

Statement of Contribution and Benefits - CHI 2002

Hints on Writing and Editing

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Short statements of contribution and benefit are to be included in the Table of Contents of the CHI 2002 proceedings, with a view to emphasizing CHI's commitment to publishing papers that make strong contributions to HCI. The specific gains envisaged from including these statements are:

- For the CHI Proceedings reader, they can quickly give an overall idea of what will be got out of reading a paper.
- For those searching online, they can make it easier to find papers of interest.
- For prospective CHI authors, they can explain and reaffirm the Call for Papers' message about the importance of contribution and benefit.
- For future CHI reviewers, they can clarify what is meant by contribution and benefit, and can assist in drafting their own short summaries of papers.
- For CHI organizers, they can offer a basis for assessing the content and quality of the papers program.

In order to serve these purposes while meeting space constraints, statements need to be crafted with some care. The rest of this note offers some advice on how to do this.

The structure of the statement

A contribution/benefit statement describes the contribution made by the paper to HCI and the benefit that readers can gain from it. The structure adopted for CHI 2002 therefore has two parts, as shown in the following examples:

1. Describes a camera-based technique for tracking a laser pointer on a large display, and appropriate interactor widgets: provides an inexpensive way to support group interaction with one display.
2. Describes a system providing an audio background whilst a paper-based book is read; a way of applying interactive audio technology to enrich the reader's experience.
3. Offers guidelines for the design of interfaces to be used by brain-injured people via the Cyberlink interface; usage can lead to improved communication by the brain-injured.
4. Presents findings concerning the effect of input device size on steering tasks: can assist designers in optimally sizing input devices.
5. Finds differences in the effectiveness of three tools for building GOMS models, when examined in terms of four criteria; offers recommendations for improvements in future GOMS tools.
6. Presents a case study of a mixed-reality performance, offering observations about participants' experiences; suggests how participant engagement might be enhanced.

For the purposes of this guide, the two parts of the complete statement are called the contribution statement and the benefit statement. The next two sections offer advice on writing each part. For CHI 2002, the two parts must amount to 30 words or less.

Stating the contribution

Contribution statements should specify what is being contributed to HCI, in a manner that not only

identifies the general nature of the contribution (the 'generic' contribution), but also explains how the contribution is unique. It may be easiest to start by describing, in a dozen words or less, the generic contribution, e.g.:

1. a technique for tracking a pointer on a large display
2. a system providing an audio background
3. guidelines for the design of interfaces to be used by brain-injured people
4. findings concerning the effect of input device size
5. findings concerning the effectiveness of tools for building GOMS models
6. a case study of a mixed-reality performance

Then add a few words that make it clear how it's unique a *camera-based* technique, *effect on steering tasks*, presenting web search results *by automatically classifying them into an existing category structure*, etc.

Note also that the initial few words should identify the type of contribution, as in our examples: (a) [interaction] technique, (b) [interactive] system (c) guidelines, (d, e) findings and (f) case study.

Identifying the benefit

The second part of the statement identifies the benefit to the reader. The contribution may, of course, offer a number of potential benefits. However, it's most unlikely that more than one can be accommodated within the overall 30-word limit. If it's really important to indicate that there are multiple benefits, start the 'benefits' section with wording such as "benefits include"

In thinking about the nature of the benefit, bear in mind that it's very likely that an improvement of some sort can be generated by the contribution, e.g.:

1. *cost* of supporting group interaction is reduced
2. the reader's *experience* is enriched
3. *communication* by the brain-injured is improved
4. optimally *sizing* input devices is made easier
5. future *GOMS tools* can be improved
6. participant *engagement* could be enhanced

If this improvement can be identified, then writing the benefit statement is largely a matter of finding a few words that express it clearly. If no such improvement can be expressed, then look for a beneficial outcome of some other kind, as in the following example:

Guidelines for improving credibility of web sites, based on a set of empirically determined factors; assist in achieving web sites that users perceive credible.

In summary

Go about writing the statement as follows:

1. Describe the 'generic' contribution
2. Add words that express what makes the contribution unique
3. If necessary, add words at the start to specify the type of contribution
4. Identify an improvement that the contribution can bring about, or some beneficial outcome
5. Express the benefit in terms of this improvement or outcome.

All that remains is then to pare the statement down to 30 words or less.