

# ASK THE USERS

## EXPECTATIONS, BEHAVIORS AND SATISFACTION OF ONLINE ARCHIVES' END CUSTOMERS

**Archives  
Online. It's  
all about  
choices**

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**l'umanesimo che innova**

# THE ARCHIVAL MEDIATION ON THE WEB

- The displaying of **archival descriptions** in Web environments (the *Docuverse* paradigm) deeply changes the **traditional mediation** between archivists and users
- The hypertextual **output** must be roughly distinguished from the **encoded input**: to make it *decodable* and *clear*, we should build **user centric displays**
- To build up effective displays we should match the **descriptive standards & methods** with **human-computer interaction studies**, checking our prototypes by adopting user studies
- A BRAND NEW MEDIATION PARADIGM

# USER STUDIES AND ARCHIVES ONLINE

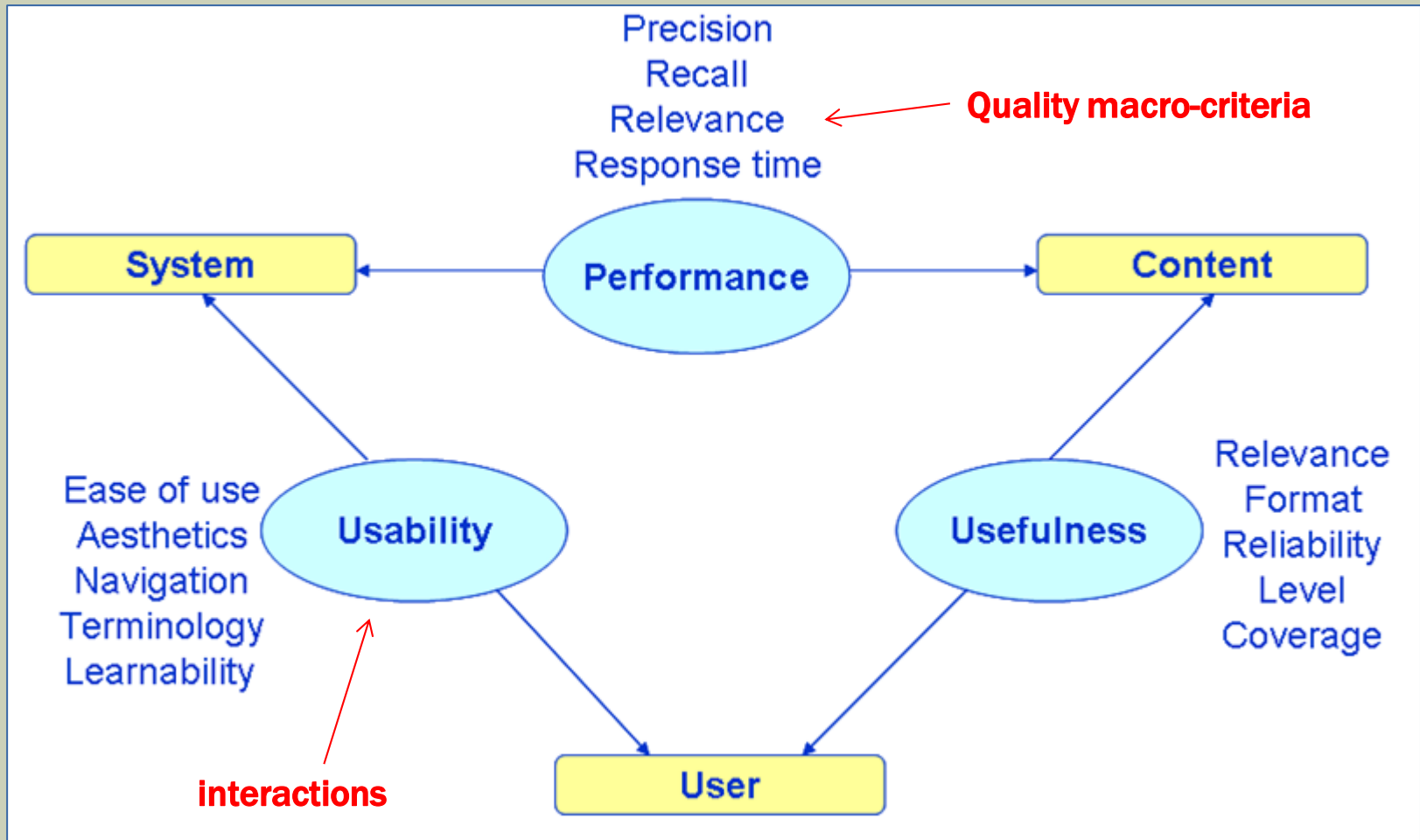
- Recently, the **quality of use** of AOL has been increasingly tested by involving real users, no longer merely inferred, mostly in North America
- Some **recurring issues** have been detected:
  - **The terminology** adopted for descriptions
  - **Menus** as a barrier
  - The **hierarchic and separated structure** of descriptions
  - The use of **searching tools**: AOL are not OPACS!
  - **Search results** presentation and **rankings**
  - **long narrations** vs. **brief descriptions**

