Summary and Analysis of the Data

We had eight people take our questionnaire and test out our program before giving us their thoughts about it. Our data is obviously skewed, since the only people available to do the questionnaires were friends all attending this school. Still, the questionnaires have valuable information that can give us guidance on how we should develop our visualizer and what changes need to be done so it can be better for those who use it.

Pre-Questions:

As we suspected early on, those who already use instant messenger clients should already be proficient in using computers. That however, still does not mean that our users won't make mistakes or understand our intent when designing the program. Most of the interviewees answered that they use their instant messenger client daily, which hopefully would give them interest in using our program to see their chatting habits. Seven of the eight have indeed thought that a visualizer would be useful, though only a few would use it often.

One problem that we face is the large number of instant messenger clients that are currently available and the millions of people who use different clients. Some clients do not have the ability to store chat logs, and the ones that do store them in files formatted differently from each client. This would be a programming nightmare if we were to try and implement a parser for each type. Since AOL Instant Messenger(AIM) is currently has the largest user base and the majority of our interviewees use AIM as well, we decided to focus our parser development on AIM for now.

Post-Questions:

After trying out and seeing what was implemented so far in the program, most of the interviewees stated that the program was very easy to use. Indeed, the fact that only one button was usable may have skewed the data. Some thought some of the buttons were slightly confusing, which is understandable since most of the program was not finished and some buttons were planned to be removed or changed. Looking at the program overall, the interviewees have thought that the interface was mostly visually appealing, though some have stated that they would like to see some animations or themes that match the “glass” look seen in most designs today.

Understanding the visualization was mixed. Some interviewees were completely confused on what the visualization was trying to represent, while others understood the basic representation, but would have liked some sort of scale for more information. The visualization also was a mixed bag. Some interviewees have expressed their preference for traditional data visualizers such as bar graphs or line charts, but still appreciated the new attempt to visualize the data in a different way. Most of the interviewees also have stated that they most likely would not use the program often, since it seems to only satisfy the user's curiosity.

When asked for opinions about what the interviewees liked and disliked about the program, almost all of them didn't give any useful information. Only one mentioned that they disliked the lack of labels on the visualization. Though when asked about improvements, added functionality or customizations they would like to see, the interviewees gave valuable information. Most said they would've liked to change the colors, shapes, and the style of the visualization presented. Almost half of them also said they would like to see more log files at once, than simply looking at one visualization for one log file.

One user suggested having users upload their data to a server and compare some statistical data with other users as a small competition. While being a very interesting idea, it seems like another project to tackle in the future.
Survey Answers

Interviewee 1

Pre-Questions
Gender: Male
Age: 19
Profession: student – sophomore in Communication
Computer Proficiency: Somewhat Proficient
IM Client usage: Monthly
IM Client used: Other - iChat
IM Client Logging Usage: Don't know about logging
Would an IM visualizer be useful?  Yes

Post-Questions
Using the program was...easy.
Figuring out each button's functionality at first glance was...easy.
Was the interface visually appealing?  It's somewhat appealing.
Understanding the visualization being presented was (between somewhat understandable and easy)
Did you find the data presented to be useful? No, it's not very useful.
After trying this program, would you use it often?  No.

What did you like about this program?
It allows you to keep track of conversation without writing stuff.

What did you dislike about this program?
It only had a single purpose.  It's also not flashy.

Could you list anything in the program that you would like to customize?
Change the shapes of measures.

What additional functionality or improvements would you like to see?
Flashy animations
Interviewee 2

Pre-Questions
Gender: Male
Age: 22
Profession: Student – senior in Mechanical Engineering
Computer Proficiency: Between somewhat proficient and very proficient.
IM Client usage: Daily – 3 hours
IM Client used: Pidgin, Windows Messenger, GMail
IM Client Log Usage: Yes
Would an IM visualizer be useful? Yes

Post-Questions
Using the program was...somewhat understandable.
Figuring out each button's functionality at first glance was between somewhat understandable and easy
Was the interface visually appealing? Between somewhat appealing and very appealing.
Understanding the visualization being presented was...between difficult and somewhat understandable.
Did you find the data presented to be useful? Between not useful and somewhat useful.
After trying this program, would you use it often? Maybe once in awhile

What did you like about this program?
The interface wasn't cluttered.

