Can designers influence the user to conform within the review and user relationship?

Introduction.

This study investigates the organization of content to share information on the web to encourage a desired response from the user using the review system provided to them.

Studies conducted by Solomon Asch (1907-1996) focused on order and understanding not from the situation but from how it is noticed through conformity and persuasion. He initially believed that we are largely independent in the decisions and choices we make however his studies soon proved otherwise, that we do in fact conform significantly to society which has a great influence on peoples' actions and opinions. It is with these findings that Asch's studies became so relevant to this study.

Susan Weinschenk (2009) discusses online ratings and reviews, "People look to others to decide what they should do" (p17). She continues to explain, "Online ratings and reviews influence us greatly – most powerfully at a non-conscious level" (p19). It is with this that defining the difference between influence and persuasion has played a key part in understanding conformity in this study. Understanding the relationship between the designer, user and the review system is crucial in determining how, when and where influence and persuasion play their parts. This allows the designer to think about how to influence and persuade those who interact on the web.

Influence makes others behave or do what is desired without the use of words. It works silently with little to no effort needed therefore this is the preferred method by professionals as it is trustworthy and credible. Persuasion however, changes a person's behavior deliberately and is a conscious approach, which can be seen as manipulative due to its ability to sway the opinions of others. This method is considered to be a temporary solution. As a result of persuasion and/or influence taking place conformity happens. Figure 1.1 illustrates these methods within the reviewing/rating process.

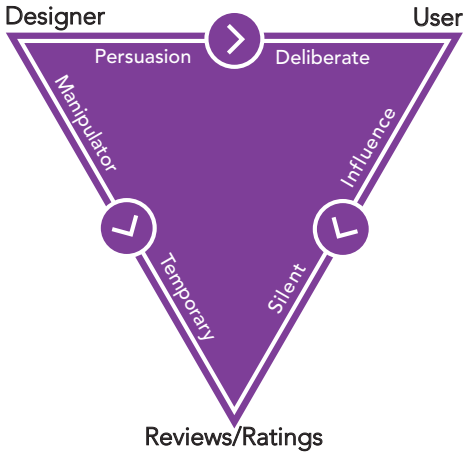


Figure 1.1. Persuasion and Influence process in the review/rating system

This diagram displays the process of the designer taking control by creating the system for the user to review and in doing so persuading, and therefore deliberately manipulating what the user will see and how the user will form their opinions. In doing so the user may be unaware of such designs and therefore they will be influenced silently to form a particular opinion by the way the designer has organised the content.

Another way to illustrate this process is seen in figure 1.2 below. This shows how a user can respond to the review system the designer sets using the tools of

influence and persuasion explained at the start of this investigation. The left graph shows the designer setting the level of conformity they wish to achieve and with the use of influence present, initially the conformity increases significantly however when persuasion comes in to play conformity levels flatten and begin to decrease as the trust and credibility gained through influence, is lost. The right diagram shows how influence and persuasion differ in their behaviour when they come in to play. As to be expected persuasion lasts for a notably shorter amount of time than influence, which continues to achieve a higher level of conformity and for a longer period of time.

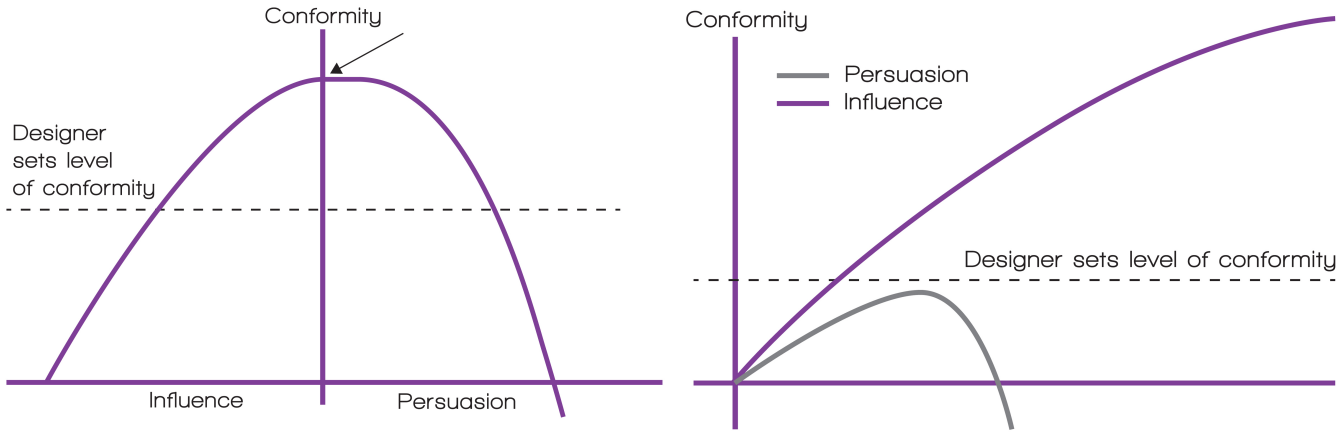


Figure 1.2

Understanding conformity and how it plays a part in online decisions is key to taking this study further. To understand it fully it is important to collect data on existing reviews systems to analyse and understand how they work and how they can be developed to give control to the designer rather than the user.

Data was collected from a diverse range of areas to initially allow for a broader coverage of the findings with a main focus on Amazon (2013-2014) due to their large review systems and breadth of categories. In addition results were gathered

from TripAdvisor (2013-2014) and Waterstones (2014) to include a variety of review systems in this analysis. Due to time limitation for this investigation the focus was on what the user would see when approaching a product containing reviews and what may have influential factors on the users' decisions.

10 reviews per item were collected for each category and of these 2 examples of each rating score. The categories included electrical, beauty, toys & games, movies, fashion, books and hotels. Areas of investigation included:

- Average number of words for each review.
- The use of punctuation in a repetitive form such as the use of exclamation marks and question marks.
- Friendly punctuation – kisses 'x' being used in the reviews.
- The use of positive emoticons such as :) :-) ;) ;-) :D :-D
- The use of negative emoticons such as :(:-(
- The use of capitalised words within reviews.
- The use of persuasive/directive personalization. This is when the reviewer uses the word 'you' or 'you're' etc. directly as though they are speaking and referring to the user/onlooker.

