What is **UX**?

And why is it essential to Open Source?
Who am I?

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UX Architect

- Cofounder of elementary (OS) (elementary.io)
- Front-end developer at System76 (system76.com)
What is **UX**?

What it is, why it’s essential to open source, how to ingrain it into your products
How do we define UX?
UX “encompasses all aspects of the end-user’s interaction with the company, its services, and its products.”

—Nielson/Norman
“The What, When, Where, Why, and How someone uses a product. As well as Who that person is.”

—Matthew Magain
In my words:

“Why someone loves, hates, or is indifferent to your product.”

—Me
What UX is **Not**

(though it might contain a bit of)
UX is not Art

Created just to evoke an emotion; Just like, someone’s opinion, man.
UX is not Veneer

Added on later; just for looks.
UX is not **UI**

Just how the app looks;
Theme, widget styles, icons.
Textbook

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UX is not **Usability**

Just how “easy” something is; Solely function over form.
UX is not **Accessibility**

Ease-of-use for impairments; optimization for low mobility, blindness, etc.
What is UX in practice?
In Practice: Enterprise

“We’re not looking for a strong UX, it just needs to work.”

$1,200/employee training\(^1\) instead of UX

5-15% of projects scrapped due to poor UX\(^2\)

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\(^2\)http://spectrum.ieee.org/computing/software/why-software-fails
5-15% of projects scrapped due to poor UX

2http://spectrum.ieee.org/computing/software/why-software-fails
In Practice: **Startups**

UX-first, especially to gain adoption

Business strategy is part of the UX

Beyond: to social media, support, ads, etc.
In Practice: Open Source

Scratches my itch; “I understand it, good enough!”

Forcing users to make design decisions

Building without a UX architect
Zander the Architect
Zander the Architect: historical renovations :: UX designers: products
Zander the **Architect**

Without him, they’re screwed.
Zander the Architect

We need UX Architects.
What UX Should Be
UX should be the “Why”

Not just the “what” of a design, but the “why.”

Reasoning behind the UI
UX should be **Strategy**

All the way back to goals and stakeholders

Simplicity, usability, desire
UX should be **Pervasive**

Always thinking of the users

Involved at every step
Why is **UX** essential to **Open Source**?
Compete with **Closed Source** software

Doesn’t always cost a lot

Open Source is more agile

Trade ideas with the community
Be **Accessible** to All

Lower the barrier to entry

Create cleaner UI, docs, and translations

Get out of the way!
Improve your **Codebase**

Focused UX = less UI = less code

Less to break

More time to implement features
What is **UX**?

And why is it essential to Open Source?
Ingrain UX into an Open Source project
UX Architect(s) at the **Leadership** level

They ensure UX is pervasive strategy

Success with elementary, GNOME, others
Hire UX people early

Remember Zander! You need an architect.

Just as important as paying developers
Treat **UX issues** as **bugs**

Just as critical as a segfault!

Need thorough solutions, not ugly hacks
Treat **UX issues as bugs**

“If a feature is too hard to use, in the eyes of the user, the feature is broken or doesn’t exist at all.”

—Daniel Foré
Treat **UX issues** as **bugs**

Just as critical as a segfault!

Need thorough solutions, not ugly hacks
Think **UX-first**

Work your way backwards to the tech

Central tenet of creating a positive UX
Continue to do UX tasks

UX is not a one-time consideration

Always be designing
What is **UX**?

Why someone loves, hates, or is indifferent to your product.
Why is it essential to Open Source?

Compete with closed source, be accessible to all, improve your codebase.
How do you ingrain UX into an Open Source project?

UX people in leadership, hire UX people early, treat UX issues as bugs, think UX-first, continue to perform UX tasks
Thank you!

Q & A