purchase a flat panel TV with High Definition feature, mainly for watching sports programs through HD. He watches TV about 2-3 hours a day. Usually watches only the sports channels and a couple of favorite shows.

Specific Task – Program Guide
Find what is showing on TBS at 8 pm tonight.

He reaches to the cable remote, which is on the floor, and presses the “Guide” button. He scrolls up and down, searching for TBS channel, as he doesn’t remember the channel number. When he finds the channel, he reads the name of the show and presses the “Select” button, which causes the guide screen to disappear and brings up the selected channel.

How would you check to see if there is a movie that you would like to watch on right now?

He mentions that he hardly watches movies at home. Him and his wife usually go out to the theater or rent a DVD from the video store.
To participate with our request, this time he lifts the cable remote up from the floor and presses the “Guide” button. He finds the Movies on Demand channel, then selects the channel and finds out which movie this is playing by clicking the “Info” button, which brings up a strip of the movie’s description at the bottom of the screen.

**Specific Task – Information Display**  
*Tell us more about the movie.*

He presses yet again the "Guide" button to find more information about the movie. He can tell what time it started but couldn't find info about when the movie was made.

**Specific Task – On Demand Menu**  
*Find and select a program you’d like to watch right now.*

As always, He clicks on the “Guide” button, even though he knows which channel his favorite program is on. He scrolls until reaches the ESPN sports channel, he selects it and watches Football.

**Specific Task – Other Menu Options**  
*Any other modes or menus used.*

He likes to record about 7 favorite shows on the DVR (Digital Video Recorder) box, since he likes to fast forward through commercials. Here is the process he goes through:  
“Guide” button >> “Rec” button (Recording options screen comes up) >> He chooses the “Record Entire Series” option.  
He mention that he’s a bit frustrated with this option because it ends up recording all the reruns of the same show which cause for many duplications of shows.
Subject of Analysis – Yael Adar
System used – Time Warner Cable

Position
Location is the living room. Yael sits on a love seat across the small room from the small TV. The TV is in front of her offset to the left, and there are two large windows to the left. Her Cat is laying next to her on the sofa’s back rest.

Behavior
As she sits down, she reaches the TV remote on the wooden coffee table in front of the sofa and turn on the TV. She changes the channel to WB, as the first channel appeared is the NY1, which she watched in the morning before going to work. She reaches the remote only when she wants to change channels, which doesn't happen often. She likes to watch TV as she eats. She always likes to have a soft drink as she watches TV. She puts her legs up on the coffee, lights up a cigarette and lean on the right hand sofa's arm. She has three remotes, one for the TV, just to turn it On/Off and to change channel for DVD viewing; the other for the Cable box; and a third for a DVD player. She watches TV about 2 hours a day. She likes to watch channels TBS and WB. To change channels she clicks on the numeric buttons of the remote. There are only a few channels she likes to watch, so she usually doesn't search for other channels. She mentioned that she wishes there was only one channel for all controls. She doesn't like having 3 remotes for separate controls. She also feels that the remotes are too large and massive.
**Specific Task – Program Guide**  
*Find what is showing on TBS at 8 pm tonight.*

She reaches to the cable remote, which is on the wooden coffee table, and presses the numeric buttons for 08. She gets confused, as she doesn't know how to check what show will be on later in the day. She mentions that she is not at all good with technical devices, let alone programming them.

*How would you check to see if there is a movie that you would like to watch on right now?*

She turns to the numeric buttons again and clicks to her favorite movie channel - 38 Bravo. Then she turns to channel 12 TV for Women. She can't tell which movie is on, when she clicks the "Info" button since the strip that appears at the bottom of the screen indicates the channel number only.

**Specific Task – Information Display**  
*Tell us more about the movie.*

She had no idea which movie was playing, and except recognizing some of the actors, she didn't have any info about the movie, since it wasn't displayed as she changed the channel, and she doesn't know how to go about finding this info.

**Specific Task – On Demand Menu**  
*Find and select a program you'd like to watch right now.*

As before, she clicks on the numeric buttons 1 and 2, which brings up channel 12. She doesn't know which program it'll show, but she likes most of the programs on this channel.
Specific Task – Other Menu Options
Any other modes or menus used.

When she wants to watch a movie on the DVD player, she uses the TV remote to change the channel for Video channel, and then she uses the DVD remote and clicks the “Play” button.
Subject of Analysis – Tom at Katy’s Apartment
System used – Dish Network

Position
The television is located in the corner of the room, next to a loveseat. Along the opposite wall is a large couch that stretches nearly the entire width of the room. There is a coffee table in front of the couch, and an additional seat along the wall across from the main entrance way. Tom nearly always sits on the large couch, slouching a bit as he does so.

Behavior
Tom generally only watches TV for an half-hour before he goes to sleep. Typically, he doesn't watch any shows regularly save a few on HBO. His usual routine is to open up the electronic program guide, jump to channel 300 (HBO) to see what's on, and then perhaps scroll through the program guide looking for interesting movies. Out of the hundreds of channels available, he says he typically sticks to four or five. He was enthusiastic about the program guide but admitted that he'll often realize he's been watching a program for several minutes in its window view. He likes not having to worry about waiting for a commercial break to end in order to determine what the current program is on any given channel. Tom mentioned that Katy, on the other hand, uses the newspaper's programming guide more often than the electronic programming guide.

He was generally comfortable with the program guide but was also confused when he first turned the system on and a screen appeared to indicate that the satellite dish was retrieving program information.
He knew how to retrieve information about the selected program and does so occasionally. He was comfortable with the remote, though he said that he only knew where the "important" buttons were (guide, navigational buttons, select, cancel). He felt that the remote was "pretty intuitive" and liked that the guide-related buttons were grouped as well as "big and blue."

**Specific Task – Program Guide**  
*Find what is showing on TBS at 8 pm tonight*

When asked to accomplish the first task of determining what was on TBS at 8PM that evening, he knew exactly how this could be done. He lamented the fact that he didn't know the exact channel number of TBS and had to scroll through a number of channels in order to find it. Once he found TBS, he scrolled forward and showed us where the program was listed in the program guide.

**Specific Task – Information Display**  
*Tell us more about the movie.*

We asked him to show us how he would determine when a movie started. At first he attempted to scroll the guide back in time (horizontally). This didn’t work on the Dish system though it does on his father’s digital cable system. He then his the “info” button and the start time was listed there.

**Specific Task – On Demand Menu**  
*Find and select a program you’d like to watch right now.*

The Dish Network has no “On Demand” service that he knew of but it does have pay-per-view. He said the only time they had used it was when Katy had received a coupon for one free movie in the mail. He said he had
used "On Demand" service at his father's place and liked
the convenience.

**Specific Task – Other Menu Options**
*Any other modes or menus used.*

As far as other functions go, Tom was unclear about the
purpose of a couple buttons on the remote: “record” and
“sys info.” He thought that the “record” probably was
meant for an attached VCR. When he pressed “sys info”
he was confused by the resulting screen. He thought
Katy may have used that when she first set up the Dish
Network system.