User
Experience
Directory
2009

Digital.
An ever-changing landscape.

Do you have the insight to make a successful
transition for your brand and customers?

A sustainable sector

Welcome to the 2009 **new media age** User Experience Directory to celebrate World Usability Day. This guide is aimed at giving those both new to and familiar with UX a snapshot of current thinking.

It has been a challenging year for all and the UX industry hasn't been immune. However, it's evident that clients haven't lost sight of the value of applying good user-centred design practices across products and services. The value of optimising what you've got, and particularly focusing on your digital channel, has not only kept UX services in demand, but we're now seeing a steady increase in that demand. This demonstrates a maturity of thinking about customers, striving to provide a holistic and consistent approach to engaging with them across channels and ensuring that each encounter they have with you as an organisation is a positive and effective one.

The theme of this year's World Usability Day is Designing for a Sustainable World. Whatever we do day to day, the issue of sustainability can't be ignored and addressing it as individuals, groups, communities and industries can't be deferred on the to-do list – we need to act.

Designing for sustainability is no small challenge. It requires us all to broaden and deepen our thinking, and do it quickly. The focus within the UX industry has naturally been expanding over time, from the core practice of usability and interaction at a screen level, to considering the entire lifecycle of an experience and a user's relationship with a company or organisation at a service level. However, it hasn't yet forged a

Claire Mitchell

President of the UK Chapter of the Usability Professionals' Association and a principal user experience consultant at Flow Interactive

http://ukupa.org.uk
worldusabilityday.org

standard or formalised approach to environmentally conscious design – a cradle-to-cradle approach – ensuring the design and build of systems (including products and services) that are both efficient and waste free.

Designing for sustainability requires us to think about the essence of what we're doing at every level: are we helping to promote material consumption for consumption's sake? How can we, as user experience designers, use our insights into human psychology to help encourage positive behavioural change? What is the impact of our work practices at a local level? And do we even remember to switch our computer monitors off each evening?

For the first time this guide is published after World Usability Day, so we can report on some of the interesting discussions from the UK UPA event. There's some great thinking going on out there and it needs to be shared (see page 8).

The user experience directory at the back of this guide (page 28) is a list of agencies that offer user experience consultancy either as their core business or as part of a wider set of services.

At a practical level, we're also providing a snapshot of the UX industry with the salary survey that was run within the user experience industry in October/November 2009 (see page 6).

We also have a selection of insights from some leading UK user experience agencies on how sustainability and usability relate to one another (page 9).

Designing for sustainability requires us to think about the essence of what we're doing at every level

Any of these sound familiar?

"We've got a project deadline next week but all of our staff are tied up on other jobs!"

"We've been using a freelancer to help with an ongoing project but he's now unavailable!"

"We've been asked to quote for a new digital project but don't have anyone with the necessary skills."

You could scramble around for a freelancer.
Or you could outsource to Zabisco.

www.zabiscodigital.com

zabisco

If you use an agency partner instead of contracted resource, you can benefit from an increased amount of consistency across deliverables and documentation

Outsourcing for skills

Hammad Khan

Director of user-centred design agency Zabisco

Given I spend most of my time working on information architecture projects for clients and partners, I hear a lot of opinions on the state of our industry. If there's one issue that dominates the conversation year after year it's that of skills. The supply and demand or the quality and consistency – never does a month go by when I don't hear the frustration that the situation isn't changing for the better at a fast enough pace.

Maybe it's because I've worn many hats over the years in digital, but I've been listening to what clients and agencies are telling me. Rather than treat each consultancy project as one, I've tried to create a sustainable supplier model that addresses the most common problems we keep coming across. The result is what we've been doing at Zabisco: working as a partner to agencies and clients in areas that are notoriously difficult for sourcing, managing and growing talent in-house. Top of the list is, of course, user experience.

It can take a lot of time and energy finding a good user-experience architect; whether you're looking to grow a team or bring in a freelancer for a project. When you have them, things start to get done. The problem comes over a period of time, when you have changes in headcount or your freelancer isn't available for changes. Being able to rely on a partner who has more than one resource to turn to can make it a lot easier to get the right person back, but if that can't happen a handover can still be arranged.

Everyone has their own way of doing things and IAs are no exception. There are 100 (or more) ways to produce a sitemap, wireframe or user journey, and the turnstile nature of freelancing can affect consistency. Some might complain they don't understand a particular design style (so it will take them longer to work on), while others might use different software (Visio/Omnigraffle argument anyone?). We see a lot of perfectly good documentation being reproduced for superficial reasons, all the while eating into the inherent profitability you have built on an account or pushing back on time digital projects are usually already short of.

I've previously evangelised the need for more consistency in IA documentation but this isn't happening with any great momentum. If you use an agency partner instead of contracted resource, you can benefit from an increased (or even total) amount of consistency across deliverables and documentation. While the industry catches up, your own particular project/account can benefit from this (you could argue this even becomes a USP).

The obvious comparison is that of a freelancer charging x per day and the partner charging y. Which one is more? Easy enough to calculate, except x is a variable that changes depending on the individual and any third-party mark-up from a recruitment agency. On the other hand, y is a constant; much easier to work with during advance planning or disaster recovery.

Having people wait around for feedback isn't very productive, so ultimately this downtime comes off gross profit or, worse still, directly increasing losses if a project is in a problematic state. An outsourcing model often allows for fixed-price projects (or even a pay-as-you-go option) where downtime can effectively be offloaded back to the supplier, taking it off the bottom line. Partners may be able to stagger projects so they can ride the wave of project uptime and downtime and keep their head above water, which by proxy lightens the load on you. An all too rare case of a win-win in these somewhat grim economic times.

If a commitment is made to bring in 30 days of a consultant's time at rate x, you know exactly how much of the pot has been spent. However, if things get delayed, this has to be renegotiated all over again, hoping/relying on them being able to accommodate. You could easily end up having to start the hunt for resource all over again, at the last minute or, in the worst case, with no success.

The outsourcing model isn't and shouldn't be limited to development; it's perfectly feasible and beneficial to look at the options in user experience too and I for one welcome the rise of this if it continues to bring stability to our profession and our projects.

Salary survey 2009

Results from the UPA's annual survey of user experience professionals' salary levels

Salary satisfaction

SALARIED

- ● Underpaid............................**44.2%**
- ● Fairly paid...........................**43.6%**
- ● Overpaid..............................**1.2%**
- ● Not sure..............................**10.9%**

FREELANCE

- ● Underpaid **15.4%**
- ● Fairly paid **69.2%**
- ● Overpaid...............................**7.7%**
- ● Not sure................................**7.7%**

Freelance daily rates

	2009	2007
Min	£120	£140
Max	£1,300	£500
Med	£375	£384
Mean	£400	£362
Base	39	29

Salary according to job level

	Entry level	Mid level non-super	Mid level supervisory	Senior level non-super	Senior level supervisory	Director	Owner/ director
Min	£18,000	£12,000	£20,000	£36,000	£132,400	£66,000	£66,000
Max	£70,000	£51,500	£65,000	£62,000	£80,000	£115,000	£173,000
Med	£24,000	£31,500	£37,500	£44,000	£53,000	£80,000	£100,000
Mean	£28,169	£33,057	£41,284	£44,321	£52,633	£84,500	£97,143
Base	13	62	15	29	35	4	7

Mean salary levels by job level
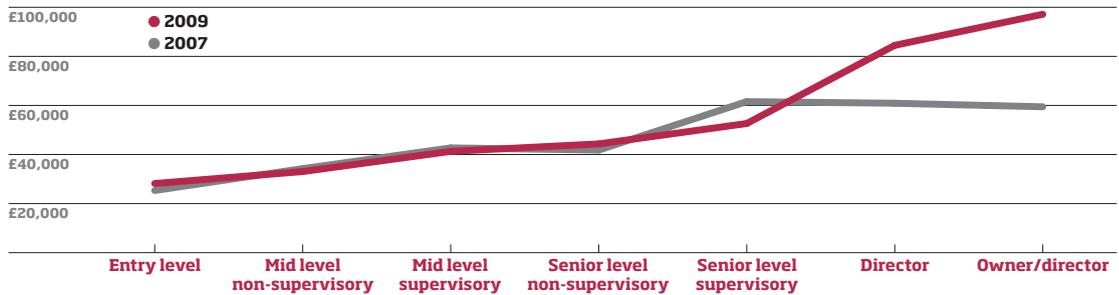
Salary according to education

|	None	GCSE	A-level	Diploma	Bachelor	Master	PhD
Min	£20,000	£38,500	£292,000	£13,400	£22,000	£12,000	£31,000
Max	£47,000	£38,500	£120,000	£52,000	£173,000	£115,000	£70,000
Med	£33,500	£38,500	£49,000	£42,500	£38,000	£35,150	£50,000
Mean	£33,500	£38,500	£59,200	£40,340	£47,193	£39,783	£48,460
Base	2	1	5	5	54	83	15

Mean salary levels by education
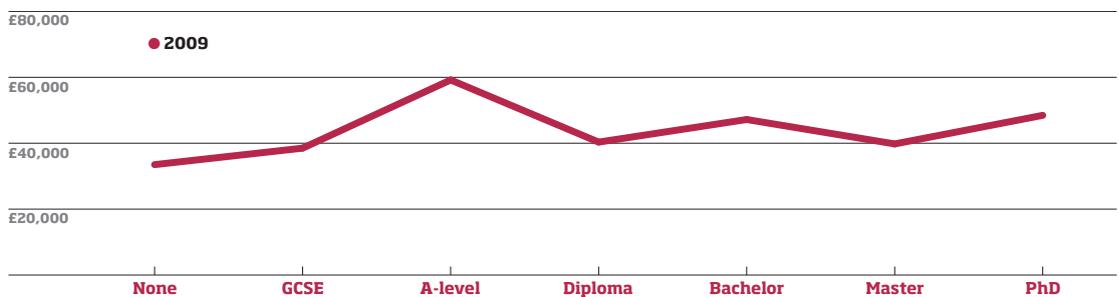
Salary according to experience

	0-1 yr	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3-5 yrs	5-7 yrs	7-10 yrs	10-15 yrs	15+ yrs
Min	£13,400	£20,000	£20,500	£12,000	£23,449	£30,000	£38,000	£36,000
Max	£49,000	£45,000	£50,000	£70,000	£70,000	£173,000	£120,000	£54,000
Med	£33,000	£30,000	£31,000	£37,000	£45,000	£49,000	£70,000	£47,000
Mean	£29,700	£30,506	£32,280	£38,742	£44,924	£52,950	£74,500	£44,800
Base	12	17	26	38	26	21	20	5

Mean salary levels by experience
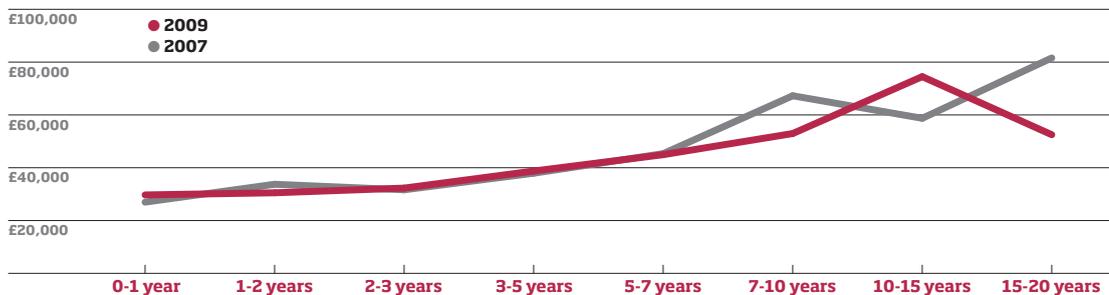
Salary according to age

	18-21	22-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55
Min	£24,000	£20,500	£12,000	£13,400	£29,000	£40,000	£34,275	£47,000
Max	£24,000	£45,000	£120,000	£80,000	£115,000	£173,000	£67,000	£47,000
Med	£24,000	£31,000	£33,000	£38,000	£50,000	£54,000	£36,000	£47,000
Mean	£24,000	£30,018	£36,352	£43,541	£55,130	£66,667	£42,655	£47,000
Base	1	13	65	38	27	15	5	1

Mean salary levels by age
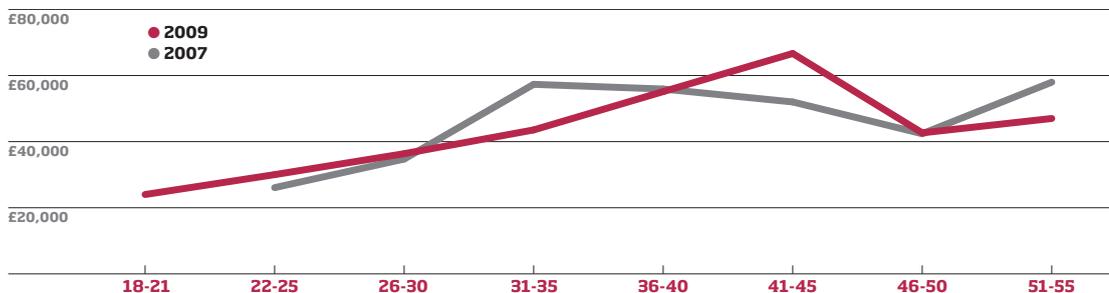
Demographic overview

Levels of seniority
Entry level **7.9%**
Mid-level, non-super **37.6%**
Mid-level, supervisory **9.1%**
Senior-level, non-super **17.6%**
Senior-level, supervisory **21.2%**
Director.....................................**2.4%**
Owner/director........................**4.2%**

Most common education levels
Master's degree......................**50.0%**
Bachelor's degree...................**33.3%**
PhD **8.6%**

Most common qualifications
HCI **33.2%**
Computer science.....................**9.9%**
Interaction design....................**8.5%**
Psychology **7.1%**

Level of experience
0-1year **8.1%**
1-2 years **8.1%**
2-3 years **13.3%**
3-5 years **23.3%**
5-7 years **16.7%**
7-10 years...............................**13.8%**
10-15 years.............................**12.9%**
15+ years **3.8%**

Most common age groups
26-30 ....**35.2%**
31-35.......................................**22.4%**
36-40 ....**19.1%**
41-45 ....**10.9%**
22-25 ....**7.6%**

Locations of work
London......................................**70.9%**
South East England **8.1%**
South West England................**4.3%**
Southern England **3.3%**
Scotland....................................**2.9%**
Outside UK **2.9%**
North East England..................**2.4%**
Midlands **1.9%**
North West England **1.9%**
East Anglia................................**0.9%**
Republic of Ireland **0.5%**

A complete report of the results can be found on the UK UPA website at www.ukupa.org.uk

What is a 'green' user experience?

