



User Types, Goals, and Expectations



Objectives

After this module, you will be able to:

- Specify how often people use help systems
- Describe the stages of use
- Identify user expectations
- Explain how users interact with help

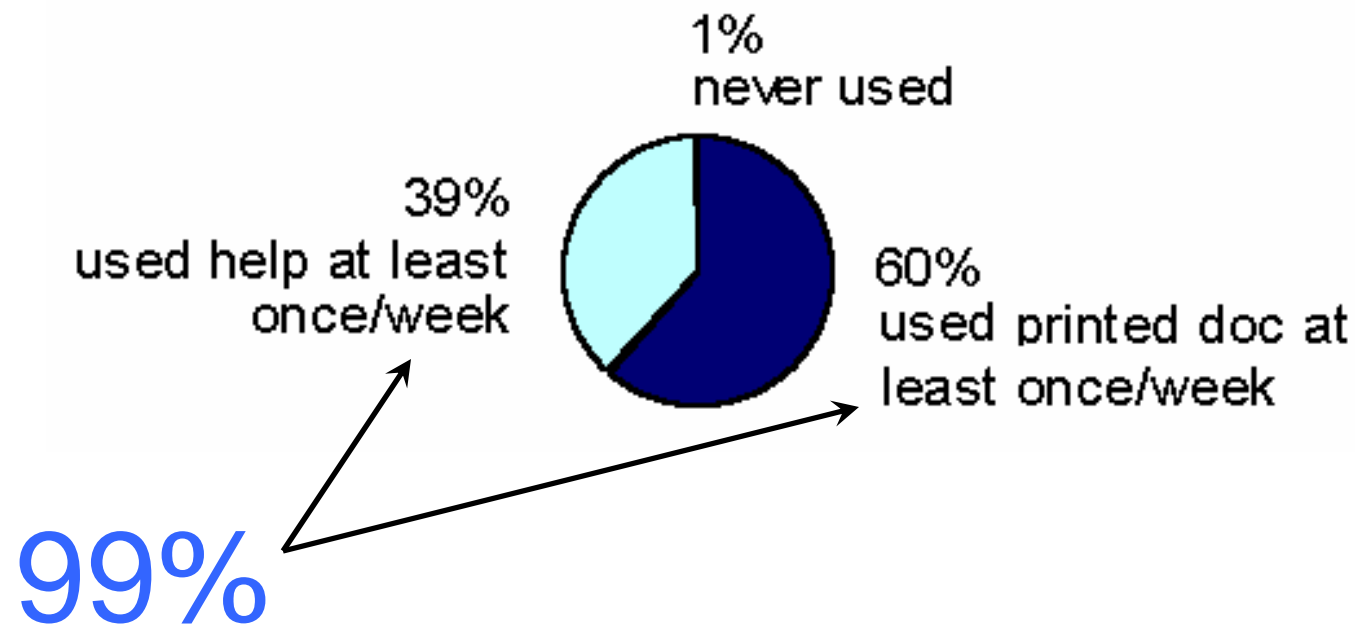


User expectations and preferences

- How often do users use documentation?
- How do users use documentation?
- Who uses documentation?
- What do they need and expect?



How often do users use documentation?



- Smart, K., DeTienne, K. B., and Whitting, M. E. (1995). "Documenting design decisions: accounting for customer preferences." In *ACM SIGDOC Conference Proceedings*. Savannah, GA.



How do users use documentation?

- Web users normally **scan** about 75% of the page.
- Users focus on headings and summaries.

- Morkes, J. and Nielsen, J. (1997). "Concise, SCANNABLE, and objective: how to write for the Web."
<http://www.useit.com/papers/webwriting/writing.html>
- "Eye movement tracking research." Stanford Poynter Project.
<http://www.poynter.org/eyetrack2000/>



Who uses documentation?

Teenagers are 1,150% more likely to use an online reference than older (50+) users.

