Steam Client Usability Analysis

Maciej Grabowski
s20504

Introduction **3**

Compliance with Heuristics of Good Usability **4**
- Visibility of System Status 4
- Match Between System and The Real World 6
- User control and freedom 7
- Consistency and standards 8
- Error prevention 9
- Recognition rather than recall 10
- Flexibility and efficiency of use 11
- Aesthetic and minimalist design 12
- Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors 13
- Help and documentation 14

Usability Tests **15**
- Participants 15
- Tested Functionalities, Tasks & Measures 16
- Test Data 18
- Test results & analysis 19

User point of view review **20**
- User survey 20
- Survey responses & analysis 21

Accessibility assessment **22**
- Contrast ratio 22
- Resize text & Structure check 22
- Keyboard access and visual focus 22
- Forms, labels, and errors 23
- Moving, Flashing, or Blinking Content 23
- Multimedia (video, audio) alternatives 23

Conclusion **23**

Introduction

The goal of this document is to study various aspects of usability and accessibility of the Steam Client application and verify how well they satisfy certain modern standards.

Steam is a video-game digital distribution service and storefront officially released on September 12, 2003 by the Valve Corporation - an American company established in 1996 by Gabe Newell and Mike Harrington, specializing in video-game development, publishing and digital distribution. The service was launched in the form of a client software (desktop application) with an accompanying website (apart from providing client downloads, served as a medium for quick access while on the move) as a way for Valve to provide automatic updates to their games, however, after sparking a lot of interest and gaining many active users, Steam expanded to distributing and offering third-party game publishers' titles. It's also worth to note that during later development, Valve released a mobile version of the Steam software (intended for use as a so-called "Companion App") which was refreshed this year (2022), although this document will focus strictly on the desktop client version.

Over the course of Steam's development there have been multiple significant additions made to the service in terms of its available functionalities, and so in the end it became much more than just a video-game distribution platform. Nowadays Steam serves as somewhat of a social-media, streaming, web-browsing and a video-game review service all in one. It also supports game development through providing support / tools for digital rights management (DRM), game-server matchmaking and anti-cheat measures.

Steam users are welcome to create their own *Community Profile* with semi-custom graphical designs and add friends whom they may later quickly and easily invite to play online games together utilizing Steam's *Friends* system. The platform also provides entertainment oriented activities such as unlocking in-game or general Steam achievements, that after completion one may display inside of their profile, or participating in community-driven discussions related to a particular game, game publisher / developer, or ordinary topics. Users, of course, have the ability to buy games, adding them to the account's Game Library, and at any time are free to publicly share their own thoughts on the products through written reviews. During gameplay, the platform makes it possible to stream the experience and share it with others, while also utilizing Steam's in-game *Overlay* to freely navigate through the web with the help of the built-in web-browser.

To conclude, Steam became much more than what it set out to be. It is, according to users' opinions, the most stable and reliable video-game digital distribution platform and it's fair to state that throughout the years it accumulated the biggest user-base in the history of its industry.

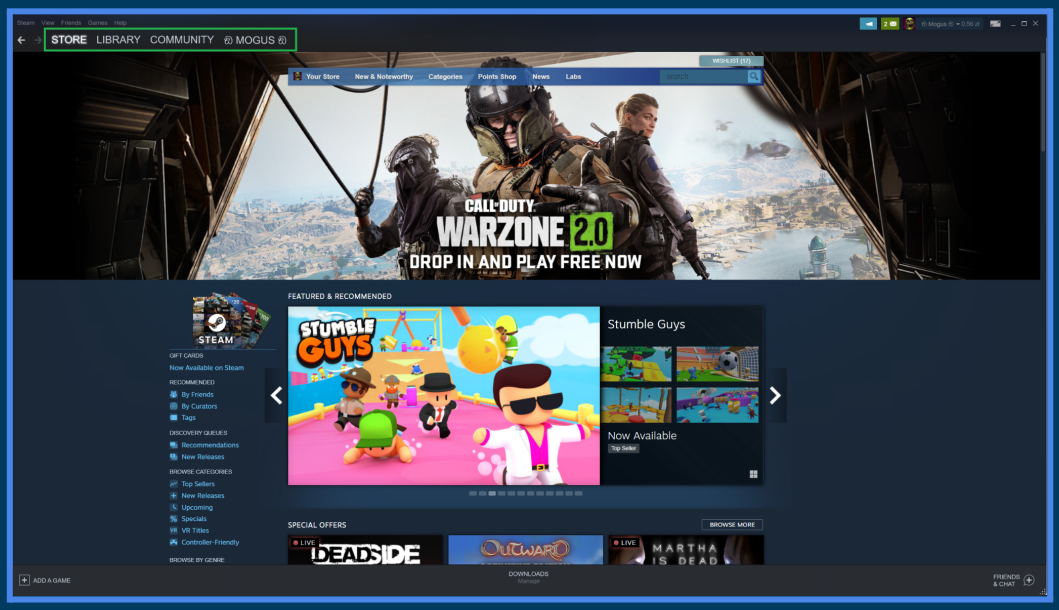
Compliance with Heuristics of Good Usability

This section of the document aims to evaluate the Steam Client's compliance with 10 Nielsen and Molich usability heuristics through looking into each provided principle separately and bringing forth both supporting and opposing examples of its implementation in the software.

Visibility of System Status

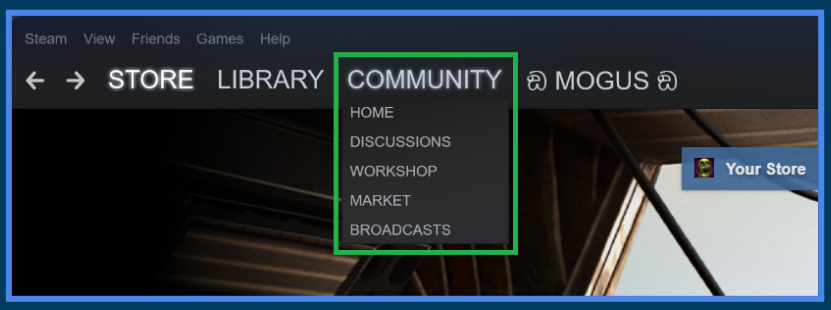
The first heuristic states that "The design should always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within a reasonable amount of time". The Steam Client appropriately complies with this principle when speaking about navigation, general system functionalities as well as the majority of user interactions.