Claire Mitchell highlights some of the key themes discussed at the
UK UPA World Usability event in London, hosted by LBi London

'Designing for a sustainable world' provides a multi-faceted challenge to UX designers, and one that many are rising to with interesting projects, from new products and services through to academic research on human behaviour. The UK UPA World Usability Day event in London saw over 100 students and practitioners of UX and clients of UX services come to learn about some of those projects and get involved in the discussions that they provoked with our panel of speakers.

One of the key questions for addressing climate change and designing for sustainability is whether human behaviour can change to reduce consumption and therefore carbon emissions, and how we can design to influence behavioural change for the better. The three speakers on the night provided three different perspectives on how to better understand behaviour and therefore design for it, or design to influence it.

Meriel Lenfestey is the founder of Flow Interactive (www.flowinteractive.com) and more recently Ecomodo (www.ecomodo.com). Ecomodo is a new social enterprise that demonstrates how good digital design can be a tool to support behavioural change, in this case in order to reduce material consumption of goods.

Ecomodo offers users the ability to offer or use goods or services (such as power tools or professional advice) on a short-term lend/borrow basis, based on the traditional hiring model, where all the normal concerns around lending to 'strangers' have been considered and addressed with the appropriate integrated insurance mechanisms. Ecomodo aims to drive behavioural change rather than rely on existing behaviours – it's a way of helping communities return to a 'borrowing from a neighbour' mentality that modern life has frequently done away with.

Dr Debra Lilley is part of Loughborough University's Design & Technology/Ergonomics and Safety Research Institute (ESRI) and the author of www.design-behaviour.co.uk. She has been working on the Calebre project that aims to reduce household energy consumption by encouraging changes in behaviour. Domestic energy consumption has been shown to have risen for a variety of factors, including single occupancy homes, home working, government policy (grants and incentives) and general 24/7 living.

Carbon, Control and Comfort is a three-year collaborative research project which aims to engage householders within social housing in the design of energy control systems that suit them. This allows them to create the conditions of comfort that they want and which, through using the

Ecomodo demonstrates how good digital design can be a tool to support behavioural change

technology and fabric of their homes more effectively, reduces their energy use. An interesting challenge is to see how low-income households address the issue of energy, and therefore economic savings, and what insights this can give into motivating behaviour within the wider population.

Tory Dunn and Franco Papeschi from the Vodafone Betavine project have been exploring the potential of mobile and web tools and services to help people understand and measure their impact on the environment. Along with addressing our behaviour, we need the information to make better decisions about our carbon-emitting behaviours, as well as the motivation to want to change our behaviour.

Betavine embraces and adapts the tools we already have to help with this aim. As a powerful tool that's ever-present and accessible, the mobile phone is unprecedented in its reach in terms of data gathering and sharing. The challenge for the project is to make people aware of the impact of their actions and to encourage change by keeping people motivated in a collaborative, networked environment, which fosters new behaviours. The ideas this project is generating are free for all to view at www.betavine.net.

In the spirit of sharing and collaboration, all our speakers participated in a panel discussion lead by Marcus Mustafa, head of user experience architecture, and Greg Smith, head of research, at LBi (www.lbi.co.uk). UPA members posed questions before the event for panellists to respond to. We can't cover these discussions in detail here, so I'll leave you with some of these interesting questions as food for thought:

How could we use UX and design to change behaviour at a corporate and individual level for sustainability?

Should we work towards an integration of sustainability concerns and requirements in our overall UX approach as an industry?

How does sustainability fit into the UX and design picture for things that aren't tangible such as websites and software?

Does being environmentally conscious have to mean a worse user experience?

How can user experience designers help to reduce real-world consumption?

How can we, as workers, help reduce the carbon footprint of our workplaces? Could we use our skills in UX and design to put together a campaign for how to run more sustainable workspaces?

More information on these projects can be found on the UK UPA website, www.ukupa.org.uk

Follow UK UPA and contribute to discussions at twitter.com/ukupa

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Silvia Zimmermann

Global president of the Usability Professionals' Association

World Usability Day was founded in 2005 as a strategic initiative of the Usability Professionals' Association (UPA) to ensure that services and products important to human life are easier to access and simpler to use. According to the European Commission Staff Working Document 'Design as a driver of user-centred innovation', only sustainable design is good design. For a long time the UPA has suggested approaching design from 'cradle to cradle'. Coming from a user-centric perspective and looking beyond form and function, the approach promoted by the UPA directly supports the first two pillars of sustainability: social and economic integrity. By looking at all products and services, whether they're buildings, roads, consumer products, business, services or healthcare systems, throughout their lifecycle, the UPA and its large international membership assumes its global social responsibility for making things easier to use and more sustainable.

Sustainable ideas

With World Usability Day focusing on issues of sustainability, usability experts give their views on how good user experience practices can cut down our environmental impact

JON DODD
Co-Founder and MD, Bunnyfoot

Usability can impact on sustainability across many fronts and is one of the reasons why it was chosen as the topic for World Usability Day this year.

On the more mundane side, the development of products or services is streamlined and made more efficient by adopting a good user-centred design (UCD) process – it's quicker, and there are fewer revisions and fixes necessary. Also, by being based on real and validated customer needs (rather than just feature based), they're often more future proof too.

More interestingly perhaps is that usability can be a major force in driving behaviour modification in a non-intrusive, non-hectoring way.

At its simplest this might be removing barriers caused by the poor design of existing systems – for example, providing an effective way to be able to tell if the immersion heater has been left on, systems to make recycling less of a cognitive effort and a physical hassle, modification of everyday objects such as kettles, doors, microwaves and light switches to promote energy efficiency by natural consequence of their most simple use.

Up the scale a bit and usability is essential to the take-up and the sustainability of environmental programmes such as car share systems and public transport. If they are a hassle people will not use them, as simple as that.

Usability, though, is more than just making things easy, effective and efficient – it's about making them satisfying or even enjoyable, and this is where some startling behavioural effects can come into play. My favourites are the bottle recycling station made to be a competitive arcade game, and the children's roundabout that doubles as a water pump. We need more of this innovation, inspired by and based on good user-centred design and usability practices.

CATRIONA CAMPBELL
Director, Foviance

We embarked on a large programme of research and strategic customer experience consultancy earlier this year for Scottish Power's 'customer first' director Robbie Parish.

Energy companies are about to experience a massive technology shift over the next couple of years when the Smart Meter becomes available in every home in the UK. This will allow consumers of energy to see the amount they're using daily (perhaps even by hour and minute) from the comfort of their kitchen through a wireless-enabled device. All hopefully leading to changes of behaviour around energy consumption.

To enable the energy company to understand how its customer base would adopt technology, we worked with the Future Foundation to highlight emerging behaviours in its customer base and create current and future personas for the business to use to inform their technology strategy over the coming few years.

This is a good example of a company using consumer behaviour to inform technology decisions for the better. But there are too few examples of this best practice. I believe it's because of a lack of buy-in from the technologists to the importance of customer centricity. Maybe it takes too much energy.

NINA BELK AND KELSEY SMITH
Lead researcher and strategy director, We Are London

Sustainability comes in three flavours: economic, social and environmental. Usability, or rather its grown-up cousin user experience, supports all three with nothing less than its core principle: if we want to change behaviour we need to understand the real-world constraints that limit change.

It's easy to suggest that the public could support sustainability programmes by adopting new habits – insulating their homes or changing patterns of consumption, for example. However, there's a huge difference between could and would. The 'people could' model of thinking often adopted by advocates of sustainable living causes a lot of trouble – any product with more features than an audience needs is evidence enough of this. Look at your mobile phone's feature list for an obvious example.

A better approach is user-centered. This uses research techniques to identify and model the real-world barriers to change. User research allows us to identify the real-world needs of an audience. For example, what are the habits and values? Is it peer pressure or economic context that sustains current behaviours and attitudes to sustainability? Where are the opportunities that afford change? Essentially it's about providing decision makers, policy makers and designers with the insight they need to align what people should or could be doing to live more sustainably with how people want to live.

GILES COLBORNE
MD, CX Partners

Sustainability means looking at using and re-using resources more efficiently, and that already affects web and mobile owners. For instance, we worked on making Lexus's website more effective, which resulted in fewer brochures being sent out but more leads generated.

Making those kinds of savings isn't a new thing. My first job in aerospace involved looking at how to make aircraft easier to maintain by designing around the users. We had one case study of a helicopter in which the number of tools required to maintain it had been reduced from several cases down to a small bag. That had a huge impact on waste, on logistics costs and on the efficiency of the aircraft – all of which you can equate to the carbon footprint of keeping it flying.

I think user-centred design companies are well placed to embrace sustainability because the entire approach is about looking at a design in context. It's not so much a usability issue as a contextual design issue. We have the design methodology that already tells us to go out and look at the impact the system has on its users and stakeholders. Those tools extend very well to looking at the other resources it impacts.

Usability should be placed at the forefront of the design of every product and service. Function ahead of form should always be your mantra. What's the point in something looking good if people can't actually consume the product or service?

TRENTON MOSS
Director, Webcredible

In terms of the development of sustainable products and services, some of the key considerations include:

Increasing awareness & education: People have to be able to understand the message that the product is putting across. This means using appropriate conventions, meeting behavioural expectations and reflecting customers' mental models of how the process should work.

Influencing decisions & decision making: People should have the appropriate tools to make the right choices which support their decisions. These could include a tool such as a carbon calculator when booking travel, consistent clear labelling such as making it obvious how to recycle, and the use of easy-to-understand iconography.

Standardisation of tools & labelling: This will ensure that people can make their choices more easily. For example, nutritional labelling and traffic-light systems are beginning to follow a standard format to which people are becoming accustomed. A sustainability kitemark is under consideration by the Design Council.

A user-centered approach uses research techniques to identify and model the real-world barriers to change

User experience gets buy-in

Be Kaler Blake talks about recruitment trends in our sector over the previous year and why a downturn isn't all bad

It's been a turbulent year for recruitment in digital media in that we have seen budgets cut for advertising and media campaigns, budgets held on new investments, product launches and improvements for existing sites. We know the story, very little else was reported in the broadsheets and the TV, it was a cold winter. This affected the need for permanent and freelance hires. Employees chose to stay put to see what the industry was saying, their years of service to a company more valuable to them than taking a chance, so there was no movement in the market. Consultancies had more resource then they had work pencilled into the resource plan so they could absorb the usual requirement for freelancers. Big research projects were seen as a luxury and guerrilla testing methods were carried out in the staff canteen to cut costs.

Interesting, though, that user experience recruitment was still the most profitable sector during the downturn. I had more jobs on my desk than my peers in design, tech, account direction and sales. I had more hires in the pipeline, and my clients – the top 100 digital media and marketing agencies, clients across broadcast, government, finance, social media, publishing were still keen to talk to me about plans for growth in user experience.

Like everyone else I kept myself off internal projects so I was profitable on the board and I put together my strategy for growth and maintaining a pipeline and I went back to basics and networked with all the people I knew well. The results were good, we got a great feel for the marketplace and were able to let our clients know what was happening outside their organisation, to help them understand where the pressure points for their clients releasing budgets were. It was good to let them know they weren't alone. It felt rewarding to know that we were fulfilling your role as a consultant and not just a fair-weather recruiter.

Clients were using their knowledge to get buy-in for small pieces of user experience work. Sure, ditch the £2m redesign and focus on small pockets of good user experience work that will get you noticed at the board meetings, your customer sales and retention goes up, bingo. You get more money to do good projects. Hiring freezes lifted on user experience first as a result of this, and we are being briefed on senior hires again that involve strategy and planning of new products and services.

Clients are continuing to work more speculatively with their core clients and stakeholders, showing them what their competition could be doing and successful ways to increase and develop revenue streams.

Perhaps this is why we have seen user experience become more coveted within a production process then ever. Roles like director of user experience and user experience planner, UCD project manager, interaction designer, user experience visual designer are coming in slowly but surely. Project managers, designers and coders have bought into the user-centred design process more than ever. It's not a compromise any more but a way of making sure that any redesign or build is a success.

It's encouraging to see even more listings in the directory of user experience suppliers this year. What is even more interesting is the projects people are taking on. Web builds and micro sites will still be bread and butter but applications, tools and software redesigns all need the help of people well versed in the UCD production process. Which means more work all around.

Agencies and clients aren't looking to produce usable designs, that is the starting point. They're looking for something likeable that doesn't take their customers off the page, provides them with the product or information and takes them through a rich brand experience.

User experience consultants are closer to the stakeholders than ever, helping them flush out requirements at an early stage using rough scamps, clickable prototypes and card sorts. Tools like Axure and a more agile methodology have enabled clients to see work in progress and be part of good decisions for users. Evangelising about the importance of user experience is such a core part of the role, both internally and externally. With so much experience in the marketplace, now we can begin to use our gut feeling about how users will behave but only once our due diligence has been done. For as long as we see the commitment from stakeholders to buy into good user experience, we will all be working on interesting projects.

So it feels like we have weathered the storm, as we can see a month by month improvement in hires this year. Which leads me to believe that, yes, a downturn is shit but (as someone once told me) that's also a fertiliser. So roll on a year of sustainability, good projects and committed people.

