ARROGANCE OR EFFICIENCY?
Part 3: Survey Results about Microsoft Fluent User Interface
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In the preceding two columns, I’ve been reporting on correspondence with Microsoft expert Mark Alexieff, Senior Product Manager for Microsoft Office concerning the company’s decision to change the Office user interface. Today Mr Alexieff provides interesting material about the acceptance of the new Microsoft Office Fluent User Interface by a variety of users.

Forrester Study on Information Worker Perceptions

_The Microsoft Office Fluent User Interface: Information Worker Perception Of Productivity, Training, And Support Requirements_

URL:

Snapshot of Results

- 1004 users of Office 2007 programs surveyed in North America

- Users cite access to new features and functions, the improved look and feel, and the ability to create high-quality documents as the primary benefits (more than 88 percent agree or strongly agree with statements related to these benefits). Advanced users and younger users were more likely to “strongly agree” than to simply “agree” with the statements.

- End-users react very positively to the benefits of the new UI:
  - 95.5 percent are more or equally satisfied
  - 81.4 percent say the new user interface is as easy or easier to use
  - 60.4 percent say their productivity has increased and another 33.2 percent say it has stayed the same

- Majority of respondents indicate that within a 2-3 week time period they are able to become more productive on the new version of Office as compared to previous versions

- Majority of respondents are not using any training in their transition – those that are rely primarily on online, interactive training

- More than one-third of respondents think that no training is necessary
Respondents were asked, “For work that normally takes 30 minutes to complete, how long did it take you to complete in the first 2-3 days as an Office 2007 user?” The average response was 33.8 minutes. When asked: “How long does that same task take you today?” 24.7 minutes was the average response - a 17.4 percent reduction.

- 60.4 percent state that productivity levels have increased
- 61.1 percent of respondents did not call the helpdesk at all while coming up to speed on the Fluent UI, and 60.1 percent indicated they did not use any training.

1.1 Forrester Study on IT-Decision-Maker Perceptions

*The Microsoft Office Fluent User Interface: IT Decision-Maker Perception Of Productivity, Training, And Support Requirements*


**Snapshot of Results**

- 749 IT decision-makers polled in North America – all play a role in defining IT strategy, choosing IT vendors and authorizing IT purchases
- More than 86 percent agree with benefits associated with access to a greater number of features and functions, an improved look and feel, and ability to create high-quality documents
- 84.4 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that benefits of new UI outweigh any challenges
- 84.1 percent say the new UI does not represent any significant obstacle
- 80 percent of respondents say end-users return to full productivity within 0-4 weeks
- More than half of all organizations experienced an increase in help desk call volume, but the majority of these characterized the volume increase as “minimal” or “moderate” (81.5 percent)
- More than two-thirds had not added IT staff to support end-user transitions to the new user interface
- 59.3 percent of respondents expect that there will be no substantial change to IT support staff costs during the first six months of deployment
- When asked how long it took the average worker to become as productive as with previous versions, 52.8 percent indicated it took two weeks or less.

In the final part of this series, I reflect on my experience with the Microsoft experts in these interchanges.
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