The software, from a user standpoint, can be divided into 4 main screens navigated through by pressing corresponding buttons in the upper-left part of the UI, that are utilized most often. These are, consecutively,: *Store, Library, Community and 'User'* where the *'User'* button is named after the currently logged-in account's username.



The Steam Client launches with the *Store* view open by default. Whenever a user navigates to one of the main screens, the corresponding navigational button is highlighted informing the user about which screen is currently being viewed.

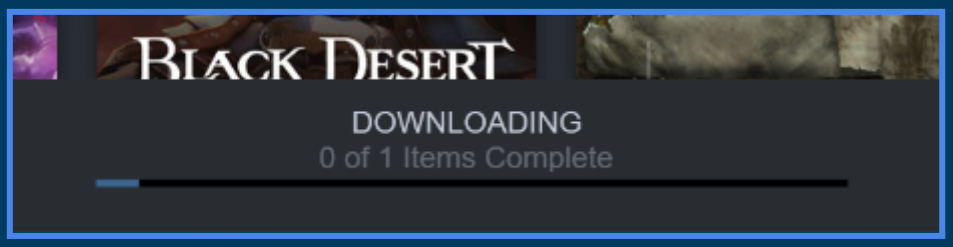
There are, however, more sub-screens available for visiting when hovering the mouse over one of the 4 main navigational buttons or traversing further through the application using the UI, and unfortunately some of those do not trigger any form of visual change when viewing the given screen giving users little feedback about the location of the content displayed apart from the content itself.



On the other hand, whenever anything is viewed in the main window of the software, the Steam Client at all times provides users with the well known '*Go Back*' and '*Move Forward*' arrow buttons allowing for better awareness about the system status.

When accessing Steam's settings, updating the Client or browsing through the *Friends & Chat* list the application displays separate pop-up windows (some of them containing other sub-sections and navigational buttons appropriately highlighted based on which page is being viewed, in case of Client update - a progress bar is additionally displayed) providing visual feedback on the system status.

Whenever a friend starts playing a game, an update for the software is found or a game update is being downloaded, a corresponding notification is sent to the user. Depending on the action, it can be a small pop-up, a progress bar or a visual change in structure of a component (in the case of f.e. adding a game to the *Shopping Cart*, the cart button glows green and the number of items in the cart is visible on it).



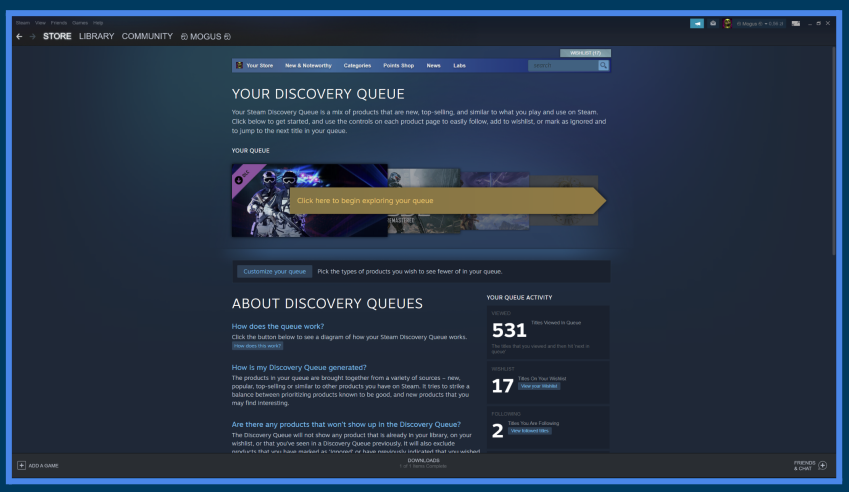
Match Between System and The Real World

The second principle explains that “The design should speak the users' language” and suggests to “Use words, phrases, and concepts familiar to the user, rather than internal jargon. Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order”. The Steam Client again successfully follows this idea in its implementation.

The general UI design of the Client contains a lot of different elements, which may be confusing to some, although most of them were appropriately named using language, icons and graphics aimed to be natural and familiar to all users. The only component that does not fully satisfy the heuristic are the Client’s *Settings*. Some of the options available are not clearly defined, and contain terminology that may not be understandable to a casual person without research. That said, there is definitely some room for improvement.

When it comes to the content displayed, whether that is the *Store*, *Library*, or any other screen, descriptions are kept brief in order not to overwhelm or exhaust users. In the *Store* games are presented in various visual forms, accompanied with a title and a price-tag, redirecting to their *Store* page containing additional information after being clicked on. Similarly with the *Library*, where selecting a game leads to its own *Library* page where a user can install / play it, modify its settings and view some other features like *DLC*’s (Downloadable Content), *Community* section, *Friends Who Play* etc.

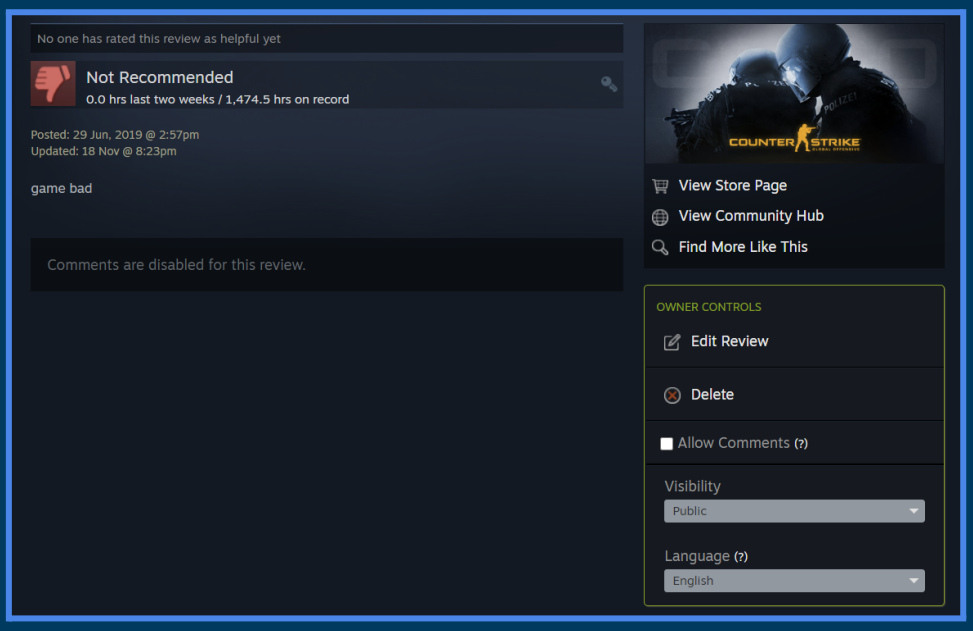
Whenever a new screen is added to the software or the naming is more creative, the detailed information or explanations are provided right after navigating to it.



