Introduction To Usability

Designing and developing usable systems.

The historical context of usability.
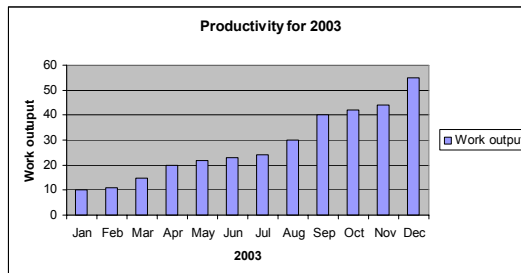

What Is Usability?

User satisfaction

Efficiency and effectiveness (user tasks)

Importance Of Usability: The Interface IS The System To Most People

James Tam

Importance Of Usability: Cost Of Using A Computer

Costs from a technical perspective
- Hardware costs
- Software costs

Costs from the user's perspective (personware)
- Training costs
- Daily usage

James Tam

Designing Unusable Systems:
Blame It On The User!

• **"What is wrong with me? Why can't I figure this out?"**

• **"I must be tired, this should be so simple to do."**

• **"They don't know how do this on my software??? They're all just a bunch of idiots!"**

How To Design Usable Systems (Gould)

1) **Early - and continual focus on users**

2) **Early - and continual user testing**

3) **Engage in iterative design**

4) **Engage in integrated design**

Early And Continual Focus On Users

•Decide who will be using the system and what they will be
 doing with it

•This forms the basis of your design

•Many techniques may be employed
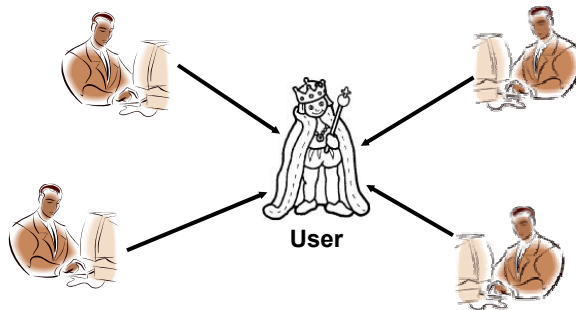
User

Early And Continual User Testing

•Not something to do just at the end!

•Instead: From the start of the development process and
 throughout have users do real work using different versions
 of your system.

Engage In Iterative Design

•**Identifying required changes.**

•**Being able to make the required changes.**

•**Being willing to make the required changes.**
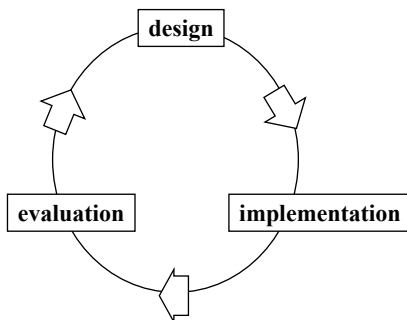
Integrated Design

All aspects of usability are controlled by one person

The Historical Context Of Usability: It's Peanut Butter!

James Tam

The Historical Context Of Usability: The Priest With A Parachute.

James Tam

The Historical Context Of Usability: The UI Police

Programmers hide your code!

The Historical Context Of Usability: It's Important

But what do we need to do?

You Should Now Know

•**What is usability**

•**Why is usability an important issue in terms of system design**

•**Some principles for designing usable systems**

•**How attitudes towards usability have changed over time**