

Snagit

Usability Report

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Executive Summary	3
Methodology	4
Purpose	4
Problem Statements	4
User Profile	4
Methodology	5
Test Environment and Equipment Required	6
Test Monitor Role	7
Evaluation Measures	7
Task List – Participants	8
Task List – Administration	9
Results	13
Performance Results	13
Summary of Performance Results	14
Preference Data	16
Post-Test Questionnaire	16
Debriefing	17
Summary of Preference Data	18
Findings and Recommendations	19
Cursor removal feature	19
Finding and Explanations	19
Recommendations	19
Exporting screen captures to other programs	19
Finding and Explanations	19
Recommendations	19
Editing images with the SnagIt editing software	20
Finding and Explanations	20
Recommendations	20
Intuitive nature of the freehand screen capture feature	20
Finding and Explanations	20
Recommendations	20
Adding effects to screenshots before they are captured	20
Finding and Explanations	20
Recommendations	20
Changing the options on a desired capture profile	21
Finding and Explanations	21
Recommendations	21
Using Help to find necessary information	21
Finding and Explanations	21
Recommendations	21
Appendix 1: Task Times	22
Participant 1 (Novice)	22
Participant 2 (Intermediate)	23
Participant 3 (Intermediate)	24
Participant 4 (Expert)	26

Executive Summary

This report details the findings of a series of usability tests conducted with the screen capture software, Snagit. Four individuals, ranging in expertise from novice computer user to an expert in both computer software and hardware, were asked to complete a series of questionnaires, tasks, and a debriefing question and answer session. These individuals were selected based on their lack of experience with the Snagit software. The two intermediate users were selected because they both had used screen capture software before.

The primary purpose for conducting the test was to gain an improved understanding of the interaction customers will have with the product and to identify any difficult areas of the software that will need to be modified and/or corrected with the next release. The tasks encompassed activities that the testers believed the average user of Snagit would need to perform. These included capturing three different types of screen captures (an object, a freehand selection, and a scrolling web page) as well as a test of the Snagit user preferences and help system. Throughout the test, the test monitor and observers recorded any errors and difficulties the users encountered and any comments the users made about the software. After the completion of the test, a post-test questionnaire allowed the user to assess their own use of the product and the debriefing session allowed the test monitor to ask questions about the user's experience.

The results of these tasks, questionnaires, and debriefing sessions are detailed in this report. With each task, at least one user felt compelled to access the help system to find guidance on how to begin, find a particular function, or complete the task at hand. Additionally, in several cases the novice user even gave up, feeling she could go no further despite having full access to the help resources.

Based upon these findings, we recommend a series of modifications to the Snagit software in order to improve its usability. These include offering a wizard for simple screen captures, creating a new export toolbar and export menu option, including more options in the right-click menu on screen capture profiles, and adding more graphical and directional elements to the Help system to assist users in locating features as opposed to just instructing them on how to use those features.

Methodology

Purpose

The primary purpose for conducting this test was to gain an improved understanding of the interaction customers had with Snagit and to identify any difficult areas of the software that need to be modified and/or corrected with the next release. The usability test measured the time users needed to complete a series of tasks spanning a wide array of features within the product. It identified any errors and difficulties the users encountered while using various features of Snagit, including screen capture, user preferences, and the interaction of Snagit with outside programs.

Problem Statements

The following questions were the focus of the usability test:

1. Are the system tray and cursor removal features intuitive?
2. Are users able to successfully export screen captures to other programs?
3. Are users able to edit images they capture with Snagit editing software?
4. Is the freehand screen capture feature intuitive with a mouse?
5. Are users able to add effects to screenshots before they capture them?

User Profile

A total of four participants were tested during the weeks of February 22, 2008 and March 17, 2008. The participants were divided according to the following backgrounds:

One novice computer user:

- No experience with screen capture software, Snagit in particular
- Limited experience with computers. Primarily uses it for e-mail and access to the Internet
- Experience with Web browsers as a means to access information from the Internet

Two average computer users:

- No experience with screen capture software, Snagit in particular
- Experience with computers beyond simple Internet and e-mail applications; uses computers primarily for word processing, but may also do minimal desktop publishing or spreadsheet development
- Experience with Web browsers as a means to access information from the Internet

One expert computer user:

- May have some experience with screen capture software, but not with Snagit
- Uses computers in their daily work routine to accomplish most work-oriented tasks
- Experience with Web browsers as a means to access information from the Internet

Methodology

The usability test consisted of a performance test where participants completed a set of tasks under direct observation while being videotaped.

The main performance test was composed of the following sections:

1. Participant greeting and background questionnaire

Each participant was greeted by the test monitor and made to feel comfortable and relaxed in the test environment. Participants were asked to fill out a background questionnaire. The test monitor then explained the confidentiality agreement and asked participants to sign it as well as an additional form providing their consent to be videotaped and audio taped.

