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Keynote II: User Centred Design for the Mobile Web

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Abstract

Expressed by Google CEO, Eric Schmidt, the triumvirate of the mobile web is upon us: mobile devices with better processors, running on faster networks, accessing more services in the cloud; these all converge to put the power of a PC in people’s hands, literally. The promise of the mobile web makes us giddy: a social network in your purse; a shopping cart from your sofa; a surroundings-aware companion on the move; and the addition of "4th screen" entertainment anywhere. But how does computing power across location, time, and devices translate into personal uptake and business success? The underlying technology is here; a remaining hurdle is to move our thinking beyond the desktop end user experience. The starting position for many clients entering the mobile web space is "here’s our full website, how do we slim that down to fit on a mobile phone?" If I go ahead and answer that question I’m fixing the wrong problem! When we think of designing for mobile, we have to also be thinking about user centred design. That is because designing for mobile is nothing if we are not paying attention to surroundings, context of use, and discreet tasks that extend across time and devices. If it is not immediately relevant and meaningful in that heartbeat, then the moment passes, the end user has moved on, the business has lost its opportunity. In this keynote address, Diane McKerlie will discuss user centred design for the mobile web, the importance of validation with the target audience, and the need for a paradigm-shift to establish effective mobile web strategies. Drawing on examples from delivering solutions to clients, the discussion will reflect on discoverability, usefulness, staying power, and the relationship of mobile to bricks and mortar.

Keywords: Mobile web; design; users;

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About the Speaker:

Dr. Diane McKerlie is a practitioner, an interaction designer, and a usability expert. At the Bell User Experience Centre in Toronto, she leads a consulting practice supporting a range of research and design activities for clients: usability testing, accessibility auditing, and interaction design for web, mobile, and other technologies. The most recent focus of her team is on usability of the mobile web. The addition of technology with the fidelity to track eye gaze on handheld devices places her lab at the forefront in North America for testing and validating the mobile end user experience. Diane draws on over a decade of user interface design experience. She has created solutions for end user groups such as telemarketers, retailers, neurosurgeons, postal workers, technology trainers, and financial traders. She has led the user interface design effort at tier-one organizations such as NCR Corporation, TD Bank, and the United States Postal Service. Diane received a PhD from South Bank University in the UK for her research on the relationship of design methods to knowledge management. Her real-world approach is supported by a principled and academic foundation.

"Meet customer expectations for ease of use and influence behaviours toward organizational goals."

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