

# Evaluation of Yahoo! Avatars

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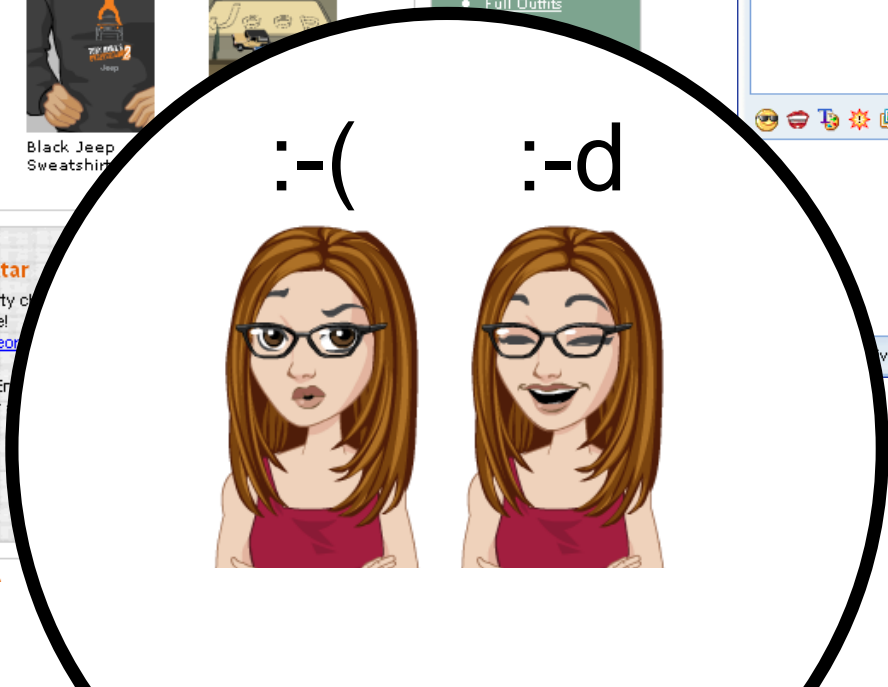