User control and freedom

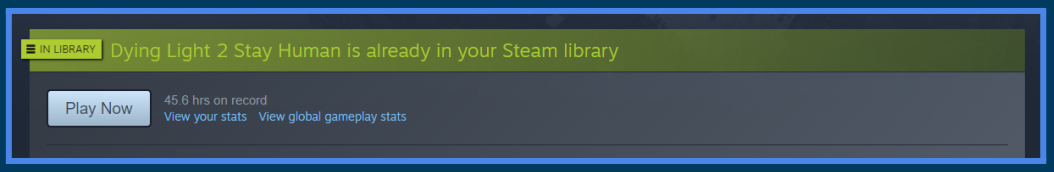
The third heuristic states that “Users often perform actions by mistake. They need a clearly marked "emergency exit" to leave the unwanted action without having to go through an extended process”. The Steam Client respects users’ mistakes and provides help in various ways. Good examples of that are:

- Social interactions such as writing comments on a friend’s profile, inside of any community discussion or providing a review for a game - Whenever users make a mistake, they are free to *delete* or *edit* their response / post / comment at any time after creating it.



- Game Purchases - If any billing information is wrong or a user changes their mind, they are free to cancel their order or edit the provided information at any time before payment. Recently, Valve also included a *Refund Policy* which allows users to refund their purchased games through a simple process, in case of any doubts, as long as the game was not played longer than 2 hours.

- UI Misuse - For example, when a user tries to launch a previously bought game using the *Store* page instead of the *Library* the Client provides an additional *Play* button inside of the game’s *Store* page, so that the user does not have to repeat the process of searching for their game inside of their *Library*.

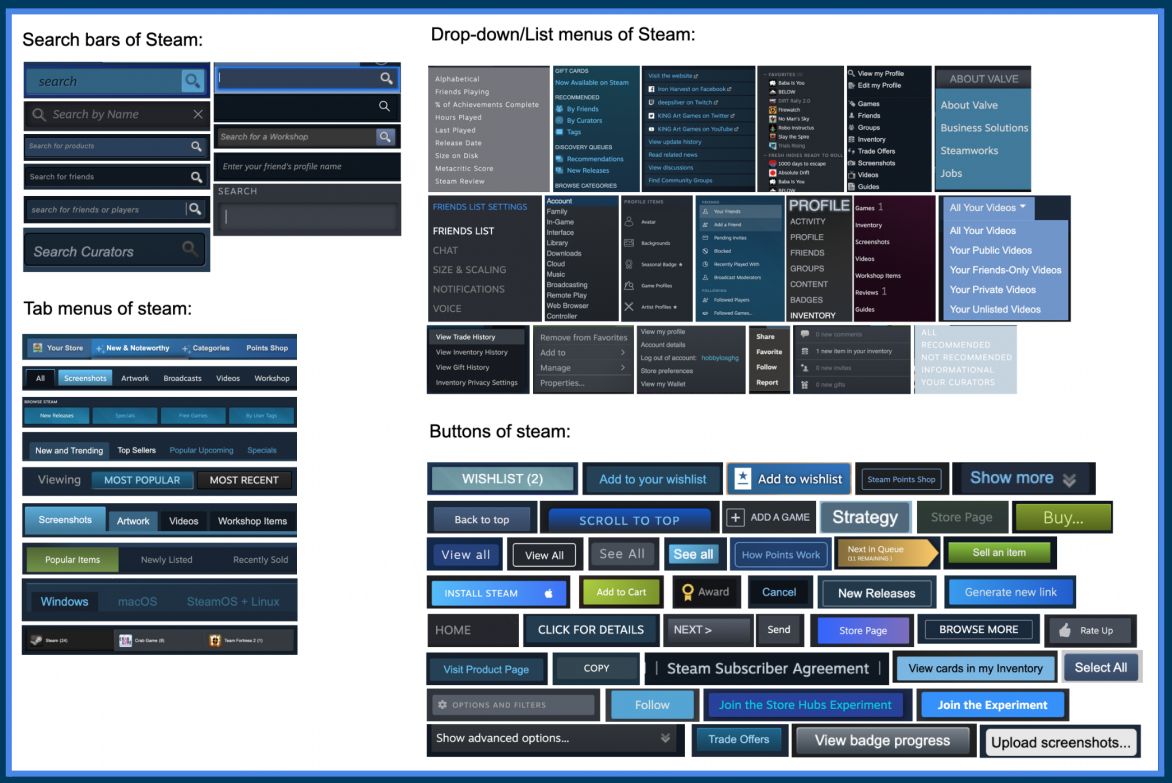


Consistency and standards

According to the fourth principle “Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing” and the software should “Follow platform and industry conventions”. Sadly, the Steam Client struggles to go in line with these suggestions.

First of all, when talking about conventions, there are no such specific industry standards for online game distribution services (apart from some obvious basic assumptions related to promoting and selling video games as a product, and ones based on law(s)). Therefore, it is exceptionally difficult to judge the Steam Client application from that perspective especially since it is one of the first such services to become successful on a global level, and one of the earliest in general. It could even be stretched so far as to say that Steam became the so-called ‘standard’ for its industry.

