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DIGITALISATION FOR
INTERNATIONAL TRADE
CHALLENGE

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Topic 2: User experience

March 15, 2022 - **April 5, 2022**

Welcome to the Digitalisation for international trade course!

This is the second topic of the **"User Experience"** programme, which aims to develop the concepts associated with the first domain of digital transformation: **Customer**. This topic is the basis for the rest of your digital transformation journey. Here you will begin to understand your company from the customer's perspective and make strategic decisions based on these insights.

Content: Customer journey, design thinking

The **obejective** of this document is to present the main relevant concepts that will guide you in understanding your customer, and allow you to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to apply them in your company.

Come and join us! Let's keep learning together

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Key elements of the Customer journey

The customer journey is a discovery process to understand **how customers interact with the company**. This design process is data-driven and visualised to gain insight into the customer process, key touch points and friction points. The result is a start-to-finish journey process designed to provide valuable information for the customer and the company.

Persona

They are fictional characters that represent key customer segments. They drive an effective and targeted conversation by exposing a deeper insight into customer needs and impacts. The customer journey is a path taken by a specific type of persona. Therefore, we must consider the routes they typically take to reach a product/service.

TIP Bring the persona to life. Give them a unique name. Use pictures and drawings to visualise the persona and their environment. Outline what they look like with their family, when they are doing their favourite hobby or when they're engaged in certain activities.

Points of contact

Identify the touch points through which your customers interact with your company. Quickly research which **channels your customers use most** and **how they contact your company**. You can do this by looking for mentions of your brand online and checking where traffic to your website is coming from.

To analyse each contact point in detail you can ask yourself:
- What does the person want here, what does he/she want to achieve (goal)?
- What does he/she do at this point, or what does he/she not do?
- What actions does he/she take to achieve his/her goals or desires?
- What channels or tools does he/she use for this, in what order?
- With whom is the persona in contact? (within the company) Where are these points of contact? How long do these contacts last? How long does the customer journey take in total?

Key elements of the Customer journey

Activities or Actions

Identify the actions your customers take to interact with your brand and check whether they take the expected number of actions. If the answer is no, you should investigate what may be discouraging the customer from taking action.

Ask yourself the following questions:
- Where can you simplify a task for your customers?
- How can you provide more benefits to customers?
- Where can you reduce or minimise risk for your customers?
- Is it possible to integrate more fun or entertaining actions for the customer?

Points of friction

Every consumer action is motivated by an emotion. And the emotion is usually triggered by a problem or a pain. Therefore, we must understand what pains our customers have so that we can trigger an emotion in them at each stage of the customer journey map. In this way, it will be possible to produce the right content at the right time, motivating the customer to act and make decisions.

Pay special attention to negative emotions, for example:
- The customer is bored
- The customer is unhappy with the prices
- The customer is confused, does not know what actions to take in a given situation.
- The customer performs the activity incorrectly
- The customer tries to solve the problem himself/herself
- Customer has to wait, which results in lost time
- The customer performs unnecessary activities
- The customer is disappointed by the quality
- Customer considers the activity too complex, not user-friendly
- The customer is worried about risks during the process or feels insecure about the outcome of a certain activity.

B2B perspective – Business to Business

What kind of information to consider when building a B2B persona?

- Business model
- Type of company (size, turnover)
- Organisational structure
- Purchasing process
- Customers and competitors
- Stakeholder influence levels

In B2B models, companies must not only be concerned with one customer, as is the case in B2C, but must also analyse the business ecosystem in which the customer "the company" is immersed. In this way, building the customer journey can become a complex task as different actors within the customer's own company must be dealt with.

How do we handle complexity in the B2B perspective?

The ideal option would be to build one persona for each stakeholder, however, as we work with larger companies this task becomes very tedious and makes the analysis more complex. The recommendation is to create personas for the following types of stakeholders:

- **Informants** - individuals who discover your product/service and take the information back to their companies.
- **Decision makers** - those who have the power to decide whether they want to use your product/service.
- **End-users** - the people within the company who will use your product/service on a day-to-day basis.

If you do not have the time and resources, creating a persona of the company as a whole is also a good approach.

What are some typical points of contact?

- Awareness that your product exists
- Research of the features in contrast to the requirements
- Contact and demo request;
- Consider and compare with others;
- Making a decision;
- Negotiation;

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B2B perspective – Business to Business

- Delivery and integration;
- Usage;
- Support;
- Feedback;

These are just some of the activities. Depending on the nature of your business and the client's expectations and processes, you can include steps such as auditing, legal processes, and so on.
It is even possible to bring the process back to the first phase if, for example, there is a problem in the contract negotiation.