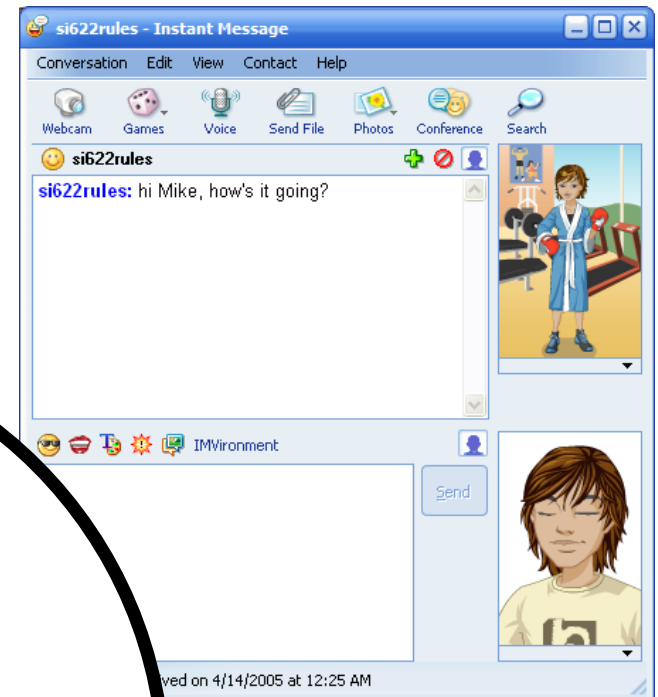
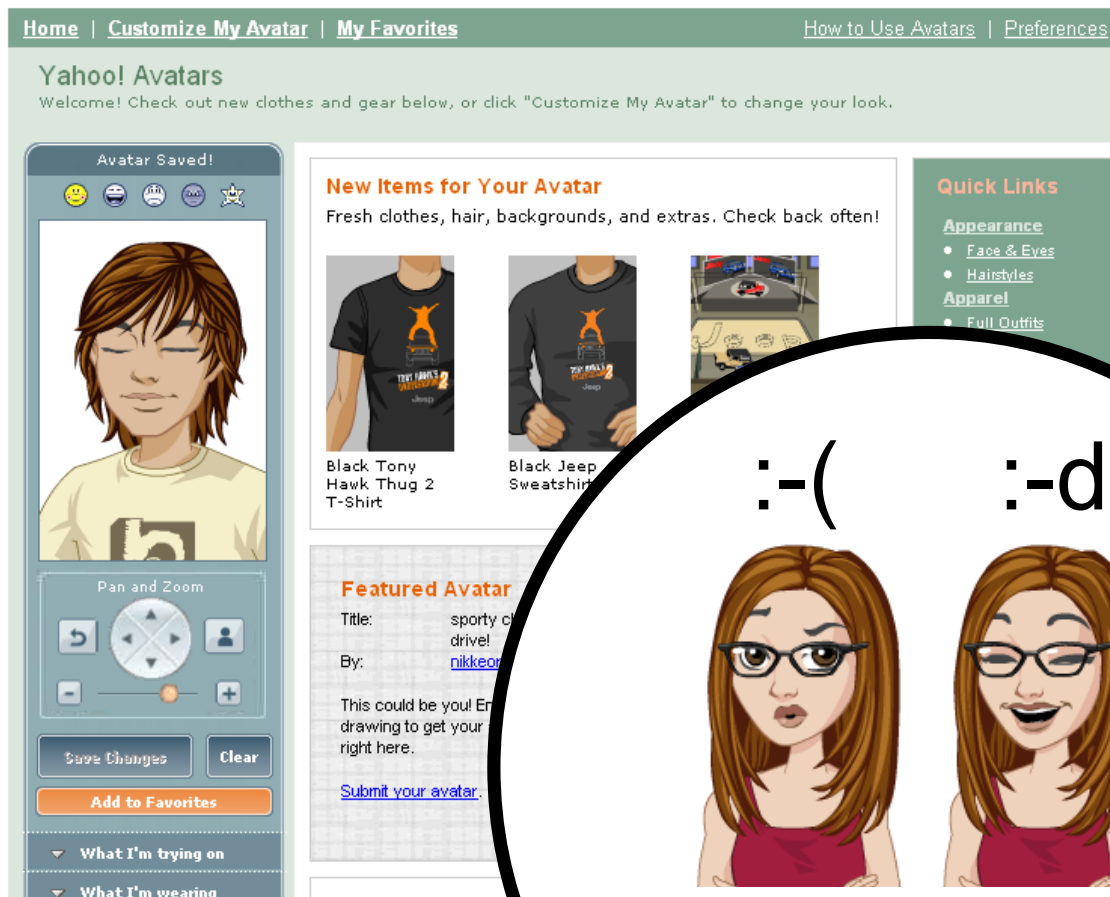
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# Presentation Outline

