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The Significance of Ethical Business Practices in the Creation of Digital User Experience (UX) Design.

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A B S T R A C T

Ethical business practices are critical to the creation of digital user experience (UX) design, as they ensure that the products and services developed do not cause harm to users and are encompassing and fair. According to (Kim, Lee, & Choi, 2021), ethical considerations are essential in creating an effective UX design, and businesses must ensure that they prioritize the needs of their users. Transparency is a fundamental ethical practice that promotes trust between businesses and their users. UX designers must design interfaces that are clear and easy to understand, so users can make informed decisions about their data usage. Businesses may make sure that their products are built with the user's needs in mind rather than just concentrating on commercial objectives or technical limitations by prioritising Human-centred design (HCD) in their design process.

The research methodology for this work carefully examines secondary sources of data. Research papers and articles from respectable journals, marketing books, trend forecasting publications, and online resources on similar topics were all evaluated to gain understanding and a conceptual grasp of the topic. The author's research also uses his own thoughts as primary sources, along with interviews with UX designers, design managers, bloggers, start-up owners, and consultants.

Inclusivity and accessibility are also essential ethical practices that ensure that digital products are designed to accommodate people with disabilities, regardless of their abilities. UX designers should make sure that their services and products have a good impact on society and the environment.

Keywords: User experience (UX), Ethical business practices, Human-centred design (HCD), Digital experience.

Introduction

Experience is a subjective sense brought on by participating in a particular action or event. It encompasses a variety of cognitive and emotional responses to environmental cues and is impacted by an individual's ideas, values, and expectations. Positive and negative experiences both have different levels of intensity and duration (Baumeister & Vohs, 2003). User experience (UX) is the total experience of a person utilising a product, especially in terms of how easy or appealing it is to use (Hassenzahl & Tractinsky, 2006). Digital user experience (UX) refers to the quality of interaction that users have with digital interfaces, including websites, applications, and other digital products. It encompasses various user experience aspects, including usability, accessibility, efficiency, satisfaction, and emotional response.

Digital UX is critical in today's digital age, as users increasingly rely on digital interfaces to accomplish tasks, communicate, and consume information. A positive digital UX can lead to higher user engagement, greater user satisfaction, and increased user loyalty (Hassenzahl, Diefenbach, & Göritz, 2010). UX design encompasses various disciplines, including user research, information architecture, interaction design, visual design, and usability testing. By integrating these disciplines, UX designers can create interfaces and products that are both functional and aesthetically pleasing, and that meet the needs and expectations of the target audience (Garrett, 2011).

Digital UX design process has advantages and disadvantages, which are mentioned below.

Advantages:

1. Increased efficiency: Digital UX design process can increase efficiency by allowing designers to quickly create and test prototypes. This can save time and reduce costs compared to traditional design methods (Zhang, Zhang, & Cao, 2018).

2. Better collaboration: Digital UX design tools allow designers to collaborate in real time and share feedback instantly. This can improve communication and result in better designs (Van der Meer, Sijtsma, & Wakkary, 2019).

3. Greater accessibility: Digital UX design tools can be used remotely, which makes it easier for designers to work from anywhere and collaborate with team members in different locations. This can increase flexibility and productivity (Han, Lim, & Lee, 2020).

Disadvantages:

1. Time-consuming: The UX design process can be time-consuming, especially involving extensive user research and testing. This can be a disadvantage for companies that need to quickly develop and launch products. As Jesse James Garrett, a UX design expert, says, "UX design is all about compromise. It's about finding the right balance between the needs of the user and the needs of the business" (Garrett, 2011).

2. Expensive: UX design process can be expensive, especially if it involves hiring specialized UX designers and conducting extensive user research. This can be a disadvantage for start-ups and small businesses that have limited budgets. According to a study by the Design Management Institute, companies that invest in design outperform those that don't by 219% over a 10-year period (Design Management Institute, 2015).

3. Subjective: UX design process can be subjective, as it involves interpreting user feedback and making design decisions based on that feedback. This can result in different designers having different opinions on the same design (Berkun, 2010).

Ethical business practices (EBP) refer to the ethics and values guiding a organization's conduct in its relationships with customers, employees, shareholders, and society. These practices involve treating all stakeholders fairly, being transparent and honest in communications, and taking responsibility for one's actions (Lee, Park, & Kim, 2017). To create engaging, trustworthy, and courteous user experiences, it may be advantageous to incorporate ethical considerations into UX design (Brave, Nass, & Hutchinson, 2019). For example, developing user interfaces that prioritise user security and privacy can help prevent data breaches and other privacy violations.