From these areas, six key questions were considered whilst conducting the data analysis. The main focus for this study is to be on the average rating that is being given for the item and the correlation that has with the system being used to portray the thoughts and opinions.

To conduct the data analysis the analytical tool SPSS was used. This allowed for a concise comparison of groups and to see if any of the results were of any statistical significance. A regression test measures the relationship with a R^2 correlation function. For the R^2 to be considered to have some statistical significance a value of 0.6 or higher needs to be seen indicating the 60% of the variation in average can be explained by the other parameter, in this case the system being used to portray the thoughts and opinions. 60% can be considered a firm relationship that can be considered in terms of prediction.

In addition the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is used to show if there is a better prediction of the dependent variable, that is the system or method being used within the review. If the significance (sig) is less than 0.05, means there is a 95% chance that the relationship between a particular rating and the method is not by chance and therefore a prediction can be made.

To represent the findings of each question the most appropriate graph, the line graph, is used to see patterns as the rating scale changes from 1 star to 5 stars.

Analysis.

Question 1: Is there a relationship between the number of words and the review, being given?

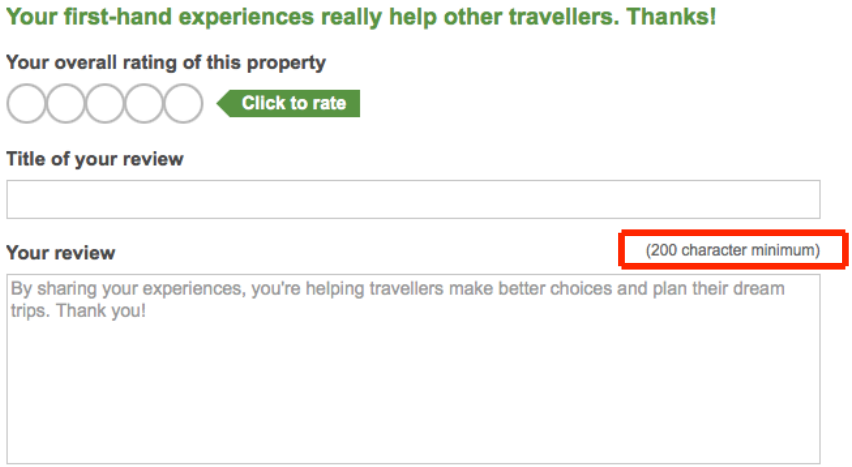


Figure 2.0. An example of the use of minimum word count

Figure 2.1 shows that in most categories R^2 is less than 0.06, meaning that the independent variable - the average rating scored, explains for less than 6% of the variability of the dependent variable - the average number of words used in the review. Although not of significant difference movies and electricals show a greater result for R^2 with electrical equating to 0.3 or 30% and movies 0.17 or 17%, which is a greater difference to the others. Further investigation would be needed to discover if these subjects have a tendency to have an increased word count, due to being more complex items, when users write their reviews.

Model Summary

Categories	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Beauty	1	.162[a]	.026	-.071	22.6259
Books	1	.161[a]	.026	-.072	40.6044
Electrical	1	.555[a]	.308	.221	79.7319
Fashion	1	.105[a]	.011	-.088	10.8285
Movies	1	.415[a]	.172	.090	94.9699
ToysGames	1	.029[a]	.001	-.099	23.6873
Tripadvisor	1	.240[a]	.058	-.037	20.2968

a. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 2.1. Model Summary for Average Number of Words

The ANOVA table, shown in figure 2.2, display results with no statistical significance however as to be expected electricals came closest with a result of 0.096, which relates to the results that came from the model summary in figure 2.1.

ANOVA[a]

Categories	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Beauty	1	Regression	137.461	1	137.461	.269	.616[b]
		Residual	5119.328	10	511.933		
		Total	5256.789	11			
Books	1	Regression	437.622	1	437.622	.265	.618[b]
		Residual	16487.185	10	1648.718		
		Total	16924.807	11			
Electrical	1	Regression	22594.601	1	22594.601	3.554	.096[b]
		Residual	50857.400	8	6357.175		
		Total	73452.001	9			
Fashion	1	Regression	13.122	1	13.122	.112	.745[b]
		Residual	1172.565	10	117.256		
		Total	1185.687	11			
Movies	1	Regression	18775.545	1	18775.545	2.082	.180[b]
		Residual	90192.821	10	9019.282		
		Total	108968.367	11			
ToysGames	1	Regression	4.593	1	4.593	.008	.930[b]
		Residual	5610.897	10	561.090		
		Total	5615.490	11			
Tripadvisor	1	Regression	251.859	1	251.859	.611	.452[b]
		Residual	4119.597	10	411.960		
		Total	4371.457	11			

a. Dependent Variable: AvNumberWords
b. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 2.2. ANOVA table for average number of words

As illustrated in figure 2.3, the word count peaks at between 2 and 3 stars and again around 4 stars.

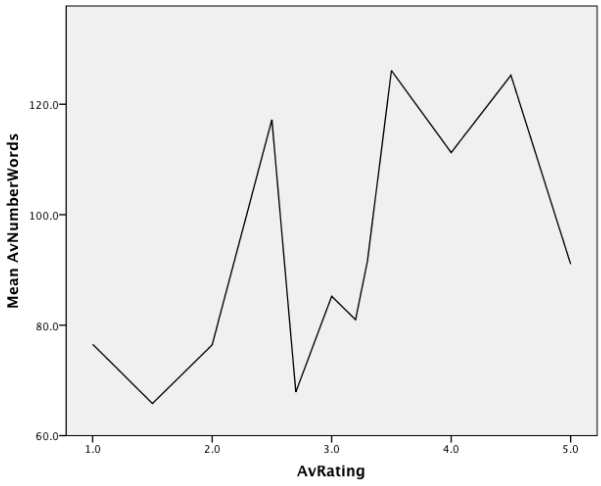


Figure 2.3

These results could be because users see no reason to write much if the item is extremely poor or they feel that the item meets all expectations therefore there is nothing more to say than to provide it with a top rating.

