

Reflection – UI Design Patterns

Over the years programmers have developed a huge number of web pages for a wide range of purposes, from commercial use to managing governmental processes. As thus it's natural that they would find common problems when designing web pages and in turn come up with solutions to solve them every time they pop up. In the case of designing user interfaces we have UI Design Patterns, which are components web developers would recycle or recur to solve common UI design problems. The most common we have are:

- Breadcrumbs: Use linked labels to offer navigation from the front page to one of the following pages in the hierarchy.
- Lazy Registration: A sign up pattern that allows unregistered users to sample what the site has for free or familiarize themselves with before showing them the form to register an account or sign in.
- Forgiving Format: Allows the user to input data in various formats.
- Clear Primary Actions: Make buttons stand out for the user to know what to do. The developer decides which actions take priority to be highlighted.
- Progressive Disclosure: Shows the user only the features relevant for the task at hand, one per screen. It helps reduce cognitive load.
- Hover Controls: Hides non-essential information to facilitate the user in finding the relevant information.
- Steps Left: Shows the user how many steps they need to take to complete a task.
- Subscription Plans: Offer users an option menu for joining at certain rates.
- Leaderboard: Ideal in social media to boost engagement.
- Dark Patterns: Lead or trick users into performing certain actions, often to spend more money or surrender personal information. Must be used carefully and ethically to avoid problems.

After going through these common patterns, I realized that my team's project could benefit the application of the Lazy Registration pattern for the navigation of groups available to join. The prototype of our application could use allowing new users to freely check out the groups present in the directory without registration to give them a sample, and if they find group or groups of their interest to join, the prototype would request them to register a new account or log in to continue the process. This would improve user experience as the users wouldn't be forced to create an account only to potentially not find what they are looking for in the app, feeling like they wasted time. By giving them a free sample of the app before asking them for registration, they can get to see what it has in offer at first glance so they can make a decision to whether create an account to have full access of its features or not.

References:

INTERACTION DESIGN FOUNDATION. (26/04/2023). *User Interface (UI) Design Patterns*. Recovered from <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/ui-design-patterns#:~:text=User%20interface%20%28UI%29%20design%20patterns%20are%20reusable/recurring%20components%2cthe%20specific%20context%20of%20use.>