2. Orientation

The participants received a short, verbal, scripted introduction and orientation to the test that explained the purpose and objectives of the test, and what was expected of them. They were assured that the software was the focus of the test; they were not the ones being tested. They were then introduced to the observers, and the test monitor explained the function of the observers in augmenting the video and audio recording. The test monitor also described the “think aloud” method they were asked to employ.

3. Performance test

After the orientation portion of the test, participants were asked to sit at a computer that had the Snagit software installed. The test monitor sat beside the participant and read each task aloud. Participants were instructed to complete the tasks to the best of their ability without guidance from the test monitor. Participants were reminded to use the “think aloud” technique as they work through the tasks to assist the test monitor and observers in determining particular problems that participants have with the software. Task completion was evaluated based on correct execution of the task and completion within the time allotted for each task. The test monitor made notes about participant behavior, comments, errors, or other actions that affected the results of the test. Immediately following the completion of the test, participants were asked to fill out a post-test questionnaire.

4. Participant debriefing

After all tasks were completed or the allotted time expired, each participant was debriefed by the test monitor. The debriefing session focused on the participant’s thoughts about their performance during the test and questions from the test monitor about specific errors or problems that occurred during the test.

The debriefing session serves several functions. It allows participants to feel free to make any comments they would like about the test. Additionally, it provides important information about each participant’s rationale for performing specific actions, and allows for the collection of subjective preference data about Snagit.

After the debriefing session, participants were thanked for their effort and released.

Test Environment and Equipment Required

We created an environment similar to a home office, including a desk, chairs, a computer, paper and pencil. The desk was clean so as to not detract from the software being used. The room lighting was bright enough to accommodate clear video capture with an Internet camera.

The computer included:

- Windows XP
- Morae software installed and ready to use
- Snagit 8 installed and ready to use with an icon on the desktop
- At least one web browser installed with an icon on the desktop, preferably Internet Explorer or Firefox, if not both. (Users will be instructed to retrieve screen captures from various locations on the Internet)
- An active connection to the Internet
- A keyboard
- A mouse
- A hard drive for storage of screen capture files and video capture of participants
- An active CD/DVD drive with associated software installed to enable writing to a disk
- An active USB port
- An active Internet camera
- An active network connection already configured on the same network as monitoring computer

A second computer was accessible in a second room or a physically separated area within the same room. The second computer was used to monitor participants progressing through the test cases.

The observers' computer contained:

- Windows XP
- Morae software installed and ready to use. This computer was configured as the observers control PC
- At least one Web browser installed, preferably Internet Explorer or Firefox, if not both
- An active connection to the Internet
- A keyboard
- A mouse
- A hard drive for video storage of test participants
- An active CD/DVD drive with associated software installed to write to a disk
- An active USB port
- An active network connection already configured on the same network as the test computer

The Morae software was ensured to be in working order and able to accomplish all data collection required for later evaluation.

Test Monitor Role

The test monitor was present throughout the test and sat beside the participants as they performed tasks on the computer. Tasks were read to the participant and the test monitor recorded timings, errors, and observations.

The test monitor did not assist the participants unless they had a question about the test procedures. Participants were asked to rely on the software and their own abilities to complete the specified tasks.

In addition to the test monitor, two observers were in the room during the test. They sat behind a partition in the same room observing the test on another computer as it was being videotaped.

Evaluation Measures

In order to provide the most detailed and thorough feedback possible, the following data was collected for each participant and evaluated:

1. The average time it takes a user to complete a given task and group of tasks
2. The average number of errors each individual encountered versus the average number of errors for all participants
3. The percentage of participants who complete each task versus those unable to do so
4. Where applicable and available, errors were recorded as detailed as possible, including:
 - a. What the user was doing when they encountered the error
 - b. Observations and comments from both the participant and the test monitor
 - c. A designation of noncritical errors, where an individual encounters an error or makes a mistake but is able to recover and complete the task, or critical errors, where an individual makes a mistake or encounters an error and is unable to complete the task as a result. Errors which occur but the user does not recognize or identify will be classified as noncritical if they are able to complete the task.
 - d. A classification of user error/program error if available
5. Complaints, comments, preferences, or suggestions for improvements that could be made with the program

Task List – Participants

1. You have been given the assignment to create a promotional brochure that contains the main story block and slideshow on the main page of the NCSU Website. Acquire this image with a distinctive boundary. Use the shortcut icon labeled “NCSU Main Page” on the computer desktop to link to the appropriate page of the NCSU Website.
2. Acquire an image of the View → Text Size → Increase drop-down menu in Firefox excluding the mouse pointer. As it will be used in instructional materials, add a circle and arrow to highlight the Increase option of the menu structure.
3. Using Snagit, obtain an image of the Google logo. Since there is not room in the required document for a square image, the image you capture must get as close to the letters in the logo as possible. Send the image to Microsoft Word. Use the shortcut icon labeled “Google” on the computer desktop to link to the Google Website.
4. In an effort to aid students in navigating the NCSU course catalogue, we are creating an instructional pamphlet in Microsoft Word. Using Snagit, obtain a copy of the main page of the course catalogue with active links and insert it into Microsoft Word. Use the shortcut icon labeled “course catalogue” on the computer desktop to link to the appropriate page of the NCSU Website.
5. Now that you have a series of screen captures and are ready to work with another program, you need to free up space on your monitor to work. Knowing that you will need Snagit again shortly, send it to the tray and only the tray without closing the program.
6. You have just been informed that the university has been asked to direct students to use the Google search engine to avoid a recent Internet virus. Using the Snagit Help system, find a list of callout boxes and add one to a new image in the Snagit Editor. Include “Google it and you’ll get there safe!” as the comment.

