Unit 4
Designing visuality

HMI Design Masterclass handout

This unit wants to guide you through designing your prototype. Learn what level of detail is the right one and which tools you can use, how to distribute, place and visualize contents to optimally assist users in their specific use cases – and why the good old buttons and switches should not be left out of the design process.

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Design Tips

Here are the tips from the unit for your convenience.

1	**Build a model; then build the house**	Your first goal is to create a prototype that you can test with users and that you can optimize. Then you can build your interfaces for the screen.
2	**Use modules, templates, and mock-ups**	You can assemble a prototype very efficiently with "prefab" components – styling will take place later.
3	**Avoid cluttered interfaces**	When your interfaces get too crowded, sort functions according to priority and group secondary functions in tabs or subscreens.
4	**Pay attention to alignment and spacing**	Aligning elements to optical guides and creating space around components, text, and frames will improve the overall appearance of your design.
5	**Use a dashboard**	A functional and visually well-designed dashboard is an easy way to create a "wow" effect with users and is fun to work with.
6	**Don't forget about analog buttons and interactions**	Important standard interactions that need to be accessible at all times can be implemented as hardware buttons and switches to complement the touch interface.

Keywords

These terms are worth noting.

HMI Library	Module kit that includes ready-made pages and components and thus enables a quick start to prototype construction.
Low-fidelity prototype	Focuses on the essentials: the placement of functions and information on the screen as well as user guidance.
Dashboard	Combines visual information (including, for e.g., icons, graphics, etc.) in a single overview so that it can be understood at a single glance.

Short Exercise

Try putting your new skills into practice with this exercise.

Choose a screen – for example, from one of your HMI projects, from a machine, or from the internet – that displays many functions. Analyze whether the location and the presentation of the functions match their relevance and frequency. If necessary, optimize the screen design.