BOBCATSSS 2007 Prague

Workshop

Using the Personas Method for Applying Marketing and User Research Data

Moderator

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Overview

Orientation towards customers' needs and the goal to improve their satisfaction are important issues for all sales- and service-oriented organisations. To achieve these goals, organisations use data from marketing and user research to identify target groups and their requirements. The crucial question is how to translate these data into concepts that can be applied into practice.

This workshop presents the concept of personas as a method to apply data from marketing and user research to the design of software applications or the customising of a wide range of customer services. These data and the resulting personas can be used for example
- to create user-oriented Web sites,
- to re-design software applications according to user needs,
- to improve and customise services for specific target groups.

Method

The workshop will provide the participants with
- an overview of data gathering techniques,
- an introduction to the concept of the personas method,
- the basic knowledge necessary to create personas and
- a hands-on experience in working with them.

Short Description of the Personas Concept

Personas are fictitious representations of typical users in general or specific user groups. They represent the users in the design process of a product or software uniting the most important characteristics, needs and goals of the prospective users in several personas. These personas are not real persons but archetypical figures because real users often have very personal habits, traits, and quirks which are not common to the average user population. In contrast, archetypical figures combine the typical characteristics of a specific user group. The concept of personas was developed for marketing research and later on introduced into the software design process by Alan Cooper (1999).

Schedule

Time slot: approximately 2 h 30 min

- Overview of data gathering techniques from marketing und user research
  (approx. 15 min)
- Introduction to the personas concept
  (approx. 15 min)
- Introduction to working with personas
  (approx. 15 min)
- Team work: creating two contrasting personas
  (approx. 60 min)
- Break
  (approx. 10 min)
- Presentation of the team results
  (approx. 25 min)
- Closing
  (approx. 10 min)

Participants

Maximum of 20 participants (5 teams of 4), no prior knowledge or experience are required.

Reference

Beck, Astrid/Eichstädt, Henrik/Gaiser, Birgit/Savigny, Peter von/Schubert, Ulf/Schweibenz, Werner (2005): Personas in der Praxis [Putting Personas into Practice] In: Hassenzahl, Marc/Peissner, Matthias (2005, Hrsg.): Usability Professionals 2005. Proceedings des dritten GC-UPA-Tracks. Stuttgart: German Chapter der Usability Professionals' Association e.V. 94-98.

Cooper, Alan (1999): The Inmates are Running the Asylum. Why High-tech Products Drive Us Crazy and How to Restore the Sanity. Indianapolis, IN: Sams.

Preece, Jenny/Rogers, Yvonne/Sharp, Helen (2002): Interaction Design. Beyond Human-Computer Interaction. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons. Chapter 7.4 Data Gathering