MAS 490: Theory and Practice of Mobile Applications
Research Paper Assignment   Spring 2012
Due date: Tuesday, April 24, 2012

The purpose of this paper is to engage you an in-depth research project in the field of mobile applications. As you have learned from the first few weeks of class, this is a broad field, in which many exciting developments are occurring on a daily basis. You will write a formal research paper on a topic of your choice within the general area of mobile applications and interactivity. If you are unsure or simply not particular, you will find a list of possible topics from which you may choose at the end of this document.

You must use <u>at least 12</u> sources other than the class readings in writing your paper – more would be better. You should use primary sources whenever possible. Primary sources means original works on the subject, such as original legislation or FCC regulatory documents, findings of state public service commissions, interviews with key sources, your own original research, and so on. Also, you should spend a significant amount of time engaged in research finding as many sources as you can on your topic, such as books, academic and trade journal articles, and technical documents.

DO NOT rely in large measure on articles from popular magazines and newspapers. These sources can be helpful, but they usually do not provide enough in-depth information. However, they may be useful for leading you to more primary sources. For that reason, at least <u>six</u> of your sources must be from publications or web sources whose focus is the wireless industry.

Use the Internet for your research, but remember that it is often difficult to determine the credibility of the information on a website, especially if it is a commercial website. Carefully cite these sources by noting the URL and the company or individual listed as the web page creator. Limit your use of online sources to no more than <u>five</u> sources. There are exceptions to this rule for items that are merely reprinted on line, like journal articles, newspaper articles, and so forth.

You must properly cite your sources. For a quick reference, I have provided a link to an APA Publication Manual Guideline on the class website. Each citation in the list of references must have the name of the author, the date of publication, the title of the publication, page numbers and journal name (if an article), and publisher information. <u>Any direct quote or idea taken from a source must be noted as such within the text</u>. Use the style manual for directions for citing within the text, and be VERY CAREFUL! Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Use 8.5" by 11" white paper. Use one-inch margins and a standard12-point serif font such as Courier or Times New Roman. Print your paper on one side of the page, double-spacing the lines. <u>Number the pages</u>, according to APA style. Don't bother with any kind of folder or report cover. They are a waste of money, paper, and plastic, and they make it difficult to carry and file your papers. Your paper should be a minimum of 10-12 pages of text in length. Save a copy of your paper on a flash drive (or on hard copy) so that if it mysteriously disappears you can provide another copy. Remember – this paper accounts for one fourth of your course grade.

Organize your paper carefully. Include an introduction, with an identifiable thesis statement, a body, and a conclusion. Connect your ideas together with good transitions from paragraph to paragraph. Write clearly, and proofread carefully (computers have spell checkers for a reason, but a spell checker won't correct you when you use "to" instead of "too" or "two"). Following is a suggested outline:

I.   Introduction to the topic
        - What is the issue under discussion?
        - Why is it an important topic at this time?
                (Is it currently a hot topic? Has it been a hot topic for some time? Is it a new
                technology that has just come on the scene? Make it sound interesting.)
        - Thesis statement: "This paper will…"

II.   Historical perspective on the topic
        - What did your extensive research reveal about this topic?
        - Where did this issue/topic originate, and what is its history?
        - Organize your review of the info so that you address several topics in an orderly fashion.
        - Try to address the issue from both the consumers' and the producers' point of view.

III.   Current perspectives on the topic
        - What's going on right now with this issue/topic?
        - Why should we be interested in this topic today?
        - What are the positions of the competing interests?
        - What are the forecasts for the future of the relevant technologies?

IV.   Conclusion
        - Brief restatement of the thesis
        - Brief summary of what you found, and why it is important to study it

Here is a list of topics for your consideration and possible adoption.

Mobile device and apps effect on – entertainment and games
Information Superhighway – consequences of immediate mobile access
Mobile-mediated communication – effects on business operations
Smartphone and application services – transforming effects on society
Social effects of interactive communication devices – history, major areas of study
Regulation – FCC and the role of regulation in smartphone and apps industries
Ownership of electronic information and mobile apps – copyright, intellectual property, fair use
International issues – development of smartphones and apps in Third World countries, Europe, and Asia
Interactive and on-line applications – impact on society
Smartphones and apps – technology, uses and gratifications, impact on society
Etiquette – what have smartphones and apps done to interpersonal interaction
Virtual community – changes in social interaction, gaming
Privacy – surveillance and monitoring, government and commercial databases, anonymity
Security – smartphones and apps another way of breaching the wall?
Industry structure – competition, convergence
Psychological effects – identity and impersonation, dependency, relationships
Information overload – managing databases, push services, self-selection and gatekeeping
Technical issues for hardware and software – capacity and growth, standards