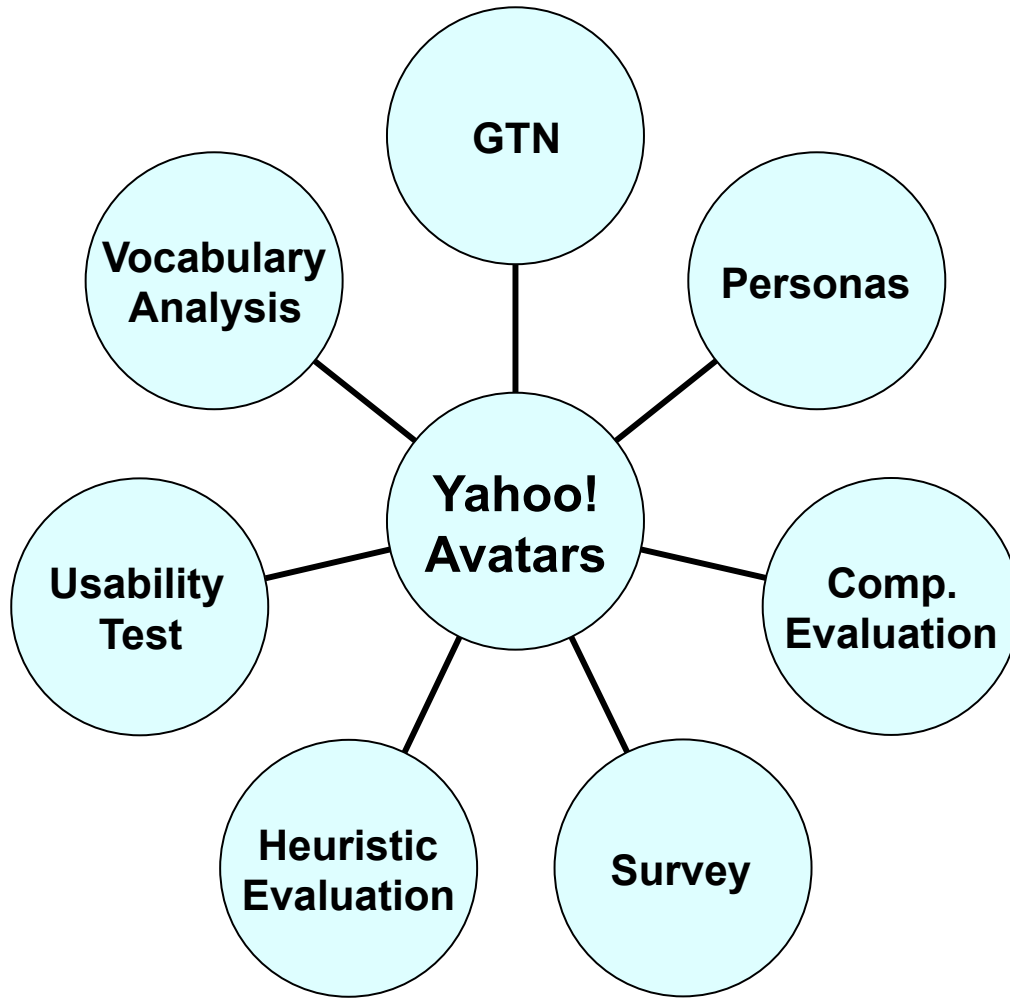
- Introduction to Yahoo! Avatars
- Overview of Evaluation Methods
- Positive Findings
- Areas for Improvement
- Recommendations
- Summary

