

Content design, strategy and editorial services

G-Cloud 15

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Content Design, Strategy and Editorial Services

Our content and customer experience services reach from behavioural insight and inclusivity strategy, through human-centred service design, to digital experience platform strategy and out into digital, editorial, creative, content and UX design and delivery. CDS' comprehensive suite of customer experience services deliver compelling, intuitive and accessible user journeys, improving engagement and supporting the effortless delivery of digital services to our clients' customer bases.

CDS' multidisciplinary agile teams, user research specialists, content editors and strategists, design studio and accessibility teams provide digital experience platform strategy and implementation, behavioural insight, research and analysis, accessibility and inclusivity strategy definition and implementation, audience engagement/UX services, content strategy and content creation and communications planning and delivery.

We work with trusted open-source and low-code partners to define, architect and build engaging front ends with minimal cost and effortless maintenance, and our content strategists provide clear, concise copy with robust information architectures, keeping our customers' content fresh and accurate.

CDS' content and customer experience services include:

- Accessibility consultancy, training, workshops and support
- Accessibility training: creating PDFs and HTML from source files
- Accessibility training in PDF remediation using Adobe Acrobat
- Accessibility audit and accessibility testing
- Inclusivity consultancy, user testing and research services
- Content strategy, measurement and optimisation services
- Content strategy and design consultancy
- Content design, strategy and editorial services
- Content design for digital channels
- Content production cloud solutions
- Web editing and proofing and content services
- Discovery research and design
- Experience and service optimisation
- Service design and strategy
- User journey mapping and analysis
- Design system and DesignOps
- User experience design consultancy
- Digital experience platform (DXP) design and performance.

Our user-centred approach aligns with the GDS Standard and supports users with a range of digital literacy/skills and accessibility needs.

Case study

In response to Ofwat's AMP7 regulations, Yorkshire Water needed to rethink how it engaged with its 2.3m customers digitally to deliver more customer-focussed services and deliver its customer experience strategy.

Yorkshire Water's primary customer service channel was via telephone, which was inefficient and, despite the excellent work of its contact centre, did not always meet customer needs. The organisation needed a partner to improve the delivery of its online services and design a new customer-centric digital platform that would reduce the number of inbound calls and ensure customer communications were as inclusive and accessible as possible.

CDS' service design team delivered research and design thinking, aimed at understanding and developing the channel strategy. Our aim was to identify how customer engagement could change in a way that was preferable for customers and manageable for the business, to deliver a better experience for both.

We conducted research to understand where customers were engaging, where they wanted to engage and the challenges they experienced. We mapped user journeys and created 'as-is' maps showing how users interacted with the service, and the steps, actions and challenges they experienced. Using ideation sessions, we created 'to-be' service blueprints and tested them frequently with users, remaining focussed on customer needs and pain-points throughout the design process.

We also engaged with various teams within the business, and added the business perspective of people, processes and systems involved in those journeys.

We presented evidence-based recommendations around what digital channels needed to do to help customers engage with the business, and how channels could operate together to deliver a joined-up experience.

The research underpinned the content strategy and wireframes created by our user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) designers. We undertook a joint approach to development, testing, planning, and prioritising, which ensured the new website went live on time and with more functionality than originally planned.

Since its launch, the new platform has resulted in a 20% reduction in billing contacts, creating improved efficiency and customer experience and significant reduction in ongoing operational costs. The redesigned website won Gold 'Best Use of Digital from the Energy and Utilities Sector' at the Digital Impact Awards 2021.

Service overview

CDS provides comprehensive content services, spanning multiple media and supporting the provision of optimised, impactful cloud-based web solutions that meet user needs and deliver improved services. Inclusivity and accessibility are baked in, to meet GDS Service Manual and WCAG standards. Services include research, analytics, content strategy, photography and video.

Features and benefits

Features

- Insight and research including brand and strategy review
- End-to-end user experience (UX) services with a user-centred approach
- Comprehensive range of creative, design and content services
- Experience strategy (insight, research and user experience)
- Brand engineering
- Conceptual creative
- Content strategy, production and distribution
- Content auditing and assessment of site health
- Content production and editorial services including copyediting and proofreading
- User testing to maximise content impact and improve engagement.

Benefits

- Award-winning, in-house design and content production team
- Single point of contact, responsible for successful delivery
- User-centred design approach
- Iterative creative approach based on user feedback
- Evidence-based recommendations
- Improved communications and user engagement across channels
- Consistent brand experience across on and offline channels
- Improved ROI through targeted content.

Our approach

We develop bespoke engagement strategies and deeper understanding through data, research and a unique empathy for vulnerability, accessibility, and inclusivity. In turn, engaging on a more meaningful level will ensure your communications are fulfilling your entire audiences' needs.

Creating content worthy of any channel, enabling the right message, or simply deciding what story you want to tell. Our job is to help you share your voice in the right place, using the right tools – be it via the written word or video. Simplifying content to reach all audiences, we make communications relevant, motivating and timely while being informative, engaging, and entertaining.