- Baird, P., Mac Morrow, N., and Hardman, L. (1988). "Cognitive aspects of constructing non-linear documents: HyperCard and Glasgow Online." In *Proceedings Online Information*, 88(6-8), London. 207-218.



Users settle for “good enough”

- Rather than maximizing efficiency, most users seek to produce **satisfactory results with minimum effort**.

- Kellogg, R. (1994). *The Psychology of Writing*. New York: Oxford.



Users want quick information

- Efficient designs are preferred 75% of the time.

- Nielsen J. and Levy, J. (1994). "Measuring usability: preference versus performance." *Communications of the ACM* 37(4), 66-75.



Stages of use

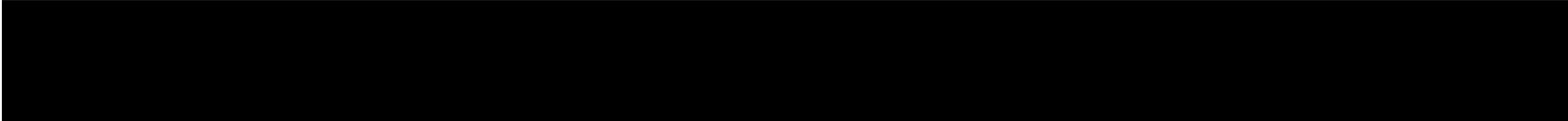
- Novices
 - Advanced Beginners
-
- Competent Performers
 - Proficient Performers
 - Expert Performers

- Dreyfus, H. L. and Dreyfus, S. E. (1986). *Mind Over Machine*. New York: The Free Press.



Stages of use

- Novices
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Stages of use

Casual Users

80%

- Novices
- Advanced Beginners

Power Users

20%

- Competent Performers
- Proficient Performers
- Expert Performers



What defines a **casual** user?

- Don't want to learn, just do
 - Are often intimidated, nervous, stressed
 - Want to be led
 - Are afraid of failure
 - Have difficulty troubleshooting
-
- Moore, J.D., and W. R. Swartout (1990). "Pointing: a way toward explanation dialogue." In *Proceedings of the eighth national conference on artificial intelligence*, Menlo Park, CA ,AAAI Press, 457–464.



What do **casual** users want?

Online

- Tours
- Wizards
- Embedded assistance
- Field-level help

Print

- “Getting Started” guides
- User Guides



What types of questions do **casual** have?

- 57% procedural ('how do I?')
- 24% validation ('is it ok to type here?')
- 12% assessment ('is my cursor in the right position')
- 3% functional ('what is this icon?')
- 3% why ('why did that word disappear?')
- 1% planning ('can I perform another task now?')



UA for **casual** users – example 1

Internet Explorer window titled "eBay item 1233116527 [Ends May-02-01 11:09:22 PDT] - scientific-atlanta modulator D9475 ...". The address bar shows the URL: <http://cgi.ebay.com/aw-cgi/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&item=1233116527&showTutorial=1>.

The eBay page displays a "Welcome to the eBay Bidding Tutorial" dialog box. The dialog box contains the following text:

Learn everything you need to know to begin bidding right away. Find out:

1. About the important auction information on this page.
2. How to learn more about the **seller**.
3. Where to find the **payment** and **shipping** terms.
4. How to **place a bid**!

The dialog box has "Cancel" and "Continue" buttons.

Below the dialog box, the auction details are visible:

- Time left: **5 days, 4 hours +**
- Location: **florida orlando**
- Country/Region: **USA/Orlando**
- Started: Apr-25-01 11:09:22 PDT
- Ends: May-02-01 11:09:22 PDT
- Seller (Rating): **hardware44 (32)** ★

Links for "mail this auction to a friend" and "watch this item" are also present.



UA for **casual** users – example 2

Alamo - rates and reservations - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help eSend

Back Forward Stop Refresh Home Search Favorites History Mail Print Edit Discuss

Address <http://res.alamo.com/> Go Links >>

Alamo®

programs & services travel tools about alamo sitemap e-mail us help

rates & reservations **locations** cars hot deals

Helpful Information

Optional Rate Information

Corporate I.D. : Corporate customers please provide your Corporate I.D. for all reservations. In order to receive your program rates and benefits please use Rate Code BX.