# What is a Yahoo! Avatar?

- A Yahoo! Avatar is a customizable image used in Yahoo! Messenger to visually represent the user



# Evaluation Methods



- 12 personas were developed, with the major focus on ages 17 to 24
- Compared Y!A to other chat clients and avatar applications
- Surveyed 75 people
- Used Xerox corporation and playability of games evaluation heuristics
- Usability subjects included 5 graduate students from SI and CoE

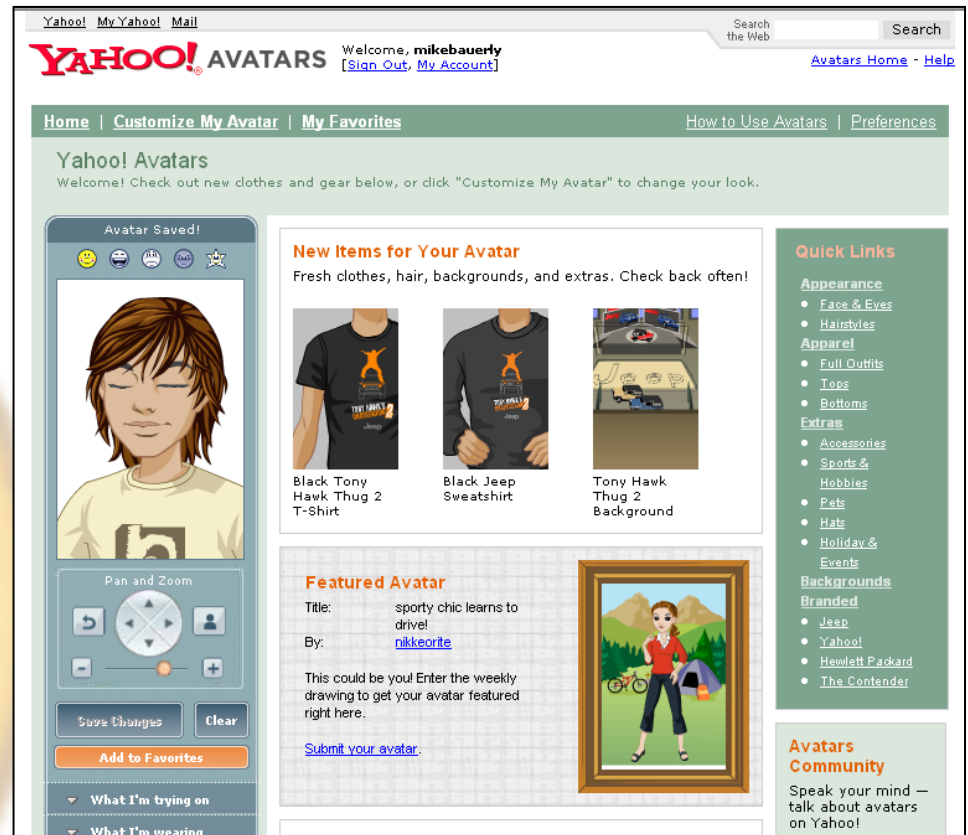
# Positive Findings



1. Yahoo! Messenger is the only chat client that currently offers avatars at this level of sophistication
2. Customizing and using an avatar in the chat client is intuitive for all users
3. Allows multiple avatars to be saved and quickly switched

# Positive Findings

4. Website is uncluttered, uses appealing and consistent color schemes and fonts
5. The 'Preview Window' is always accessible and reflects changes to the avatar immediately



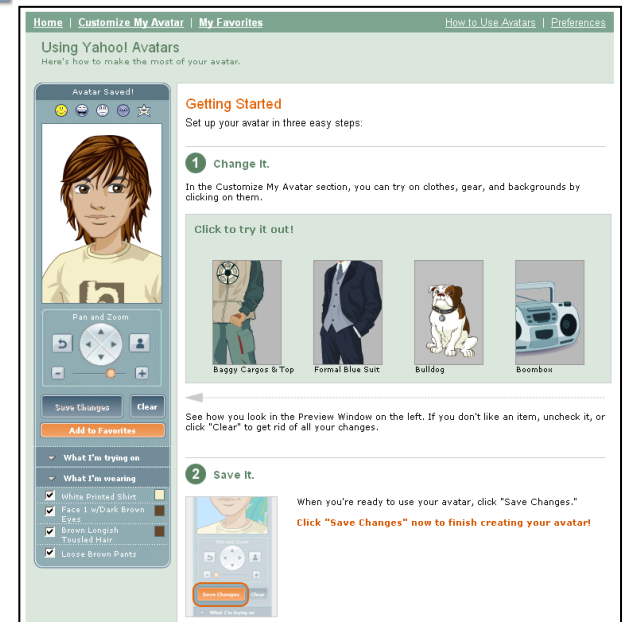
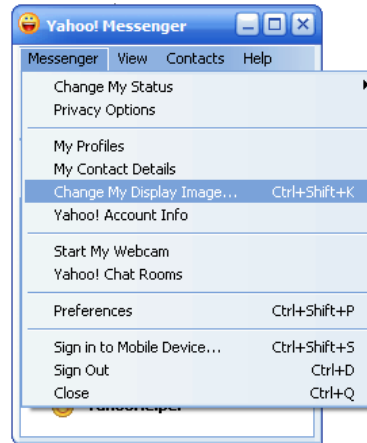
# Major Areas for Improvement