Question 2: Is there a correlation between the use of punctuation and the rating the review has been given?


12 of 12 people found the following review helpful
★☆☆☆☆ **pedispin a load of rubbish** 14 Oct 2013
By helen obrien
Amazon Verified Purchase
does not have enough power for the job, the minute you put pressure on the unit it stops, and thats the whole point of the sytem when trying to remove hard skin. looked at the t.v.advert, which is so misleading, and was impressed. don"t buy this !!!!!
Comment | **Was this review helpful to you?** Yes No

Figure 3.0. An example of the use of repetitive punctuation

Model Summary

Categories	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Beauty	1	.229[a]	.053	-.042	5.8539
Books	1	.352[a]	.124	.036	2.1533
Electrical	1	.335[a]	.112	.001	2.5722
Fashion	1	.431[a]	.186	.105	3.9186
Movies	1	.109[a]	.012	-.087	7.3294
ToysGames	1	.202[a]	.041	-.055	7.8631
Tripadvisor	1	.388[a]	.151	.066	9.6681

a. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 3.1. Model summary for punctuation

In figure 3.1 most categories give an R^2 less than 0.18 explaining for less than 18% of the variability of the dependent variable, the use of punctuation in the review. As shown in figure 3.2 the sig values are greater than 0.16, which is moving away from significant value of 0.05, which would create more interest in the results.

ANOVA[a]

Categories	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Beauty	1	Regression	18.990	1	18.990	.554	.474[b]
		Residual	342.677	10	34.268		
		Total	361.667	11			
Books	1	Regression	6.548	1	6.548	1.412	.262[b]
		Residual	46.369	10	4.637		
		Total	52.917	11			
Electrical	1	Regression	6.669	1	6.669	1.008	.345[b]
		Residual	52.931	8	6.616		
		Total	59.600	9			
Fashion	1	Regression	35.113	1	35.113	2.287	.161[b]
		Residual	153.554	10	15.355		
		Total	188.667	11			
Movies	1	Regression	6.470	1	6.470	.120	.736[b]
		Residual	537.197	10	53.720		
		Total	543.667	11			
ToysGames	1	Regression	26.384	1	26.384	.427	.528[b]
		Residual	618.283	10	61.828		
		Total	644.667	11			
Tripadvisor	1	Regression	165.939	1	165.939	1.775	.212[b]
		Residual	934.727	10	93.473		
		Total	1100.667	11			

a. Dependent Variable: Punctuation
b. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 3.2. ANOVA table for punctuation

Figure 3.3 shows how punctuation is used heavily for lower rating scores and sharply declines around the average rating scores, then begins to increase as the ratings increase.

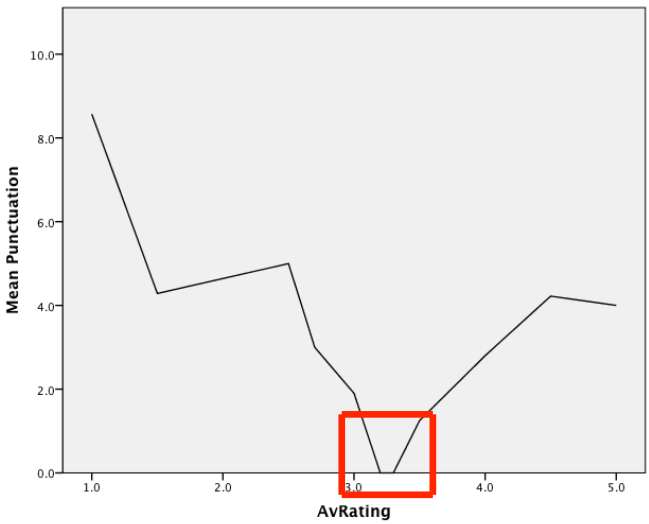


Figure 3.3

These results would suggest that with extreme opinions being had at each end of the scale, those wishing to express themselves in a more vocal use punctuation to illustrate and exaggerate their point.

Question 3: Is there a correlation between the uses of friendly punctuation and the rating the review has been given?


5 of 6 people found the following review helpful

☆☆☆☆☆ **Nice** 25 Jun 2012

By Saira

Amazon Verified Purchase

Very nice i have just receved mine today and tried it on my daughter as she has to many blackheads , and was amzed it workd very well and very fast deliver xx

Comment | **Was this review helpful to you?** Yes No

Figure 4.0. Example of the use of friendly punctuation

Model Summary

Categories	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Beauty	1	.202[a]	.041	-.055	1.0234
Electrical	1	.384[a]	.147	.041	.3097
Tripadvisor	1	.455[a]	.207	.127	.5394

a. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 4.1. Model summary for friendly punctuation

A much smaller table is shown in 4.1 due to friendly punctuation featuring only within beauty, electrical categories and on TripAdvisor. The results here show R^2 less than 0.207, which is less than 21% of the variability of the dependent variable – the use of friendly punctuation in reviews. To reflect this the ANOVA table featured in figure 4.2 shows the sig value being greater than 0.13 again moving further away from results of any significance.

