Looking at the Keyboard While You Type? Listen to This…

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." – Albert Einstein

Introduction

Unlike the mobile platform which in most cases incorporates a touch keyboard as part of the screen, our PC keyboard and screen are physically separated. This physical separation inevitably results in having roughly two types of users – those who focus on the screen while typing and those who focus on the keyboard.

It doesn't require deep analytical skills to assume that users who focus on the keyboard are likely to miss Lightkey's suggestions that show-up on their screens. The question therefore is how many of the users are 'keyboard-focused'? A survey we conducted among our users revealed that a little more than 40% of them define themselves as focusing on the keyboard while they type.

Houston, we have a problem…

Developing a software that communicates itself visually on the screen we figured if we could only get them to check their screens more often… they could see more suggestions for both predictions and spelling corrections and potentially get more out of using Lightkey!

We looked at our statistics and carefully examined the physical attributes of 'keyboard-focused' users. We noticed that quite naturally and despite their association they as well seek visual feedback and glimpse at their computer screens after typing a full word/sentence (i.e. did I get it correctly…?).

This led to the inception of adding sound assistance.

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Sound Assistance

The idea is to expand Lightkey's means of communication with users by bringing their hearing sense into play; an extremely subtle sound notification will give the user that gentle 'tap on the shoulder' essentially letting them know there's a high-impact time & energy-saving prediction they might like to consider. As the user grows confidence in Lightkey, we anticipate that the sound cue will trigger a reflex-like Tab hit response, potentially even skipping the screen verification.

Bringing this idea from concept to reality is challenging, as it's a fine line between a subtle sound assistance and an annoying sound disturbance. It took time and a lot of trial and error to choose what we feel is a correct and balanced sound assistant that delivers a smooth experience. Nevertheless, we decided to deliver sound assistance as an opt-in feature with adaptive capabilities to change its behavior based on the user interaction.

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