Designing for Modern UI: Windows 8 and the New Windows UI Design Language

* This curriculum provides foundation information and tutorials on how to design for the Windows 8 UI **NEW WINDOWS UI** language;
* The content can be used in class such as part of a UI/UX class or for self-paced independent learning;
* The content is at an **introductory level**;
* **Prerequisites:**  none; content is suitable for any college or university student, including business, social sciences, liberal or fine arts, students who may have little or no computer programming background;
* **Audience:**   **any audience**;  no programming skills required; early modules start from basics and build skills required for more advanced topics;
* Because this content can be used as part of an **academic class** it includes background information, describes problems that are solved, and provides background information as well as terminology that relates to Human Computer Interaction (HCI).

## Assets:

* 11 written guides
* 11 videos
* Sample applications, assets, and templates
* Available instructor resources

## Topics covered

[Module 1: Overview of New Windows UI as a design solution](#_Toc330455813)

[Module 2: User Experience Design fundamentals](#_Toc330455814)

[Module 3: Applying User Experience process to New Windows UI applications](#_Toc330455815)

[Module 4: Introduction to New Windows UI Design Principle: Do more with less](#_Toc330455816)

[Module 5: organizing app features to fit your scenario](#_Toc330455817)

[Module 6: Introduction to New Windows UI Design Principle: Pride in Craftsmanship](#_Toc330455818)

[Module 7: Being fast and fluid, and authentically digital](#_Toc330455819)

[Module 8: Introduction to New Windows UI Design Principles: Win as one – using charms and contracts](#_Toc330455820)

[Module 9: Introduction to Live Tiles and notifications](#_Toc330455821)

[Module 10: Designing for multiple screens and resolutions](#_Toc330455822)

[Module 11: App store Submission Process](#_Toc330455823)

# Module 1: Overview of New Windows UI as a design solution

Module 1 introduces key principles to those familiar with new Windows UI, and those who have yet to be exposed to the new Windows UI Design style used in the Windows 8 platform. Module 1 serves as the foundation for modules to follow.

*In this module students discover the background behind new Windows UI and how new Windows UI style design relates to established design principles. Students also discover how new Windows UI design has been adapted to offer a consistent user experience using various new Windows UI components such as:*

* *Charms for Search, Share, Settings, and Devices*
* *Touch language for interactions*
* *App bar for commanding*

## Concept of New Windows UI Design style applications

Students discover the history behind new Windows UI and how it relates to established design principles.

* Swiss Design
* Traffic signage
* Based heavily on type and grids
* Emphasis on reduction, cleanliness, readability, simple and beautiful visuals

## What new Windows UI means to design

For the first time the Windows OS can run on multiple devices. These range from desktop, to table, to all-in-one devices. This opens up the opportunity for creators of Windows 8 applications to have a user base unlike any other version of Windows. Students see examples of how new Windows UI style designs appear in different form factors and how the layout of the design reacts to different size screens.

## Definition and demonstration of new Windows UI design

New Windows UI design language is rooted in Swiss design, and has the same emphasis on reduction, cleanliness, readability, simple and beautiful visuals. Included in this module is a general overview that provides an understanding of charms, app bars and contracts into new Windows UI applications.

## **The new Windows UI design views**

Students are introduced to snap and portrait views. They are shown how the layout stays consistent, yet adapts to the new size.

## Video Demonstration

This video demonstrates how new Windows UI works on a touch device and shows key terms in action on a device.

## Summary and Q & A

Questions about the history and background of new Windows UI design are included.

# Module 2: User Experience Design fundamentals

This module includes a general overview of building a good user experience. A typical design process is defined and demonstrated. The module also emphasizes the planning process.

*After completing this module a students will have a clear understanding of the steps that are typically followed by user experience designers, and how it relates to building a successful application. This general overview of the user experience process serves as the foundation for building apps using new Windows UI style design.*

## What is User Experience

* Definition of user experience and what it means to an application designer.
* How good design contributes to creating successful applications.
* The application design process:

## Video demonstration

This video shows the process of creating an application using the typical processes followed by a UX designer.

## Summary and Q & A

Questions relate to the typical steps that are followed in creating successful user experiences and challenges faced by designers.

