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# UX Design for Interactive Media

# What is UX?

- UX stands for **User Experience**
  - Alternatively abbreviated as UE
- It's **how the user experiences** the product
  - E.g. website, software application, etc.
- And it's about **how the product:**
  - **behaves** towards the user;
  - **is used** in real-life by the user.

# Interactive Media are products too

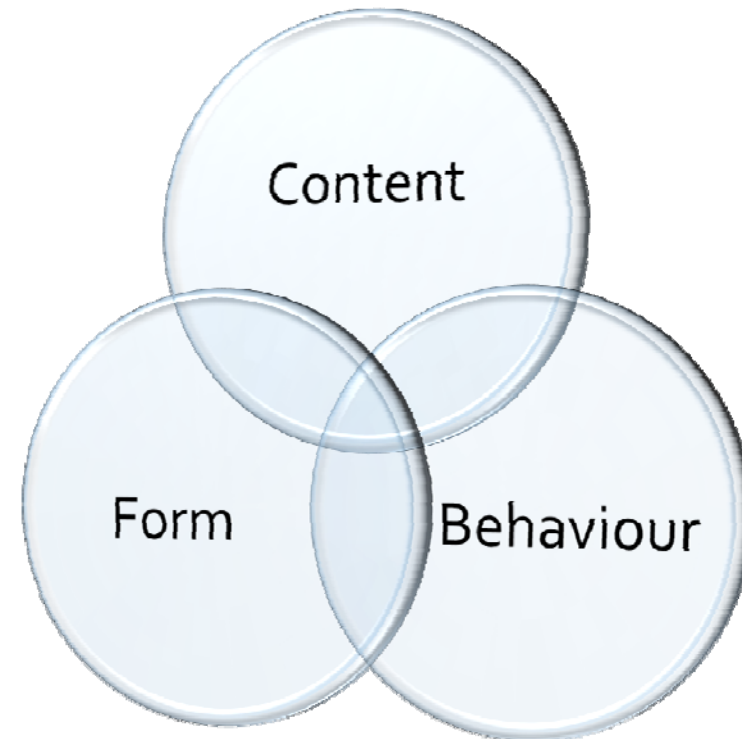
- Product development can be:
  - **Technology**-driven
    - What can we do with this **new technology**?
    - E.g. “We have to get a website too.”
  - **Market**-driven
    - What makes **economic sense**?
    - E.g. “Business needs to expand into online.”
  - **User**-driven
    - What does the **user want or need**?
    - E.g. “User needs online information about our services.”

# User-centred iterations

- Modern development works in iterations
  - During each iteration 3 types of aspects are verified:
    - Human aspects
    - Economic aspects
    - Technological aspects
  - None are more important than the others.
- UX Design is *user-centred*
  - It focuses on the human aspects.
    - That might conflict with the other aspects.
  - Keeping the user happy is a healthy product strategy.
    - In most cases.

# What is UX about?

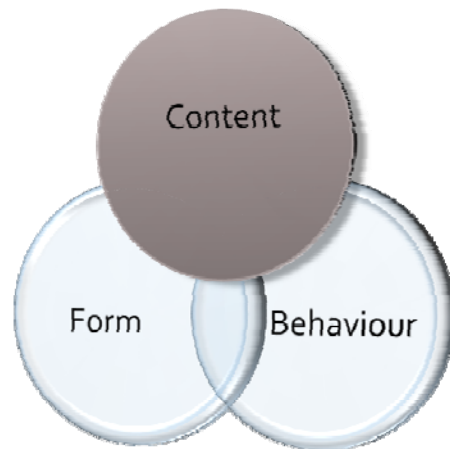
- Has 3 overlapping, **determining factors:**
  1. Content
  2. User Behaviour
  3. Form



# Content

## Specialty of:

- Copywriter
- Lawyer
- Photographer
- Animated Filmmaker
- Information Architect
- ...



