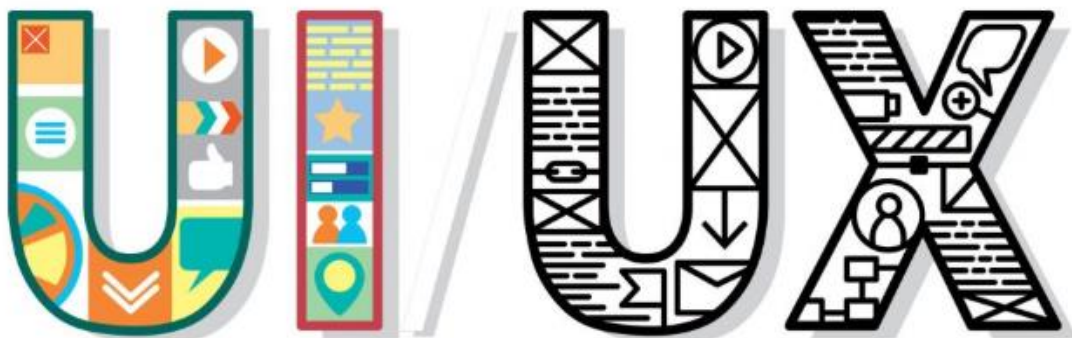


THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN UI AND UX

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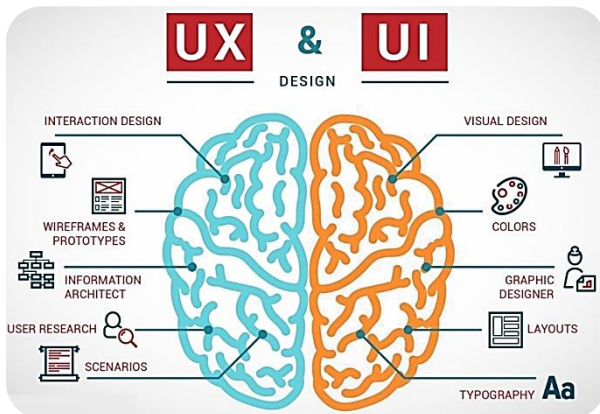
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN UI & UX

As the business world is moving from a feature-oriented product design towards a customer-centric approach, User Interface Design (UI) and User Experience Design (UX) have become central to product development environments.

Today, businesses are ready to spend heavily on UI and UX design for their software products. While both terms seem to convey the same meaning, they actually represent two entirely different segments in the product development environment.

AN OVERVIEW OF DESIGN

The terms 'UI design' and 'UX design' are interchangeably used by most people. To understand the difference between these two terms, it is important to first understand the meaning of these two concepts.



USER INTERFACE DESIGN

User Interface is a process of designing a software product interface with a customer-centric approach wherein visual appearance is the primary focus. It is basically, about the style and look of the software product. Right from the colour, texture, text font and spacing to choosing the right visual elements such as blocks, the entire visual design has to entice the user.

UI design normally represents graphical user interfaces. It includes voice-controlled interfaces as well. UI interface design is important because customer satisfaction is an utmost priority for any business. It is a proven fact that the colours, font, and other visual

elements of a user interface significantly affect the user experience. According to an infographic from [Social Media Today](#), the right usage of colours significantly improves the site traffic. For instance, dark colours increase the traffic by 2%. It also reports that most users scan any webpage in an F-shaped pattern and mostly read the first two paragraphs. The page design you choose and the elements you add to the page and the position of each element significantly impacts the user behaviour on the site. Similarly, users don't trust a poorly designed website. As such, business have to take utmost care while designing the user interfaces. This is where a UI designer comes to the rescue.

USER EXPERIENCE DESIGN

In a UX design, the primary focus is more on the usability and user experience rather than the visual appearance of the application. Be it a desktop application, website, mobile application or an IoT interface, user experience matters the most. As such, the designers focus on creating application interfaces such that the user would be able to easily navigate through the product while enjoying the design and style.

It is important to note that user interface design also plays an important role in delivering a rich and fulfilling user experience. As such, UI design can be considered as a sub-set of UX design.

The UX designer analyses customer behavioural trends, shopping trends etc. to identify the needs and pain points of customers and design the web

interfaces accordingly. For instance, when a user visits an ecommerce website, he/she should be able to easily navigate through all options. Right from signing to the portal and searching for the required products to comparing the prices and purchasing the product, the user should be able to seamlessly navigate between various tasks on the website regardless of his/her technical knowledge and expertise.