Task List – Administration

Legend

MTC = Maximum time to complete

REQ = Requirements to perform the task

P = Participant

SCC = Successful Completion Criteria

TM = Test Monitor

The first task is designed to test whether the participant can open the program and perform a basic task with Snagit (capturing a screen region) and add an additional border around the image captured.

Task No.	Task Description	Task Detail
1	Open Internet Explorer	REQ: Mouse SCC: P double clicks on Internet Explorer icon on desktop or uses the Start Menu to open Internet Explorer MTC: 1.0 min.
2	Browse to NCSU Website	REQ: Mouse, Internet Explorer SCC: The NCSU Website appears in the Internet Explorer browser MTC: 1.0 min.
3	Open Snagit Program	REQ: Mouse SCC: P uses the Start Menu to open the Snagit Program MTC: 2.0 min.
4	Set border for capture	REQ: Mouse, Snagit Program SCC: The border feature is activated MTC: 2.0 min.
5	Capture Screen Region	REQ: Mouse, NCSU Website SCC: Entire contents of area requested to capture are captured. Extra space around area is acceptable MTC: 3.0 min.

The second set of tasks is designed to test whether the time delay capture is intuitive and whether the user can use the Snagit program to edit the image captured. The Snagit program should still be open from the first set of tasks.

Task No.	Task Description	Task Detail
1	Open Firefox	REQ: Mouse SCC: The user clicks on the Firefox icon MTC: 2.0 min.
2	Turn off the mouse pointer	REQ: Mouse, Snagit SCC: The mouse pointer feature is activated so that the mouse pointer will not appear in the final captured image MTC: 2.0 min.
3	Capture the navigation structure to the Reviewing Toolbar in Word	REQ: Mouse, Firefox, Snagit SCC: Image captured includes the View → Text Size → Increase Menu MTC: 2.0 min.
4	Circle and draw an arrow to the Reviewing Toolbar option in the menu navigation structure	REQ: Mouse, Captured Image SCC: Menu item circled and an arrow points to the circle MTC: 5.0 min.

The third set of tasks is designed to test whether the user is able to free-hand select an image and then send the image to Microsoft Word. The Snagit program and Internet Explorer should still be open.

Task No.	Task Description	Task Detail
1	Browse to the Google Website	REQ: Mouse, Internet Explorer SCC: The Google Website appears in the Internet Explorer browser MTC: 1.0 min.
2	Capture free-hand selection of a Website	REQ: Mouse, Google Website SCC: A minimum amount of whitespace is captured surrounding the Google logo MTC: 5.0 min.
3	Send the image to Word	REQ: Mouse, Snagit Preview SCC: User clicks on the Word icon MTC: 1.0 min.

The fourth set of tasks is designed to test whether the user is able to select an image, set an advanced feature (select and keep links), and then export that image to Microsoft Word. Snagit as well as Internet Explorer should still be open.

Task No.	Task Description	Task Detail
1	Open the NCSU English Course Catalog	REQ: Mouse, Internet Explorer SCC: The NCSU English Course Catalog appears in the browser window MTC: 2.0 min.
2	Enable Export to Word feature	REQ: Mouse, Snagit SCC: The screenshot is set to export to Microsoft Word MTC: 2.0 min.
3	Capture Web page with links	REQ: Mouse, NCSU English Course Catalog SCC: The NCSU English Course Catalog with links appears in the Snagit window MTC: 2.0 min.
4	Export screen capture to Word	REQ: Mouse, Image captured in Snagit SCC: The user clicks on the Export button and the screen capture appears in Microsoft Word MTC: 2.0 min.

The fifth set of tasks is designed to test the personalization features of Snagit and diagnose whether the location of such features is intuitive. The Snagit program should still be open.

Task No.	Task Description	Task Detail
1	Open Program Preferences	REQ: Mouse, Snagit SCC: User clicks on Tools → Program Preferences MTC: 1.0 min.
2	Select Program Options Tab	REQ: Mouse, Snagit SCC: User clicks on the Program Options tab MTC: 1.0 min.
3	Minimize To Tray set	REQ: Mouse, Snagit SCC: User checks the Minimize To Tray box and clicks OK MTC: 1.0 min

The sixth set of tasks is designed to test the Help system of Snagit and diagnose whether the technical and instructive aspects of the Help system are sufficient to meet the needs of users. The Snagit program should still be open.

