PARTI & THE DESIGN SANDWICH

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IxDA INTERACTION 2009

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LukeW Interface Designs

• Web Form Design: Filling in the Blanks (Rosenfeld Media)
• Site-Seeing: A Visual Approach to Web Usability (Wiley & Sons)
• Functioning Form: Web applications, product strategy, & interface design articles

http://www.lukew.com
PROCESS
METHODOLOGY
DEFINING UX

A STRUCTURE FOR GETTING TO A HOLISTIC DESIGN

DESIGN PATTERNS
BEST PRACTICES
DESIGN PRINCIPLES
PRODUCT VISION
DESIGN DECISIONS
The Mother of all Homepage Redesigns

Most visited Web site in the US
76% of US Internet (145MM UV)
13.3% of US online time

(December 2008, Comscore Media Metrix)

10,000+ stakeholders

101 Things I Learned in Architecture School

Matthew Frederick
“A parti is the central idea or concept of a building.”

“A parti can be expressed several ways but it is most often expressed by a diagram depicting the general floor-plan organization of a building and, by implication, its experiential and aesthetic sensibility.”

Image from 101 Things I Learned in Architecture School by Matthew Frederick
“The design process is the struggle to create a uniquely appropriate parti for a project.”
“Parti derives from understandings that are non-architectural and must be cultivated before architectural form can be born.”

“At its most ambitious, parti derives from matters more transcendent than mere architecture.”

“Parti derives from...”
“Parti derives from...”

The dashboard for what you love on the Web.”
“A parti diagram can describe [many] concerns. The portion of attention given to each factor varies from project to project.”
“We are fundamentally changing the front page into a dashboard for the Web.” - Tapan Bhat, SVP Yahoo! Inc.
“Use your parti as a guidepost in designing the many aspects of a building.”

“When designing a stair, window, column, roof, lobby, or any other aspect of a building, always consider how its design can express and reinforce the essential idea of the building.”

PARTI
The central idea or concept

DESIGN PRINCIPLES
Characteristics used to evaluate decisions
**DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

Key characteristics to evaluate decisions

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**ENHANCE THE CORE**

- Align with primary behaviors

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**CHECK-IN BEHAVIOR**

- Give people a reason to return
- Snack-sized updates
- Communicate quickly

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**IMMEDIATE ENGAGEMENT**

- Lightweight interactions
- Minimum set-up
- Success up front
DESIGN TENENTS FOR MICROSOFT OFFICE
“Design Tenets have to be religion” –Jensen Harris, Microsoft

- A person’s focus should be on their content, not on the UI.
- Reduce the number of choices presented at any given time.
- Increase efficiency.
- Embrace consistency, but not homogeneity.
- Give features a permanent home.
- Straightforward is better than clever

From Jensen Harris’ The Story of the Ribbon talk at MIX08, Las Vegas NV
DESIGN TENENTS FOR MICROSOFT OFFICE

“Design Tenets have to be religion” – Jensen Harris, Microsoft

- Someone has a great idea
- Take the idea and validate it against design tenets: “straightforward is better than clever”
**Design Patterns**

**Web Design Patterns**

**User**
- needs to navigate
- needs to enter
- needs to explore data the
- needs guidance/feedback
- needs to manipulate an of
- needs to issue a command
- needs to customize
- needs to organize
- needs to compare data

**Designer**
- needs to call out important
- needs to improve readability
- needs to group related
- needs to organize screen
- has limited screen space

**Interaction Patterns**

**User**
- needs to navigate
- through a process
  - that is step-by-step
  - process workflow
    - (Step-by-Step)
  - see when the steps are on different pages/screen
    - if a desktop-application
      - (Step-by-Step)
      - if a web-site or web-application
    - process bar
  - see when all of the steps are on single page
  - and the steps are disclosed piece by piece
  - progressive disclosure
  - all steps are shown at once on the page
  - *list of steps*
  - see when you need to guide the user through a series of
  - *“ Trouble Shooter “*
  - that is automated
  - through content
  - around a site
  - needs to enter
  - needs to explore data that is
  - needs guidance/feedback

**Designing Interfaces**
**PARTI**
The central idea or concept

**DESIGN PRINCIPLES**
Characteristics used to evaluate decisions

**PATTERNS & BEST PRACTICES**

**DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**
Opportunities & limitations

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**TESTING**

- **Usability**
  - Errors, issues, assists, completion rates, time spent per task, satisfaction scores

- **Field**
  - Sources used, environment, context

- **Customer Support**
  - Top problems, number of incidents

- **Web Conventions**
  - Common solutions, unique approaches

- **Site Tracking**
  - Completion rates, entry points, exit points, elements utilized, data entered

- **Eye Tracking**
  - Number of eye fixations, length of fixations, heat maps, scan paths
“In all situations where bad design decisions were made, people lacked some information that would have helped them make the right decision.” – Jared Spool, 2008
So that all the decisions we make support the central idea we want to bring to life...

... as a holistic design!

We evaluate our solutions by passing them through a filter of design principles.

We make use of patterns, best practices, and testing to help guide us toward solutions.

We consider all relevant factors: technology, context, audience, etc.

PARTI
The central idea or concept

DESIGN PRINCIPLES
Characteristics used to evaluate decisions

DESIGN DECISIONS

TESTING

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS
Opportunities & limitations
“Fast and effective Web forms”

Minimize the Pain
Illuminate a Path to Completion
Consider the Context
Ensure Consistent Communication

- Label alignment
- Top-aligned labels
- Right-aligned labels
- Left-aligned labels
- Labels within inputs
- Mixed alignments
- Input fields
- Field lengths
- Required fields
- Input groups
- Flexible inputs
- Primary and secondary actions
- Actions in progress

- Agree and submit
- Automatic inline help
- User-activated inline help
- User-activated section help
- Secure transactions
- Errors
- Success
- Inline validation
- Confirmation
- Suggestions
- Smart defaults
- Personalized defaults

Principles and Patterns for Rich Interactions

Designing Web Interfaces

O’REILLY

Bill Scott & Theresa Neif
“Rich Web Interactions”

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The central idea or concept

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Characteristics used to evaluate decisions

PATTERNS & BEST PRACTICES

DESIGN DECISIONS

TESTING

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS
Opportunities & limitations
“As the design process advances, complications inevitably arise – fluctuating clients requests, ..., new understandings of old information, and much more.”

“A poor designer will attempt to hold onto a failed parti and patch local fixes onto the problem areas, thus losing the integrity of the whole. But a good designer understands the erosion of a parti as a helpful indication of where a project needs to go next.”
“When complications in the design process ruin your scheme, change—or if necessary abandon—your parti. But don’t abandon the idea of having a parti, and don’t dig in tenaciously in defense of a scheme that no longer works. Create another parti that holistically incorporates all that you know about the building.”

**PARTI & THE DESIGN SANDWICH**

- A structure for informed (not subjective) design decisions that guides teams towards a holistic solution
- Parti is the central idea
  - Expressed as a diagram depicting general organization and experiential sensibility
  - Should focus on the elements that are specific to a project
- Design sandwich
  - Design principles: filters for decisions
  - Design considerations: factors you learn about and weigh when considering options
  - The middle is where decisions about the design happen
  - Patterns, best practices, and testing can inform decisions
- Change is ok but don’t give up on having a parti
FOR MORE INFORMATION...

• Functioning Form
  • www.lukew.com/ff/

• Web Form Design
  • www.rosenfeldmedia.com/books/webforms/

• Drop me a note
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