

TILAL AL-MASAKEN APPLICATION

Portfolio Activity- Unit 3

MSIT 5260-01

Foundations of HCI

AY2023-T4

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Introduction

User experience UX has become a significant factor for businesses across all industries. The real estate business is undoubtedly no exception. In fact, the importance of UX for the real estate industry has only increased with time. A well-designed and easy-to-use website can make all the difference when it comes to capturing potential clients and generating leads. A user-friendly interface, seamless navigation, clear call-to-actions, and mobile responsiveness are some key features that contribute to a positive UX. A good UX design not only enhances customer satisfaction but also builds brand credibility and ultimately leads to higher conversions. As such, real estate businesses that prioritize UX design will have a competitive edge in today's crowded marketplace (Clark, 2019; Nosov, 2020).

For this course, I have chosen a project about building a cross-platform application for a real estate company called Tilal Al-Masaken. The company has multiple services related to real estate business including selling, renting, and building. The company is an old fashion company with no technical infrastructure. Due to the modernization requirements by the business and the market, the company decided to perform digital transformation by creating an app to digitalize its paper work and enable the customers to preview the offers and compare them using their phones before coming for negotiation in the office.

User analysis

There are four types of stakeholders who represent the actors of the system:

- 1- The first actor is the customer who will navigate the system, observe the offers, compare the offers, and book an appointment with an agent of the company to negotiate the offers and observe them on land.

- 2- The second actor is the owner of the real-estate who will define the specifications of his building, upload images and videos, and update the availability status of the building.
- 3- The third actor is the agent who will communicate with customers based on their scheduled appointments, get contact with the owners to aid them in registering their buildings and get familiar with them to promote their offers to the customers, and track their balances.
- 4- The fourth actor is the company administration who will confirm newly registered buildings and approve them, manage the agents' appointments and rates, and conduct and authorize the contracts.

Create one persona for two of the stakeholders

For this point, I am creating a persona for the customer and another one for the owner in the following two templates.



Angela McRaven

Goals

To buy a house with a backyard.

To explore the latest real estate offers.

To compare the available offers based on her preferences.

Motivations

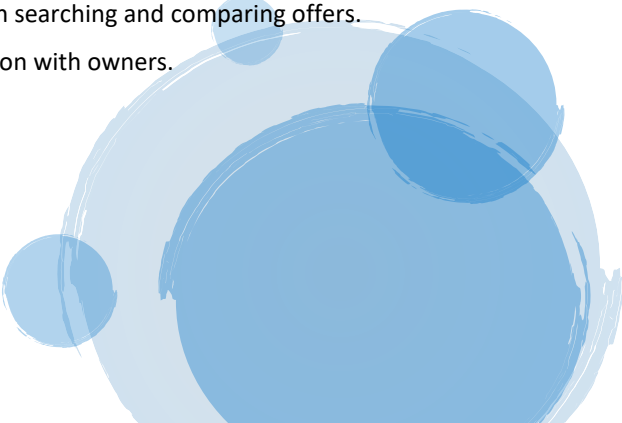
Owning a house to live.

To get rid of the monthly rental cost.

Attitude

- As a prospective customer, she is curious and careful at the same time.
- She is a slow decision maker that take a lot of thinking and revision before taking a decision.
- While she wants to buy a house, she care for both quality and price but not luxury.

Frustrations and Competence

- She run away from luxurious too expensive offers.
 - She does not like the red color.
 - She is exhausted from too much searching and comparing offers.
 - She prefers direct communication with owners.
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Fred Rainstorm

Goals

To sell one of his houses for the highest price.

To explore the latest real estate offers and guarantee that his offer is competent.



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Motivations

Buying a land and start a development project.

Attitude

- He would take any chance that would help him sell his house.
- He prefers that the agent would do everything for him.
- He wants to be able to know how much his net gain is.

Frustrations and Competence

- He announced his offer on multiple platform.
 - He does not want to pay high commission without defining what value would be high.
 - He is pessimistic about the prices trend.
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Task analysis

First task: A customer searches for offers

Goals

- To explore variety of offers in terms of price and specifications.
- To find a suitable offer.
- To be able to narrow the search by filters.

