

Winner of the SIGCHI Finland thesis competition 2014

Piia Ikonen, University of Jyväskylä
Tieto- ja viestintäteknologia ikääntyvässä yhteiskunnassa
(Information and Communications Technology in the Aging Society)

The thesis studies how information and communications technology fits into the aging society and how the senior citizens regard the current information society. Focusing on senior citizens and their needs for information technology, the thesis addresses a timely societal phenomenon that is an increasingly important challenge. It includes an empirical interview study with senior citizens, a very extensive literature analysis, and an insightful discussion between the empirical findings and the literature. The research approach integrates sociological and psychological perspectives, making it very relevant also for the HCI community and user-centered design.

The thesis demonstrates critical and objective thinking and insightful analysis of qualitative data. The used methods are sound and well-justified, and the work is well positioned in the scientific landscape. The research has been executed with rigor and analytic mindset. It is proof of excellent skills in research and self-evaluation and genuine interest in the studied topic. Despite the slightly narrow empirical data, the results bring out interesting new aspects and consolidate earlier findings. The results are well described, which is not a straightforward task in qualitative research. The discussion of the results emphasizes a critical approach to why and for what purposes technology should be utilized in the aging society.

* HONOURABLE MENTION *

Kajsa Sundeson, Aalto University, School of Arts, Design and Architecture
Collaboration in Care - Design of a mobile health platform to support care management of cystic fibrosis

The thesis describes the user-centered design of a mobile application to support patients (mainly children) with cystic fibrosis in their daily life and collaboration with professional care providers. The thesis reports an exemplary design process of an eHealth service with an exceptional breadth in the executed empirical phases and number of stakeholders. The utilization of various research, design and evaluation methods not only signifies ambition and creativity but is also reasonable given the challenging topic. The resulting application concept seems to provide a significant practical contribution to the particular field. The playfulness and other design principles are well described and meaningful choices for the context of the work. The thesis is exceptionally well written and illustrated, making it an enjoyable read.

The assessment and decision of the winner were done by a panel of experts, including both academics and representatives of the industry. The panel was invited by the board of SIGCHI Finland and it was led by Thomas Olsson.

Leena Arhippainen, Oulun yliopisto
Tomi Heimonen, Tampereen yliopisto
Pekka Ketola, IdeaScout
Thomas Olsson, Tampereen teknillinen yliopisto
Antti Oulasvirta, Aalto yliopisto
Antti Pirhonen, Jyväskylän yliopisto (recused himself in the final phase)
Markus Salo, Jyväskylän yliopisto
Elina Vartiainen, ABB
Heli Väätäjä, Tampereen teknillinen yliopisto
Salu Ylirisku, Aalto yliopisto