



White paper

Polish is a beautiful thing

Tips on creating a well-polished product

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People enjoy using polished products. They like it when features are elegantly implemented and go above and beyond the call of duty. It feels good, and you feel certain the product is just right for you. Your trust in the product increases because you can sense the care that was put into it. That feeling comes because the designers took the extra initiative to polish the product to perfection.

First, it is important to know that the time you spend polishing a product is not lost. At first it feels that way because people never ask, “is your product polished?” Instead they ask, “Does your product do this thing for me?” The urge to do more things seems to outweigh polish. Polish is an intangible investment in your product’s future. You’ll never be able to track return on investment, but you’ll be amazed at the number of people who notice.

Here are some ways you can ensure your product is well polished. Start by showing empathy for the people who use your product. Polish comes from care, which comes from empathy. Take pity on customers who must muddle through the use of your product. You can make it easier. The first way to show empathy is to use your own products. You’ll quickly identify areas for improvement. Eat your own dog food. Study the usability of your product using formal tests, and find out what people expect each feature to do. When you find areas where the product doesn’t work as expected, fix it and retest with new subjects. Ask a lot of questions of your customers. Ask how customers perform certain tasks. They may not be able to articulate the perfect way to use each feature, but they will give you hints. The more you listen, the more you’ll hear. Consider holding the product back from release while you listen to customers. Usually the biggest reason for poor product design is that they were rushed to sale before any significant testing was performed. Products like that prove the developer is more interested in your money than your loyalty.

About Us

Scoutwest, Inc. develops and publishes project management and time tracking products for consulting, manufacturing, government, and general business applications.

Thousands of small to large businesses, in dozens of countries worldwide, trust their mission critical business processes to Scoutwest products. Standard Time® and Standard Issue® work together to offer well-rounded project management solutions.

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