iBalance:
A cross-media web service platform for home workout

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MEDIA DESIGN D
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Abstract

This paper declares the creative process behind the creation of iBalance, a cross-media web portal connecting on-the-go videos about training with an interactive information retrieval website. The study is built on two target groups opinions; the first group took part in the pre-study analyzing existing website on the market. The second group of subjects reviewed the prototypes of the final web portal developed from the first target group opinions compiled into guidelines on the basis of grounded theory. A list of minor errors was the result from the second study and the design team solved the problems and the final web portal was created.

Keywords

Cross-Media, Media Convergence, Web development

Background

Since the millennium has internet seen a massive development almost duplicating the amount of users between 2000 until 2006 (www.internetworldstats.com).Which has boosted the innovations about online media in many ways (Bierhoff, 2003). One field that has seen a large development is websites about health and training, including websites covering everything from food to work-out. Some websites make a good combination of many elements in this field. Creating something like your very own personal coaching directly on the internet covering everything from the way you should train to what you shall eat and not eat.

Internet is developing towards higher level of convergence (cf Bolter & Grusin, 1999) between different types of media and media content. This is a complicated process but in the hands of the designers complex concepts are reduced into simple ones, the business community will be able to take advantage of the opportunities to reach consumers that these new technologies affect. Also the convergence between different forms of internet connections like narrowband, broadband and wireless is leading towards exciting opportunities for designers to create ground-breaking interfaces. (Curran, 2003)

One thing that is exciting is the convergence between internet and mp3-players.

Looking towards mp3-players and then especially the Ipod from Apple (ipod.apple.com) being in the front of development of the next generation mp3-players or more correct the mp4-players. MPEG-4 is multimedia container format that allows multimedia content to be streamed at variable bit rates over high and low bandwidth connections. (Viljoen, et al., 2003). This leads us to the introduction of the Ipod video which opens new opportunities and a big step was taken with the video functions. So in a near future it is most likely that we will see an explosion of small video players with video function. This is something that also could be enabled in our cellular phones, PDA’s etc. Soon it is most likely that mp4-players can be found with wireless...
internet connection so you do not need to involve your computer in the process anymore. This would lead us to live streaming direct from your mp4-player. So based on these facts the technology today allows us to create training programs available at anytime and also a website sharing these videos and control your training. Somehow it will be necessary to connect the users with the new technology, make it available to the people. In the area of home workout and wellness most practitioners are middle-aged women in the age span between 20-49 (http://www.rf.se, 2006-05-24) were the majority which is somewhere in the middle of the age span is not used to this high technology because they are in a generation gap between the young generation that has grown up with technology and the older generation which might not have the same level of interest in the matter. This paper presents a study where this problem is in focal point by working directly with the target group.

iBalance - a web service for on-the-go training

In the project Entertainment Services one of the subordinate projects included a web portal about wellness and training with focus on video-on-demand functions. The videos should contain exercises from Pilates and Yoga performed by famous professionals. Therefore the goal of this study was to create an empirically informed design for a cross-media web portal, connecting on-the-go video features with an informative website adjusted to the target group.

Related work and Cross-media

iBalance focuses on the connection between video on portable devices and the web portal. This is an example of cross-media in other words convergence between different types of media and devices. Other studies that can be related to this study are for example found within e-learning, online television broadcasting, podcasting (Meng, 2005) and iTV (Schwalb, 2003). If we look towards e-learning and podcasting studies has been made on working with Ipd for academic use (Racetham, 2006). At Duke University in the US every student is given an Ipd allowing 1600 students to download class material, record and playback lectures etc. (Belanger, 2005). Since iBalance is a website trying to instruct the users about pilates and yoga looking towards other work about e-learning is an obvious choice. During this study the final results is completely because of the subject opinions, working close to the target group when designing a website is a great way to get information about what the end-users demands. (c.f. Anschuetz, 2003).

Three separate websites

In an initial stage it was decided that the website would be separated into three individual parts. First, the main web portal called iBalance which has the focus on wellness in general. Two subordinated websites should work as more special-oriented websites towards pilates and yoga. The names of these two websites are iPilates and iYoga.

Strategy and structure

This study is separated into several steps before reaching the final design layout for the web portal. The workflow is illustrated and explained below.
applied. This theory was chosen on the basis of grounded theory in general focuses on the process of generating theory rather than a particular theoretical content. (Patton, 2002). One of the advantages is that it keeps the creative process flowing for the researcher. The main point with grounded theory is to find the main problems according to the researched area and then what is needed for solving them. The first survey in this study should have been conducted with longer time spectra and more widely collection of data in order to qualify as a full version of a grounded theory study. However for this study enough information came out of the interviews that were made. This was clear since already halfway through the interviews in each study the subjects started to repeat information contributed earlier.