# THE BENEFITS OF EVALUATING UX

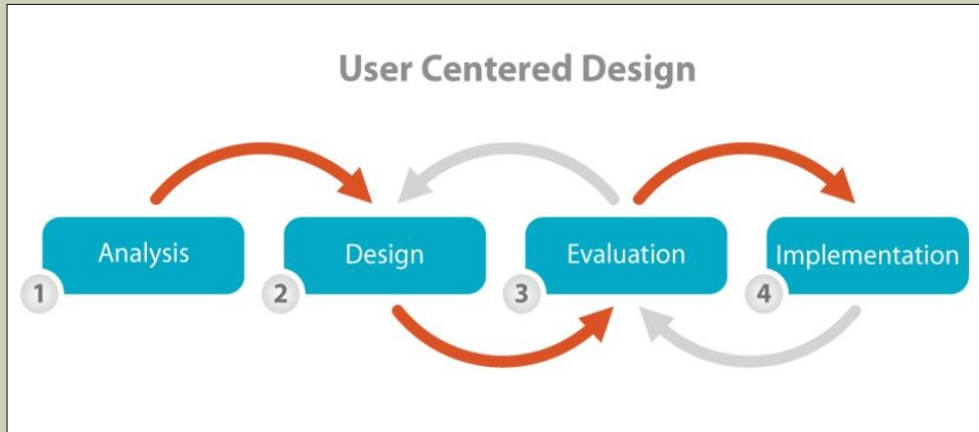
**Quality of a digital service:** “the capability of the software product to enable specified users to achieve specified goals with **effectiveness, productivity, safety and satisfaction** in specified contexts of use.” (ISO/IEC 9126-1:2001)

- **Studying** the needs, expectations, behaviors and satisfaction of final users (i.e. the **User Experience: UX**) should be part of **digital services development**
- **Involving users** throughout design, development and release of archival digital projects cycle could become normal, to guarantee a effective **ROI** for projects whose first profit is **customers' satisfaction**

# A POSSIBLE EVALUATION MODEL

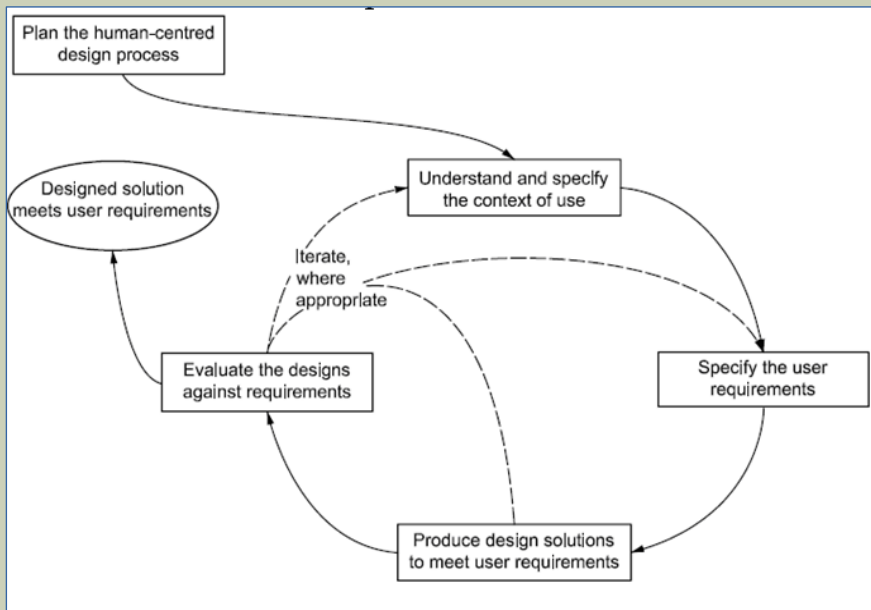


# EVALUATION: WHEN?



throughout all the project life-cycle...

