We aim to support user interface designers in capturing, representing and reasoning about temporal information. We have developed a method to support user interface designers in considering how the temporal aspects of software impact the user. Importantly the method is based on a detailed analysis of data from a set of situated interviews that capture the views of practicing user interface designers. This paper discusses the background research and the motivation for the method.

Keywords: Temporal aspects of usability; user interface; design; methodology; practitioner’s views.

1. INTRODUCTION
The impact that time exerts while users interact with software often goes unnoticed. Interacting with software becomes most notable when interaction is interrupted, or otherwise suffers a ‘breakdown’ (Winograd and Flores, 1986). The effects of time on computer based task performance and the subjective experience of time related to task progress during interaction with software is central to this paper.

Recent interest in the area has been collectively referred to as ‘Temporal Aspects of Usability (TAU)’ (Johnson and Gray, 1995a). Research related to TAU is characteristically diverse and includes application areas as such as conferencing systems, multi-user applications designed for supporting group work (Computer Supported Collaborative Work (CSCW)) and World Wide Web usage (Johnson, 1995; Johnson and Gray, 1995b) and communication software and multimedia systems (Roast, 1995). A number of studies have investigated the effects of different system response times on user strategies (Dix and Abowd, 1996; Dix, 1994; Teal and Rudnicky, 1992),