

## The Experience is Everything!

Jim Nieters– Director, User Experience Design, Yahoo!  
Pat Reilly– President, Intellectual Property Society

Consider this: Every touch point we have with a company's products, whether hardware, software, services, web properties or tools, documentation, or any other feature or function, delivers an enduring experience. When you go to a website, you have an experience that endures, for better or worse. The question is whether companies, and the people who work across disciplines in those companies, work toward a common goal of producing the common experience of that company that they defined in their brand.

The larger question for those of us in this room though is whether we, as user experience researchers and designers, do-- and should-- consider this total experience, or just the one feature, application, or tactical research question we've been asked to work on? (I contend that we often think in features and functions to solve the problems we're given, rather than ask the question of whether the problem we're given will really solve the problems it's intended to, and more importantly, whether it will help distinguish our company's products from that of competitors.)

# The Discipline of Human Experience Design:



## Human Experience Society

Mindfully Enriching the Human Experience

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The Human Experience Society brings together scholars, practitioners, and users to exchange ideas about designing experiences for humans. These experiences include human interfaces such as web, desktop, and mobile application interfaces, and physical media. They also extend to every aspect of the experience a user encounters when they come in contact with a company, such as the marketing campaigns, hardware, software, documentation, brand experience, advertisements, technical support, and more.

As such, members of the Human Experience Society include User Experience Designers, Experience-based Marketing professionals, Industrial Designers, Creators, Producers, and Directors in the entertainment industry, and Intellectual Property experts with the goal of helping to stimulate innovation and protect intellectual property.

The Human Experience Society meets monthly in the Monterey Bay Area. For information about the March meeting, please inquire at [events@humanexperiencesociety.org](mailto:events@humanexperiencesociety.org).

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Patrick Reilly and Jim Nieters, Co-Founders of the Human Experience Society



I am a designer not of products or UI's, but of human experiences. I call myself a human experience designer. Now my title is Director of User Experience Design, which is close. I don't think of myself as designing products, but consciously understanding the experience I want consumers of my products to have, and designing everything to meet that experience.

Who are you? What is your company and title?

## What is our goal as UE Researchers and Designers?

I want to contribute to the next killer app!!



Market Researcher, UE Researcher, or UE Designer

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- I know a lot of us want to create great designs that people will remember, to have the reputation of having conducted the research or design that resulted in a GREAT product.
- At the same time, I think we would all agree with the following statement: The first goal of HCI and HF practitioners is to understand our user's needs and design products that support their requirements, even if unstated.
- Certainly, our end-users of our products are one audience. I believe that there is another audience we need to consider.

## What do senior leaders want?

I need to grow the  
business by \$1 Billion



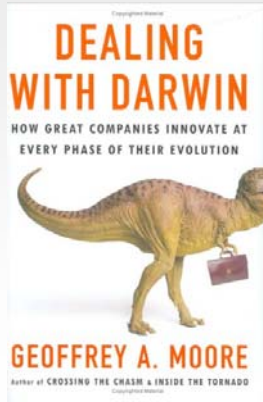
SVP/EVP

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- In industry, the executives who hire us pay us what they think is a lot of money, and the reason is so that the company can make a lot more money. Executives in today's companies are typically held responsible for hitting strict revenue targets. They're in search of increased revenue, reduced TTM, higher margins, larger market share.
- I believe that the goals of researchers, designers, and executives can be the same. If we as design teams can introduce products that change the way people think about and interact in a domain and result in billions of dollars in new revenue, then we've met our goals, and those of our senior leaders. But we have to bridge that gap and we have to think big.
- The purpose-- then-- and this is my premise-- of UXD RESEARCHERS is to IDENTIFY the big opportunities that change human experience and result in such disruptive innovation that makes a lot of money.

## Growth requires innovation



Disruptive innovation is critical for revenue growth, stock price, and the long-term success of any company.

The top 25 most innovative companies show a ~10x increase in margin growth, higher revenue, and higher stock prices



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Now, the term innovation is often over-used, so let me define it: Disruptive innovation changes the way think about and function in a domain. It IS the killer app that drives dramatic revenue increases. Innovation can be tied directly to money.

