

Pensioners relaxed in front of the computer

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How can pensioners with little if any computer skills successfully cope with a digital information system? According to Dutch researcher Henk Herman Nap, the design of an accessible system needs to incorporate large letter types and keys, the mother language, and a touch screen and ABCDE keyboard as input devices. Furthermore, positive feedback is important to reduce the stress experienced by pensioners whilst using the computer.

All age groups are making increasing use of the Internet but in terms of skills, pensioners continue to lag behind the younger generations. Therefore the design of an accessible system must give due consideration to the skills and capabilities of pensioners.

Yet if pensioners are to work with digital information systems in a successful and pleasant manner, they must also experience little stress. Nap has analysed if the complexity of a system and the expected performance of pensioners exert an influence on acute stress.

The study revealed that the stress experienced increases if pensioners receive negative performance feedback and decreases if they receive positive performance feedback. However, the complexity of a system does not affect the stress experienced, although it does exert an influence on the expectations pensioners have about their future task performance and the efficiency and effectiveness with which tasks are performed.

Source: Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research

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