



## Applied Design Tools & Interfaces

Designing for the Activity - Understanding Use

## Designing for the Activity

### Understand why they use it

Supporting Users Mental Models...

“ so *what is this* **Mental Model**  
you keep *referring to?* ”

Loosely translates in to what we believe to be true.

Based on our experiences and how we  
assimilate new information.

Not necessarily the truth, all it has to do  
is help the user understand.

Not what it really does “*behind the  
curtain*”.

- ▶ Example: Trash / Recycle Bin in  
our OS.



## Designing for the Activity

### Understand why they use it

Supporting Users Mental Models...

“ so *what is* an **Implementation Model?** ”

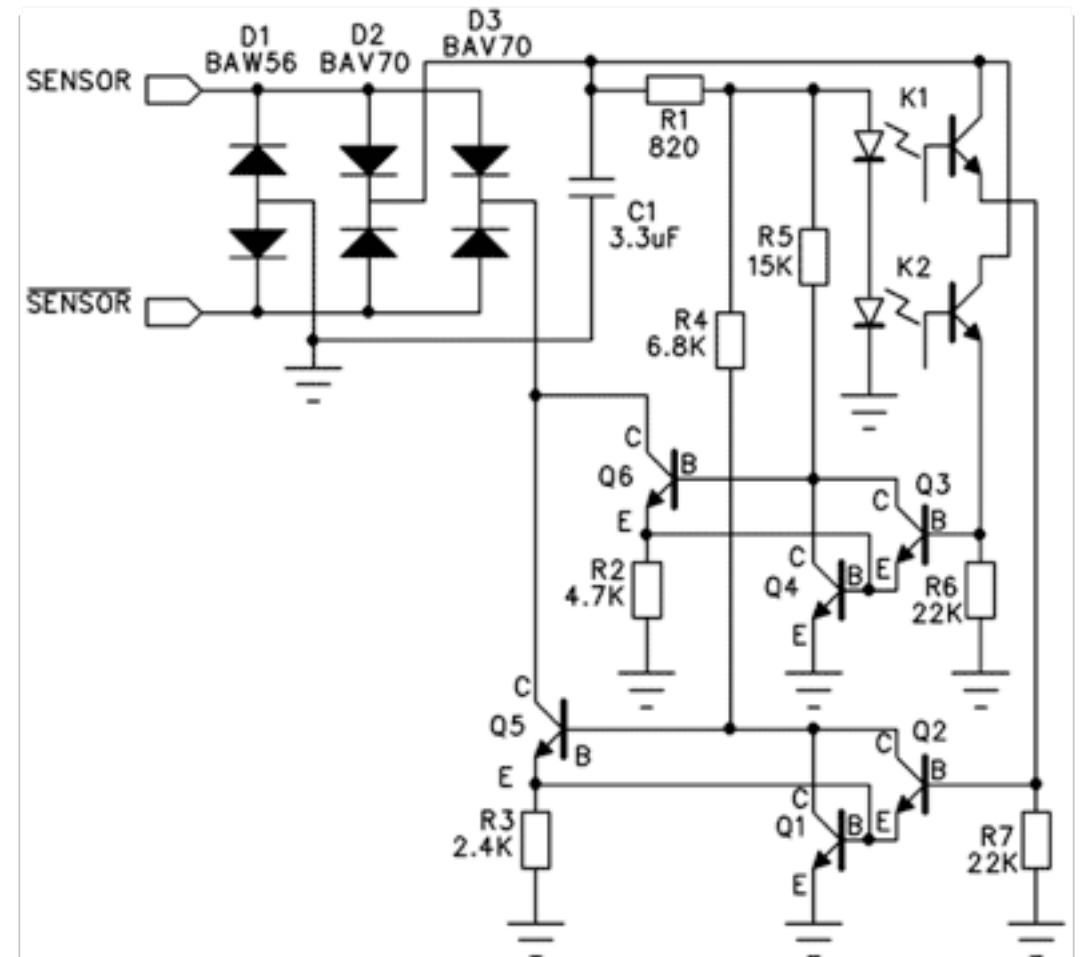
A model designed to reflect the underlying details of a system.

Very technical, explains how a systems works in a technical way.

Has no regard for a base level users.

- requires pre requisite knowledge.

*Example:* Command Line Interface.





## Designing for the Activity

### Understand why they use it

Remember, it supposed to scratch an itch...

“ why does this **work** this *way*?  
shouldn't it **work** *different*?”

People use an app because it lets them accomplish a task.

While they may understand the nuances of using it...

- ▶ asking outright results in hypothetical answers.

Always consider the habits users form with applications.

