Think Fast!

Heuristics in Virtual Assistants

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Heuristic = Mental Shortcut
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We need to take heuristics into account while making important decisions.
Default Effect
The default effect is the tendency for people **not to adjust the default settings of a product.**
Researchers have tied the default effect to life or death consequences.

Johnson, Eric, and Daniel Goldstein. “Do Defaults Save Lives?”
Countries that default to opt-in had statistically significant higher donor rates.

Johnson, Eric, and Daniel Goldstein. “Do Defaults Save Lives?”
Google Assistant helps you throughout your day, across devices: from finding information, to starting applications, to playing music and games and more.
Sets the stage by providing information up front.

Play the GA’s response with sound by default.

Lets the user know these settings can be customized.
Google Assistant

Differentiates your settings versus the Assistant’s.
GOOGLE ASSISTANT

Lets you change the assistant voice which is named by brand-color primarily.
(Guest Star: John Legend)
Naive Diversification
Naive diversification is accounted for during a user’s specific intent by not suggesting other tasks unless it’s relevant, or else they may be led off-track.
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Alexa, what’s my notification?

You have a new notification from Amazon shopping.

Your package was delivered.
ALEXA

**Naive diversification** is accounted for during a user’s specific intent by not suggesting other tasks unless it’s relevant, or else they may be led off-track.
Fluency Heuristic
The fluency heuristic states that people tend to make decisions based on which option is easiest to process.

Speed is King
You have an upcoming technician appointment.

Where:
3815 Diamond Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

Current Appointment Date:
February 20, 2020

Reschedule  Dismiss
XA makes decisions easy to process by reducing friction. If someone needs to complete a specific action, enable it your space. Don’t boot them somewhere else, forcing them to learn a new context.
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If someone needs to complete a specific action, enable it in your space.

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If someone needs to complete a specific action, enable it in your space.

Don’t boot them somewhere else, forcing them to learn a new context.
Don’t force the user to search through endless guides for help and support.

Proactively notify the user when something goes wrong, and let them know how to fix it.
Hello Ryan! I'm the Xfinity Assistant here to help you with your services. Let's get started.

Your tech will arrive tomorrow at 1199 Hand Avenue, Portland, OR 97201 between 2:00pm - 4:00pm EST for repair.

![Phone screen with Xfinity Assistant chat]

**SERIAL POSITION EFFECT**

When ordering information, the middle options will be picked the least.

Account for this in your ordering of intents, notifications, and more.
Speed is King
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Context is the Kingdom
Thank You!

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Resources

https://thekevinscott.com/usability-heuristics-for-bots/


https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2015/07/using-heuristics-to-increase-use-of-your-product/


Johnson, Eric, and Daniel Goldstein. “Do Defaults Save Lives?”