> **User experience consultants are closer to the stakeholders than ever, helping them flush out requirements at an early stage**

User
Experience
Portfolio

essays and insights on
the usability sector
from leading players

Bunnyfoot

Understand people **Optimise** design **Maximise** return

Web

Email

Study it

Optimise it

Test it

Model it
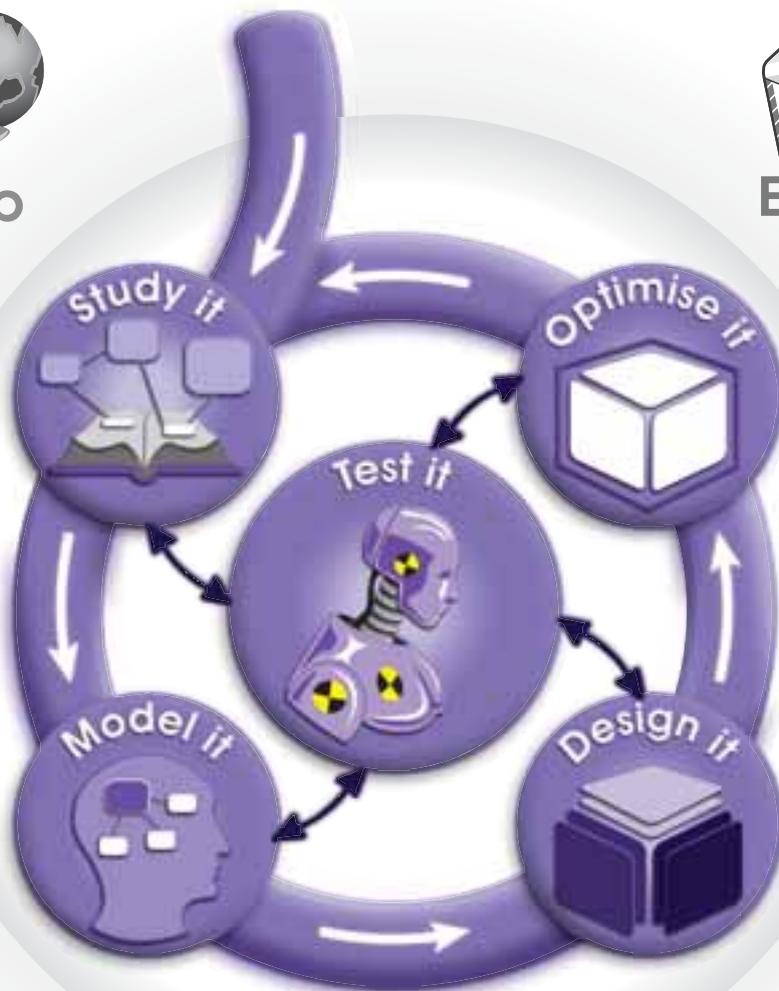
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Understanding Global Markets

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C ob, bap, muffin, barm cake... what do you call it? Chances are it depends on your social background, where you were brought up, and a myriad of other influences over the past years. If you haven't got a clue what I am talking about by the way they are all terms for things you might stick some cheese or a sausage in to make a snack. Other terms include 'bread rolls' or 'buns' and there are about 30 or so others in common use in the UK.

If something as innocent as a baker's doughy product has the potential for confusion, misinterpretation, class associations and heated argument (yes disputes are rife – raise the issue with your colleagues and wait for the fallback) then imagine the potential for chaos and bewilderment when communicating more complex propositions across national and international markets.... ...this is where good customer research with a reach beyond the confines of London can help.

My company, Bunnyfoot, has been performing customer research and customer usability testing for the last 10 years. We noticed very early on that there were distinct UK regional differences (over and above other demographic influencers) in people's responses to the same website – and these differences have profound consequences on the websites' ability to communicate, persuade and convert. Knowing and acting upon the geographical differences (cultural, social, language, attitudinal etc.) dramatically increases the effectiveness of the end result. This is one of the reasons why we set up 5 offices with usability labs running the length of the UK and why we encourage our clients to look beyond the myopia of London when researching with their customers (it works better if you do – simple as that).

But you don't have to be locked to physical labs, getting out there in the field and observing what real people do in their own environments is a valuable thing to be doing that can reveal key insights. One problem with this is that it can be expensive. One way of getting there without so much cost is to perform 'remote usability testing'. This typically relies on screen-sharing over the Internet, and with recent advances in broadband penetration it is now possible to run usability tests and observe people in their own homes or places of work (with consent!!) from practically anywhere.

Beyond the UK

When your product or service reaches beyond national boundaries then geographical and cultural differences become even more pronounced. HSBC clearly know this and you will know doubt have seen some of their adverts revealing the different cultural, geographical and socio-economic meanings associated with things like colour, gestures, symbols and language.

It goes beyond this too – recently working extensively across Europe, the Middle East and Asia (and a little in Africa), we have uncovered challenges associated with extending online communications across these regions. This includes:
- the need for flexible or even completely different interfaces to cope with different languages (e.g. German = long words and phrases, Arabic and Chinese = right to left)
- the fact that in some regions the preferred or only way people engage online is via mobile (Africa and Japan in particular)
- display advertising and contextual advertising is far more effective than search engine marketing in some regions (e.g. Middle East) because of not just language differences but also cultural differences
- 'western style' minimalist aesthetic design doesn't work well in China – and again this is cultural and not just because of the character sets used

We, as an agency, need to take our own advice on board to adopt local knowledge to get the best results. Bunnyfoot employs consultants from across cultures and have recently opened an office in Hong Kong to get closer to international differences. When we test abroad we use a network of quality agencies, it just brings that edge of local knowledge that makes the whole process run much smoother.

DR JON DODD
Co-Founder and MD
Bunnyfoot Ltd.
Since starting Bunnyfoot 10 years ago, Jon has been all over the world helping governments and commercial organisations communicate better with their online audiences. He is frequent speaker and trainer at national and international workshops and conferences and has authored a number of respected standards and guidelines – most recently the COI Government usability toolkit (usability.coi.gov.uk)

CONTACT INFORMATION
Dr Jon Dodd
0845 644 0650
jon@bunnyfoot.com
www.bunnyfoot.com
Twitter: @bunnyfootsays

CASE STUDY: Hotels.com

The Client
Hotels.com is a leading provider of hotel accommodation worldwide, offering reservation services through its own network of localised websites and its telephone call centres.

The Objective
From 6 proposed designs, Hotels.com needed to understand which best supported the user's needs, goals and expectations. They wanted to understand what constituted a compelling entry experience amongst their varied international audience.

The Work
Bunnyfoot used their multi-lingual team and international testing

Hotels.com
wake up happy

capabilities to test across 4 markets, using remote testing abroad and eyetracking in the UK to gain a variety of qualitative and quantitative data to influence design.

The Deliverables
- A full report covered each element of the design, showing not only which design was most popular, but how each element performed individually.

- Eyetracking provided additional visual feedback on design performance.

Results
- Simplified decision making regarding which design concepts to go with and which needed development
- New insights into improvements that would benefit all designs in all regions

"Being able to validate the designs with an international audience was absolutely invaluable."
Jonathan Baker-Bates, Head of Online

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Colin Barnard, *Peugeot*

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STRATEGY / RESEARCH / DESIGN / DELIVERY

Designs that impress the board

If you're looking for kudos and results then it's not the glamorous pages on your site that need redesigning; it's the hard working pages - forms, search results, and product pages - which deserve attention.

Last year, a financial services client asked us to improve their online business. We redesigned two pages and boosted applications by over 80% – a big win for our client that earned him high praise from his board of directors.

The pages were a text-only product description and an application form – two of the least glamourous pages on the entire site. But they were doing the hard work of turning visitors into customers. Focusing on them is what delivers the numbers to the board.

Of course brand design matters. Crafting a great brand message takes a great amount of skill. Great brand design often works on an almost subliminal level (the swoosh on a Coke can echoing the shape of the classic glass bottle). It is about stepping back from the design and getting the big picture.

But designing an online form or a product description is a different kind of skill. It's about immersing yourself in the minutiae of the users' interactions and decisions, smoothing out all the kinks in the road, opening doors for the user to step through.

If you're going to deliver the goods, you need to have skilled people working on those pages. It's not the place for junior designers to cut their teeth, it's an art that rewards patient attention.

In our time designing and testing those hard-working pages, we've come up with three golden rules: think like a user, simplify and collaborate.

Thinking like a user means breaking down the users' decisions at every point in the page. For Island Cruises, we created a map of the decisions users have to make as they go through a complex booking process. This turned out to be very different from the process Island Cruises expected. Putting it on paper stopped us from designing for ourselves or for what was convenient for the call centre. Those new designs trebled Island Cruises' sales.

Simplify – our second rule – means getting rid of clutter. For instance, we helped increase leads on Lexus' site by simplifying the navigation - getting rid of layers of menus and putting simple calls to action in a single location on the screen.

Web pages get cluttered for the same reason that basements get cluttered - because designers think users 'might need that link/picture/instruction one day' and don't have the heart to throw out junk. Having a map of how users really think gives us the confidence to throw away all that clutter and keep things simple.

The last rule, collaborate, is important because it's through the iteration and scrutiny of workshops that a design gets tested and improved (a great example of this is the case study below).

Of course your board may want to boost the brand. But you can build great brands on the back of a focus on simple design. In last years' Superbrands survey of British consumers, the number one spot went to Google - a brand that focuses on delivering results rather than glossy appeal. If a brand is a promise of service and satisfaction, then it's better to keep your promises than to look smooth.

So if you want to impress the board, focus on the places where promises are kept – the forms, search results and product descriptions – and you'll be able to improve business and brand at the same time.

CASE STUDY: Mortgage forms design

By creating simple application forms, we helped deliver a massive jump in Platform's online mortgage business – more than double what they had hoped for.

Platform (part of Britannia Building Society) sell mortgages via Independent Financial Advisors. Platform knew that as long as their product was competitive, simplifying the application process was the key to winning business. They wanted their new service to be a benchmark in ease of use. But it also had to meet complex business requirements.

Completing a mortgage application requires a huge amount of information. User research told us that

IFAs rarely got all the important details from their customers first time. So a key part of our redesign was helping IFAs to see which parts of the form were complete and which needed more work. We created a form that was divided into tabbed sections, each of which was labelled to show whether

it was complete or not, so IFAs could see what information they needed and where it went.

Mortgage application forms also have complex rules behind them ('If you answered yes then please fill in section 2.2b'). We ran workshops with Platform's technical and customer service managers to ensure that the forms covered every eventuality - and yet the wording and data-capture was as simple as it could possibly be.

Following the launch of the new application process, Platform saw a significant increase in online applications - over 2.5 times their target. Platform also won the Business to Business Mortgage Strategy Gold Award.

GILES COLBORNE
Managing Director

Giles founded cxpartners in 2004 with Richard Caddick. Since then cxpartners has grown to be one of the UK's premier user-centred design agencies. He has designed user experiences for brands as diverse as Mini, Orange and DirectLine. He's currently writing *Simple and Usable: Strategies for Interaction Design* due to be published by New Riders in 2010.

CONTACT INFORMATION
0117 946 3930
giles.colborne@cxpartners.co.uk
www.cxpartners.co.uk

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Creating a sustainable business flow

Sustainability is a poignant choice for this year's World Usability Day. The recession has forced us all to focus on ensuring the sustainability of our own businesses – whilst simultaneously continuing to address environmental issues for ourselves and our clients.

More and more people are realising the value of involving users throughout the design process – which is great for the whole User Experience community - but doing the right thing can be tough when budgets are being squeezed.

As you'd expect from the pioneers of User-Centred Design (UCD), we looked at the impact of the credit crunch on Flow and talked to our clients about our business - as well as talking to their customers about theirs.

Our clients told us they value our flexibility as much as they value our expertise. Why flexible? Well, with UCD at the heart of everything we do, we're the first to point out that whenever we embark on a new project, we don't start by thinking we have all the answers. This approach enables us to react to the findings of user research and design innovative solutions that are intuitive, easy-to-use and commercially viable.

Our Ethos
We see UCD as more of an ethos or set of principles than a rigid methodology. We like to think of it as an ever-expanding toolkit which we use to create compelling solutions. However, there are some things that are true about all Flow projects:

We always use research to inform design, right from the very start. We take issue with applying usability testing at the end of a project and calling it research with users. By that time all the decisions have been made and there is little value in conducting research. Using research right from the start and then iteratively throughout the design process is the only way to genuinely reap the benefits of involving users in a design process.

We lead with ideas. While users will give you valuable insights into what they do, they cannot solve the problem or innovate for you. That is why we have a rigorous interview process which ensures we only hire the smartest and most innovative researchers and interaction designers.

We work iteratively and collaboratively. It's important to get design input from the entire team responsible for creating and delivering a solution on a regular basis. It's no good waiting until you have found the one perfect solution to hand over to the next team. Better to iterate quickly through lots of ideas from a number of perspectives and then evaluate them with users.

Consumers are looking beyond branding messages for experiences that live up to the hype. If your product doesn't deliver against its promise, potential customers will reject it. That's a risk that no business wants to take – even in the best of times.

The UCD approach makes sure that user needs are clearly represented in your projects. This guiding force increases team efficiency and reduces risk.

Essentially, our UCD projects help our clients to generate increased revenue and more satisfied customers at a lower overall cost.

(Re)usability
For the last twelve years, we've been as committed to re-usability as we have to usability. Anyone who's visited our Clerkenwell offices can attest to that. We cherish our role with like minded clients such as the Environment Agency and the BBC and many of you will have seen us present – or may have read about – our work on Coastal Erosion and Flood Defence. Some of you may also be familiar with our award-winning work for the travel industry. For World Usability Day, we've been brainstorming sustainability ideas for the office and have already implemented three of them and are looking at many more.

Elisa del Galdo -
Director of User Experience
Elisa is responsible for the quality and delivery of every one of Flow's client projects. Previously Chief of Technical Staff EMEA at HFI and most recently Head of User Experience at Webcredible, Elisa has been a user experience (UX) practitioner, researcher and instructor for over 20 years and is widely published on UX methodology and internationalisation.
During her career, she has worked on design projects in a wide range of industries, media and interaction types, including Internet, intranet, web-based applications, speech and language user interfaces, and mobile applications. Specialising in the internationalisation of products and systems, Elisa has delivered multilingual projects with teams in over 20 countries for clients such as JPMorgan Asset Management, Schlumberger, Citibank, Vodafone, BBC and BT.

ELISA DEL GALDO
Director of User Experience

CONTACT INFORMATION
020 7336 4700
info@flow-interactive.com
www.flow-interactive.com

Harella House
90-98 Goswell Road
London EC1V7DF

Spend less.
Get more.

If your online sales targets are getting bigger but your marketing budget is getting smaller, maybe it's time to take a fresh look at the customer experience on your site. Whilst most sites nowadays are usable, many lack the persuasive content, engaging tools and streamlined purchase paths to convert visitors into customers.