# Module 3: Applying User Experience process to New Windows UI applications

In this module students take fundamental information provided in Module 2 and use it to start creating their own application. This module allows students to start thinking about how they should approach building their own new Windows UI style design application from scratch. If students do not have an application that they want to create in mind, sample categories are provided.

*After completing this module students will have a clear understanding of how they control the success of their application by investing the time to think about user scenarios and how those scenarios affect the design of their application.*

## Review the five steps to creating a successful new Windows UI style application

In this section students are briefly introduced to the steps need to create a successful new Windows UI style application.

## Selecting the application category from list of samples suggestions

In this section students are encouraged to choose one of four sample categories:

This sample category is to be used throughout the remainder of the modules to help the user relate what they learn with an actual new Windows UI design project of their own.

## Creating a “Best-At” Statement

In this section the participant is expected to create their own “Best-At” statement for one of the example categories, or for a custom application that they wish to create.

Included in this module are steps that are helpful when creating a “Best-at” statement. Samples of strong “Best-At” statements are provided to provide tips and help students understand what is expected in a successful “Best-At” statement.

## Aligning scenarios with “Best-At” statement

One sentence

The section also includes examples of scenarios vs features and how you tell the difference.

Students are encouraged in this module to brainstorm and create a list of at least 10 scenarios that align to their “Best-At” statement.

## Video Demonstration

The video includes live video and PowerPoint presentations to demonstrate a user mapping out situations where their application may be used, sketching out ideas and scenarios.

## Summary and Q & A

Includes questions about the requirements needed for a successful “Best-At” statement and about the differences between features and scenarios.

## To-do in this module

In this module students select a category for an application that they want to create. They also decide on a “Best-At” statement. Students also brainstorm to create scenarios that reflect their “Best-At” statement.

# Module 4: Introduction to New Windows UI Design Principle: Do more with less

This module builds on the exercise in Module 3 where the students created a “Best-At” Statement and then created scenarios that followed user’s needs. In this module students start recognizing the relationship between the user experience processes, discussed in Module 3, and how it relates to new Windows UI style designs and Windows 8.

Students are introduced to new Windows UI navigational patterns and select the one that works best for their application. Discussion of how using the correct navigational pattern helps to follow the “Less is more” new Windows UI design concept.

*In this module students discover how to pick appropriate scenarios by eliminating those that do not directly relate to their “Best-At” Statement. They also discover that Scenarios are goals that users want to achieve using your app. They are also introduced to new Windows UI style navigational patterns.*

## Sorting through Scenarios and Features

In this module, students sort through their scenarios, created when brainstorming in Module 3. The goal is to find scenarios that work best for their application and support what their application is best at. Examples are provided to help define what a good scenario is.

## Understanding new Windows UI style navigational patterns

In this module students discover the new Windows UI style navigational patterns, flat, and hierarchical

## The importance of the Hub

The app is the hub: The hub is the landing point; it tells the users *why* they should use your app. It is not a simple table of contents, but makes a statement about why your app is better than its peers in its category.

## Video demonstration

In the video demonstration students are introduced to parts of an application that are considered chrome and the navigational patterns that exist in Windows 8 to start eliminate chrome distractions. Students are shown how using Windows 8 distraction-free patterns, such as App bars, Charms and Semantic Zoom can help them succeed in the elimination of unnecessary elements in their applications.

## Summary and Q & A

This includes questions relating to selecting effective scenarios as well as questions about new Windows UI style navigational patterns.

## To do in this module

In this module students decide on the navigational pattern that works best for their application. Using pencil and paper, or post-its, the participant sketches out which scenarios appear in the hub and how those scenarios are represented in the section and details pages. Students are reminded to treat their hub as though it is a cover to a magazine.

# Module 5: organizing app features to fit your scenario

In this module designers discover the relationship between features that are to be included in their application and the scenarios they have created. Students then discover how to organize features as commands on the canvas, or in the App bar. The App bar is a unique method for presenting features in a new Windows UI app that is only available in the Windows 8 platform.

## Learning Objective

In this module students discover that scenarios are the reasons why people will use their application and that features are how they will achieve those scenarios. Students also discover how to differentiate what is a successful feature and how to organize features and place them appropriately in the App bar. The use of the App bar is important enough that it should be addressed in the information architecture, or flow of your application in the planning state.

