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Farewell to Icons, Embracing Colours!

User interfaces of computer desktop applications controlled by icons are widespread in human–computer relationships. Icons can be used in the ribbon menus of different programs. Complex workflows can be assembled by icons, too. We can choose among files stored in our computers easily by iconized previews – thumbnail pictures. These iconized previews, designed for the human gaze, are generated from the binary contents of image, photo, movie or sound files, but in case of other types of files this procedure is hard or impossible.

Can there be any generally applicable technique to identify and to differentiate computer files?

Recalling former knowledge is necessary to understand shapes on computer icons. The image of the icon tries to refer to a certain part of reality. Sometimes this reference is incomprehensible for the human interpretator. I suggest that a better understanding could be achieved by replacing shapes by colours. First, recognizing colours is simpler than understanding shapes. Secondly, the drawing space of a computer icon is limited, so creating a finite pictorial reference to the endless diversity of reality is not possible. This is the reason for icons of output files of various software applications increasingly becoming similar to each other.

In my paper I suggest a solution for referring to computer files by colours. By way of conclusion, I introduce a method for searching for files with the help of colour codes.



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