Task No.	Task Description	Task Detail
1	Open Snagit Help	REQ: Mouse, Snagit SCC: User clicks on Help → Snagit Help MTC: 1.0 min.
2	Find the Callout Box listing in the Help system	REQ: Mouse, Snagit SCC: User either searches for or finds the Callout Box listing in the Help via the Help search, index, or subject listing MTC: 1.0 min.
3	Open Snagit Editor	REQ: Mouse, Snagit SCC: User clicks on the Snagit Editor menu item MTC: 1.0 min.
4	Create Callout Box	REQ: Mouse, Snagit SCC: User clicks on the Callout Box icon, then clicks and drags on the screen to create it MTC: 2.0 min.
5	Enter text in Callout Box	REQ: Mouse, Snagit SCC: User enters the required text, then clicks OK MTC: 1.0 min.

Results

The following details the results of the usability test conducted March 11 – March 15, 2008.

The four participants for this test spanned a wide range of computer expertise, screen capture experience, and industries. For the purposes of this study we categorized each individual as a novice, intermediary, or expert computer user. The participants include the following users:

- User 1 is the novice user
- Users 2 and 3 are the intermediary users
- User 4 is the expert user

Refer to the Methodology section for a complete description of the qualifications we considered to determine these classifications.

Performance Results

Table 1 – Median and range of completion times for each task				
Task	Mean completion time	Lowest completion time	Median completion time	Highest completion time
1 – NCSU image	6:39	1:54	5:81	12:38
2 – Firefox menu	11:14	5:39	9:79	19:58
3 – Google logo	9:87	8:33	9:53	12:09
4 – Course catalog	3:74	1:34	1:59	10:46
5 – Send to tray	2:24	1:06	1:21	5:47
6 – Create callout	5:57	1:54	3:83	13:10

Table 2 – Percentage of participants who performed the tasks successfully, including those who required help, either from the test monitor or the Help system	
Task	Successful completion rates
1 – NCSU image	100%
2 – Firefox menu	100%
3 – Google logo	75%
4 – Course catalog	100%
5 – Send to tray	100%
6 – Create callout	75%

Summary of Performance Results

Overall, the Help system was accessed at several points throughout the test. In almost every step, at least one user needed to consult the Help to locate a feature, figure out how to begin, or learn how to complete a task. Additionally, the time it took each participant to complete each task led us to conclude that the program seems better suited for more advanced users seeking to perform more advanced tasks rather than individuals needing simple screen captures. Each of the tasks we asked the users to perform confirmed this. The novice user and one of the intermediate users, who happened to be one of the older participants and retired, produced the longest completion times. The expert user and the other intermediate user actively engaged in desktop publishing produced the shortest. Table 1, the median and range of completion times for each task, and Table 2, the completion rates for each task, provide further justification.

***Task 1:** You have been given the assignment to create a promotional brochure that contains the main story block and slideshow on the main page of the NCSU Website. Acquire this image with a distinctive boundary. Use the shortcut icon labeled “NCSU Main Page” on the computer desktop to link to the appropriate page of the NCSU Website.*

For Task 1, the longest completion time, performed by one of the intermediate users, resulted from difficulties adding the border to the image. The shortest time for Task 1 was performed by the expert user; however, they forgot to add the border. Every participant but the expert user needed to access the Help system in order to complete this task, two of which needed assistance learning just how to take their first screen capture. This tells us that the overall screen capture process may not be intuitive even though each user was able to complete the task successfully.

***Task 2:** Acquire an image of the View → Text Size → Increase drop-down menu in Firefox excluding the mouse pointer. As it will be used in instructional materials add a circle and arrow to highlight the “Increase” option of the menu structure.*

All of the participants had problems with this task. Some did not recognize the correct capture profile to use (Menu with time delay). The novice user, who produced the longest completion time for Task 2, forgot to click the capture button to capture the image. In the end, all participants were able to capture the menu, or part of the menu, but they either included the

cursor when the task stated to exclude the mouse pointer, or they were not able, or forgot to add an arrow to the image.

Task 3: *Use Snagit to obtain an image of the Google logo. As there is not room in the required document for a square image, the image you capture must get as close to the letters in the logo as possible. Send the image to Microsoft Word. Use the shortcut icon labeled “Google” on the computer desktop to link to the Google Website.*

None of the participants were able to initially locate the command for a freehand capture. Some participants did not realize they needed to use a freehand command and used the region capture profile. The task may have not been worded clearly enough for participants to understand they needed to trace around the words in the logo rather than use a square capture to get as close to the letters as possible. The participant that was not successful with the task could not capture in the manner requested in the task.

Task 4: *In an effort to aid students in navigating the NCSU course catalogue, we are creating an instructional pamphlet in Microsoft Word. Using Snagit, obtain a copy of the main page of the course catalogue with active links and insert it into Microsoft Word. Use the shortcut icon labeled “course catalogue” on the computer desktop to link to the appropriate page of the NCSU Website.*

Most of the participants were successful with this task without requiring help. However, one of the participants (the novice) was unable to send the image to Word and only the expert user actually used the Word shortcut button.

