

ASSIGNMENT 1: Critique a Multimedia Product or Web Site

OBJECTIVE:

To think about the major design elements that make a successful interactive piece.

DESCRIPTION:

Choose a Web site, CD-ROM or other interactive digital media piece (e.g., Citibank cash machine), and write a 1-to-3 page critique of it. Pick one that is either exceptionally good, or one you feel needs improvement. Focus on the high points - the major design and interactive elements of the piece. Include screen "grabs" (captured images of the Mac screen) where appropriate to better explain your comments.

Note: You can capture the entire Mac screen by pressing Command-Shift-3 together, or just a portion of the screen by pressing Command-Shift-4 and then dragging the crosshairs as you like (release to complete the grab). The resulting PICT graphic files will be placed on the main hard drive and named "Picture1", "Picture2", etc. You can view these files in SimpleText by double-clicking them, or by opening the file from within Photoshop, or by dragging the file into Netscape or Internet Explorer.

ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- initial impression
- ease of understanding
- ease of navigation
- quality of graphics and images
- legibility and appropriateness of text
- appropriate use of sound, video, animation
- appropriateness of interface/navigation metaphor(s), if any
- is this an effective use of multimedia format (vs. print or other)?
- overall quality of presentation
- final impression

THINK ABOUT:

How does this piece exploit the interactive digital medium? What is it doing that could not be as effectively achieved in print, film, video or another form (live performance, flash cards, children's blocks, etc.)?

DELIVERABLES:

Submit your critique in hard-copy format, from a printed text file in Microsoft Word or other word processing file format. This file may also include your screen grabs imported inside it. Or, you may submit screen grabs as separate files, but be sure to name and reference them clearly in your critique.

If the course server is available before next week, I will e-mail you with instructions as to how to submit your critique digitally instead of in hard-copy form. In that case, your file should be named in the form Lastname, First initial, Project number. For example: "JohnsonM1". Supporting files (screen grabs) should be named as "JohnsonM1_grab1" or similar.