Geoffrey Moore suggests that the way you achieve innovation in a volume operations company like Yahoo! Is different from the way you achieve innovation in a complex systems company like Cisco

- Driving disruptive innovation is difficult enough in a company like Intuit or Yahoo! It takes tremendous skill and insight and our previous panelists have shown glimpses of their impact. But in a complex systems company like Cisco, one that's technology led, and Cisco has been technology-led, it's almost a task worthy of Sisyphus.

- Now, we did it, and I'm proud of it. We got the rock to the top of the hill, and I'll describe how. To a large extent, it has to do with the user research function being integrated into a UXD team to identify those strategic opportunities.

- Now you have to realize that Cisco was only interested in investing in new "AT's," which would drive new disruption into the market. Like VoIP, which we developed. The impact my team initially made was in the \$50M/yr range. And that wasn't enough to get the attention of Sr. Leaders.

Also mention that Scott Cook, founder of Intuit, presented at CHI2006 and conveyed in that message that disruptive innovation-- in short-- is what drove Intuit's success.

# Great end-to-end experience:

Industrial Design



Software experience

Web experience



So, what companies provide a great end-to-end experience? What companies are great at lining up their brand promise with the every experience you have with their people and their products? Well, one is Apple-- they have an integrated experience that ranges from their industrial designs-- take the iPod and the PowerBook-- to their software designs, to their web designs to the design of their packaging. Everything they do is done to stimulate delight. Taken together, their brand promise is fulfilled in their products very well.

But how often is this the case. Let's take another look at BMW, who also does a solid job of defining the experience they want to convey, and doing so across every aspect of the company and product in which customers can engage with them.

## Conscious end-to-end experience:



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Let's take another look at BMW, who also does a solid job of defining the experience they want to convey, and doing so across every aspect of the company and product in which customers can engage with them.

Every aspect of BMW, from the time you talk with a dealer, to the auto itself, to the service facilities, wants you to believe that you will be making the best decision of your life purchasing a BMW-- or are, or did. They even address "buyers remorse" by sending emails and calling to remind you that you purchased the greatest car on the market. They make you feel good to own one. Remember, it's the ultimate driving machine. For BMW, it's all about the experience.

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★ Democratic Party Timeline  
★ History of the Democratic Donkey

At the start of the 21st Century, the Democratic Party can look back on a proud history — a history not just of a political organization but of a national vision. It is a vision based on the strength and power of millions of economically empowered, socially diverse and politically active Americans. Over two hundred years ago, our Party's founders decided that wealth and social status were not an entitlement to rule. They believed that wisdom and compassion could be found within every individual and a stable government must be built upon a broad popular base.

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This theory suggests that we belong to a political party, often because it helps us feel good- it provides meaning, gives us a sense of belonging, allows us to align to our internal compass-- it gives us an experience.

Read the highlighted text in from the Democratic Party website. It creates the experience that they are about the common person, and idealize the concept that the government should not be a group of elitists.

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President Bush is committed to keeping the nation strong and secure through strengthening our military, deploying a missile defense system, strengthening the NATO alliance and supporting military families and veterans.

**Strengthening Our Military**

- President Bush has increased defense spending by more than one-third - the most in a generation.
- President Bush signed into law landmark legislation that better prepares our defense establishment to meet the challenges of the 21st century. A military that was designed for the challenges of the mid-to-late 20th century is being transformed into a lighter, more flexible, more agile, and more lethal force - one better able to deal with new threats to our national security.

**Deploying A Missile Defense**

- The United States will soon deploy a functioning missile defense system to protect Americans from nuclear threats posed by rogue regimes - and will deploy the first land and sea-based system.
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And on the Republican National Committee website, they emphasize the importance of a strong nation and supporting military families and veterans.

Now, my intent is not to advocate for one party or another, but to highlight a little about how their goal is to stimulate an experience, and I suggest this is why we become members of a party. Now, does this have anything to do with designing human experiences? Our premise is that political parties do an excellent job of designing messages that speak to human experiences. I'd say they're experts at defining experiences that people can believe and stand behind.

