SWE 301

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Case Study: Online Food Delivery App (e.g., Uber Eats-style system)

While using an online food delivery app, I noticed two violations of **user interface design principles:**

1. **Violation of Visibility of System Status -** When users place an order, the "processing stage doesn't show clearly what's happening. The user simply sees "Your order is being processed" without an estimated time or status update. This causes confusion and anxiety, as the users are unsure whether the restaurant received the order or when it will arrive.
2. **Violation of Consistency and Standards** - The app's payment screen uses icons and labels inconsistently. For example, sometimes the credit card option is represented by a "💳" between screens, forcing users to re-learn navigation.

Redesign

1. **Improved System Status Feedback**
    - A real-time progress bar showing stages: "Order Received → Being Prepared → Out for Delivery → Delivered." is added.
    - Display estimated delivery time with live updates and driver tracking.
2. **Consistent Interface and Standards**
    - Standardize icons and labels across all screens (e.g., use a unified "Card" icon).
    - Fix the position of navigation buttons to follow platform conventions (e.g., back button always top-left).

Why the Redesigned Program is Better

The redesigned program enhances **user experience (UX), trust and efficiency**.

First, improving visibility of the system status keeps the users informed about their order, thereby reducing uncertainty and frustration. Real-time updates provide transparency and build confidence that their food is actually on the way. Research in UX design shows that users feel more in control and satisfied when they can see the progress of ongoing tasks.

Second, enforcing consistency in icons and navigation simplifies interaction. Users no longer waste cognitive effort trying to remember changing layouts or meanings. This adherence to **Nielson's usability heuristics** (consistency and standards, visibility of system status) creates a smoother, more predictable experience. The app becomes easier to learn, faster to use, and less error-prone.

Ultimately, the redesign increases **usability, reliability and customer control**. When users can easily track their orders and navigate confidently, they are more likely to reuse the service and recommend it to others. The app now aligns better with the fundamental human-centered design principles, ensuring both novice and experienced users can interact with it naturally and efficiently.