10 Best Design Practices

Heather Winkle
Product Manager of User Experience
FileMaker, Inc.
Session Agenda

• 10 Best Design Practices
• Your Ideas for Improving FileMaker
1. Don’t start at the computer

It is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail.”

– Abraham Maslow
1. Don’t start at the computer
2. Observe users in their environment
2. Observe users in their environment
3. Define goals rather than features

What is this product?

- Internal combustion engine
- Four wheels and rubber tires
- Transmission connecting engine to drive wheels
- Engine and transmission mounted on a metal chassis
- Steering wheel
3. Define goals rather than features

What is this product?

• Internal combustion engine
• Four wheels and rubber tires
• Transmission connecting engine to drive wheels
• Engine and transmission mounted on a metal chassis
• Steering wheel
• Cuts grass easily and quickly
• Comfortable to sit on
4. Build layouts using a grid

www.gridulator.com
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5. Use the squint test
5. Use the squint test
6. Use color carefully

• To emphasize
  – Required fields
  – Errors

• To organize
  – Sections of similar information
  – Objects with common behaviors
6. Use color carefully

“angry fruit salad”
7. Prevent errors

Rather than telling users what they did wrong, keep them from doing it.
7. Prevent errors
8. Make the system status visible
8. Make the system status visible

The user should feel informed and in control

• What is the system doing?
• How long will it take?
• Can I stop it if I need to?
• What’s going to happen next?
9. Consider consistency
9. Consider consistency

It does not mean
“make everything the same”

It means
“be consistent with what users expect”
9. Consider consistency
10. Test with users along the way

“Supposing is good. Finding out is better.”
– Mark Twain
10. Test with users along the way

- Some (astute) testing is better than none
- It does not have to be expensive
- Makes your solution stronger
- Saves money spent on fixing problems and changing code
- Reveals unknown information about users
10. Test with users along the way

- Card Sorting
- Rapid-Iterative
- Cognitive Walkthrough
- Usability Testing
Method: Card Sorting

- To understand user mental models
- To organize information
- To test terminology
Method: Card Sorting

- Best done with real users (at least 3)
- Alternative 1:
  Supply users with elements to sort
- Alternative 2:
  Give users blanks to fill in
Method: Card Sorting Alternative 1
Method: Card Sorting Alternative 2

Name the following:

- Tab 3 _____________________
- Section A __________________
- Section B __________________
- Section C __________________

![Card Sorting Diagram]
Method: Rapid-Iterative Testing

- To validate your approach
  - For screen layouts
  - For work flow
- Use paper prototypes
- Have a user perform a task
- You play the role of the computer
- Make changes after each user
Method: Rapid-Iterative Testing
Method: Cognitive Walkthrough

• To quickly find problems in your design
  • Layout
  • Flow
  • Terminology
  • Iconography

• To brainstorm solutions

• Without actual users
Method: Cognitive Walkthrough

- Get 1 or 2 colleagues in a room
- Tell them to pretend they are the user
  - What the user’s primary job is
  - How well they know computers/FileMaker
- Ask them to perform specific tasks
- Walk through each task one step at a time
Method: Cognitive Walkthrough

• At each step stop and ask:
  • What are you trying to accomplish at this point?
  • What control on the screen will you use?
  • What do you expect to happen next?

• Have them take action

• Stop again and ask:
  • Did that work?
  • If yes, move on
  • If no, do they know what happened?
Method: Cognitive Walkthrough
Method: Usability Testing

- To observe real people using the product
- To discover problems
- Giving users a set of common tasks
Method: Usability Testing

• Give users tasks to accomplish
  • Don’t walk them through the solution top to bottom
• Ask them to “think aloud” as they go
• Be quiet and patient
  • Let them say whatever comes to mind
  • If they are quiet too long, ask “What are you thinking?”
• Don’t help them
  • If they get stuck, ask “What do you think you need to do? What would happen next?”
• Always ask open-ended questions
  • Avoid yes/no
  • Ask what, why, how
Method: Usability Testing
Your Turn

Ideas for FileMaker
Vielen Dank

heather_winkle@filemaker.com
Vielen Dank unseren Sponsoren