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To find out more, please call Saul Annett on 020 7539 3840 or email him at saul.annett@foolproof.co.uk

Foolproof™
Online Sales Improvement

How customer-centred is your organisation?

Foolproof ™
Online Sales Improvement

Each day, it seems more brands are trying to convince us that their services and interactions are designed around our needs as customers. But how many companies can demonstrate that they are truly customer-oriented?

It is more common now to find companies making User-Centred Design (UCD) a central part of their development approach, yet many brands are missing out on the benefits of collaborating with customers in the earliest stages of their innovation processes.

The enlightened brands that do are asking customers to help co-create new online experiences and innovative ways of interacting, to deliver a genuine competitive advantage online.

Similarly, the benefits of regularly reviewing existing online sales processes are often overlooked. In the current economic climate, a few percentage points on the online conversion rate, can deliver a significant business benefit.

'End-to-end' experience design

Experience design, the process of developing full end-to-end customer 'buying and owing' experiences, requires a deep understanding of customers' expectations and behaviours: How and where customers shop? What influences customer buying decisions? How can expectations about the purchase experience be met or exceeded?

At Foolproof we have an approach to experience design which we call the '3Ts' – Think, Test and Tune:

Think: Customer Driven Innovation

We bring together customers, clients and their agency teams to co-create the 'big ideas' and new experiences. Our rapid innovation process turns these ideas into pragmatic concepts that can be validated with customers and proven commercially.

The beauty of this process is that traditional 'blue sky' thinking can be turned into practical applications in just a few short weeks, and all ideas that emerge from the process are firmly rooted in a real customer need.

Test: User-Centred Design

The benefits of UCD are well documented. The risks and costs of developing new tools, functions and content are minimised by validating the site architecture, customer journeys and main areas of interaction with real customers at regular points in the design and build process.

Nowadays, with online marketers being asked to deliver more online sales with static, or lower, marketing budgets, the return on investment argument for UCD is compelling.

Tune: Sales Process Optimisation

You'd be surprised just how many companies think that once a new part of their site is 'live' that their work is done. Such is the speed at which technology and competitors develop, customer 'norms' evolve quickly and it is easy to fall behind.

The more advanced companies adopt a programme of regular review on their most important sales processes. They employ user experience testing, multi-variate testing and customer experience competitor benchmarking to ensure that site processes are fine-tuned, and in doing so, ensure no sales opportunities are lost.

'Always-on' customer collaboration

Without doubt, the companies that will enjoy continued success will be those that fully involve customers throughout their design and development processes and continue to take this approach to fine-tuning their online sales journeys.

With the demand for low-cost and quick consumer insight increasing, we expect to see greater use of social media to deliver this. We already use Facebook to stage campaign tests and social media has allowed us to build, moderate and maintain a 'co-creation platform' giving us easy and immediate access to representative users throughout the lifespan of major projects.

Without reference to real customers, any attempts to convince us that products and services are built around our needs can quickly be revealed as hollow claims. In a world where it is easy to share the reality of our experiences with others, it seems sensible to make sure those experiences are genuinely customer centred.

> **"Without reference to real customers, any attempts to convince us that products and services are built around our needs can quickly be revealed as hollow claims."**

PETER BALLARD
Founding Partner, Foolproof

Foolproof is one of the world's leading user experience design companies, combining strong UX methodology with hard-headed commercial thinking, to improve clients' e-commerce performance. Foolproof's clients include some of the biggest names in banking, insurance, travel, mobile and gaming. Its Online Shopping Surveys are renowned for the independent customer insights they provide on different industry sectors.

CASE STUDY: 188BET

188BET aims to become one of the world's leading in-play gambling providers and commissioned Foolproof to help it design its online experience, based on the requirements of sports bettors in both the UK and China.

Firstly, we evaluated the competitive landscape for both in-play and regular sports betting which was supported with consumer research in both the UK and China (based out of Hong Kong to avoid breaking Chinese gambling laws).

By employing our Customer Driven Innovation methodology, we were able to co-create with customers an ideal online experience that would meet the needs of both audiences, as well as promote the 188BET proposition to best effect.

The initial focus was on acquiring customers to capitalise on 188BET's major sponsorship deals with Premier League teams Wigan Athletic and Bolton Wanderers. The new site aims to help new registrants to place their first in-play bets and engage them in a wider range of activity. Subsequent releases will target retention via a range of tools to help customers manage their accounts and improve their enjoyment of the site.

Andy Scott, CEO at 188BET explains: "Foolproof's understanding and interpretation of the behavioural and appetite differences in local territories across our global audience is helping us to refine a UK-specific proposition. As a result, we are able to incrementally deliver improved offerings that are designed with the local customer in mind. We engaged with our customers to identify what they want, how they want it presented and have employed best practice to deliver against those requirements."

188BET

Since we were founded in **1997**, Fortune Cookie has delighted our clients — and their users — with findable, beautiful, usable sites that deliver tangible, measurable results, time after time. We are ranked number **5 out of 400** for delivering our customers ROI (as voted by client readers of Revolution, Marketing and Marketing Direct). Our sites have won our clients no fewer than **28** industry award nominations in **2007/08** alone. And more and more top brands are choosing us to help make their online numbers add up: we are the UK's **no 1** fastest-growing digital design agency (**2008** Media Momentum Awards). After we redesigned www.lta.org.uk for the Lawn Tennis Association, site searches for information about player rankings increased by **167%** and there was a **10%** increase in the number of visitors returning to the site. During Wimbledon **2008**, the site received **570,000** unique visitors in a single month. Fortune Cookie's redesign of slh.com for Small Luxury Hotels of the World increased reservations by **45%**, room nights by **56%**, and Average Room Rate by **15%**. The site also won Best Hotel Website at the Travolution Awards **2008**. The site we built for Accor Services achieved almost instantaneous results. Leads generated from the site increased by more than **350%** and the homepage bounce rate dropped by **50%**. Users are more engaged with the site visiting twice as many pages as before. Most significantly, more parents are saving money as a result. The 'Pensions Gym' we developed for FT Business proved to be a winning idea, when more than **1000** stakeholders registered for training sessions to learn more about investments. More than **180,000** people have taken the interactive '**2** minute test' which we developed for Diabetes UK to find out whether they are at risk from diabetes. In the **5** years that we've been working on the site, bookings through kuoni.co.uk have risen no less than **71%**. The **2008** redesign lowered the homepage bounce rate by **28%** with **40%** of visitors clicking through to the special offers.

fortune cookie

Big on numbers.

Since 1997 more and more of the world's top brands have looked to **Fortune Cookie** to boost their online conversions, bookings and acquisition rates.

Websites designed by **Fortune Cookie** are findable, usable and beautiful. We can help you to smash your sales targets, deepen your relationships with customers, and even carry off a suitcase full of prestigious industry awards.

So whether you measure ROI in yen, dollars, euros or pounds, we'll make sure the figures all add up.

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* In the 5 years that we've been working on the site, bookings through kuoni.co.uk have risen a staggering 71%.

The Power to Transform

fortune cookie

G reat user experiences must have the power to transform, says Fortune Cookie managing director Justin Cooke.

Turn the clock back a decade and good user experiences were not the commodity they are today. Innovation was technology-led and if the user had a good time online it was more likely to be by happy accident than design. But as online has matured, our clients have begun to demand more from us as agencies. It's no longer OK to simply innovate. Innovation must now place the needs of the user at its heart.

For too long, digital marketing meant web and email, and other digital delivery channels have had many false dawns. For how many years have we thought that the touchable web was within reach? How many times have we said that next year would be the year the web would go mobile? How many times have we been disappointed as our clients have told us it is too soon, too risky for them to dive into new digital channels?

The market may not have been ready, but we have not wasted the opportunity to discover how to deliver great user experiences ready for the time when mobile, touchscreen and other media would finally be embraced. For behind the scenes, digital agencies have been investing in new technologies, delivering halo projects to test user acceptance of new channels for service delivery, and learning, ready for the day when our clients would finally take that bright, bold step with us and commission their very first non-web, digital application.

In 2009, we experienced the real dawn of mobile and touch, not as separate channels by simultaneously and fully integrated in the form of touchscreen, handheld devices, the iPhone leading the charge as the fastest-selling device ever. Take up of iPhone and iPod Touch exploded in 2009 and with them came new sales channels.

As an agency, we have long ensured the websites we create are fully interoperable, which means our clients' websites work on these media immediately and with no fuss. We understand the need to bring our clients up-to-speed with new trends and opportunities, so we produced tutorials for our clients to make them aware of the potential of touch-controlled handheld devices, and created for them screen icons to ensure their brands stand out on a very crowded screen – these have proved hugely popular.

But receiving our first commissions to build applications for iPod Touch and the iPhone and for Microsoft Surface was when we really got the opportunity to put everything we've learned about how to deliver great user experiences across channels into practice.

Good user experiences are channel-agnostic. They are a paradox, memorable but at the same time invisible. Good user experiences are simple. They cover the entire user journey, not just the digital elements, but end-to-end.

Good user experiences are transformational. They transform businesses and transform the way users interact with and perceive a brand. To achieve transformation, digital agencies must be perfectly aligned to working with partners as well as clients to make sure the users' journeys are consistent and as supported (with relevant, contextual information) as they can possibly be. Today's digital experience should be instantaneous and responsive – users demand nothing less. But ultimately, the experience must be human, inviting, tactile, not technical – the channel being the means to an end and not the end itself.

JUSTIN COOKE
Managing Director

Justin Cooke founded Fortune Cookie in 1997. The multi-award-winning digital agency has offices in London and Paris and a burgeoning portfolio of international clients, including Le Creuset, UEFA, Amnesty International, Europcar and Metro International. Justin is chair of BIMA, The British Interactive Media Association.

CONTACT INFORMATION
Justin Cooke
 0870 736 1000
justin.cooke@fortunecookie.co.uk
www.fortunecookie.co.uk
The Lightwell
12-16 Laystall Street
London   EC1R 4PF

CASE STUDY: Transforming Businesses

F ortune Cookie is a digital agency at the forefront of innovative user experience. The transformational solutions that we produce and our capital investment in new technologies set our team apart from other agencies in the sector. Here are some examples of our recent work:

Fortune Cookie is the world's first digital agency to combine the power of Tobii T60XL and Microsoft Surface to undertake eye-tracking on participants using a Microsoft Surface application.

Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) - tennis fans at the Davis Cup were encouraged to use break time to provide feedback on the design of the new LTA website in a fun and engaging way via an interactive questionnaire loaded onto Microsoft Surface.

Europcar International (ECI) - we developed a route-planning application in Microsoft Silverlight for use on Microsoft Surface. Surface is installed in a number of ECI 'stations' and customers can spend any time queuing or waiting time planning their journey, holiday or stay using the engaging and immersive Surface application.

BMJ Group - we developed the first social network for clinicians. Using the Pluck social media platform, BMJ Group has made the tricky transition from publisher to facilitator, with doctors of all ages and levels and experience using doc2doc to exchange ideas and experiences. http://doc2doc.bmj.com/

CBS Outdoor - the process of booking ad space is transformed by an innovative interactive visualisation tool which makes the process of booking ads engaging and fun, with customers getting a deeper appreciation of how their ads will be carried. www.cbsoutdoor.co.uk/

digital vision. *now* delivered *end·to·end.*

As the No.1 rated Technical Agency in the NMA's *Top 100 Interactive Agencies* ranking for the last two years running, our track record speaks for itself. Lately though, we've been busy with more than just providing our usual world-class digital media expertise to large enterprises around the world. We've brought talented people on board, with years of experience in the UX digital space, who thrive on a passion for creative excellence and efficient delivery. Our user-centred approach to design, combined with our technical expertise solidify an impressive end-to-end digital offering. To get in touch, please call us on 01904 438 000 (Ext. 2) or email info@iokointeractive.com.

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Know thy user!

ioko

Digital Vision. Delivered.

The economic downturn may have encouraged us to close our wallets, but it should have opened our eyes.

TANYA LIDSTONE
VP of User Experience, ioko

Tanya is an energetic and results-driven user experience professional with over 13 years experience gained from working with brands such as Thomas Cook, Opodo, and ITV. She has an impressive track record of defining and implementing strategic initiatives across a wide range of products from video-rich entertainment web sites to complex transactional platforms. Tanya is a member of the Usability Professional Association and the British HCI Group.

CONTACT INFORMATION
ioko interactive
01904 438 000 (Ext. 2)
info@iokointeractive.com
www.iokointeractive.com

No this is not another article about the sad state of affairs we find ourselves in as our country struggles to free itself from the grasp of recession. There are many tales of woe in the agency landscape but one very positive sign we have found at ioko is that our clients are having to focus much more on what they **have** and **optmising** it, rather than focusing on what they don't have. As budgets get slashed companies are being forced to think about creative ways to make a positive impact on their bottom line and one encouraging aspect of this endeavour is that the importance of creating a great user experience is being forced into the spotlight. For too long we have witnessed the counter-productive action of trying to increase sales simply by driving more traffic to a website which already has poor customer conversion and experience which to me was like trying to keep a leaky bucket full by adding more water instead of plugging the holes. Now companies are much more focused on plugging those holes in order to maximize benefit from their earlier investments, and the best prepared approach the task properly by getting to know and understand their customers.

If there is one golden rule that outranks all the others in our thoughts it should be to know your customer. Products built and designed to achieve business goals alone will fail; the personal goals of your customers need to be identified, understood and fulfilled. When the user's personal goals are met by design aimed at satisfying identified needs, business goals are much more likely to be met. Our philosophy at ioko has a simple premise: if achieving the user's goals is the basis of our process, the user will be happy and satisfied. If the user is happy and satisfied they will gladly pay money for the product or service and, critically, recommend it to others. Interestingly during times of economic hardship using classic segmentation and demographic data is not enough when thinking about exploring and mining the sectors of your audience. What Professor John A. Quelch has found during his recent research at Harvard Business School is that classic demographic information is no longer relevant. Segmentation needs to change to look at clustering people according to their emotional reaction to the economic downturn.

