

Functional product design: Fluency effects on perceived functionality and ease of use

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Abstract

Consumers form opinions about various product characteristics merely by looking at its design. Apart from aesthetic and symbolic attributes, evaluations of interactive products also comprise inferences about functional dimensions. In one exploratory and three experimental studies, this paper investigates factors that improve a product's perception of functionality and usability. All studies showed that fluent perceptual processing positively affects usability perceptions. Functionality was negatively related with fluency in a correlative study but there was no such effect in an experimental setting. Fluency also mediated high appraisals of usability and functionality for familiar interface designs with a moderate level of digital control elements. These findings reveal a novel consequence of processing fluency and provide practical advice for designers.

Keywords: *Product design; ease of use; functionality*

Track: Consumer Behaviour