

Service Definition

User Research for Cloud Services

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1. Introduction to Farsight Consulting

Farsight Consulting is a SME consultancy that was incorporated in 2010.

We have a number of highly skilled and experienced consultants, many of whom have worked or are currently working in the UK Public Sector. We also have a number of private sector clients and engagements which enables us to bring together ideas and good practice from across multiple sectors and a number of different industries.

Our business model allows us to provide high quality services at reasonable prices and adapt quickly and agilely to client requests. We are proud to say that every engagement has been successful and we would be happy to introduce you to any of our clients.

We have set out below a selection of organisations that we have worked with. Most of the organisations are very happy to share their knowledge and experience – and we have found this open and collaborative approach to be extremely beneficial for our clients as it typically reduces the costs of engagements and speeds up delivery.



We would be very happy to arrange discussions with any of our clients to provide feedback on our services, and also to compare ideas and practical experiences where that might be helpful.

We have two aspects to our business that G-Cloud clients have found useful:

Firstly, we have built up a considerable body of work in the Public Sector and developed a detailed understanding and good working relationships with a large number of departments. We have a 100% re-engagement rate from existing clients and most of our work comes from repeat clients and client recommendations.

Secondly, we have worked very closely with suppliers to help them improve the way in which they engage and operate within the public sector and to improve the services they provide. This includes a number of the key larger suppliers into government. We also work closely with SMEs; and through a number of our G-Cloud engagements we have been able to help a number of SMEs deliver quality services into public sector organisations. This aspect of our work is increasing as both suppliers and buyers become more familiar with the G-Cloud and the additional diversity that SMEs can provide.

Because of our relationships with suppliers we have often been asked to provide corrective advice and assistance to get things back on track when key initiatives have stalled.

Our independent status and the fact that we focus solely on consultancy (rather than providing solutions) allows both public sector organisations and suppliers to feel confident that we have their best interests at heart and treat their information in the strictest confidence.

We design our work specifically to ensure our clients achieve their goals. We pride ourselves on providing easy to understand and accessible products and deliverables. Our work is outcome focused and supported by high quality thinking and precise delivery.

We would be delighted to discuss the challenges facing your organisation and excited to see how we could help. If you think we could be of service, please contact us on:

info@farsightconsulting.co.uk | www.farsightconsulting.co.uk.

2. User Research for Cloud Services

2.1 Overview

Good user research can help transform service design and development. Farsight's user researchers can help turn ideas, products and services into impactful solutions by providing a deep and nuanced understanding of your users' needs and the problems they experience.

Our approach leverages a breadth of experience in the public sector to help you see things from a user-centred perspective. The Farsight approach aligns with GDS practices and can help you better understand where user needs are not being met. Using both tried and tested and new innovative methodologies, we can help you to iterate ideas and solutions to better meet those needs and improve your users' experience. By capturing user needs and mapping users' touchpoints across the end-to-end service landscape, we can help you to redesign the way you deliver services and make better use of cloud technologies.

This service can help you to:

- Understand how to design user-centred services
- Identify and recruit suitable users to take part in research activities
- Design suitable approaches to engage with your users, through qualitative and quantitative research methods
- Run and facilitate research activities
- Analyse the outcomes of the user research activities: for example, mapping user needs, customer journeys, service blueprints and task models
- Play back the user research findings and insights to your wider team and key stakeholders within your organisation to encourage consensus on a user-need focused approach
- Take stock of the questions being asked in user research and re-align it with your outcomes if necessary

2.2 Further Information

This service is flexible and customisable depending on your organisation's needs. Our free initial engagement will ensure we have a joint understanding of your expectations from the service from the outset.

