The job title "UX/UI designer" may suggest interchangeability between UX and UI, but in reality, they are two different things, albeit with some overlap. They are, in fact, seen as subsets. The term "User Experience" was invented by Don Norman, an American researcher and the director of The Design Lab at the University of California, San Diego.

To further elaborate, UI focuses on visible work such as interaction design, interface design, and layout, while UX focuses more on less visible work such as Google Analytics, A/B tests, and Wireframes. While UI tries to make the project fit the image of the company, UX considers what a user expects.

The usability of a product is a priority for UX designers. The user experience itself is also an important priority, mostly to make the product stand out. The user experience has various aspects to it that a UX designer must focus on, such as pleasure, efficiency, and fun. It is commonly agreed among UX designers that there is no "objectively good" user experience for everyone. After all, if you try to please everyone you'll please no one. Therefore, it's important that the design should abide by the standards the target audience expects and would find comfort in. Just like always, it's important to abide by a particular user's needs. UX designers tend to imagine and define their target audience through a User Persona where they gather all the traits they would typically expect from a typical user for their service and define their problems and needs to base the service around.

UX design is seen as an appealing career choice by Career Foundry, a leading online school for career change dedicated to educating the next generation of tech talent by offering courses in various talents such as UX Design, Web Development, Data Analytics, Digital Marketing, UI Design, and Product Management.

They see it as a good career choice due to its emphasis on empathy, as the designer must empathize with the user to check if its designs are convenient. Of course, finding these good solutions requires both critical and creative thinking. Additionally, soft skills are required because this is often done through teamwork effort, therefore it's important to communicate well, whether it's with the client or with your teammates. Designers are also a permanent staple of tech due to its high demand, and it's expected that the demand will only rise as the years go on. Career Foundry also praises the life of a UX Designer for its decent work-life balance, as it often allows remote work or at least a hybrid.

There are several Heuristics for the User Interface Design proces. These heuristics are set up by Jakob Nielsen, a User Advocate and principal of the Nielsen Norman Group which he co-founded with Dr. Donald A. Norman.

1: The user should keep being informed about the system status.

2: The design should speak the users' language. The system should use words and concepts familiar to them.

3: Always allow the user an "emergency exit" when they make a mistake.

4: Maintain consistency in design elements and adhere to industry standards

5: Make designs that can carefully prevent problems in the first place, so you won't have to keep relying on good error messages. For example, make confirmation messages.

6: Minimize memory load by making information visible and reducing the need for users to remember details.

7: Offer shortcuts or customization options, so it appeals to inexperienced and experienced users.

8: Minimalist Design to avoid distractions

9: Error messages should be expressed in plain language, no error codes.

10: Provide help or documentation.

To help abide by these rules, there are different methods for UX designers to empathize with their user. They can gather their thoughts through empathy maps. This method can not only help the designer to empathize with the users, but it can also help the design team be on the same page, so they all have a similar understanding on the user.

An empathy map is a visualization used to articulate what we know about a particular type of user. With this, it could help the team make their decisions more effectively. Empathy maps are usually split into 4 quadrants with a user persona in the middle. These quadrants are "Says", "Thinks", "Does", and "Feels". It is meant to describe this user as a whole.

Says: captures quotes from the user, usually gathered through interviews or other ways. This quote is meant to reveal preferences the user has.

Thinks: captures the user's internal thoughts and considerations, often discovered by the team through research. These are unspoken concerns or doubts that a user doesn't usually mention.

Does: captures observable actions of the user and their interactions with a product or service.

Feels: captures the emotional aspect of the user experience. It expresses how users feel throughout the interaction. This can include, for example, impatience from slow loading times.

There's a popular ideology UX designers follow when doing their job. This ideology is called Design Thinking. It claims that a hands-on, user-centric approach to problem-solving can lead to innovation, and that innovation can lead to differentiation and a competitive advantage. This approach is defined by a design thinking process of 6 distinct phases which are as follows:

Empathize: Conduct research to understand what your users do, say, think, and feel. Talk to a range of actual users and observe what they think. In this phase, you talk to a range of actual users. The goal is to gather enough observations that you can truly begin to empathize with your users and their perspectives.

Define: Combine all your research and figure out what the users' problems and needs are.

Ideate: Think up a range of ideas that address the problem and needs. Bring your team together to sketch out these ideas. You can even build upon other teammates' ideas.

Prototype: Build a representation for your ideas. The goal of this phase is to understand how the components of your ideas should work.

Test: Return to the user for feedback to verify if it achieves your goals. Then apply the feedback to put the vision into effect.

According to the writers Kara Pernice, Sarah Gibbons, Kate Moran, and Kathryn Whitenton from the blog site the Norman Nielsen Group, there's a certain "UX maturity model". That is a framework to assess each organization's UX-related strengths and weaknesses.

The 6 Stages of UX Maturity:

Absent: UX is ignored or nonexistent.

Limited: UX work lacks importance, thus it's mostly done haphazardly.

Emergent: The UX work is done inconsistently and inefficiently, but it still works.

Structured: The organization utilizes a partially structured UX methodology that is widespread but demonstrates differing levels of effectiveness and efficiency.

Integrated: UX work is comprehensive, effective, and pervasive.

User-driven: A commitment to UX across all levels results in profound insights and outstanding outcomes in user-centered design.

To make sure that the UX maturity is high, the UX must be a priority. There must be great knowledge of UX.

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