Insight and research:

- Customer profile reviews
- Strategy review
- Brand review
- Insight and planning
- Vulnerable audiences
- Minority groups
- Taboo subjects
- Stakeholder reviews

User experience:

- Heuristic evaluations
- Competitor analysis
- User interviews
- Scenario mapping
- Empathy mapping
- Feedback analysis
- User journeys
- Personas
- Experience journeys
- Wireframing
- Prototyping

Brand engineering:

- Corporate positioning
- Insight
- Research
- Identity
- Tone of voice
- Audience resonance
- Brand creation/guidelines

Creative:

- Planning
- Content strategy
- The big ideas
- Creative concepts
- Copywriting

Content strategy:

- Content strategy
- Content audit
- Information Architecture
- Content writing
- Content migration strategy
- Script writing

Content production:

- Writing
- Photography
- Video
- Film
- Animation
- Experiential

Editorial:

- Writing/editing
- InDesign to HTML conversion
- Easy read
- Web content management

Design for print:

- Graphic design
- Editorial design
- Branding/corporate design
- Advertising design
- Packaging
- Typography
- Artwork
- Typesetting

Design for web:

- Mood boards
- User testing
- Style tiles
- Accessibility audit
- Mobile design

Business continuity and disaster recovery plans

CDS is committed to minimising and managing its exposure to disruption to the business and the services provided to our customers. This encompasses robust systems and processes necessary to maintain continuity of service and operations.

CDS maintains a comprehensive Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR) plan, certified to **ISO 23001**, that defines clear roles, responsibilities, processes, and procedures for assessing and responding to disruptions to ensure continuity during disruptions. **Our plan is tested annually with lessons learned incorporated into plan improvements.**

Our Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) is underpinned by regular business impact assessments and threat and risk analyses, and annual tests to ensure all contingencies remain effective, current, and fit for purpose.

Onboarding and offboarding

Onboarding

CDS provides a tailored onboarding pathway, based on clients' individual requirements.

Onboarding is a collaborative process, through which we fully understand our clients' short-, medium- and long-term goals, and plan our service accordingly, to deliver best value and appropriate resourcing, governance, communication and planning.

Our multi-disciplinary agile teams will work with project stakeholders to understand the client and project needs and requirements.

We will define and capture ways of working, including definitions of 'ready' and 'done', and identify acceptance criteria for each sprint, underpinned by modern test practices and OKRs.

Offboarding

Upon starting the engagement, CDS will provide an exit plan for client approval. This will cover matters such as knowledge transfer and documentation, roll-off schedules, data and asset transfer, intellectual property and removal of access / permissions and return of devices / equipment.

Ownership of data contained in any solution belongs to and rests with the client; as the service is decommissioned, raw data will be transferred to the client. CDS is certified to ISO 27001 for data security and will always adhere to these standards – including data removal and destruction.

Ways of working

At CDS we apply agile principles across our projects, primarily using the SCRUM Agile methodology. We operate multi-disciplinary squads that combine domain expertise with technical excellence, delivering value early and iteratively through two-week sprints. Our approach is underpinned by the following core practices:

- **Daily standups:** A team call for 15 minutes each morning to track progress, surface blockers and ensure sprint goals are achieved.
- **Sprint planning:** Held at the start of each sprint to prioritise the work, align on objectives and ensure the team is fully prepared.
- **Sprint review:** At the end of the sprint, the team demonstrate to all stakeholders the deliverables achieved and present the sprint goal for the next sprint.
- **Sprint retrospective:** For each sprint the team will review what went well, identify areas of improvement and embed lessons learned to drive continuous improvement.

Additionally, we have an Agile mindset and culture at CDS, in which we apply:

- **User-centred design and customer-focus:** Through collaboration and partnership working we deliver outcomes that meet user needs.
- **Adaptability and flexibility:** Short feedback loops enable us to respond quickly to change, with teams empowered to pivot as required.
- **Continuous learning:** Retrospectives encourage open, honest feedback to continually improve ways of working and delivery effectiveness.
- **Partnership and teamwork:** We create a one-team culture with our clients and their supplier partners, working collectively towards shared project goals.

Training

As well as continual ‘on the job’ knowledge transfer to upskill client teams, CDS can provide formal, comprehensive training for administrators and users prior to handover and go live designed to support successful change management, ensure smooth implementation and embed solutions that are integral to business operations. Our training also builds internal technical capability, empowering teams to become self-sufficient and reduce the long-term cost of change.

In most cases, we adopt a ‘train-the-trainer’ model, delivered through a blend of on-site and remote sessions. This is supported by comprehensive training materials and easy-to-follow digital end-user guides, written for non-technical audiences and compliant with WCAG 2.2 accessibility guidelines.

Service constraints

Attainable service levels will be dependent upon the service performance of cloud suppliers within the service chain. Maintenance windows may apply, and clients should refer to the SLA for the specific service in use.

Ordering and invoicing

We recommend contacting CDS before placing an order via G Cloud 15, to confirm and agree scope, scale, SLAs, KPIs, outcomes, etc. We will be pleased to support clients to define statements of work that reflect their requirements.

Invoices are issued monthly in arrears, with payment terms of 30 days.

Pricing

Timescales and costs vary, depending on several factors; we recommend a preliminary review to provide a firm cost.

Please refer to our pricing document and rate card.

Industry standards

CDS delivers all its services to internationally recognised standards. CDS is accredited to the following standards:

- ISO 9001 Quality Management System.
- ISO 27001 Information Security Management.
- ISO 20000 IT Service Management and IASME certified.
- ISO 14001 Environmental Management.
- BSI 1008 Electronic Information.
- ISO 22301 Security and Resilience (Business Continuity).
- ISO 45001 Health and Safety Management.
- ISO 10008 Evidential Weight and Legal Admissibility of Electronic Information.
- ISO 50001 Energy Management Standard.
- Cyber Essentials Plus.
- IASME certified.
- ITIL compliant service desk.
- PlanetMark Sustainability.

We comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR regulations.

Contact details

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