- The copy
- Legal documents
  - Terms of use
  - Privacy policy
  - Disclaimers
- Audiovisual content
  - Pictures, audio, animation
- **Information Architecture**
  - IA

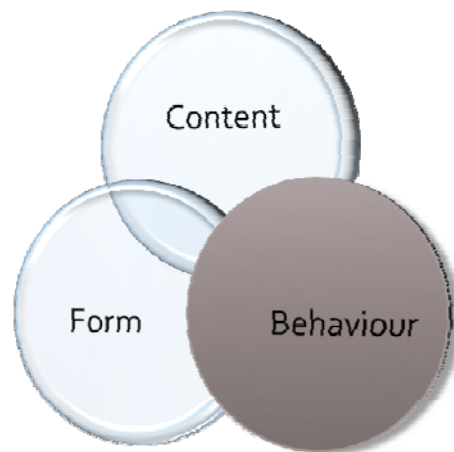
# Behaviour

## Specialty of:

- Interaction Designer
- Web Designer
- Usability Engineer

## ■ Interaction Design

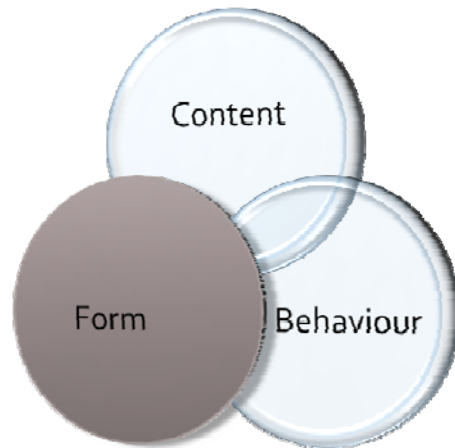
- IxD



# Form

## Specialty of:

- Graphic Designer
- Interface Designer
- Web Designer
- Usability Engineer
- ...



- Graphic Design:
  - Styling
  - Typography
  - Colour
  - Layout (in limited amount)
  - ...
- User Interface Design



# Some useful concepts

Concepts and observations that can help UX Design

# Users don't read

- We all know nobody reads e-mails, right?
  - We're too busy
- Actually, people do not read much at all
  - Users are no different
- We all do the next best thing: **scanning**
  - Much faster, takes less effort
  - But it's also error-prone
    - **Not a problem:** no one ever got killed in the digital world
    - Unlike the real one, the digital world is a relatively risk-free environment
- Design for scanning by
  - Reducing text, not information it contains
    - Be concise, clear and to the point
  - Drawing attention to the most important parts
    - Highlighting, font size, graphics ...
  - Reduce visual noise

# Mental Models

- Borrowed from *Cognitive Psychology*
- The real world is too complicated for people to understand
  - Users need **simplified models** of systems and environment
- **Mental Models**
  - Based upon previous experience
  - Enable the user to predict the outcome of their actions
  - Can be inaccurate and/or incomplete
    - Predictions do not correspond with real-world outcomes
- Two related types of mental models
  - **System Models**
    - How the system works
  - **Interaction Models**
    - How the user interacts with the system

# Mental Models

- For Designers:
  - Complete and refine your own interaction model
    - Through:
      - Personal use
      - User testing
  - Existing product
    - Try to reuse standard mental models
  - Novel product
    - Try to draw from or common mental models
      - E.g. by using a metaphor (computer desktop)
      - But only when it fits
    - Help the user form accurate and complete interaction models

# Perceived Affordance

- Affordance
  - Physical property of an object that influences its function
- E.g. a raised button invites to push it
- Interactive Media
  - Non-physical world
    - Affordance does not exist in images, it is **perceived**
- Input fields and buttons
  - Should never look alike

# Perceived Affordance

Search with Perceived Affordance

Search

Search without any Affordance

Search

# Users Satisfice

Is that even a verb?

- Actually, it's in Webster's.

When searching through options

- First option that **Satisfies** will **Suffice**
- Finding the **optimal** option:
  - Takes too long and too much effort, hence no fun
  - No serious penalty for getting it wrong
  - Evaluating all options does not necessarily pay off

E.g. user should notice a search box

# Errare Humanum Est

The Romans weren't wrong:

- Users will make mistakes

There are several ways in dealing with this

- Avoid mistakes
  - Limit input: do not allow invalid input
  - E.g. *datepicker* for entering dates
- Friendly warnings
  - Friendly means: respectful, brief and unobtrusive
  - Give **hints** as how to possibly correct the mistake
  - It's never the user's fault, always the designer's
- Give an option to **undo**
  - Users have a right to **make mistakes,**
  - even to **ignore warnings,**



## Manuals are for sissies, not for users

Users don't take time to learn  
how a product works

Actually, they don't even take time to  
properly understand how things work

Users prefer to muddle through

- As long as the product does what they want

High and long learning curves

- Only ever acceptable when users receive training



Thank you for listening!

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