When it comes to a more ‘broad’ understanding of conventions like some ‘good practices’ for creating reliable UIs, the implementation of the Steam Client definitely falls short of what objectively can be expected from a giant company like Valve. The Client often proves to appear very confusing to many new users with its sophisticated graphical design - unique and not similar to any other digital tool. The biggest drawback of the application is the lack of consistency in its style, many components such as buttons reappear often throughout the UI but with different sizes, fonts and shapes in spite of performing the exact same action. The same goes for various views available in the software, like the *Friends* sub-section of the *‘User’* screen and previously mentioned *Friends & Chat* pop-up window. These serve mostly the same purpose - viewing users’ lists of friends and managing them - yet they are 2 separate elements of the application (the *Friends and Chat* window allows for some small additional actions, although the 2 screens could be unified). The internal consistency is best summarized by the picture below.

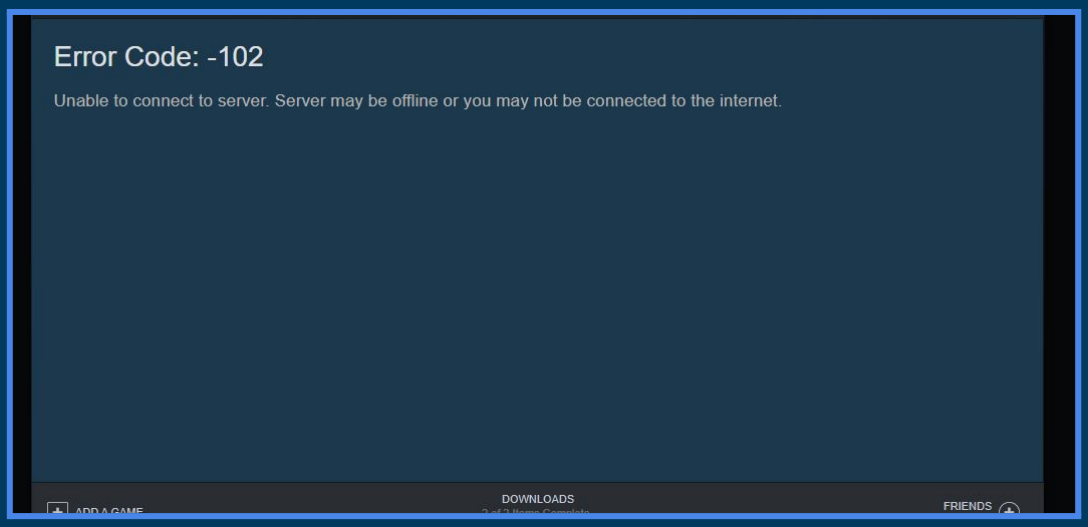


Error prevention

The fifth heuristic implies that “Good error messages are important, but the best designs carefully prevent problems from occurring in the first place” and encourages to “Either eliminate error-prone conditions, or check for them and present users with a confirmation option before they commit to the action”. Fortunately, the Steam Client falls in line with this approach.

There are very few issues that may arise with the software itself. If any, most problems are related to specific games, and should be of concern to third-party developers rather than Vave. It’s worth knowing that the Client still provides a certain option for every game, namely ‘*Verify integrity of game files*’, which usually takes care of the most common game errors.

That said, there is not much error prevention implemented with the user in mind, simply because it is not possible to corrupt the software’s integrity through regular use without tinkering with raw application files in the system. Whenever a problem does occur it is most commonly caused by the connection between the Client and the Server (rarely memory issues) and more often than not it is the Server’s fault. In these situations, the Client provides appropriate error codes bundled with brief descriptions of the issues.

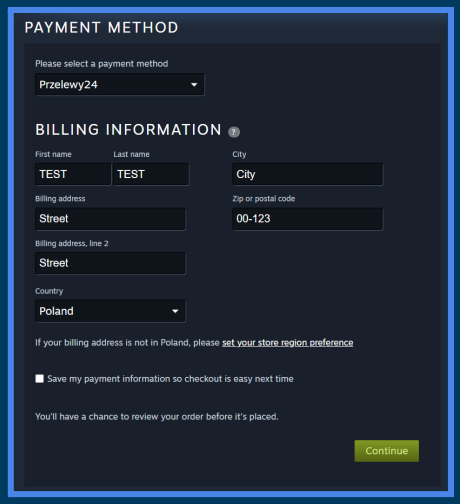


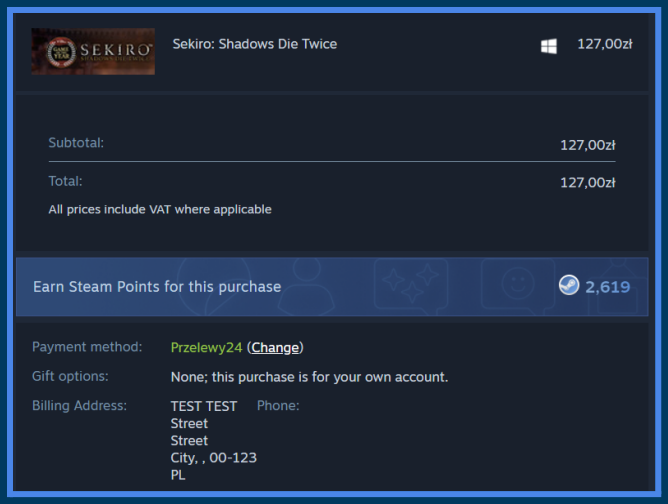
Recognition rather than recall

The sixth principle suggests to “Minimize the user's memory load by making elements, actions, and options visible” and states that “The user should not have to remember information from one part of the interface to another. Information required to use the design (e.g. field labels or menu items) should be visible or easily retrievable when needed”. The Steam Client abides by this idea.

As previously mentioned, the UI of the software is rich in various differently-styled components which leads to some downsides mentioned in the part of this document related to the “Consistency and standards” principle. With the sixth heuristic in mind the advantages of such implementation are clearly visible since, even though possibly causing confusion, the great amount of elements present in every screen of the application means having a lot of functionalities at hand at all times.

That said, the Steam Client allows users to utilize it without the need to focus on remembering certain parts of its interface, or rather certain navigation schemas. A great general example of this is the main part of the UI, the ‘top bar’ of the screen serving as a ‘main menu’ which always has the same appearance and structure no matter what interaction is being executed (and besides that, all screens have the majority of use-case specific functionalities visible). More focus devoted to this principle is shown during making purchases through the software - after selecting the products for purchase and inputting personal / payment information, in the final screen of the order all the information is displayed again so that the user is able to check the correctness of it without worrying about possible mistakes and backtracking.





