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Enterprise Modernization Experts

WHITE PAPER

Design for **Every Next**

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Focus on citizen engagement and the importance of UI/UX in the delivery of services reflect the ongoing transformation of government processes to align with the digital age and foster greater collaboration between citizens and their government. In today's fast-paced and ever-evolving digital world, designing user interfaces (UI) and user experiences (UX) has become an exhilarating challenge. As technology advances, user expectations rise, and trends come and go, designers must constantly adapt to meet the demands of the "Every Next." In this paper, we will explore the importance of a platform approach to designing UI/UX for the ever-changing landscape and discuss strategies to stay ahead in this dynamic field.

Design Over Time

Two significant factors that have a major impact on UI/UX design over time are changing business requirements and shifts in user preferences due to evolving technology landscape.

Change in mission delivery is relentless

As federal agencies evolve and adapt to market dynamics, their requirements for UI/UX design often undergo transformations. As government priorities, policies, and regulations evolve, federal agencies need to adapt their business models, update their existing business processes, and automate their business operations, necessitating corresponding changes in the design of products or services. This could involve designing new user interfaces that facilitate efficient completion of tasks, integrating data visualization to enhance transparency, or incorporating accessibility features to ensure inclusivity for all citizens.

It is impossible to avoid design entropy

Evolving digital landscape has raised the bar for user expectations. As users become more accustomed to seamless and intuitive experiences across various platforms, their demands for user-friendly designs have escalated. They expect products and services to be visually appealing, easy to navigate, and tailored to their specific needs. Meeting these heightened expectations requires designers to continuously innovate and anticipate user preferences, ensuring that their designs not only meet but exceed user expectations.

Switching from a Building Perspective to a Dwelling Perspective

To effectively navigate the evolving landscapes of changing needs and design entropy, UI/UX designers need a major perspective shift. It is crucial for designers to transition from a "building" perspective, where the focus is solely on creating a product, to a "dwelling" perspective that emphasizes continuous adaptation and improvement around a core experience. This shift entails modeling the lived experience of users, implementing the product as a platform and making all changes relative to that core platform. By modeling the lived experience of users and implementing platforms, designers gain a deep understanding of their needs and behaviors, enabling them to anticipate and adapt to any new changes that may arise. This approach ensures that designs are rooted in user-centricity, fostering long-term engagement and satisfaction.

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Model the lived experiences of key personas

Designers can model the lived experience of users by focusing on identifying the core job being done for the user by the system. The "Jobs To Be Done Playbook (JBTD)" by Jim Kalbach is a good framework to use to model the fundamental need or problem that users are seeking to address and designing solutions that align with those needs, regardless of specific program, process or operational variability. For example, in the case of a grant system serving citizens seeking urgent disaster help, the core job being done is providing timely financial assistance during a crisis. When a new type of grant program is introduced to augment assistance for the same citizen, the core job remains unchanged. The designer's role is to ensure that the user's experience seamlessly transitions between different grant programs while addressing their core need for disaster relief.

In addition, designers should extend every persona map to include a three-part time machine view of design goals and challenges from the past, present and potential future points of view. Taking a historical perspective to design backwards allows the designers to use facts to get a sense of the degree of change over time among business operations, business processes, and business models. Augmenting it with an opinion of potential future directional changes and design forward, allows designers to gain deeper understanding of the core experience of the users. Together JBTD framework and time-machine views of persona maps enables modeling the core experience for each persona providing a basis to future-proof the design for every next.

Implementing Products as Platforms

Designers must also consider the technical implementation of the product to align with the envisioned model of the core lived persona experience. This requires reimagining the product as a platform inline with the "dwelling" over "building" perspective. Reimagining products as platforms enables envisioning them as dynamic systems that evolve over time, where design changes are enabled with technical methods such as modular core domain building blocks and layered abstraction using toolkits creating a cohesive and consistent user experience.

