

Required fields in forms

Positioning of the * symbol

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT & DESIGN

Problem

Currently, the visual indicator of required fields in forms, is aligned at the end of the input field, while the label is aligned left.

When we (& our clients) can have long forms on desktop, with a large width, this can take the user to not perceive that it was a required field, and commit undesired errors, or try to move forward without being able to actually do it.

The retina movement required to look for the symbol, is unnecessary and unrecommended.

Solutions Requirement

The required information, should be immediately perceived by the user, when reading the labels.

Situation

As Product Designer of WebUI, I've created the ticket for this small improvement, based on the most common usability practices in multiple web platforms, and assuring that the user would not need to 'look for' the required symbol in the form: <https://jira.nuxeo.com/browse/NXP-25140>

The developers didn't felt comfortable with the positioning of the symbol aligned to the right of the label, and indicated that would much appreciate to validate this improvement, based on a diverse sample of potential users of forms online.

Also consider this client feedback:

https://nuxeo.zoom.us/recording/play/mbZnlhqiM-NTwkbGF84ITarXwCWprL5G5A9qkOIVPT7xSm7s84Td2PLb_p3QvTtm

A/B TESTING

In order to expose the current situation VS two possible solutions, was presented the following image, to a sample of 15 users:

The screenshot shows a 'NEW FILE' form with the following fields: Location (pre-filled), Title, Description, Content (with 'Add a file' button), Nature, Subjects, Coverage, and Expires. In the current version, the asterisk is placed at the end of the field labels: 'Title *', 'Description *', 'Subjects *', 'Coverage *', and 'Expires *'.

A - current situation

This version of the form places the asterisk at the beginning of the field labels: '* Title', '* Description', '* Subjects', '* Coverage', and '* Expires'.

Solution B

This version of the form places the asterisk at the beginning of the field labels: '* Title', '* Description', '* Subjects', '* Coverage', and '* Expires'.

Solution C

[See here in more detail](#)

EXPOSING THE PROBLEM

Imagine you are filling a form online;
And that there are some required fields;
Where would you prefer to see the asterisk/little star?

If possible, please justify your decision.

SAMPLE

It was selected a diverse sample of 9 men and 5 women, from ages between 24 and 63.
A big professional diversity was one of the requirements, all with different levels of digital experience.

Sex	Job	Age	Option
M	Product Marketing Manager	43	B
M	Lawyer	31	B
M	Psicologist/RH	39	B
M	Creative Director	36	B
F	Medical Delegate	39	B
M	Neurosurgeon	35	B
M	Mechanical engineer	34	C
F	Nuclear engineer	24	B
F	Art curator	33	B
F	Administrative	33	B
F	Fashion Designer	34	B
M	Marketing and Communication Coordinator	38	B
M	Teacher	58	B
M	Events manager	63	C
9M / 5F			12B / 2C

User quotes

“I prefer the option B.

It’s the same solution I currently use on the surveys we do at Randstad, and at the Psicology University & Nova, we always used always the star* right after the question or data, that we pretended to obtain.”

“2nd is the best.

The first option is two far away, and I totally missed it, and the 3rd is behind the label, it’s not so impactful. The second is the one that I detect more easily, and it stays more in my mind what I really have to fill.”

“No doubt: B”

“The one in the middle, definitely. It’s more intuitive”

“B. You see the * better after the words,”

“B.

A - is far away from my focus point.

C - It seems like bullets, I don’t understand it is required.”

“B no doubt.

The eyes detect immediately where are the required fields”