Flexibility and efficiency of use

The seventh heuristic explains that “Shortcuts — hidden from novice users — may speed up the interaction for the expert user such that the design can cater to both inexperienced and experienced users” and suggests to “Allow users to tailor frequent actions”. The Steam Client partially applies to this approach.

While the Client does not contain any implementation of keyboard shortcuts meant for speeding-up interactions for experienced users, there are some functionalities like the in-game *Steam Overlay* trigger which are strictly bound to certain key-combinations. It is rather a drawback considering this principle as both experienced and inexperienced users have to learn these inputs to be able to utilize all software capabilities and there is no other way around it.

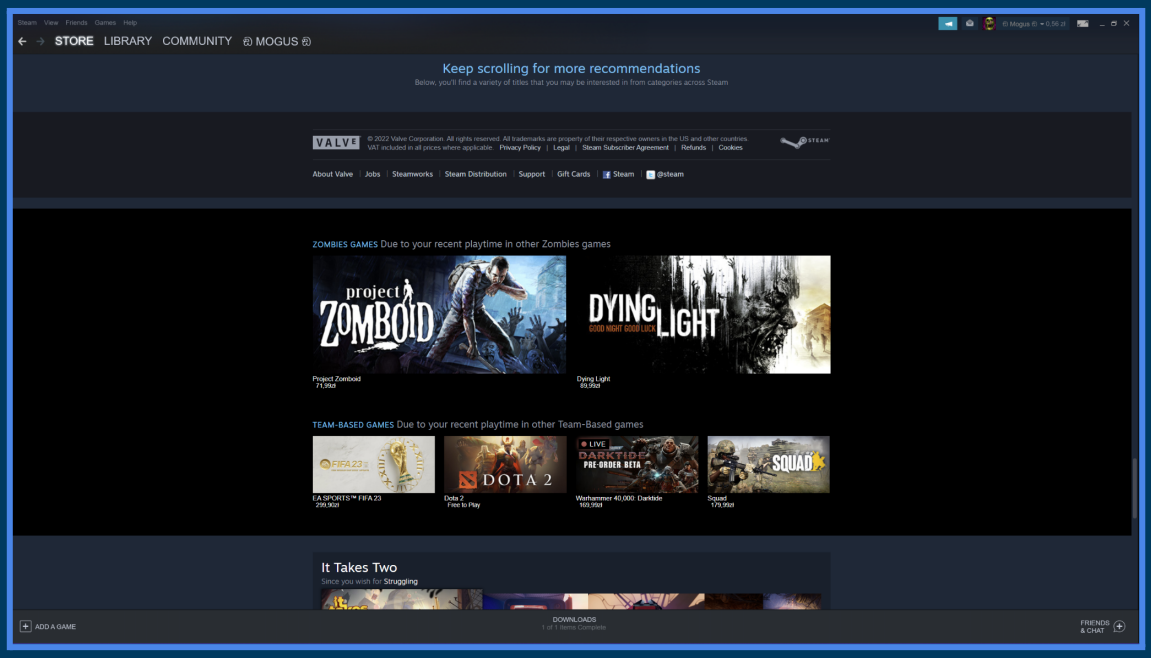
On the other hand, the situation changes drastically when using a game controller with Steam. The software provides a clear and easy-to-use configuration window for customizing the bindings between controller’s inputs and actions performed in the Client, giving users an opportunity to speed up future interactions.

When it comes to personalizing the application, there are some solutions provided to tailor the experience for every user. As an example, It is possible to create both game and friends categories to which a user may later assign chosen titles and people, making future interactions with them more seamless. In both cases there is also a *Favorites* section allowing further experience tailoring.

Aesthetic and minimalist design

The eighth principle states that “Interfaces should not contain information that is irrelevant or rarely needed. Every extra unit of information in an interface competes with the relevant units of information and diminishes their relative visibility”. The Steam Client does not fully satisfy this idea.

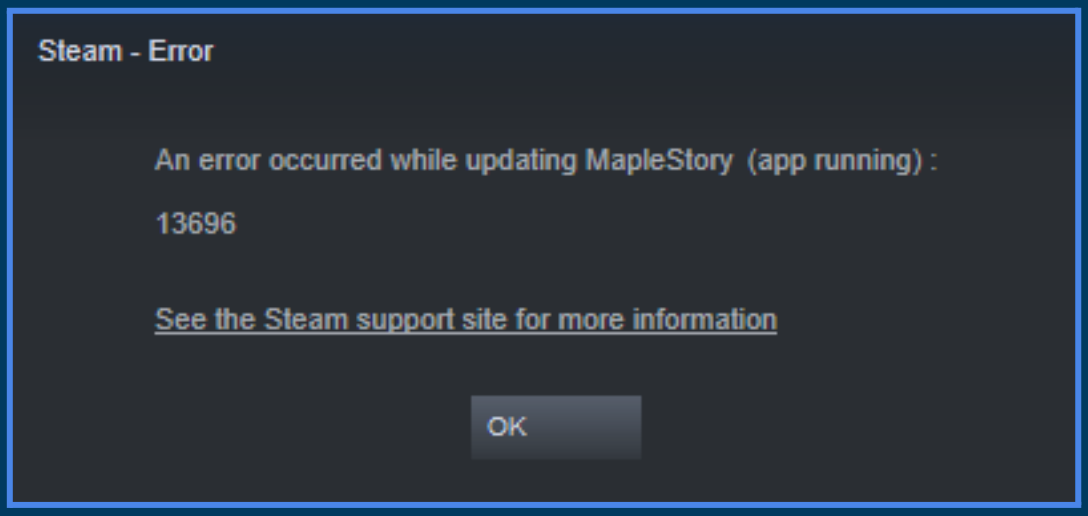
As frequently mentioned throughout this document, the application contains a great amount of various components in each screen of its UI. In most cases, they are strictly related to the functionalities crucial for the given view (which is good in terms of focusing on key elements), although it is objectively correct to state that the user interface can sometimes become cluttered and confusing, especially to new-coming users. Therefore, unfortunately, one could say that there is some room for improvement when looking at the software with this principle in mind.



Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

The ninth heuristic recommends that “Error messages should be expressed in plain language (no error codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution”. Yet again, the Steam Client’s implementation does not precisely follow this suggestion.

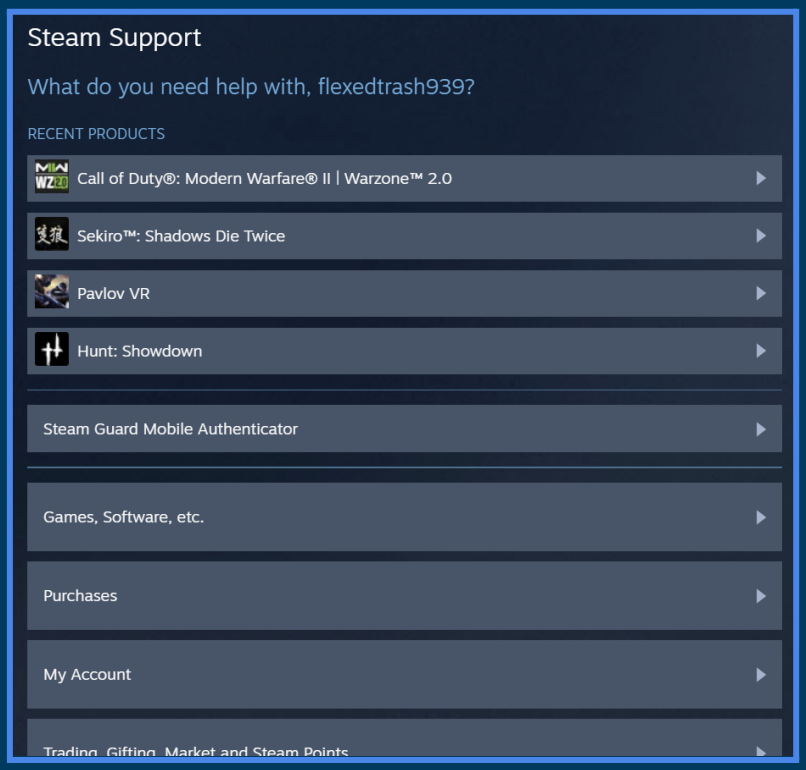
As previously discussed, referring to the “Error prevention” principle from an earlier sub-section of this document, users utilizing the Steam Client rarely encounter errors strictly related to the Client itself. Whenever that does happen, an appropriate message-box is displayed containing a specific error code as well as some brief description of the issue. According to the ninth heuristic, the software’s way of communicating occurring problems to users is rather poor considering the existence of error-specific codes together with (at times) lack of possible solutions provided in the description of the issue. Additionally, the text may also (rarely) contain some technical jargon.



Help and documentation

The last principle states that “It’s best if the system doesn’t need any additional explanation. However, it may be necessary to provide documentation to help users understand how to complete their tasks”. Since the Steam Client may often prove to be confusing and complicated to use, there is some (although not much) help Valve decided to provide with regards to the software.

Namely, there is a *Steam Support* section available inside of the application itself, navigated to through the dropdown list of the *Help* button on the ‘top bar’ of the UI. It forces users to communicate step by step what is the issue, using some common and known examples of what others often experience and either provides some standard troubleshooting tips to the pin-pointed problem or allows users to create a *Support Ticket* in order to get in touch with the support department of Valve with hopes of receiving further help. Additionally, *Steam Support* is also accessible through Steam's website.



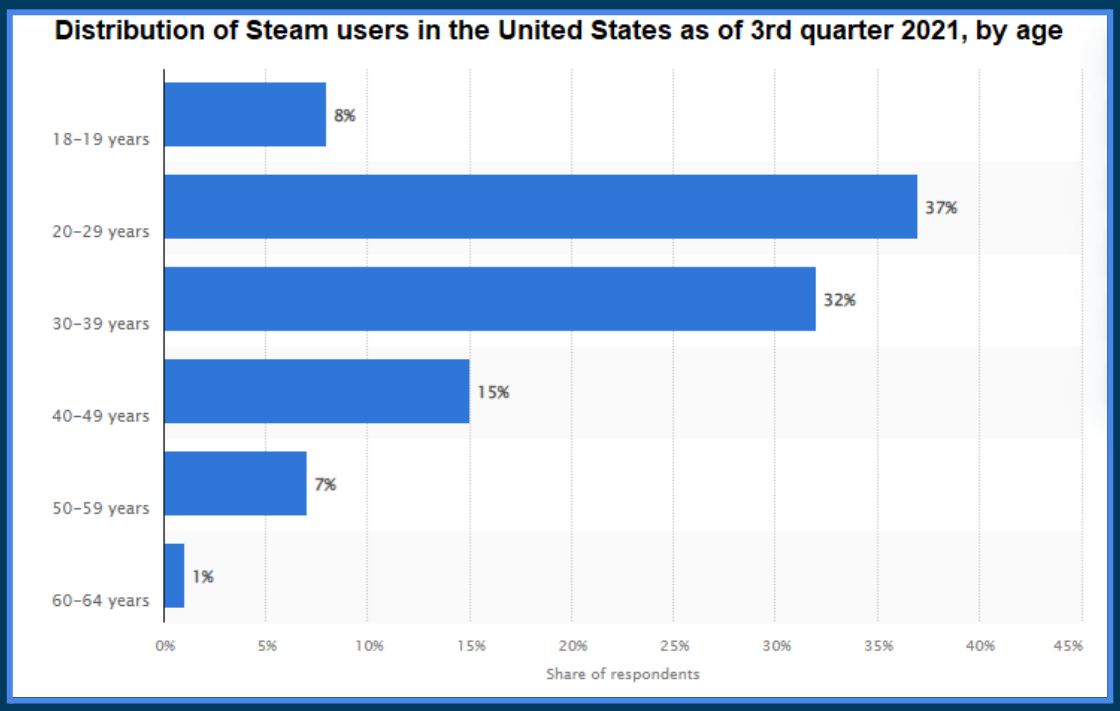
Unfortunately, that is about it. Valve did not release any form of software manual or publish the documentation of the Steam Client. It is worth to note, however, that Steam’s users from around the globe greatly contributed to helping each other through the Client’s *Community Discussions* and by uploading multiple articles and videos to the Web. That said, at the end of the day there are no problems one may encounter while using the Steam Client that cannot be solved with some quick Googling.