A typical engagement could contain the following:

<i>Initial Customer Engagement (free of charge)</i>	In this initial discussion, we help you to understand and to articulate your potential user needs and how you can design user-centred services by developing a joint understanding of the nature of the user journey and pain points and the key organizational aims of the business.
<i>Proposal and Plan for User Research</i>	We provide you with our detailed proposal for engaging with your users, mapping user journeys and creating user profiles.
<i>User Research approaches</i>	In discussion with you, we will design suitable approaches to engage with your users, through qualitative and quantitative research methods.
<i>Detailed information gathering</i>	Alongside user research, we will use other techniques to gather more detailed information, in order to further support the research and journey mapping. We will gather information in a variety of ways, as agreed with you. This could include: • User recruitment to ensure relevant user groups are researched and tested with • Qualitative user research methods such as interviews and workshops • Quantitative user research methods such as surveys and questionnaires • User needs and user personas • User journey maps and service blueprints
<i>Final Report</i>	Our User Research Report and findings is a significant deliverable for our customers and contains the key findings from the user research conducted. • Outputs for this could include: • Stakeholder engagement to inform decision making with user needs • User research video, summarising the key findings and evidencing the activities and interactions with users • Identified and analysed unmet user needs across the end-to-end service landscape • Alignment of service design with user needs We discuss the report with you and use this as an opportunity to check: are the findings consistent with your understanding of user needs; are there any gaps in understanding or problems that might affect the final quality of the advice; and what areas should the user research focus on to produce the Final Report. We also identify any opportunities for you to view services or organisations which face or have already addressed similar challenges. We then agree next steps and remediation actions for any problems.

This service is completely customisable – meaning that you will only use resources where you need them. This could include using our team to do a combination of design and user research, identifying user needs; and/or designing digital services based on the user needs that have been identified as well as your organisation's goals.

3. Our Approach & Methodology

Including Onboarding, Offboarding & Implementation

Our Engagement Approach

Farsight likes to take a simple approach to engaging with clients and potential clients. It breaks down into 4 linked phases.



Prior to formal engagement

Before any formal engagement takes place we like to meet with our potential clients to develop an understanding of what they are trying to achieve and how we could help. We find that this allows us to add value from the outset and ensure that expectations are clear.

Often, at this stage, we have found that we are able to make suggestions regarding the approach that reduces costs and decreases the effort involved.

We can put together a proposal that sets out our understanding of the client's aims and objectives and the services they'd like us to provide. This often lines up nicely with the G-Cloud clarification process.

This is done at no charge to the client.

Formal engagement and start-up

At the outset of the engagement we agree the scope of the work, based on the proposal which may have been revised iteratively during the prior stage.

This then forms the basis of the engagement and the formal commercial terms and call-off contract is put in place.

We usually hold a 'kick-off' meeting with the client and key stakeholders to ensure everyone is clear on the plan and their roles and responsibilities within that plan.

During the engagement

We usually work closely with the client, so that they are kept informed of our progress and can get as involved as they want to with our work.

The extent to which this occurs obviously depends on the nature of the engagement. We are comfortable working autonomously or being integrated into an existing team. We attempt to ensure that knowledge and skills transfer occurs naturally throughout the engagement.

We hold regular catch-up meetings with the client (and any key stakeholders) and provide regular progress reports. At these meetings, if anything unexpected has arisen, the client can refocus and reprioritise effort if necessary.

Due to our flexible resourcing approach this can sometimes include briefly pausing the engagement (e.g. if the client needs time to consider emerging analysis) during which time the engagement can be 'frozen' and no costs incurred until everyone is ready to continue.

At the end of the engagement

If the object of the engagement is to produce a specific product (e.g. a strategy document) this is presented to the client for sign off.

We can also produce an engagement summary report setting out the results of our work. The content of this varies depending on the engagement but could include a summary of progress over time, key risks and issues that we have discovered (both historically and going forward), lessons learned, etc. We can also include suggestions for future work and next steps.

We try to ensure that knowledge transfer occurs throughout the engagement so that our clients are empowered rather than managed – but at the end of the engagement we can review what's happened and how we've done things so that the client team is in a stronger position to deal with things in the future.

Our High Level Methodology

We have designed a flexible, high-level approach for engagements that has proven to be simple to manage, effective, transparent and efficient. It also allows us to flex our resources and easily refocus them to solve any specific issues that we identify during the engagement.

We broadly follow 5 steps across an engagement, these are set out below using analysis as an example.



Throughout the analysis process the customer is kept completely informed and can refocus the analysis based on emerging findings - ensuring the best results and avoiding wasted effort.

We have applied this method to a variety of different engagements and have refined this approach over a number of years, working closely with our clients. So we are confident that the approach works across different industries and for many different aspects of an organisation. We place a great deal of emphasis on joint planning and joint working where possible and practical as this ensures that any issues are recognised and acted on immediately and there are no surprises.

