

# **The Developers Group Masterclass**

## ***Effective User Interface Design***

### ***with Ray Konopka***

**at The Village Hall (Parish Reading Room), Upavon,  
Wiltshire SN9 6EB**

**on Monday October 22nd 10.00 - 6.00**

## **Outline Agenda**

### **Why UI is so important**

As programmers, we all know the importance of an application's user interface, but all too often the user interface gets the least amount of attention. Most programmers would rather work on the behind-the-scenes programming bits. To some extent this is understandable, as many developers equate user interface design with graphics design and the creation of pretty icons and images. When asked to justify their application's UI, they typically respond with, "but, I'm not good at graphics." What's really scary are the UIs created by developers that do enjoy creating (or downloading) pretty icons and images!

### **What you'll learn**

The primary focus of this class is to emphasize that user interface design is not the same as graphics design and more importantly needs the attention of ALL developers. Throughout this class a set of user interface guidelines will be presented that apply to virtually any type of application: desktop, web, mobile, etc. In addition, specific attention and examples will be given illustrating user interface design traps that developers often encounter, and how to avoid them.

Building on this foundation, the next section delves deeper into specific user interface issues including: screen real estate, user navigation, control types and arrangement, user feedback, font choices, and more. Plus, this section expands our focus to include applications for touch-sensitive devices (e.g. kiosk systems, mobile devices). Designing a user interface for these types of devices is quite a bit different than designing one for a traditional desktop application.

### **Let's see your UIs, then**

Wrapping up our day of effective user interface design will be a highly interactive section. Specifically, Ray will conduct live reviews of user interfaces submitted by attendees of the class. See firsthand how the rules and guidelines presented earlier are applied to real-world applications. In the process, you'll learn the benefits of having someone else review your designs and discover new techniques for handling tricky UI situations. This is a great way to get a free user interface review, and reviewing actual interfaces created by attendees personalizes the session for the entire group and makes it much more effective

### **Submitting an Interface for Review**

If you are attending the Effective User Interface Design MasterClass, Ray encourages you to submit an interface to be considered for review during the session. This is a great way to get a free user interface review, and reviewing actual interfaces created by attendees personalizes the session for the entire group and makes it much more effective. To submit an interface, simply follow these steps:

#### **Step 1 - Capture the Interface**

Select a few forms that you are interested in having reviewed and capture them to image files (PNG is best, but BMP will do, etc.). Try not to use JPEG as it is a lossy compression format and screen shots do not turn out well in JPEG. Also, please do not reduce the color depth of the image. That is, do not reduce a 24-bit True Color screen capture into a 256-color GIF image.

## Step 2 - Describe the Interface

For each screen capture, describe the purpose of the form. That is, please provide a brief description of what the user is to accomplish on the form. This is also where you should clarify any terms used in your interface that have a specific meaning in your application, or that might require some domain knowledge.

## Step 3 - List UI Concerns

Please indicate the aspects of the user interface with which you are most concerned. For example, would you like the review to focus on field layout, the use of fonts or color, navigational elements, control selection, etc.

## Step 4 - Send in Material

Simply email your submission to Ray Konopka at [uidesign@raize.com](mailto:uidesign@raize.com). Please be sure to ZIP up all images to reduce bandwidth. (You'll have to do this several days before the class.)

### Important

Please note that submitting an interface to be considered for review during the class does not guarantee that your interface will in fact be reviewed during the session. Due to session time constraints, it is simply not possible for Ray to review all submitted interfaces.

## Some non-technical information about the day

### Timing and food

Registration with refreshments starts at 9:30 and the class begins at 10 o'clock sharp. There will be a break with more refreshments mid-morning and mid-afternoon. At lunchtime (around 1 o'clock, for an hour) we take you to the pub for lunch - your food is included in the cost of the class, your beer is not ;-)

### Cost

The price for members is £175 + VAT per class, or £300 + VAT if you book for this class and the following day. All places must be booked and paid for in advance. If your membership package includes masterclasses, you still need to pre-book. You're welcome to book as soon as you read this; please make sure we have payment by cheque, credit card or bank transfer by Wednesday 17th October.

### Getting here

- **From London, Hampshire, Surrey and South:** M3 to junction 8, A303 to Andover, A342 via Ludgershall towards Devizes.
- **From Berkshire and Buckinghamshire:** M4 to junction 14, A338 via Burbage to Collingbourne Ducis, local road to Everleigh, A342 towards Devizes.
- **From Bristol, Swindon and Gloucestershire:** M4 to junction 16, B4005 to Wroughton (or shortcut via local road), A4361 to Avebury, local road via West Kennet, Alton Priors, Woodborough and North Newnton, A342 towards Amesbury and Salisbury.
- **From Salisbury and South Coast:** A345 towards Pewsey and Marlborough.
- **From South West:** A303 to Amesbury, A345 towards Pewsey and Marlborough.

The hall is on the A342 between Andover (East) and Devizes (West), near the river bridge, just to the East of the junction of the A345 between Salisbury (South) and Swindon (North).

Regrettably getting here by public transport isn't easy and it's generally easier to drive. We'll let you know closer to the date where it's best to park. Please ask if you need train information and for us to book you taxis from and to local stations (Paddington to Pewsey infrequent trains + taxi 10 minutes/£10, or Waterloo to Andover about every half hour + taxi 40 minutes/£25).

### Overnight accommodation

Accommodation very close to the hall is available at Upavon Manor ([isabelgreen@hotmail.com](mailto:isabelgreen@hotmail.com) or 01980 635115) and the Antelope Inn (01980 630206 but check with us first as the pub is currently changing hands). There are other b&bs a very brief drive or walk across the fields away.

We expect these classes to book up very quickly and places are (quite genuinely) limited. The classes are not designed to be hands-on and, if you decide to bring a laptop, there won't be anywhere for you to plug it in.

### Mobile phones and emails

Please remember that phones must be switched off while the class is in session. Be warned that signal is very poor here and you may need to take your phone for a short walk before it will work - Vodafone tends to be best. You will not have access to the internet at the hall or at your accommodation.