Usability Tests

This section of the document aims to yield information about how efficiently different users manage to utilize Steam Client's implementation 'in-practice', through carrying-out a set of usability tests and analyzing their outcomes. Test group identification, tasks and their measures as well as test data and results are described below.

Participants

The test group consisted of 4 participants who were chosen based on the target audience of the Steam Client - people interested in video games, between 20 and 39 years old. Common user age data was provided by a recent research from *Statista.com*.



Presented below, are some key-characteristics of each participant:

Participant	Age	Previous Experience with Steam
1	22	Yes (Experienced)
2	22	Yes (Experienced)
3	20	No
4	25	No

Tested Functionalities, Tasks & Measures

The tests were created with 3 mainly utilized functionalities that the Steam Client offers in mind: buying / playing games, meeting new people and playing games together with others. The main objective for each test was to complete the given task as fast as possible while utilizing the Client's UI to the fullest (visiting a minimal amount of screens). During execution of the tests, each of the participants was logged into a separate, newly-created Steam account. Before the start of each test, the Steam Client was put into the default startup *Store* view. An additional fifth account was also created for the purposes of Test 2. Both Test 1 and 2 had to be completed before participating in Test 3. Below, further descriptions of measures and each test can be found.

Measures

The main measure for all tests was time to completion of the given task. Additionally, the number of screens visited (apart from the default *Store* screen) by each user per test was noted and users could give up at any time during the test resulting in its failure.

Test 1

- Task:

  Find, install and start a free-to-play game called "Counter Strike: Global Offensive".

- Tested functionality:

  Buying / Adding a game to a user's game library - the most basic and most commonly used functionality of the Steam Client. For obvious reasons, a free-to-play game was chosen instead of a paid one - the difference in user experience is minimal, as buying a game involves only two additional steps: inputting some personal information and making a payment.

- Optimal solution:

  Store → Search for game in the *Store* search box → Navigate to game's *Store* page → Install game → Play game

  Screens Visited: 1 (Game's *Store* page)

Test 2

- Task:

  Find and send a Friend Invite to person XXX, their Friend Code is XXX. After your request is accepted, send your new friend a message.

- Tested functionality:

  Inviting a person to a user's *Friends* list - the second most basic functionality of the Steam Client. Additionally, the task involves sending a message to a friend which can be done in multiple ways, some require more time than others.

- Optimal solution:

  Store → *Friends* tab (upper left part of the screen) → "*Add Friend*" → Input *Friend Code* and send request → Open *Friends & Chat* → Search for friend → Right-click and press "*Send Message*" → Send message

  Screens Visited: 3 ("*Add Friend*" screen, *Friends & Chat*, Message Window)

Test 3

- Task:

  Start the game installed during Test 1, then invite your new friend from Test 2 to play.

- Tested functionality:

  Inviting people to play games together - the third most commonly used functionality of the Steam Client. The task involves using the in-game *Steam Overlay*, triggered by the key-combination 'Shift + Tab' with which new users usually struggle.

- Optimal solution:

  Store → *Library* → Search for the game in the list → Right-click and press Play → After the game loaded, launch *Steam Overlay* → Open *Friends & Chat* → Search for friend → Right-click and press *Invite to play*.

  Screens Visited: 3 (*Library*, *Steam Overlay* main page, *Friends & Chat*)

Test Data

Test 1

Participant	Time to Completion	Screens Visited	Result
1	22s	1	Successful
2	25s	2	Successful
3	54s	2	Successful
4	1m 3s	3	Successful

Test 2

Participant	Time to Completion	Screens Visited	Result
1	27s	3	Successful
2	20s	3	Successful
3	57s	4	Successful
4	1m 21s	5	Successful

Test 3

Participant	Time to Completion	Screens Visited	Result
1	26s	3	Successful
2	29s	3	Successful
3	1m 19s	3	Successful
4	3m 34s	6	Failed

Test results & analysis

When reviewing the test data, even taking it at face value already reveals a great difference in efficiency of use of the Steam Client between users who had previous experience with it and those utilizing it for the first time. Both the first and the second participant managed to successfully complete all tests, scoring sub-30-second completion times in each task. It is worth mentioning that even though these users were extremely fast and their time measurements are similar, if we take a closer look at the first test's results, surprisingly participant no. 2 (unlike participant no. 1) did not pick an optimal path to solving the task, launching the game by additionally accessing the *Library* screen instead of doing it right from the game's *Store* page. It shows that even those users who are quick in utilizing the Steam Client's UI may not be fully aware of all functionalities that it offers.

Looking at the other participants' results, a tendency to visit more screens together with a large increase (compared to the two previously discussed users) in completion time of the tasks is clearly visible. It is not surprising considering these users' lack of experience in utilizing the Steam Client. What is interesting is that participant no. 3 showed a better understanding of the application's UI and managed to outperform participant no. 4. It proves how vastly different users' perspectives may be, where some of the software's components perceived as familiar by one are not so intuitive to others. Furthermore, one failed attempt can be noticed during the third test performed by the last participant. Unfortunately, the user missed Steam's notification displayed during the launching of the game, instructing how to access the *Steam Overlay* in order to invite people to play together. The participant tried accessing various screens in the Client, outside of the game, before finally giving-up near a 4 minute mark.

To summarize, a few conclusions may be drawn from the conducted usability tests. First of all, even though the Steam Client's UI is definitely usable and far better than many other digital products' interfaces, it is not very transparent to new-coming users. As understandable as it is, since Steam gathered so many users worldwide during the period of time after its official release and these days they compose the main focus of the developers, Valve should pay some more attention to it. Second of all, more experienced users may still find themselves unaware of certain functionalities that the UI offers. It is concerning, and should be addressed by Valve at some point. In fact, both of the issues pointed out by these conclusions could be easily solved by including some kind of a 'help overlay' in the software, adding manuals or simply following today's standards and providing users with video tutorials using f.e. the YouTube platform. Lastly, the final conclusion which can be formulated after reviewing the test data is that the Steam Client has a learning curve to it. When frequently utilizing it, users develop a better understanding of the application and start to notice the usefulness of its unique UI design.