The pre-study led to the creation of several guidelines according to grounded theory, which were practically used in the making of the first prototypes of the web portal with subordinate websites.

The next step in the process was to conduct a new study in order to test the prototypes. Ten subjects were selected according to the target group and these went through the same process as in the pre-study, however this time subjects’ were confronted with a mock-up of the real web portal. On the basis of the result from the second study a list of errors were created and then solved in the final version of the website. Since only very few errors and problems were reported in the second study it led the design team to the conclusion that no further studies were necessary.

**Environment and Equipment**

The interviews were made in the subjects’ natural context, most commonly at their home or at a friend’s home. This in order to simulate a context users are familiar with when visiting these kinds of websites. Both of the studies were performed on an Acer Aspire 3610 (http://www.acer.com, 2006-05-24) laptop with external mouse. The screen resolution was 1280 x 800 pixels. This will make the website look very much alike the most common used resolution by internet users, 1024x768 pixels and 1280x1024 pixels and higher (www.w3schools.com).

**Websites for the pre-study**

The specific goal of the pre-study was to get a picture of what the subjects liked and disliked in websites concerning training. Ten different websites were chosen on the basis of discussions about content with the Entertainment Service team in order to cover as much as possible of websites in the area of wellness. The websites covered everything from strict information retrieval websites to entertainment websites (Wiberg, 2003) all with widely spread designs. The websites that were used in the test are presented briefly on the next pages.

**Target group for iBalance**

The target group for the iBalance web portal is women interested in any form of training or wellness. The age span on the women was approximated to a range between 25-55 years. In both studies the subjects were widely spread over the spectra aging from 24 up to 51 years old as shown in the tables presented under each survey further on in the paper. Since this group was intended to target for this service subjects in both of the studies were collected from it.
Balanced body Pilates – www.Pilates.com
The website of the world’s largest pilates equipment manufacture. Chosen to be included because of the topic of the website and the special design with the centred menu and separated content areas.

Denise Austin – www.Deniseaustin.com
Denise Austin is a well known fitness celebrity in US with millions of sold videos & DVD’s through the years. Her website was included in order to get more information about the menu solution and the centred full screen-length layout. Another reason for including it is because of the special style on the pictures and their commercial attitude. The website also had an introduction page with animations before the main website loaded.
Hälsa – for body and soul in balance – www.Hälsa.se
Hälsa is the major Swedish wellness magazine presenting articles and also including a personal wellness coach. It was included because of an interesting layout on the first page with three equal columns and also a horizontal main menu is included on the website. The design is uncomplicated and straightforward putting information in focus.

The website of a Swedish bodybuilding magazine named Body. The first thought is probably that this website has nothing to do in a study about wellness and training however it is included in the pre-study for several reasons. It has an unusual colour scheme, works with large amounts of advertisement and a majority of the pictures on the website are on men.
Hälsa.info – nutrition science – www.Halso.info
A swedish website about training and diet with focus on articles on the topics mentioned and their own forum. The reason for this website to be included in the study is for the reason that it has an extremely minimalistic layout and includes no pictures at all.

Templet.nu – Diet, Exercise and Health – www.Templet.nu
This is an information retrieval website hosting a meeting point for people interested in training with the focal point on their forum with the topic of diet, training and health. It presents the same kind of content as halso.info but with a completely other layout. It gives the user much information in one time since it has content placed all over the website.
A Swedish website focusing on poweryoga filled with training information and it also includes a forum. It is included in the pre-study because of the bright layout and also for the reason that it works with an easy to use vertical tree menu and the layout that is based on three vertical content areas.

A swedish website for the company Moventus which provides yogaflow education and classes, a form of yoga invented by Magnus Ringberg and Anna Paringer. “Yogaflow is a dynamic hatha yoga which combines traditional yoga with new and innovative ideas”. It was chosen for the pre-study because of the yoga training in general and the artistic pictures. The website also includes an animated introduction before you can enter the main website and it has a classic centre-aligned rectangle shaped layout.
The international website form women from Nike (www.nike.com) presenting the latest training collections of shoes and clothes. Used in the study because it is an entertainment website with radical colours and a massive attitude, completely different from any other website in the survey.

