Abdulrahman Al-Nachar

CS319 – 3/2 Colors, Sounds and Motion

Colors have been shown to have their unique psychological effects on users when using a software system, they can affect everything about the system from how successful it becomes to user retention and everything in between, when choosing colors for software, the designer must factor in the local cultural significance so that it appeals to the targeted audience, another factor to consider is user guidance and visual hierarchy which is using colors and how they differ to guide the user from start to finish in an organized and structured fashion when using the software, A third to factor when picking colors is to consider emotions and moods and to use color to trigger the preferred emotion for the customer like using warm contrasting colors to draw attention and energy for a CTA(Call To Action) to get users to take action, or if the intent of the software to get users relaxed and calm then use colors that effectively achieve that like cool colors, Colors gives a brand its identity so it is important to stay consistent with colors around the brand so people can identify particular colors with certain brands.

Understanding colors and utilizing findings of research around color helps me as a designer to understand the psychological and emotional effects of color which in return helps me with design software that efficiently achieves its goals through enhancing the effects of having an impactful design. For example: I would design the software to have a hierarchy of colors and contrasts to serve as a guide for users to finish their tasks in the software, I would make sure that colors are representative of the brand and create an aesthetic that is recognizable with the brand, I would make sure CTA option in the software is designed in a way to induce buying emotions using color, sound and motion.

Sound plays an integral part in UX and it humanizes the whole experience to the user, Humans always relied on sounds for communication that’s how we talk so having software that doesn’t have sounds attached to it seems odd and unfriendly to a lot of people and not engaging enough, Sound helps with providing feedback to the user when something has been done like download completed or a notification received, Another great sound can add to software is that sounds can be linked and recognized with a brand, My personal earliest memory of an effective sound that I linked with the brand and provided feedback at the same time was the older Samsung whistle sound when a new notification is received that first started around 2012/2013 I thought that it was a genius marketing idea at that time to have Samsung devices make that sound to engage existing customers and market to other listeners to buy one of their devices

As a designer planning to incorporate sounds into software, I would think of it from the perspective of the user and the functionality of the software and what I as a user would like to hear at every step of the experience, for example, if I was designing a health and fitness tracking app that sets goals for customers to stick to every day I would design so that every day when users meet their goals it would make a sound that represents achievement to invoke good emotions and feeling for customers that way it is a small step that encourages them to stay on track every single day.

There are some limitations to sound and colors in UX like overstimulating, some users would find colors and sound to be too much and make the system and brand look a bit desperate, personal/ cultural interpretations are another potential limitation and since software has a targeted audience and can’t limit specific users from using it sometimes you get users who misinterpret designs due to their cultural or personal pre conditioning, Other times sound and color feels underwhelming and would require a third dimension that would bring them to life like using interactive motions. But in the end, one must consider and factor in the goals of the software and the intended audience and their cultural/personal characteristics to then design software that effectively improves it in achieving its goals with solutions better suited for the targeted audience's average profile and characteristics and goals.