

User Friendly 2004

http://www.upachina.org/userfriendly2004/index_en.htm

Fact Sheet:

- 200 + people
- 5 international speakers from US, Australia and Singapore
- 6 workshops
- Attendees from companies like:
 - Sina
 - eBay
 - Siemens
 - Alibaba
 - Lenova
 - Huawei
 - Nokia
 - Sohu
 - Yahoo
 - IBM
 - Motorola
 - Tsinghua Tongfang
 - Bose ...

Photos:

http://www.upachina.org/userfriendly2004/photogallery_en.htm



**Whitney Quesenbery - President, Usability Professionals'
Association**

I would like to congratulate everyone in the UPA China and UPA Hong Kong chapters on the success of User Friendly 2004, held in Beijing on December 18-19, 2004. I was honored to be part of this event.

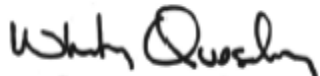
It is a mark of the strength that you were able to organize such an ambitious event in such a short period of time. The arrangements went off flawlessly from beginning to end, creating a friendly atmosphere for learning and networking.

It is also a sign of the depth of interest in usability in China that this conference could bring together so many people. I was impressed with the enthusiasm, the knowledge and the skills evident in the audience, and met many people I will value as colleagues.

The presence of so many important companies was impressive. I hope that this demonstrates a continued commitment to usability as part of their product development process.

With such an exciting beginning, the future of UPA China can only be positive. I look forward to many more successful activities to promote usability in China.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Whitney Quesenbery". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

It's all Happening in China – A Report from User Friendly 2004

http://www.upassoc.org/upa_publications/upa_voice/volumes/2005/february/china_upa.html

By Whitney Quesenbery
Whitney Interactive Design, LLC



Last December, I traveled to Beijing, China for [User Friendly 2004](#) to meet a few of our usability colleagues there. What I found was a large and vibrant usability community, with nearly 200 people attending the conference, organized by [UPA China](#) and [UPA Hong Kong](#).



At the end of the conference, speakers, organizers and attendees all assembled on the stage in front of the conference banner for a group photograph. The lighting was not the best, but it was amazing to see the number of people who came to User Friendly 2004.

The community includes people working on mobile telephony, web design and in many other industries as usability engineers, user researchers and interaction designers. Take a look at your phone. There's a good chance that people from UPA China worked on the user interface.



Qin Lin, President of UPA China

I asked Qin Lin, the President of UPA China, what motivated her to start the chapter. Her story sounded like many I have heard from other chapter organizers. “I used to live in Beijing, and there are many usability professionals here, but last year I moved to Shanghai. There are many fewer people there working in usability and I felt a little lonely, professionally. I decided to start UPA China as a way to create a community there. We held our first meeting in September, and found other people who felt the way I did. Starting the chapter helped us find out about each other.” Josephine Wong, from Apogee in Hong Kong, echoed this thought. “One of the great things about this conference is that people who had never met before, who didn’t even know the others existed, could share experiences and knowledge.” She hopes that the UPA chapters will help this community grow.

The first UPA China meeting was a “mini conference,” featuring talks on human factors and usability testing in China. By chance, Daniel Szuc, President of UPA Hong Kong, was in Shanghai at the same time, and was able to meet Qin and Jason from the UPA China leadership. They decided to cooperate on a larger conference later that year, and are planning more cooperation between the two chapters.

The first day of the conference featured short presentations on a variety of usability topics with speakers from China, Australia, Singapore, US and Hong Kong (see [program details](#)).



The speakers at the conference included Qin Lin, Gerry Gaffney, Carl Thong, Patrick Larvie, Professor Kan Zhang, Whitney Quesenbery, Professor Liezhong Ge, and Daniel Szuc.

Day two offered six half-day workshops on user-centered design, usability testing, personas, information architecture and prototyping. Daniel said, “We took a survey that showed a hunger for practical topics that people could use in their work, so we tried to focus on basic skills.”



Six workshops drew full rooms of eager participants. This group, in a workshop led by Daniel Szuc, works on an exercise about preparing for a usability test.

For some, the workshops introduced new topics; for others they helped reinforce basic skills. One participant said, “Even when the material was not new to me, it was good to have my knowledge and skills confirmed. It gave me more confidence in how I might compare to other usability people around the world.”

The conference was also an opportunity for people from outside of China to learn more about the usability scene here. The breaks felt like any other UPA conference, as people networked, exchanged business cards (or ming pian) and talked about opportunities for work.



Networking opportunities included conference breaks, a party at the end of the first day, hosted by Yahoo!, and other social events.

Some of the companies represented at the conference were familiar names around the world – Yahoo, Nokia, Motorola, Siemens, IBM – others were names from companies headquartered in China -- Sohu, UTStar and Baidu to name a few. Some companies are creating the next generation of mobile devices. Several people were carrying new

phones they had helped design. This focus on mobility means that industrial design, interaction design and icon usability are all strengths in this community. As Patrick Larvie, from Yahoo! put it, “This is where the next innovations will come from.” Professor Ge, from the Institute of Psychology at Zhejiang University of Science, for example, presented a detailed usability and human factors comparison of different models of mobile phones. The study examined attention and focus with eye-tracking, and made a detailed study of the effort required to complete simple tasks on each of the devices.

Managing a conference is a big task – and UPA China and UPA Hong Kong took on the challenge of pulling the whole thing together in less than three months. They solved logistical challenges in finding good resources for printing, venues for conference events, arranging for hotel rooms and handling all the tiny details that make a great conference, with a conference team split between Shanghai, Hong Kong and Beijing. The credit for the smooth operation goes to conference coordinator Feng (Jason) Huang, and a team of people who seemed to be in constant motion, making sure that everything went just right. The conference team included: RongGang Zhou, Registration; Qin Lin, Sponsorship, Feng Huang, Event Organization; NanXiang Sheng, Membership Information; Jia Lee, Newsletter, HangYan Ying, Logistics; and ZhongWei Wang, Website Design.



*Feng (Jason) Huang,
conference coordinator*

Gerry Gaffney, from InfoDesign in Australia, summed it up this way: “It’s all happening in China. There are all these bright, young, clever, motivated people here who are interested in usability.”

(Photographs by Jo Wong, Daniel Szuc and Whitney Quesenbery)