This doesn't mean that we cannot work on our own – we are happy to work autonomously, whilst ensuring we remain focused on meeting your needs.

4. Looking after your data (backup, restore, etc)

We do not often need to hold client data as most clients prefer to keep things on their systems. If we do need to hold client data we ensure it is secure and we will agree up front with the client any specifics around handling and processing data. We will also agree in advance any specific processes to clear down and hand back data at the end of an engagement.

5. Resource Options and Pricing

The services Farsight provides can be sourced in two ways:

1. **Purchased on an ad-hoc basis** – for example x resources for x days.
2. **As a fixed price ‘work package’** – where we agree a package of resources to deliver a specific product or outcome by a specific date.

We have found that offering **Work Packages can greatly assist with budget management and better shares the risk between the client and Farsight** – effectively allowing the client to pass some of the risk of delay onto Farsight. We can offer the fixed price work packages because of our flexible approach and ability to re-profile our resources internally. We believe this demonstrates the confidence we have in our people and our abilities to get things done on time and to budget.

Often clients combine the two sourcing approaches, choosing ad-hoc support to get started and moving to a fixed price work package when they are clearer about what they need.

Under either approach, at all times the client remains in control of the engagement and (within reason) can reprioritise and refocus effort immediately (without penalty). This approach has resulted in lower costs, greater value and better outcomes for our clients.

For further information about our services, our people and the way we work, including examples of how we have worked with public sector organisations please visit our website [here](#).

For specific day rates broken down by skills and experience, please refer to our SFIA rate card which you will find under our G-Cloud listing.

6. Terminating a Contract

At the outset of the engagement we will agree with you any specific aspects involved in terminating a contract (early). We are flexible about how we support you and understand that things might change. We would recommend a short close down period to hand things over and to pass on knowledge of the work as well as finishing off any in-flight work, but this is completely negotiable.

7. After-Sales Support

Once the work has started, our after-sales approach includes:

- Catching up with senior stakeholders regularly – to work together on quality delivery; planning; and addressing any issues (don't worry, we will not be upselling!)
- Helping to identify and address patterns/systemic issues you might not otherwise be sighted on – through retrospectives, strategy workshops etc. Our senior team have lots of experience and are always available.
- Building capability – we've helped clients plan how to recruit their own teams, and sat on their interview panels; we've played a key role in constructing and maturing clans, networks and communities of practice across multiple organisations; we helped clients design and set up service desk functions.
- Leaving things in a good place – e.g. by introducing performance analysis and dashboards for in-house teams.
- Training, mentoring and coaching – this includes helping in-house product owners, service owners and SROs build agile skills; showing service desk teams how to manage backlogs, triage and prioritise tickets; and instructing people on specific skills on business cases and benefits-modelling.
- Flexing resource to fit around clients' internal plans – with some clients we've taken people off projects when internal decisions took time, so that they didn't pay when they didn't need us; or we have dropped resourcing down to part-time while in-house teams are getting up to speed.
- Working alongside clients to develop lasting internal expertise and approaches – for example, our team have worked with some of our clients' in-house specialists to develop their own frameworks, approaches and tools.
- Maintaining relationships after we've left, to help spread good practice – for example, we recently helped one of our previous clients demonstrate our digital dashboards, to a team at another government department.

8. Benefits of Working with Farsight

Here are some of the ways in which our clients say they have benefited from our services. We can provide further details about these benefits upon request, and some are included in the case studies on our website:

Cost reduction

- Reduced start-up and operating costs of systems
- Reduced development and configuration costs
- Reduced change costs
- Reduced management costs
- Reduced consultancy costs

Improved Efficiency and Responsiveness

- Quicker and higher quality response to business needs
- Improved ability to assess and introduce new services to transform the business
- Improved ability to respond to changes
- Greater flexibility in relation to services
- Better quality services for end-users
- More control over the services they use
- Reduced time and effort to deliver

Greater Understanding of what's possible

- Opportunities to leverage existing assets and services
- Opportunities to leverage new services – such as cloud services
- Opportunities to share services across departments and organisations
- Opportunities to combine data sources, enhance cross-organisational knowledge and to streamline service delivery

Reduced Risk

- Greater understanding of the service offerings
- Greater understanding of how services fit together
- Greater understanding of the risks involved (and how to manage risk)

Transformed Organisation Operations

- A clear plan to transform the ICT capabilities of the organisation
- An operational model that is set-up to manage cloud services (taking into account the changes required to service management)

9. Other Services available via G-Cloud

Farsight Consulting provides a suite of services that help our clients improve the way they operate.

