

How Good Experience?

The chart is a tool to define “goodness” of a product's user experience and focus efforts to improve the user experience.

User experiences are subjective. So is this chart. Every value on the axes is something perceived by the user. Don't try to pinpoint a product to an exact location. There are no answers or fixed positions. You can't read the parts out of the sum. There's only “better” and “worse”, left or right, up or down. But placing a product on this chart (or having your users place a product on the chart) can give you a starting point for re-thinking how to improve the user experience of the product. Should the product be more desirable or more convenient? Is there a technical problem or a business problem? Does the design need more thought? Start plotting and revitalize your thinking.

Convenient product

Time being the scarcest of resources, **saving time** for users is convenience at best. A convenient product is **easy to use**, it has the **right features** and **just enough** of them. The product is **compatible** with other products, whether it means sharing data or using common cables for connectivity. The product is **open** and hackable, although being hackable and easy is a challenge, to say the least. **Simplicity** is convenience and so are **ergonomics**. Often a convenient product is **subtle**, almost transparent in operation.

Unattractive product

Lack of **aesthetics** kills a product. An unattractive product is ugly, boring, badly designed or perceived as not having been designed at all. Unattractive service is unpleasant, uncompassionate, maybe even rude.

A product might have a bad **reputation** because it is unreliable, or popular among people you don't relate to or don't want to relate to. An unknown product might not have a reputation. Both cause lack of trust in the product and make the product unattractive. A product perceived as being complex makes the product unattractive, but so does perceived lack of features. Nobody wants a product that is not enough and does not answer their imagined need. Too expensive or otherwise **unavailable** products are not attractive. Neither is being one of too many competing products to choose from.

Inconvenient product

A **complex, hard to use** product is inconvenient. The more features a product has, the more chance most of them are the **wrong features**. **Too much detail** makes a product inconvenient. An **incompatible** product or a product confined in its own **closed system** is inconvenient. **Wasting users' time** is highly inconvenient. Users might adjust to **non-ergonomic** products, but at the expense of creeping discomfort and inconvenience.

Attractive product

Attractive products are **aesthetic**, beautiful and well designed. Good **reputation** and reliability make any product attractive. Perhaps paradoxically the most attractive products are at the same time simple and complete on features. These products answer imagined needs without seeming complex. This powerful combination creates great expectations for the convenience of the product. A product can be attractive also because it is popular – in fashion.

Availability makes products attractive. A low-price or freely available product is attractive. Being an “easy choice”, one of only a few competing products, makes the product more attractive. On the other hand, also exclusive products are attractive. Popularity and exclusivity can even strengthen each other: Ferraris are very exclusive, but also popular among those who can afford them.

