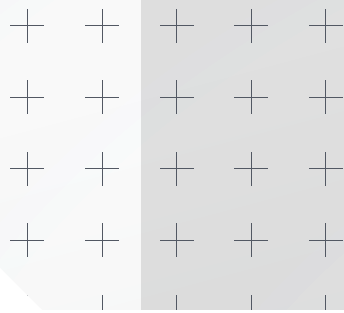# 20
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UX
TRENDS
REPORT
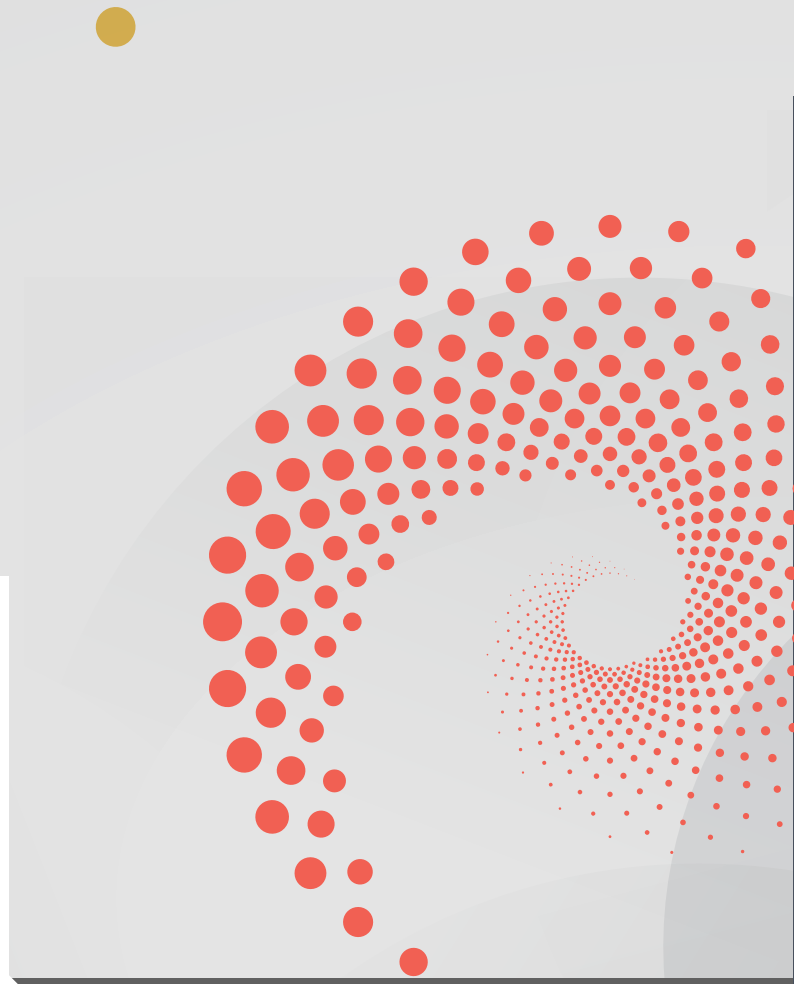
ABOUT THE
UX TRENDS
REPORT

WHY
Interest in UX has been growing now more than ever, particularly over the last few years. Within the next year, UX will change immensely and will continue to grow exponentially. As a result, UX will play a crucial role in almost every industry and sector and will concern everyone, becoming a major part of everyday life. UX will incorporate other disciplines and fields of expertise, such as psychology, to achieve the best possible outcome. The aim of the UX Trend Report 2025 is to identify both micro and macro trends in UX as well as discover new approaches to UX applications.

WHO
The UX Trend Report is published annually by youspi Consulting, an agency that offers services ranging from strategy development and design to problem-solving and customer analysis for businesses. Ten years ago, youspi founded the World Usability Congress, with the latest virtual conference hosting over 250 experts who participated in this year's survey.

HOW
The UX Trend Report has been published annually by youspi Consulting in collaboration with Daito Design Group. The interviews included in this report were recorded over extensive conversations with experts across multiple disciplines from around the world. The insights extracted from these interviews allow us to compare different perspectives on trends in UX. The results of the Survey were analyzed and interpreted by experts in the field.
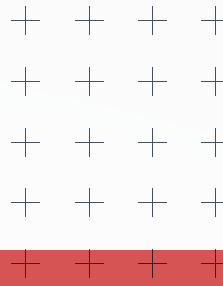
UX TRENDS REPORT 2025

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UX TRENDS REPORT

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SHAPING THE FUTURE WITH UX:

BACK TO HUMAN-CENTRICITY

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

HANNES ROBIER

The future of UX is about more than most of us think—it's about empowering people. We have to return to our roots: prioritizing human needs and experiences.

From leveraging AI to enhance empathy and creativity, to embracing sustainable design that respects ecosystems, the UX landscape is redefining itself. This shift underscores the value of emotional intelligence, ethical practices, and systemic thinking, creating experiences that resonate deeply with people while addressing broader societal and environmental impacts. Together, we are designing a future where technology amplifies human connection, understanding, and purpose.