Currently we have over 35 services available on the Digital Marketplace. If you would like to discuss which of our services might be most suitable to meet your needs please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Our services are designed to make things straightforward and to enable organisations to gain access to wider and deeper expertise when it's needed without the on-going costs involved in developing and maintaining that capacity in-house.

We often work closely with existing client teams, adding our expertise to theirs and effecting knowledge transfer whilst delivering for the client.

For more information about our other services please use the Digital Marketplace, take a look at our website (there is a specific section on government cloud services) or just get in touch and we'll be happy to talk things through and suggest options for your consideration.

10. Examples of Our Work

Introduction

Our work to date has predominantly been UK Public Sector-based and we have extensive experience in working at all levels within government departments. We augment this experience with ideas and knowledge from the private sector to ensure we provide rounded and future-proof advice and guidance to all our clients.

We have considerable experience in supporting organisations 'join up' and share business functions, information and technology using Cloud technologies – and we have led a number of significant organisational transformations which have been enabled by the use of Cloud computing.

We also work closely with suppliers into government to help them define their service offerings and to improve the benefit government gets from their services.

Some Feedback from our Clients

"Farsight guided us expertly through a complex landscape of information and technology. They worked closely with us and our suppliers, helped us understand our options and provided the Management Board with specific recommendations that we could then take forward."

IT Director, UK Supreme Court



"Farsight helped us to make sense of the complex information and technology landscape. In particular, they gave us the insight and confidence necessary to tackle the security concerns in sharing information between Youth Offending Teams and the National Offender Management Service."

Director, Youth Justice Board



"I am impressed with the way Farsight uses its knowledge and experience. They are great to work with and their work ethic inspires the team."

Lead Account Manager, Ministry of Justice



"Farsight provided us with the knowledge, skills and confidence to transform our business."

Director, Criminal Justice Reform



Example Engagements

We have set out some examples of our work in the table below. We have selected certain examples to provide further insight into the particular service; we have also provided some other examples to show the breadth of our experience. We hope this is useful – if you have any questions or would like further information about any of the examples please let us know.

**People Strategy Design
and Case for People
Transformation –
Financial Services
Organisation**

Farsight supported Directors at a large financial services organisation, to develop its future People Strategy, against the backdrop of a major transformation programme and introduction of new technology fundamental to the operations of one of its largest departments.

The initial work involved articulating the need for an improved People Strategy which would deliver significant benefits including having the right people in the right roles, and doing the right things; getting people up to speed faster and therefore start delivering value quicker; having robust arrangements in place across the People Model to avoid the risk of failing to effectively deliver successful recruitment, induction, ongoing development, and performance management; keeping up with the pace of change in the market because people have the right skills and support to manage demands of an evolving and dynamic market and new technologies; and a workforce who can use new technologies efficiently and effectively to get the job done.

As part of our work we supported key stakeholders to develop a business case for people transformation and to seek significant investment to deliver the new and improved People Model. Funding was awarded and Farsight went on to support the organisation with the design and delivery of an improved People Model aligned with the People Strategy.

**People Model Design
– Financial Services
Organisation**

Following the development of a new People Strategy in the above example, working to the Head of HR, Farsight designed a new People Model for one of the organisations largest operational departments. We worked closely with the Senior Management Team and HR to understand what people issues needed to be addressed. We proposed a new People Model with Five 'Pillars' to support the business, consisting of robust arrangements for recruitment; induction; ongoing training; culture & engagement; performance management and career progression. Strong operational leadership and management ran across the People model.

