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Human-Centered Design Delivers Focused and Meaningful Solutions

"HCD facilitates an interactive development approach aimed at making systems more usable and useful by focusing on the users, their needs and requirements, and by applying human factors, usability knowledge, and iterative techniques."

BACKGROUND

Too often service and solution providers make assumptions about the wants and needs of their client base, trying to overlay a technological solution to an issue without context. As solutions rely more on advances in artificial intelligence and robotics, it will be crucial to capture and maintain focus on the human element. Without direct interaction with the client to empathize and fully understanding the issue in context of their environment, organizations may develop solutions that do not fully respond to or resolve end-user business needs or requirements. These extraneous solutions can be wasteful, costly, and frustrating to the end-users.

HCD facilitates an interactive development approach aimed at making systems more usable and useful by focusing on the users, their needs and requirements, and by applying human factors, usability knowledge, and iterative techniques. HCD strives to create innovative products, services, and solutions through creative and collaborative practices.

In an agile environment, organizations can no longer rely on traditional approaches. By employing HCD, developers can create solutions that align to a customers' values and build products or services that are more effective and intuitive for them to use.

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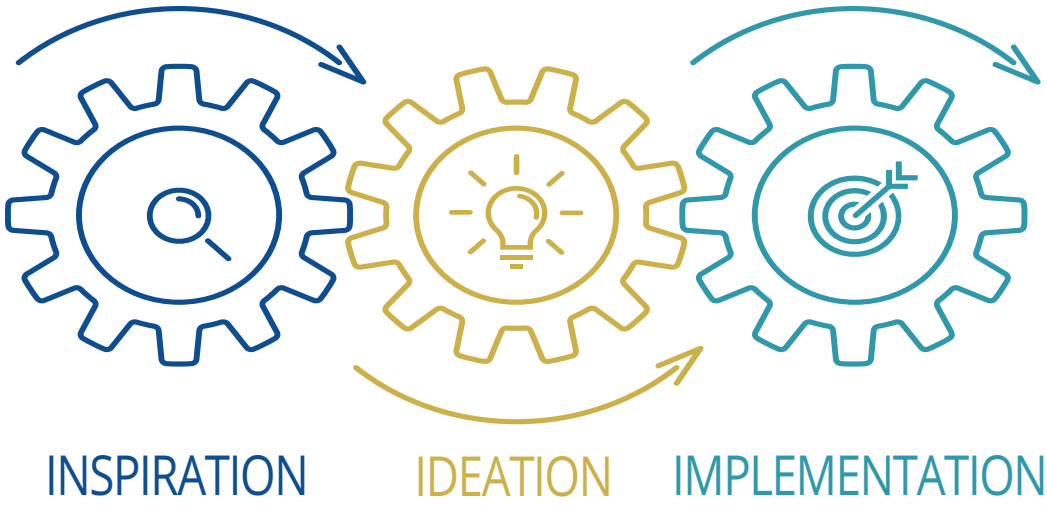
HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN ENGAGES THE CUSTOMER THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE LIFECYCLE

The HCD process has three phases – the Inspiration Phase, the Ideation Phase, and the Implementation Phase.



Inspiration Phase

During the Inspiration Phase, the focus is on learning directly from the client through immersion in their environment. The Inspiration phase is about adaptive learning, being open to creative possibilities, and trusting that by adhering to the needs of the client, the ideas generated will evolve and result in the right solution.

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Ideation Phase

The Ideation phase contains two parts – Synthesis and Prototyping.

Synthesis

Synthesis brings together the needs and requirements learned during the Inspiration Phase and organizes them into themes and insights. The outputs from Synthesis are used to identify and target the best ideas for development into opportunities to prototype and test.

Prototyping

Following the Synthesis of ideas into opportunities, the second part of the Ideation Phase is prototyping; expanding ideas into testable processes, products or services. This cyclical process of testing prototypes, getting feedback, and iterating is important to create an effective, innovative solution in the end. HCD leverages the prototype or pilot approach as an important tool designed to test the desirability, feasibility, and viability of solutions with clients at a small scale with minimal risk.

Whereas user-centered design focuses on improving the interface between users and technology, HCD concentrates on actively involving the client recipient all throughout the improvement and development process.

Implementation Phase

During the Implementation Phase, special attention is paid to how the decided upon solution will impact the client environment and how it will be implemented. Long-term success may require incremental change, therefore understanding the target audience and considering change management are paramount.

Even after a solution is implemented, HCD encourages iterative, post-implementation feedback gathering and continuous refinement of the concept to best meet the end user's needs.

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HCD IS MORE SUCCESSFUL BY GIVING OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF THE SOLUTION TO THE CUSTOMER

Using a Human-Centered approach to design and develop has substantial benefits for IT organizations and end users. Highly usable systems and products tend to be more successful both technically and from a usability perspective. Solutions designed using human-centered methods improve quality by:

- Increasing productivity of users and operational efficiency of organizations
- Creating systems that are more intuitive, reduces training and support costs
- Increasing usability for users with a wider range of capabilities, increasing accessibility
- Improving user experience, reducing discomfort and stress

Contact us at info@eglobaltech.com to find out how you can build successful technology solutions with our HCD framework!

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