A paper for GCOM360 :: User Interface Design
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Web Design for User Experience

GCOM 360

How to Design for User Experience

Web design done with ease of user experience in mind necessarily takes into consideration user device type, user purpose and user psychology.   Each is a subject is worthy of individual consideration and discussion on its own, but in this paper we shall briefly touch upon these areas as contributing factors in an overall picture to paint when engaging in web development for user experience.

Device Viewport

There are a variety of devices that a web page can be viewed on.   Many people have jumped on board with browsing websites from mobile devices, therefore, web HTML template writers and CMS theme developers have adopted the responsive design strategy of "mobile first" when in writing templates and themes.   Smaller viewports require resizing and reordering the web page content. Images, tables and data blocks will be resized and reordered when being viewed on mobile devices.   This requires extra CSS and JavaScript coding to achieve this.   When working with HTML site construction CSS code such as Bootstrap, for example, can be downloaded as a CSS plugin and implemented in web design, having pre-coded in CSS the desirable viewport break points thus streamlining the process of making easier work for responsive website design. Bootstrap CSS is also a popular choice of responsive code platform used by many CMS theme developers and is now also available on CDN (the Content Delivery Network).

User Purpose

A web developer will need to know the intended audience of his/her web creation. A gamer will like seeing a lot of high definition and colorful imagery on a front page.   Perhaps a developer will use flash animations on such a website. An online marketer will want to provide an attractive and easy way for customers to view and buy items from an online store, calling for platforms and plugins such as Woo Commerce, for example.   For those seeking to share information, a blog platform will have to be chosen, and there are many.   Also common are affiliate marketing websites, which are built as a business and source of income for the website owner where web design strategies will mix user information and reviews with ad generating pay per click links to the suggested solution to the information being given. What is being offered and for whom is the bottom line for establishing user purpose in web development strategy.

User Psychology

Taking into consideration behavior of the online user, analysis requires careful consideration of individual user psychology in order to target and design the website accordingly. Behavior changes with age, generation, gender, career and national mind set and language must be chosen accordingly.   Youth is by nature quick minded, which is only fed by mobile computing.   Considering that instant gratification can be a contributing factor to impatience, more than ever will web designers need to consider the proper elements of the landing page in order to keep a user's attention.   The nature of mind in establishing order according to known familiarities, also known as Gestalt, will also find a place in web design in order keep pace with ever increasing information availability and overload.   Web design which takes into consideration figure, continuation, closure, proximity, symmetry and so on, may also be strategic components deployable to keeping a user's attention focused in an age of information overload and availability of instant gratification.

All Things Considered

Tools for web design keep getting better. The age on information overload continues to grow and the ever present needs of marketing and web user audience have to be observed and strategized. We also live in a time where ruthless competition flourishes in an atmosphere of blind over specialization while being ignorant of the forces of exploitation and control operating from behind the scenes. Albeit stated here last, it is for me first that the number one consideration of the web designer needs be that of developer ethics.   In this day and age will a web developer be OK with optimizing usability of a website for the military industrial complex infrastructure, a business model operating on exploiting or killing other human beings? Will today's generations jump on board with dark exploitative corporate agendas just because these entities have the deepest pockets and provide the highest paying gigs?   For me I do say not here, not now and not ever.