Association I.D. : Association customers please provide your Association I.D. for all reservations. In order to receive your member benefits and discounted rates please use Rate Code BY.

Corporate I.D. and Promo Code/Association I.D. cannot be used simultaneously.

Rate Code required when using a Promo Code.

Dropoff Location *

Dropoff Date * Dropoff Time *

Optional Rate Information

Enter all applicable information. This information is not required. If you have questions regarding what to enter, click in the field and read the text that appears to the left.

| Rate Code | Promo Code/Assoc. I.D. | Corporate I.D. | Coupon Code |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="text" value="AAA"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

Quicksilver Members

| Member I.D. | Member Last Name |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

continue ➔

Need technical help? [Click here](#) or call 1-877-252-6600.

65 Internet



What defines a **power** user?

- Frustrated by oversimplified information
 - Look for shortcuts, tips, and tricks
 - Know everything about the product
 - Serve as resources for other users
 - Troubleshoot on their own
-
- Only 1-2% of users reach the expert stage



Why don't all users become power users?

Motivational Paradox

- Reluctant to explore
 - Don't see the ROI of learning how to use software efficiently
 - Concentrate on achieving the task at hand
-
- Carroll J. M. and R. L. Mack (1992). "Learning to use a word processor: by doing, by thinking, and by knowing." In Thomas, J. C. and Schneider, M.L. (eds.) *Proceedings of CHI '92, human factors in computer systems*, New York, ACM Press & Addison Wesley, 13–51.



What do **power** users want?

Online

- Conceptual topics
- Knowledge bases
- Online communities
- Technical specifications
- Troubleshooting information

Print

- “Getting Results” guides
- Reference guides
- Troubleshooting information



Why do experts have trouble designing for novices?