The screenshot shows the Columbia Business School Executive Education website. At the top, a purple banner reads "Experience marketing– creating positive experiences". Below this, the Columbia Business School logo and "EXECUTIVE EDUCATION" are displayed on the left, and contact information for "Within the U.S." and "Outside the U.S." is on the right. A navigation bar includes "OPEN PROGRAMS" and "CUSTOM PROGRAMS" tabs, with sub-links for "Programs by Title", "Programs by Date", "Programs by Level", and "Programs by Topic". The main content area features the program title "Experience Marketing: Setting Your Brand Apart with Superior Customer Experience" and a link for "Other marketing programs". Below the title, there are three buttons: "SEND THIS PAGE TO A COLLEAGUE", "DOWNLOAD PDF OF PROGRAM DESCRIPTION", and "REQUEST INFORMATION". A quote, "THE MOST POWERFUL DRIVER OF BRAND VALUE IS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE", is centered below these buttons. The footer contains the page number "- 10 -" and a small Columbia Business School logo.

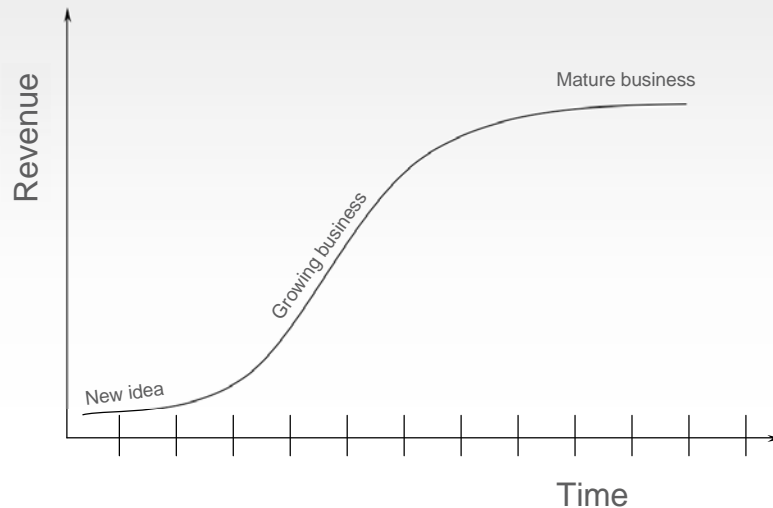
Now, there has been a movement afoot called Experience Marketing in recent years, which broadly states that it is critical to understand the factors that create a memorable and positive experience for customers, and then design solutions that create that memorable and positive experience. In fact, the Columbia Business School Executive Education program offers a course in Experience Marketing that asks these questions, and presents methods for designing experiences that "reflect a new experiential platform for your brand."

Now, we cannot speak to the value of this course, because we have not taken it, but most courses I have seen focus on either:

- educating Marketing professionals on defining a brand
- OR
- product designers on designing products. But seldom do we see a brand that delivers a promise, and a set of products that deliver the experience that is promised.

In fact, it is hard to do.

## Typical business growth cycle



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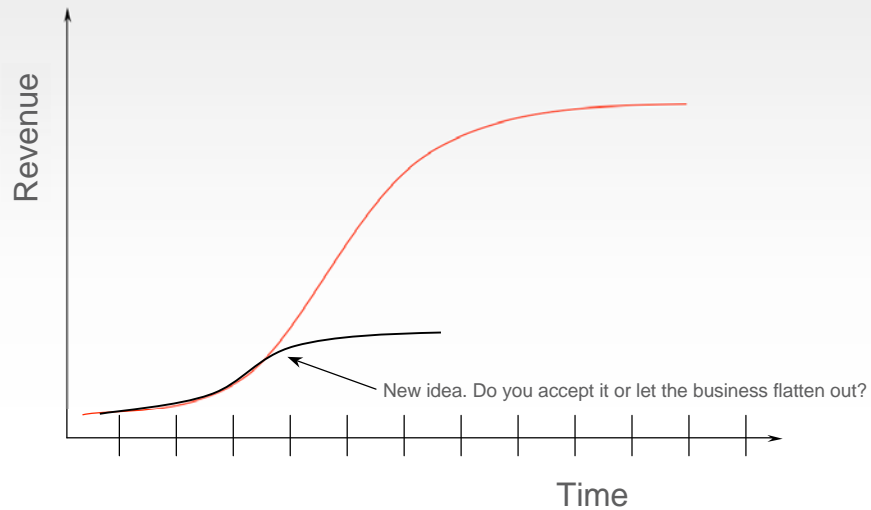
Now, how does this apply to us?