UX Design comprises of all interactions of the customer with the product, right from unpacking the product, the packaging layout to all contact points of the customer with the product.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

While UI and UX designers work together on the project, they have distinct roles to play. In a normal procedure, the UX designer creates the prototype first and passes it on to the UI designer.

UI Designer	UX Designer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Design the GUI with visual elements ➤ Add colours, text, layout, typography ➤ Make sure the interface design is in-line with company branding ➤ Design research, interactivity and animation ➤ Finalise the UI prototype ➤ Work with developers for product deployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Customer research and data analysis ➤ Creation of customer profiles and user stories ➤ Arranging the information into meaningful structure ➤ Prepare the prototype and interface blueprints ➤ Testing and iteration ➤ Deployment with developers

THE ROLE OF A UI DESIGNER

While the UI designers works along with the UX designer in envisaging the product and giving inputs into the design, the actual process normally begins after the prototype is prepared.

1. Take the prototype prepared by the UX designer along with the customer research data

2. Consider the branding of the company
3. Add visual elements to the interface such as colours, text, layout etc.
4. Ensure that the typography supports the hierarchy and delivers the right meaning
5. Arrange all visual elements in the right places, striking the right balance of text, buttons and design
6. Test the interface to ensure it's a visual delight to users

THE ROLE OF A UX DESIGNER

- 1) The first step is to research whom the audience is and, what the audience require. This research includes analysis of data collected from various methods. Talking to customers is the key here. For an existing product, identifying pain points and providing solutions is important. The UX designer prepares questionnaires, interviews people, performs competitive analysis etc.
- 2) This data has to be organised into a meaningful format using information architecture methods.
- 3) User profiles are created.
- 4) User stories are created that will provide user navigation paths across the application.
- 5) The UX designer prepares a blueprint of each interface.
- 6) A prototype and wireframing of the product is prepared
- 7) User testing for prototype validation and iteration is performed

Whilst the UI designer strives to make the user interface attractive, the UX designer makes it purposeful.

SKILLS NEEDED

Whether it is a UI designer or a UX designer, both require soft skills as well as applied technical skills



SOFT SKILLS

When it comes to soft skills, the first skill to possess is **empathy**. UX designing is all about creating a user-centric design of a product. As user experience becomes the primary focus, the UX designer needs to be able to get into the mind of the user to understand the pain points, needs and necessities and goals of the user from the user perspective.



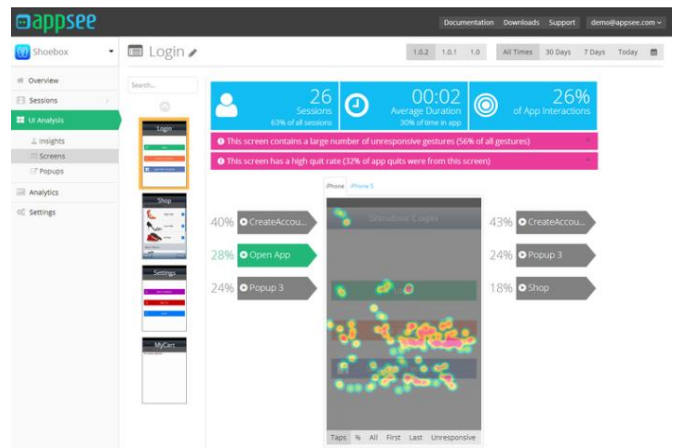
Secondly, being a **team player** with good communication skills is important. It helps the UX designer in easily interacting with all stakeholders of the project to get the required information. At the same time, collaborating with UI designers and other members of the project for seamless exchange of information is important. Thirdly, being a **self-disciplined** person helps a lot. As UX designer gathers the required research information, it should be organised in the right way to derive meaningful

insights and proceed with the implementation of the findings.

OPERATIONAL SKILLS

a) Research and Analysis

When it comes to technical skills, the first task is customer research and creation of user personas. As such, a UX designer should have skills in using research tools for preparing questionnaires, interviewing various stakeholders, data analytics, competitive analysis etc.