In such a competitive landscape the user experience of any platform is a hugely important factor in attracting, retaining and broadening your customer base. So much of what is visited, consumed, and recommended today is dependent upon the nature of the experience that a person has with that product. Subsequently, the user interface should be considered a key component in your marketing arsenal and as a result of increased competition and economic pressure is becoming more important and more sophisticated. Having worked in interface design for over 13 years I have seen the commitment to delivering sector-leading user experience grow exponentially. **There is a growing acceptance that the customer focused user experience of a product or service is without doubt a major contributory factor in the purchase decision making process.**

How do we achieve great user experiences?
At ioko, we follow a methodology called User-Centred Design (UCD). This means we put our clients target users at the centre (and the very beginning) of our project to create a web site or product that not only meets their needs but surpasses them. Typically this means we engage with business managers at the start of the project to get to understand their business, and create personas and scenarios that relate to the target audience and in turn, use these to develop the user journey and interface. We also recommend undertaking user testing of proto-types and competitive offerings throughout the early stages of development for validation that our ideas will translate into a useful, usable and engaging product that users will enjoy using.

Whilst I am pleased at the growing awareness of the value that good user experience brings we still have a long way to go before it becomes a ubiquitous element in all online projects. I still have conversations with clients that believe that user experience and great design is the gloss you add at the end of the project rather than understanding that it is actually the steel structure underneath that defines and supports the whole user journey.

However, at ioko we are up for the fight and if diminishing budgets encourages business managers to know and understand their customers better, and forces user experience to become a critical factor by which companies measure the success of their business, then we all stand to gain considerably; consumers, business leaders, and UX practitioners alike.

From recovery to resurgence

Looking back at the last year, it's been a bumpy ride for the user experience industry and the entire marketing landscape. As we head into World Usability Day 2009 though, the green shoots of recovery are beginning to show through.

TRENTON MOSS
Director

Trenton is a Director at Webcredible and founded the company in 2003. He is one of the most recognised names in the user experience industry and is a regular public speaker on the topic. He's passionate about what he does and his work has been published and endorsed on over 100 websites and in numerous offline magazines and newspapers.

CONTACT INFORMATION
Trenton Moss
0870 242 6095
info@webcredible.co.uk
www.webcredible.co.uk
99 Mansell Street
London E1 8AX

This may sound like a cliché that has been repeated over and over about the UK economy in the last few months, but this is no illusion in the online world. After a period of streamlining, companies are now looking to invest in their websites once again. Online sales are continuing to grow, according to the latest IMRG/Capgemini Sales Index, and online has recently overtaken TV as the biggest advertising channel.

This shows the increasing acknowledgement of the importance of websites within marketing and business operations. And, despite the fact that the UK is still officially in a recession, this is sparking a period of rapid growth in the user experience industry and 2010 could be the year of a big resurgence.

Usability over aesthetics
When it comes to developing a new website, some companies would previously look to put aesthetic design or commercial drivers at the forefront. Aesthetics are crucial for the first impression your website gives and users will make initial opinions on your brand based on aesthetics. However, usability is much more crucial in getting users to return to your site.

This mantra has been demonstrated by some of the biggest websites on the Internet, such as Google and Amazon, which have never been aesthetically amazing, but their usability and content has propelled them to the top. As many organisations are increasingly acknowledging, it's crucial that your website is designed based on what your users' want and need, rather than purely what you want, and designing on this basis will ensure usability is built into your site.

The ecommerce industry also continues to be a very good example of this development in website usability. Webcredible's recent 2009 Ecommerce Usability Report showed that the majority of top UK high street retailers are continually working on improving the usability of their websites, seeing the user experience of their websites as a key point of differentiation in such a competitive market place.

Usability issues
Saying this, there are still many websites that do not take usability best practice into account, and there are certainly still improvements to be made in all industry sectors. There are two types of issue when it comes to website usability: fundamental issues, which are structural and often require starting again from scratch; and tactical issues, often quick wins that just require some updates on the site.

The fundamental issue we come across most is that a website is structured entirely around the wants of the organisation rather than around the needs of the user as user research has not been done. For example, a website's homepage should list the key tasks as identified by users' requirements and not the way that organisations think.

Common tactical issues we encounter include: a poorly designed search function, a lack of filter and sort functionality and calls-to-action not being strong. These kinds of issues can be easily discovered and remedied through usability testing.

Interaction and integration
Since the early days of Google Maps, many more interactive websites, with richer interactions have been developed and Internet users are now getting used to using these. This growth of multimedia, interactive websites with more complicated interactions makes it even more important that usability testing is carried out and best practice followed.

In addition, the nature of requests for usability consultancy has shifted over recent years from auditing a near-complete website to integrating usability throughout the entire development process. This user-centered design (UCD) process involves the user at every stage, to ensure the website is completely aligned with user as well as company needs.

Future developments
In recent years, a trend has developed of users dropping off a site if they find it too hard to do something, and visiting competitors' sites instead. As online continues to increase in importance and competitiveness, this will only happen more and more unless companies are prepared to invest in the user experience of their websites.

Fortunately, another trend on the increase is the acknowledgement that usability can be a key differentiator and contributing factor to business growth. As more companies realise the importance of putting usability at the forefront of their online proposition, user experience could be a big growth area in 2010.

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The elephant in the room

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Those who know me know that I am not a man short of things to say, but quite often short of time to say them.

HAMMAD KHAN
Director, Zabisco

For over 12 years, Hammad has lived and breathed digital experiences and spends most of his time consulting with clients or getting under the skin of users. Following stints at top UK agencies and working with global brands, Hammad is Director of Zabisco – a unique digital outsourcing partner to anybody in need of a reliable and cost effective supplier for IA, UX, UCD, UGC & DEV.

CONTACT INFORMATION
0115 9484454
zabiscodigital.com
twitter.com/zabisco

I'm often asked to give a seminar, hold a workshop or even write a book about all things IA and UCD related; yet the restrictions of there being only 24 hours in a day, combined with being a new dad, mean these works are unlikely to ever materialise in my lifetime. Whilst the drawer of topics on which I could muse is probably as wide and diverse as the Internet itself, it occurred to me that now I've managed to make a commitment to some writing, I should use the opportunity not to write not about a subject of my own desire, but that of what others have asked of me. After all, isn't that what being user-centred is all about in the first place?

I recently put the question to my peers in the digital industry (from agency colleagues to members of London IA) and most of the responses I got seemed to carry a theme – what separates a user experience professional from a rookie? (those "jumping on the bandwagon" and "fly-by-night experts" are some of the actual phrases people have described them as to me).

It's a fair question to be honest. Indeed there are many architects, designers and consultants out there who are giving some very sound and practical advice; yet without having earned the stripes in the battlefield that the gurus of our trade (myself included) often tout as our key credential.

Despite every bit of experience gained, all the tools and techniques in the artillery and the clients in the portfolio, the ability to STAY USER FOCUSED is surely the one redeeming trait that can elevate an aspiring UE practitioner or ground the seasoned professional.

If I think about some of the most challenging IA projects I come across (like working on large scale Microsoft SharePoint migrations or trying to maintain UCD within a long Agile project), I feel vindicated when something I've learned along the way proves to add real value to the client or their users. But then I think about some of the basics of usability; I still have to bring my A-Game for in order to convince people to implement them. It's easy to see why the simple things are often the most effective – and by championing them through the various stages of requirements, specification, approval and change, anybody able to do this deserves as much recognition as an expert.

Despite all the knowledge and experience that goes into digital projects these days, I still come across these every day.

The fold line is dead. Long live the fold line!

1. The pen is mightier than the sword
For all the technological innovations past, present and future, content remains king. Whether it's a Facebook status, tweets on Twitter or a blog post – user generated and scripted content is what engages us most. Write clearly, with conviction and with your users in mind (both search bots and people). You'll then overcome even the most cutting edge of where the web takes us tomorrow.

2. A picture speaks a thousand words
Having a visual way to break up (or even interact) with content is one of the easiest, yet most effective ways to build a connection with your users. That being the case; don't blow the opportunity with pointless handshakes from a stock library or a team photo that isn't actually your team. Use images sparingly, intelligently and with good reason. The same goes for flash, video or any other rich content that has the potential to engage or distract users. Don't forget to think about accessible alternatives!

3. Keep your head above water
Don't believe everything you read in your favourite blog – the fold line is still very much a hot topic. Most end users still don't like to scroll unless they have to and even then would prefer not to when given the choice. Think about that long and hard before you decide what to put on a page and how your navigation and calls to action work. The rise of netbooks and mobile only emphasises this more (especially when trying to use those tiny trackpads). In the widescreen, full HD world of today, web pages are a lot like skyscrapers. The higher up it is, the more it's worth.

4. Do what I say, not what I do
In all but very rare circumstances, make sure you design around what your users need – not what you want. Don't let this simplicity fool you (or your clients). The subtle differences are the first step towards giving your users a better experience. Think about what customers looking into the shop window can see, as opposed to focusing on the ones you can only see from inside.

5. It's the economy stupid
The first thing to get cut from every project budget is the testing; especially any form of user testing (i.e. informal feedback or in a usability lab). We've all learnt the hard way that it's a false economy, yet it remains our duty to serve and protect our clients. I know it's tempting to keep all the whiz-bang features in scope, but if you keep asking your audiences how they feel, you'll develop an impenetrable poker face for when you need to convince somebody to do what's right. We all prefer something simple that works, over something amazing that keeps letting you down.

User Experience Directory 2009

About the directory

This directory lists UK companies active in the field of user experience, either as their sole business or as part of a broader offering. The information has been supplied by the companies themselves. While every effort has been made to include as many companies as possible, there may be others offering similar services.

ABILITYNET
abilitynet.org.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2004
CORE SKILLS Usability testing with disabled users, accessibility auditing, training, strategic consultation, information architecture and design review
KEY CLIENTS BBC, Microsoft, BT, Channel 4, UFI, UK Parliament, Citizen's Advice, Leonard Cheshire.
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 7/40

AbilityNet is a national charity helping disabled adults and children use computers and the internet by adapting and adjusting their technology. The Accessibility Services team offers a range of services aimed at ensuring that your web presence is accessible and usable. All profits from our consultancy work support our charitable work.

ALISON BLACK RESEARCH AND CONSULTING
alisonblack.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS Primary user research, contextual/anthropological-based research, prototype development and testing, field trials, expert consulting on user experience, mobile and new technology industries
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 1/1

I work with my clients (designers, engineers, planners, marketers) to ensure user focus in product and service development. My work answers two basic questions: what should we develop to meet our customers' needs and how should we design it so it creates the best possible experience? I tailor my input to each project, working individually or drawing on a network of collaborators to build the best team for the task.

ALLOFUS
allofus.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2003
CORE SKILLS User insight and research, experience planning and modelling, experience design, envisioning and prototyping, evaluation and usability
KEY CLIENTS BBC, Microsoft, Natural History Museum, Nike, Renault, Science Museum, Sky, Xbox
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 4/30

AllofUs is an award-winning, multi-disciplinary interactive design consultancy that sets out to exploit emerging opportunities for interactive technology. It provides a unique portfolio of services across an unparalleled range of media, including web and online application design, product & mobile device UI design, and physical interactivity for exhibitions spaces, events and retail interiors, the latter being a key differentiator.

AMBERLIGHT PARTNERS
amber-light.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS User testing, ethnography/contextual design, rapid prototyping, interaction design, visual thinking
KEY CLIENTS Orange, Vodafone, Omnifone, O2, RIM, Nokia, LG, Samsung, Google, Premier Inn, Symantec, Sony, Sega, MSN, Bing, Abbey, Channel 4, BBC, Microsoft MediaRoom, BT, Samsung, Alcatel
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 17/17

We help you launch better, more successful products by making your design decisions based on real evidence, not just stakeholder opinion. We call this approach evidence-based design. We are also experts in rapid concept visualisation and creating low-cost prototypes for mobile, web and software platforms.

AVVIO
avvio.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1997
CORE SKILLS Competitor and best-in-class analysis, usability testing, information architecture, user-centred design and development
KEY SECTORS Telecomms, IT, retail, finance, travel
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 16/38

We are an award-winning agency with a team of highly experienced art directors, designers, developers and producers who have all worked in the industry for many years. We create digital solutions that engage with the lives of people in the real world. These can take the form of online campaigns, SharePoint intranets, complex extranets, websites, carbon calculators, video, mobile comms, and many more.

BLUHALO/GYRO HSR
bluhalo.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1991
CORE SKILLS Digital planning and marketing, user needs and definition, concept creation, testing and user groups, training
KEY CLIENTS Hi-Tec, Nokia Siemens Networks, BlackBerry, Liverpool FC, Virgin Atlantic
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 22/112

Bluhalo/GyroHSR is a full service global digital agency servicing a wide range of clients from a variety of industry sectors. Specialising in digital marketing, social media, bespoke web development projects and multi-channel digital delivery, Bluhalo/GyroHSR has a strong track record in delivering successful digital projects that provide an impressive return on investment.

BUNNYFOOT
bunnyfoot.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1999
CORE SKILLS User-centred design, usability, accessibility, user testing, eyetracking
KEY CLIENTS Microsoft, Virgin Holidays, DWP, COI, HFEA, News International, RBS, Prudential, BP
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 25/40

We help you to optimise the way you communicate with your customers to make sure they do more of what you want. We understand the needs of business and deliver reports that can be actioned within the context of your business. We focus on the practicalities of delivering ROI resulting from enhanced customer experience aligned to your business objectives. We do not only deliver user testing but offer the full package of specialist user centred design services.

CATCH DIGITAL
catchdigital.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2007
CORE SKILLS Information architecture, CMS development, Flash design/development, WAI accessibility, FSA-regulated compliance
KEY CLIENTS Hymans Robertson, Lucida, Crest Nicholson, Quintain Estates & Development, Haymarket)
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 4/6

Catch is an independent digital creative agency based in London. Our growing team of creative, technical and strategic specialists work with clients both large and small across a diverse range of digital projects. This includes creating large online applications powering events such as the Campaign Big Awards to proto-typing pension fund management tools for Hymans Robertson.

CHAMELEON NET
chameleonnet.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1998
CORE SKILLS Accessibility audit/testing, competitor review/benchmarking, expert analysis/review, information architecture, interaction design, user segmentation, visual design
KEY SECTORS Higher education, non-profits, publishing
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 5/28

Chameleon Net is a web solutions company offering a wide range of online services including website hosting, design, software develop-ment (ecommerce and content management systems), online marketing (including SEO) and web consultancy. We believe user-centred design is at the heart of a successful website and are experienced in creating accessible sites.

