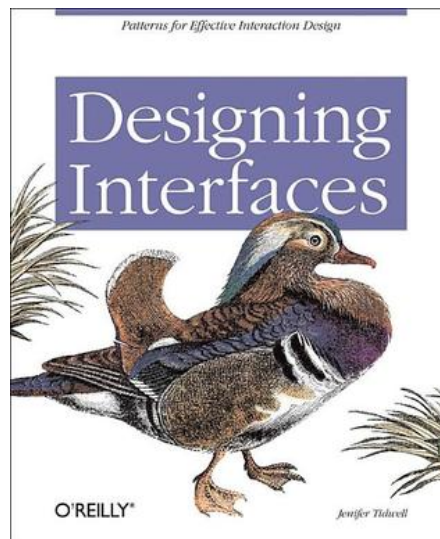




Designing Interfaces: Patterns for Effective Interaction Design

Jenifer Tidwell

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Designing a good interface isn't easy. Users demand software that is well-behaved, good-looking, and easy to use. Your clients or managers demand originality and a short time to market. Your UI technology -- web applications, desktop software, even mobile devices -- may give you the tools you need, but little guidance on how to use them well.

UI designers over the years have refined the art of interface design, evolving many best practices and reusable ideas. If you learn these, and understand why the best user interfaces work so well, you too can design engaging and usable interfaces with less guesswork and more confidence.

Designing Interfaces captures those best practices as design patterns -- solutions to common design problems, tailored to the situation at hand. Each pattern contains practical advice that you can put to use immediately, plus a variety of examples illustrated in full color. You'll get recommendations, design alternatives, and warnings on when not to use them.

Each chapter's introduction describes key design concepts that are often misunderstood, such as affordances, visual hierarchy, navigational distance, and the use of color. These give you a deeper understanding of why the patterns work, and how to apply them with more insight.

A book can't design an interface for you -- no foolproof design process is given here -- but *Designing Interfaces* does give you concrete ideas that you can mix and recombine as you see fit. Experienced designers can use it as a sourcebook of ideas. Novice designers will find a roadmap to the world of interface and interaction design, with enough guidance to start using these patterns immediately.

Designing Interfaces: Patterns for Effective Interaction Design Details

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From Reader Review Designing Interfaces: Patterns for Effective Interaction Design for online ebook

Phoenix says

Intelligent and Invaluable

Jenifer Tidwell's pattern based approach is amazingly good! She carefully organizes and enumerates a wide variety of effective user interface options for both small screen (ie: Blackberry, cell phones) and larger screen forms. I am not an expert in UI design by any means (I have read Donald Norman, Tagnazzini, Shneiderman and Mayhew but I have no background in graphic design), but I do project reviews and this book has given me some insight into problems and potential fixes in a few areas. I was also able to pick up on a couple of "hidden" features in some of the software tools that I do use and to label and critique several "features" that weren't working well.

The style is easy to read. Tidwell explains, illustrates and covers the merits of each user interface. The research is solid. For example she notes that the Fisheye menu, while slightly favored by programmers and experienced users is considered confusing by and less effective for casual users and recommends a hierarchical approach.

I recommend this book for corporate libraries and as a reference for individuals and groups working on what might become overly complicated design

Updated Note, Dec 2016

GUIs have become more complex and small screens have become larger and more capable. Browsing through the book again I see where some of the ideas have become dated, but some are still relevant. Though I've referred back to Tidwell less and less over the years, it may be simply because I learned so much from her ideas.

Francesco says

A lot of great stuff in here on Information Architecture but the examples are very old.

The book needs an update to be really worth the read at this point.

F //

Nika says

This book was super useful when I was working on my project. When I did not have much ideas how to start with creating a certain element I could always find ideas. What I really like about this book is also how much material you can find. Today we have websites such as Material Design and many others who share the component specifications with the rest of the world. So even though I think it's a good book, it's not as

practical as a direct website and some of it's cases are pretty old - but it covers a lot more cases than some websites with those specs.

It is also made more for designing websites, and just a small amount of the book (few pages in the end) are reserved for designing interfaces on mobile. Nevertheless I'm pretty sure I will use this book throughout this and other projects.

Alper Çu?un says

Nice book with explanations and examples of most of the common user interface elements and idioms. An excellent reference with thoughtful and in most cases very recent examples illustrating the patterns.

As with any design book this is not complete but covers most of the bases extensively and a lot in it has been motivated thoroughly but remains discutable. Let neither of those put you off.