What did you dislike about this program?
The program didn't do anything useful.

Could you list anything in the program that you would like to customize?
Change size of stuff.

What additional functionality or improvements would you like to see?
Add in a search feature.
Interviewee 3

Pre-Questions
Gender: Male
Age: 19
Profession: Student – sophomore in History
Computer Proficiency: Somewhat proficient.
IM Client usage: Monthly
IM Client used: AOL Instant Messenger
IM Client Log Usage: No
Would an IM visualizer be useful? Yes

Post-Questions
Using the program was...easy.
Figuring out each button's functionality at first glance was...easy
Was the interface visually appealing? It was very appealing.
Understanding the visualization being presented was...easy.
Did you find the data presented to be useful? Between somewhat useful and very useful.
After trying this program, would you use it often? Yes.

What did you like about this program?
The option to change the view between days, months, and years.

What did you dislike about this program?
I don't really use IM enough to need it.

Could you list anything in the program that you would like to customize?
Change colors and shapes of the visualization.

What additional functionality or improvements would you like to see?
None.
Interviewee 4

Pre-Questions
Gender: Male
Age: 19
Profession: Student – Sophomore in Division of General Studies
Computer Proficiency: Somewhat proficient.
IM Client usage: Daily – 1 hour
IM Client used: AOL Instant Messenger
IM Client Log Usage: Yes
Would an IM visualizer be useful? No.

Post-Questions
Using the program was...easy
Figuring out each button's functionality at first glance was...easy
Was the interface visually appealing? Between somewhat appealing and very appealing.
Understanding the visualization being presented was...somewhat understandable.
Did you find the data presented to be useful? Yes, it's very useful.
After trying this program, would you use it often? Maybe once in awhile

What did you like about this program?
The program is a new idea.

What did you dislike about this program?
There aren't many practical uses for it.

Could you list anything in the program that you would like to customize?
Not really.

What additional functionality or improvements would you like to see?
Have a number to tell you exactly how many messages there were per day, month, etc.
Interviewee 5

Pre-Questions
Gender: Male
Age: 20
Profession: Student – sophomore in Computer Science
Computer Proficiency: Between somewhat proficient and very proficient.
IM Client usage: Daily – less than 1 hour
IM Client used: AOL Instant Messenger and Facebook chat
IM Client Log Usage: Yes
Would an IM visualizer be useful? Yes

Post-Questions
Using the program was...between somewhat understandable and easy.
Figuring out each button's functionality at first glance was...easy
Was the interface visually appealing? It's somewhat appealing.
Understanding the visualization being presented was...somewhat understandable.
Did you find the data presented to be useful? Somewhat useful.
After trying this program, would you use it often? Maybe once in awhile

What did you like about this program?
Having the full understanding of when I messaged the most.

What did you dislike about this program?
The program didn't have many uses.

Could you list anything in the program that you would like to customize?
Change colors.

What additional functionality or improvements would you like to see?
Pull up records of two people at once.
Interviewee 6

Pre-Questions
Gender: Female
Age: 21
Profession: Student – Junior in Landscape Architecture
Computer Proficiency: Very proficient.
IM Client usage: Daily – 10 hours
IM Client used: AOL Instant Messenger, Windows Messenger, Yahoo Messenger, Skype, Pidgin, Meebo
IM Client Log Usage: Yes
Would an IM visualizer be useful? Yes

Post-Questions
Using the program was... between somewhat understandable and easy.
Figuring out each button's functionality at first glance was between somewhat understandable and easy.
Was the interface visually appealing? Between somewhat appealing and very appealing.
Understanding the visualization being presented was... easy.
Did you find the data presented to be useful? Somewhat useful.
After trying this program, would you use it often? Maybe once in awhile.

What did you like about this program?
Colorful displays that help visualize your chatting experience.

