MODELING USERS

PERSONAS

690A- Advanced Methods in HCI

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Includes slides from Prof. Karon MacLean and Jessica Dawson
TODAY

- Personas [20 min]
- In class activity [30min]
  - Personas
- Discussion of readings [20min]
LEARNING GOALS

• describe the Persona method, specifications, and why we use it
• understand different types of Personas and be able to identify and prioritize them for an HCI project
• describe how to develop a Persona
• describe the pros/cons and challenges of using Personas
PERSONAS

The best way to successfully accommodate a variety of users is to design for specific types of individuals with specific needs.

Alessandro’s goals
- Go fast
- Have fun

Marge’s goals
- Be safe
- Be comfortable

Dale’s goals
- Haul big loads
- Be reliable
WHAT IS PERSONAS

A human-centered tool to design for specific types of individuals with specific needs

- Ground design in users’ goals and activities

A fictional user/character - a personification

- archetypes based on real data gathered from interviews and field research
- The power of fiction to engage

A precise descriptive model of the user

- what he wishes to accomplish, and why
WHY PERSONAS

Provide a shared basis for communication

- Communicate and build consensus across design teams and stakeholders

Helps to avoid critical errors in design

- Elastic user
  - constantly changing definition of the end user

- Self-referential design
  - designers design toward their own goals, needs and motivations.
  - designers may base scenarios on people similar to themselves.

- Edge cases
  - designers design for possible but not users
PERSONAS SPECS

• Design for one person
  • represents a group
• Hypothetical not real
• User persona not a buyer persona

Powerful tool if uses to complement other method but not replace them.

Pruitt & Grudin, 2003
WHY NOT JUST USE REAL PEOPLE

• everyone has some behaviors one would not want to focus design on.

• a Persona represents a group of people
  • designing for/testing six Alans…
PERSONAS TYPES

We must prioritize our personas

- Primary persona (user persona)
  - one primary persona per interface
- Secondary persona
  - has additional needs that can be accommodated
- Customer persona
  - address the need of customer not end users
- Served persona
  - not users but directly affected by the use of the product
- Negative/Anti-persona
  - the type of person you don't want to target
CREATING PERSONAS

COOPER ET AL

Qualitative research data: behavioral patterns observed during interviews and observation.

1. Group interview subjects by role.
2. Identify behavioral variables.
3. Map interviewee to behavioral variables.
4. Identify significant behavior patterns.
5. Synthesize characteristics and define goals.
6. Check for completeness and redundancy.
7. Expand the description of attributes and behaviors (narrative).

Cooper et al, 2014
CREATING PERSONAS
PRUITT & GRUDIN

Development Process

1. Begin with intensive research based on fieldwork and marketing data
2. Divide the team to focus on different personas, gather relevant research data, consider ‘anti-personas’
3. Consolidate data collection and analysis in *Foundation Documents* that serve as a repository of relevant data for each persona.
4. Construct narrative stories based on affinity diagrams of data.
5. Create images of personas and give names

Pruitt & Grudin, 2003
CREATE PERSONA

Links between Persona characteristics and the supporting data are made explicit and salient in the foundation documents.

Pruitt & Grudin, 2003
A FEATURE-PERSONAS

an example of how Personas can become explicitly involved in the design and development process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Persona 1</th>
<th>Persona 2</th>
<th>Persona 3</th>
<th>Weighted Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight:</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 3</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etc.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0  (the Persona doesn’t care about the feature one way or the other)
-1 (the Persona is confused, annoyed, or in some way harmed by the feature)
+1 (the feature provides some value to the Persona)
+2 (the Persona loves this feature or the feature does something wonderful for the Persona even if they don’t realize it)

Pruitt & Grudin, 2003
IN CLASS ACTIVITY  [30 MIN]

Use your notes from interviews and observations of people (potential product’s users) and identify a set of behavioral variables for each of your participant by focusing on the following types of variables:

- **Activities**-What the user does; frequency and volume
- **Attitudes**-How the user thinks about the product domain and technology
- **Aptitudes**-What education and training the user has; ability to learn
- **Motivations**-Why the user is engaged in the product domain
- **Skills**-User abilities related to the product domain and technology
DISCUSSION ON READINGS [20 MIN]

Get into group of 3-4 answering the following questions:

• What surprised you? or
• What you disagreed with?
• Others?
ON DECK...

Next class (Thursday) ...

1. No Reading
2. Second Project milestone: Define
   - due on Wednesday Feb 27
EXTRA SLIDES
BENEFITS

• become a management tool in the development process
  • guides development towards building a human centered product instead of tech-centered
• provide internal and external project participants with a common language and a common understanding of the users.
• help make assumptions and decision-making criteria explicit.
• help establish who is and consequently who is not being designed for.
• provide insights into and maintain focus on user needs and company goals.
CHALLENGES

• expensive tool: it takes time and money to create personas
  • demands a proper validation and large sets of data.
• hard to keep in mind that the personas are not real users and cannot replace meetings with real users.
• difficult to encompass a large cast of personas in design process (more than 10).
• the method does not provide instructions on how to use the personas, as the focus is on descriptions of people.
• it can be difficult to get management support.
  • validity of a small number of interviewed
RISKS OF PERSONAS

• the characters are not believable
  • designed by committee (not based on data) or the relationship to data is not clear.
• the characters are not communicated well.
• adopt or adapt Personas
  • marketing and product development have different needs that require different Persona attributes.
• Personas can be overused.
  • At worst, they could replace other user-centered methods, ongoing data collection, or product evaluation.

Pruitt & Grudin, 2003