Jessica says

I was given this as a supplemental resource for a new job, particularly for Chapter 7, and think it's an excellent guide. It doesn't go very in depth, but she lists pros and cons of different design decisions that helps, IMO, when making UI decisions. I think this is a great reference for anyone in a HCD field, especially those who are new to UI design. I don't think it's the best resource for people who have been working in the field for a while though, and much better for novices like myself. Excellent resource for anyone starting in the field. (Do yourself a favor and get the hard copy, not the e-book. Personal preference perhaps, but that's my 2 cents)

Nguyen Huu Anh Vu says

This book contains many mini UI patterns, from UX point of view. Each with its own what, why, when, how and examples from well-known Desktop Application, Website, Mobile...

This serves as a good reference book, not as a thorough guide for Designing Interfaces

Ieva says

Goog, though should be updated. Some examples are outdated.

Mikal says

Designing Interfaces is one of the few books every designer should have and read, note: get the print version, this book will not translate well to ebook.

It does a great job laying out the common patterns of software design and establishing a common nomenclature for referring to each one. Given its scope, Tidwell only superficially tackles each topic-- however she provides the foundational elements of each one (going over Gestalt principles for example) to ensure even those unfamiliar to interaction design are up to speed.

While I rate this five stars for effectively reaching its goals; I am disappointed that Tidwell did not pair with a researcher to cite usability and user research studies that speak to how each interaction performs in the wild. Additionally the social interfaces' focus on creating social content vs. creating social interfaces was oddly placed within the context of this book.

I can imagine Designing Interfaces becoming my 'get unstuck' tool in my toolkit; sadly since it does not cover the peer-reviewed cons of many of the patterns, it doesn't serve as a "designers desk reference".

But at over 500 pages, I get that some things were simply out of scope.

Patrick says

Another gorgeous design book. But not quite what I was expected.

The book is basically an encyclopedia of UI design patterns, or maybe "mini patterns". Broken into categories like form design, editor design, etc. Covering areas like individual, concrete patterns like tabbed containers, referred to as "card stack" to general, abstract notions like "diagonal balance". Each pattern is cross-linked with related patterns. I assume an online version of this book would work quite well, particularly if the graphic layout there is as good as it is the the book (I'd have to guess it's not).

So, sadly, not a whole lot of new information for me, but it was certainly interesting to page through here. I also suspect the next time I actually do some UI design (been awhile), I may pull this out and read the sections on UI bits that I actually use, to get some additional thoughts.

A bunch of the patterns are actually available on the web, here:

<http://designinginterfaces.com/>

Graham Herrli says

I can only assume that one of the reasons some people don't believe in the value of UX design is the existence of books like this.

In over 500 pages it says absolutely nothing.

Stefan says

A nice overview of UI patterns (typical ways interface is put together, controls you would use etc) with some coverage of usability and interactions. Definitely worth giving an user / client so they know what's possible / feasible whilst working on a new app / website. Since 2nd edition Google Material design and iOS 'Human

Interface Guidelines' moved the domain a bit. Time for a reviewed 3rd edition?

Summa Smiff says

A good overview of common UI elements and their best use cases. If you have been an interaction designer for long, most of it is likely to be familiar if not obvious, but the clear explanations still make this a valuable read. If you are new to interaction design, Designing Interfaces will get you to start thinking about the relationship of form to function and put you on the right path for further development.

Abhinav says

The domain of the book is very well defined by its title. Its primary focus is to educating the readers about Interaction Patterns, its use and context of usage. The book encompasses certain aspects of Interfaces but leaves the readers craving for more patterns. So after reading this book you might want to look into Yahoo! pattern library.

All in all, a nice read for someone who has a decent knowledge of Interface designing and interface usability. Will not recommend this book to someone looking for an introduction to this field. Should try Steve Krug or Donald Norman books first. A must for someone looking to excel in Interaction design field.

Rafaïla says

Although the book was written back in 2005, it mostly discusses basic principles of UI design that are timeless, avoiding to get in details that are related with the seasonal trends. This approach makes the book modern even after 12 years.

The writer managed to present and analyse most aspects that someone needs to consider in order to create a user-friendly UI, while most of the analysed principles can be also applied for web-design or even poster-design. It is easy-to-read and written in a simple language without too much terminology that could make it unfriendly for less technical readers. I also liked the fact that it presents example screenshots of UIs, which - although they can now be considered quite old-fashioned- they help make the presented points more easily comprehensible.

Of course, the fact that it was written 12 years ago is something that the reader needs to keep in mind while reading it, and - in my opinion - needs to be combined with more recent sources in order to give a complete picture of UIs' needs nowadays.

Ietrio says

Designing interfaces can be very difficult. The proof is the majority of applications that are hard or unpleasant to work with. Yet the author has no idea what designing interfaces takes. Tidwell only wings it by making up reasons why the Apple interface is great. Well the Apple interface is great and sales would prove it. And? Reading this book you would be able to do a Mac application interface. Something you would be able to do by simply using a Mac and paying attention to the details, instead of wasting time and money on

some improvisation skills.