Appsee, lookback, Full Story, Hotjar, SessionCam, Appaptive, Usersnap, Usabilla etc. are some of the tools available for research and analytics tasks.

b) Information Organisation

The data generated from customer research should deliver meaningful insights. So, UX designers should be able to properly architecture information, organise navigational structures, label systems, site mapping, etc., to create a visual representation of the product structure. The order in which the user reads the content is key in information architecture.

Microsoft Visio, PowerMapper, Dyno Mapper, Omnigraffle, XSort, Smart Draw, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint etc., are useful for structural organisation of information.

c) Interface blueprints (Wire Framing)

Wireframing helps you understand the functionality of the product before the actual coding is done.



Be it digital mock-ups or hand-drawn models, prototyping the app is very important. After user testing, it becomes easy to understand if user requirements are met. It also gives assurance to stakeholders and might invite investment, if applicable.

Microsoft Visio, Omnigraffle, Mockplus, Lucidchart, Cacao, Axure, miro, justinmind etc. are some of the popular wireframing tools available in the market

d) Visual Design

While the visual design of the app falls into the UI design category, UX designer should also have an understanding of graphic design. Right from writing proper content and creating visually appealing design to implementing responsive designs, the UX designer should be well versed in these areas too.

e) UX Coding

As DevOps brings cross-functional teams into the picture, design and coding now overlap with each other. Along with design skills, the UX designer should have an idea of basic coding skills to seamlessly work with developers in the product deployment process.

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<body>
<h1>My First Heading</h1>
```

HTML, JavaScript, JQuery, CSS, etc. are some basic coding scripts that help an UX designer. In addition, having the knowledge of automated deployment tools is an added advantage.



SOFT SKILLS

When it comes to soft skills, both UI and UX designers possess more or less the same skills. A UI designer should have empathy so that he/she can understand the mindset of the user and design the app interface accordingly. For instance, an art-related app should have vibrant colours when compared with a business app or a spiritual app. Similarly, good communication is essential to be a team player. However, the most important skill is the aesthetic sense and passion for creativity. UI design is more about the creative angle and delivering an enthralling experience to the user.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

a) Graphic Design Tools

Graphic Design is a basic requirement of every designer. So, having expert knowledge of graphic design tools such as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe In-Design, Sketch, Adobe Illustrator, Pixlr, Visual CSS Tools, DeviantAR, Iconfinder etc. is important.

b) Typography Skills

While design tools help you to create vibrant designs, it is important to apply your creativity in

placing the right elements in right places. For instance, choosing the right font for the right heading is key. Similarly, text sizing, placement, colour and texture, alignment, line spacing and hierarchy of elements all make a difference.

HOW MUCH DOES A UI/UX DESIGNER EARN?



As the demand for UI/UX designs is increasing, the salary packages are increasing too. According to [Glassdoor](#), the average

base pay of a UI designer in London is £38,946 per year. For a senior UI designer, the pay goes up to £62,000 per year. The average base pay of a UX designer in London, UK is £31,597 per year as per [Payscale](#). Senior UX designers earn £49,000 per year. [Glassdoor](#) reports that the average base pay for UX designer is £40,987 and it goes up to £60,000 for senior UX designers.

THE STATE OF THE UI/UX DESIGN MARKET

- BUSINESS GROWTH -



The UX Design market is rapidly innovating in recent times. According to [Market Watch](#), the global UX design market earned a revenue of \$130 million in 2019. This value is expected to reach \$300 by

2024, growing at a CAGR of 18% during 2019 and 2024. The European market is rapidly growing in recent times. It now holds a share of 32.7%. Ideo, UX Studio, Frog, Cooper, Nielsen Norman Group, Fantasy Interactive etc. are some of the leading providers of UX design services.

When it comes to the UK market, Hedgehog Lab, Momentum Design Lab, Mubaloo, Tapptitude, Beyond etc. are the popular UX design companies.

The Bottom Line

The current UI/UX market is rapidly expanding. Today, most employers want their UX designers to possess UI skills as well. In most job postings related to UX design on LinkedIn, employers ask for UI skills too. As such, it is important for a UX designer to have a clear understanding of UI skills as well. So, having a workable knowledge of both areas would give you an edge in the job market. Moreover, the UX designer role is getting transformed into a product designer. As such, UI/UX designers should proactively monitor these market trends and empower themselves with the required skills and expertise to stay in the competition.

Brightred clearly understands the difference between UI and UX Design. As such, Brightred has an edge over its competitors when it comes to specialist recruitment solutions in the UI/UX design segment.

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