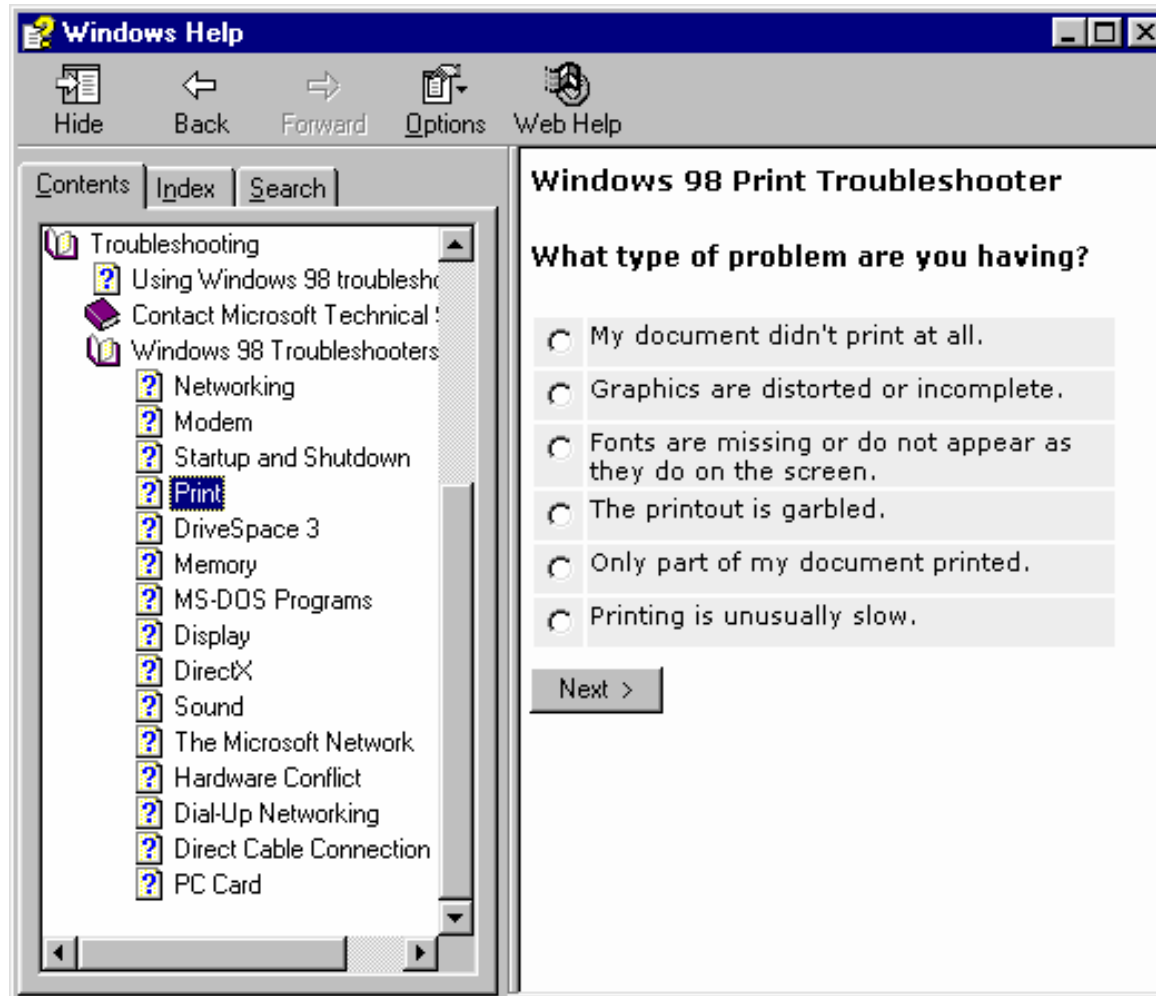
Curse of knowledge

Experts have trouble ignoring their own superior knowledge in trying to make naive predictions.

- Camerer, Loewenstein, C. G., and Weber, M. (1989). "The curse of knowledge in economic settings: An experimental analysis." *Journal of Political Economy* 97, 1232-1254.