Preconditions

There must be registered or referral approved offers in the website.

Subtasks

Filtering the results is a subtask of searching for offers.

Exceptions

When no offers are available, the customer should get an apology feedback to inform him that. It should not just give him an empty list.

Other features

The search process should be personalized using business intelligence tool to propose the most suitable offers to the customer according to their profile and search history.

Scenario

Angela needs to buy a house. First, she wants to explore the available offers she can navigate. She wants to be selective too. There might be a lot of non-useful offers for her. That is why she would prefer to use filters. Her total budget is about 350k\$ but she is not planning to spend them all. She uses the application to explore the available offers. She has found that there are many luxurious offers which do not deserve its high price according to its specifications. She decided to filter these results out using the lifestyle filter. She also wants the offers to be in one of

areas in a list but not out of them. She added those areas to the location filter. She will live in the new house with her son and daughter, so she needs at least five rooms. She selected that from the room count filter. Finally, her evaluation in case all these features are available is based on the price. So, she ordered the results base on the price using the order by list button.

Second task: A customer compares offers

Goals

- To explore the details of more than an offer in the same screen.
- To compare the features between multiple offers.
- Find the most appropriate offer.

Preconditions

- The customer should have already added multiple offers to the compare list.
- The offers should be marked as available by their owners upon comparison.

Subtasks

Running intelligent evaluation system is a subtask of comparing offers

Exceptions

- If no available offer or only one available offer exists in the comparison list, the compare button would be inactivated until more offers are added.
- If an offer is added to the comparison list and its status is updated to unavailable, the user should be notified that the offer has been removed from the list for that reason.

Other features

The comparison list can handle at most five offers.

Scenario

Angela has been attracted to many offers during her observation. She wanted to compare the specifications of these offers. Whenever she found a good offer, she added it to the list. After adding five offers, she could no more add other offers. When she finds a new attractive offer which she thought it is a very special chance offer. She decided to remove the least significant offer from the comparison list and add that offer instead. She has done that until she finished browsing the offers. After that, she went to the comparison list and started the comparison. The offers were summarized in a table that is identified by the specifications and the columns represented the offers. Angela could explore the specifications of all offers in one screen and decide which offer is better.

Third task: An owner announces for a property

Goals

- Add the property as an available property.
- Promoting the property for potential customers.

Preconditions

The owner should be registered in the system

Subtasks

None.

Exceptions

If any detail of property is missing, the owner should be informed.

