



# **Is Less More When Using and Creating Checklists?**

Jennifer Rousey and Janeen Sharma  
Northrop Grumman Corporation  
Boulder, CO

# Overview



- A checklist is a user aide for ensuring the complete and accurate performance of a series of procedural steps.
- “But regardless of focus, purpose, or complexity, all checklists share in common a basic mnemonic function: they remind (or inform) us what we are supposed to do, check, look for, etc.” (Wingate, 2002).



# Introduction

- Research exists regarding checklist design, evaluation, testing, and proper use
- No research to date regarding checklist length
- Goal is to identify the optimal length of a GUI evaluation checklist

# Practice Innovation



- The only reference to checklist size was found in an article by Michael Scriven (2000), "...the balance between ease of use and value added via applicability, on the one hand, and length on the other. Brevity is desirable; but clarity is essential..."

# Practice Innovation



- As a first step towards determining the optimal balance between clarity and brevity, empirical research was conducted to discover the number of checklist items an individual will actually use to correctly evaluate a GUI.

# Participants



- Twenty individuals, male and female ranging in age from 18 to 65 from varying disciplines
- All participants were comfortable using computers and browsing the internet but had no specific experience evaluating web page GUIs

# Tools



- Four GUI evaluation checklists of varying lengths 25 to 300 items
- The longer checklists had more specific questions
- Two websites were selected based on their potential for usability improvements

# Procedure



- Each participant reviewed two websites with two of the four checklists
- Completed checklists and additional comments were submitted upon completion of the evaluation



# Findings

A decorative graphic at the top of the slide consists of two groups of three circles. The first group on the left has a solid light purple circle on the left, a white circle with a light purple outline in the middle, and a white circle with a light purple outline on the right. The second group on the right has a solid light purple circle on the left, a white circle with a light purple outline in the middle, and a solid light purple circle on the right.

- Shorter checklists
  - Missed usability concerns
- Longer checklists
  - Were abandoned!
- Wording
- Amount of items marked N/A

# The Way Ahead



- Dynamic Checklist
  - Specific to GUI type
  - Allows for detailed items
  - Saves time
  - More efficient

# Dynamic Checklist

- Users answer a few questions regarding the GUI to be evaluated
  - Does the GUI contain input forms?
  - Does the GUI have a menu?
  - Does the GUI have error messages?
- Checklist dynamically adapted based on the user's input

# References

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Questions???