Users will form a mental model of how they think an application works.

- ▶ sync the mental model to line up with the workflow.



# Applied Design Tools & Interfaces

## Designing for the Activity

### Avoid Feature Cram

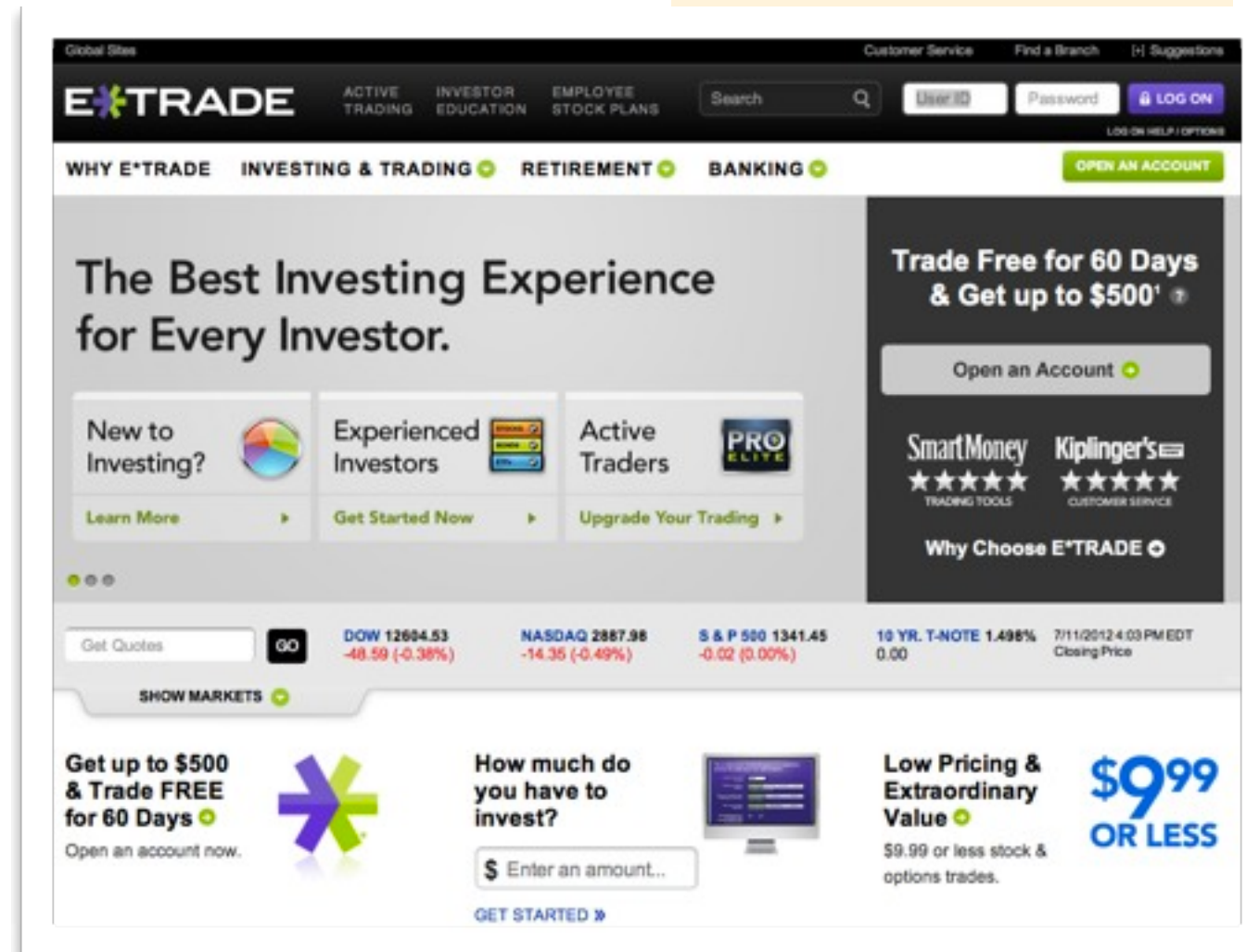
Give them just what they need...

“give them *too much*, and now  
its just *plain confusing*...”

It's tempting to dump a ton of features in to an app  
in order to make it more marketable.

Users will see it as something else they have to  
learn.

Focus on critical functionality that reflects actual  
user workflow!



## Designing for the Activity

Lets prototype this thing!

Prototypes continue to refine workflow...

“ a *version* of a **proposed interface**  
that **indicates** *functionality & workflow...* ”

*Paper Prototypes*

*HTML Prototypes*

*Click Through Mock Ups*