User point of view review

This section of the document intends to gather views and opinions of previously introduced participants of conducted usability tests on the Steam Client application, analyze the responses and possibly draw some conclusions from said analysis.

User survey

The method chosen as the means for gathering the data was a short survey consisting of 5 close-ended questions since it was the most time-efficient solution for both participating sides, the users and the reviewer. Each question was to be answered on a scale of 1 to 10, with the scale having a different meaning depending on the question asked. Below the list of questions can be found:

1. ***How appealing did you find the Steam Client application's UI visual design?***
   (1 - Very Unappealing, 10 - Excellent)

2. ***How would you rate the difficulty of using the Steam Client application, based on your experience?***
   (1 - Very Difficult, 10 - Very Easy)

3. ***How familiar do you consider the Steam Client's general design in relation to other applications you often use?***
   (1 - Very Unfamiliar, 10 - Very Familiar)

4. ***How enjoyable did you find interacting with the Steam Client / How much did you like the 'feeling' of the application?***
   (1 - Very Unenjoyable, 10 - Very Enjoyable)

5. ***How strongly do you feel the Steam Client application needs further development in relation to 'modern standards'?***
   (1 - Not Needed, 10 - Very Needed)

Survey responses & analysis

Several conclusions can be drawn after reviewing the yielded survey responses visible below.

Question	Answers (Average)
1	7.3
2	5.8
3	6.5
4	7.6
5	4.5

First of all, users' answers to question no. 2 indicate that, while the Steam Client application is not necessarily difficult to utilize, it could use some future development aiming at making the software more user-friendly. This supports some of the claims made in the "Test results & analysis" sub-section of the "Usability Tests". The same applies to the next finding.

While sharing their perspectives on question no. 3, the participants rated the application's 'familiarity' similarly to the difficulty of using it. This provides further explanation for the increase in completion time as well as the number of visited screens seen in the "Usability Tests" result-data of users having no experience with utilizing the Steam Client. Both use-difficulty and intuitiveness issues of the software could be addressed through following the suggestions proposed in the "Test results & analysis" sub-section of this document.

Lastly, even though it is not perfect, the results from questions no. 1 and 4 clearly state that users simply enjoy utilizing the unique design of the Steam Client application. That said, also taking into consideration opinions on the last question, the survey revealed a rather positive view of the Client from the participants' perspective.

Accessibility assessment

This section of the document aims to verify the Steam Client application's accessibility according to W3C's (World Wide Web Consortium) "Easy Checks" accessibility review guide.

Contrast ratio

According to the W3C's guide, "Web browsers should allow people to change the color of text and background, and web pages need to work when people change colors". Projecting this recommendation onto the Steam Client, one unfortunately finds that the software does not abide by it.

Instead of providing options for changing the color-scheme of the UI the Client enforces its own design 'standard', forcing users to adapt themselves to it. To Valve's credit, there is a possibility to create / download and use so called custom '*UI Skins*' through the *Settings* menu of the application, which may help users in tailoring their experience. It is important to mention that these graphical interface layouts are not official, they are made and shared by the Steam community (and are rather unpopular) and, therefore, do not constitute a part of the Steam Client itself.

Resize text & Structure check

W3C suggests that web pages and applications should be implemented in such a way, so that whenever a user decides to enlarge text or change other visual aspects of the content displayed, f.e. resizing the window, the service remains fully functional and no graphical issues arise.

When taking Steam Client into consideration, the software does not provide any way of enlarging or modifying the appearance of displayed text, however, it may be forced to do so through changing the resolution of the display itself. In that case, the Client manages to handle such changes very well without any visible problems. The same goes for any size modifications of the application's window, confirming that its structure is well prepared for utilization.

Keyboard access and visual focus

W3C recommends that "Keyboard focus should be visible and should follow a logical order through the page elements".

The Steam Client's implementation of keyboard access is rather poor. It does work on all displayed pages and supports visual focus, although it is not possible to control the main 'top bar' of the UI (where most navigational components and some core functionalities are located) using solely keyboard input which essentially kills the idea behind it.

Forms, labels, and errors

W3C's guide explains that any form-controls should be keyboard accessible, appropriately labeled and include error indicators as well as filling-instructions. The Steam Client appropriately follows most of these suggestions.

Within the application, whenever any kind of form is presented (f.e. during checkout in the *Store*) all its elements support keyboard access, are correctly labeled according to the guide and include error indicators that work properly. The only, perhaps small, issue concerns the form instructions that should be visible before they are actually needed. In the Client's implementation, the error indicators serve the purpose of instructing users about what needs to be done and because of that, they are displayed only when forms are filled-out incorrectly.

Moving, Flashing, or Blinking Content

According to W3C's guide, any moving, blinking or scrolling content that starts automatically as well as auto-updated information should be stoppable by the user, or have a modifiable frequency.

When it comes to the Steam Client, there are no blinking or auto-scrolled components included in the software. The only case that falls into the category formulated by the guide are moving screenshots from games appearing on the given game's *Store* page. Unfortunately, this movement cannot be stopped or modified by the user in any way, although if anything, it may only be mildly irritating and does not pose a threat to users struggling with visual processing disorders.

Multimedia (video, audio) alternatives

W3C argues that any multimedia present on a page should have available alternatives, such as transcripts or audio descriptions. Additionally, videos or audio recordings should be keyboard accessible and provide users with optional captions. Any automatically played content should be controllable and best started without audio.

The Steam Client supports multimedia content in the form of video recordings (screen-captures) of games, available in the given game's *Store* page, serving the purpose of advertising. These videos are automatically played, although this can be controlled by users through an "*auto-play*" toggle, and always start muted. On the other hand, there are no alternatives and no captions provided, and additionally, the media player is not keyboard accessible. That said, it is fair to state that the Steam Client does not fully follow the W3C's idea.

Conclusion

To conclude, the Steam Client has been thoroughly researched from various perspectives of usability and accessibility taking into consideration advantages and disadvantages of its implementation, results of formulated and conducted tests as well as users' opinions. The application proved to be successful in following certain 'good practices', while it failed to fully satisfy others. All in all, the Client's design is definitely well thought-out and, even though some issues have been revealed, it constitutes a great piece of software.