Tyranny of design success. Groups that have been successful tend to not want to change. Success can create inertia.

Constraint seeking. Teams work within typical constraints that made the existing business successful

The problem is that it's difficult to redefine your hedgehog concept after you've been so successful. It's difficult while you're growing to decide that you need to do something different. Most companies in fact don't reconsider their business models until they've reached a mature state. But by that time, these businesses are only growing at say 6 - 8%, or even worse, are starting to contract. Take IBM in the mid '90's: They saw tremendous growth in mainframe computers through the '80's, and they couldn't see this concept of personal computers being a big deal. They did not recharacterize their business until they lost billions. The logical question then is, "well sure, but is that a research or design question? I contend that it is, or at least should be.

## Recharacterize the business opportunity



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So, if we step back and recognize that this old business model and strategy was good at one time, but that the ideas the team is presenting now are only going to grow the business incrementally, we can in fact introduce new ideas that recharacterize the business while the business is still growing.

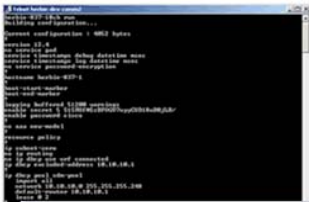
## What can researchers and designers do?

- Recognize that previous successes form constraints
- Seek that next big idea
- Operationally:
  - Deliver on tactical projects
  - Step back and ask if these tactical projects will really solve the businesses problems
  - Research the bigger problem space
  - Recharacterize the business
- Example?



So, what does this have to do with design and research? Most of the time-- I'd say up to 90% of the time-- when I talk with researchers and designers, they're very focused on researching or designing within the constraints the business defined to become mature. And the challenge with that is that it imposes constraints. "It's the way we do things."

I contend that it is the responsibility of market researchers, user researchers, and user experience designers to ask the hard questions and do much more than we are asked to do. We have to design features when we are asked, or perhaps we don't have a job. But my experience is that you can also do more. You can ask the question "If I do what I'm told, will this really solve our business problems?" If the answer is "yes, what I'm doing will differentiate us sufficiently from our competitors that we will have a significant competitive advantage for years," then you are doing the right thing. If the answer is



Before: 3.5 hours to configure using the CLI

### Home Office Solution

- 1 Problem
  - In 1997, competitors were gaining market share in the SOHO router space
  - A usability study showed that it took 3.5 hours for experts to configure our routers
  - Users were confused by cabling, documentation, and the embedded CLI
- 2 Our Solution
  - Color-coded cables and corresponding labels on routers
  - Four-color quick start guides
  - Simplified packaging
  - Home Office Solution—a wizard to simplify configuration
- 3 Impact
  - Enabled novice users to deploy in 20 minutes
  - Grew our market share from \$200 million in revenue to over \$2 Billion



After: 20 minutes to deploy, grew revenue from \$200 million to over \$2 Billion

## The researcher and designer's constraint:

- My team addresses one piece of the experience:
  - Web site
  - Application design
  - Industrial design
- My scope does not cross disciplines:
  - Market or user research
  - UE Design
  - Product Management
  - Sales



So, how can we, as market researchers, ethnographers in particular, and user experience researchers in general, user experience designers, and developers, contribute to designing the entire experience? I often hear people say "but, I'm just given responsibility for one piece of the total experience. How can I contribute to redefining the total experience of a company's products, services, and offerings? That's what we're going to talk about here.

## Step 1– Leader creates a culture of innovation

1. Dedicate 20% of time to innovation (technology bets).
2. Conduct innovation workshops to define the problem.
3. Conduct Design Labs to solve it cross-functionally:
  - UE Research and UE Design
  - Product Management
  - Marketing
  - Engineering
  - SalesIdeate, design, and test assumptions and innovations.

