Abstract:
Advancements in information and communication technology make new IT-based services in the tertiary scope of a car driver (short: automotive services) possible like e-mail and social networking and are highly demanded by customers. However, if not well designed, these services have a potential to dangerously distract drivers from their main driving task and therefore increase the risk of road accidents. Hence, we studied the effects of an in-car e-mail client on drivers’ distraction. A low fidelity driving simulator was used to test 32 participants on their degree of distraction while driving. In this paper we present the findings of this evaluation. Our results show that when designing complex automotive services like an e-mail client one of the crucial factors besides the user interface is to keep the provided content simple and well structured thus reducing the amount of driver’s distraction considerably.

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