Adidas (www.adidas.com) global website for women presenting their shoes and clothes for women that exercises. Chosen based on the fact that focus lies entirely on the pictures. It is an entertainment website just like nikewomen.com but with a softer and more glamorous attitude.
Questions for the pre-study

The interviews were conducted using open questions (Patton, 2002). The questions covered aspects as navigation, structure, typography, picture material etc. and also some specific questions like if the subject’s would pay for internet services. Notes were taken during the study on the subject’s comments and reactions.

Overall Subjects

Eight subjects completed the survey. The subjects in the group exercise at different levels, covering everything from people working with training to people with almost no experience in training programs. All the subjects had at least basic internet knowledge. Below statistics about the subjects is displayed.

Guidelines from the pre-study

From the data collected in the pre-study eleven categories were created to show what the subjects thought were the most important features in websites focusing on wellness and training. This worked as guidelines in the design process to fulfil the demands of the users.

Impression – Honest and easy

During the observation the subjects found it a lot easier to tell what they disliked in a website, the most specific example is deniseaustin.com which is a site that is focused on selling training programs with punchlines like “Get thin in 19 days” and pictures of Denise Austin in different poses showing her well trained body. Some subjects even connected it with pornographic websites because of the layout. This approach only ended up with comments like:

“They seem to offer something impossible”
Subject no. 4

“The site does not feel trustworthy; I connect it with miracle pills and TV-shop”
Subject no. 4

The study shows that the majority of the subjects are interested in finding out fast what the website is all about and quickly be able to retrieve information about the particular subject of the website. Only one subject in the test thought that entertainment in form of movies and sounds should take more space than information. It is also important that the website is not completely limited without logging in; in that case the majority of the subjects looked for information elsewhere and does not spend enough time on the website to find out what it is about.

During observation it was shown that the majority of the subjects were afraid of advanced features being pushed at them immediately. Since iBalance is going to be a relative advanced website it is important to find a way to make it easy to use for everyone and not scare them away because they do not know how to master the features. This guideline will only work if the final website fulfils the other ten categories which are more specific.
Navigation – A classic solution

Regarding to solutions about navigation on a website the most common thing were that the subjects like the basic solutions with the vertical menu on the left side of the screen. Observations show that the subjects had no problem to find that kind of menu when placed on the left side however when you move it around the screen it becomes more difficult. That is clearly shown on the website pilates.com which is a site that uses a vertical menu however it is placed in the middle of the screen. Only one subject located the main menu of the website. One website which got really good results concerning the solution of the menu was deniseaustin.com which uses a classic vertical tree menu. The classic horizontal menu also got fine results in the pre-study. Three fourths of the subjects thought that Halsa.se had a good menu solution which is a horizontal menu with drop down sub-categories. However did the subjects not find it appealing in an aesthetic point of view. The worst menu in the test was the one at templet.nu where all the subjects in the survey had problems even finding the main menu, more than half of them never found it. It was a solution with a drop-down box containing all main menu options. However the problem was not based on the solution of the menu more the mess built around it with many other kind of menus and options. This created a lot of confusion and put the small area containing the main menu completely out of focus something that should be avoided. The main menu should be easy to find and not slip away from the focus of the website; it does not have to be the first thing the eyes recognize however it has to be seen before the user starts to explore the website.

Interactivity – a facelift for the website

On a website today interactivity is something that often exists. Users like to be able to cooperate with the site in some kind of way. The more they take part of a website the longer time will they spend there. During observation and comments it clearly shows that it was important with content like “Question of the month” and calculators where you can enter your own values and see a result. After the survey was completed everybody thought that interactivity with the website is highly important and especially the opportunity to ask questions and discuss.

Video and sound – Important although unobtrusive

The most important thing about video and sound clips according to the subjects in the pre-study is that the user is in control of them. One example that shows the opposite was Moventus.com which has the sound of Ujjayi, one of the different breathing techniques that exist in yoga playing automatically on some subordinate pages on the website. This is something 2/3 of the subjects found irritating.

“The sound when I enter some pages is sick and disturbing, it should be voluntary”
Subject no. 8

However does video and sound play a big part in web development. One fourth of the subjects thought that videos and sound clips are among the most important things on a website.