CIMEX
cimex.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2004
CORE SKILLS Diary studies, expert reviews, ethnography, eyetracking, focus groups, multivariate testing, online surveys, personas, stakeholder workshops, usability testing, accessibility, functional specification, information architecture, proof of concept, rapid prototyping, business analysis, community building, content strategy, competitive reviews, digital engagement, requirements definition
KEY SECTORS Business, government, e-learning
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 7/52

Cimex has an exceptional track record of award-winning solutions for mobile and the web. We bring our unique experience and creativity, with the practical skills gained from having one of the few purpose-built usability labs.

C-INNOVATE
c-innovate.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2005
CORE SKILLS ICT benefits realisation, mobile device usability, contextual design, ethnography
KEY SECTORS Police, health, social care, local government
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 4/4

C-innovate is a consultancy group that specialises in supporting the implementation of new ICT systems. Our goal is to help organisations get the most out of whatever systems or technologies they use. The essence of what we do is spending time with people to understand their needs and helping to ensure that these needs are met throughout the implementation process.

COAST DIGITAL
coastdigital.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2002
CORE SKILLS Expert review, user interviews & contextual enquiry, persona creation, conversion analysis & improvement, competitive benchmarking
KEY CLIENTS Capgemini, Lexis Nexis, Lund University, CAFOD, National Computing Centre, Morgan Crucible, Slendertone
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 5/30

Our 1-day usability workshop delivers clarity about your objectives, your user personas and their behaviour. We then recommend and implement improvements that deliver higher conversion rates for your organisation.

COGAPP
cogapp.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1985
CORE SKILLS Information architecture, interaction design, usability testing, user research, visual design & branding
KEY CLIENTS London2012, Home Office, Transport for London, British Museum, The National Archives, The Metropolitan Museum of Art New York, Arts Council England
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 4/28

Cogapp is a multiple award-winning digital media and user experience company. With over 20 years' experience, we produce websites, interactive installations and next-generation mobile applications. Our experience integrating user testing, ethnographic research, information architecture and interaction design ensures clients get the results to deliver measurably better experiences.

CSCAPE
cscape.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS Website analysis, onsite optimisation, customer journey development, taxonomy/wireframe development, usability testing
KEY CLIENTS Aviva, Sony, Barclays, Microsoft
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 15/85

cScape is an award-winning digital agency. We are a Microsoft-certified Gold Partner and have developed a SharePoint Centre of Excellence with one of the leading Microsoft Most Valued Professionals. We set up the Customer Engagement Unit in November 2006 and our team of consultants offer clients access to the best in design, IA, user experience, content development and strategy, conversion optimisation, planning, customer research and usability.

CXPARTNERS
cxpartners.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2004
CORE SKILLS User-centred design, user testing, customer journey mapping, ecommerce, information architecture, design for SEO
KEY CLIENTS Ebay, Moneysupermarket, Marriott, Nokia, Unum, Environment Agency, Virgin Trains
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 12/15

We've increased client revenues by £327m over the past two years. We bring your customers to life, in research, strategy, design and delivery. Our insights help you focus on customer needs, innovate and set you apart. We're experts at designing the pages on your website that do the real work – product descriptions, forms and search results. And we turn your analytics into stories that make it clear how to improve your site's performance.

DESIGN UK
designuk.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1997
CORE SKILLS Eyetracking, information architecture, visual design, web analytics, accessibility audit/testing
KEY CLIENTS Hobbs, Jaeger, Selfridges, ntl:Telewest Business, New Look, Speedo
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 37/37

At Design UK we focus on maximising customer engagement because that's what makes a site effective. The more a user engages with your brand and product, the greater the propensity they will make a purchase. Usability is therefore core to everything we do because it facilitates that engagement. We understand how people use a site in both rational and emotional ways and build customer journeys that satisfy their needs and drive higher conversion rates as a result.

DETICA
detica.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1997
CORE SKILLS Customer experience strategy, user-centred design, web technology innovation, usability research and analytics
KEY CLIENTS Transport for London, Vodafone, Orange, Yell, Centrica, National Rail Enquiries, Metropolitan Police Service, Health Protection Agency, London Development Agency
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 50/1,800

Detica's strength is the combination of heavyweight business and technical consulting services with award-winning user experience design. We help UK government departments and FTSE 100 companies devise strategies to realise and maintain the UK's best and busiest digital platforms. We have dedicated testing facilities for web and mobile platforms.

E3
e3.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2005
CORE SKILLS Accessibility audit/testing, competitor review/benchmarking, expert analysis/review, information architecture, interaction design, user testing, visual design
KEY CLIENTS AXA, Kia, E.On, Environment Agency, COI, Disney, V&A, BBC, Toshiba
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 4/49

E3 is one of the UK's leading independent digital agencies. Our work covers major websites, microsites, digital advertising, social media and viral campaigns. We understand the importance of information architecture, always ensure the needs of the user are considered, and know user-centric design is fundamental to creating a successful website. And we're passionate about our clients.

EFFORTMARK
effortmark.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1994
CORE SKILLS Paper and web forms design, websites and business processes, surveys, search analytics, content strategy
KEY CLIENTS Open University, HM Revenue and Customs, HM Courts Service, IRS, IEEE, Perform
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 2/2

Caroline Jarrett is recognised as one of the world's leading experts in the usability of forms. She is lead author of *Forms That Work: Design Web Forms for Usability*.

ELECTRONIC INK
electronicink.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1990
CORE SKILLS Design strategy, user experience design, usability testing, business system assessments, enterprise system
KEY CLIENTS National Grid, EDF Energy, Novartis Pharmaceuticals, Thames Water, Easynet Global Services
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 7/7

Electronic Ink is an international design consultancy dedicated to improving the way people interact with technology and environments. We improve the design and usability of software applications, enterprise software, browser-based applications and digital devices. Our passion for improving human-computer interaction through innovation continues to drive the company.

User Experience Directory

ETRE
etre.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2003
CORE SKILLS User experience design, user testing, eyetracking, usability inspections, information architecture, navigation design
KEY CLIENTS Anglo American, Camden Council, Eurostar, Health Professions Council, Police Complaints Commission, Mars, Mencap, Rolex, The Law Society
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 8/10

Etre is a digital communications agency specialising in results-driven user experience strategy and design. We help multinationals, start-ups, government departments, local authorities and not-for-profits build more usable, useful and engaging products. We're making waves in industry too, having recently hosted events for usability gurus Louis Rosenfeld and Steve Krug.

FHIOS
fhios.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2002
CORE SKILLS Customer experience strategy, usability, eyetracking, user-centred design, focus groups, contextual investigations
KEY CLIENTS Axa, Expedia, Kurt Geiger, Vodafone, Orange, O2, Halifax, Samsung, Hilton, Dell
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 25/30

Fhios is a leading international customer experience research consultancy. Fhios's services provide the insight necessary to help clients better understand their customers' needs, expectations, behaviours and experience levels when they engage with them and their competitors across multiple channels. Fhios's goal is to help clients provide stellar customer experiences.

FLOW INTERACTIVE
flow-interactive.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1997
CORE SKILLS User experience strategy, user-centred design, contextual research, interaction design, usability
KEY CLIENTS BBC, BG Group, BSkyB, BT, Bupa, easyJet, Environment Agency, Nokia, Orange, Samsung, Shell, Sony, Standard Life, Tesco, Transport for London, Thomson Reuters
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 40/40

Flow is a pioneer of user-centred design. We've spent 12 years creating interactive solutions for our clients that are innovative, easy to use and commercially successful. We do this by ensuring our clients' users are at the heart of every design process. Essentially, we create the right user experience.

FLUENT INTERACTION
fluent-interaction.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2003
CORE SKILLS User research, qualitative behavioural analysis, user-centred design, accessibility, wireframing, prototype development
KEY CLIENTS Department for Children, Schools and Families, RNID, LloydsTSB, Telegraph
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 10/10

Fluent is a user experience and web design agency. We combine behavioural research with creative innovation to deliver user-centric online experiences. Public or private sector, websites or applications, all our clients have one thing in common: they value their customers and want to give them the best online experience.

FOOLPROOF
foolproof.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2002
CORE SKILLS Online sales optimisation, customer-driven innovation, user-centred design
KEY CLIENTS HSBC, Aviva, LloydsTSB, Royal Bank of Scotland, Direct Line, Churchill, Nationwide, Allianz, BWin, Skybet, Virgin Money
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 33/40

Foolproof is a digital agency specialising in customer-driven innovation, user-centred design and online sales optimisation. Our approach uses market and consumer insights to improve design decision-making and increase online sales. We work with leading global brands and organisations seeking competitive advantage though digital technology.

FORTUNE COOKIE
fortunecookie.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1997
CORE SKILLS Digital strategy, goal-oriented planning, user research, experience architecture, usability testing, eyetracking
KEY CLIENTS Legal & General, Prudential, Hastings Direct, Experian, Compare the Market, TUI, Kuoni, Europcar, Small Luxury Hotels, ATOC, Arcadia, BBC, Oxfam International, Amnesty International
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 10/55

Fortune Cookie is one of the UK's most well-respected digital design agencies, famous for delivering beautiful, findable, accessible websites that deliver stunning return on investment. Over the past two years, websites designed by Fortune Cookie were shortlisted for major design awards a total of 40 times.

FOVIANCE
foviance.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2001
CORE SKILLS User experience services, analytics intelligence, research, experience management, experience blueprint
KEY CLIENTS RBS, Barclays, RBS, Dell, Nokia, William Hill, Ladbrokes, BSkyB, Royal Mail, Thomas Cook, BBC, CIPD, Sainsbury's
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 28/38

Foviance is Europe's largest specialist customer experience consultancy, providing quantifiable improvements to websites, online advertising, mobile, call centres and email. We offer our clients the very latest in techniques and technology to deliver a complete understanding of online and multi-channel customer behaviour, and the strategic consultancy required to exploit this knowledge.

GRAND UNION
thegrandunion.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2007
CORE SKILLS User experience strategy, information architecture, content strategy, usability, business analysis
KEY CLIENTS Boots, Waitrose, Best Buy, Digital UK
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 6/80

Grand Union, established in 2000, is one of the UK's leading independent digital communications agencies providing web development, online marketing, content and social media solutions for a range of blue-chip clients. Grand Union is built around Collective Intelligence – how we work as a unified team, with our clients, and leverage the digital channel to build powerful relationships between businesses, their brands and consumers.

GRAPHICODMG
graphicodmg.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1996
CORE SKILLS Customer experience strategy and design, usability and user research, information architecture, business analysis, accessibility
KEY CLIENTS Pepsi UK, CrossCountry Trains, Rolls Royce Engineering, STA Travel, London Eye
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 4/56

We work alongside clients to define their digital strategy and implement multi-channel digital communications which reach the brand's consumers in the right place, at the right time and in the right way. Our user experience professionals are involved in all stages of design and implementation, so once the work connects with the end user they get the best digital experience possible. GraphicoDMG is a Digital Marketing Group agency.

HARVEST DIGITAL
harvestdigital.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2006
CORE SKILLS Customer insight research and profiling, conversion and customer acquisition optimisation, usability and multi-variate testing, user-centric design, data-driven business modelling
KEY CLIENTS Art'otel, Auto Trader, Decalthlon, Go Compare, HCA Hospitals, Holiday Extras, LV=, McAfee, NatWest/RBS, Plan International, Quidco, Royal Shakespeare Company, Tesco, The Brooke, Towergate
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 8/35

Harvest Digital is a full-service digital marketing agency. Through a joined-up approach to media planning, paid search, SEO, social media, email, web design, technology and user experience, we create involving digital experiences for consumers and deliver great business results for our clients.

HUGO AND CAT
hugoandcat.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2003
CORE SKILLS Information architecture, user experience strategy, usability engineering, usability testing and prototyping, interaction design
KEY CLIENTS ABN Amro, Brady, British Library, City & Guilds, CMS Cameron McKenna, ConvaTec, Fovea, Healy Hunt, IPC Media, Isklar, London Gifted & Talented, Mitie Group, The National Gallery, National AIDS Trust, Natural History Museum, Palamon Capital Partners, Refresh Accommodation, Royal Geographical Society, Sagentia Group, Sony Europe, Standard Life, Surface Magazine
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 5/30

Hugo & Cat is an online and interactive consultancy creating engaging and practical solutions for complex brand and business challenges.

INSTINCT
instinctstudios.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2003
CORE SKILLS User research, experience architecture, information design, interaction design, visual design
KEY SECTORS Finance, not-for-profit, retail, telecoms
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 6/15

Instinct is a user experience design agency. We optimise online user experience through a collaborative user-centred design approach involving in-depth research, iterative design, and robust development. We produce online solutions that are user-friendly, engaging and deliver measurable ROI by increasing your online conversion rate and customer loyalty. Good user experiences don't happen by accident, they're designed. That's what we do at Instinct, we design good user experiences.

INTERACTION DESIGN STUDIO
ixdstudio.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2008
CORE SKILLS Expert analysis, accessibility, usability testing, user profiling, navigation design, usability for mobile apps
KEY SECTORS Finance, telecoms, automotive, ecommerce, agencies
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 3/3

The Interaction Design Studio was the first UK agency to provide fixed-price usability and design packages in addition to consulting services to create great user experiences for websites, iPhone apps, intranets and applications. This means more sales for an ecommerce site, less staff training required on an intranet, increased productivity using applications and fewer helpdesk calls for everyone.

INVESTIS
investis.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS Website build and design, , share prices tools build, webcasting
KEY CLIENTS Cadbury, Standard Life, Anglo American, VT Group, Vodafone
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 10/81

Investis is the market-leading specialist in providing corporate websites and online communications services to listed companies across Europe. We work with more than 1,000 clients worldwide, from the smallest AIM companies to more than 50% of the FTSE 100 and 30% of the FTSE Eurofirst 100. We offer our clients a range of services from corporate and investor websites and intranets to share price feeds and website tools, as well as document conversion and webcasting.

JULIE SCHILLER
julie.schiller@gmail.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2004
CORE SKILLS Accessibility, ecommerce, strategy and planning, user experience and usability, web design
KEY SECTORS Automotive, charities, broadcasting, financial services, IPTV, manufacturing and engineering, media and entertainment, web project management
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 1/1

We are a nimble user experience consultancy with international experience with major clients from the BBC to Ford Motor Company. We specialise in clarifying users' needs and goals in easy to understand language for many industries. With many partners in the industry, we can help manage your project to deliver on-time, insightful results.

