

Delineato: Designing Distraction-Free GUIs

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Abstract : A large amount of software products offer a wide range and number of features. This is called featurities or creeping featurism and tends to rise with each release of the product. Featuris often adds unnecessary complexity to software, leading to longer learning curves and overall confusing the users and degrading their experience. We take a look to a new design approach tendency that has been coming up, the so-called “What You Get Is What You Need” concept that argues that products should be very focused, simple and with minimalistic interfaces in order to help users conduct their tasks in distraction-free ambiances. This is not as simple to implement as it might sound and the developers need to cut down features. Our contribution illustrates and evaluates this design method through a novel distraction-free diagramming tool named Delineato Pro for Mac OS X in which the user is confronted with an empty canvas when launching the software and where tools only show up when really needed.

Keywords : diagramming, HCI, usability, user interface

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