ANOVA[a]

Categories	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Beauty	1	Regression	.444	1	.444	.424	.530[b]
		Residual	10.473	10	1.047		
		Total	10.917	11			
Electrical	1	Regression	.133	1	.133	1.383	.273[b]
		Residual	.767	8	.096		
		Total	.900	9			
Tripadvisor	1	Regression	.758	1	.758	2.604	.138[b]
		Residual	2.909	10	.291		
		Total	3.667	11			

a. Dependent Variable: FriendlyPunctuation

b. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 4.2. ANOVA table for friendly punctuation

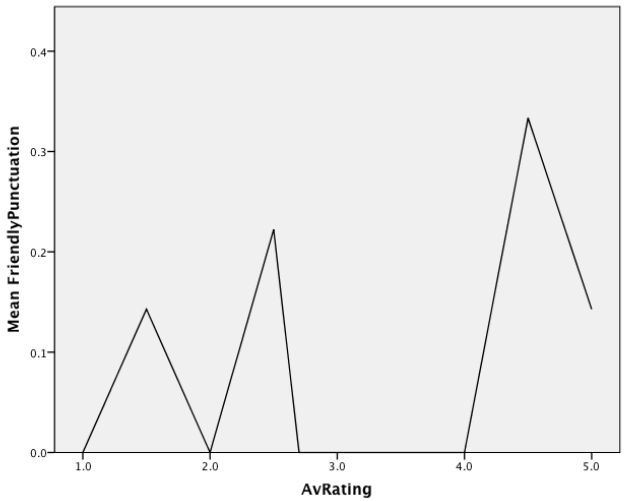
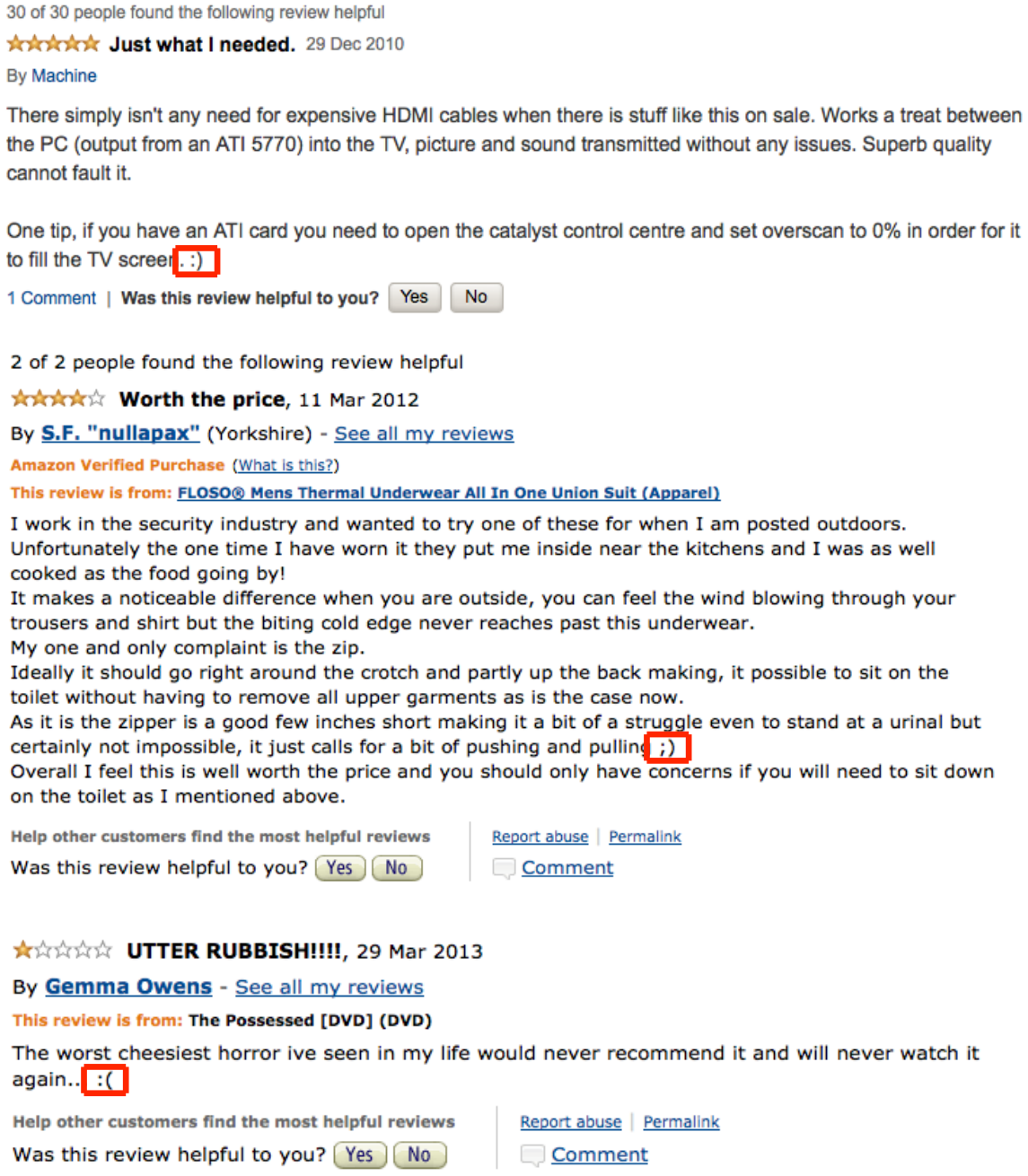


Figure 4.3

Figure 4.3 show the presence of the friendly punctuation fluctuating quite significantly throughout making it difficult to draw a conclusion. However in line with other results, a drop is seen for average rating scores, which indicates the reluctance in a response at these points in the review system.

Question 4: Is there a correlation between the use of positive and negative emoticons and the rating the review have received?

Throughout the data collection it became clear users were adopting methods used from other sources to express their feelings through review systems and with emoticons being used across many channels in today's society, it comes as no surprise that emoticons appeared frequently.



30 of 30 people found the following review helpful

★★★★★ **Just what I needed.** 29 Dec 2010

By Machine

There simply isn't any need for expensive HDMI cables when there is stuff like this on sale. Works a treat between the PC (output from an ATI 5770) into the TV, picture and sound transmitted without any issues. Superb quality cannot fault it.

One tip, if you have an ATI card you need to open the catalyst control centre and set overscan to 0% in order for it to fill the TV screen :)

1 Comment | **Was this review helpful to you?** Yes No

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful

★★★★☆ **Worth the price**, 11 Mar 2012

By **S.F. "nullapax"** (Yorkshire) - See all my reviews

Amazon Verified Purchase (What is this?)