1. The connection between Yahoo! Messenger and the Yahoo! Avatars webpage is not intuitive
2. The 'Preview Window' has many areas where the usability can be improved
3. The categorization of elements (clothing, backgrounds, extras) is confusing

# Improvement 1. Connection to Y! Messenger

## Problems

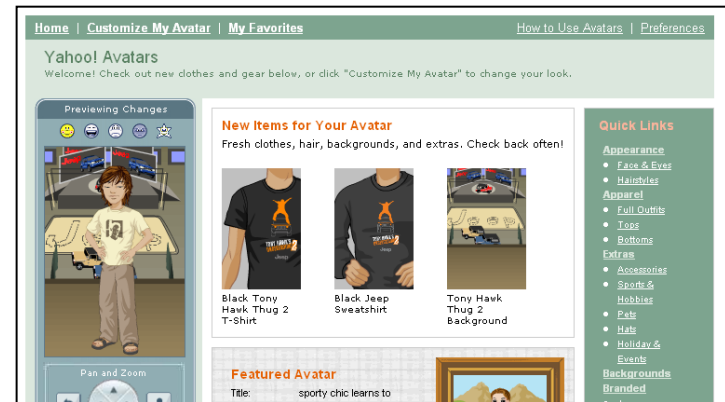
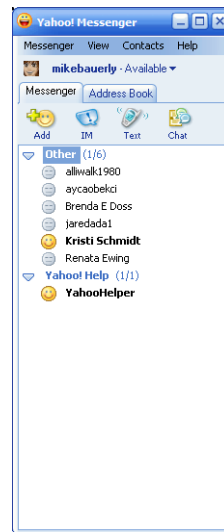
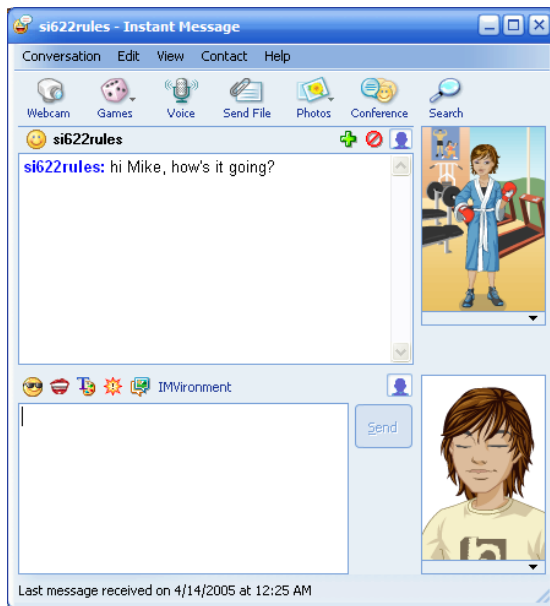
- Difficult to get to the website from Y! Messenger
- Getting Started page is confusing and appears only once
- No way to make modifications to avatar in Y! Messenger client



# Improvement 1. Connection to Y! Messenger

## Recommendations

- Put a Y! Avatar icon on the main messenger window
- Make first-time traffic flow through the home page
- Add zooming and emotion functionality in the chat client



