

# **User Experience (UX) and the Data Center - IO**



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# IO Blog



## User Experience (UX) and the Data Center

May 29th, 2013 / Scott Smith / 0 comments

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Is there a place in the Data Center for UX? **Absolutely.**

Data Centers as entities are in a state of rapid evolution. Exponential increases in the sheer volume of data required by virtue of our own societal needs for instant access and gratification have been a key catalyst in this amazing transition.

Ultimately this translates to a need for not only definitive physical changes in what we have come to know as Data Center 1.0, but also an elevated need for deep integration of the Hardware and Software layers in order to create an entirely new User Experience for Data Center 2.0 and beyond.

As an objective, User Experience will play a more increasingly important role. **A role whose time is NOW.**

In a recent post on [UX Matters](#), UX strategist and architect Frank Guo introduces his "[Four Elements of User Experience](#)". I believe these elements are a valid framework as each has the potential to influence and impact decisions made regarding next generational Data Center design, as well as why, what and how they deliver end user experiences.

I view the end user as being two groups; 1) the user who is connected to their application ALWAYS and 2) the team of administrators who manage, service and maintain the physical and logical components of data centers and how it efficiently delivers that application uninterrupted: ALWAYS!

In this context, enabling great User Experiences starts with insuring that the solution delivers on the these four elements:

## UX ELEMENTS

<b>Value:</b>	<i>The solution delivers value to me as an administrator to the end user.</i> (Ex. Questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Does it understand what is important to me?</li><li>-Can I get the reports I need to make key decisions?</li></ul>
<b>Usability:</b>	<i>It is easy for me to use and get to the information and the physical locations I need?</i> (Ex. Questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Is the information readily available and easily read?</li><li>-Can I make it mine?</li><li>-Can I easily service the system?</li></ul>
<b>Adoptability:</b>	<i>I can easily and quickly start using the product successfully.</i> (Ex. Questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Is it intuitive?</li><li>-How long will it take for me to understand the system?</li></ul>
<b>Desirability:</b>	<i>It is a place I want to be, engage in and have fun! This is cool!</i> (Ex. Questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Are the physical and logical spaces interesting, informative and delightful?</li><li>-Does it make my work easier?</li></ul>

Starting with these four core principals provides our UX, Design and SW/HW Engineering teams a framework for creating next generational experience goals inside the Data Center evolution.

Bringing these to the forefront both supports and acknowledges the need to deliver higher level human experiences through deeper HW/SW integration, advanced information architecture, visualization and environmental stimulus.

Historical drivers for what makes data centers manageable have focused on Capital Expenditures, Asset Management, Optimization at both the IT and Facilities levels, Scalability and Total Cost of Ownership. These remain paramount in today's data center evolution, but now it reaches far beyond that with today's evolving solutions.

Coupling historical drivers with the principals of Value, Usability, Adoptability and Desirability enables new opportunities for data centers to be a more enjoyable and engaging environment for everyone in them, and all along ensuring that the connection between the user and their application is always on.

This is the challenge IO strives to relentlessly deliver.

*Scott Smith is Director of Product Management at IO.*

Tags: data center, data center 2.0, design, optimization, Scott Smith, user experience, UX

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