FACTSHEET ON SS 618 – GUIDELINES ON USER INTERFACE DESIGN FOR OLDER ADULTS

Background

With the aging population and increasing use of the Internet, there is a need to bridge the gap between older adult users and the Internet. Many services that are traditionally delivered over-the-counter are increasingly being delivered online. This standard takes into consideration that older adults are likely to develop age-related impairments such as visual and/or mobility related impairments. Hence, it is necessary to design user interfaces to enhance usability and user experience for older adults. It helps to encourage active ageing among older adults and promotes Singapore as an age-inclusive society as we advance toward a Smart Nation.

SS 618 Approach

SS 618 provides guidance on the design of the user interface\(^1\) of digital devices, such as laptops and smartphones as well as online services. It goes beyond basic considerations, such as readable font size for older adults, colour and contrast, presentation of information, to include considerations on senior-friendly designs and features.

The senior-friendly designs and features are based on the following general principles of user interface:

(a) **Easy to perceive** – Information and user interface elements can be easily seen, heard and touched by older adults. For instance, the guidelines recommend that at least a 12-point font size should be used on a 15-inch screen as the default; with font size to be scaled accordingly to the screen size and also can be adjusted easily.

(b) **Easy to operate** – User interface components and navigation should be operationally realistic and easy for older adults to operate. For example,

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1 User interface refers to aspects of a computer device or programme that can be perceived and interacted with by the human user in controlling the computer device or programme to perform certain tasks. Examples of computer devices include personal desktop computers, notebooks and laptops, tablets, smartphones, internet kiosks, or Automated Teller Machines. Examples of programmes include computer software applications, tablet applications, smart phone applications, web pages and online services.
minimising the use of time-based content. If time-based content is unavoidable, the option of adjusting or extending the time limits should be allowed.

(c) **Easy to understand** – User interface should present a clear purpose and intent prominently. It should also provide clear informational cues about the function of different elements. For example, when an error is detected, the system should provide guidance and clear instructions on what to do next.

**Benefits of Adopting SS 618**

With SS 618, older adults and stakeholders in the silver industry can benefit as follows:

- Helps application and service providers in designing digital devices and online services that enhances the user experience for the elderly.

- Makes digital devices and online services easy and pleasant to use. This enables active ageing and ageing in place as the elderly can remain independent and continue living within their community.

- Helps companies tap business opportunities from the growing silver market as they can cater to the needs of the elderly through embracing web design that is more suited for older adults.

**Purchase of SS 618**

The standard can be adopted with immediate effect. For those who are interested, the standard is now available for purchase from the Singapore Standards eShop at [www.singaporestandardseshop.sg](http://www.singaporestandardseshop.sg).