## Brainstorming and selecting features

A good feature is one that makes one of the scenarios great and is useful to most users. After the participant brainstorms features they will review them to remove unnecessary content and features.

## Sorting features into related sets

Once a participant decides upon the features that are to be included in their app they group related features together. This helps the designer to create a more organized placement of features in the App bar.

## Organizing features contextually

It is important to think about which features will work with each screen. To build a successful new Windows UI app the features should be specific and be applied contextually to user selections.

## Assigning features to the App bar

Assigning the features to the App bar is one of the most important steps to creating a great user experience. It is important that a designer look at each screen and determine what feature is available on the app when nothing is selected, and when there is a selection.

## Summary Q & A

This includes questions about what comprises good features and about the placement of features in the app bar.

## Video demonstration

Using the restaurant example, the suggested placement of icons (features) in the app bar is discussed as well as methods for grouping feature icons together. The specifics for placing icons on the left or right, depending upon what kind of feature it represents is also covered. In the demonstration fly-outs are discussed and how they can be effectively used to keep grouped features together.

## To-do in this module

Students brainstorm to create features that will work for their application. They then sort through the list of features to find those that best support the scenarios. These features are then mapped to the appropriate screens in their application. They are to consider the keys to great feature placement when assigning features to the app bar.

# Module 6: Introduction to New Windows UI Design Principle: Pride in Craftsmanship

When designing for new Windows UI, sensitivity to details is important as each pixel makes a difference. Use of content on the grid and how type is used also carries on the message of “less is more”, as the content is used as the navigational elements.

*In this module students learn specifics about the grid used in new Windows UI style design and how type is handled using the typographic grid and the type ramp. By the end of this module students will feel confident designing their new Windows UI style application by taking advantage of the grid for visual content including type.*

## Understanding and using the basic building block of the new Windows UI grid system

Students gain an understanding of the basic building block for creating new Windows UI design applications. The use of a grid in the new Windows UI design language goes back to its inspiration from Swiss graphics design, particularly as applied in modern transportation systems – on signage and maps.

Using a grid is about communicating essential information in an honest and beautiful way. The focus is on cleanliness, readability and alignment so that content pops for easy and direct consumption.

## Definition of a grid

The grid offers the opportunity to present content in a clean, straightforward, readable manner through alignment. When using the grid in a new Windows UI style design there is no visible grid lines, the content itself and the space around the content.

The new Windows UI style grid is based upon a base unit: 20 px unit divided into 5 px sub units.

## Discovering how to design on the grid proportionally

When you place elements (text or graphics) on to a grid and you align to the gridlines, their heights and widths will always be multiples of a base unit. In other words they will be proportional to each other.

Use of proportions in a layout creates a visual hierarchy that allows users to easily scan and discover information.

## Using the Typographic grid

New Windows UI is founded on clean typography. Type in a new Windows UI style design application creates impact, hierarchy, direction, and rhythm through size and weight.

## Using the Type Ramp

A Typographic ramp is used to establish a sense of hierarchy for the content. A careful choice of proportions and granularity help people easily establish an understanding of the structure of the content and see how a piece of content fits within the overall hierarchy.

## Understanding the new Windows UI Silhouette

Each new Windows UI style application has a silhouette that helps it to be recognized as a new Windows UI application. The silhouette helps to provide visual cues so users know how content flows. The consistent top, left, and bottom margins forms a ‘C’ shaped silhouette, along with the intentional “peeking” of more content on the right indicate the panning direction and that there is more content on the right.

## Additional thoughts on new Windows UI design layout

By using proportion you can change the standard layout into many variations. Also keep in mind that if you focus your application on what it is “Best-At” the best layout will fall into place.

## Video demonstration

This video includes live video and PowerPoint presentations covering the topics in this module.

## Summary and Q & A

Questions that relate to the standard new Windows UI grid and the basic building block, Type Ramp, and new Windows UI Silhouette.

## To-do in this module

Students start sketching ideas for the layout of their application. The designs include text that specifically describes contents on the hub, sections and details. The text should follow the type ramp specifications. Content can be proportionally adapted to create a custom layout.

# Module 7: Being fast and fluid, and authentically digital

Animation is a core part of the new Windows UI design language, just as much as typography or imagery. In this module students learn that motion is more than just visual adornment in new Windows UI design; it provides information and helps people understand context and information. Also included in this module is a section on being authentically digital. This section covers the topic of how designers can creatively interpret and display information differently because their application is on-screen, created from pixels, which allows them much more freedom in design.

