Beyond Putting Lipstick on the Pig

Usability Testing and Designing New UIs for Open Source Projects

What you'll Learn

- How to conduct usability tests
- How to communicate the results of the tests to generate excitement and commitment to fixing issues
- How to divide solutions into quick wins and long-term fixes

What you'll Learn *contd*

- The best way to organize chaos and build a foundation via a style guide and a design pattern library for developers
- How to use modular design to create a sophisticated and highly customizable skin
- How you can contribute to an open source community and share your efforts

What you'll Learn *contd*

- How to get buy-in from the multitude of stakeholders, committees, and service teams without going insane
- How to bring innovation to a risk-averse IT culture without compromising the design

Mark Reilly

User Experience ~ User Interface
UX~UI T-Shirt at UIStencils.com

Contact

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Background
A Common Scenario

A web designer or developer is tasked with adding the institutional branding and colors to a vendor's software.

Background *contd*
A Uncommon Scenario

- Researching Users Needs
- Finding Users Problems
- Designing Solutions
- Working with Developers
- Testing to see If Users Achieve their Goals
- and Iterating

Background *contd*
How was the Product Selected?

- Project Requirements were Drawn Up
- RFPs were Solicited from a Small Pool of Candidates
- Selection is Based on Budget and their Sales Pitch

Background *contd*
The Result of this Broken Process?

A product:

- Pretty Interface Graphics
- Previously Implemented by another Group
- Prioritized systems Integration over user Goals
- Preferred Institutional Graft
- Poorly Implemented Goals

Background *contd*

Then you're Tasked

To 'tart' up the product by adding your institution's branding.

The Muppets Take Manhattan - 1984 *(TriStar Pictures)* Youtube

Aftermath: Unhappy users

- The system doesn't meet their needs
- Users aren't satisfied
- You're frustrated
    - You're unable to get the vendor to change things without additional funds
    - You're not in control of what get's prioritized

How Can We Change this Cycle?

Selecting Open Source products is a good start.

Why Open Source is Different

- *In theory*: you can see the code and make changes
- *In practice*: this is not always that straight forward
  - A certain amount of technical expertise is need:
    - internal resource or a hired specialist

Why Open Source is Different

… "free software" is a matter of liberty, not price.
… you should think of "free" as in "free speech,"
not as in "free beer".

What is free software? gnu.org

Why Open Source is Different

"Free as in kittens"

OMGSoCute.com

Sakai to Replace BlackBoard

NYU decided to move from BlackBoard to Sakai in the Fall 2011.

Sakai

My Workspace | LMS Project Team

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Announcements 🚩
Worksite Setup 📰
Preferences ⚙
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Mark Reilly

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Basic Information

You haven't filled out any information yet

Contact Information

Email   mark.reilly@nyu.edu

Staff Information

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Mark Reilly Statuses are lame 6 minutes ago Clear

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Basic Information

Nickname   alienresident

Birthday   09 April 1973

Personal summary Consectetur stumptown accusamus tof
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                  yn mlkshk dreamcatcher anim, nisi irony
                  whatever tempor viral proident hoodie a
                  dipisicing messenger bag.

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My connections

1 connection

Mark Reilly

My pictures