KEYNOTE SYSTEMS
keynote.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1995
CORE SKILLS International online user research, remote user testing, measurement of website user experience KPIs, competitive benchmarking, customer experience management
KEY SECTORS Financial services, telecoms, retail
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 7/7

Keynote is the leading provider of on-demand test and measurement solutions for continuously improving the online experience. We have carried out over 6,000 projects helping our clients to measure the customer experience of their websites.

KIRSTEN DISSE
fruitti.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2001
CORE SKILLS User experience architecture, design strategy and consultancy, concept development and articulation, design for socially mediated technologies, interaction design, visual design
KEY SECTORS Health, education, not-for-profit, technology
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 1/1

User experience and creative leadership specialising in transformative innovation in healthcare/IT software and systems.

LBI
lbi.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1995
CORE SKILLS Interaction design, information architecture, experience strategy, user research, multi-channel experience design
KEY CLIENTS Lloyds TSB, BT, Formula1.com, National Grid, Marks & Spencer
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 70/375

LBi employs the largest user experience architecture department in Europe. By attracting some of the best interaction design, experience strategy and information architecture talent, it has helped to define the discipline since 1995. Combining a heritage of adding value through the highest quality design refinement and usability ensures research, debate and opinion continues to produce award-winning, user-focused solutions.

LIGHTHOUSE EXPERIENCE
lighthouseexperience.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2006
CORE SKILLS User experience strategy, agile prototyping, research with real users, on-project coaching
KEY CLIENTS Sony, Camelot, ITV, eHarmony, Nokia
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 2/3

Lighthouse Experience was founded in 2006 to raise the bar in user experience research and design services. We focus on truly understanding audience needs and expectations by using novel, bespoke behavioural research techniques and in-house rapid development of challenging materials. We do this for consumer websites, worksystem software, mobile products and video games. We offer a full range of research and design products, consultative services, on-project coaching, and training.

MADGEX
madgex.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS Domain knowledge in digital recruitment, expert evaluation for jobseeker and recruiter experiences, usability testing, faceted navigation research and design
KEY CLIENTS Haymarket, Guardian, Cima, Times Online, Trinity Mirror, Emap, Incisive Media, Centaur Media, Wolters Kluwer, Totaljobs Group, Reed Business Information, United Business Media
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 3/60

Madgex is a world-leading provider of job boards and CV database systems. In addition to providing a great user experience for our own platforms, we provide dedicated user experience consultancy. Our expertise is at the intersection of digital recruitment and user experience.

MANDO GROUP
mandogroup.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS Digital strategy and consultancy, user research, information architecture, interaction design, user testing
KEY CLIENTS HSE, United Utilities, Business Link, Hill Dickinson, Places For People, Brookson, Urban Splash, Makro
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 7/48

We are Mando Group, a nationally recognised digital agency renowned for our thinking, collaboration and delivery. We research, make and measure the digital experience, collaborating closely with our clients and engaging with users to develop everything from far-reaching digital strategies to business-critical applications.

MICROSOFT UK
microsoft.com/uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1994
CORE SKILLS Envisioning future user experiences, user experience skills transfer, user experience process improvement, UX design and development best practices, user experience reviews
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 12/2,250

The mission of user experience design at Microsoft is to create products that people love to experience. We are supported by a network of specialist UX partners and work closely with the product development teams in Redmond with a focus on helping our customers realise their potential through the use of our technology.

NEW EXPERIENCE
new-experience.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2003
CORE SKILLS Ethnographic research, participatory design, information architecture, usability testing, service trials
KEY SECTORS Technology, telecoms, media, entertainment, not-for-profit
KEY CLIENTS Orange, Vodafone, Hutchison Whampoa, Microsoft, Metro, Sky, BBC, vinspired
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 6/8

We are a London-based consultancy that helps companies create innovative, compelling and usable products and services. We support our clients through all stages of the innovation process, bridging the gap between customer insight and user experience. We are committed to helping our clients create effective services that generate ROI.

NICE
niceagency.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2009
CORE SKILLS Interaction design, user journeys, personas, task analysis, prototyping
KEY SECTORS Financial services, media, FMCG, technology
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 3/6

Nice is an agency specialist in delivering rich digital experiences. We're building some of the best in a new generation of engaging web, desktop and mobile solutions using cutting-edge technologies such as Flex, Air, Silverlight, WPF and iPhone. As today's users have higher expectations than ever, rich, interactive and sticky experiences that keep users engaged, increase productivity and allow brands to push their message more effectively is paramount to future success.

NOMENSA
nomensa.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2001
CORE SKILLS Web strategy, CMS procurement, user research including requirements gathering, information architecture, user testing and design
KEY CLIENTS Procter & Gamble, Daily Mirror, Sky, News International, The National Trust, Financial Times
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 20/26

Industry renowned for our accessibility and user-centred design expertise and experience, we have a significant footprint in the media, travel, charity, education and government sectors. We provide a variety of services from developing web strategy and CMS technology to a complete range of user research and design services. We work collaboratively with clients to make the most of your resources.

PANCENTRIC DIGITAL
pancentric.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2003
CORE SKILLS User research, personas and goals, information architecture, user testing, competitor analysis
KEY CLIENTS BBC, Cadbury, Burger King, RSA, AXA, Petplan, Fly53, Clipper Teas, Pepsico, Merck, Whitbread
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 3/41

Pancentric Digital is a full service interactive agency specialising in strategy, user experience, social media, site design & build, search marketing, emarketing and video/rich media. We passionately believe human-centric thinking is the key to more involving and effective online brand strategies; our end-to-end solutions are grounded in customer insight. We are an **nma** Top 100 agency, a Design Week Top 100 agency and an Adobe premier partner.

PARADIGM INTERACTIONS
paradigm-interactions.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2006
CORE SKILLS User behavioral research, user-centered design, information architecture, design for organic search, content object modelling
KEY SECTORS FMCG, government, media, finance, banking, B2B
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 6/6

Paradigm Interactions is involved in defining strategies, requirements, governance and solutions that support businesses and organisations involved in high-volume transaction technologies for ecommerce, social media, WCMS, enterprise CMS, enterprise search and intranet systems. Paradigm Interactions' user-centred design approach supports effective business and consumer alignment and engagement.

PIXELGROUP
pixelgroup.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2005
CORE SKILLS Usability, online branding, user experience, website design, user testing, information architecture, online marketing, customer research, ecommerce, graphic design
KEY CLIENTS Abel&Cole, TalkTalk, BBC World Service Trust, Ann Summers, Financial Times, Virgin Games
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 5/9

Pixelgroup is an independent results-driven digital agency that combines usability and design services. We plan, design and develop user-centred sites to create engaging experiences. Established in 2005, we have created beautiful user experiences based on four key principles: measurable results, people like things that work, your brand, your promise and end-to-end experiences.

PROXIMITY LONDON
proximitylondon.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2004
CORE SKILLS User segmentation, requirements gathering, user needs analysis, expert audit and evaluation, competitor review/benchmarking, information architecture/content mapping, experience design, interaction design, lo-fi prototyping, rapid/agile/iterative methodologies
KEY CLIENTS Royal Mail, Orange, Post Office, Procter & Gamble, Shell, Capital One, TV Licensing, ATOC, RNLI, VW
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 4/230

The London hub of the world's most creatively awarded direct and digital agency. We solve business problems by creating measurable change. We fuse our expertise in data, strategy and creative to produce work that works.

RAZORFISH
razorfish.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1998
CORE SKILLS Advertising, media, technology, UX and design, strategy
KEY CLIENTS Audi, McDonald's, O2, Lynx, Levi's, Unilever, Asda
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 8/160

We are the world's largest full service digital agency with an annual turnover of $900m, 16 offices worldwide and over 2,500 people. In the UK, we are a top-ten agency with annual billing in excess of £25m.

READING ROOM
readingroom.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1996
CORE SKILLS Research, strategy and planning, information architecture, web design and build, usability and accessibility, content strategy, managed services, SEO
KEY CLIENTS COI, LoveFilm, Royal Mail, Department of Health, WWF UK, Skoda, Cancer Research UK, Wellcome Trust
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 35/150

Reading Room is an award-winning full service digital agency. Our passion is creating immersive user experiences and digital dialogues that truly engage, placing the user at the heart of everything we do. We were among the first to adopt solid user-centric methodologies, involving users in all aspects of a project from initial strategy through to testing.

REDEYE OPTIMUM.WEB
redeye.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS User testing, optimisation, analytics, usability, multi-variate testing, information architecture, user needs research, accessibility auditing
KEY CLIENTS Abbey, Esure, HSBC, Nationwide, Marks & Spencer, ASOS, WHSmith, Ted Baker, Home Office, DirectGov, COI
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 12/13

RedEye Optimum.web helps clients improve conversion by optimising their online business. All our work is firmly rooted in the science of human-computer interaction. Uniquely we link usability findings with analytics data to create a deeper understanding of what users do on a site and why. Pinpointing any problems the user experiences allows clients to improve their website.

REDWEB
redweb.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2004
CORE SKILLS Consultancy, usability testing, card sorting, contextual inquiry, expert usability evaluations
KEY CLIENTS Training and Development Agency, HM Treasury, NHS, TUI Marine, LighterLife, Access Self Storage
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 6/92

Redweb is one of the UK's fastest growing digital agencies. Specialising in the design and build of websites, it also offers SEO and PPC, consultancy, email marketing, mobile, hosting and support. Redweb's emphasis is on user-focused design, ensuring users' needs and clients' business objectives are met. The success from this approach means that many of Redweb's clients become long-term customers – a business ethos that is continuing to deliver sustainable growth.

SAPIENT
sapient.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1998
CORE SKILLS Usability and accessibility, planning and persona development, visual design, editorial content, information architecture, site development, media
KEY CLIENTS Vodafone, News International, Unilever, BP, Star Alliance, Singapore Airlines, Auto Trader, BSkyB, Department of Health, Epson, Energy Saving Trust, Visit Britain, Education UK, TalkTalk
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 17/277

Sapient is the first global marketing and communications company fully capable of delivering the immersive, seamless brand experiences that customers expect and demand from today's brand leaders. We connect multi-channel marketing and multi-channel commerce in new ways.

SAS DESIGN
sasdesign.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1996
CORE SKILLS User experience architecture, IA, interaction design, competitor benchmarking/review, user research, visual design
KEY CLIENTS BT, Sainsbury's, Ernst & Young, Freshfields, Coca-Cola, Savills, BP, KPMG
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 3/80

SAS works with its clients to influence graduates, shareholders, employees and business customers. We use printed and interactive media to reach these corporate stakeholders. We are an audience-driven corporate design and communications agency. Our client list and relationships say a lot about the quality of our work. The work is based on deep audience understanding and intelligent creativity.

SERCO EXPERIENCELAB
serco.com/experiencelab
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1970s
CORE SKILLS Customer experience management, evaluation and testing, concept development, support and benchmarking, innovation leadership
KEY CLIENTS Sky, T-Mobile, BBC, Virgin Media, Business Link, Microsoft, Sony
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 17

ExperienceLab (formerly Serco Usability Services) is a global experience design research agency. We help organisations optimise their customer experiences, from web to TV and mobile, from advertising to physical environments. We've been doing this for 40 years so we know how to make people, processes and technologies work in harmony. As a co-founder of the UXalliance, we provide research on a global scale, and have access to over 250 consultants.

SEREN PARTNERS
seren.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2003
CORE SKILLS Functional branding, user experience strategy, service design, user research, cross platform experience design
KEY SECTORS Mobile, telecoms, ecommerce, intranet, social networking, television
KEY CLIENTS Orange, Vodafone, Nokia, ITV, Post Office
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 17/20

Seren is a service design consultancy. Our specialism is creating services that are more than just functional, that have emotional appeal and communicate your brand values though elegant user experiences. They not only help customers do what they need to, but also deliver a positive and meaningful brand experience to companies and organisations.

SIMPLEUSABILITY
simpleusability.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2001
CORE SKILLS Expert analysis/review, eyetracking, information architecture, user research, user testing
KEY CLIENTS Asda, Republic, Ebuyer, Higher Education Academy, Big Bathroom Shop
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 5/8

Usability and behavioural research company with a full-time eyetracking research studio in Leeds. Respected pioneers of natural user research techniques, observing both conscious and subconscious behaviour. Projects are ROI driven, delivering significant uplifts in sales for our retail customers.

SPACE01
space01.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2004
CORE SKILLS User journey analysis, information architecture, functional design, copywriting, information design
KEY SECTORS Financial services
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 16/30

Usability informs all stages of our development process. We work with clients, particularly in financial services, to gain meaningful insights into users' behaviour, motivations, needs, expectations and aspirations. We marry these to an understanding of business objectives, brand values, communications strategy and functionality to create effective, commercial solutions.

SPOTLESS INTERACTIVE
spotlessinteractive.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2004
CORE SKILLS Usability and user experience training, usability testing, accessibility testing, user research, user-centred design
KEY CLIENTS Capita, BDO LLP, Paddy Power, Action.org.uk, National Trust
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 3/3

Spotless Interactive offers a range of usability and interactive design services for websites, intranets, CD/DVD and mobile devices. We research users, build interfaces and offer training courses to support user requirements and business goals.

STEAK
steakdigital.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2006
CORE SKILLS Expert analysis/review, user research, usability testing, web analytics, information architecture
KEY CLIENTS Virgin Holidays, Time Out, British Gas, John Lewis, Dyno, Swiftcover.com, (Red)
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 4/69

Steak is a digital response full service agency. Our mission is to bring the intelligence of search to all marketing communications, both online and offline and from media to design. We are a full service digital agency offering search marketing (search optimisation and paid search), display advertising, digital design, reputation management and social media marketing. Steak has offices in London, New York and Melbourne.

STICKY CONTENT
stickycontent.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1999.
CORE SKILLS Content strategy and language guidelines, creating usable copy content, working your brand voice online, auditing your content against our web-writing best practice, training in digital copywriting skills, copy for marketing emails
KEY CLIENTS Nielsen Norman Group, Berghaus, The Big Lottery, City & Guilds, HSBC, Ikea, Interflora, LloydsTSB, Marine Stewardship Council, Natural History Museum, Post Office, Sony
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 45/50

Over 50% of website usability issues are copy fixes, says Jakob Nielsen. As digital copywriting specialists who focus on creating usable text that encourages people to act, this is where we come in.