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Now, whether you're an individual designer or group of designers in a company, or a consultant/design firm, you have to do the specific work you are asked to do. You have to deliver on the tactical deliverables requested of you. But we would submit that it is also possible for you to identify opportunities for major improvement and drive them. More than this, we submit that if you want your organization to have strategic credibility, it is your responsibility to identify the gaps that prevent your company from delivering on its brand promise of creating the greatest experience possible for your customers-- delight, and to act on them. You can always do more than you are asked. And yes, I believe this is true even if you are a consultant working on an hourly basis.

At Yahoo!, we refer to breakthrough ideas from a design standpoint as the Big D Design, as opposed to the Little d design. We consciously go after the Big D, How do we focus on the Big D?

- Find efficiencies to give UE Researchers and UE Designers 20% of their time to investigate innovative ideas that can impact revenue by delivering a GREAT experience.
- Conduct innovation workshops, wherein we bring all the qualitative and quantitative data together, so we can identify emergent user needs
- Conduct Design Labs that incorporate members of the UER, UED, Product Management, Marketing, Engineering, and Sales teams to identify, design, and test great experiences, all within a one-week period.

I don't believe there's one way to do it but you have the opportunity to

## Step 2– show your results:

**Before: Multiple tools, 9 hours to deploy**

**After: 45 minutes to deploy, increased revenue \$100M over goal**

**SMB Voice Solution**

- 1 Problem**
  - Several highly complex products and protocols were required to deploy our small business voice solution
  - Deployment complexity decreased partner margins
  - We needed to capture new revenue in Voice for small businesses
- 2 Our Solution**
  - User and partner research, competitive analyses, personas, use-cases, and high-fidelity wireframes
  - Design and development of a wizard to configure all devices and protocols in the solution
- 3 Impact**
  - Reduced time to deploy from 9 hours to 45 minutes
  - Increased revenue by \$100M over plan

Highlight the challenge so everyone gets it:

Show users failing

Tie your data to money

Create media that appropriately highlights the opportunity

Bring a cross-functional team (coalition) together to identify the next big solution.

Monetize the opportunity.

Triangulate with qualitative and quantitative research.

In this example, my team actually went out and created a DHTML-based application to simplify the process of deploying an entire solution of complex products. Once we did this, it was hard to ignore that it was the right thing to do.

the first problem is that leaders often do not know to ask you to look at the big picture. If they did, they would. As a UX design group at Cisco, my team was often given the task of conducting a usability study for a product, or designing a User Interface for a network management product. But, rather than just conduct a limited usability study or design only one piece of an overall experience, I and my team took it upon ourselves to research the entire experience, and design entire product solutions. We impacted the product, the docs, the ability to easily order, documentation, packaging, cabling, hardware, and software. We looked at every aspect of the product, and that resulted in hundreds of millions

## Think big— along the right dimensions

1. It's our job to think big.
2. Consider the dimensions along which the next opportunity should emerge:
  - Usability or simplicity
  - Usefulness or utility
  - Delight or desirability



It's our job to think big, to come up with the next big idea, to help recharacterize the business opportunity.

### Step 3– What's the right dimension for a great experience?

Desirability: Does it fulfill an emotional or social need?

Delight

Usefulness

Utility: Does it help accomplish a necessary task? (Includes technology advancements)

Usability

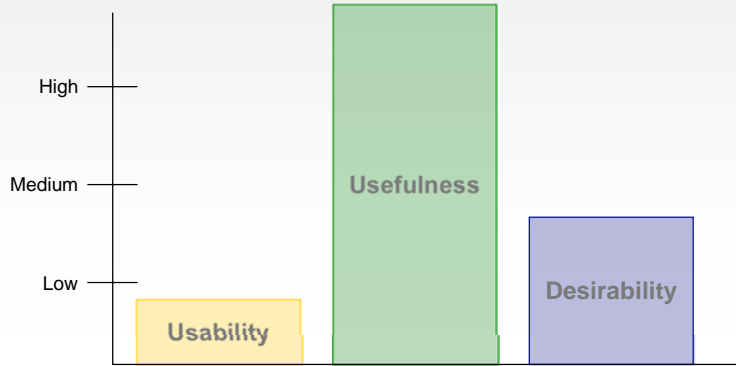
Sweet Spot

Ease of use: Is it easy to discover, learn, and use?