Main colours – Clear and pure

The thing that stands out the most in this category is that the target group really does not like soft pastel colours. A good example of this is Halso.info which had a light blue pastel colour as base tone, white background with black typography and an extremely minimalistic layout. Every single one during the survey thought that the site was boring, stiff and wan. One subject expressed her self like this about the website

“The layout and the colours feel like a doctor’s prescription”
Subject no. 8
Almost every training site on the internet is light and bright, one example of the opposite is Nikewomen.com which was based on shocking pink colour on black. This website got really good response in the survey everybody except one that did not have an opinion loved the colours on the website. However still we have to keep in mind that nikewomen.com is an entertainment website which is structured in a completely different way than an information retrieval website where information and the ability to read it has to be in priority. Also the colour on the Denise Austin’s website got good response from about half of the subjects, however no one disliked the clear turquoise colour dominating the website.

Language – Native language creates security

All the persons that participated in the study preferred websites written in their native language. The majority thought that a site is more trustworthy if it is in your own language.

“I give more trust to a site in my own language because it is easier for me to understand all the information”

Subject no. 3

Also another subject pointed out that she would never make an online payment to a website that was not in her native language. This shows clearly that if you are going to sell a service on the internet it is very important to make the site available in the native languages for the countries in focus.

Pictures – artistically beautiful and mood setting

Pictures were something that often was in focus when the subject analysed the websites. This was a subject everybody had something to add to every website in the study, most common because of poor pictures or the lack of pictures. One site that suffered of this was Halso.info that did not include any pictures at all which ⅓ of the subjects disliked. This website also showed that people got tired of reading information a lot quicker when they did not have any pictures to go through. The most important thing that the subjects’ mentioned about the pictures on the websites is that it is not the workout or difficulty of exercise that is motivating and interesting for the target group. This can be shown by the result from the picture on the starting page of Poweryoga.nu which shows a women bending backwards with her hands in the ground, a mainstream of the subjects in the test found this negative. Because they could not see them self do the same exercise and they did not get any contact with the women on the picture since she was looking away from the camera focused on the exercise. It is more relevant to create an image with artistic compositions and colours not only documentary pictures of well trained professionals. It is important that the viewers can feel a connection to them self in the pictures. The persons on the photos should work like motivating role models; it should be realistic to actually reach the same level of fitness. Many times during the study mentioned the subjects that they rather want to see women performing the workout for the same reason as they do not want them to be exceptionally athletic. Pictures that got really good response from the subjects were the pictures on Moventus.com and Adidas.com/women. The pictures on Moventus got good response from everyone except one person that could not see the reason with them since they are often extreme close-ups. The others found them artistic beautiful and created a positive feeling. Adidas.com/women got the best response since no one disliked the pictures and a large majority found them really beautiful. One person commented the pictures like this

“The pictures are fantastic they create a beautiful and glamorous feeling about training”

Subject no. 4

Some of the subjects also mentioned that they judge the sites reliability according to the artistic quality of the pictures.
Typography – Functions ahead of style

None of the subjects preferred reading small letters. Even of the most famous typefaces on the internet, Verdana written in 9 and 10 points is too undersized for the mainstream. One thing that is important for the target group is that not the aesthetic is the focal point it is more important with readability. Halso.info did had an excellent size on the letters according to the subjects, it was written in 12 points Verdana.

The subjects preferred a short column width to feel that the text was easy to read and handle. Body.se got good response according to the column width having approximately 60 to 65 signs per line written in ten points with Verdana.

Online payment – Depends on trust

Every subject except one would be prepared for more advanced functions on a website. Functions that they mentioned were individual training programs, unique videoclips and personal trainer. This fact is based on that the site feels trustworthy and the definition of what makes a website more reliable is mentioned in the guidelines impression, language and pictures. Of course it is not only these guidelines that gives the users an impression of trust, it is hard to define on what reasons that makes a website something that you trust in however these reasons where the main things the subjects mentioned.

Advertisement – Disturbing in most cases

The majority in the test found advertising disturbing elements on a website, especially if it is animated. The reason for this is because the focus is removed from the relevant content of the site towards the ads. An example of this is Body.se which has advertisement covering one third of the site on the right of the content area. Only one subject liked body’s advertisements because she likes to see adverts on websites because it can pass her on to new websites and find new products. However she pointed out that it is very important that the advertising is relevant to the subject of the website.

Introduction pages – Something unnecessary

Introduction pages is something a large amount of the test group thought just stood in the way for getting them to the important content. If intro’s is going to be used they have to be short and easy to skip, a good example of this is the site adidas.com/women which shows three large pictures one at a time with an interval on 3 seconds and has a clear skip intro button at the bottom of each pictures. Moventus.com had an introduction that no one of the subjects really liked because it took to long time and they had no opportunities to skip the intro and when it finished it automatically enter the site which made the user totally without control of the website for about 10 seconds.

