

Chapter 1

Introduction to the Book: User Experience in Web 2.0 Technologies and Its Impact on Universities and Businesses

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ABSTRACT

The design of interfaces has become an essential dimension of companies' digital strategies, aiming at enhancing user experiences through User Experience goals, alternatively named UX. From user tests to front-end development, UX now affects all areas of digital production. This book presents relevant and recent studies conducted in various fields, from Marketing to Information Systems over Human Resource Management to Strategic Management. Its objective is to provide up-to-date results in relation to UX concerns, which exist in both e-learning and e-commerce. It is composed of 20 chapters and contains the most recent findings in research, as well as case studies and relevant works conducted by experts in User Experience, from the field of e-learning to e-commerce. 40 authors from Australia, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Nigeria, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey and the United Kingdom present their case studies, practical experiences, and studies on User Experience and its impact on universities and businesses.

INTRODUCTION

The design of interfaces has become an essential dimension of companies' digital strategies, aiming at enhancing user experiences through User Experience goals, alternatively named UX. How has UX evolved, what are the current developments and what will be the future changes? How to implement it and why put the user at the center of its concerns? From user tests to front-end development, UX now affects all areas of digital production.

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There is a slight difference between UX and ergonomics. The UX design approach is user-centered, while the ergonomic approach is anthropocentric. In both cases, practitioners will try to achieve common goals, such as anticipating user needs, defining services and functionalities, gaining knowledge in cognitive, human, and social sciences as well as creating a toolbox to observe and analyze consumers' expectations and usages (in using A/B tests, for example). Practitioners will also design interfaces and, from a multidisciplinary perspective, will draw upon different actors from different fields, like engineers, managers, designers, entrepreneurs, and artists. They make proposals to render the usage of these interfaces more efficient and, hence, increase the performance of the company.

Ergonomics no longer concerns only the professional world. UX could also be considered for software, such as office suits for people working on computers. Web ergonomics consists of optimizing the interaction between the site interface and its users, visitors and administrators, according to Usabilis (2020). To be ergonomic, a website, or an app, must present a utility, that is, serve the activity of the user, have a meaning in relation to its objectives and usability, which encompasses everything that allows users to use it easily, quickly, and effectively, without any error. This concept is based on three parameters which are efficacy, efficiency and satisfaction. **Mesquita and Silva (2020)** argue in their chapter **“Are we ready for the job market? The role of business simulation in the preparation of youngsters”** that one of the key factors to be successful in the job market is to be prepared to face the challenges equipped with the appropriate and required knowledge and competences, whether hard or transversal. Traditionally, education was focused on the acquisition of knowledge or technical skills, but over the last few decades, teachers and trainers have realized that students will be better prepared if they also develop transversal skills. The reason is that their work environment is becoming increasingly challenging and is changing at a very fast pace.

Experiential learning is a pedagogical approach that allows students to consolidate technical competences, while developing the necessary soft ones. Among the solutions offered by such softwares there is business simulation, which is defined as an instrument transforming the real business world into a simplified model and, therefore, enabling students to make decisions and simulate activities as if they were in a real business environment, without assuming any risks. **Mesquita and Silva (2020)** describe a business simulation used in a higher education institution in Portugal. They analyze this simulation based on the underlying theory and confirm that it meets the requirements of the pedagogical approaches used. They also show how such a simulation can contribute to the development of students' essential skills.

The user performs the desired action on the site in a simple way. They do it quickly, without complicated learning processes or mistakes that cannot be corrected. They will be satisfied with having successfully completed the task. The challenge is both human - the website satisfies the Internet user for which it is intended - and economic. Indeed, an effective, efficient and satisfying website, or a progressive web app or app, makes visitors want to stay and come back, making them a loyal customer or learner. This is important in the human resources field. **Mesquita, Oliveira and Sequeira (2020)** argue in their chapter **“Digital Transformation Work 4.0 and the preparation of youngsters for the job market”** that the 4th Industrial Revolution and digitalization has changed organizations and the way they work. The changes are reflected in the business models they use, their forms of communication and collaboration, the relationships between work and private life, the structure and organizational hierarchies, and the employment itself. These changes imply some challenges in the preparation of youngsters to work in such

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