Task 5: *Now that you have a series of screen captures and are ready to work with another program, you need to free up space on your monitor to work. Knowing that you will need Snagit again shortly, send it to the tray and only the tray without closing the program.*

A couple of participants were unclear about what was meant by the term “tray,” but they were all able to complete the task relatively easily. One user was forced to access the Help system to complete the task; however, this may have been because the participant was not clear about what was meant by system tray. This same individual also accidentally closed the program and changed the view of the program and could not recover.

Task 6: *You have just been informed that NCSU has been asked to direct students to use the Google search engine to avoid a recent Internet virus. Using the Snagit Help system, find a list of callout boxes and add one to a new image in the Snagit Editor. Include “Google it and you’ll get there safe!” as the comment.*

A couple of participants were not familiar with the term “callout” and therefore were unable to locate it in the Help system when they attempted to figure out how to create one. Also, many users, even after using the Help system, still seemed unable to create a callout because they were not able to locate the tool. In fact, the participant that did not complete the task successfully created a text box instead; they were never able to locate the callout feature.

Preference Data

In addition to the in-depth analysis of the performance data from the participants, we also analyzed their preference data. Through a series of post-test questionnaires and debriefing sessions we obtained valuable information as to the participants' impressions of the software. The following section details these findings.

Post-Test Questionnaire

1. I found the system tray and cursor removal features intuitive.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

2. I was able to successfully export screen captures to other programs.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

3. I was successfully able to edit images with the Snagit editing software.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

4. The freehand screen capture feature was intuitive with a mouse.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

5. I was successfully able to add effects to screenshots before capturing them.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

6. Capturing a screenshot was easy.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

7. I would recommend this software.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

8. When you used the built-in Help system, did you find it intuitive? Why/why not?

P1: "Yes, not hard to find."

P2: "The Help Index was good for the most part. The info on the task bar was not clear."

P3: "Everything except the tray. It didn't come up with a result at first."

P4: "The Help features I found useful after determining how to start a task, but not before. The Help was minimal at best for starting."

Summary: Yes, it was intuitive (it worked the way they expected), but in practice everyone encountered errors.

9. In what way did the navigation structure work or not work for you?

P1: "Once I got used to it, it was not hard."

P2: "Having used a different capture tool, I had to get used to the automatic capture control."

P3: "It worked."

P4: "The navigation structure was painful to use in the 'hybrid' design that it seemed to use, it is neither advanced nor uses wizards. The act of editing a profile was not natural to me the way the software was presented."

Summary: Individuals who had used screen capture software before had a hard time adjusting to differences.

10. When you encountered errors with the software, where did you think you should look first?

P1: "Ask first – got help second, search around third."

P2: "I don't remember any errors."

P3: "Help."

P4: "The Help tool under the Help menu."

Summary: Everyone who encountered errors said they'd try the Help system; however, one did point out that they would ask someone first.

11. For what scenarios/jobs/tasks would you buy this software?

P1: "I don't have a need for this kind of software."

P2: "Creating an instruction set of screens for teaching, screens for web page visual direction, error screen for tech support."

P3: "Class."

P4: "Manually edit screen captures by hand for most tasks over using the software. The software does, however, hold its own for capturing scrolled pages, and it looked like video."

Summary: The program would be used for specific uses only; no one would buy it for the overall functionality.

Debriefing

• **Help system easy to use?**

"Not useful to start a task – better to finish a task."

"Generally."

"Not too bad, more info than most other help screens."

"Easy to search for terms, but didn't tell me where to do callout procedures."

• **Capture profiles intuitive to perform?**

"Once I figured out they were profiles as opposed to tasks they were easier, but not intuitive."

"Pretty much describe what to do."

"By the pictures, yes, but I would have liked a description in words – not enough information with the rollovers" [tooltips]. The right-click had no options."

"The menu profile was difficult to choose."

• **Profile settings easy to set?**

"Intuitive after some experience with the software."

"Hard to find setting, but easy to set."

"More direct ways to get to them would be nice. I'm not used to it, but I would like some glaringly blatant directions."

• **Initial interface easy to navigate?**

"Yes."

"Pretty Much"

• **Capture preview interface simple to navigate?**

"Pretty Much."

"Yes."

"Not too bad. Because it's an automatic capture, you have to know in advance what you

want to do.”

“I didn’t know what to do next on that screen.”

- **Ease of using free hand capture function?**

“Difficult to find but acted as expected.”

“Using mouse on screen was easy, but “freehand tool” was not the term I would have thought of to use.”

“Not easy to find; Paint Shop Pro was easier.”

“Hard to find the function.”

- **Preferences easy to set?**

“The Minimize to Tray preference I didn’t expect to find under File.”

“Include cursor not directly intuitive.”

- **Encounter any errors in capturing images?**

“Not really.”

“Don’t remember any errors; Nothing told me what the task bar was though, and the help info wasn’t complete.”

“Saving or exporting to Word difficult option. Not always there for Word.”

- **Encounter any errors in finding commands?**

“I purposefully ignored those little shortcut icons – wanted options under the menu.”