This review is from: FLOSO® Mens Thermal Underwear All In One Union Suit (Apparel)

I work in the security industry and wanted to try one of these for when I am posted outdoors.
Unfortunately the one time I have worn it they put me inside near the kitchens and I was as well cooked as the food going by!
It makes a noticeable difference when you are outside, you can feel the wind blowing through your trousers and shirt but the biting cold edge never reaches past this underwear.
My one and only complaint is the zip.
Ideally it should go right around the crotch and partly up the back making, it possible to sit on the toilet without having to remove all upper garments as is the case now.
As it is the zipper is a good few inches short making it a bit of a struggle even to stand at a urinal but certainly not impossible, it just calls for a bit of pushing and pulling ;)
Overall I feel this is well worth the price and you should only have concerns if you will need to sit down on the toilet as I mentioned above.

Help other customers find the most helpful reviews Report abuse | Permalink

Was this review helpful to you? Yes No Comment

★☆☆☆☆ **UTTER RUBBISH!!!!**, 29 Mar 2013

By **Gemma Owens** - See all my reviews

This review is from: The Possessed [DVD] (DVD)

The worst cheesiest horror ive seen in my life would never recommend it and will never watch it again.. :(

Help other customers find the most helpful reviews Report abuse | Permalink

Was this review helpful to you? Yes No Comment

Figure 5.0. An example of the use of emoticons

Model Summary

Categories	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Books	1	.110[a]	.012	-.087	.3009
Electrical	1	.655[a]	.429	.358	.7600
Fashion	1	.234[a]	.055	-.040	.5888
Movies	1	.562[a]	.316	.248	.5392
ToysGames	1	.709[a]	.502	.453	.3643
Tripadvisor	1	.234[a]	.055	-.040	.6876

a. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 5.1a. Model summary for positive emoticons

Model Summary

Categories	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Books	1	.110[a]	.012	-.087	.3009
Fashion	1	.298[a]	.089	-.002	.4528
Movies	1	.384[a]	.147	.062	.2796

a. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 5.1b. Model summary for negative emoticons

Although the results for emoticons indicated no significant difference between the dependent variable emoticons and the rating being given, the results for positive emoticon displayed in figure 5.1a, showed noteworthy figures with half of the categories displaying results for R^2 at more than 0.31 or 31% of the variability of the dependent variable – the use of positive emoticons in the review. And to draw on specific categories, electrical results came back at 0.429 (43%) and toys and games resulting in 0.502 (50%). These areas are worth investigating further.

The results for negative emoticons did not show a significant value. This may be due to only featuring in three categories; books, fashion and movies.

ANOVA[a]

Categories	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Books	1	Regression	.011	1	.011	.122	.734[b]
		Residual	.906	10	.091		
		Total	.917	11			
Electrical	1	Regression	3.479	1	3.479	6.022	.040[b]
		Residual	4.621	8	.578		
		Total	8.100	9			
Fashion	1	Regression	.200	1	.200	.577	.465[b]
		Residual	3.467	10	.347		
		Total	3.667	11			
Movies	1	Regression	1.343	1	1.343	4.618	.057[b]
		Residual	2.907	10	.291		
		Total	4.250	11			
ToysGames	1	Regression	1.340	1	1.340	10.099	.010[b]
		Residual	1.327	10	.133		
		Total	2.667	11			
Tripadvisor	1	Regression	.273	1	.273	.577	.465[b]
		Residual	4.727	10	.473		
		Total	5.000	11			

a. Dependent Variable: PositiveEmoticons
b. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 5.2a. ANOVA table for positive emoticons

ANOVA[a]

Categories	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Books	1	Regression	.011	1	.011	.122	.734[b]
		Residual	.906	10	.091		
		Total	.917	11			
Fashion	1	Regression	.200	1	.200	.976	.347[b]
		Residual	2.050	10	.205		
		Total	2.250	11			
Movies	1	Regression	.135	1	.135	1.727	.218[b]
		Residual	.782	10	.078		
		Total	.917	11			

a. Dependent Variable: NegativeEmoticons

b. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 5.2b. ANOVA table for negative emoticons

As to be expected the ANOVA table for positive emoticons, reflect the results shown in the Model Summary with the sig value for movies being on the required value at 0.057. But more importantly the results for electrical and toys and games are less than or equal to 0.040 making them even more significant in this test. As mentioned previously the results for negative emoticons are not as notable.

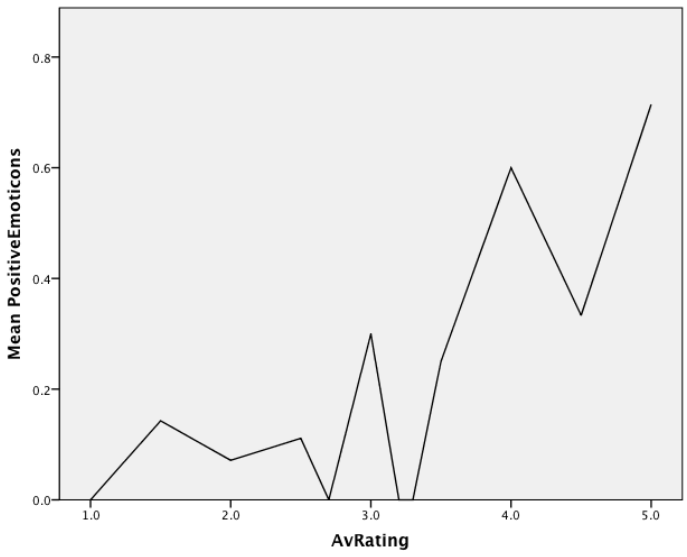


Figure 5.3a

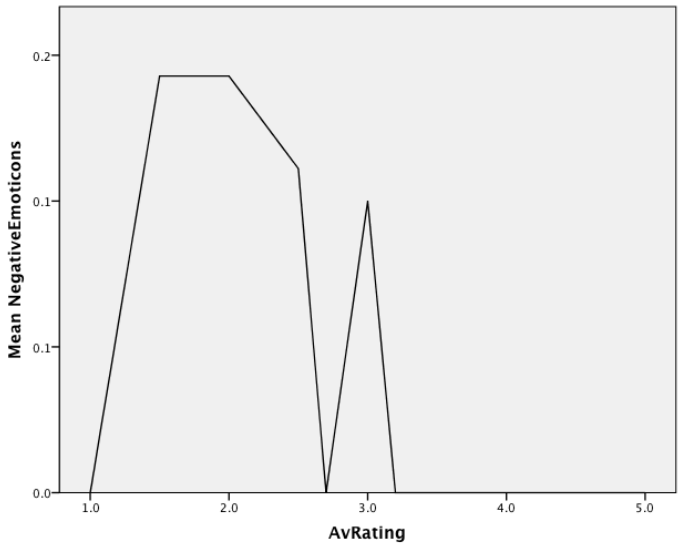


Figure 5.3b

Both graphs here show a pattern that would be expected with the use of emoticons being high at the most relevant points of the rating scale and decreasing towards the opposite end.