*A Cry For Looking To Other Methods For User Centered Design, (Tristan Weevers, 2012)*



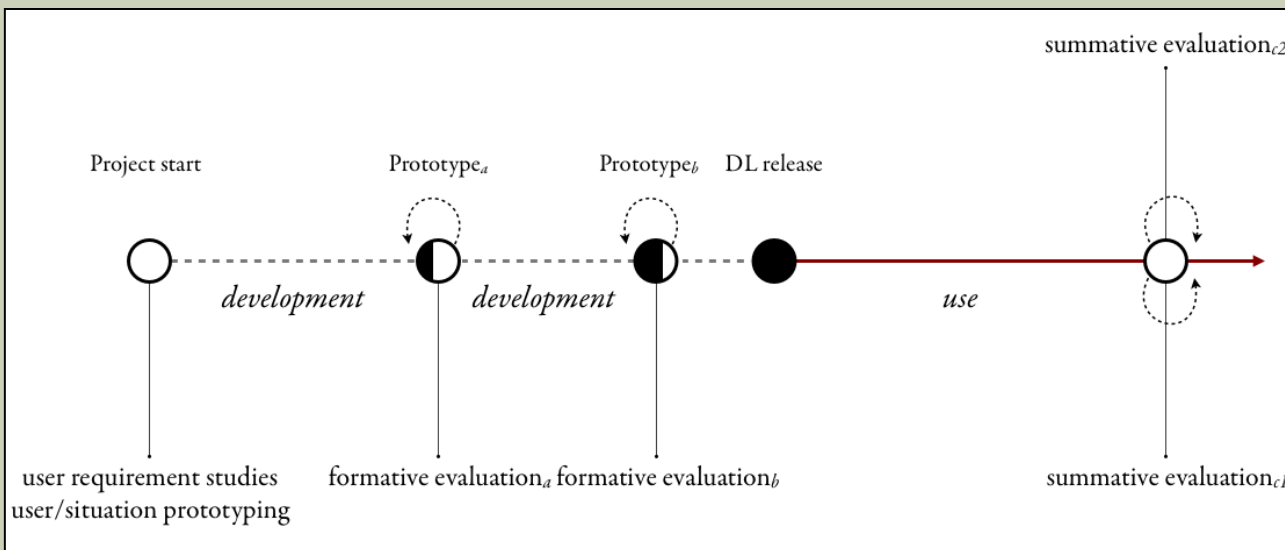
and managing quality as an iterative process

ISO 9241-210:2010(E). *Ergonomics of human-system interaction— Part 210: Human-centred design for interactive systems*

# EVALUATION: WHEN?

## User studies are useful:

- in the **start phase** (to check user requirements)
- in the **prototype phase** (to assess and finalise the layout and the system)
- in the **on-going phase** (to check final user satisfaction and behaviour)



*A time-line of design and evaluation of digital libraries (Tsakonas 2012)*

# EVALUATION: HOW?

**Qualitative  
Summative**

## User simulation

- Profiles, Use cases, Personae
- Use scenarios

**Development  
Reengineering**

**Quantitative**

## Indirect observation

- User logs analysis
- Sniffing, client-side analysis

**On-going use**

**Qualitative  
Summative**

## Direct user involvement

- Questionnaires
- Diaries
- Single user observation/  
eye-tracking
- Focus groups

**Development  
Prototype  
On-going use  
Reengineering**

**PROJECT PHASE**

+ Growing use of mixed methods..



# EVALUATION: SHARING RESULTS

The available corpus of user studies reveals **several weaknesses**:

- 1 they are **not based on a common evaluation schema** and each study applied its own protocol
- 2 the usual **narrowness of panels** involved puts in discussion a wide reliability of collected data
- 3 some surveys were conducted without a **distinction among targets**: curios users, novice archival researchers and advanced scholars.

To face this panorama it could be crucial to build a **community and a normalized and shared benchmarking framework** in this field to **compare data** coming from different **studies, models and profiles** and to set up **historical series**

**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**

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