

WHAT IS UI / UX ?





Interface & Experience

To the average person, user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) are often considered one in the same. While one can't live without the other, there are some distinct differences that should not be confused. Think of it like this: UI is the saddle, the stirrups, and the reins. UX is the feeling you get being able to ride the horse and rope your cattle.



What is UI?

To put it simply, UI design is the section of the product (typically a website or application) facing the user. User interface is focused on the actual elements the user interacts with, including menus, dialog boxes, icons, images and animations. It does not address details such as how the user reacts to the system, remembers the system and re-uses it.

According to the 2011 article “A study of merchandise information and interface design on B2C websites” published in the Journal of Marine Science:

...the design of the HCI (human-computer interface) can have a substantial impact on learning time, performance, speed, error rates and user satisfaction. Commercial designers recognize that systems (webpages and apps) easier to use will a competitive edge in terms of information retrieval...and personal computer applications. In the process of online consumption, the most important interface design is the design of the website Some of the most important things that make up a flawless user interface that contributes to a great user experience are:



1. Staying consistent. Staying consistent throughout your website or app will help create a sense of harmony and balance, leaving your website and users in a focused state. Disorganized interfaces, i.e., interfaces that contain too many fonts, irrelevant and misplaced graphics, or navigation icons placed halfway or near the bottom of the page will leave a user feeling confused, frustrated, and unable to find the information they are looking for.
2. Using visual cues to hint at the object's function. Doing so will encourage user interaction. For example, "click" buttons exhibiting three-dimensional effects look like they are meant to be pushed and entice users to take that action.

3. Incorporating whitespace. White space, or space that contains little to no graphics or text, emphasizes the area that you want to call attention to such as, calls to action or sales text. White space is inviting to users because it allows them to quickly determine what the page is offering.

4. Including images. Humans process visuals 60,000 times faster than text. Including well-placed images can help users make quick decisions and increase comprehension. Consider that the average user leaves a web page in 10-20 seconds, this can make or break your ability to convey your point.

Key Points to Remember When Designing a User Interface

- *The appearance of the website as a whole influenced by the UI.
- *The UI controls how the user navigates the website to find information they need.
- *A website's interface is where the user makes contact with a product or service



What is UX?

While UI surrounds the physical elements of a website or app, user experience (UX) is all about what the user feels during and after their interaction with your site. How a person perceives and feels about the interface is heavily influenced by the design of the UI as well as the ability of the interface to understand the main persona you are trying to reach. No two people experience the exact same reactions but all demographics share similar reactions to similar concepts, which should be taken into consideration when developing and designing a site or application

Creating the Quintessential User Experience

Providing a solid user experience involves the collaboration of the UI developer and the UX designer who is responsible for creating a page/app layout that retains the attention of jaded Internet users within seconds of landing on a page. Being able to consistently deliver an intuitive and enjoyable user experience can make or break you. Think of user experience as the goal. Not just the goal of the UI, but of the organization as a whole. When good user experience is achieved, every desirable or positive effect that one could possibly think of will follow behind it.



The User Experience:

- Direct and simple--do not overload users with information. Less is more--but do the less well.
- Satisfying expectations--a UX needs to be visually appealing but balanced, pleasantly interactive and emotionally gratifying.
- Personal but within acceptable boundaries—A UX professional should focus on meeting each user’s needs by designing adaptive interfaces for different peripheral locations.
- The interface should be capturable “at a glance”. More or less, eliciting a good UX means that they should not have to think too hard. Users should be able to read a display at a glance to rapidly gather important information in situations where their attention may be and is often diverted.
- Minimizing settings, options and tasks--optimizing UX means including “rest areas” for users to achieve the desired goals of the interface. Avoid overloading users with intense displays of information that require too much thinking.



Basic Ideas Behind UX

- *Never ask users to accomplish more than one task at a time.
- *A website's viability is heavily influenced by its UX factor. Moreover, improving UX can be done by a well thought out user interface.
- *UX is based on emotional responses and is therefore the primary "takeaway" of any interaction
- *More importantly, UX is how the user feels following interaction with the interface.
- *Create layouts in which related entities are placed near each other to reduce guessing and searching. Let the user scan, scoop (up desired information) and satisfy their needs as quickly and as easily as possible.
- *Optimized UX means empathizing with humans before empathizing with the computer. In other words, put the user first and the computer last by providing an efficient UI enhanced by a user-friendly, streamlined design that effectively guides the user to a specific goal.



Summary

Together UI and UX is the fusion of science, art. With people relying more and more on technology for experiencing satisfaction, meaningful communication and improved productivity, it has become not only necessary, but expected, to consider both the user interface and the user experience to create a rich, rewarding experience that leaves your customers wanting more. If you're interested in learning more about UI/ UX, The Humane Interface is a great place to start.