User interface (UI) / User experience (UX) design

G-Cloud 14 | Service definition document

Digital innovation for better experiences

- We are a team of researchers, service design and UX specialists working to improve the way people experience services. Our goal: better experiences for better lives

- We uncover exactly what people need from your service at each step of their journey. Then we show you how to meet these needs, so you can deliver effectively

- With the right evidence you can identify clear goals and focus investment on areas that will make the biggest difference to your users and achieve the best outcomes

UI / UX design

We translate research insights into simple, intuitive user-facing designs to improve the way people interact with digital services.

We explore the entire journey across channels and investigate different points of user interaction. We iteratively prototype user journeys and interactions across digital touchpoints to test how they work for people, in terms of both overall flow and individual design elements.

We work collaboratively, using co-creation and co-design workshops to build on the expertise of SMEs / stakeholders and invite users' input.

Insights feed into the design improvements, e.g. solutions for assisted technology, to ensure intuitive, joined-up journeys and consistent UX. We design digital products that are usable, inclusive and accessible to all users.

We integrate with agile, multidisciplinary teams and have established, quick onboarding processes.

- We are experienced in using a range of prototyping tools, including Figma, Sketch and Axure, as well as the GOV.UK Design System and Prototype Kit and NHS Prototype Kit., relying on robustly tested and accessible components and design patterns

- We take an agile approach to user research and user-centred design, in line with GDS and NHS service standard, to enable iterative improvements and quick changes for rapid delivery

- We work in the open as one team to drive decisions collaboratively, taking every opportunity to share knowledge, upskill, build internal capabilities and enable sustainable benefits

- We adopt a design-led approach. We are technology agnostic and help shift mindsets to focus on user needs over technology, avoiding costly investments

- We've delivered interaction design for clients including the Cabinet Office, Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, NHS England, NHS Gloucestershire CCG and Scope

Inclusive research and design

We take an inclusive approach to our work to ensure all voices are represented. This reduces the risk of missing opportunities and fits with our ethos of leaving no-one behind.

We make it easy for people to participate in research, adapting to specific needs or requirements. Recent research has included people with autism, people with no fixed abode / address, and people with English as an additional language.

We have developed ways to effectively engage with diverse groups to co-create and co-design solutions in a collaborative and transparent way, helping design accessible services, policies and places that work for everyone.

We are experienced in researching, collaborating and designing with complex stakeholder groups including staff, local authorities, communities, charities, businesses, partner organisations and technology providers.

Seldom-heard and under-represented groups

- We include diverse, seldom-heard, under-represented and marginalised communities in our research as standard, including low digital literacy

- We include people from outside the mainstream and across socio-economic backgrounds, so we can design for people with markedly different lives and needs

- We have created a guide to conducting research around sensitive topics with vulnerable users to ensure the wellbeing of both participants and our researchers. Please contact us for a copy

- Through experience we have developed a number of techniques for recruiting from these groups which we tailor to each engagement

Co-creation and co-design

We use co-creation and co-design techniques to design with stakeholders, communities and service users.

Running co-creation / co-design sessions with stakeholders and service users is a great way of ensuring we tap into existing expertise. Through a combination of collaborative workshops, sketching, prototyping and user research, we help generate, validate, adapt or discard ideas.

We involve users across the design process, identifying and working through challenges together. This builds trust and an understanding of the lived experience.

We advocate for inclusive research and design practices, and use various methods to ensure all voices are heard, reducing the risk of overlooking needs and missing opportunities. We have deep experience co-designing with seldom-heard and under-represented users.

"Mace & Menter provided an exemplary discovery and alpha project to NCSC. By having seasoned and independent researchers and designers assist us, we were able to canvas the community comprehensively in order to construct a long term development plan for the service."

Programme manager, NCSC

"They spend time to include you at each step of the way and work collaboratively where appropriate. In true partnership, they are open to working in different ways"

Insights and engagement manager, NHS BNSSG

Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement is fundamental to our approach. We use innovative ways of keeping disparate and time-poor stakeholders involved.

We put effort into creating an effective and inclusive engagement plan to understand individual perspectives, wider context, priorities and build on their valuable expertise.

We have extensive experience collaborating with SMEs and stakeholders at all levels and adapt our communication to meet technical and non-technical needs.

Through our work with government and NHS clients, we have developed ways of effectively engaging with complex stakeholder groups across organisations and government departments. We bring stakeholders together to align priorities and collaboratively drive evidence-based decisions.

