Earthdata Search UX Lessons Learned

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5 Lessons Learned

- You can't please everyone
- Golden paths simplify complexities
- UX is often dictated by underlying systems
- Screen real estate is expensive
- Nothing beats live user testing

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You can't please everyone

- Users have opinions, and they often don't align
- Users are all coming from different places, literally and figuratively
- Recommendation:
  - Design to the 80% rule
  - Industry standards
  - Add multiple paths/options, but don't over-complicate things

Golden paths simplify complexities

- Workflows make complicated processes easier
- EDSC assumes a user follows a general search > discovery > configure > download process
- EDSC doesn't *force* a specific workflow
- Recommendation:
  - Encourage users to go down a golden path by making that path easy to follow
  - Allow users to escape at each step if necessary

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UX dictated by underlying systems

- Interacting with legacy systems is usually required, but never fun

- User expectations have *dramatically* changed with the proliferation of cutting edge tech

- Recommendation:
  - Move as much as you can to modern systems
  - Decouple live tasks/actions from slow endpoints

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Screen real estate is expensive

- Exposing all data and metadata does not work
- Users can become paralyzed with too many options to choose from
- Constrained panels do not work
- Recommendation:
  - Understand what your users need at each point of your application

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Nothing beats live user testing

- No design survives first contact with the user
- Spectrum of understanding always amazes
- Product teams can be susceptible to confirmation bias
- Recommendation:
  - Find opportunities to put your application in front of a user *who has never used it before* and watch them try to complete a task.

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Lessons Applied

- EDSC Governance Group discusses, product team makes final decision.

- End-to-End Services brings discovery and customization closer than ever.

- Actively moving information from Legacy Services calls to tags and scheduled background tasks.

- Reverting back to (better) vertical panels

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Questions?

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