Product building blocks as a platform

The book "Domain-Driven Design (DDD)" by Eric Evans provides a basis for designers to collaborate closely with developers implementing the product as a platform. DDD emphasizes the importance of understanding the core domain, creating a common language between technical and domain experts, and using strategic design patterns to model complex changing domains effectively. For example, by building a grant management platform using DDD principles, a set of microservices along with associated user interfaces acts as modular building blocks. Each building block represents a specific aspect of the grant management process, such as application submission, eligibility evaluation, fund distribution, and reporting. This approach allows for recomposition and extension, accommodating different personas and grant programs while maintaining a consistent user experience and cohesive set of functions that fulfill the life cycle for grant operations. In general, by encapsulating domain logic and user experience elements within such building blocks, the product becomes a platform that remains flexible, scalable, and adaptable to changes in business models through new grant programs.

Enabling Layered Implementation Reuse

In addition to a modular approach, the designer should also rely on a layered set of component libraries and tools to future proof changes in the digital landscape. You do not want your design system to atrophy as users' expectations and preferences change to newer digital technologies and channels. Maintaining consistency and familiarity in your UI/UX designs is still essential, as users rely on familiar patterns and conventions to navigate interfaces effortlessly. Designers should build and maintain a layer of implementation using component toolkits that incorporate consistent design elements, such as color schemes, typography, and iconography, to create a cohesive experience across platforms and updates. This consistency provides a sense of comfort and reliability to users even as you introduce new features or redesign certain elements.

40+

40+ components are maintained in the toolkit library. This library includes add-ons and components explorer and ensures components are independently versioned. Thus components also become the means to maintain uniformity and reduce rework.

6

For one federal customer, our Digital Transformation toolkit accelerated delivery of the project's Minimum Viable Product. This was deployed and provided Authority-to-Operate (ATO) in production and within an unprecedented timeframe of **6 weeks.**

400+

Over 400 Karsun experts use our toolkits every day to accelerate transformation and modernize mission critical applications.

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Karsun Dxμ
Design Toolkit

Karsun builds and maintains a "Dxμ Design Toolkit" that utilizes our Continuous Design (CDg) process and UI component libraries to enable our designers to constantly adapt and meet the demands of the "Every Next." The CDg process for designers follows a similar principle to the Continuous Integration/Continuous Deployment (CI/CD) process for developers. By utilizing a modeled core lived experience, designers can effectively identify the impact of new business changes on the user experience. With the implementation of modular building blocks, designers can rapidly develop and receive feedback, allowing for continuous adaptation and improvement of the core user experience. This iterative approach enables designers to quickly respond to evolving user needs, integrate feedback, and deliver user-centric designs that align with changing business requirements and changing technical landscape.

The CDg process also empowers designers to maintain a dynamic and responsive design approach, ensuring the ongoing enhancement of the overall user experience. For example, we used our "DX Design Toolkit" to deliver a grant management platform as a solution. This enabled us to onboard new grant programs using an automated process based on the building blocks that make the grant operations. We enabled a declarative approach to dynamically construct a grant application process experience for a grantee that is consistent and clean across different grant programs. empowers designers to maintain a dynamic and responsive design approach, ensuring the ongoing enhancement of the overall user experience. For example, we used our "DX Design Toolkit" to deliver a grant management platform as a solution. This enables us to onboard new grant programs using an automated process based on the building blocks that make the grant operations. We enabled a declarative approach to dynamically construct a grant application process experience for a grantee that is consistent and clean across different grant programs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, designing for the “Every Next” requires a shift in perspective and a continuous adaptation mindset. By modeling the lived experiences of users and implementing products as platforms, designers can create cohesive and adaptable user experiences that withstand the test of time. The Jobs To Be Done (JBTD) framework helps designers identify the core needs of users, ensuring that the design addresses those needs regardless of specific variabilities in business requirements and technology landscape. Leveraging a layered implementation approach and component toolkits maintains consistency and familiarity in UI/UX designs, providing comfort to users while introducing new features. Embracing a continuous design process and utilizing the Karsun Dxμ Design Toolkit allows designers to stay ahead in the dynamic digital landscape, delivering user-centric designs that align with changing business requirements and ensure a superior user experience.

About Karsun Solutions

Karsun Solutions modernizes enterprise systems enabling agencies to make the next technological advancement their next opportunity to elevate mission capability. IT solutions from Karsun are tailored to meet agencies’ unique needs and optimize operations. These solutions adapt and stay relevant with current trends while using secure, digital architecture built to last. It is a proven modernization partner whose expertise elevates agency capabilities and ensures every next opportunity is within reach.

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