MODELING USERS
PERSONAS

CPSC 544 FUNDAMENTALS IN DESIGNING INTERACTIVE COMPUTATION TECHNOLOGY FOR PEOPLE (HUMAN COMPUTER INTERACTION)
WEEK 5 – CLASS 9

© Joanna McGrenere and Leila Aflatoony
Includes slides from Karon MacLean and Jessica Dawson
TODAY

• Persona
• In class activity
  • Personas
• Discussion of readings
The best way to successfully accommodate a variety of users is to design for specific types of individuals with specific needs.

**PERSONA**

Alesandro’s goals
- Go fast
- Have fun

Marge’s goals
- Be safe
- Be comfortable

Dale’s goals
- Haul big loads
- Be reliable

Cooper, Alan, et al., 2003
WHAT IS PERSONA

• 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
• A tool to engage the empathy of the development team towards the human target of the design
WHY PERSONA

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

Cooper & Reiman 2003
PERSONA 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.
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…
PERSONA 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
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
CREATING PERSONA

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

Overview – Alan Waters (Business Owner)
  Get to know Alan, his business, and family.
A Day in the Life
  Follow Alan through a typical day.
Work Activities
  Look at Alan’s job description and role at work.
Household and Leisure Activities
  Get information about what Alan does when he’s not at work.
Goals, Fears, and Aspirations
  Understand the concerns Alan has about his life, career, and business.
Computer Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities
  Learn about Alan’s computer experience.
Market Size and Influence
  Understand the impact people like Alan have on our business.
Demographic Attributes
  Read key demographic information about Alan and his family.
Technology Attributes
  Get a sense of what Alan does with technology.
Technology Attitudes
  Review Alan’s perspective on technology, past and future.
Communicating
  Learn how Alan keeps in touch with people.
International Considerations
  Find out what Alan is like outside the U.S.
Quotes
  Hear what Alan has to say.
References
  See source materials for this document.

Pruitt & Grudin, 2003
A FEATURE-PERSONA

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

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>Persona 1</th>
<th>Persona 2</th>
<th>Persona 3</th>
<th>Weighted Sum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight:</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature 1</td>
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<td>Feature 3</td>
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<td>-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feature 4</td>
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<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)
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
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.
DISCUSSION ON PERSONA READINGS [10 MIN]

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

- What surprised you? or
- What you disagreed with?
- Others?
ACTIVITY [30 MIN]

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

- Activities and Motivations
- Attitudes and emotions associated with the behaviour
- The use of environments
- Frustrations and pain points
- Skills, experience or abilities
- Demographics associated with the behaviour
- Interactions with people, products, or services.

- Characteristics and Goals
PROJECT [10MIN]

- Questions?
ON DECK...

Next class (Tuesday) ...

1. No Reading

2. Second Project milestone: Define
   ✷ due on Tuesday Oct 10th