

Multimedia products



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Do multimedia enhancements actually add value to a product - A Viewpoint

Multimedia products have become immensely popular in today's world.

Typically, where earlier communication and entertainment products had only text facilities, we now have other dimensions such as graphics, movies and sounds available. While this has been largely embraced by most age groups in the market, the efficacy of using multimedia 'for just about anything' is questionable and deserves more critical analysis. Here are a few points supporting the argument that multimedia is not necessarily the 'best' option for all seasons and uses:

1) Arguably the most significant point against use of multimedia is the profligate use of multimedia without thought on actual business case for its use - we have a plethora of products claiming to be 'multimedia-enabled' when probably the end customer would be quite happy to consider something that is simpler - today's product developers tend to assume everyone needs multimedia and cannot survive without it - when history tells us traditional modes of communication like voice, in-person interaction and written language have long stood the test of time are acknowledged as the most effective and sustainable means of communication.

2) The cost of multimedia enhancements is substantial when seen as a proportion of overall development costs for a product - many a time, customers do not get 'bang for the buck' - Product companies tend to inflate costs significantly in the name of multimedia features.

3) Language skills of end users especially students are known to diminish with the indiscriminate use of multimedia - many students do not know or care to learn, language skills that will sustain them and add immense value later on in their lives (Disadvantages using Multimedia, 2007).

4) Multimedia is increasingly being used a substitute for live interaction in communications of different forms. This will remove the essence of communication many a time and hinder in-person exchange of thoughts (Disadvantages using Multimedia, 2007).

5) Multimedia has often been resorted to, in masking poor content and message quality - in other words, anything 'jazzed up' to look and sound good, is passed off by companies as a product worth spending extra dollars on (Disadvantages using Multimedia, 2007).

6) In today's world of online, web and Internet interactions, multimedia poses a significant bandwidth utilization challenge - thereby discouraging end customers from being thrifty - this is bound to affect purchase power and cost dynamics eventually - There are many who argue that, even today, the best websites on the net are those that are simple, direct and use largely textual means to convey content.

7) Another key factor against use of multimedia is the profuse proliferation of different standards and formats - while standards are good, too many of them only end up confusing the end user as well as put him/her in the risk of 'end life' products - While most traditional text and voice-only communication standards are mature and few, multimedia has seen a huge number of players vying on another and claim 'their own' standard happens to be the best in the market.

In conclusion

It was a wise man who said 'if you cannot convey in simple terms, your message is probably not worth communicating' - the virtues of simplicity are many and will eventually be rediscovered after all the multimedia magic begins to wear out common people across the planet.

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References

Ray, et. al. (2007). Disadvantages in using Multimedia Retrieved April 25th, 2009, from <http://forums.datamation.com/general-management/2307-disadvantages-using-multimedia.html>.

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