SYNTAGM
syntagm.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1985
CORE SKILLS User-centred design, empathetic design, user experience research and design, usability
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 1/2

William Hudson consults, writes and teaches in the fields of user-centred design and usability. He has over 35 years' experience in the development of interactive systems, initially with a background in software engineering. William was the product and user interface designer for the Emmy-award-winning Boujou, now an indispensible tool in many film studios. He has specialised in interaction design and human-computer interaction since the late 1980s. William has an international reputation, presenting at conferences from Vancouver to Berlin.

SYSTEM CONCEPTS
system-concepts.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1981
CORE SKILLS Usability, accessibility, user testing, user research, expert reviews, user-centred design, training
KEY CLIENTS Microsoft, Amadeus, BBC, Nationwide, Samsung, Liverpool Victoria
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 18/32

We are dedicated to helping you understand your users better and so deliver efficient, effective designs which are a pleasure to use, within time and budget. Our highly qualified, independent and experienced consultants provide a full range of consultancy, testing and training services across Europe, North America and Asia. We have a flexible approach to projects and offer practical, commercial advice, clearly presented and prioritised ready for action.

SYZYGY UK
syzygy.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS Expert reviews and heuristic evaluations, user research, information architecture and content strategy, user-centered design, prototyping and usability testing
KEY CLIENTS Mazda, Orange, Sky, HSBC, Mercedes, De Beers
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 5/70

Syzygy is a top-ten pan-European full service digital agency (part of WPP). We design and build award-winning sites and digital marketing campaigns for some of the world's leading brands. Established in 1995, we turn over £75m a year and pride ourselves on three key things: insight-driven big ideas, pioneering brand and design creative, and market-leading technical delivery. Focusing on business performance and ROI, we help brands to grow.

TAMAR
tamar.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2002
CORE SKILLS Persuasion design, usability, accessibility, technology
KEY CLIENTS Lloyds TSB, Allianz Cornhill, Endsleigh, Express
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 5/35

Found in 1995, Tamar is an independent agency retained by some of the UK's top blue-chip companies. We have an impressive 95% client retention rate – our longest client relationship is 12 years and the average client partnership is four years. Tamar has six complementary divisions: search, analytics, usability, conversion design, technology and social media. Awarded Defaqto number 1 usability rating for Lloyds TSB website. Increased the conversion rate of Premierline Direct by 140%.

THE TEAM
theteam.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2005
CORE SKILLS Interaction design, information architecture, experience strategy, user research, service design
KEY CLIENTS Becta, NHS, Universal Music, Logica, GSK, Fat Duck
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 8/150

A Loewy Group consultancy making a difference through communications. Our clients cross every boundary and include commercial, public sector and not-for-profit organisations. We have a high-calibre digital team and a broad portfolio of delighted clients. We believe in making a positive difference to the user experience of all our engagements through a strong synergy of messaging, visual design, brand strategy and user-centred design.

TH_NK
think.eu
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2004
CORE SKILLS Information architecture, interaction design, iterative methods, user research, visual design
KEY CLIENTS Bupa, BBC, Hays Recruitment, BMI, LloydsTSbB, Anthropologie, TNS, LG Electronics
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 14/54

We transform some of the world's most successful businesses and the way they communicate through digital. We do this by creating long-term partnerships where we explore exciting opportunities, develop award-winning ideas and define successful strategies together. This collaboration of expertise is underpinned by a solid foundation of research and insight, which in turn, helps us to deliver the best digital communication and most engaging customer experiences.

User Experience Directory 2009

TMG
tmg.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 1996
CORE SKILLS Experience consulting and strategy development, user research, testing and analysis, information architecture, interaction and visual design, usability and accessibility testing and standards compliance
KEY CLIENTS DWP, COI, Home Office, Care & Quality Commission, NHS Innovation Centre, Harveys Furniture, Reed Smith, The Caravan Club, DST International, Healthcare Connections
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 18/33

Intelligent digital people who design & build engaging, results-driven digital solutions. Our clients value our approach, attention to detail and most of all the fact that we deliver on what we promise.

TMW
tmw.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS User testing, usability audits, information architecture, usability strategy
KEY CLIENTS Unilever, Nissan, Post Office, Guiness, T-Mobile
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 2/250

Tullo Marshall Warren is one of Europe's largest and most successful digital and direct marketing agencies, part of Creston, an Insight and Communications Group.

TRIBAL DDB LONDON
tribalddb.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2003
CORE SKILLS User experience design, interaction design, information architecture, usability assessments
KEY CLIENTS Volkswagen, Hasbro, The Guardian, Diageo, Exxon Mobil
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 6/80

Tribal DDB London is a full-service interactive agency that works with its clients to create brand demand, a business strategy that recognises the importance and power of today's consumer. Tribal is part of the Tribal Worldwide network with 54 offices in over 36 countries throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia Pacific. In 2009 *Advertising Age* added Tribal DDB Worldwide to its esteemed Agency A-List, this marks the second consecutive year Tribal has received honours from the publication.

TRICKY BUSINESS
trickybusiness.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2006
CORE SKILLS Sketching, prototyping and realising the UI designs across multiple platforms including desktop software, RIA and mobile
KEY CLIENTS Microsoft, Audi, RBS, Capita, Tussauds Group, Galliford Try
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 4/6

Tricky Business is uniquely positioned, offering purely design and UX services to development partners and solutions providers. As brand guardians we consistently consider the customer's perspective – we believe what you make people feel is just as important as what you make. Bringing designful thinking to the development mix and partnering with some of the top UK developers, we involve the designers, developers and clients throughout the delivery of our projects.

USABILITY DESIGN PARTNERSHIP
lon.barfield+udp@gmail.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS Information architecture, web usability, user experience design, pervasive/cloud computing design, rapid prototyping and user testing
KEY CLIENTS Hewlett Packard
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 2/2

Usability Design Partnership tackles complex and novel information design projects ranging from web information architecture to location-based media projects. We have a wide range of experience across the usability design spectrum and couple appropriate design with solid software knowledge.

THE USABILITY LAB
usabilitylab.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2006
CORE SKILLS Strategy and user research, user experience design, information architecture, usability testing, mobile design and testing
KEY CLIENTS Tesco Direct, Viking Direct, Lloyds TSB, NHS, Post Office, British Red Cross
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 5/6

The Usability Lab offers the full range of UCD techniques and is respected for its strength in user experience design and user research in the early stages of projects. The team has a full suite of facilities in Edinburgh's West End, including a lab for testing on mobile devices, and eyetracking, all with observation facilities.

USER VISION
uservision.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2000
CORE SKILLS Usability testing, expert evaluations, mobile and IPTV usability research, accessibility audits and testing, information architecture and wireframing
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 11/15

We are an international consultancy firm dedicated to improving the user experience of websites, software and products. We offer a range of services – consulting, testing, reviewing, evaluation and training – to help clients produce better products that customers find easier to use. We are involved at all stages of development, keeping users needs at the forefront. We help reduce development and support costs, reduce the need for expensive redevelopment and increase sales.

WEBCREDIBLE
webcredible.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2003
CORE SKILLS User research, information architecture, usability and accessibility testing, web design and development, training
KEY CLIENTS Airmiles, Ebay, EDF Energy, Lloyds TSB, Transport for London, T-Mobile, VideoJug
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 16/16

Webcredible is an open, friendly and jargon-free user experience consultancy with a very passionate team. It works closely with clients, helping them achieve their business goals by optimising the online user experience. Webcredible firmly believes in knowledge sharing and helping to push industry thinking forward. It regularly publishes research and how-to articles which can be freely accessed from its website.

WEB USABILITY PARTNERSHIP
wupltd.co.uk
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2002
CORE SKILLS Usability testing, user research, site strategy, personas, accessibility audits
KEY CLIENTS British Library, Orange, Environment Agency, Jet2.com, Hilton Hotels, Bristol City Council
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 7/9

WUP is a user experience research consultancy established in 2002. We are customer, not technology, led. We help to achieve our clients' aims for their sites and make them more effective. We combine rigorous user-focused research with a process to generate agreed and actionable results quickly and cost-effectively.

WHAT PEOPLE WANT
whatpeoplewant.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2002
CORE SKILLS Ethnography/behavioural research, naturalistic usability testing, mobile/interactive TV/web, service design specialists
KEY CLIENTS BBC, Intel, Nokia, Yahoo
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 8/8

It's hard to know what your customers want. We see the wood for the trees and uncover the insights that show you exactly what your customers want. Whether it's a business idea on an envelope or an established global service, we have the research expertise to meet your needs. We offer all standard qualitative research techniques and have invented cutting-edge new ones, giving clients like the BBC, Nokia, Intel and Yahoo a competitive edge.

WILSON FLETCHER
wilsonfletcher.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2002
CORE SKILLS Digital strategy and design development, competitor benchmarking, user insight research, prototyping, expert reviews, remote and lab testing, co-creation projects
KEY CLIENTS The Times, BBC, Which?, Standard Chartered Bank, Macquarie Bank, ICE, Prudential, Seatwave, HCA
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 12/15

Wilson Fletcher is a specialist user experience strategy and design consultancy. A team of 15 specialists help leading organisations to trade and communicate with millions of people online every day. We solve complex online problems by building customer and market insight, shaping long-term strategy, delivering sophisticated design solutions and providing ongoing strategic consultancy.

ZABISCO
zabisco.com
PROVIDING UE SINCE 2004
CORE SKILLS Sitemaps and wireframes, user-centred design, user testing, content audits, digital strategy
KEY CLIENTS Barclays, Aviva, University of Nottingham
DEDICATED USABILITY STAFF 6/9

Zabisco is a unique UCD agency. We have a talented team of user-centred designers, information architects and user experience specialists who can take on full projects or just pick up on the bits you need help with. Whether working on-site or from our usability lab, we're building up an unrivalled reputation for being the supplier of choice for IA, UX and UCD services. For reliable, friendly project support call, email, search or follow us @zabisco.
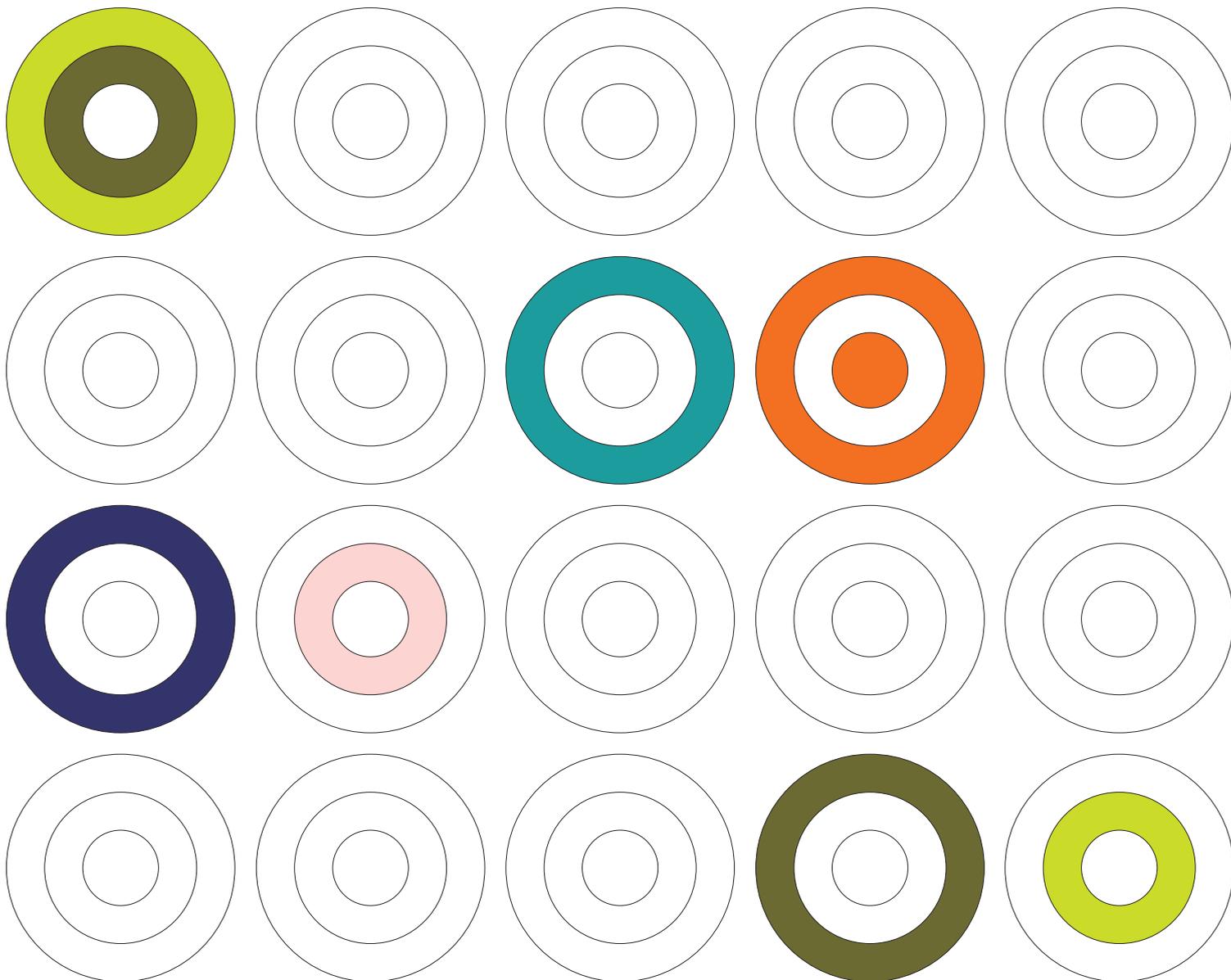
Connecting you now.

Gill Arnold

gill@wearefutureheads.co.uk
07872 597674

Be Kaler Blake

be@wearefutureheads.co.uk
07958 720975

Rachel Murray

rachel@wearefutureheads.co.uk
07732 116965
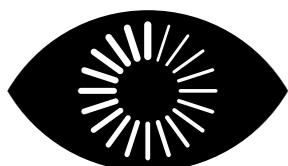
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