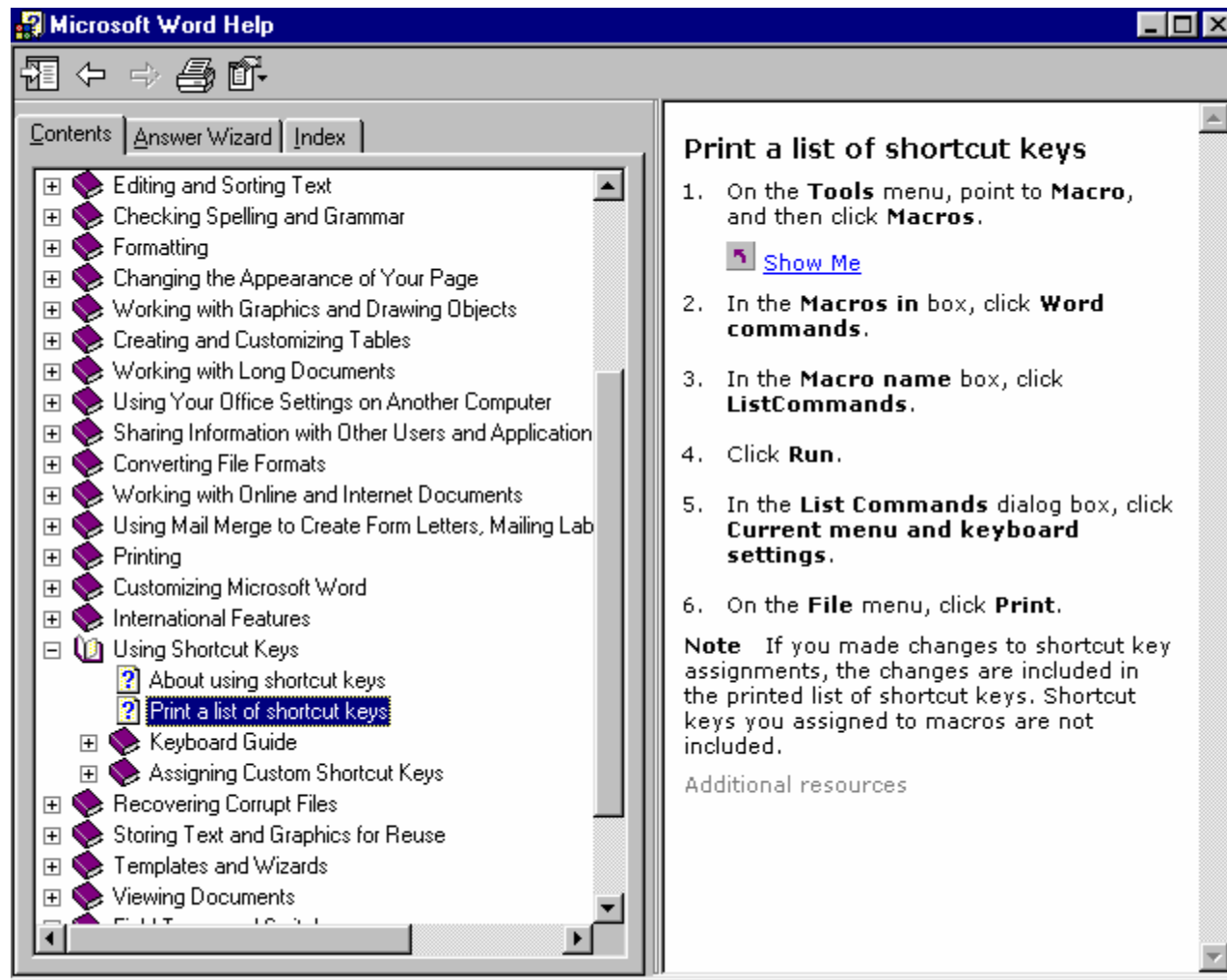


UA for power users – example 1





UA for power users – example 2





UA for power users – example 3

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "RoboHelp Community - Knowledge Base - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar shows "Contents", "Ask", and "iPredict" buttons, with "eHelp Corporation" on the right. The main content area is titled "Welcome to the eHelp Technical Support Knowledge Base". It contains a paragraph about the Knowledge Base's purpose, a search instruction, and a bulleted list of resources. A sidebar on the left lists various links like "Welcome", "Using this Knowledge Base", and "Latest Version of RoboHelp".

Contents

- Welcome
- Using this Knowledge Base
- Latest Version of RoboHelp
- New items added this week
- Articles updated this week
- Getting More Help
- RoboHelp Classic
- RoboHelp HTML
- RoboHelp Office Tools
- Suggest a Knowledge Base Article

Welcome to the eHelp Technical Support Knowledge Base

The eHelp Technical Support Knowledge Base brings you problem-solving resources around the clock. We deliver our Knowledge Base system in an easy-to-use interface, complete with a table of contents, index, and full-text search functionality.

Search the Knowledge Base to quickly find the answers to your product questions and maximize your RoboHelp investment. Browse and search for your topic. You will find many solutions to choose from to help solve your problem. If you're unable to find what you are looking for here, be sure to check some of the other resources available to you:

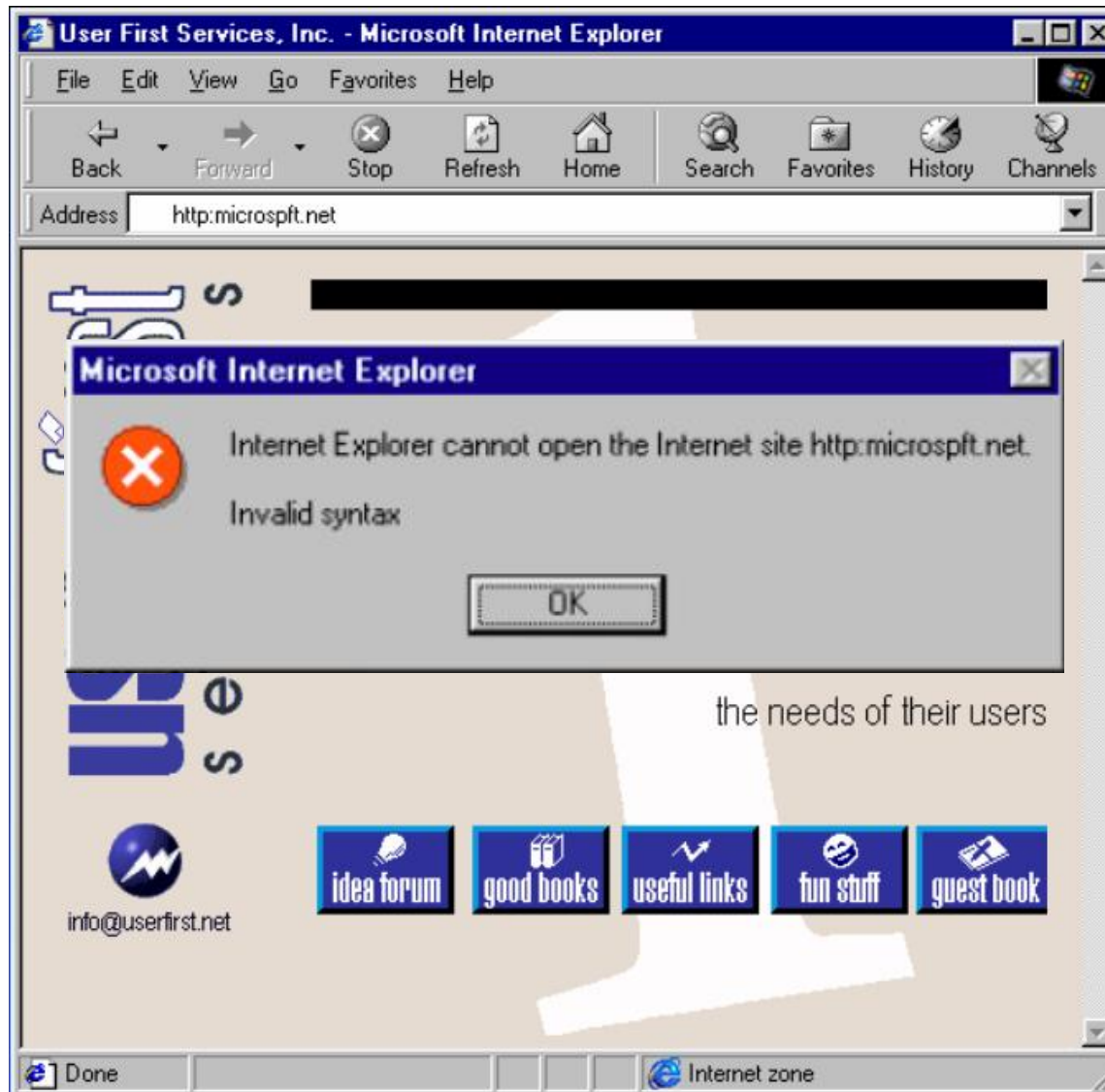
- Post your question to our popular [Help Author](#) or [Developer](#) forums.
- Review and download one of the available [Sample Projects](#)
- Check out the [Articles](#) or [Tips and Tricks](#) section
- You can also use our [on-line support form](#) to contact RoboHelp Technical Support.

If you did not find the topic you were looking for but would like to see it added, we want to hear from you. You may not be alone. If you would like to request a topic be included in the Knowledge Base please use our [on-line submission form](#). Our Knowledge Base Administrator will review your suggestion and will keep you informed of the status of your request.