“I’m already scared of the page since I did not have any control of the situation”
Subject no. 6

As mentioned above introductions are unnecessary and the mainstream of the subjects did not think that it added something useful at all.
Designing the prototypes

The web portal was in an early stage decided to be separated into three individual sites (as described in Objectives) however still they need to be connected to each other. The separation will be done with different main colours and separate logotypes on the websites. Also some individual menu options will be created. This section of the paper will first show the prototypes created and then go trough each guideline from the pre-study and how they are implemented on the prototype.

The three prototypes

This is the three prototypes created from the pre-study. However as shown on the coming pages is five pictures presented. Three of them are different pages on iBalance and the other two are pictures on the subordinate websites iPilates and iYoga.
Impression

Since the most important thing the subject mentioned was to quickly receive information. An introduction text was placed on the start page explaining the reason of the website and the opportunities that is available.

Overall is the design of the website trying to keep a modern however still classic look so the user’s feel that it is something at the height of fashion and fresh however still can easily navigate and understand everything as in an old classic website.

The website is built in boxes so the user easily can find the main navigation next to the content as the mainstream of websites is constructed on the internet. Also the solution with separating information in boxes solved the problem with hiding the technology from the website when the user is logged out. The entire box with advanced feature is unavailable and hidden in the free membership (read about it in online payment below). The picture of the prototype when the user is logged shows the box with advanced features. This solution does not destroy the websites layout and keep different levels separated from each other. It also gives a feeling of that the website is not limited. The mainstream of information on the website should be public material. Also something that is important for the subjects is that everything reachable from the main menu is public material.

Navigation

The navigation for the main menu is a classic vertical tree structured menu. Built on the same principle as the menu on deniseaustin.com which got really good response in the pre-study. The menu will never show subordinate categories when chosen without showing a new page in the content area. This so the users always get information and response from the website. One more navigation is also available. It is the top menu which is a horizontal menu with only two choices, to switch between the main websites. The third and last menu is only available for advanced members. This menu is a vertical menu located to the right in the box showing up in advanced mode. From this menu will the users be able to manage all the extra function available with their advanced membership.

Interactivity

The most important interactivity functions the subjects mentioned is implemented in the prototype. Weekly questions, opportunities to discuss and ask questions have been implemented with the different forums. Also some functions like wikipedia, community and weight curves have been included. This is functions that other similar pages with focus on wellness have on their websites. After the next phase with the second study of the prototypes is completed it will be decided if all this functions are necessary for the users on a web portal with focus on video-on-demand.

Video and sound

The subjects in the pre-study disliked when video and sound clips played without them being aware of it. Even if it can be a highlight on some webpage’s it were decided to create a calm website focusing on the information even if it is selling a product like video-on-demand. The only time videos will play is when the users are aware of it and have chosen it.

Language

The prototypes are written in Swedish for the reason that it is the mother tongue for the subjects in the pre-study which preferred their own language. Also the next study will be done in Sweden and after this subordinate project inside Entertainment services is completed beta testing of the website and the video functions is focusing on the Swedish market.
Colours

The colours were chosen on information given from the pre-study. Pink and light blue got really good response from the subjects, to complement this two colours a light green were selected. The reason these colours were chosen if we look further than the pre-study is because of how the human in common interpret with colours. Studies have been made on the colours affect on us. However remember the text explaining the colours affect is about the colour in it is maximized saturation. A mixture in the colour can lead to deviant appearance. The following part will in this case just give an indication.

Red is a colour that we connect with keywords like powerful, physically activating and full of life. Red also has a tendency to give higher blood pressure and more rapidly breathing.

