Kelvin Kellner

Mrs. Cooper

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User-Experience Design: Understanding What Is Under the Hood

The cooperation between the visual appeal, functionality, and feeling of a product are all integral parts of successful design. If any one component is insufficient, then the entire product is essentially ineffective. Users must have a clear understanding of their product’s functionality, and every good product should be easily used by their target audience. This is especially important in the digital age. Similar to the seamless transitions of a well-edited film, a well-designed platform works so swiftly that the user hardly thinks about the path they follow to meet their desired purpose from the service. Buttery-smooth design is no mistake, User Experience, or UX, designers are an essential team of designers who invest hours of planning and testing time to create products that absolutely benefit the usability of a given service; they construct products that allow customers to feel comfortable and confident while streamlining the problems that may naturally occur, to create the optimally time-effective and stress-free experience possible. Only after functionality is perfected can beauty be attained.

There is a vast multitude of principles and techniques used by UX designers to plan effective services. The first step into planning, say, an app or a website is to create wireframe designs of the layout for every type of page. Essentially, the designers create a flow chart of all the pages and their relationships with the other pages ‒ how will users get from one page to the next, where will images and buttons be placed for users to effortlessly find and be drawn towards them, et cetera, et cetera. Before the team even considers icons, colour schemes, and pictures, they begin to brutally plan and adjust the flow of their platform so that they can easily control the stream of customers to better follow their expected or desired usage. This can include components as straightforward as deciding which buttons should be filled in and which ones should simply be outlines, or as complex as utilizing the fundamental understanding of how users scroll through and interact with websites in order to direct the outcome of their usage to improve customer satisfaction or benefit the company.

Beyond usability, UX designers are concerned with the aesthetic appeal of their products. People frequently say that a book should never be judged by the appearance of its cover, however, one may beg to differ that a book which ties the sail to an unattractive cover is inconsequential in a sea of beautiful images and symbolism. Beauty speaks volumes, and astonishing aesthetics can absolutely foster an enriched user experience for a customer. A polished, professional look can work wonders with bringing a product from good to great. Visuals can also provide an excellent opportunity for harmony in industry. Popular aesthetics lend themselves to brand imagery and competition. Brands can use symbols and colours to distinguish themselves from their competition and construct an identity in an immense marketplace. This brand identity creates a connection between brands and consumers: a familiar relationship from which the two sources can learn to understand one another. From the company side, branding allows companies to establish target audiences and take advantage of familiarity heuristics. As for customers, branding acts as an outlet for companies to share messages to customers that tell them that they share some sort of understanding of one another, a sense of unity and mutualism.

In addition to functionality and appearance, UX designers care about the way that their products make people feel. They hope to please their customers and provide a thoroughly gratifying experience. They use a combination of the senses to create a lasting emotion from the usage of their products. From the satisfying crunch of a Pringles chip or the powerful hum of a Harley Davidson motorcycle, to the seductive pink of a La Vie en Rose bag, and everything in between. UX designers learn to focus on not only where and why customers use their products, but they also emphasize how their products will make you feel. This a fundamental insight into the world of advertising that every large-scale company knows how to skillfully manipulate. The emotions elicited during the use or consumption of a product are worth just as much as the purpose they fill in a person’s life. People love products that bring them closer to the versions of themselves they most strongly aspire towards, and clever UX designers make the most of these desires.

Ultimately User-Experience Design can be boiled down to three major components: the look and feel, usability and importance, as well as the emotional satisfaction of their products. Each of these three pieces, when placed together, form products with the optimal experience for customers and establish a company’s value in any given marketplace. If any of these pillars are damaged, then the entirety of the brand is significantly less likely to succeed. UX design is an ever-evolving field that interconnects a vast network of other skills such as sociology, visual arts, computer science and more. The attention on customer-focused, cross-disciplinary improvement is precisely what makes User-Experience Design a deeply fascinating career path often remains underappreciated.

Sources

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