“Expected more options associated with mouse right click.”

“No. Just so automatic, I had to go back and learn how to use it before I could, which would be a problem if you didn’t use it all the time.”

“The menu structure was fine.”

Summary of Preference Data

Overall, users of the software found certain aspects lacking while others simply acceptable. When asked before the test whether they would be likely to purchase the software, only the individual employed in technical support agreed with the statement. Afterwards, three out of the four individuals would recommend the software. So, although several aspects of the software may need improvement, overall the product was still well received by participants.

Findings and Recommendations

Cursor removal feature

Finding and Explanations

The option for removing the cursor from a screen capture is well hidden and difficult to find for most users. The Help system does not provide useful information on how to remove the cursor from a screen capture, leaving users to conduct their own search of the program to find the appropriate option.

Although the remove cursor option has been included in an options box at the bottom of the main window, it was either missed or ignored by every user tested during the associated task. One user was able to find the option, but it was much later when he accidentally scrolled over it while working on a separate task.

Recommendations

Create a Menu Capture Wizard that would guide the user through the necessary steps and options required to capture a menu. For more advanced users who would rather bypass the wizard, provide the option to use the standard interface.

The options menu, currently found at the bottom of the main window, would be more useful as a pop-up menu. Once the user selects their desired profile, a menu of the most common options should pop up to make them more prominent. This will also inform the less experienced users of the available options.

Exporting screen captures to other programs

Finding and Explanations

The ability to export a capture to another program varied depending on the users' experience with computers. Most of the users tested first searched for an export option under the file menu. With no export option available, users then resorted to the standard copy and paste option, utilizing the computers clipboard to accomplish the export. The export icons on the menu bar were largely ignored.

Recommendations

Add an export option to the File menu following the standard used by most photo editing software. Although you can export from other areas of the program, this option should be included in the program's primary navigation.

Move the export icons from the main toolbar to their own secondary toolbar labeled Export. Include the ability to add new programs to this toolbar that are required by the user.

Editing images with the SnagIt editing software

Finding and Explanations

Most users found adding effects to images to be fairly easy once the captured image was in the Preview window, providing all of the toolbars were active. If either the task toolbar or paint tools were turned off, novice users were unable to find the necessary information in the Help menu to indicate that a toolbar needed to be active to accomplish certain tasks.

Recommendations

When a toolbar is closed, provide a means of retrieving that toolbar outside the primary menu structure. Include an icon in the main preview window for the paint and task toolbars. Leave a visible tab either on the top or the side of the preview screen indicating that there is a toolbar to be opened.

Intuitive nature of the freehand screen capture feature

Finding and Explanations

The option for selecting the freehand option was not easily found by the users. Only one user was able to find the option without help. Even this user admitted it was not in the menu he expected or would have thought to look. The Help system does not include the term freehand in the index and gives no other information on how to change the selection shape for a screen capture.

Recommendations

Create a wizard for screen captures that would guide the user through the necessary steps and options required to change the means of capturing an image. For more advanced users who would rather bypass the wizard, provide the option to use the wizard or the standard interface.

Include the type of capture shape as a pop-up menu. Once the user selects their desired profile, a menu including the preferred capture shape should pop up, allowing the user easy access as well as informing less savvy users of the available options.

Adding effects to screenshots before they are captured

Finding and Explanations

None of the users tested were successful in being able to add effects, like borders, to a capture before beginning the capture process. Everyone used the tasks tool in the preview window to add any effects. Users were unaware that effects can be added automatically upon completion of a screen capture.

Recommendations

Create a Screen Capture Wizard that would guide the user through the available effects options before capturing an image. For more advanced users who would rather bypass the wizard, provide the option to use the standard interface.

Create a pop-up menu that appears when the user clicks a capture profile. Include the option of adding effects to a capture in the pop-up menu, allowing the user easy access to the effects options as well as informing less knowledgeable users of the available options.

Changing the options on a desired capture profile

Finding and Explanations

Most of the users tested were unsuccessful in being able to quickly locate the settings for a capture profile. Only one user was aware of the Settings toolbar at the bottom of the main window. This toolbar was largely ignored because it blends in completely with the main selection window.

Recommendations

Move the Profile Settings toolbar or highlight it using another color background. The standard convention for program settings is at the top of the program window. The current location defies convention and allows the options menus to blend in to the main window and disappear. If this toolbar must reside in its current location, highlight it in some way to allow the user to identify it as something important and different from the main menu window.

Using Help to find necessary information

Finding and Explanations

The Help system was the first place all users went to find information, but they were frequently unable to find the information they needed to complete a given task. The Help index does not include all of the terminology used in the actual program to describe available functionality. There are no allowances for using common terms instead of program specific terms, for example, using the term comment box instead of the programs callout box.

When you are able to find the requested information in the Help system, the help screens themselves do not include all of the information required to complete the task. The callout Help informs you how to use the callout tool, but does not show how to actually select the callout tool or what icon to look for in the program.

