Usability

Usability is the ease of use and learnability. The usability would be discussed in developer perspective in term of using Broadleaf to develop an eCommerce website.

To use Broadleaf, we have to install it first. The installation guide is provided and explains very clearly step by step. But the installation is not smooth. The problem we met is caused by the third party plugin – Maven which helps build the development environment. When we installed the Maven and started to build the environment following the guide, we got nothing error about Maven but only about the environment. After the hard time to search and browse the forum, we got nothing. Finally, we fixed it by installing Maven again following another guideline. It seems the installation guide is far to the last update and some settings of the third party tools and plugins have changed.

Broadleaf use Thymeleaf as a templating engine and default UI rendering engine and use Spring framework following the MVC pattern. And most controller is defined and can be used. So to simply develop an eCommerce website we can only finish the configuration works and choose a UI template to use. It is similar to CMS like wordpress. We also can customize all the things if necessary. Broadleaf has provided with documents like Javadoc to support that. That's also benefit to learnability.

So far as we know the usability is good but these exists some problems in installation and documentation. Some documents are provided and some other important documents is lacking such as design documents that will help us easy to understand and develop the project.