Additionally, during the different points of contact, stakeholders will influence the purchasing decision by entering into internal conflicts that may hinder the process. E.g. the IT manager may be convinced of your product but the legal department is not.

To minimise these risks, you must identify the points where multiple stakeholders meet, and design the experience to motivate the customer to make the purchase.

B2C perspective - Business to Client

What kind of information to consider when building a B2C persona?

- Sex, age, origin, family situation (married or single; children? How many? How old?)
- Profession (job, position), educational background, special knowledge, expert on a particular subject
- Friends and social environment, pets
- Living conditions (own house / condominium / rented or shared flat, as well as type, design, quality of housing)
- Financial situation
- Attitudes (values, interests, preferences), frustration tolerance, health awareness, life goals
- Hobbies and leisure activities (Athletics? Which sport? How often?)
- How much time does the person have available for certain topics or activities, what media and sources of information does he/she use for which topics?

B2C perspective - Business to Client

- Attitude towards digital media (User of social media? Likes to share information openly with others?)
- Consumer habits or factors influencing purchase decisions How quickly is the purchase decision made? Spontaneous shopper or do they tend to plan? What information channels do they use? Price, quality or service oriented? Do they know the brand?

Stages of the customer journey

Some of the typical moments the customer experiences may be:

1. Awareness or interest: Describe in detail how the customer becomes aware of a need, a problem or an offer, how the customer gathers information about it and address how the customer compares one offer with another.

2. Decision: Examine how and by whom or through what the customer is influenced positively or negatively during their purchase decision. You should also ask yourself why customers select a product or service.

3. Explore: Analyse what potential customers experience step by step when they use your service or product. Every step, every activity, every movement and every thought should be analysed individually.

4. After-sales: Describe the customer's needs, tasks or expectations. The question of how and by whom or by what means the customer can be motivated to make another purchase. Do not underestimate the fact that the customer will use customer networks to share their experiences with the product or service. Check how and by whom or what means the customer is persuaded to communicate a positive buying experience. Observe where (online, at home or in the office) and on what occasions the customer will report experiences.

Design thinking

It is a creative and analytical process that involves a person in opportunities to experiment, create and prototype models, collect feedback, and redesign.

It is a method for generating innovative ideas that focuses its effectiveness on understanding and solving real user needs through the **following stages:**

EMPATHIZE

Understand customer needs and pain points. Identify and narrow down a problem hypothesis.

- Conduct qualitative and quantitative research.
- Develop an empathy map to define what customers think, say, see and hear, and identify their pain points.
- Create a stakeholder map that identifies the project team, external stakeholders and any other influencers.
- Identify the people and their key use cases.

DEFINE

Explicitly define the problem you are trying to solve.
- Create the current state of the customer journey to identify actions, touch points, thoughts, emotions and any underlying dependencies.
- Identify the customer's pain points that exist throughout their journey.

IDEATE

Brainstorm various options and ways to alleviate the problem.
- Brainstorm solutions that could solve the clients' pains.
- Prioritise solutions based on their impact and feasibility.
- Re-imagine the customer experience.
- Create action statements that define the who, what and how as measurable metrics.
- Apply the action statements to create the new journey.

Design thinking
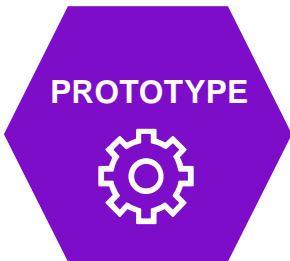
PROTOTYPE

Show, don't tell. Create a tangible prototype to share with users.
- Generate prototypes based on the prioritised solutions to discover how to improve the solution.

TEST
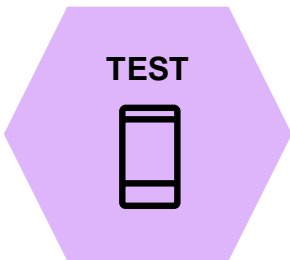
Validate your solution with potential users and iterate based on feedback.
- Collect feedback from stakeholders and users to validate proposed solutions.
- Determine gaps that may affect the success of the solution.
- Iterate the solution based on customer feedback.

ⓘ For more information on design thinking tools to build your customer journey, please consult:
dschool_bootleg_deck_2018_final_sm+(2).pdf (squarespace.com)
Personas – A Simple Introduction | Interaction Design Foundation (IxDF) (interaction-design.org)