Why Software Sucks Book Report

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Is there a problem with the way software is written for the consumer? According to David Platt’s book “Why Software Sucks...and What You Can Do about It” there are many problems with the way that programmers code software for users.  In the introduction section of the book Platt goes into how everyone has had a problem with software in their lives. This is problem comes from the programmers, architects, and managers that have lost touch with what the customers. Platt is not saying that these programmers are incompetent but rather they just don’t know what they need to do for the benefit of the customers.

The first chapter of the book goes on to add more details from the introduction explaining that this is a problem that started from the beginning. According to Platt is not that the users are dumb, but its rather the user interface is set up in a way is hard for the user to understand. This is again referred to by the programmer just not understanding the user and what they need to make the software work for them. Platt believe that this is because a programmer is making the user interface for themself in a way that they would like and understand it.

Chapter two is all about the world wide web and how it has fallen short of its true potential. It goes into details on how the programmers have not made it easy for users to use the web. Platt again goes into how the programmers of the sites don't know the user well enough, but this time he goes into how people that shouldn’t be programming a site do it because it looks easy. Platt then goes on to explain that web developers often make the mistake of making complicated things instead of just making them simple. which then leads the user to have to adjust to the programmer instead of the programmer adjusting to the user.

The next few chapter continue on in this adding more details about how programmers seems to have missed the mark when it comes to making software for the user and not for themselves. Platt keeps going back to the idea that the big companies don’t have

In chapter nine Platt states five ways that the user can do something about this software that according to him sucks. The first way is by supporting the programmer by buying software when its good or when it's bad not buying it. Platt believes that the consumer has the power to make programmers change their mindset by not buying as it would make the programmer have to improve their work. The second is by telling the companies about their product, giving good feedback can help programmers make a better product. The third way is by ridiculing a company Platt thinks that the users should use the tools that the web gives us to hurt the ego of big companies. According to Platt this will force the companies to make change as they don't want to look bad in front of their peers. The four solution Platt brings up is to trust reviews on software he goes into this with the example that you would look up a movie review before seeing the movie. Platt goes on to say that research a software before you buy so you know that the software is trustworthy and will get the job you have done. The final way is organization as Platt believes that a single user is not as strong as a collection of users. He goes on to bring up the point that one bad review does not change the opinion of these programmers and companies, but if a large enough group of people give bad reviews it forces change. His final point is that it's up to the consumers to make a change market demand work for software.

I really enjoyed this book and thought it did a good job explaining what is wrong with software today. It gives good examples and it is clear by the end of the book what is needed to be done. I agree with most of the stuff that Platt wrote in this book. Overall in my opinion I think this is a great book and anyone in the computer field should  read it at least once.