Recommendations

Include all terminology used to describe an action or function in the actual program in the Help index. Also, include the most common terms for a function in the Help as well as the programs preferred terminology. Users who are new to this software, or who have used similar software, may not automatically know the proper terminology.

Include all required icons and information in the help for completing a task. When a specific tool is named, include a small image of the icon that represents that tool in the program with a link explaining where to find that tool.

Appendix 1: Task Times

Participant 1 (Novice)

Elapsed Time	Name	Notes
0:00:37.6		Introductions and Paperwork
0:11:41.4	Task 1	User was able to take a screen capture but WITHOUT a border
0:11:41.4		
0:13:33.6		Didn't know had to open Snagit first, Test Monitor prompted
0:14:10.4		Didn't click on Capture First
0:14:56.4		User accessed help to figure out how to take their first screen capture
0:16:39.6		User was able to take screen capture, but WITHOUT a border
0:17:13.4		
0:17:13.4	Task 1	User was able to take a screen capture but WITHOUT a border
0:17:57.8	Task 2	Capture menu sequence in Microsoft Word without the arrow
0:17:57.8		
0:20:24.8		The new version of Word is installed on the computer, so we're intervening and changing it to be the view--> Text Size--> Increase in Firefox
0:23:19.2		User forgot to use Snagit
0:25:11.0		User is forgetting to click on Capture to capture the images
0:26:41.6		User is forgetting to click on the Capture button, so needed to access the Help Menu to figure out how to take a menu item screen capture
0:29:14.4		Jennifer had to tell the user there's something else she needs to do in order to capture the image.
0:29:57.4		Prompted with 'Capture the menu'
0:30:13.8		Reminded again about capturing
0:32:10.0		User thought they were in correct but they actually did it correctly, minus the cursor in the image.
0:33:12.2		Given time constraints, asked to move on to drawing the arrow
0:37:09.0		Snagit did not open directly into Edit Mode, so we are removing the task to draw an arrow.
0:37:55.8		
0:37:55.8	Task 2	Capture menu sequence in Microsoft Word without the arrow
0:37:55.8	Task 3	'Done as much as I can do'
0:37:55.8		
0:39:10.4		User asked whether she was in the right place or not
0:43:03.6		prompted to Close editor - return to main Snagit screen
0:44:00.0		Cancel popup menu
0:45:19.4		observer enters situation to search for free hand capture option
0:46:51.2		Forgot to maximize Firefox first
0:47:27.8		Released mouse button too early
0:48:05.4		Released mouse button too early again
0:48:44.2		Because it's a JPG, no ability to do part of the image, so we're going to say that it's OK
0:49:21.8		User is saving the file first rather than just clicking on the Word icon

0:50:04.6		
0:50:04.6	Task 3	'Done as much as I can do'
0:50:13.6	Task 4	Course Catalog snapshot with links and exported to Word
0:50:13.6		
0:53:48.6		Not understanding the assignment
0:54:51.4		Told to close the Image to Insert image, 'Export it to Microsoft Word'
0:55:33.9	Task 4	Course Catalog snapshot with links and exported to Word
0:55:55.5	Task 4	Completed Task -- program prompted an error, but user did correct actions
0:55:55.6		
0:57:01.5		'I would think I could save it in Microsoft Word'
1:00:17.0		'I don't know how to try saving it as'
1:00:59.5		
1:00:59.5	Task 4	Completed Task -- program prompted an error, but user did correct actions
1:01:19.4	Task 5	
1:01:19.4		
1:02:42.2		
1:02:42.2	Task 5	
1:02:51.3	Task 6	Stopped task because user was unable to successfully complete it - instead created a text box
1:02:51.3		
1:05:25.3		User is just sticking to the Index, not clicking on Search or Contents to find the help information on 'comment boxes'
1:09:49.9		User told that this is actually called a 'Callout' in SnagIt
1:12:29.3		'It doesn't tell me how to create it.'
1:14:06.8		'I don't see anything about callouts here'
1:14:19.2		user went clicking through the menus to try and find Callouts
1:15:47.2		
1:16:01.0		
1:16:01.0	Task 6	Stopped task because user was unable to successfully complete it - instead created a text box

Participant 2 (Intermediate)

Elapsed

Time	Name	Notes
00:38.8		introduction to test scenarios
03:21.0	Task 1	task completed according to user
03:21.0		
04:50.2		user verified section to be captured
05:31.8		user prompted to 'think aloud'
06:26.0		user opened help for instructions on border
07:21.6		What kind of border do you want
08:33.8		I don't see any thing that shows a border
10:06.4		what are you thinking - how to set up the options. I didn't see that
12:14.6		capture successful without border
13:02.6		added border in preview screen post capture
14:39.4		referred to help to verify task completion

