

## Step 11: Screen Design Standards

### Purpose of this step:

To ensure consistency and simplicity in detailed design across all displays within a product interface, as well as across other products used by the same users.

### Overview:

Screen design issues that should be standardized:

- Use of controls (check boxes, option buttons, list boxes, combo boxes, push buttons.
- Location and format of display components (title bar, status line, display body, navigation controls, action controls)
- Terminology
- Color
- Fonts and styles
- Mouse interactions, and keyboard shortcuts
- Type, location, format, and wording of messages and on-line instructions

When to create Screen Design Standards:

- If following the typical waterfall or OOSE method
- The SDS can parallel or follow the Analysis phase
- The SDS can also parallel the Design phase.
- The SDS should not go under any development or revisions outside of these two phases.

### Practical application of these principles to your site:

#### 1. Draft control standards: Example standards

- For binary options, one should use check boxes, not Radio buttons which indicate “yes/no” or “true/false” operations
- For simple numerical ranges, one should use spin boxes or a drop down.
- For more complex ranges one should use an input box with validators.

#### 2. Draft product/process window standards.

- Wire frame standard windows or forms
- Set a standard set of fields arranged in a particular order, represented by a particular set of controls which follow general standards from step 1. These serve as a base to build from.
- A standard set of fields for a form could be personal information where as the non-standard information could be a credit application, survey information or really anything else.

#### 3. Draft dialog box standards.

- Such as entering personal information (name, address, phone, comments)
- These standards are where you apply validation rules and required fields.

4. **Draft message box standards:**
  - Example standard criteria: error, warning, and status messages.
  - You must explain specific syntax here, placement, and behavior
5. **Draft input device interaction standards:**
  - Keyboard shortcuts, mouse over buttons
6. **Draft feedback standards**
  - Show status cues such as where a user is in the checkout process.
  - For warnings you may want to color the warning red and have it flash
  - Different sizes, shapes or fonts for system feedback to the user.
7. **Document all draft standards.**
  - All the above standards should be written down in a common document, with illustrations.
  - This document should be available to all designers and coders to educate them on the common standards available to the product.

**Examples:** See examples of this step in the “Examples” folder.