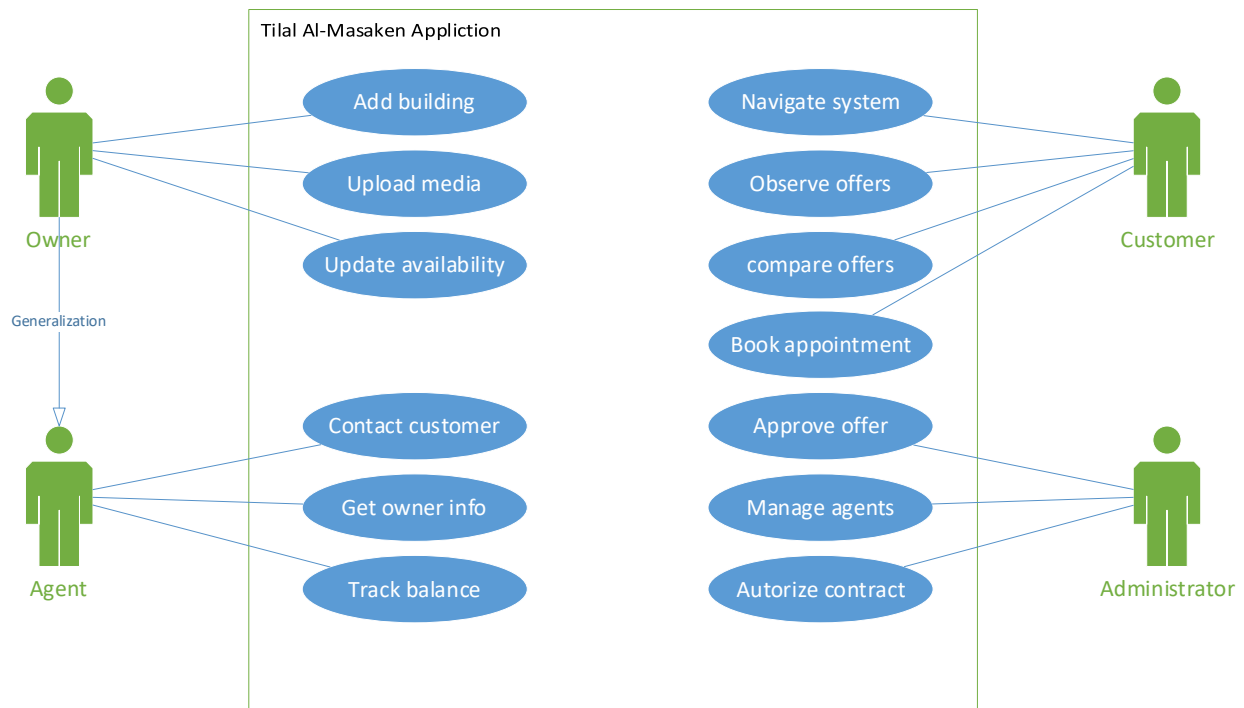
Other features

None.

Scenario

Eric owns some houses in the town where Angela is looking for. He decided to sell one of his houses in order to prepare fund for his new development project. His project needs about 250k\$ but he aims to sell his house for 400k\$. He explored other offers and found the price he is proposing is reasonable. However, he did not pay attention to some details. He tried to add his property to application. The application asked for information about his house. He could fill all the information. The applications estimated the price of his house as 320k\$ and asked him to confirm or modify the price. He modified it to 370k\$. After that, the app asked him if he has any photos or videos of the house to upload them. Finally, the house was added, and Eric was notified that the house is going to be marked as available. If it is not available or sold outside the application, Eric should modify its statues. Eric accepted that and the offer was available and can be explored in the offers.

c) Usability requirements



There are nine main use-cases defined in this project so far:

<i>Use case</i>	<i>Actor</i>	<i>Flow</i>
<i>Observe the offers.</i>	Customer	From the main page, the customer selects to explore the available offers or search for certain offer. Both results can be filtered.
<i>Compare the offers.</i>	Customer	The user adds offers to the comparison list. Then, the user selects the comparison screen to compare the offers' specifications on a single table.
<i>Book an appointment.</i>	Customer	After deciding and being convinced with the offer, the user book an appointment to discuss the offer with the company agent and observe the offer in reality.
<i>Define the specifications of building.</i>	Owner	The owner selects adding new offer from the main screen and adds the required specifications. After that, it will be notified about the availability policy and commitment. After agree, the offer will be added to the offer list.
<i>Update the availability status of the building.</i>	Owner	If a building is sold through the app, it will be marked as unavailable automatically. If it is sold outside or the owner no longer wants to sell it, the owner should mark it as unavailable.

<i>Communicate with customers.</i>	<i>with</i>		Unavailable properties are excluded from being observed in the offer list.
		Agent	The agents will be notified if a customer asked for an appointment. They will get the contact information to call that customer and arrange any further follow ups.
<i>Contact with owners.</i>		Agent	If an agent has some owners who want to advertise by him, he can register these owners on their behalf and aid them in adding properties and get familiar with them to promote offers to the customers.
<i>Track balance.</i>		Agent	Agents can track their commission balance from their profile page.
<i>Approve offers.</i>		Admin	A newly registered offer is not automatically added to the offer list unless the admin approved it. The admin is notified on the main dashboard that new offers are added to approve them or decline them with writing the reason and proposed modifications. The owner and his agent will be informed upon decision.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the importance of user experience (UX) in the real estate business cannot be overstated. Research consistently shows that users are more likely to engage with a website that offers a smooth and intuitive experience. This is especially true for those in the real estate industry, where users are looking for effective search and navigation tools to help them find the property they want. By investing in UX design, real estate businesses can improve their website's usability, which in turn can lead to increased engagement, customer satisfaction, and ultimately, higher revenue. Therefore, it is crucial for real estate businesses to prioritize UX design in order to stay competitive in today's digital landscape.

References

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