Green and blue are colours we connect with calm, ease and harmony. Green is drawn more towards vegetation and blue is connected with water and the sky. Through time has blue become more of a power colour in the society it is also the colour most people prefer as their favourite. Based on this the main colour of the core website iBalance became light blue. The iPilates site got the pink and not the red colour mainly because of popularity among the subjects and because of modern trends, something that was considered while mixing all three colours. iPilates have the most active colour for it is characteristic of the training since it in general looks more powerful than yoga. iYoga got the light green colour based on the fact that yoga is connected with harmony and nature so it seemed liked the obvious choice. This is the only colour that did not have any connections with the pre-study since none of the pages had green as its main colour however it works great together with light blue and pink. The result from the target group opinion about this specific colour and the other two will be presented in the study of the prototype. We also need to keep in mind that most often is the appreciation of the colour based on the design it is applied on. (Nilson, 2004)

The colours that were created for the website are the following three:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>CMYK</th>
<th>RGB</th>
<th>Pantone</th>
<th>CMYK</th>
<th>RGB</th>
<th>Pantone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iBalance Blue</td>
<td>C: 56%</td>
<td>R: 107</td>
<td>Pantone 7458 C</td>
<td>C: 8%</td>
<td>R: 224</td>
<td>Pantone 5010 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iPilates Pink</td>
<td>M:11%</td>
<td>G: 183</td>
<td>M: 78%</td>
<td>G: 94</td>
<td>M: 0%</td>
<td>G: 210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iYoga Green</td>
<td>Y: 17%</td>
<td>B: 201</td>
<td>Y: 32%</td>
<td>B: 125</td>
<td>Y: 76%</td>
<td>B: 106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pictures

The pictures taken for the website was photographed by Mari Paajanen (www.marifoto.se) and she tried to achieve the things pointed out by the subjects in the pre-study. It is warm and calm pictures focusing on creating an image about the different topics of the websites more than showing how the workout is done. Still it is real Pilates and Yoga exercises performed so the user still can see which kind of training that is represented.

Typography

Running text

Because the mainstream of the subjects preferred a really short column width and large lettering Tahoma written in 12 points where chosen for running text. This for the simple reason that it is a very tight font so more letters can fit on the same line and still keep the readability. The column width chosen for running text is 61 to 67 letters. According to the book Typografisk handbok (typographic handbook) by Christer Hellman is the optimal column width between 60 to 65 letters. The colour of the running text is a dark grey (54% black) It would be the best readability with completely black letters however it is also important with the aesthetic aspects to match the rest of the website. This choice to use a grey tone instead of completely black does not affect the readability especially much during
screen use. Links in running text is pointed out buy the same colour as the headings which you can read about below.

**Headings**
The headings are written in 18 points Century gothic, which is a sans-serif with high readability suited for headlines. It is written in a darker version of the same colour as the particular websites main colour. This is because the eye understands the colour as lighter than it is with the letters thin lines on a white area.

**Online payment**
To get the user pay for services on the internet is it very important that the website feels trustworthy. To reach this goal the site was created in there own language, information about the site immediately on the start page and information about the company as a footer on each page. Together with the overall design and the pictures developed together with the subject’s opinion a trustworthy website is hopefully created. Also the opportunity to preview the advanced membership before getting it should lead to better trust. If the target group feel that the website is trustworthy and could see them self pay for more advanced services on this web portal will be shown after the survey of the prototype.

**Advertisement**
No advertisement area for external companies has been placed on the website in view of the fact that most subjects found it negative. Anyway an advertisement area for internal information is implemented on the top left side each page to show new features and products on the website, however this is not a real advertisement area more of a billboard to show of features the user can find useful inside the web portal.

**Introduction pages**
No introduction is created on the web portal for the reason that the subjects found it unnecessary and time consuming.

**Study of the prototypes**
When the design of the prototypes were completed a second study with ten different subjects inside the target group were concluded. The users were browsing through a mock-up of the real website. It was constructed by five different pictures, three of them were of the main web portal iBalance showing the starting page, an article and the appearance when the user logged in to the advanced membership. The other two pages were wikipedia from iPilates and preview of the video function on iYoga.

The interviews were based on the same questions as the pre-study however also some questions pointing towards the main things in the guidelines were asked.

**Overall Subjects**
Ten subjects completed the study. The subjects in the group exercise at different levels, covering everything from people working with training to people with almost no experience in training programs. All the subjects had at least basic internet knowledge. Below statistics about the subjects is displayed.
Result from the study

According to the study almost everything specified in the guidelines were fulfilled with the prototype. The web portal gave the subjects a serious and good impression. The only major error was that video-on-demand did not appear to be in focus. This is something that has been corrected in the final version and how it was done is written below in the solution of the errors.

When the study was completed a list of errors were written according to the subject’s opinion. After this the faults were corrected and the final website was created. The error is not overall represented by the mainstream of the subjects however still every opinion has been surveyed.

