



Project Server 2007 Interface Inconsistencies

I used to joke about the inconsistencies in 2003 Project Web Access during my Administration training classes; but with Project Web Access 2007, it is no longer a joke, I am upset. Most of you may consider these inconsistencies minor, but for me, it is like "hearing fingernails scratch a chalkboard" and I hate that.

Some of my peers would argue I am "nit-picking" or worse "anal-retentive" and there are a lot bigger problems to worry about with EPM 2007. I'll let you be the judge. My issues below refer to the Server Settings section in Project Web Access 2007.

 **Should it bother me that a few of the Save and Cancel buttons are not the same size? Probably not, but it does.**

Version 1 - Normal (found on most web pages)



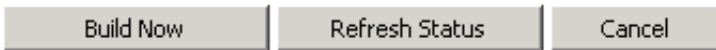
Version 2 - Normal size, but no space between the Save and Cancel buttons.



Version 3 - Different size buttons. (found in the Resource Center, select a Resource and Select EDIT. Scroll down to the bottom of the page.)



Another example of different sized buttons (found in the Cube Build Status Page)



 **Should it bother me that the Save and Cancel buttons are at the top of most of the screens, but not all of them?**

This one really irritates me because I desire consistency in using an application and it "interrupts" my brain. Instead of driving down a smooth highway I feel like I am driving down a bumpy road in an unfinished community.

Screens that do not have Save and Cancel Buttons on the Top and Bottom of the Page

Cube

- Build Settings
- Build Status
- Configuration

Time and Task Management

- Task Settings and Display

Database Administration


- Schedule Backup
- Administrative Backup
- Administrative Restore

Look and Feel

- Grouping Formats
- Quick Launch
- Gantt Chart Formats

Operational Policies

- Alerts and Reminders
- Active Directory Resource Pool Synchronization

 **Should it bother me that the Quick Launch Bar is available on some screens and not others?**

Perhaps there is a reason I have not considered. Mostly I want the Quick Launch Bar because the space is already there and I think it should be filled with something useful, something I would be expecting to see.

Pages that show the Quick Launch Bar

Security

- Manage Users
- Security Templates
- Manage Groups

Enterprise Data

- Enterprise Custom Field Definition
- Resource Center
- Enterprise Global
- Enterprise Calendars

Database Administration

- Force Check-in Enterprise Objects
- Administrative Backup
- Schedule Backup
- Administrative Restore

Queue

- Manage Queue

Look and Feel

- Manage Views
- Operational Policies
- Server-Side Event Handler Configuration
- Quick Launch
- Project Workspaces

Pages that DO NOT show Quick Launch Bar

Security

- Project Web Access Permissions

Cube

- Build Settings
- Build Status
- Cube Configuration

Enterprise Data

- About Project Server

Time and Task Management

- Financial Periods
- Timesheet Classifications
- Administrative Time
- Close Tasks to Update
- Timesheet Periods
- Timesheet Settings and Defaults
- Task Settings and Display

Database Administration

- Delete Enterprise Objects

Queue

- Queue Settings

Look and Feel

- Grouping Formats
- Gant Chart Formats



Operational Policies

- Alerts and Reminders
- Additional Server Side Settings
- Active Directory Resource Pool Synchronization
- Project Workspace Provisioning Settings

If someone can identify a logic to the above that would make sense to the average user please let me know.



Should it bother me that some of the "Link Titles" (the links viewed on the Server Settings Page to access Server Setting functionality) do not match the title of the Web Page the link takes you to?

Examples of what I am talking about:

Link Title	Web Page Title
Security Templates	Manage Templates
Build Settings	Cube Build Settings
Configuration	Cube Configuration
Build Status	Cube Build Status
Enterprise Field Definition	Custom Fields and Lookup Tables
Enterprise Global.....	Configure Project Professional - Configure button opens Project Pro
Financial Periods	Fiscal Periods
Timesheet Classifications	Edit or Create Line Classifications
Timesheet Settings and Defaults	Settings and Defaults
Administrative Time	Edit or Create Administrative Time
Schedule Backup	Daily Backup Schedule
Administrative Backup.....	Backup
Administrative Restore	Restore
Manage Queue	Manage Queue Jobs
Quick Launch	Edit Quick Launch
Server Side Event Handler Configuration	Events
Active Directory Resource Pool Synchronization	Active Directory Enterprise Resource Pool Synchronization
Timesheet	Timesheet Approval
Setup Outlook Sync	Synchronize your tasks with Outlook

Tag: **Are these big issues?**

In my opinion, unequivocally yes; the "devil is in the details" (as any good manager knows). Why do I think these are big issue? It is my belief that these "interface consistency" issues illustrate a serious concern regarding the process and personnel engaged to test and QA (Quality Assurance) Project Server 2007. Inconsistencies in an application's interface can make the product more difficult to use. If the application interface is not consistent:

- As a trainer, I think it is a more difficult product to work with, learn and teach.
- As a software development engineer (programmer) I am disturbed that the "basics" of software design and development were ignored; I then question the quality/consistence of the application's functionality.
- As a quality assurance manager I am appalled that a company with such vast resources would release a product that seemly "rushed through" the QA cycle and/or did not adhere to promulgated standards.

Project Server 2007 appears to be a significant leap forward in certain functionality and a few steps back in quality assurance / testing / functionality. Does the Project Server 2003 Service Patch 2 ring any bells? Within a month or so SP2A was released to fix SP2 issues. None of the many application interface inconsistencies were addressed in any of the Service Patches for Project Server 2003; will they be addressed in 2007? I doubt it and that bothers me too.

Why would a company with vast resources release a product without properly conducting quality assurance on the application's interface? Rush to market? No standards defined? Unqualified individuals performing the work? I expect these types of issues from a ShareWare or FreeWare product or a product from a small company without vast resources. Not an Enterprise Project Management Solution probably used by over 80% of the fortune 1000 corporations, Governments and the largest agencies in the world with millions of users.

Maybe there is rock in my shoe about this whole thing is I was thinking Microsoft was going to pull together a comprehensive team of people from their vast resources that would give us the best computing experience possible.