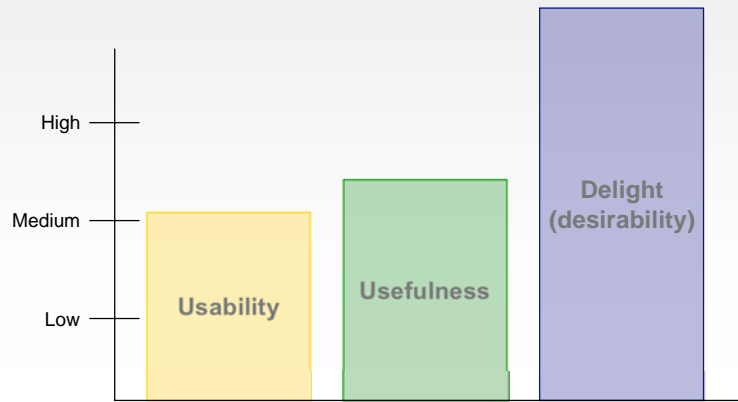


Any great experience is the result of a product that is usable, useful, and delightful, all in the right measures. Some products should be more usable, others more desirable, and yet others more useful.

## Multiprotocol routers: Highly useful



## iPod: Highly delightful



## Key messages:

- ✓ Set aside time for innovation
- ✓ Think big
- ✓ Recharacterize your problem
- ✓ Take risks
- ✓ Form coalitions
- ✓ Conduct workshops:
  - Innovation to define problem
  - Design to solve problem
- ✓ Show your results
- ✓ Consider the dimensions of the problem:
  - Usability
  - Usefulness
  - Delight

### • Contact us with questions:

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OK, you're now ready to lead a human experience team. The question is one of how you get there. Call us if you have questions so we can help your executive staff understand why you should be in charge of your company's human experience efforts, whether you're in marketing, UED, UER, or market research.



Backup slides

## Experiential Motivation theory:

The desire for an experience motivates us

Why do we really want a promotion?



There is a theory suggesting that everything we do, we do to derive an expected experience. We think that we are motivated to receive a promotion because we want more money. This theory suggests that we go for the promotion not for the money, but for the great experience we anticipate from receiving the promotion. And, if we want more money, we want it for the status it affords us, not for the money itself. Why am I a Director of User Experience at Yahoo!? Pat? Why did I want this? [Pat]: I think, because it affords you a credibility that makes you feel good. Why did I become an Intellectual Property attorney? [Jim:] I believe you were involved in the intellectual property space before, but you wanted to be an attorney for the additional respect it afforded you. Now, I submit that we're just being honest, and this is a common goal: We're all looking for that experience.

You need to get in front of the other car on the freeway not to get somewhere faster, but because you need to have the experience of being first. Now, as someone who studied human motivation, I realize that there are hundreds of theories, and the idea here is not to go into all of them, but to suggest some implications for research and design.

## If given one, which would you take?

BMW 750i



Hyundai Accent?



This is the same reason that most Americans, if we have the chance, would rather purchase a luxury automobile, such as a Mercedes, Porsche, or high-end BMW than a non-luxury vehicle. We tell ourselves it is for the power or the amenities. The reality is that you can achieve the comfort, speed, and amenities in a car that costs 25% of these vehicles (of course, not this model Hyundai). And yet, we aspire to purchase them. Why? Because of the experience they afford us. It makes us feel good to drive the highest end BMW.

Clearly, we're speaking to brand here. We're going to come back to the BMW as a case study in crafting an experience in a little while.

We wear nice clothes or try to look good because it affords us respect, and we like the that (though the specific motivations would, I submit, vary for most of us).

## How many great experiences?

- In the past day?
- In the last week?
- In the last month?
- Six months?
- Year?



Think of a truly positive experience you have had with a product or service that was highly memorable, that made you say to yourself (or maybe even out loud) "this is great! They really "got" me and I feel good!" How many of you had these positive and memorable experiences with a product or service in the: \* Past day? \* In the past week? \* In the last month? \* How many of you have had a positive and memorable experience with a product or service in the last six months? \* How about year? Unfortunately, it is difficult for most people to think of such a recent product or service experience that was highly positive and memorable in the super recent past. It is much less common than it should be. Why can't we have a truly delightful experience at least one time per day?