Question 5: Is there a correlation between the use of capitalised words and the rating being given?

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful

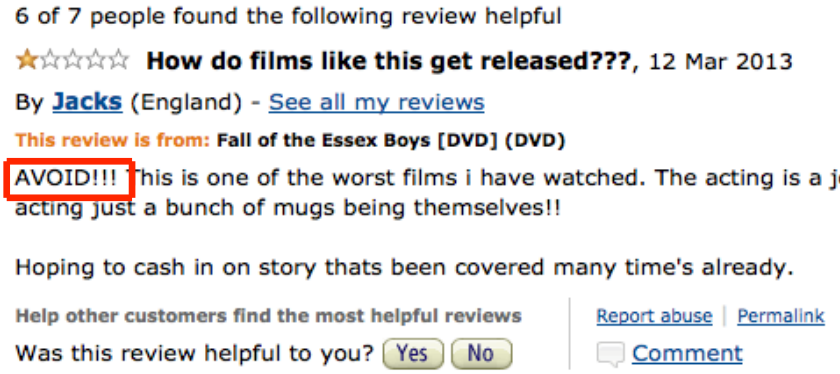
☆☆☆☆☆ **Exciting, nail biting fun!** 5 Feb 2012

By Venus

Durability: ☆☆☆☆☆ **Educational:** ☆☆☆☆☆ **Fun:** ☆☆☆☆☆

All our family absolutely LOVE this game and believe it or not, it actually gets you on edge, even though you only stand to lose wads of cardboard not money. The only downside is that it costs quite a bit and the majority of it is made from thick card, however, when it has been played as many times as we have it starts to look a bit frayed around the edges. They could do with moulding it in plastic and making it electronic as it is a bit over priced. BUT it has provided HOURS of fun and the questions actually sharpen up your knowledge!

Comment | **Was this review helpful to you?** Yes No


6 of 7 people found the following review helpful

★☆☆☆☆ **How do films like this get released???**, 12 Mar 2013

By **Jacks** (England) - See all my reviews

This review is from: Fall of the Essex Boys [DVD] (DVD)

AVOID!!! This is one of the worst films i have watched. The acting is a joke, i don't think it's even acting just a bunch of mugs being themselves!!

Hoping to cash in on story thats been covered many time's already.

Help other customers find the most helpful reviews | Report abuse | Permalink

Was this review helpful to you? Yes No | Comment

Figure 6.0. An example of the use of capitalised words

Model Summary

Categories	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Beauty	1	.332[a]	.110	.021	6.7518
Books	1	.185[a]	.034	-.062	2.0672
Electrical	1	.132[a]	.017	-.105	1.2587
Fashion	1	.331[a]	.110	.021	13.6923
Movies	1	.029[a]	.001	-.099	61.9258
ToysGames	1	.224[a]	.050	-.045	9.2711
Tripadvisor	1	.619[a]	.383	.314	2.2168

a. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 6.1. Model summary for capitalised words

As displayed in the model summary (figure 6.1) most categories R^2 results are less than 0.110 showing no significant pattern. However the results from TripAdvisor display a greater value at 0.383, possibly indicating a style of language being adopted for a specific subject area. The ANOVA table shown in figure 6.2 display results for TripAdvisor of 0.042 indicating that there is more than 95% chance that there is a relationship between the rating and the use of capitalised words therefore it could be predicted that reviewers will naturally use this method to emphasise and convey their emotions through very good or bad reviews.

ANOVA[a]

Categories	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Beauty	1	Regression	56.384	1	56.384	1.23	.292[b]
		Residual	455.866	10	45.587		
		Total	512.250	11			
Books	1	Regression	1.519	1	1.519	.35	.564[b]
		Residual	42.731	10	4.273		
		Total	44.250	11			
Electrical	1	Regression	.225	1	.225	.14	.716[b]
		Residual	12.675	8	1.584		
		Total	12.900	9			
Fashion	1	Regression	231.200	1	231.200	1.23	.293[b]
		Residual	1874.800	10	187.480		
		Total	2106.000	11			
Movies	1	Regression	32.915	1	32.915	.00	.928[b]
		Residual	38348.002	10	3834.800		
		Total	38380.917	11			
ToysGames	1	Regression	45.390	1	45.390	.52	.484[b]
		Residual	859.527	10	85.953		
		Total	904.917	11			
Tripadvisor	1	Regression	27.408	1	27.408	5.57	.042[b]
		Residual	44.228	9	4.914		
		Total	71.636	10			

a. Dependent Variable: CapitalWords
b. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 6.2. ANOVA table for capitalised words

To illustrate these findings, figure 6.3 displays the increased use of capitalised words at both extreme ends of the rating scale, which may explain the significance that has been found in the ANOVA table.