15:32.0		changed color and size of border
15:59.4		
15:59.4	Task 1	task completed according to user
16:24.6	Task 2	task completed successfully
16:24.6		
18:10.6		user captured entire screen sans menu
19:49.2		user has not selected menu capture option
20:24.4		user searches help for 'trigger key' for menu capture
		is there any reason you did not select options listed under menu in help search
20:54.2		
21:40.4		prompted to explore main capture window for further options
22:54.2		user captures menu pulldowns- thinks that is incorrect
23:44.2		
23:44.2	Task 2	task completed successfully
24:02.8	Task 3	inserted image in word
24:02.8		
24:45.8		clarification of non square image capture
27:22.8		user searches help for info on non square capture
27:47.4		capture freehand version of Google logo
29:11.4		hint-modify region trying to select - your in the right area
30:06.0		what's another name for 'edges' - if not a square
30:46.6		user uses search element of help
31:42.4		user completed freehand capture of image
32:10.4		searching for 'send to' or 'export' option in menu but cannot find
33:06.0		
33:06.0	Task 3	inserted image in word
33:22.4	Task 4	successful insertion in word
33:22.4		
34:56.8		user captured page with links
35:20.8		
35:20.8	Task 4	successful insertion in word
35:37.0	Task 5	Sent Snagit to the tray and ONLY the tray
35:37.0		
36:07.6		asks for clarification of tray vs. task bar
36:55.0		
36:55.0	Task 5	Sent Snagit to the tray and ONLY the tray
37:06.8	Task 6	callout created successfully
37:06.8		
38:13.4		re-directs user to help to find info on callout
39:06.6		what is a callout
39:41.4		think of a callout as a speech bubble
40:34.0		
40:34.0	Task 6	callout created successfully

Participant 3 (Intermediate)

Elapsed	Name	Notes
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Time

01:26.4	Task 1	
01:26.4		
04:07.8		User is accessing the help system to learn where to begin.
04:42.2		User is going through the video tutorial to learn how to use the software.
06:45.2		User forgot to click capture
07:56.4		
07:56.4	Task 1	
08:24.0	Task 2	
08:24.0		
		User accessed the online help system to try and figure out how to complete the task.
08:59.9		
13:13.6		User opened the Macromedia Help as opposed to the Snagit help files user was unable to find the help file on removing the mouse from the image
14:00.2		
		User captured the wrong image without noticing - the timer at the bottom right of the screen ran out before he was ready.
16:35.4		
		User did not recognize the countdown timer at the bottom right of the screen and actually clicked on the menu item.
17:31.6		
17:56.0		User told he was using the right capture profile
20:23.7		User told to not actually click on the Increase
21:02.0		
21:02.0	Task 2	
21:17.8	Task 3	
21:17.8		
		User immediately tried to access the help to figure out what he needed to do
22:06.6		
23:17.0		User tried to capture an image from a web page
29:34.6		User forgot to click capture
29:51.2		
29:51.2	Task 3	
30:03.0	Task 4	
30:03.0		
32:01.6		
32:01.6	Task 4	
32:22.4	Task 5	
32:22.4		
32:54.0		'Oh I have no idea how to do that'
33:05.0		User accessed help to learn how to complete the task
33:45.8		User accidentally closed the program
		'Oh there's a remove cursor option down here, I should have used that earlier.'
34:34.8		
35:19.0		user went into compact view and couldn't figure out how to get out
38:09.8		
38:09.8	Task 5	
38:30.2	Task 6	
38:30.2		

40:24.4
40:24.4 Task 6

Participant 4 (Expert)

Elapsed

Time	Name	Notes
08:40.0	Task 1	Did not complete with border
08:40.0		
09:43.4		'I would have expected to be able to double-click to capture the image, but that doesn't do anything'
10:33.6		
10:33.6	Task 1	Did not complete with border
10:50.8	Task 2	
10:50.8		
13:23.8		User was able to capture the screenshot, but wasn't sure how to do it without the cursor. Then figured it out and re-captured the image.
14:43.4		User wasn't sure how to edit the image once it was captured.
15:13.0		User wasn't able tried to type in 'shapes' to figure out how to add an arrow, but was unable to find it. Then, when he did, it didn't tell him how to access it.
16:06.2		The paint tools aren't intuitive. Also would have expected the arrow to draw in the opposite direction.
16:30.1		
16:30.1	Task 2	
16:45.2	Task 3	
16:45.2		
18:16.6		User misunderstood directions, and just captured the Google logo. First idea was to capture it, then to edit the image.
23:26.4		Not really apparent to me how to capture freehand.
24:35.0		User accessed help to figure out how to capture a shape.
26:48.1		
26:48.1	Task 3	
27:11.8	Task 4	
27:11.8		
28:08.8		'Not sure how it's gonna work til I hit capture'
28:18.4		'Oh look, it scrolls'
28:46.0		
28:46.0	Task 4	
29:14.4	Task 5	
29:14.4		
30:20.8		
30:20.8	Task 5	
30:27.4	Task 6	
30:27.4		
33:30.4		After looking at the help system, still a little confused as to where the callout tool is.

33:58.2 Would expect to see what the tool looks like before you see the
34:39.0 properties. They show you how to use the tool, just not how to access it.
35:05.6 Found it using the tool tips, not the help.
35:05.6 Task 6