By Benjamin Brown
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My best and worst User experiences

Introduction

Every day I use tens maybe even a hundred different programs on my computer. Each one of those programs has a different user experience which affects the ease of use, functionality and ratings/reputation of that program. For this reason, it is necessary to invest in UX design when making a program because without proper UX the program will fail in its initial purpose or at least it will be less efficient in doing so. Below I have listed two of my best and two of my worst user experiences as an example of the difference UX can make to a program.

Opera GX browser

Like most people I used to use google chrome as basically my only browser until I stumbled over opera's brand-new PC browser that actually ads a load of functionality which chrome simply does not have. Chrome, I think is an example of the result of a monopoly, it is no longer upgraded in a significant way because it is effectively a monopoly. Opera GX added so many features which just made me wonder why google never added them in the first place. A super clean GUI which comes with shortcuts to all popular social media in their unique sidebar which opens them in the sidebar without opening a new tab or replacing your current one. Which social media there are can also easily be modified to leave out the ones you do not use. The browser also comes with a built in, free, add blocker that is actually very effective considering its price tag of zero. It also comes with a built in, free, vpn that can be easily enabled and even customized so that it is only active on certain websites. The browser generally has way more customizability and gives you much more agency over the data they and the sites you visit gather on you. The above points are only the main advantages but there is a laundry list of features the browser has that greatly improve the user experience especially in comparison to the competition.

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Microsoft Word

Microsoft word has gone through many different iterations and each time it just gets better. Aside from aesthetic improvements to the GUI the program is given an update that adds loads of functionality every few years and yet somehow the program remains simple and accessible enough that people like me who only use maybe 5% of that functionality can still use the application comfortably without having to know about all of the functions we don't need. Word has been and will probably always be my text editor of choice due to the fact that it has basically everything you could ever need (for text editing) but it is also very easy to use (as demonstrated by this assignment).

Canvas

I have been at Fontys for almost three weeks and in that time one of the most recurring and obvious lessons has been that canvas is not user friendly. In fact not user friendly might not be the right word when it often doesn't do what its supposed to for no apparent reason. From just today when I experience a broken file search bar to my broken mentor list that doesn't display a profile picture for my mentor despite the fact that she has a canvas profile picture when I look at her embedded systems class (see images below).

Marian Jager
Mentor P-CB-01
m.jager@fontys.nl

Leo Maessen
Mentor P-CB-02
l.maessen@fontys.nl

Antoinette Littel
Mentor P-CB-03
a.littel@fontys.nl

Dr. Georgios Metaxas
Mentor P-CB-04
g.metaxas@fontys.nl

Sabina Pencheva
Mentor P-CB-05
s.pencheva@fontys.nl

Stan van Hartingsveldt
Mentor P-CB-06
s.vanhartingsveldt@fontys.nl

Frank de Lepper
Mentor P-CB-07
f.delepper@fontys.nl

Kalina Petrova
Mentor P-CB-08
k.petrova@fontys.nl

Mark Beks
Mentor P-CB-09
m.beks@fontys.nl

Christina Morgan
Mentor P-CB-10
c.morgan@fontys.nl

Corrie Wolf
Mentor P-CB-11
cp.wolf@fontys.nl

Georgiana Manolache
Mentor P-CB-12

Sabina Pencheva
Teacher
s.pencheva@fontys.nl

Rainbow Six Siege

Rainbow Six Siege is a video game that I love to play however I would be lying if I said that it has a good user experience design. The games UI has a range of issues from not being able to see someone when you click invite friend even though you can see them online in your friends list (this is confirmed to be a bug), to the game randomly disconnecting you if you are playing on the same internet connection (again this is confirmed to be a bug). The game is renowned for being buggy on launch and even though they fixed the game itself since then it still continues to have a very broken GUI which can do everything from causing inconveniences to stopping you from playing the game which in the case of the game is actually defeating the purpose of the program.

Conclusion

User experience design is a necessary component of any program that can make a good program horrible if done wrong and a mediocre program much more effective if done well. Of course, the goal is to get the best of both, but the point is that user experience design is just as important to the completion of a solution. Because a solution is no solution at all if the person trying to use it does not know how.