

UI Design Patterns

During the development of the SEAP appointment management system, one of the main tasks that was delegated to one of the 3 teams that formed the project was the appointment management system, that included the creation, updating and reading (for some cases, deletion too) of reports, rooms, patients, therapists, appointments and other functions.

The elements of the systems UI were derived from a prototype made by a former collaborator of the project and except for the agenda management, the rest followed the prototype UI, then because of consistency, it was changed to another UI that better matched the appointment management system and the colors used by the institution (mainly blue and purple).

A prominent UI design pattern used is the clear primary action pattern, buttons that stand out and have different colors, sizes and positions depending on their use. For example, the navigation sections are buttons in a light blue that stand out from the navigation bar and change color if selected (giving feedback of that state); The buttons that execute direct actions on sections of the system, such as CRUD-like actions, apply filters, creating events, etc. Aren't aligned to this pattern completely, because there isn't a "standard" of colors, sizes or styles, some buttons are bright green to highlight their importance, others are deep blue that also stand out from the white background also match with the general color palette from the system and even some have the default style from HTML (grey color and small size). There's no consistency of that design pattern on that "task" yet and needs to be reviewed and applied.

There may be some difficulties that may yield some questions, how do we know the importance of actions, measure them and relate them with sizes and buttons? Do we need any measures, hierarchies or classifications? Personally, I usually rely on "common sense" to see if any action is important enough to be a big and noticeable button or if it's just a secondary thing to have it as a smaller (maybe with a different color) but still noticeable button, but then other issues arise, How do I know if an action needs a button or a highlighted label? For its importance or just aspect in the page? What about pictures or links that open other sections and pages?

The complexity of UI on some products may be too much for "common sense" to handle, and maybe it could be better for this project and future ones, to establish a hierarchy or classification based on standards, design principles, user study, etc. Things that could "help" our common sense.