

10 Small Design Mistakes We Still Make Don't Make Me Think by Steve Krug The saying that "good design is obvious" is pretty damn old, and I am sure it took different shapes in the previous centuries. It referred to good food, music, architecture, clothes, philosophy and everything else. We forget that the human mind changes slowly, and the knowledge you have about human behaviour will not go old for at least 50 years or so. To make it easy for you, we need to keep consistent with a couple of principles that will remind us of how to design great products. We should be told at least once a month about these small principles until we live and breathe good design. The human brain's capacity doesn't change from one year to the next, so the insights from studying human behaviour have a very long shelf life. What was difficult for user twenty years ago continues to be difficult today -- J. Nielsen Revisiting: Don't Make Me Think Steve Krug laid out some useful principles back in 2000, after the dot-com boom which are still valuable and relevant nowadays. Even after his revised version, nothing changed. Yes, you will tell me that the looks are more modern and the websites are more organised and advanced (no more flash!). But what I mean about that is -- nothing has changed in human behaviour. We will always want the principle "don't make me think" applied to any type of product we interact (whether it is a microwave, tv, smartphone or car). Usability testing will erase any "likes" and show you what needs to be done. 10. When a person uses your product, you forget that she shouldn't spend time thinking about... Where am I? Where should I begin? Where the f* did they put _____? What are the most important things on this page? Why did they call it that way? Is that an ad or part of the site? The point is that every question that pops into our head, when using your product, only adds up to the cognitive workload. It distracts our attention from "why I am here" and "what I need to do". Or as some designers say: "it adds to the experience". Use plenty of headings -- they tell you what each section is about or if they are relevant to the person. Either way, they help you decide to scan further or leave the website Keep paragraphs short -- long paragraphs makes it harder for readers to keep their place, and they are harder to scan than a series of short paragraphs. There's always a reasonable place in a paragraphs to break it in two. Use bulleted lists -- almost anything can be a bullet list. Do you have a sentence that separates many things with comma? Then it can be a bullet list. Also, don't forget to leave space between bullet list rows for optimal reading. Take Medium as an example. Highlight key terms -- much of page scanning process consists of looking for keywords and phrases. Formatting the most important one in bold, makes them easier to find. Also, don't highlight too many things because it will lose effectiveness. 2. Create effective visual hierarchies Another important aspect that will help scanning a page is offering a proper visual hierarchy. We have to make it clear that the appearance on a page portrays the relationship between elements. So there are a couple of principles for that: The more important something is, the more prominent it is. The most important stuff are either larger or bolder in distinctive colour set. Things that are related logically, are related visually. For example things are similar by grouping them under the same visual style, or under the same heading. 3. Don't reinvent the wheel We believe that people want something new and more. But we forget that there are so many applications on the market that each demands our time. Each of them has different interactions, and we need to learn each one of them. And our mind blows up when: "Oh man, another app to learn?!". We allow personal feelings take over the process All of us who design digital products have the moment when they say -- "I am a user too, so I

know what is good or bad." And because of that, we tend to have strong feelings about what we like and don't. We enjoy using products with _____, or we think that _____ is a big pain. And when we work on a team it tends to be hard to check those feelings at the door. The result is a room full of people with strong personal feelings on what it takes to design a great product. We tend to think that most of the users are like us.

9. You ask the wrong questions It is not productive and will not add any value if you ask questions such as: "Do people like drop-down menus?". We don't read, we scan The reason for that is -- we are on a mission, and we only look for the thing that interests us. For example, I rarely remember myself going through all the text on the homepage of a product website. Life is a much more stressful and demanding environment than an app's delights and subtle effects. They talk about their opinions about the product, past experiences, their feelings and reactions to new concepts. It is an important point to know before I am going to say this: We as designers, when asked to design something new, have a temptation to try and reinvent the wheel. We, designers, love giving the users subtle effects and add beautiful delights. And as a rule, people don't enjoy solving puzzles when they merely want to know if that button is clickable or not. Focus groups are not usability tests Focus group is a small group of people that sit around at the table and discuss things. Focus groups are great for determining what your audience wants. So focus groups is about listening and usability tests are about watching. and get deeper into the strategic context of design. Ok. Third?

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