Powered by eHelp

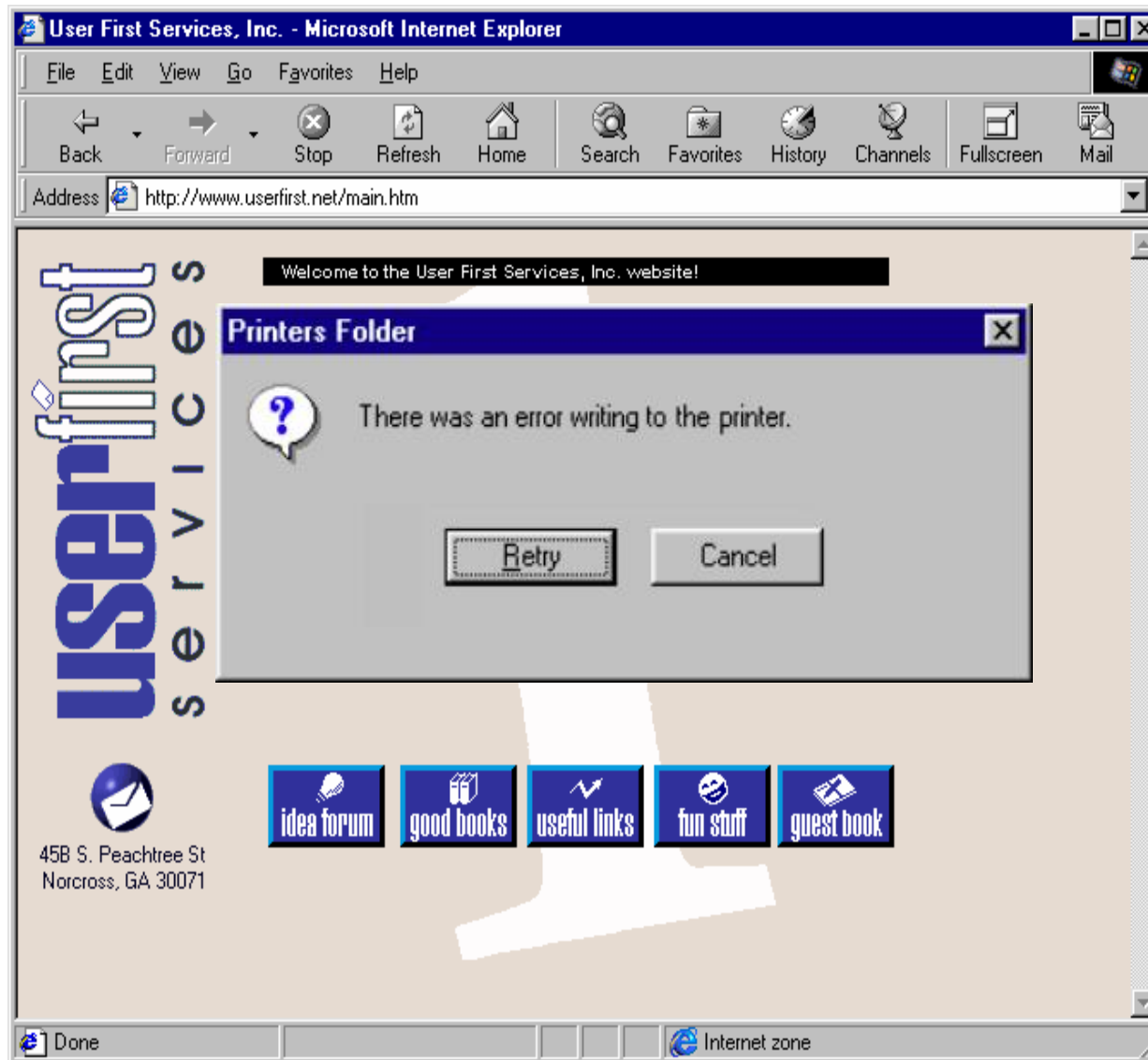


Discussion Problem 1





Discussion Problem 2





Discussion

- Select a problem
- Select a group (casual or power users)
- Describe how you would provide assistance for the problem