

# User Experience Working Group

February 26, 2025

## Participants

- Chris Coffin
- Steven Christey
- Matt DiVisconte
- Scott Drinkall
- John Keane
- Rich Piazza
- Rae Powers
- Erica Stokes
- Remy Vanece Stolworthy
- Alec Summers
- Katherine Taylor-Jewell

## Agenda

- Potential Macro-Usability Changes for CWE 4.17
- Open Discussion

## Meeting Summary

- **Potential Macro-Usability Changes for CWE 4.17:** Steven Christey presented concepts and examples in preparation for the upcoming CWE 4.17 release, which is scheduled for late March or early April. Steven emphasized the need for small, feasible changes to improve the macro usability of the CWE website.

## Action Items

1. **UEWG GitHub Space:** Provide feedback or propose issues (<https://github.com/CWE-CAPEC/UEWG/issues>). (All Participants)
2. **Update to Potential Macro-Usability Changes for CWE 4.17:** Update slides and send them to the UEWG mailing list. (Steven)
3. **Feedback on Potential Macro-Usability Changes for CWE 4.17:** Consider the most important issues for CWE to prioritize items to address in the next release. (All Participants)
4. **Link to Mark Zuckerberg's Talk:** Find and share the link to Mark Zuckerberg's talk about AI and software development with the team. (John)

## Meeting Notes

### Potential Macro-Usability Changes for CWE 4.17 (Steven Christey)

- **Background:** Macro usability is the usability of the CWE site, independent of the content. Past work was focused on the landing page and organization of menus. A release date for CWE 4.17 is anticipated for end of March/early April. Given the timeline, only small changes are expected.
- **Two goals:** 1) Improve the UX experience for first-time visitors to individual CWE entry pages; 2) Make useful features more readily apparent.
  - 1) Many first-time visitors click on a CWE link from another website and are driven to the individual web page for that CWE, rather than the landing page. These web pages can be overwhelming for first-time visitors.

- 2) The CWE website has a lot of useful information that many users may not notice. Many users are not aware of features that could be hidden in menu options, obscured in a link in the corner, etc.
- **Improving the UX for Individual Web Pages:**
  - **Improving UX for people who first visit individual CWE entry pages:** The current default for first entry to the website through a CWE entry is a comprehensive presentation filter.
    - **Steven** suggested changing to a different default that shows a more limited set of data. This would entail switching to a different presentation filter.
  - **Change color / presentation for some kinds of entries (deprecated, obsolete, categories, views):** These could be greyed out. However, do not delete entirely to preserve traceability.
  - **Change layout of complex fields (reduce wall-of-text):** The amount of information—while important—is overwhelming. The need is to simplify the layout for first-time users while still supporting advanced users with detailed information.
    - **Steven** suggested a default to minimize for complex fields.
    - **Chris** suggested also creating larger buckets to categorize data types.
    - **Steven** responded that this might not be possible with this timeframe.
  - **Remove/minimize IDs in CWE categories /views:** The purpose is to reinforce not to map to IDs as well as reduce confusion.
  - **Presentation filters to select fields to show:** There are about 20 different fields a CWE weakness could have. The customization options could be improved.
- **Potential use of GitHub issues in the UEWG GitHub space to make proposals:**
  - **Chris** shared there are currently 6 issues and requested UEWG members to provide feedback or propose issues.
    - Link: <https://github.com/CWE-CAPEC/UEWG/issues>
- **Example – CWE-79, Part 1:**
  - **Steven** highlighted issues: 1) buttons that take up vertical space and are inconspicuous for the user, 2) default that provides the complete set of data, 3) missing diagram (a content issue), 4) extended description of technical nuance.
  - **Steven** suggested hiding extending description (if it exists) by default.
  - **Rich** suggested changing button text “first time user” to “simple.”
  - **Chris** suggested changing the default presentation filter to first-time use or something similar.
- **Example – CWE-79, Part 2:**
  - **Steven** highlighted issues: 1) wall of text with no clear boundaries between rows/cells, 2) “likelihood” field is rarely filled, context-dependent, and takes space.
  - **Steven** suggested thickening the lines to differentiate rows, shading every other row.
  - **Chris** noted that Excel is an example of row shading.
  - **Chris** suggested removing column of “likelihood” when not used.
  - **Steven** suggested moving “likelihood” column to be a row.
  - **Rich** suggested moving the “scope” column to the right side.
- **Example – CWE-79, Part 3:**

- **Steven** highlighted issues: 1) while cleaner, still a wall of text, 2) unclear boundaries between mitigations.
- **Chris** noted the inconsistent layout with Common Consequences page.
- **Example – CWE-79, Part 4:**
  - **Steven** highlighted issues: 1) repetition of “parentof,” 2) though helpful information, icons are unclear, 3) prevalence of underlined text.
  - **Rich** suggested making the ID the link.
  - **Rich** emphasized the difference of relationships between child/parent and other relationships (can follow, can precede).
  - **Steven** suggested changing the layout of relationships to avoid repetition.
- **Example – CWE-79, Part 5:**
  - **Steven** highlighted issues: 1) no visual distinction between references.
- **Example – CWE-79, Part 6:**
  - **Steven** highlighted issues: 1) the oldest modifications are on top—this could be reversed, 2) unclear who uses the details.
  - **Rich** noted the benefit of giving people credit.
  - **Steven** responded that a “contributions” element could be added.
- **Example – Category**
  - **Steven** highlighted issues: 1) repetitive text, 2) unclear yellow background and layout.
  - **Steven** recommended removing numeric ID.
    - These might require longer-term changes.
- **Example – View-699 – Part 1**
  - **Steven** highlighted issues: 1) users are typically not familiar with the types of views, 2) data downloads are inconspicuous, 3) detailed text under Relationships.
- **Example – View-699 – Part 2**
  - **Steven** highlighted issues: 1) “expand all” and “show details” blend into background and are missed.
- **Make Useful Features More Readily Apparent:** This was tabled in the interest of time.

**NEXT MEETING 3/26**