

Introduction To Usability

Designing and developing usable systems.

The historical context of usability.

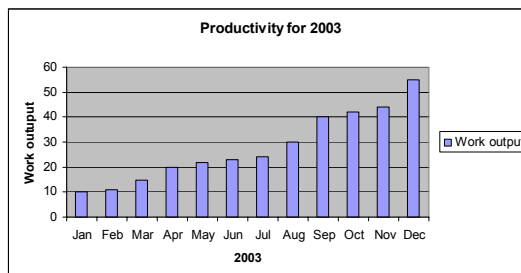
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What Is Usability?

User satisfaction



Efficiency and effectiveness (user tasks)



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



```
buffer Files Tools Edit Search Help View Help
displayHelp()
system.out.println("Enter choice: ");
choice = (char) Console.in.readChar();
Console.in.readChar();

if (choice == 'C') || (choice == 'c')
1
    calculatePerIncise();
2
else if (choice == 'D') || (choice == 'd')
3
    System.out.println(choice);
4
    displayInstructions();
5
else if (choice == 'Q') || (choice == 'q')
6
    chooseContinue = 'N';
7
else
8
    System.out.println("Please select one of 'C', 'D' or 'Q'");
9
while (chooseContinue == 'Y')
10
```

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Importance Of Usability: Cost Of Using A Computer

Costs from the technical perspective

- Hardware costs
- Software costs

Costs from the user's perspective (personware)

- Training costs
- Daily usage

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Designing Unusable Systems: Blame It On The User!

“What is wrong with me? Why can’t I figure this out?”

“They’re all just a bunch of idiots!”

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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**

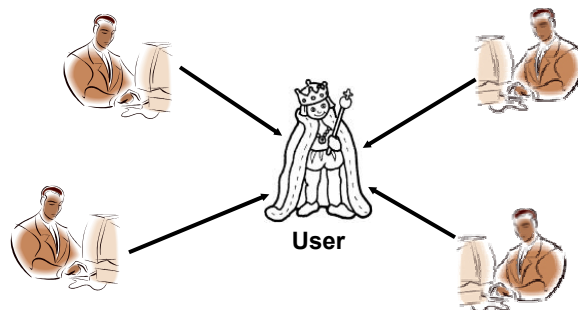
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Early And Continual Focus On Users

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



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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.



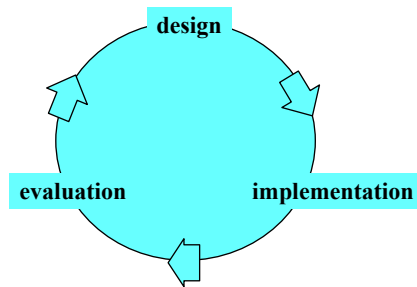
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Engage In Iterative Design

Identifying required changes.

Being able to make the required changes.

Being willing to make the required changes.



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Integrated Design

All aspects of usability under one person



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Historical Context Of Usability

It's peanut butter!

The priest with a parachute paradigm.

The UI police...‘programmers hide your code!’

Important...but how do we do it?

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You Should Now Know

- **What is usability**
- **Why is usability an important issue in terms of systems design**
- **Some principles for designing usable systems**
- **How attitudes towards usability have changed over time**

James Tam