LIS-3353

User Interfaces

LIS-3353

aka, what's the difference between
using a computer and
programming a computer?

Everyone needs to learn to code!!

?

An opinionated and rough measure of "programming-ness"

Changing your screensaver

Writer/Word

Calc/Excel

Macros

HTML/PHP/MYSQL

Bash

Python/Perl/Ruby/Java/Javascript/C# *interpreted/scripted*

C *compiled*

Assembly (00 4E A3 77 8C 0A etc)

Machine (00101010011010101100)

The Good and Bad (and Bad) of ”post Microsoft” GUIS

The good – we covered this, right?

The (first) bad, by way of an aside...)

Flat Design v. Skeuomorphism
Which is better?

Flat Design

Skeuomorphism Design

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There are lots of professionals out there with very serious and thought out answers to this questions; and one can get quite far by being engaged with it...

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There are lots of professionals out there with very serious and thought out answers to this questions; and one can get quite far by being engaged with it...

..and I'm not one of them.
My somewhat-serious answer is

WHO TF CARES.

Flat Design v. Skeuomorphism
Which is better?

I do have a serious answer though:

Specifically: Who/what is preventing you from having a **choice**?

No, seriously, people. This is stupid.

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It is probably true that, for example, too much bright light in your face at night messes with your sleep

- it's definitely true that it's annoying
- it's definitely true that dark backgrounds with light text is **trivially** easy to implement. 30 year old operating systems had multiple ways of doing this.

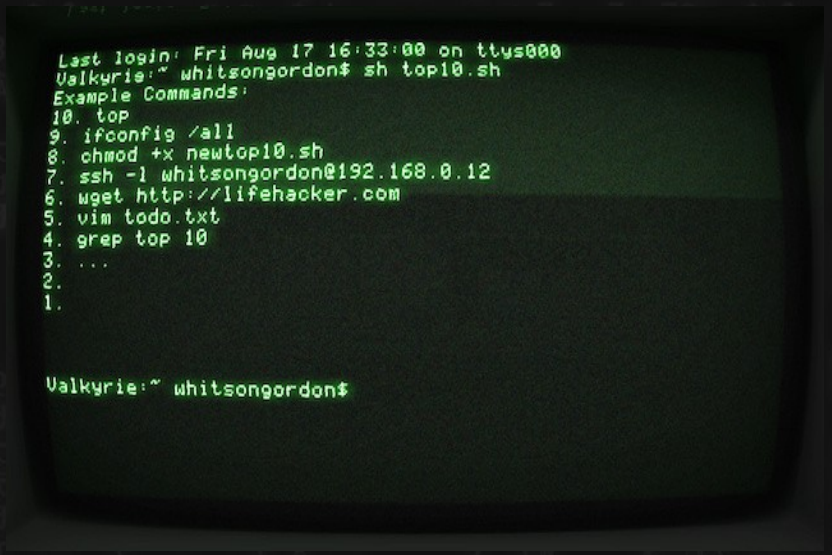
and yet. Where are we with night modes?

They giveth and they taketh away

The false presumption:

Good / Easy GUIS MUST result in fewer options for the user.

Which is “primitive?”



Why command line/text?

Because you can very quickly say/relate complex concepts in a concise way, by combining a series of simple symbols.

You know, like talking. Or writing.

Command line is the act of literally talking to the computer....unlike...

This is cool

This is cool

Utterly inefficient and kind of stupid for the task, I mean, Google Maps is literally already MUCH better than this today, but cool.

What's so bad about the mouse and touchscreens,etc?

"Caveman interface."

- Pre-linguistic/animal-like
- "Point and grunt"

(Tablets and even "Minority Report" etc, are cool and fun...but why is Charades a game?)

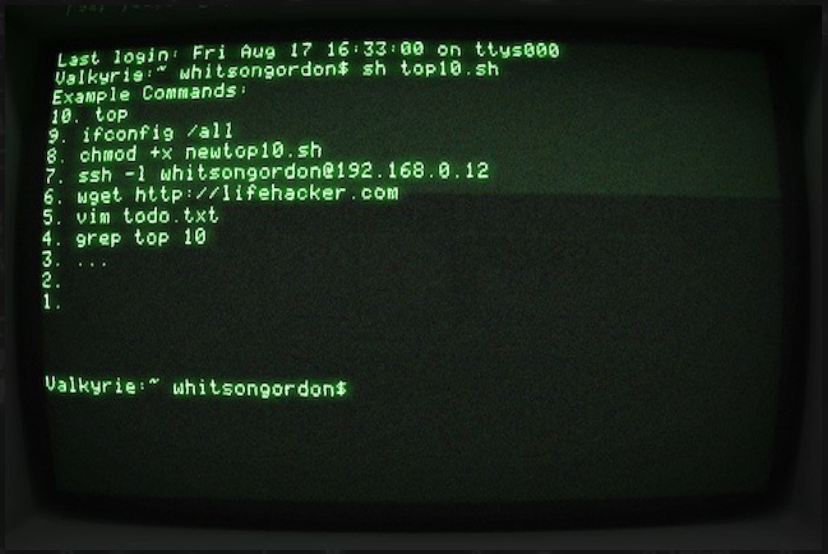
Intelligence requires Language

Buttons and gestures are frequently convenient for repetitive tasks...

...but to do anything intelligent, you need LANGUAGE.

TEXT. Numbers and Letters.

So again...



literal infinity
bounded only by the limits
of all language and math

the 12 or so things the little
buttons it allows you to do

It's so easy, even...

Either way...

Yes – early text was (and is?) ugly and unforgiving, and fixing that to various degrees propelled the big tech companies..

... but, along the way, restricting access to "back-end" text stuff helped create some of the messes we deal with today; including the oddness of programming languages.

So, “text”

- sane
- predictable
- simple
- infinitely useful and portable

...and formerly not sexy at all
it’s coming back, though...

Obvious old school text drawbacks

Though powerful; very “brittle” – this applies to most programming languages as well:

”You can understand this sentence tacos even though I put a random word in.”

(this will break many a text interface, badly)

Voice Interfaces (alexa, siri et al)

Interesting; and MUCH closer to the command line:

You tell it things, and it tries to do them.
Some notable differences though

So, (old school) “text”

- sane
- predictable
- simple
- infinitely useful and portable
- but not “easy.” (requires precision, sometimes not useful feedback, not a lot of intuition

Voice Commands

- sane-ish?
- (somewhat) predictable
- NOT simple
- NOT infinitely useful or portable by any means. A VERY VERY limited set of commands.

(Can’t even play “old town road,” whats up with that?”)