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WEB 425

Discussion 5.1 – Material Design

Material Design by Google is a set of style guidelines and design ecosystem used in Google’s many applications. It is responsible for the recognizable design of Google apps in web form, as Android apps, and even in the Android operating system. Even though Material Design was made by and for Google, it is available publicly and there are many examples of other applications using Material Design.

Personally, I’m currently using some elements from Material Design to prototype an event registration web application for the library system I work at. One great thing I found is that Google has made Material Design elements available as a UI kit for Adobe XD, so quickly throwing together a UI design is much easier.

There are some potential drawbacks to using Material Design. The biggest drawback is simply that it is so recognizable as a Google/Android design that many organizations won’t want their own work to be associated with the looks of Android or Google apps. Another is that in Google’s own use of Material Design there is almost always a liberal usage of motion in those apps (e.g. hamburger menus sliding out) and incorporating Material Design without creating motion/animation of your own can make it seem like something is missing to users who are used to interacting with Google apps (which is obviously a large percentage of users for most applications). Material Design is also such an all-encompassing design ecosystem that it can leave designers feeling unable to innovate visually as much as they would like to.

References

Chapman, C. (2020, February 12). *Why Use Material Design? Weighing the Pros and Cons*. Toptal Design Blog. https://www.toptal.com/designers/ui/why-use-material-design