

SAP ENTERPRISE SOFTWARE

Challenge

SAP is the world's largest inter-enterprise software company and the third largest software supplier, with 22,000 employees in over fifty countries. The company initially approached frog design to create a simple set of icons and splash screens for its main product, R/3: an enterprise software system from which a large company can run its entire business, including accounting, manufacturing, warehousing, inventory, and purchasing operations. The project grew to encompass the redesign of all C++ components and controls, as well as both of SAP's websites, mySAP.com and SAP.com.

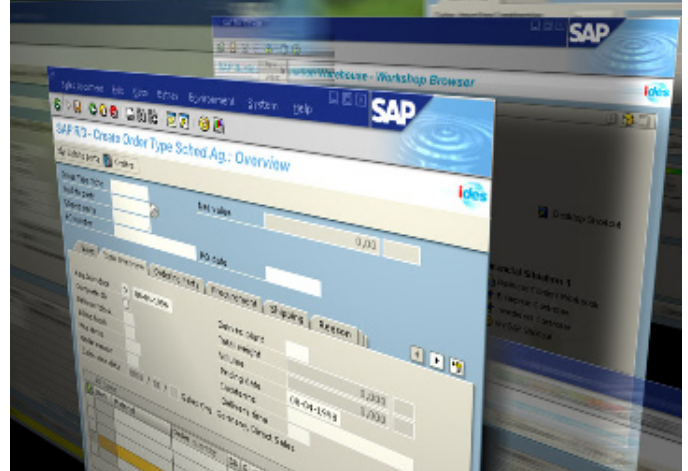
A Wealth of Information

The sweeping utility of R/3 is made possible by more than 50,000 individual screens, countless widgets for building tables and entering data, and hundreds of unique icons. The design team at frog sought to package this colossal wealth of information within a newly engaging, attractive, and approachable form. Business software has a reputation for being plain and gray, but through extensive user research, we identified opportunities to endow the interface with unprecedented emotional impact, aesthetic beauty, and streamlined functionality. Our team met with thousands of R/3 users to gather feedback and amass data concerning feature use and consumer behaviors.

Zen Aesthetic

Intensive brainstorming yielded a seemingly counterintuitive aesthetic for this critical business software: a Zen design theme. Rippling water animations bring the softness of nature to the traditionally impersonal realm of business productivity software. A deft balance of 2- and 3-dimensional forms serves as elegant, functional indicator of control capabilities. With every screen, the design team blended comfort and utility to better address the shifting expectations of users, who have come to demand a more human computing experience.

Within this improved aesthetic, structural adjustments have created a more fluid experience as well. When users indicated a strong preference for business systems tailored to their individual needs, we worked to maximize customization throughout the software interface. The resulting software can be programmed to acknowledge each user's most relevant transactions, so that only necessary applications appear on-screen. Important screen areas are highlighted throughout so that users can instantly recognize incoming work items, mandatory input fields, and system messages. Elements like trees, tables, and tabs with drag-and-drop capabilities significantly reduce the number of screens a user must



ABOVE

SAP's newly comprehensible user interface and reworked visual design enable users to navigate throughout the software with ease.

encounter to perform a task, enhancing productivity. The Zen theme represents more than a surface aesthetic – it embodies the peace of mind that the refined SAP interface offers its users.

A Leap Forward

Users of SAP software now interact with a system that is maximally tailored to their individual needs. With a completely proprietary graphical characteristic, intuitive controls, and customizable features, the new line of SAP products substantially outperforms earlier iterations. It can be used without special training, simplifying business management and propelling workers to new heights of productivity. frog went on to extend these improvements to SAP.com and mySAP.com, unifying the brand identity across multiple platforms.

Result

The redesigned R/3 offers companies a radically decentralized business process, a network of empowered, self-reliant employees each working on an individualized platform. The improved SAP user interface translates into dollar savings for companies that implement it; on average, users of the new R/3 interface have reduced the time it takes to complete standard tasks by fifty percent. Multiply that savings by the thousands of tasks performed per person, per day – worldwide – and the revolutionary power of R/3 becomes immediately apparent.