Understanding user needs, balancing business goals with user needs, designing for various platforms and devices, time and resource limitations, overcoming bias, keeping up with emerging technologies, working with cross-functional teams, and explaining the value of UX to stakeholders are challenges faced by designers during the UX design process (Kujala, Walsh, & Lahteenmaki, 2011).

Objectives

The objectives of this research paper are:

1) To understand the digital user experience design process.

2) To discuss the Ethical Business Practices in digital user experience design.

3) To suggest the areas that the researchers can explore.

Research Methodology

The research methodology for this work carefully examines secondary sources of data. Research papers and articles from respectable journals, marketing books, trend forecasting publications, and online resources on similar topics were all evaluated to gain understanding and a conceptual grasp of the topic. The author's research also uses his own thoughts as primary sources, along with interviews with UX designers, design managers, bloggers, start-up owners, and consultants.

Literature Review

(Li, Li, & Wang, 2020) said, "User experience (UX) and Customer experience (CX) are two intertwined concepts critical for business success in the digital age". Similarly, (Chen & Popovich, 2018) state, "UX and CX are two complementary perspectives on the same goal to provide users with a positive experience and build customer loyalty". While UX focuses on the user's experience with a particular product or service, CX encompasses the entire customer journey and the overall perception of a brand (Fig.-1).
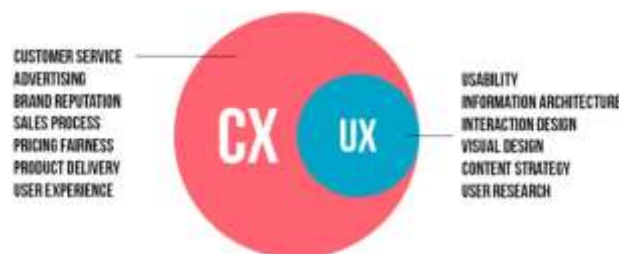

Fig.-1

Source: https://miro.medium.com/v2/resize:fit:1400/format:webp/1*c21Hs6889nZ6gSwi-XFY3w.jpeg

(Miron-Shatz & Kujala, 2019) discuss the importance of measuring digital user experiences and provide an overview of different methods and metrics used for evaluation. They emphasize the need for a holistic approach considering the user's emotional, cognitive, and behavioural responses to digital

interfaces. The challenges of measuring digital user experiences, such as the subjective nature of user perceptions and the need for real-time feedback. Integrating different measurement methods and metrics can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the user experience.

According to (Borenstein & Zhang, 2019), designers should be transparent about their design decisions and communicate openly with users about any biases or potential impacts of their products. This can help build trust with users and promote responsible business practices. (World Wide Web Consortium, 2018) recommends that designers adhere to online accessibility standards to guarantee that their products are usable by all users, including those with impairments. This involves considering elements like text size, colour contrast, and compatibility with screen readers. In their research, (Liu & Arnett, 2019) assert that designers must respect user privacy and adhere to data protection laws like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This entails giving brief and explicit explanations of the policies governing data collection and sharing, obtaining user consent, and putting in place administrative and technical safeguards to maintain data security.

The human-centred design (HCD) approach in digital UX design seeks to understand the user's needs, goals, and behaviours to create digital products that are intuitive, efficient, and effective (Norman, 2013). The following steps are typically involved in digital UX design with an HCD approach:

1) User Research: This step involves gathering data about the user's needs, preferences, and behaviours through methods such as surveys, interviews, and usability testing.

2) Persona Development: This step involves personas—fictional characters that represent various user types are created. Personas help designers empathize with users and understand their needs and goals.

3) Ideation: This step involves generating a variety of design solutions based on the insights gathered during the user research phase.

4) Prototyping: This step involves creating low-fidelity and high-fidelity prototypes of the design solutions. Prototypes can be tested with users to gather feedback and refine the design.

5) Testing: This step involves evaluating the prototypes' usability with users to find problems and potential solutions.