List of errors:
- The video part is not obvious enough
- The fontsize on second level of sub menus are too small
- What is Wikipedia?
- What is “Samlingar” (Collections)?
- The link to test the membership is hard to understand
- The BMI index should be written in words instead.
- Hard to understand where to update health values for weight curves

Solution of the errors:

The video part is not obvious enough

The way to correct this problem was to put information about video-on-demand in the advertisement area on the front page of the web portal. Since this part according to the subjects draws a lot of attention towards it video will now be set in focus.

The fontsize on the second level of submenus are too small

These were written in one point lower fontsize then the rest of the text in the menu and content area. The solution was to enlarge the text by one point and because of the submenus different colour and indentation the user will not have a problem separating the different levels.

What is Wikipedia?

Since almost no subjects ever heard of wikipedia. This function was removed from the website. it is unnecessary to implement such an advanced function if the users never will use it. Maybe this is something that can be developed in the future of the web portal however from the beginning it seams like it is more important to focus on the core functions of the website.

What is “Samlingar” (Collections)?

This was a major problem with the website since almost no subjects could make a guess about what they would find in this category in the main menu. Also questions about where they could find food
recipes were asked during the survey and thought that this was an important part of the website. The solution was to remove the topic “Samlingar” and switch it with recipes and move the calorie database to calculators since the mainstream of the subjects thought that they would find it there. This is something applied on the main page of the portal iBalance.se on the others two subordinate websites this link will change to a menu option focusing on the training that is in focus. This is because it is unnecessary to have recipes on these two special-oriented websites.

The BMI index should be written in words instead.

Because of the reason that some of the subjects did not want their BMI in numbers because it is hard to understand however instead of removing the numbers a link has been placed next to the BMI index. If you press this link your BMI index will be explained. The reason not to write the persons BMI measurement clearly in words is because BMI works with wide weight categories and to have the same text for a long time gives the user a feeling of no progress, however in an numeric index with 0.1 marginal it is a lot easier to see results.

Hard to understand where to update health values for weight curves

In the design of the prototype this was a major usability mistake because the place for updating your personal information was placed in the top content box and all the other advanced membership future in the lower content box. The solution was simple; create a new link in the advanced membership menu called “Enter your values”. However does the link in the top content box stay intact because of other functionalities inside. The page for “dagbok” (diary) becomes much clearer without the weight update implemented. Now it is only a daily blog spot and nothing more.

The link to test the membership is hard to understand

Since it is very important that users understand that they can get a preview of the website before becoming a member this had to be clarified. The solution was a re-write of the sentence and link to make it clearer and easier to understand.

The final websites

On the next page and forward are thumbnails of the mock-ups for the final website represented. For larger version check Appendix 1.
This is the final version of the starting page of iBalance.se, differences that has been made since the prototype are the following:

- New improved navigation
- iBalance video in focus
- New link for the demonstration site

This is the final version of the article page representing sub-pages on iBalance, differences that has been made since the prototype are the following:

- New enlarge fontsize on the second level of submenus
- New improved navigation
iBalance – Advanced membership

This is the final version of the membership area, differences that has been made since the prototype are the following:

- New BMI index link
- New improved navigation
- New link in the advanced membership menu

iPilates

This is the final version of a page on the iPilates website, differences that has been made since the prototype are the following:

- New improved navigation
- Wikipedia page removed
- New specific page about training Pilates
This is the final version of a page on the iYoga website, differences that has been made since the prototype are the following:

- New improved navigation
- New specific page about training Yoga

**Discussion**

This study has been an interesting journey creating a modern cross-media web portal from the subject’s demands; a target group with the core in something of a middle age between the young generation that has grown up with modern technology and the older generation that do not have the same connection to it. This is something mentioned by one of the subjects. She said that because she was between 30 and 40 years old she had not been growing up with cellular phones and was not especially familiar with internet, so she thought that she would be a bad subject for a study about a cross-media web portal. However the truth is that it is perfect, the less they knew about internet and web design the more they contributed to the study and actually she was the one bringing the comments with absolutely most value according to usability. So this website is created by user that wants their websites simple and easy and that is what has been achieved according to the subjects’ review of the prototypes.

To get a durable scientific result more subjects should have been used in the study, however it is not sure that it would have change so much more in the creation of the website. On the basis of that during the last interviews in both studies tendencies of saturation appeared. So the only thing more subjects would have created is confirmation of the previous subjects however of course this is necessary however as mentioned above the web portal would probably looked similar even if 100 subjects was used.