What did you dislike about this program?
It's unapplicable to daily needs.

Could you list anything in the program that you would like to customize?
Maybe section out a chunk and see it in more detail.

What additional functionality or improvements would you like to see?
None.
Interviewee 7

Pre-Questions
Gender: Male
Age: 21
Profession: Student – senior in Computer Science
Computer Proficiency: Very proficient.
IM Client usage: Daily – 4 hours
IM Client used: Skype, Google Talk
IM Client Log Usage: I don't know.
Would an IM visualizer be useful? Yes

Post-Questions
Using the program was...easy.
Figuring out each button's functionality at first glance was...easy
Was the interface visually appealing? It's very appealing.
Understanding the visualization being presented was...easy.
Did you find the data presented to be useful? Yes, it's very useful.
After trying this program, would you use it often? Maybe once in awhile

What did you like about this program?
I liked the simple shapes & bright colors.

What did you dislike about this program?
It's not quite finished.

Could you list anything in the program that you would like to customize?
Whose graphs you can see at the same time – ability to compare different correspondents' correspondences.

What additional functionality or improvements would you like to see?
Online comparison web competition thing...
Interviewee 8

Pre-Questions
Gender: Male
Age: 21
Profession: Student – junior in Physics
Computer Proficiency: Between somewhat proficient and very proficient.
IM Client usage: Daily – 1 hour
IM Client used: AOL Instant Messenger
IM Client Log Usage: No
Would an IM visualizer be useful? Yes

Post-Questions
Using the program was...between somewhat understandable and easy.
Figuring out each button's functionality at first glance was...easy.
Was the interface visually appealing? It's very appealing.
Understanding the visualization being presented was...easy.
Did you find the data presented to be useful? Between somewhat useful and very useful.
After trying this program, would you use it often? Maybe once in awhile

What did you like about this program?
A visual representation of data can be more comprehensible than dates and numbers.

What did you dislike about this program?
The chart/graph image had no labels.

Could you list anything in the program that you would like to customize?
Orientation, multiple images at once to compare, using different colors, different shapes

What additional functionality or improvements would you like to see?
See above.
**Goal**
The goal of this study is to find any possible usability issues that users might have when using this program. We mainly want to gauge how easy or difficult our program can be when figuring out how to interpret the visual data or how to use the program. We will then see what changes we can make to the program in order to make it easier to use. We also want to see which demographic our program mostly appeals to and develop the program to target that audience.

**Pre-Questions**
**Gender:** □ Male □ Female

**Age:** _______

**Profession:** _____________________________
(If you are a student, please write your year and major)

How proficient are you with computers?

- [ ] Not Proficient
- [ ] Somewhat Proficient
- [ ] Very Proficient

How often do you use an instant messenger client?

- [ ] Daily
- [ ] Weekly
- [ ] Monthly
- [ ] Yearly

If you said daily, how many hours? _______

Please check which instant messenger clients you use:

- [ ] AOL Instant Messenger
- [ ] Windows Messenger
- [ ] Yahoo Messenger
- [ ] skype
- [ ] Digsby
- [ ] Pidgin
- [ ] Meebo
- [ ] Trillian
- [ ] Other: __________________

Do you use your IM client’s chat logging feature (if available)?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- [ ] I don’t know

Do you think using an instant messenger visualizer would be useful?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
Post-Questions
Using the program was...
...difficult  ...somewhat understandable  ...easy

Figuring out each button's functionality at first glance was...
...difficult  ...somewhat understandable  ...easy

Was the interface visually appealing?
No, it's not appealing.  It's somewhat appealing.  It's very appealing.

Understanding the visualization being presented was...
...difficult  ...somewhat understandable  ...easy

Did you find the data presented to be useful?
No, it's not very useful.  Somewhat useful.  Yes, it's very useful.

After trying this program, would you use it often?
☐ Yes
☐ Maybe once in awhile
☐ No

What did you like about this program?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

What did you dislike about this program?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Could you list anything in the program that you would like to customize?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

What (if any) additional functionality or improvements you would like to see in this program?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________