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Boost **User Satisfaction** and **Productivity** with Tailored UIs

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Companies are facing a growing demand for business applications with extremely friendly user interfaces (UIs). With the popularity of mobile apps and social media at the forefront of this surge, business users want and expect a seamless consumer-grade experience at every turn. Delivering a great user experience is a key driver to increase employee productivity by allowing users to complete tasks with fewer clicks, decreasing time spent on data entry and data gathering. New technologies like touch interfaces, augmented reality, location sensitivity, and other smart device capabilities offer untold opportunities to boost user productivity and, ostensibly, achieve higher profits. In addition, a delightful user experience significantly lowers the barriers to entry and cost of implementation since it requires less training.

SAP has met the convergence of these trends head-on with a three-pillar strategy designed to steer its customers in the right direction. First, the standard development team continues to enhance the mainstream software user experience for widely used business scenarios and across the on-premise, cloud, mobile, and SAP HANA platforms. Second, for users who want to further enhance the experience on their own, SAP offers SAP Screen Personas. This software allows customers who use the classical SAP GUI front-end UI to personalize and simplify their experience in minutes, without writing any code.

Then there are customers who want to take advantage of the quickly changing landscape of user experience opportunities to create a truly unique and competitively differentiating experience on top of their existing SAP and non-SAP business applications. For those customers, a new user experience development service is now available through the SAP Custom Development organization: UX Services.

When It Makes Sense to Do It Yourself

SAP Screen Personas is an easy-to-use tool that is intended for SAP users who are interested in personalizing their own interface based on their roles and preferences. For example, an infrequent user can hide unneeded functionality, while adding customized personal touches such as images or links. An expert user, on the other hand, can make personalized enhancements or choose to keep the standard SAP user interface.

Easy to install and intuitive to use, SAP Screen Personas enables all the functionality of the standard SAP GUI with the personalized environment of the new web-based UI layer in which a user can drag and drop certain fields and functionality. It eliminates the need for programmers and scripting experts, dramatically reducing the cost of personalization. User productivity and satisfaction are also improved since only the essential screen elements are provided, allowing users to complete business transactions faster and more accurately with fewer data entry fields and reduced scrolling. Repetitive tasks are automated and complex screens are simplified with prefilled fields and pull-down menus.

A French consumer packaged goods company recently used SAP Screen Personas to help with training. While the company was very satisfied with its existing SAP user interface, which could display thousands of datasets in seconds, the infrequent users experienced navigation difficulties because they only used limited functionality on different pages. Using SAP Screen Personas, the company deployed a new web-based UI for infrequent users and included a toolbar with a link to a training video. With limited investment and simple screen manipulation, the company benefited from enhanced user productivity and satisfaction.

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When to Call in the Troops

SAP Custom Development offers a wide range of services for building custom applications to address unique, often mission-critical business challenges. This group now offers UX Services to address individualized needs relating to the end-user experience. The global UX Services team works with customers to conceptualize, design, and develop unique user experiences tailored to a customer's business processes and needs, leveraging the latest technologies available.

When engaging in these projects, it's important to put the user at the center of the conversation. Leveraging a 360-degree research approach, the team works closely with IT, business, and end users to assess the big picture and understand the customer's needs. The team then provides a recommendation that either adapts existing software or proposes the design and development of a new, customer-specific user experience. The solution is developed using an iterative, agile development process and is deployed in the customer's solution landscape for productive use.

The benefits are clear: The customer gets a tailored solution for its unique user experience needs, designed and developed quickly, and delivered with the same high quality expected from any SAP mainstream software. These solutions can also be protected with the same array of SAP maintenance options that are available for the mainstream offering.

A Swiss consumer goods manufacturing company recently benefitted from UX Services. The company needed to re-design several interfaces for its call center solution. On top of regular responsibilities such as greeting callers, fielding complaints, and providing services, customers expected the call center agents to handle additional purchases and returns. To address these other requests, the agents had to change screens or systems or, worse yet, transfer the caller. The UX Services team worked with the company to design a one-stop navigation interface that gives its call center agents broader functionality right at the point of the customer contact, enabling the agents to handle all calls quickly and efficiently, and helping supervisors to better monitor, maintain, and continually improve call center processes.

This is an example of a common need to have a single front-end entry point for different business applications. This is not limited to SAP applications, but rather can incorporate multiple data sources from different vendors. By engaging UX Services, companies can drive better user adoption, productivity, and satisfaction while increasing profits.

Often, what users say they do is not exactly the same as what they really do. When evaluating their UI needs, it is important that we listen *and* observe.

The Value of Design Thinking

Every UX Services project incorporates a collaborative process that includes an initial phone consultation followed by an on-site visit when feasible, a discovery phase, and a comprehensive research phase to truly understand the unique needs of each user.

Whether a company is interested in creating a web channel and providing services in parallel to its service center, speeding the procurement process, or just wants a consultation before embarking on its own interface redesign, the starting point is always the same: we listen.

This might seem obvious, but the importance of a discovery phase cannot be understated. It sets the stage and allows the UX Services team to understand the customer's business, find out what really matters to the user, rule out certain directions that show potential for failure, and help the organization build a solution that maximizes the business benefits. The discovery process may also include observing users in their own environment to gain more insight into what the user is thinking — often, what users say they do is not exactly the same as what they really do. The goal of this observation is to synthesize the information and structure the insights to start working on initial ideas, which are worked into sketches and paper prototypes.

This collaborative process continues throughout the solution proposal and prototype validation phases. From there, a global team of UI designers works directly with the customer to turn usability requirements into wireframe mock-ups and low-fidelity and high-fidelity prototypes that are then validated with end users and stakeholders.

Finally, during the application development phase, the team continuously improves the solution as the project evolves to ultimately deliver a competitively differentiating, uniquely tailored solution that focuses on the end users.

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