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Chata

Chata Application

Development Documentation

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# Design Principles

A high quality website is something that users appreciate and will subsequently return too. High quality websites are obvious and self-explanatory. It is easy for the user to get around the site and make use of all its features; regardless of the device, they are on. They are interesting and immediately grab the user’s attention. Finally, they are useful and provide value to the user. When creating a website it is important to bear these concepts in mind. This section details these concepts and others and how they have been considered for our web application.

Usability is an attribute that looks at how easy a user interface is to use (Nielsen, 2012). If a website is hard to use or difficult to understand, users will not use the site. A website must be easy to learn and quick to use. The site should be clean and simple to understand. User should enjoy using the site and not feel frustrated by it. This should be true for all types of users from beginners to power users and we should cater for their individual needs. Usability is a massive consideration for our application. We need to make sure that people understand what our application is and how it works but at the same time not over-simplifying it. Users should be able to login to the site and instantly understand the sites aim. Without these aspects of usability, we will not retain users and find it difficult to gain new ones.

A successful UI (user interface) needs to be engaging. An engaging UI will flow, be compelling and is a pleasure to use. A UI that doesn’t flow will see users bounce for example, a multi-step signup process that doesn’t make navigation obvious will most likely see users completing the first step but then dropping off because they cannot see how to progress. As well as being able to easily navigate through the UI, it will also have to be something that users want to use. If a user does not want to use the UI, they will not. You have to ensure the UI matches the target audience and works without issues. Creating a compelling UI merges with creating a UI that is a pleasure to use. If your UI is, a pleasure to use users will want to use it. Interfaces that are a pleasure to use will be aesthetically pleasing, easy to use & understand and respond to users’ actions. These properties should be considered during the design process of any UI.

Accessible design is a major key to enable a web application to be successful. It allows stakeholders to target all of the intended users, by designing the product to meet their needs. This concept is produced to ensure all types of people are targeted and not just a specific group, meaning it would enable people with disabilities to use the web application without any difficulties. The user interface will need to be flexible, so that it has the ability to accommodate a huge variety of users and meet their preferences. Inputs within the application will make it simple for the users to fill out; for example, if their phone number was requested on sign up, the keypad provided would show numbers instead of letters. Simple tweaks can make a big difference.  
There are a set of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to ensure that the content on an application meets the accessibility standards for the web. There is a selection of tests that can be checked against the application once completed to ensure that the accessibility of the chat is to the highest quality.

When creating a design for an application, stakeholders should ensure it is rewarding for clients. This ensures clients stay motivated to use the application and lets them know they are doing something right. It makes the application more enjoyable to use, will engage the target audience and most importantly will encourage the user to return. Some examples of a rewarding application could be achievements for using certain functionality or even well designed animations for completing something. Adding small features like this can make a huge impact on an application and will result in more users, a high standard application and most importantly the page being a success. A realistic example of a rewarding design principle for the Chata application would be unlocking certain profile image once the user reaches one hundred messages to friends.

Some other considerations when designing an application include ensuring that the user feels like the content they are seeing is relevant and up to date. Making sure to use the right controls to capture data from the user to reduce complexity when they are providing information in the application. Ensuring that the pages are able to cope with different displays. These are crucial to ensure the user gets a seamless experience regardless of the device they are using to access the application. Additionally, the page should be copyrighted in order to stake ownership over the website and use of media such as sound and animation should be carefully considered in order to prevent the user becoming annoyed, use of this media can also cause the page to load slower.  
A final consideration is the data protection act, users are protected online from the misuse of their data, therefore it is important adhere to legal principles put in place to protect users and also to ask the user’s permission to use their data and ensure that it is made clear what the user’s data will be used for.

In conclusion, design principles are essential in web development and every detail matters however big or small. Clients will notice every feature and will very quickly get an idea on how much effort went into the application. This will make clients instantly make a decision on whether they would like to revisit the site at another date, recommend it to a friend or simply leave the site and never return, therefore demonstrates how important this segment is. By ensuring this section is very well created, it will support a strong and successful future for the project, which both creators and clients will find it engaging, rewarding, accessible and usable.

Nielsen, J. (2012) Usability 101: Introduction to usability. Available at: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/usability-101-introduction-to-usability/ (Accessed: 21 October 2016).