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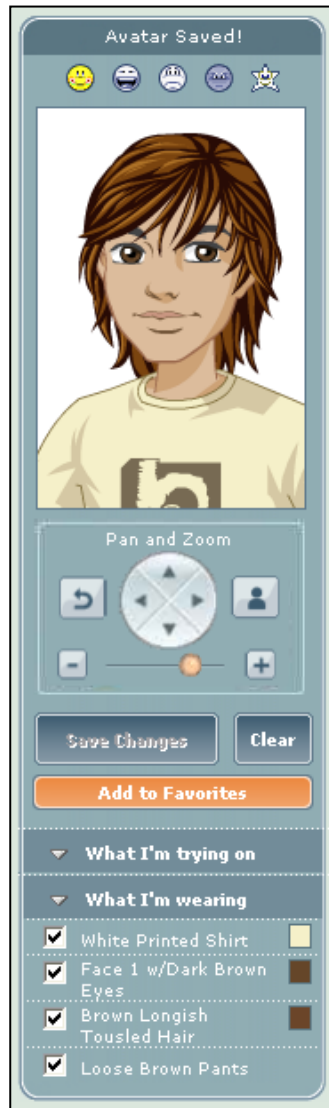
## Improvement 2. Preview Window Makeover

### Problems

- Checklist doesn't behave as expected
- Preview Window, What I'm Trying On, What I'm Wearing are poor metaphors
- Users want to navigate by clicking on avatar



## Improvement 2. Preview Window Makeover



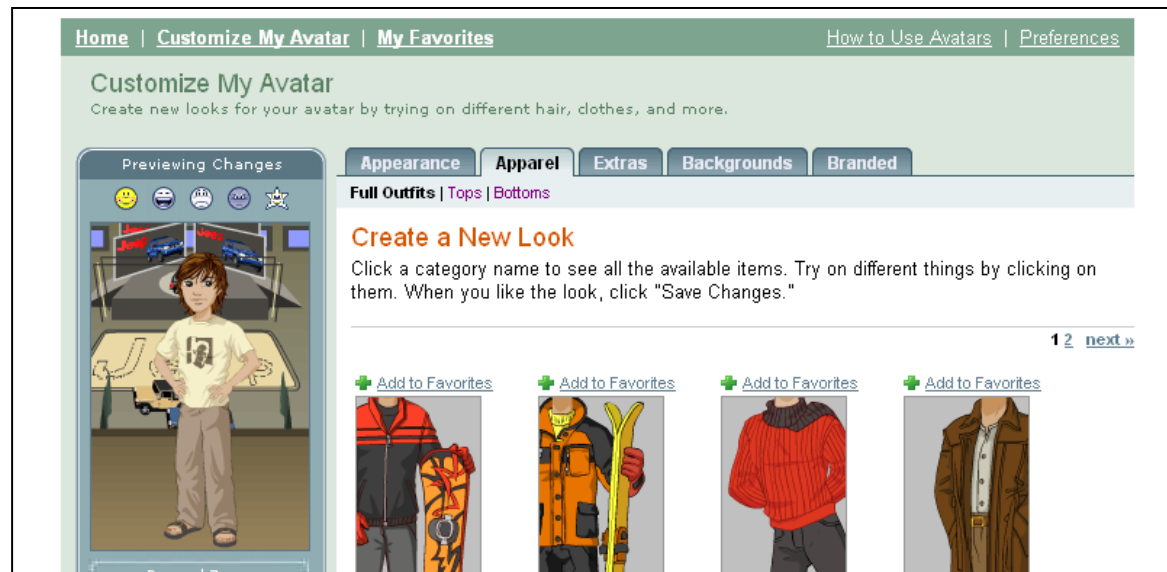
### Recommendations

- Rename to 'Control Panel'
- Rename lists to **X** and **Y**
- Improve checklist to behave as expected
- Allow navigation by clicking directly on the avatar
- Increase functionality by allowing the avatar to be reset or to change gender

# Improvement 3. Element Categorization

**Problem:** Elements are categorized inconsistently

**Recommendation:** Allow elements to be placed in more than one category



# Summary

- Yahoo! Avatars is a fun product that is generally easy to use
- It is a relatively new addition to Messenger and Yahoo! is constantly making improvements and providing updates (*firefox support, My favorite avatars, new elements for avatars to interact with or wear ← take this list out for presentation*)
- ... but there is always room for improvement

Thank you



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