CLASSROOMS
21ST CENTURY WRITING
APPLICATIONS FOR
DESIGNING WEB-BASED
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Handbook for Writers
Developing a Web-Served

CHAPTER 10
THINKING ABOUT ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS

Electronic textbooks (e-textbooks) are changing the way students learn and engage with educational content. With the advent of digital platforms, e-textbooks offer a wealth of benefits over traditional print textbooks. They can be accessed anytime, anywhere, allowing for flexible learning. E-textbooks can also include interactive elements, multimedia content, and real-time feedback, enhancing the learning experience.

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To make Writer's Help as useful as possible, we were determined to get to know our audience. We wanted to learn how our students currently use reference handbooks, how they learn from them, and what sorts of things they need to look up in their handbooks. We surveyed over 250 students from around our campus, asking them to fill out our Web-based version of Writer's Help, and to answer a series of questions about their online reading habits. The survey responses confirmed the following generalizations:

- Most students (about 90%) read papers on their personal computers, almost always with Internet access. Students at one community college were, however, often inclined to print papers from electronic sources and mail them to friends, or post them on message boards. (35% always draft on paper, 26% frequently do so, and 42% never do; and not to have Internet access while writing is more common than they would like.)
- Students also frequently use a handbook for online help (45-45% of the time), looking up definitions, spelling, grammar, or punctuation and document design. Community college students are less likely to consult a handbook for (a) advice on topic choice and organization; (b) following documentation style; (c) language and style; (d) editing; (e) writing; (f) using and evaluating sources; and (g) revising. However, they are more likely to use search engines and tables of contents, and to search for information about topics they need when they consult online, and that they do so more frequently than they consult a handbook.

These data suggest that significant numbers of students rely on both print handbooks and online searches to find information they need to compose online. The data were useful in suggesting that the conditions of composing are such that an electronic handbook would have a potential audience, and that the audience would be poised for feedback and collaboration.

The survey responses also reinforced our decision to make the Web version of Writer's Help as useful as the print version. The survey responses showed that students use the Web version to learn about Writer's Help, to use hours of their time on the Web, and to rely on the Web version for more than half of their composing time. The survey responses showed that students were more likely to buy print handbooks (58-59%) than a Web version (49-51%).

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<th>Feature</th>
<th>Usefulness</th>
<th>Always Useful</th>
<th>Mostly Useful</th>
<th>Slightly Useful</th>
<th>Not Useful</th>
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Table 1. Navigation Feature Usefulness

The flow of information from student and teacher testers, who performed representative tasks on both early and advanced prototypes, shaped all our decisions. We followed up on user feedback, and our responses before going back to a new round of design and content revision. Internally, we were on the product throughout development, with weekly discussions and team decision making.

Beta testing in classrooms before commercial release (ongoing as of write)

Most students (about 90%) write papers on their personal computers, almost always with Internet access. Students at one community college were, however, often inclined to print papers from electronic sources and mail them to friends, or post them on message boards. (35% always draft on paper, 26% frequently do so, and 42% never do; and not to have Internet access while writing is more common than they would like.)

While writing, students frequently look up definitions, spelling, grammar, or punctuation and document design. Community college students are less likely to consult a handbook for (a) advice on topic choice and organization; (b) following documentation style; (c) language and style; (d) editing; (e) writing; (f) using and evaluating sources; and (g) revising. However, they are more likely to use search engines and tables of contents, and to search for information about topics they need when they consult online, and that they do so more frequently than they consult a handbook.

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A quick tour

We begin our discussion by exploring the various features and components of the handbook. The handbook is organized into several sections, each focusing on a specific aspect of web-based applications. Each section is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of the topic, along with practical examples and exercises to reinforce understanding.

The handbook is divided into the following sections:

1. Introduction to Web-Based Applications
2. Designing Documents
3. Creating Interactive Content
4. Implementing Web Applications
5. Troubleshooting and Maintenance

Each section is further divided into chapters, each focusing on a specific sub-topic. The handbook is designed to be accessible to both beginner and advanced readers, with clear explanations and step-by-step instructions.

The handbook includes a variety of tools and resources, such as sample code, design templates, and best practices. It is an invaluable resource for developers, designers, and anyone involved in the development of web-based applications.

We encourage you to explore the handbook thoroughly and apply what you learn to your own projects. Happy reading!
Building Student Language into Search

No longer needed, this comes up quickly and that just as quickly; get rid of the way when
untold quantities, thus supporting. Here's step is work support—a tool that ease on the desk
building a resource that satisfies the primary world; the student can
reinforce, much more so, the language and display conversions that is in an accessible format,
letter size and feedback have been essential to clarifying these points, and
help they need and get back to their writing.

Quick Help boxes or Show Me, but they are one layer down as not to clutter the
clean example.
Facilitating Customization

Figure 6: Facilitating and Intervening

Facilitating customization to enhance user experience can be achieved through various methods. One effective approach is to provide users with customizable options that allow them to personalize their interactions with the system. This can be done through user-friendly interfaces that enable users to adjust settings according to their preferences. Additionally, integrating social feedback mechanisms can help users learn from each other's experiences and adapt their behavior accordingly.

By utilizing these strategies, designers and developers can create more engaging and user-centric applications that better meet the needs of their users. This not only improves the overall user experience but also fosters a sense of community and participation within the application's ecosystem.
Building in the Expertise of Focus Groups.

USBILITY TESTING, AND REVIEWSERS.

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DESIGNING WEBBASED APPLICATIONS / 1610
Collaborating on Texts and Applications

When working with others on a project, it's important to communicate effectively and efficiently. Here are some strategies that can help:

1. **Set Clear Objectives:** Before starting, ensure that everyone understands the goals and expectations.
2. **Establish Roles and Responsibilities:** Assign tasks based on strengths and availability.
3. **Regular Meetings:** Regular check-ins can help keep everyone on track and address any emerging issues.
4. **Use Collaboration Tools:** Utilize software and tools designed for collaboration, such as Slack or Google Docs.
5. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Encourage open and constructive feedback to improve work outcomes.

By following these steps, you can enhance the collaboration process and achieve better results.