I propose that we as researchers and designers have the opportunity and obligation to consider the end-to-end experience, come up with the big ideas, and implement them across the enterprise.

# Emotion plays a major role in our decisions

USABILITY IN PRACTICE

## What's Love Got to Do With It?

Why emotions and aspirations matter in person-centered design

BY ROSS C. TEAGUE, PH.D. AND HUNTER X. WHITNEY

**W**hether it's a car, a computer or a cell phone, many of the technologies we use do not merely address practical needs. They become important forms of self-expression, mediators in our relationships with other people, evoking a range of emotional responses and states of mind. Consider the following questions about the products you create and evaluate:

- What is the state of mind your customers are likely experiencing while using your product? Boredom? Amusement? Fear? Sleepiness?
- What kinds of feelings do your products evoke in your customers? Contentment? Anger? Frustration? Satisfaction?
- What kinds of feelings do your customers want to experience while using your product?
- How do you come up with "experience goals" for your products?

If you don't regularly think about these kinds of questions or believe these issues are out of the scope of your work, read on, because love, fear, respect, fun, status and myriad other human needs and emotions should play a major part in our design of products and services.

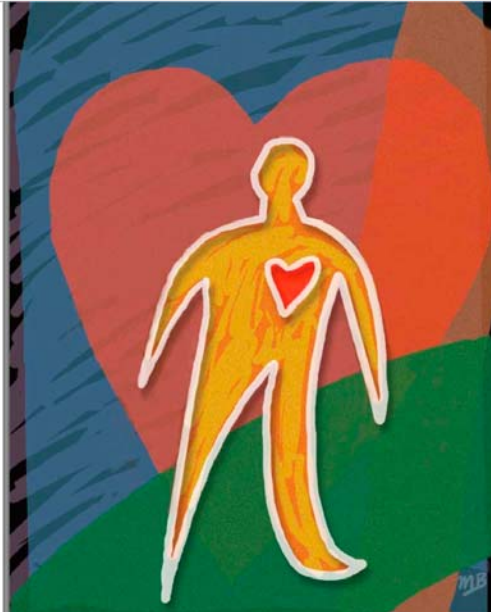
There's no doubt that usability and efficiency are key elements of interactive products, but all too often they become the sole touchstones for what gets shipped. Not only is this a mistake, it also minimizes the impact usability and design professionals can have on product development. Why is it a mistake?

Love, fear, respect, fun, status and myriad other human needs and emotions should play a major part in our design of products and services.

can hinder innovation when we fail to understand and design with human needs and emotions in mind, and we can create "cool but" products that don't resonate with consumers. Before you say, "hey, I collect user needs!" it's important to understand that these needs and desires are not synonymous with user requirements, market research, task flows, desired features and anthropometrics. A concern is that the principles and methods of user-centered design should help us to account for these human needs, but, unfortunately, user-centered design can be more accurately described as usability-centered design, which has dire implications for our field.

Think of "usability-centered" as shorthand for the tendency to frame design strictly in terms of efficiency and ease-of-use issues. Contrast it with other terms such as "person-centered" or "total experience design" that describe a broader approach that takes emotions and other factors into account. Of course, "usability" can and does mean more to many practitioners. The sharply focused definitions here are simply meant to help illustrate key differences in approaches and stimulate thought about ideas and practices.

In terms of designing for these deep needs and desires, it sometimes seems that there is a distinction made between usability/UX design and graphic design. In this polarity, color palettes, graphic elements and images become a catch-all for the emotional realm. While usability and interaction designers tend to focus on hard requirements, they leave the evaluation and incorporation of "soft" needs to graphics, marketing and advertising people. These "soft" needs are the deep desires and emotions that people have and are



suggests that we buy gadgets like iPods because it makes us feel cool, more than for the function. (Refer to “What’s Love Got to Do With It?”) We’ve seen numerous studies that there have been other MP-3 players that are easier to use than the iPod. So, why did the iPod become so popular? I suggest that emotion plays a much larger part in our daily lives and decisions than we might otherwise admit or recognize