The Anatomy of User Experience

slide 1: Introduction

Hi guys! Welcome to [Fundamentals of User Experience Design ], a Tuts+ premium course. I’m [Sarah Kahn] and today we’re going to cover the anatomy of a user experience.

slide 1

Getting started

So, in our last lesson, ‘What is User Experience?’, we established why you want to make your websites usable. In this lesson, we’re going to expand on that idea a bit and delve into the various pieces that work together to make up a good user experience. There’s a lot of terminology that gets tossed around, sometimes as though the terms were interchangeable. They aren’t. There are several distinct pieces that go into the overall User Experience, and it’s important to separate and identify each part in your process.

slide 2

Here’s what we’re going to cover:

- What is Information Architecture?

- What is Interaction Design?

- Separating Visual Design from Usability

slide 3

[a bit of theory]

this particular lesson is going to be pretty theoretical, i’m afraid, but i hope to keep it from getting too dry. this might be a good time to get a cup of coffee or tea. or any other stimulant of your choice.

slide 4

[honeycomb]

User experience is a broad idea. In order to design a good user experience, you have to address several specific sub-areas. Organization, content, visual appeal, business and marketing objectives.

slide 5

[what is info architecture]

So, what is information architecture?

Information architecture refers to the overall organization of navigation and content on a website or software interface. Organizing static content pieces, actions, and any other content in a logical, non-overwhelming way is the end goal of information architecture.

slide 6

[circles]

this is a classic diagram in the field of ux, peter morville’s ‘the circles of information architecture’. this illustrates the need to balance business objectives, usability, and available content in a given design.

slide 7

[some examples]

these are all examples of things that work together to make up a site’s information architecture.

slide 8

[wireframe]

you can see here in this wireframe for an application that i was working on how we worked with the different levels of navigation and content blocks to get a logical hierarchy organized.

slide9

[yahoo]

Let’s give [yahoo.com](http://yahoo.com) some love. They used to be known, famous for, in fact, a giant list of links on their front page. Now they’ve added a lot of hierarchy and organization.

slide 10

[what is id]

What is Interaction Design?

slide 11

[id is a series of tasks]

Interaction design refers to the overall experience of moving through a series of actions on a website or in a software system. For example, completing a task that requires a user to input information and then post that information to a database. The process of getting that user to perform that task is Interaction Design.

slide 12

[amtrak]

for an example of interaction, let’s go to groupon. The first thing that happens with this site is that they ask the user a series of questions so that they can show useful information.

Clearly, there’s a little overlap between these areas, which is part of the reason that the terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

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separating visual design

<next slide>

so let’s go back to groupon for a minute. we already talked about the user workflow piece, but now let’s take notice of the visual elements.

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Your assignment:

* Visit http://msnbc.com
* Identify an element of information architecture on this site (hint- navigation menus, breadcrumbs, and page headings are all examples).
* Identify an element of interaction design (hint- verbs/action words usually indicate an interaction).
* Identify an element of visual design.
* Pick one thing you'd do differently, and sketch it out- whether it's reorganizing a navigation menu, or reorganizing a sign-in form, etc.

Next time on [Fundamentals of User Experience Design ], we’re going to cover [Lesson 3: Getting Started]. This is [Sarah Kahn], and from all of us here at Tuts+, thanks for listening!