

The Principles of Good Design: An Overview

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To have a firm grasp for our work on the 2005-2006 CREU grant it is important that we focus, first on the importance of computer Human Interaction. This is necessary so we can explain and research the usability of available security tools. Software design is crucial when dealing with all interaction between the computer and user. After spending time researching the methods of human computer interaction and good interface design I have come up with the necessary parts for a good interface design. These are to anticipate users, readability, consistency, and interaction with the user.

Firstly, it is important that there is a string grasp on Human Computer Interaction. A major part of this concept is the human. Therefore, a necessary part of a good interface design is being able to know what your users will be. In today's society, most of the programs are geared towards a computer novice. The level of understanding is necessary when deciding what form the program should take. Another important part of this concept is how quickly something loads. We live in fast-paced society, and people have come to expect that in all parts of their lives. If something takes time to load, a person is less likely to pay attention to any messages that the program displays. An additional key element when dealing with users is being able to know what errors a user may find, and to make sure that these errors are somehow caught. Tying right in with the user, is the concept of readability.

Readability is essential in all aspects of life. Today, the internet is used practically for everything including banking, chatting, and other educational functions. The ideas that deal with readability are color, size, proportion, text, and many other design attributes. If a window is too small or too big for the necessary operation, the user may feel as if it is

unnecessary. An example of this is the AOL instant messenger window. In addition, it is important that designers choose colors that are not harsh on the eye, nor blend. When laying out a specific form or window, it is essential to make sure that there is space between elements so that the user will not be easily confused and be able to read what is important. Readability is the second most important part when designing a program to interact with a user.

Consistency is another attribute that is essential to design. Humans are creatures of habit and easily thrown off by change. What's important here is that the user can easily see a constant theme and or layout throughout an interface design. Without consistency, there is more aptness for error and confusion. Simply said, keep it the same format.

Lastly, the way a design interacts with the user is quite important. Certain interfaces are created to do certain things, such as ask for input to generate a desired task. If there is vague alerts and errors are not explained to be errors there can be problems. In addition, you must take into account the likelihood of a person switching between two applications. This user could accidentally delete or cause problems if they accidentally click on something. A huge example of this is the AIM viruses that are spread every day through links. It is also important that the user is not given too much control over a certain interface, because this could cause other problems regarding functions and actions that a user should not be able to perform.

Overall, there are many crucial attributes to account for when designing a interface design, however I believe that these are the most critical to remember. Computers are a everything growing importance to our society, and as computer scientists we need to understand how to make the use of computers much easier.

Reference

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