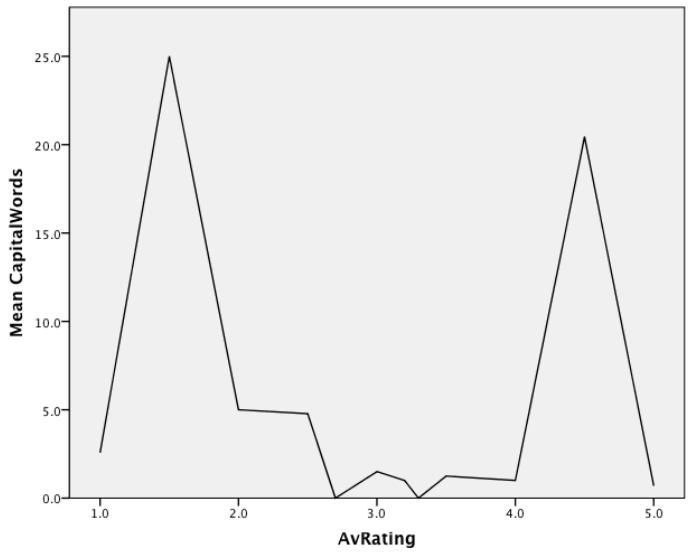


Figure 6.3

Question 6: Is there a correlation between the use of persuasive personalisation and the rating the review has been given?

What became apparent in the data collection was the use of 'you', 'your', 'you're' and so on. This gives the impression of directive/persuasive personalisation using words personal to the onlooker to persuade them to feel a particular way about the item. Examples such as, "…leaves *you* disappointed *you* wasted *your* time watching it" and "…don't waste *your* money…"



Figure 7.0. An example of the use of directive/persuasive personalization

Model Summary

Categories	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Beauty	1	.172[a]	.030	-.067	3.5245
Books	1	.513[a]	.263	.190	5.9502
Electrical	1	.717[a]	.515	.454	7.4306
Fashion	1	.356[a]	.127	.039	9.3777
Movies	1	.697[a]	.485	.428	8.4775
ToysGames	1	.179[a]	.032	-.065	4.6422
Tripadvisor	1	.059[a]	.003	-.096	7.6435

a. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 7.1. Model summary for persuasive personalization

Figure 7.1 displays how most of the results show that less than 26% explains for the use of persuasive/directive personalization with the rating given in the review. However of those results remaining electricals R^2 value is 0.515, which is statistically significantly showing that there is a firm relationship between the two components - the use of personalisation and rating score, indicating that a prediction can be made. To reaffirm this the ANOVA table featuring in figure 7.2 shows the sig value to be 0.020 confirming that this relationship between use of personalisation and the review rating, is not by chance and in fact based on these results a prediction can be made. In addition, although the results for the Model Summary for movies were not quite so significant the ANOVA table does show another area of significance with the value of 0.17 indicating that a prediction could also possibly be made here.

ANOVA[a]

Categories	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Beauty	1	Regression	3.782	1	3.782	.304	.593[b]
		Residual	124.218	10	12.422		
		Total	128.000	11			
Books	1	Regression	126.613	1	126.613	3.576	.088[b]
		Residual	354.054	10	35.405		
		Total	480.667	11			
Electrical	1	Regression	468.395	1	468.395	8.483	.020[b]
		Residual	441.705	8	55.213		
		Total	910.100	9			
Fashion	1	Regression	127.513	1	127.513	1.450	.256[b]
		Residual	879.404	10	87.940		
		Total	1006.917	11			
Movies	1	Regression	610.093	1	610.093	8.489	.017[b]
		Residual	646.816	9	71.868		
		Total	1256.909	10			
ToysGames	1	Regression	7.165	1	7.165	.332	.577[b]
		Residual	215.501	10	21.550		
		Total	222.667	11			
Tripadvisor	1	Regression	2.021	1	2.021	.035	.856[b]
		Residual	584.229	10	58.423		
		Total	586.250	11			

a. Dependent Variable: PersuasivePersonalisation
b. Predictors: (Constant), AvRating

Figure 7.2. ANOVA table for persuasive personalisation

To illustrate these results figure 7.3 displays the patterns across the rating scores given. This shows a consistent use of persuasive personalisation on lower rating that then dips, as shown with other tests, around the average rating score. The use then rapidly peaks before returning to a consistent pattern again.

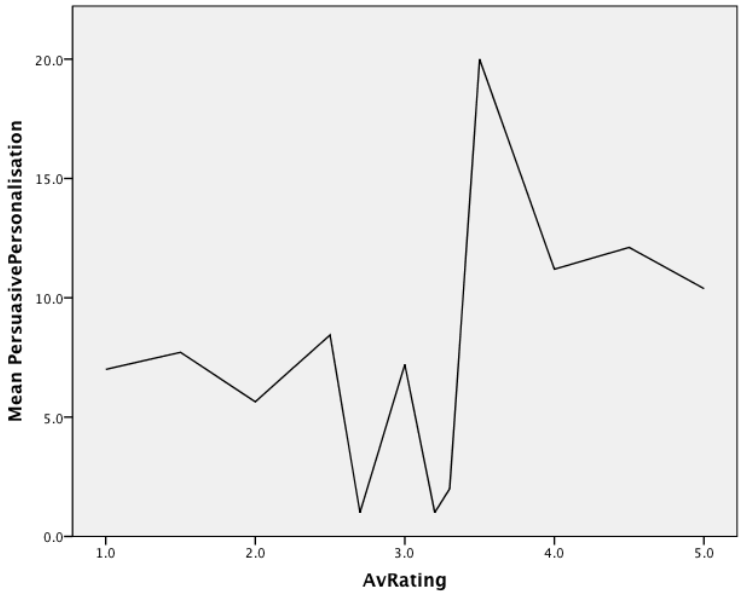


Figure 7.3

Although the focus for this study was to be on the average rating and the method used, upon the data analysis it was also found that within the categories electricals and movies the average number of words used and the use of persuasive/directive personalization held some significant results, and this began to show within the results in this study. Therefore it would be fair to briefly mention this as this may, in future, hold some bearing on further studies.

Conclusion.

Based on these results, designs rules can now begin to be considered if a new system was to be created by the designer. The results to the 6 key questions show that the style and the detail of reviews can be intrinsically linked to the rating score. Using the methods found in the data collection and analysis within the review system the designer can manipulate how the user responds, therefore giving them control over influencing and persuading the reviewer.

One possible rule could be to control the amount of words permitted per review dependent on the rating score. This could have an impact on how the reviewer responds, and whether they adopt other methods to express themselves if they are restricted to how much they can say.