A fundamental component underpinning the People Model design was a new Capability Framework which defined the skills and behaviours needed to achieve departmental (and organisational) strategic objectives and goals, specifically in relation to the transition to new technology and new ways of working. We worked closely with the business to define the capabilities and also 'what good looks like' across different grades within the department. We incorporated the Capability Framework into a number of the components of the new People Model, including designing a more robust way of assessing capabilities at recruitment; tailoring the induction of new joiners to their capability level; and incorporating an assessment of capabilities at performance reviews so that individuals (and managers) could assess themselves against the Capability Framework.

**Strategic Advice on
People Transformation –
Software Development
Company**

Farsight was engaged by a software development company to assess their People Strategy as they transformed as an organisation. The organisation was entering a period of growth, bringing on board new clients, team members and introducing new technologies.

As part of the work we helped the CEO to develop their People Strategy and transform their people in response to upcoming changes. We carried out robust analysis of their current People Model, worked with them to develop a joint understanding of where they wanted to get to and assessed the changes required to deliver their goals.

Farsight recommended a programme of work to support the transformation of the organisation and its people including developing (and delivering) a blended delivery model for driving culture change, managing performance and delivering ongoing development. We worked closely with key stakeholders to specify the activities needed to drive the changes required and how changes will be explained and communicated to the wider organisation.

**Design and Delivery of
a Recruitment Approach
– Software Development
Company**

Farsight led the design and delivery of a new and improved recruitment approach which saw the introduction of a more robust method for assessing the technical capabilities of candidates as well as their fit with the organisations culture. The technical assessments significantly increased the quality of candidates that made it through to subsequent interview stages and gave the organisation confidence that their new hires had the capabilities required to do their jobs. In addition to designing a new assessment approach Farsight also supported with delivering key parts of the recruitment process including sifting CVs; running phone interviews; sitting on interview panels; assessing candidates; writing up interviews; providing assessment reports; making recommendations on candidates' suitability; and providing candidates with feedback (verbal and written).

**Developing a Culture
Change Strategy and
Delivery Plan – Software
Development Company**

Farsight was commissioned by a software development company to 'transform their organisational culture' to be more high performing. We started by analysing the current culture and gained an initial view of the problems the organisation wanted to address, these included things like people weren't always clear what they were responsible for; performance issues weren't always managed effectively; people seemed reluctant to take risks, and are worried about getting things wrong.

We worked closely with key stakeholders to develop an understanding of their vision or 'To Be' Culture and developed plans to address the issues with the culture we identified. We designed a blended delivery model for driving culture change, managing performance and delivering ongoing development. The Blended Delivery Model included multiple aspects such as: training on how to run a performance review, techniques for managing performance conversations, and coaching and mentoring on how to give feedback in the moment.

Farsight is currently supporting the customer with the implementation of their culture change plans and they have reported that the change activities we have put in place have been well received. The customer has reported significant changes to job satisfaction, morale, attitude and notable improvements to performance.

*Leadership and
Management
Programme – Sector
Leading Charity
Organisation*

Members of our team worked with a large organisation to develop and deliver a sector leading 12-month leadership development programme for a cohort of high potential leaders expected to progress to director positions in the next 3-5 years.

We engaged with senior stakeholders across the organisation to identify the skills, behaviours, and knowledge required by leaders to drive the organisation forwards. In collaboration with stakeholders we also ensured that all learning activity delivered through the programme was aligned closely to the operating model and the organisations strategic goals. We worked closely with participants to develop bespoke learning plans that identified the specific skills, behaviours and knowledge that they needed to develop, and agreed specific and measurable learning objectives. As well as working towards specific learning objectives, supported by bespoke learning plans, participants also had access to the following learning as part of the programme: leadership master-classes covering a range of topics, external professional coaches, internal senior mentors, peer coaching, and stretch-projects which gave participants exposure to new areas of the business and provided an opportunity to practise new skills and behaviours. We used a blended approach to deliver the leadership development programme, all face-to-face learning was interactive; we created opportunities for participants to learn from each other (this included discussions and feedback); learning content was readily accessible in an electronic format (e.g. pre-work, suggested reading, webinars, video, online discussions); and participants had the opportunity to submit feedback and a self-assessment of their skills and abilities electronically.

To support programme participant's discovery of their personal leadership style we used a variety of tools during the course of the programme, some of which include: MBTI, FIRO-B, Strengths Finder, and other psychometric and personality profiling tools.