UX designers must prioritize ethical considerations in their design process to ensure the success and sustainability of their products and services (Nielsen Norman Group, 2020). One study that highlights the importance of ethical considerations in website accessibility is by (Scharff, Laitala, & Halonen, 2019). They emphasize the need for website developers to ensure their websites are accessible to all users, regardless of their abilities. The authors recommend that website developers prioritize accessibility in their design and development processes and engage with users with disabilities to understand their needs and preferences better.

Discussion and Suggestions

User experience and customer experience (CX) are crucial in design. The user experience (UX) is one of the touchpoints in a customer's total journey, and it significantly influences how people view a company. Understanding CX will aid UX designers in developing designs that complement the brand experience. CX includes all of a customer's interactions with a firm, not merely those that take place online. UX designers must therefore be familiar with CX to produce designs that consider the customer journey's broader context (Rathinasamy, 2023).

There are several challenges that the industry may face in the digital UX design process mentioned by (Gupta & Agrawal, 2019). Some of the most common challenges include:

1) Keeping up with technological changes: As technology advances, designers need to adapt their skills and processes to stay relevant and practical.

2) Meeting user expectations: Users have high expectations for digital products, which means designers need to create designs that are intuitive, easy to use, and visually appealing.

3) Balancing business goals with user needs: Designers must ensure that the products they design meet both the business goals and the needs of the users.

4) Working with cross-functional teams: Digital UX design often involves collaboration with multiple teams, such as developers, product managers, and marketers, which can lead to communication and coordination challenges.

5) Ensuring accessibility: Designers must ensure that their designs are accessible to users with disabilities, which requires specialized knowledge and testing.

6) Incorporating feedback: Gathering feedback from users is crucial to the design process, but it can be challenging to synthesize and incorporate this feedback effectively.

7) Adapting to different devices and platforms: With so many different devices and platforms available, designers need to create designs that work seamlessly across a variety of contexts and form factors.

8) Balancing design aesthetics and functionality: Designers need to balance the need for visually appealing designs with the need for functionality and usability.

Ethical business practices in digital UX design refer to creating products and services that prioritize the needs and rights of the end-users while complying with the ethical standards and values of the industry. Here are some ethical principles that designers should follow in digital UX design:

1) User privacy and data protection: Designers should respect user privacy and ensure that their data is protected. They should clearly communicate their data collection and sharing policies to users and obtain their consent before collecting any personal information (Liu, Zhao, Zhang, & Wang, 2018).

2) Accessibility: Designers should create products that are accessible to all users, including those with disabilities. This means considering factors such as color contrast, font size, and screen reader compatibility (Lazar, Dudley-Sponaugle, & Greenidge, 2017).

3) Transparency: Designers should be transparent about their design decisions and the impact they may have on users. This includes being upfront about any biases in the design process and how they plan to address them (Borenstein & Zhang, 2019).

4) Inclusivity: Designers should strive to create inclusive designs that reflect the diversity of their user base. This means considering factors such as gender, race, age, and cultural background when designing products (Nielsen, 2018).

5) User empowerment: Designers should empower users to make informed decisions by providing clear and concise information about their products and services. This includes offering user-friendly interfaces and intuitive navigation (Law, E.L.C, & Hvannberg, 2007).

6) Social responsibility: Designers should be mindful of the impact their designs may have on society and the environment. They should consider the long-term consequences of their products and services and work to minimize any negative impacts (Frascara, 2003).

By following these ethical principles, designers can create products and services that prioritize user needs and promote responsible business practices.

Future Directions

1) One possible direction for ethical practices in UX design is adopting a more user-centred approach that prioritizes user privacy and data protection. This approach would involve designing interfaces that are transparent about the collection and use of user data and provide users with greater control over their data.

2) Another is consideration of cultural diversity and inclusivity in the design process involves designing interfaces accessible to users of different cultures, backgrounds, and abilities. It also includes designing interfaces sensitive to the needs and preferences of other user groups.

Limitations

The limitations of this study are that due to a time constraint, only selected literature sources could be reviewed to understand the ethical business practices in digital user experience design. Further, empirical work has yet to be done as a part of the research.

Conclusion

The future of ethical practices in UX design is expected to grow in importance and become more prevalent in the industry. Social responsibility, diversity, and sustainability may all be encouraged via ethical UX design. Businesses may create interfaces that are accessible, inclusive, and egalitarian by taking the requirements and preferences of various user groups into consideration. A more sustainable future can also be achieved through promoting sustainable consumption and production through UX design.

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