In the first sentence of the discussion I mentioned that the website was created on the subjects equal to the users demands of course it is impossible to create something completely based on their opinion, they have worked more like guides and exactly that way was the websites created. From the subjects opinions guidelines were written and the first prototype came to life. The prototypes went trough a similar process as the websites in the pre-study but this time with ten subjects. Before the second study started prejudice was that some users would probably dislike the website since every human has an individual opinion. But the final version got great response from the
subjects and only some minor errors were reported. This confirms that the website fulfils the end-users demands and since 80% of the target group were changed between the studies it was reviewed with almost completely new eyes.

Future work
This website will not die as a mock-up of a real working site. It will hopefully be developed in to a fully functional web portal in the project Entertainment Services. Material for the first videos for the Ipod training service has already been filmed and in a near future edited and tested in an extended study. However other studies that would be interesting to look deeper into are for example high-quality live streaming training for local training-centres connected to the internet. This would give the opportunity to train for famous celebrities within training without travelling. An other interesting feature would be when wireless internet is enabled in portable video players which would allow similar live features as mentioned above but instead of going to the training-centre the training comes home to the user.
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Templet.nu – Kost, träning och hälsa (http://www.templet.nu (2006-03-02))
Appendix 1 – The final pictures of the website
Välkommen till iBalance!


Se även till att kolla in undersidorna iPlates och Yoga som är mer fokuserade på dessa 2 typer av träning.

Bli medlem idag!
Grundmedlemskapet är gratis och ger dig tillgång till:
- Din egen presentationssida
- Gärthok
- Privata meddelanden mellan användare
- Vänlista
- Möjlighet att skriva i forumet
- Gratis annonsering
- Utökad receptdatabas

I det utökade medlemskapet får du tillgång till:
- Individuella träningvideos till datorn och din mp4-spelare
- Allmänna videoträningsprogram
- Träningsdagbok
- Skaffa din egen ktipplan

 För en demonstration av det utökade medlemskapet klicka här!
Är glykemiskt index överskattat?

Glykemiskt index har fått stor uppmärksamhet i meda den senaste tiden. "Räkna inte kalorier", "Välta på det glykemiska indexet istället" rogar det. På diverse kostrelaterade diskussionsforum dyker det upp inför om GI titt som tätt. Det finns folk som under visat glykemiskt index deras smörgåspilliga har andra undrar över vilken frukt som har lagt GI.

Läs mer.
Veckans fråga
Vikta näringsämnen tycker du är svårast att få i dig tillräckligt av?
» Proteiner
» Fett
» Kohydrater

Min våginformation
Startvikt: 84 kg
Målvikt: 72 kg
Just nu: ~25 kg
BMI: 27,4 (forlade)
Måldatum: 2005-06-30

VIP medlem
» Start
» Fyll i dina vården
» Individuella videokurser
» Personlig rådgivning

Meny
iBalance
Nyheter
Forum
Artiklar
Anmälning
Medlemskap
iBalance Video
Recept
Kalkylatorer
Shop
Om iBalance

Gratulerar, du håller din vågplan!
Enligt dina inmatade vården så håller du ditt vågschema.
Fortsetter du arbeta lika bra så kommer du att nå din målvikt om
67 dagar.

Rekommenderad träning vecka 17:
Måndag:
1 timmes promenad
Kalorintag: >570 kcal

Tips på matlag:
Måndag:
Pastatallad med kyckling, pasta och svarta bonor
305 kcal, Protein: 27 g, Fett: 6 g, Kohydrater: 51 g

Läs hela receptet
Träna Pilates

PILATES är en träningsform som skapades i början av 1900-talet av tysken Joseph Pilates. Han kallade särskilt träningsformen The Art of Contrology vilket syftar på vikten av precision och koncentration som ett sätt att kontrollera musklerna.

» Läs artiklar om Pilates
» Börja träna NUN
Veckans fråga
Skulle du kunna tänska dig att köpa en mp4-spelare för att hjälpa dig med träningen?
  > Ja
  > Nej

Medlemmar

Din e-postadress
Löst lösenord
» BL medlem
» Gjort lösenord?
» Problem att logga in?

Meny

iYoga
Medlemskap
iBalance Video
Förhandsvisning
Vad är iBalance video?
Samlings
Kalkylatorer
Shop
Om iYoga

Förhandsvisning av iBalance Video

iYoga erbjuder individuellt anpassade yoga program direkt i din mp4-spelare. Även Pilates program finns.

Klicka på Pod spelaren till höger för att se hur det ser ut när du tränar med hjälp av din iPod.

» Läs mer här om Balance video.