"They are capable of liaising with and managing stakeholders at all levels so for us they've interacted with people at board level all the way down, sensitively and empathically building relationships with customers who are often at a point of crisis. That can be quite a difficult thing to do and those softer skills really matter"

Service owner, Cabinet Office

"They work openly and collaboratively with stakeholders to plan, execute and act on the research and design. This is so important when you are looking to transfer skills into the organisation and unlike other agencies or consultants we have worked in the past they do not exclude clients from the process or take specific parts of the project, work on it and then deliver a finished product."

Insights and engagement manager, NHS BNSSG

UI / UX design approach

Activities

- Onboarding / discovery workshop
- Desktop research
- Detailed recruitment and research plan
- Sketching and user journeys
- Prototyping
- Usability testing
- Recommendations and next steps workshop

Outputs

- Sketches and storyboards
- User interface prototypes (low / mid / high fidelity) covering the end-to-end service and user journeys
- Proof of concept
- Navigation structure / IA
- Draft content
- Research report
- Research video recording

Our experience

Safety tool design post Grenfell

Following the Grenfell disaster, MHCLG commissioned the redesign of the Confidential Reporting On Structural Safety (CROSS) tool for professionals in the construction industry.

We led a user-centred research and design programme, with stakeholders feeding into the process at all stages - identifying user groups, observing prototype research, reviewing prototypes and collaborating on show and tells.

Through a series of workshops, face-to-face interviews, surveys and experience mapping, we defined the needs and journeys for multiple user groups including residents, architects and construction workers.

We designed an online reporting process covering the process of learning about safety reporting, submitting safety reports and reviewing other safety reports.

Designs adapted interaction patterns from the GOV.UK design system and prototypes were created iteratively based on user research. We used Miro and annotated Axure prototypes to document research insights and user needs, and provide clear evidence to show why decisions were made, preventing duplication of work in the future.

Our designs created intuitive journeys, surfacing the right information at the right time with secure data sharing.

Results:

- Step change from complex, time-consuming and desktop-only form to user-friendly, accessible and mobile-first HTML tool with improved taxonomies and visual rebrand

For more information, please visit Discovery for structural and fire safety service post Grenfell.

Improving access to mental health support

We worked with NHS Gloucestershire CCG, NHSX and our technology partner, MadeTech, to improve children and young people's access to mental health services.

Following discovery, we moved to alpha with a clear picture of the needs and behaviours of teenagers, teachers, families and professionals. We ran co-creation workshops in schools with students and teachers, testing storyboards and sketches, and defining priorities for beta.

We designed for differing needs uncovered through depth research, co-creation and testing sketched concepts. We prioritised accessibility for all user groups, alongside clinical safety.

NHS
Gloucestershire
Clinical Commissioning Group

Our work:
- Uncovered the need for an alternative product for teenagers based on text messaging
- Prototyped intuitive, secure and accessible UIs
- Prototyped accessible, relevant content with the right wording and tone of voice for vulnerable users and sensitive topics
- Prototyped the end-to-end service and touchpoints around evidenced user needs.

Results:
- Our work is helping 23,000 children/young people access mental-health support every year
- Our work defined strategy and MVP for the service and fed into NHSX national strategy

"They're very agile, able to flex based on new insights and limitations. Also very passionate about solving problems for people and looking at the whole picture."
Head of Digital Transformation, NHS Gloucestershire

Designing services for disabled people

We worked alongside disability charity, Scope, throughout their five-year transformation. We led a user-centred process to redesign their services, content and products to meet a wide range of access needs and assisted technology requirements.

This included:

- Co-designing an employment support service with disabled people, carers and service delivery teams to help disabled people find and stay in work

- Co-creating parent support service with parents of disabled people

- Redesigning content and structure for Scope's online help and support

- Redesigning the Scope community based on research insights

Results in two years:
- Significant improvements and increased engagement
- 1.5m people accessing online advice post-implementation
- 0.5m people accessing the employment service

Case studies: Scope: New employment service launched and Scope: Effective content for 1.5 million people.

> "We wanted to take a completely customer-led view, Mace & Menter really challenged us to step away from the way we'd always done things. They are experts, highly skilled, and very easy to work with. It feels like they're part of my team."
> **Director of customer experience, Scope**

Experience

Government

Home Office

Cabinet Office

Department for Work & Pensions

Department for Culture Media & Sport

Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency

National Cyber Security Centre
a part of GCHQ

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

NAO National Audit Office

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

North Somerset COUNCIL

Health and social

NHS Digital

NHS England

NHS X

NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire
Clinical Commissioning Group

NHS Gloucestershire
Clinical Commissioning Group

GIG CYMRU NHS WALES | Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales

Third sector

SCOPE
Equality for disabled people

citizens advice

career ready

Action for Children

we the curious

RSPCA

Evidence not guesswork

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