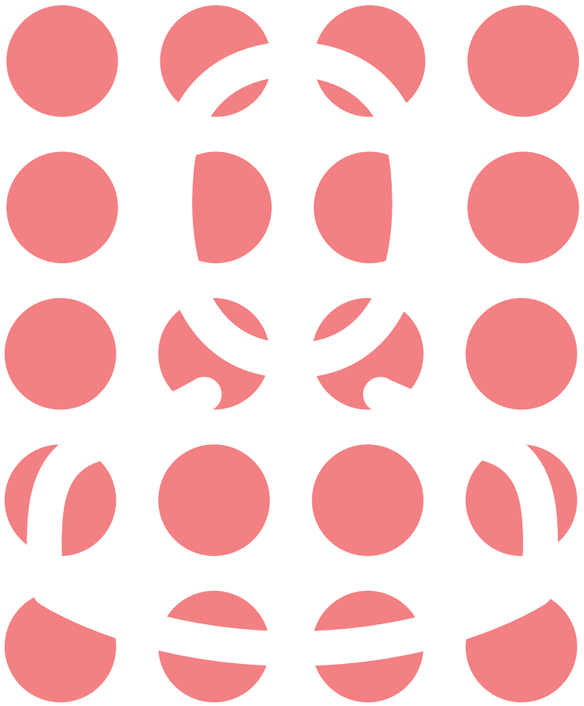
A manifesto for digital designers as a guideline to design for User Experiences

CONTEXT MATTERS

UX is about understanding your user's needs & values and designing a great experience before, during, and after use of your product or service. The context in which it is used in is extremely important and should not be neglected in any way. For instance the environment the user is in, previous impressions, emotional state and current mood. UX designers can create value by ensuring that the design is grounded within the context of their users.



If you have a clear idea of the context you can truly understand your user

Be aware of your users

#1 Do you feel me?
Emphatic design can be used to create an emotional connection between the product and consumer. It's about genuinely understanding and listening to the user to design products that are meaningful and valuable for them. Methods such as contextual inquiry, observations, interviews, cultural probes and empathy maps can support the emphatic process of you as a designer. [7]

#2 Why?
Users have unfulfilled needs. A design should try to clarify needs and emotions involved. UX Design starts with the Why. Only then it is able to provide the what and the how of the design.[2,3]

#3 Because I need it
Your design has value when it satisfies a certain need. Use the self determination theory - autonomy, relatedness and competence - to clarify the level of fulfilment of needs and the level of intrinsic motivation to truly engage.[1]

Be aware of their contexts

Let's imagine: you're are sitting in the train and you would like to watch a video. However, you forgot your earplugs and don't want to bother other passengers with your video. Luckily, Facebook automatically enables subtitles whenever your sound is turned off. This is a great example of context-awareness from Facebook's perspective. As a digital designer it is useful to think how and what your user might feel, think and act in his/her environment. Consider the social, physical and mental context.

#4 What are you doing?
Awareness of the social context and considering social interaction between users is important to design a valuable user experience. Be aware of interactions within shared systems and reflect on how users respond to each other.[5]

#5 Mapping values
Understanding the nature of a problem requires you to map the values of all stakeholders involved. The value framework helps to identify different (conflicting) values of all stakeholders and creates, based on these insights, a thorough user experience for your user. [4]

#6 It's about time
The core of UX is the actual experience with your product. However, people can also have indirect experiences before (because of previous experiences) or after (because of changes in people's appraisal or through reflection) using your product. By creating a customer journey, you can indicate different time spans and touchpoints. Gaining insights in moments before and after usage can support you as a designer in getting a comprehensive overview of the entire experience of your product. [6]

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