*In this module students find out about how animation, and glyphs, and other metaphors that can be used in a new Windows UI app. Students discover the Animation Library and how it provides a set of pre-designed motion tailored for common app scenarios.*

## Using the animation libraries

There are over two dozen pre-designed animations. Some of the animations are baked into the controls already, but others can be easily added to an application. If a design specifies what UI elements they would like to animate, using one of these animations from the library, all the motion and timing is automatically addressed.

In this section students gain the understanding that animations in Windows 8 are purposely scenario-centric and are designed to convey specific information. You can tell by the names when each scenario should be used. There are no generically named animations that do not relate to the scenario that they relate to.

## Thinking about ergonomics and touch

In this section students discover that they need to consider how their application is going to be used. Is it an application that will be used while someone is standing, sitting at a desk,. Layoing on a sofa. These considerations are important as they determine the type

## Summary and Q & A

Questions that relate to the standard new Windows UI grid and the basic building block, Type Ramp, and new Windows UI Silhouette.

## Video Demonstration-Overview of New Windows UI Components

This video demonstrates authentically digital apps using the new Windows UI design language.

# Module 8: Introduction to New Windows UI Design Principles: Win as one – using charms and contracts

In this module, students discover how their users can take advantage of charms to enable unique integrated experiences between their app and the Windows 8 platform. Students also find out how charms are enabled by implementing contracts, agreements with other apps, and the system UI.

After this module, students will be able to create and implement scenarios where their app’s users can integrate with other apps or services on the platform. They will also discover how they can design experiences for the results of those interactions. Contracts covered in this module include:

* Using the Share Contract
* Using the Search Contract
* Using the File picker Contract
* Using the Devices Contract

## Summary and Q & A

Questions that relate to charms and contracts are included with the materials.

## Video Demonstration-Overview of New Windows UI Components

This video demonstrates the use of charms and contracts within a new Windows UI style app.

# Module 9: Introduction to Live Tiles and notifications

In this module, students learn the role of live tiles in a new Windows UI Style application and discover why it is important to invest in a tile on the Start menu. They also learn about the new Windows UI templates that are available for use as well as the various features of the live tile, such as peek and cycle. Additional topics covered include branding, badges, and notifications. Students learn how to take advantage of live tiles to invite users into their applications. This includes:

* Selecting tile templates
* Using Branding on tile templates
* Applying Tile notifications and badges to your tiles
* Q & A

## To-do in this module

Create a live tile that will work well with your application and define its appearance and attributes.

## Summary and Q & A

Questions that relate to charms and contracts are included with the materials.

## Video Demonstration-Overview of New Windows UI Components

This video demonstrates the use of live tiles and notifications within a new Windows UI style app.

# Module 10: Designing for multiple screens and resolutions

In this module, students discover techniques used for designing an app that looks great and works well on all screens. They also discover how to take advantage of snap and portrait, new views that are unique to Windows 8, and the tablet form factor.

In this module students find out how to build your applications for various screen sizes and resolutions. Topics covered include:

* Fixed and Adaptive Layouts
* Designing for snap and portrait views
* Design for users' multi-tasking needs: understanding layout considerations if an app will be used while surfing the web, watching movies, chatting, or performing other tasks?
* Designing for different view states: Snapped, Filled, Full, and Portrait views
* Designing for different form factors

## Summary and Q & A

Questions that relate to different form factors and designing for different views are included with the materials.

## Video Demonstration-Overview of New Windows UI Components

This video demonstrates new Windows UI style app design for different views and devices.

# Module 11: App store Submission Process

In this module, students discover the Windows Store and how to submit apps for sale and distribution on the store. This module discusses trial versions, monetization options, and the certification process.

This module takes students through the online interface for store and reviews metrics supplied by the store such as number of downloads, exception reports, and more.

## To do in this module

This module includes a hands-on lab starting the submission of an app to the store and walk students through:

* Dos and don’ts for Windows 8 apps
* Validating your UX design against guidelines
* Process for app submission

## Summary and Q & A

Questions that relate to the app submission process are included with the materials.

## Video Demonstration-Overview of New Windows UI Components

This video demonstrates the app submission process.