MIS3506

ICA – Outlook Migration & User Experience

Temple University recently migrated from Gmail to Microsoft365. This migration has caused joy for some users and angst for others. The question is – what is the source of the angst? Is it the User Experience of Microsoft? Is it that users don’t like change and a break from the familiar? Is that Gmail was just so intuitive that we don’t think any other option will be suitable? Or is it the opposite?

Reflect for a moment on the migration from one system to another. Consider Temple’s reasoning for the migration – what would the reason be to migrate from a usable system? What do you think the requirements were in this case?

Step 1:

1. Identify the overall affordance of Gmail & Outlook.
2. Without using the interfaces, think through the steps needed to achieve your goals with your mail delivery application. List them out.
3. Now, walk though the steps in Outlook – what feels comfortable or uncomfortable? Can you discover what to do easily?
4. Open Gmail if you still have it and repeat the steps in the app OR think through the process as you remember it. What makes the experience so different?
5. With a partner, perform a usability test to see if people perform actions the same way you would expect them to with the technology?

Step 2:

1. Think about where you find the most discontent with the Outlook app, make a few notes. How about Gmail?
2. For each note, think about a way that you could improve the features and functionality to improve the overall experience. Can you classify these as slips or mistakes?
3. Finally, sketch out what you think the improvements should look like. (think – how can you bridge the gulfs?)

Consider: The Outlook app has been widely used and Microsoft is a leader in technology. How can you ensure that the changes you propose won’t alienate the traditional user base? Or should you disregard their needs? If you understand the need or decision for the change, does it make it more appealing?

