

Design Patterns and Standards

Pattern – is a repeated set of criteria (depending on the medium) that are seen in practice, and then codified for possible re-use within systems. The key here is that patterns are not created, they are discovered and then described. 1

e.g. – a hierarchical navigation using a combination of containers and content objects.

Convention – is a pattern or collection of patterns that are re-used so often and with such acceptance that designers and non-designers both understand the pattern(s) to easily fit a problem's needs. A single problem can have several conventions that fit to solve it.

e.g. – a cascading tree navigation system

Guideline – is a declaration made to help designers think through recurrent problems with a solution that fit against many desired contexts, but not all of them.

e.g. – When a folder is open /expanded in a tree navigation it is best to denote that by changing the icon to demonstrate that and show a (-) next to the icon to show it can be collapsed again.

Standard – is a collection of criteria used so that interoperability between differing contexts or parts of a single context can meet and interface painlessly. A standard can also be a de facto solution, where variation is scorned upon except at the most superficial presentation layer.

e.g. – build your tree using the windows widgets

<http://www.uigarden.net/>

<http://synapticburn.com/>

Memes

The term "meme", coined in 1976 by Richard Dawkins, refers to a unit of cultural information that can be transmitted from one mind to another. Dawkins said, Examples of memes are tunes, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches. A meme propagates itself as a unit of cultural evolution analogous in many ways to the gene (the unit of genetic information). Often memes propagate as more-or-less integrated cooperative sets or groups, referred to as memplexes or meme-complexes.

The idea of memes has proved a successful meme in its own right, achieving a degree of penetration into popular culture rare for a scientific theory.

Some proponents of memes suggest that memes evolve via natural selection — in a way very similar to Charles Darwin's ideas concerning biological evolution — on the premise that variation, mutation, competition, and "inheritance" influence their replicative success. For example, while one idea may become extinct, other ideas will survive, spread and mutate — for better or for worse — through modification.

Some meme-theorists contend that memes most beneficial to their hosts will not necessarily survive; rather, those memes which replicate the most effectively spread best; which allows for the possibility that successful memes might prove detrimental to their hosts.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meme>