

Human-Computer Interaction

School Year 2020/2021

Individual Assignment

Good and Bad Design

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Contents

Introduction	3
Example of Good Design: Google Drive	4
Example of Bad Design: ARNGREN	5

Introduction

The aim of this assignment is to give an example of a good and a bad user interface design.

As it is hard to find a perfect interface or a completely bad interface, I will centre my attention on specific aspects of the interfaces.

For classifying what is a good and a bad design I will focus on the following criteria:

- Learnability: if it is easy for new users to learn it, begin effective interaction and achieve maximal performance.
- Efficiency: if, once the user has learned it, a high level of productivity is expected.
- Memorability: if it is easy to remember.
- Error free: if it has a low error rate.
- Satisfaction: if it is pleasant to use.

Example of Good Design: Google Drive

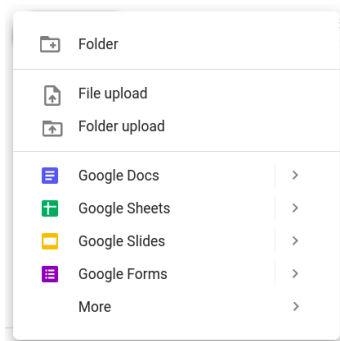
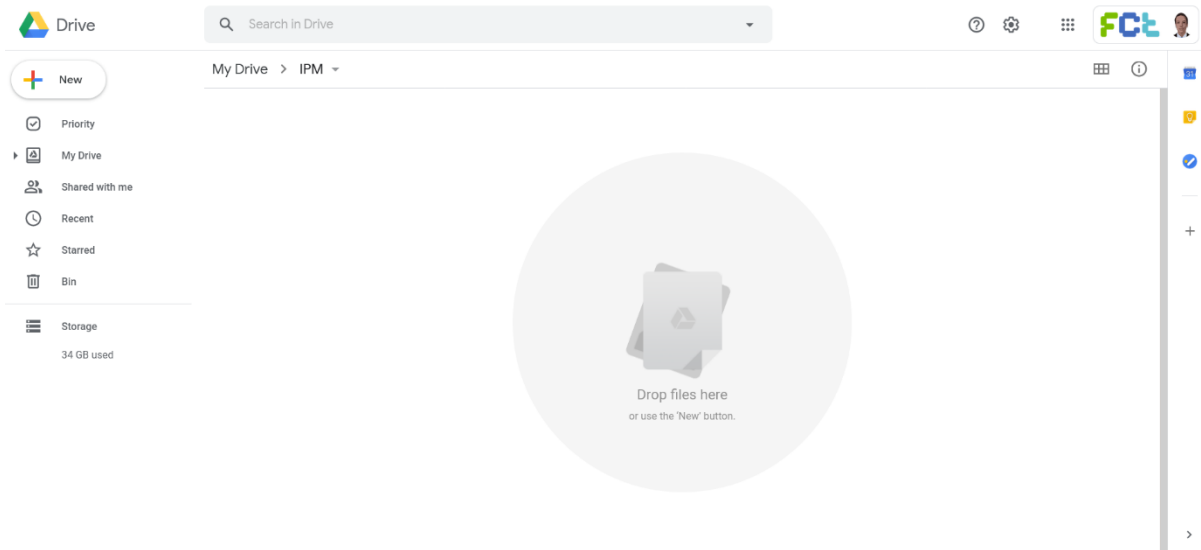


Figure 1 - Menu "New" or Mouse Right Click Dropdown

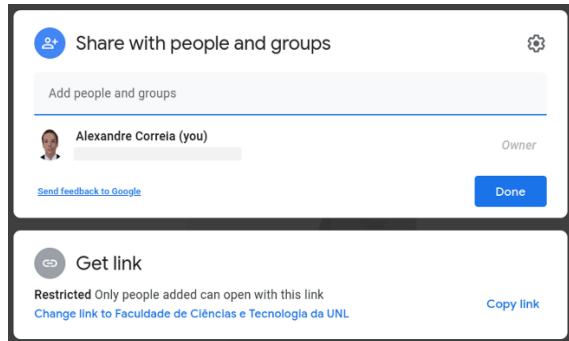


Figure 2 - Share Menu

To illustrate an example of good design I chose Google Drive (<https://drive.google.com>), which lets users to store and share different types of documents.

Two of the main functionalities are to create and upload files or folders. To do that, the user has two ways: click on the "New" button or right click with the mouse in the drop area (where it says "Drop files here") and a dropdown menu will show up (Figure 1) with the available options: create folder, file upload, folder upload and some options to create files.

The other main functionality is to share files or folders. For that purpose, the user can select the files and folders to share and then right click above them and a dropdown menu will appear with some options, which within them there is an option called "Share" and another menu appears (Figure 2) which allows the user to set who has access to those files and folders.

With the description of the main functionalities of Google Drive interface, I can say:

- It is very intuitive to use, and so, it is easy to learn and remember how to use.
- Every one of the main functionalities is simple to use, so, it is also very efficient to use.
- As the interface only shows the possible options for each task, it is almost impossible to commit any errors, and so, it has a low error rate.
- As the interface is simple, clean and intuitive, it is very pleasant to use.

Overall, the Google Drive interface design scores 5/5 using these criteria.

Example of Bad Design: ARNGREN



Figure 3 - Search Box at Top

Figure 4 - Search Box after Menu

To show an example of bad design I chose ARNGREN (<http://arngren.net>), which lets users buy a large range of products.

On the left side there is a menu which allows the users to navigate through some categories of products. However, on the rest of the page there are a lot of product advertisements, with a short text and small images, and two search boxes, looking like a very dense catalogue.

One of the search boxes is located at the top of the page (Figure 3) and the other is located after the menu (Figure 4 - not visible in the first image).

As an initial suggestion to improve the existing webpage, I would propose to make the search boxes easier to find, keeping only the search box at the top.

About the products advertised, they have no order neither organization, some have a border around, some have bigger sizes than others and some have different colours.

Another suggestion would be to present only the main categories of products listed in the main page and, when selecting one category, the sub categories would then be displayed, having this way a more organized layout, improving learnability, efficiency and memorability. Also, the dense catalogue appearance should be replaced by the display of a short number of selected items in promotion, which could include an animation to show the products. A cleaner layout would contribute to improve user satisfaction.

Having described the ARNGREN interface, I can say:

- When I look at it, I get confused about where do I have to look to get what I want, so it is hard to learn and remember.

- As there is no order or organization, there are different font colours, there are different background colours and there are different sizes between the products it is difficult to find anything, so it is not efficient neither pleasant to use.
- Although it is not easy to learn and remember how to use and not efficient and pleasant to use, there is nothing that could generate errors for its bad usage, so it has a low error rate.

Overall, the ARNGREN interface design scores 1/5 using these criteria.