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CIS 102 Telekin Paper

 The Telekin is a revolutionary machine that renders using the computer extremely easy for seniors. During the class I had the chance to use the Telekin on several occasions and see how well my seniors functioned with it, and how different it was from a traditional PC or Mac. Throughout the seven weeks I realized that it is much simpler to operate than, although one of my seniors preferred the PC to the Telekin, my other one found it more interesting and encouraging to actually using it since it removes most of the confusion that PCs have.

 Although the Telekin improves on the PC and makes it more senior friendly it isn’t without its problems and it could use some improvements. I received a list from Telekin with all their suggestions and I can add to those as well as advise new ones. One of the suggestions is adding new ways to differentiate the different buttons and icons on the screen, this is a wonderful idea and I have seen my seniors struggle to find the web icon for example. There is a simple solution; color-coding the icons instead of having the entire page being blue would be a great way to help them figure out what is where. None of my seniors had any severe eyesight problems however they did struggle from time to time. Another suggestion are games and cognitive exercises, I actually had this idea before I read it on the list since it is the topic for my term project. It is a known fact that as you get older your cognitive functions decrease and one way to avoid that is brain exercises. Although there are plenty of websites with free exercises that one could use, it would be better if they were directly on the computer, perhaps on the homepage with a distinguished icon on it or a pop-up in order to get their attention. Since most of these exercises require the user to play them several times a week, a setting requiring the senior to play it every time they access the computer or as it turns on would not only improve their cognitive functions but would also help in monitoring their progress.

A research implement in using the using the touch screen besides the finger or stylus is a good idea but since none of my seniors had any problems I don’t’ have any personal insight. However I have learned of a program using a webcam that monitored the user’s eyes, allowing them to access different functions on the computer simply by looking at them, this is certainly something worth *looking* into. As far as regular functions such as games, Internet and email go, I believe they are really simple already. There is no need to put icons directly at their faces, the side bar contains basic buttons and they are easy to navigate to, perhaps adding icons distinguishing them more from one another would improve their overall functionality but besides that it’s fine. As for seniors who have physical impairments, a different mouse or feet operating clickers and several other devices would certainly improve their use of the computer. A suggestion that I personally have is in regard to the zoom icon; those who are in need of it would not be able to see it as it is pretty small and fades in with all the other icons on the screen. It also can’t be used on the homepage or any other program on the computer besides a few. The internet remains its main functionality but the icons being at the top right corner, are not that noticeable; I suggest making them blink in order to grab the senior’s attention, or making the computer say something in regards to the zoom button’s location and attributes, or simply making them larger and more noticeable.

 These are all the suggestions I have after using the Telekin with my senior, I believe that if these are followed and added onto the Telekin will become much more user friendly and it will make using the computer much more enjoyable rather than a struggle to find the right buttons.