FUTURE VISIONS OF THE USER EXPERIENCE

Panel Chair: Erik Wakefield, Amazon
Panelists: Marc Resnick, Bentley University
              Charles Mauro, Mauro New Media
              Sanjay Batra, Motorola Corp
              Zach Weiner, Emerging Insider Communications
              Stephen Wilcox, Design Science

Note: Slides from the panelists' presentations will be available on the User Experience Day archive website and on Slideshare after the meeting for your viewing pleasure.
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INTRODUCTION

What will the user experience look like in 20, 30, or 50 years from now in health care? In retail? In education? Of course, the way these experiences unfold depends on a lot of factors outside the HF/E domain. We could experience a persistent economic malaise that results in a strong shift towards simplicity and minimalism. We could experience health advances that vastly expand the need to design for the elderly. A new scientific advance in teleportation could eliminate the need for transportation systems (OK, perhaps we are thinking too far outside the box here). We asked five leading user experience visionaries to think outside the proverbial box and imagine what the user experience in their domain might look like in the future. Here are some of their ideas.

THE CHANGING EXPERIENCE OF EDUCATION

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We are already seeing a paradigmatic shift in education with the emergence of massive open online courses (MOOCs). MOOCs provide courses at little to no cost to anyone around the world, providing education in topics running the gamut of university disciplines.

One coalition, EdX, is composed of some of the best universities from around the world - including Harvard and MIT in the US, McGill University in Canada, Tsinghua University in China, IIT Bombay in India, and dozens of others. Similarly, Coursera is a MOOC supported by Princeton University, Caltech, The University of London, The National University of Singapore, and again dozens of others.

Another model is being developed by The Khan Academy. Also free to students, Khan Academy focuses on K-12 level education for students as well as teachers and parents. While the MOOC model tends to stick with a typical university course in terms of scheduling and scope, Khan Academy is more flexible, allowing participants to use it as a standalone learning platform or as a supplement to existing K-12 and introductory college level courses.

These organizations are launching game-changing platforms as we speak. How can we predict the vast transformations that might describe the education domain in the more distant future? We can use the models appearing in EdX, Coursera, and Khan Academy as an indicator of what the future holds in store.

One major trend that is likely to continue is increasing customization and personalization. As Salman Khan, the founder of Khan Academy, says in his TED talk, there is no reason that a system designed to prepare the industrial workforce of prior centuries should in any way define the education of the innovation-based economy of the future. Content sets can be created specifically for an individual based on their real-time needs, speeds, and feed in an engaging, visceral, and highly effective manner. Longer term, more fundamental expertise or passions can be pursued in a different learning environment to support higher levels of expertise. This presentation will share visions of these educational user experiences of the future.

UX DESIGN IN COMPLEX HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS: 50 YEARS BACK - 50 YEARS FORWARD

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Healthcare delivery has undergone profound advances in the past 50 years as new clinical modalities and imaging technologies have dramatically improved the quality of clinical outcomes for most major disease states. However, the overall user experience for those involved

in the healthcare domain (patients, caregivers and healthcare professionals) has not changed dramatically. In this talk we will discuss how the historical trajectory and forward projection of healthcare will be dramatically enhanced if and when formal UX design practice is integrated into the conceptual, technical and regulatory frameworks of the healthcare system.

We will conclude the talk with a list of 5 core inhibitors and 5 core stimulants that will impact both the adoption and propagation of formal UX design into the development of healthcare products, processes and regulations over the next 50 year time frame. The talk is designed to stimulate discussion related to when, why and how formal UX design may or may not have a dramatic impact on healthcare and, most importantly, the quality of clinical outcomes over the next 50 years.

UX BECOMES SOCIALLY WEARABLE

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Today, in UX, we work on solutions to help people overcome the limitations of technology. In the future, the challenge will be designing technology that adapts more fluently to social interactions and environments. Even as the smartphone has radically changed how users interact with technology on a daily basis, the act of tapping or swiping a glass screen is still a discrete task that alters historical norms of social interaction. Future technology will have to adapt to ways people interact with each other and be cognizant of group behavior. I'm currently working on wearable devices and our future projection is that the hardware will be virtually invisible. Device functionality will disappear into clothing, shoes, belts, hats, glasses, and jewelry.

Examples of the first steps towards this trend are Google Glass and the Pebble smart watch. Wearable devices should improve our ability to interact with our own bodies and environment. Glasses will not only correct for vision but will provide digital information which will help the user to respond to their social environment naturally. As voice interfaces improve, users will be able to interact with technology in ways similar to verbal human communication. In addition, the technology itself will be able to observe and recognize patterns of human behavior which enable better socialization. For example, imagine a wearable device that senses you want dim the lights and play romantic music when you come home on a date based on previous observations. The role of UX designers will change from

understanding the limitations of human capabilities with technology to actually understanding how to amplify user interactions within social environments.

THE FUTURE OF HOME ENTERTAINMENT

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When we start to explore the changing nature of the TV landscape, we are instantly hit by a multitude of thought camps making differing claims about what the future of the industry, consumer experience, and technology will look like. Some will emphatically state that TV is rapidly becoming upended during a period of intense evolution and convergence. Others believe that small shifts have resulted in only minor changes. The truth is that the current and future nature of television is vastly complex and undergoing what could best be described as an ongoing yet subtle disruption.

Interwoven throughout these multitudes of changes are novel demands for more engaging, seamless and captivating television experiences that make sense for audiences who are living in a digital world. The future of the industry will hinge not just on riveting content and entertainment value, but in a deep understanding and execution of how user experiences across screens and platforms must converge in ways that are dictated by viewers themselves.

FUTURE VISIONS OF USER EXPERIENCE IN THE MEDICA ARENA

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The presentation will attempt to anticipate the future trajectory of UX design in the medical arena. Some of the predicted trends to be discussed include eliminating UIs altogether as devices become more like actual organs, UIs for making large data sets manageable, UIs that are much smarter than todays, and UIs that artificially simulate actual systems for manipulation of things that are not easy to observe.