

Usability Guideline

Usability guidelines for developing application

Usability can be defined as the extent to which an application can be used by user to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction.

Some points to remember while designing User Interface of application

- **Simple Design** : User interface of application should be simple as much as possible, by removing unnecessary features, controls so that user does not get confused while using the application. So that user can more concentrate on the functionality. For example, prefer selection control over text input to make users life easy.
- **Consistency** : The UI, controls and the navigation should be consistent across the applications.
- **Standard command (keys)** : You should provide standard command (Key) for the standard functionality which user know to feel them more confident while using application. For example, As on fire key (OK key/ center key) it should open selected item, as on left side cba key of your application should invoke menu, on right side you should assign back functionality to your application which make user familiar with application.
- **Proper error dialog** : Error messages are a special form of feedback they tell users that something has gone wrong. Your application should show proper error message in case of any error. Error message should be simple so user can understand it easily. Application also should show error message in proper dialog box. As warning message should be shown in warning dialog.
- **Flexibility**: Accomodate users with all levels of experience.
- **Provide informative response** : If your application is loading some icons or taking some times to load view, It should show loading screen so user feels process is going on. In case of sending sms or connecting to GPRS, Application should show progress dialog to show status. Application should give some feedback or response on every user action (activity).
- **Help**: Applications should have built in help and a proper documentation.

Advantage of usability

A good product's usability gives several benefits to the client or user who is purchasing an application. If an application is designed according to good usability principles, it will be more user friendly.

Investing in the improvement of a product's usability provides several benefits for the customer organization that is purchasing an application, the actual users, and the development organization selling the application. It also increase the sales of an application and provides more satisfaction to the users/clients.

- If an application is easy to use, more people will use it and like it. It will increase the sale of product.
- A good usability design understands what matters to people, what exactly user wants from application. It won't waste user time just talking about things which they don't care about.
- Usability-related issues are the majority of user support needs - improved usability will reduce demands on support.
- Improving usability will improve the overall quality of the product.
- User will be more satisfied by the application with good usability, rather than dreading using it.
- A good Usability design of application can reduce the chances of errors.
- A good Usability design of application can also reduce the maintenance cost of application.