Another method could be to provide tools in the review system such as emoticons, capitalised words or punctuation and see if the uptake of these increase and possibly result in a change of tone in reviews being submitted. However taking them away at times when they are most likely to be used could display some interesting results also.



Figure 8.1

Alternatively, review systems could allow for more friendly responses to provide a softer form of expression and taking away the use of harsher forms such like capitalised words and negative emoticons. This could change how users respond or could cause them to find other appropriate methods of expression.

Making the experience more personable by implementing the use of 'you' or 'your', invites the user to document their honest experience, and can allow the user to respond in a more personal fashion giving them the feeing of ownership of review they are placing. The results conducted in the study indicate that this method is being adopted by users to influence actions of others so to take back control as a designer this method needs to be implemented in to the system prior to the review being entered.

It would also be interesting to investigate another form of icon to rate with, currently stars are the most popular method however, these could be replaced with emoticons, or thumbs up.

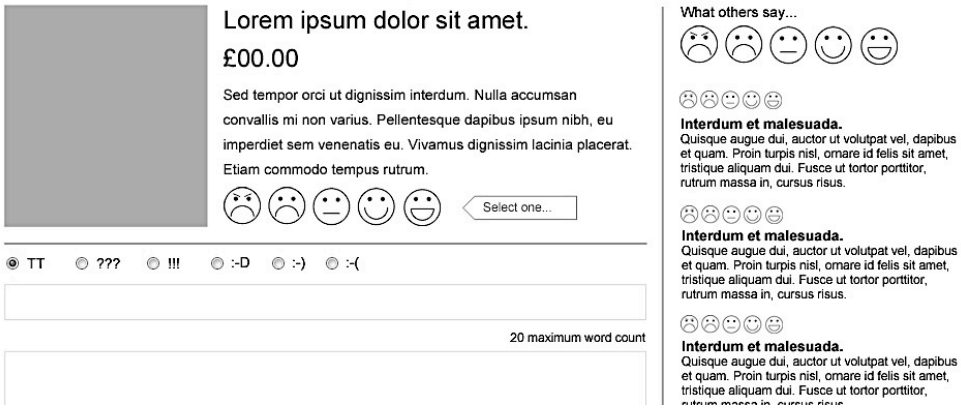


Figure 8.2

As also seen in the results there is a clear reluctance for expressing oneself when the rating score is average. With this in mind it is important to evaluate other methods such as a minimum word count that can encourage more of a response from the user. However as shown in the results, users have a reluctance in spending too much time on reviews if they do not feel strongly about it, therefore other forms of influence and persuasion will need to be in place.

The main areas of interest evolving from this study show that the way we communicate online is becoming a more visual process, so the systems that require interactions should adopt this style more and allow this form of expression. These systems should provide new tools and ways to express their opinions instead of just language, allowing for a more personal, honest experience. As shown in figure 8.3 I have begun considering how Amazon can adjust their review system to influence and persuade.

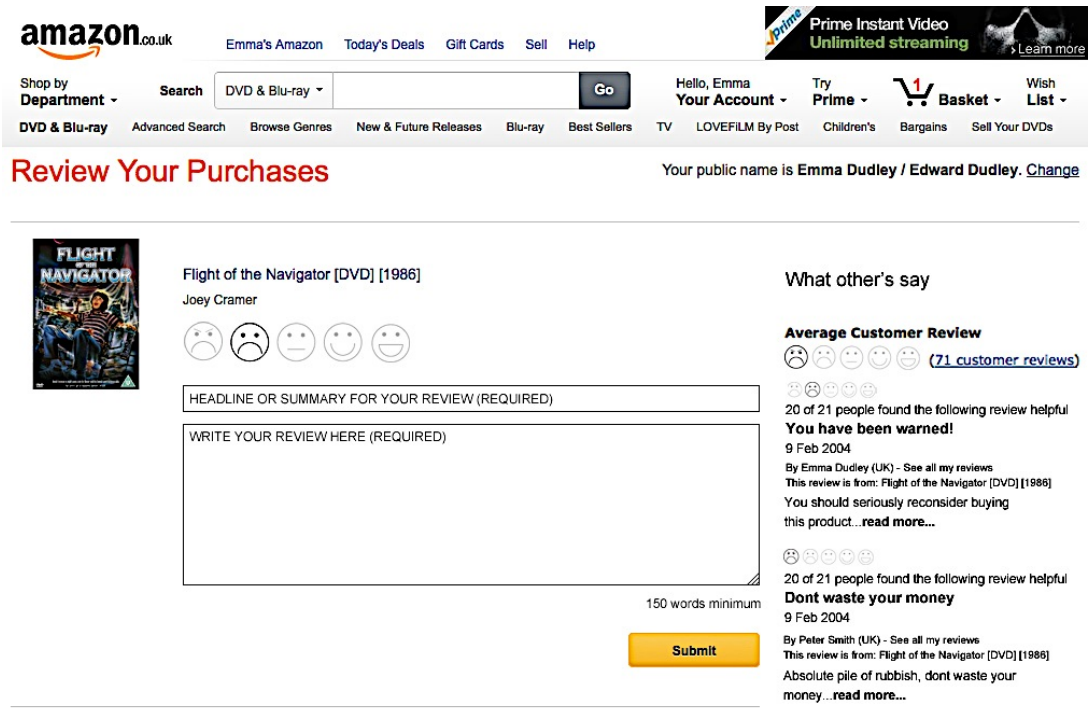


Figure 8.3

Although the main focus for this study was to be on the average rating being given for the item and the correlation that has with the system being used to portray the thoughts and opinions, it has opened up opportunities for further investigation due to so many components in review systems influencing and persuading the user. Other areas to consider would be influence and persuasion of peers within the review system and the concept of 'was this review useful to you…' currently used.

One final aspect to point out, whilst collecting data from the various sources, a couple of statements from reviews stood out to me, "could only give 5 stars as they're aren't anymore…" (2014) and "I WISH I COULD GIVE 0 STARS" (2012). This has raised an interesting question to the reasons why the systems provided only allow five stars ratings and not three or ten - another area worth investigating.

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Figure 8.1, 8.2, 8.3.

Suggested design solutions