

Module#2 Accessible Learning

Name: _____ Class number: _____
Section: _____ Schedule: _____ Date: _____

Lesson title: Simplified User Interface.

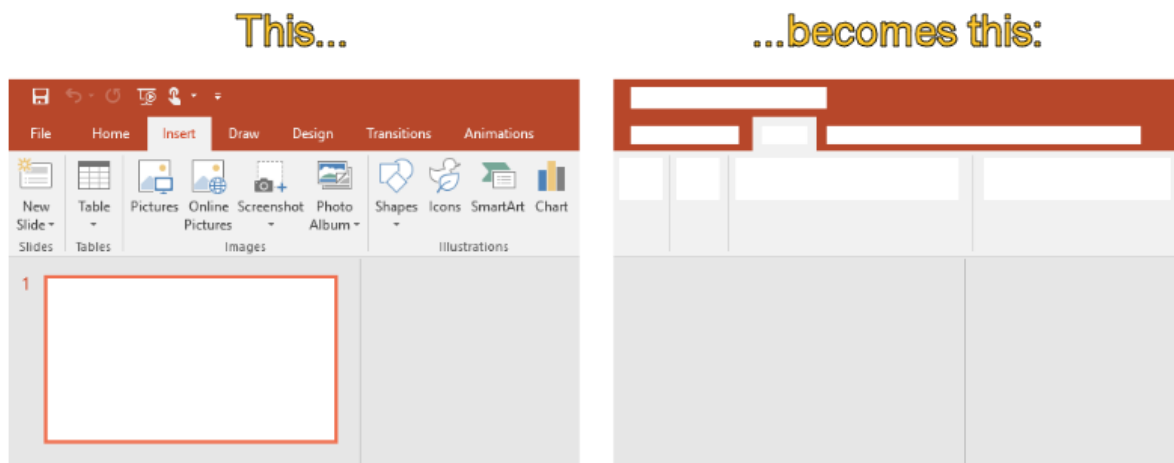
Learning targets:

1. What is Simplified User Interface?
2. How to Create a Simplified User Interface Graphic?

A. Introduction

Simplified User Interface: What is it?

A simplified user interface (SUI) is a visual representation of a software interface that removes unimportant elements and reduces them to simpler shapes.



An example of SUI (pronounced "sue-ee" by the TechSmith User Assistance team).

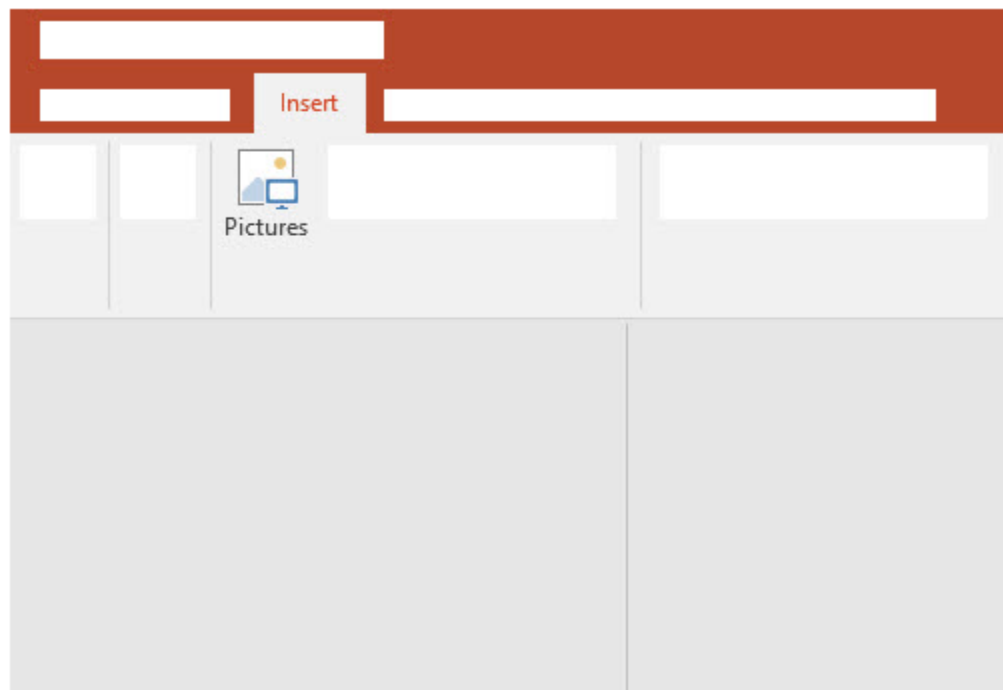
The elements that are fundamental to the instructions or for the user to understand are purposefully kept visible and the SUI graphics serves as a visual aid to support the instructional content given, via the sub- or figure text.

SUI graphics allow for easy-to-follow instructions which enable the reader to get to the point quickly and avoid distractions.

Keep it simple, Stupid!

SUI graphics leverage the famous K.I.S.S. (Keep it simple, Stupid!) principle: systems perform better if they are kept simple and when unnecessary complexities are avoided. By reducing the graphics to a simpler state and by removing distractions, we can allow the user to focus on only the essential information, which creates a better experience.

Josh Cavalier, an eLearning expert, [describes cognitive load](#) as the “amount of information being processed by the brain”. When you reduce the amount of distractions for your audience, they are better able to focus their attention on what is important.



In this example, only a single menu item is shown so as direct user attention to something specific.

SUI graphics build upon these principles: using a simplified user interface in help documentation can aid in user success by giving them only the information they must have in order to be successful, increasing their success and satisfaction with a product.

B. Main Lesson

How to Create a Simplified User Interface Graphic?

1. **Capture the Screenshot** - Using Snagit, capture a screenshot of the user interface you want to turn into a GUI graphic and open it in the Snagit Editor. Crop the screenshot to the dimensions of your desired output.
2. **Simplify the Screenshot** - Simplifying an image is a process that involves covering up and removing visual noise like unrelated text, menus, buttons, or tool tips to reduce an image's complexity and focus attention on the important parts. Snagit provides two ways to help make this an easy process with the Simplify tool available in [Snagit](#).

The first option is to simplify a screenshot manually by selecting the Simplify tool, and using the graphic elements to hide unimportant details in your image and direct attention to the ones that matter. After choosing the Simplify tool, Snagit automatically detects the colors in your screenshot, creates a color palette, and provides a set of tools that match and are ideal for simplifying images.

3. **Save it** - When you are done, save your file as a .png or .jpg file to be used in your documentation. We highly recommend also saving your final image as a .snag file. This is the Snagit project file type and it allows you to reopen the project to edit and adjust the image later on. This makes updating your image easy so you won't need to recreate your GUI graphic every time.

C. Key Takeaways

The benefits of using Simplified User Interface graphics in your technical documentation are twofold: First, these graphics visually enhance your instructions and improve the onboarding experience for your users. Second, the graphics make technical communicators' jobs easier, as they reduce the need for screenshot updates and help with localization.

Integrating GUI graphics into part of one's content strategy is therefore a smart business decision that all content creators should consider, regardless if your favorite aspect is the improved user experience, having evergreen content, or faster localization. Even just a few simplified user interface graphics can make a big difference!

Author:

<https://www.techsmith.com/blog/simplified-user-interface/>