

Software Development Heuristics for Interaction Designers

KEY QUESTIONS

Intent

All design choices are made for a reason.

- What user, business, or communal goals are served by each component of the design?
- Are design decisions supported by best practices?
- Do you understand why you've copied some interaction from elsewhere?

Consistency

The same interactions are represented the same way throughout the design.

- If recommending an alternative to an established interaction pattern, why is this new type of interaction necessary or desirable?

Thoroughness

The design comprehensively represents all system states, transitions, and modes of communication.

- Does the design include examples of all interaction states?
- Does the design show transitions from one state to another?
- Has the software team agreed that it has enough detail to build?

Inforealism

The design fully reflects the data to be displayed and captured.

- Are designs and prototypes populated with real data?
- Do you understand the extremes of your data?

Adaptation

The design indicates how the system will adapt to different form factors.

- What devices, browsers, and screen orientations will you support?
- Will you implement one responsive interface, or multiple specialized interfaces?

Maintenance

The design describes how users will administer the system.

- What data elements need to be managed?
- How will you monitor system health?
- How will the right people compose and manage content?
- How will you internationalize the content?

Measurability

The design specifies what metrics will be collected to indicate the success of the system.

- How will the design let product owners track operational success?
- How will you gauge success of a redesign over a legacy design?

Communication

The design specifies how the system will communicate with users throughout the entire product experience.

- Does the design include real & thoughtful content?
- What events within the application will trigger communications?
- What modes of communication are appropriate for each event, or each type of user?