Human Computer Interaction

User Centered Design & Task Analysis
PART 5

Identifying User Profile - Creating A Persona
Personas

• What is a persona?
  – A description of a **specific fictional/imaginary person** who is a target user of a system being designed.
  – Personas are constructed out of well-understood, highly specific data about real people
What are Personas

• Represents typical users of a certain application/product that represent the needs of larger groups of users, in terms of their goals and personal characteristics.

• They act as ‘stand-ins’ for real users and help guide decisions about functionality and design.
What are Personas

• Personas identify the user motivations, expectations and goals, and bring users to life by giving them names, personalities and often a photo.

• Although personas are fictitious, they are based on knowledge of real users. Some form of user research is conducted before they are written to ensure they represent end users rather than the opinion of the person writing the personas.
Creating a Persona

• Persona is not real people, but synthesised from real user characteristics, so how do we create one?
  – Collect background data from your target users
  – Take primarily tasks, behaviour, goals, attitudes and environment into account
  – Add personal and motivational details
  – Make the personas come to life by including real photos
Example of a Persona

Bob is 52 years old and works as a mechanic with an organisation offering road service to customers when their car breaks down. He has worked in the job for the past 12 years and knows it well. Many of the younger mechanics ask Bob for advice when they meet up in the depot as he always knows the answer to tricky mechanical problems. Bob likes sharing his knowledge with the younger guys, as it makes him feel a valued part of the team.

Bob has seen many changes over the years with the company and has tried his best to move with the times. However, he found it a bit daunting when a new computer was installed in his van several years ago, and now he has heard rumours that the computer is going to be upgraded to one with a bigger screen that’s meant to be faster and better.

Bob’s been told that he will be able to access the intranet on the new computer. He has heard about the intranet and saw once in an early version on his manager’s computer. He wonders if he will be able to find out what’s going on in the company more easily, especially as customers’ seem to know more about the latest company news than he does when he turns up at a job. This can be embarrassing and has been a source of frustration for Bob throughout his time with the company.
..from Bob’s Persona Profile

• Bob’s goals when using the intranet
  – wants to avoid feeling stupid
  – would like to retain status as mentor
  – make him more informed when interacting with customers
Why Are Personas Needed?

• “...the most critical tool for designing the behavior of software." - Alan Cooper

• “We want our efforts to result in products that delight people, and to delight people we have to have some idea of who these people are and what they want." - The Persona Lifecycle
Why Are Personas Needed?

• Traditionally user-centered design involved researching the needs of as many users as possible and collecting all of their requirements. This resulted in a long list of needs with no sense of priority. This lack of direction typically translated into designs that tried to serve all users but ended up serving no user particularly well.

• Creating Personas allow you to identify discrete sets of users and create typical users to represent each group.
Why personas?

- Moving from
  - Too many conflicting goals

- To
  - A clear set of personas, each with a well articulated set of goals

- Not a specific person
- Not too broad as to include everyone
Why Are Personas Needed?

• Benefits:
  – users’ goals and needs become a common point of focus for the team
  – the team can concentrate on designing for a manageable set of personas knowing that they represent the needs of many users
Using Personas

• Use personas to plan your product
• Use personas to explore design solutions
• Use personas to evaluate your solutions
• Use personas to support the release of your product

The goal of personas is to keep the user in view throughout the product lifecycle.
PART 6

Writing A Scenario
Writing Scenarios

• What is a Scenario?
  – A narrative description that describes how a user is intending to use a system
  – Goal or Task-based
  – Can include textual descriptions, illustrated stories, animations or even videos
  – Presents the user's point of view
Writing Scenarios

• Benefits:
  – Highlights an application within the work context
  – Powerful communication tool
  – Useful for testing of early prototypes
  – Helps users understand the design
  – Provides a contextual basis for testing
  – Scenarios test the integrity of requirements and processes
  – Gives an idea of current and future needs
Writing Scenarios

• How to write a scenario:
  – Determine the target group and analyse their context of use
  – Transform user goals into activities
  – Determine the user tasks, and the system tasks.
  – List in dot point the sequence of tasks
  – Re-write task list into simple narrative language.
  – Ensure you omit in your wording, any links to the technology
  – Review the scenario to ensure it represents a real use context.
Writing Scenarios

• How to write a scenario for using the ATM:
  – **Persona:** Brad, 45, carefree office worker, travel often but does not have good time management
  – **User goal:** Withdraw money fastly from the ATM
  – **Tasks:**
    • Identify himself
    • Key in the transaction details
    • The system responds
    • Transaction ends
Example Writing Text-Based Scenarios

• Re-write task list into simple narrative language

It's Thursday afternoon and Brad is flying to Sydney. He doesn't have enough money for a taxi to the airport, and he's running late. He goes to the local ATM and identifies himself. He specifies that he wants $200 from his savings account. He'd like the money in $50 notes so that he can give the taxi driver the correct change. He doesn't want a printed receipt, as he doesn't bother keeping track of transactions in this account, besides he's already late. The system draws out his money, and the transaction ends.

• Ensure you omit in your wording, any links to the technology
• Review the scenario to ensure it represents a real use context
Activity

• Create personas and scenarios for your group project
  – Create one or two personas for each of your user group
  – Identify roughly 4 functions that your system/application offers
  – Based on the functions, create the scenario of how your persona might use your proposed system/application
Any Questions?