Let's design the future together.
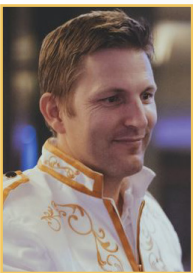
Hannes Robier is the founder of the UX agency youspi GmbH. He has worked in User Experience, Customer Experience, Usability, and Service Design for more than 15 years, consulting organizations of all sizes and various industries. He developed and leads the first "Design Management" course in Europe.
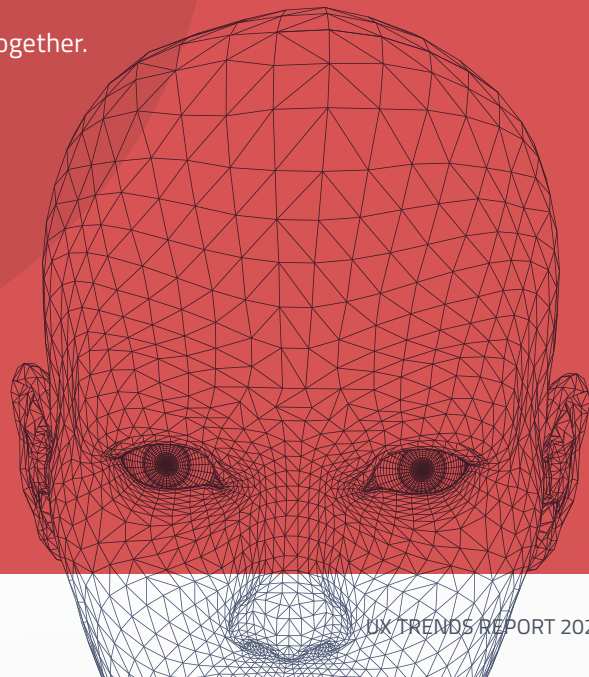
EXPERIENCE TREND SURVEY

20 25

How do you rate the impact of "Experience Design" on business performance?

89 RESPONSES

Very Important — **48%**

37% Important

14% Somewhat Important

11% Unimportant
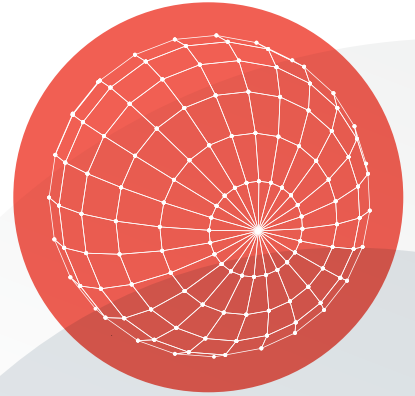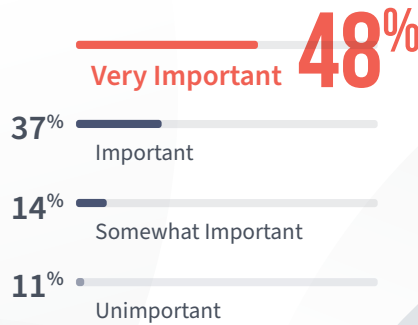
To what extent is the potential of Experience Design in your company being realized?

89 RESPONSES

32%

37%

15%

6%

7%

5%

- ● Almost fully
- ● Somewhat
- ● Hardly at all
- ● To a high degree
- ● Barely
- ● Not applicable
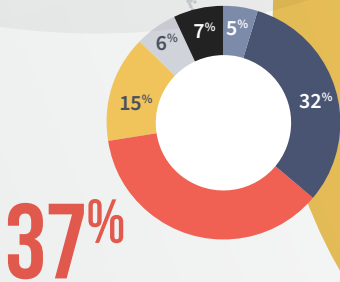
Do you believe "Experience Design" will become more popular the next 10 years?

84% YES

16% NO

At which "Design" level do you recognize your company at the moment?

- **28%** Design as STRATEGY
  – Design is a key strategic element in our business model
- **20%** Design as FORM GIVING
  – Design is used as finish or styling in products or services
- **43%** Design as PROCESS
  – Design is an integrated element in development processes
- **9%** NON Design
  – Design is not applied systematically

43%
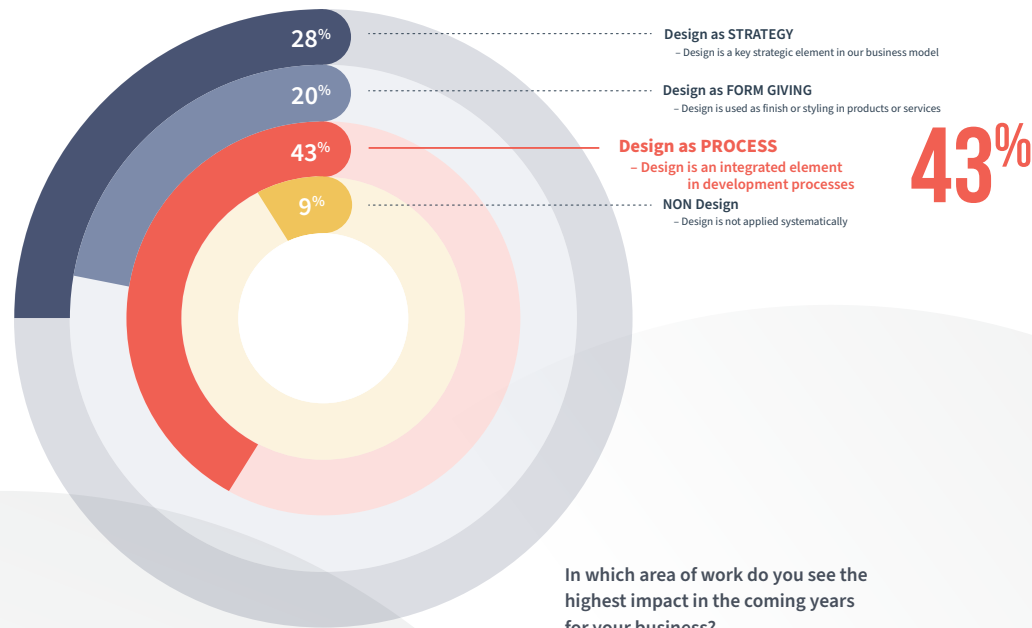
In which area of work do you see the highest impact in the coming years for your business?

(RESPONSES)

Service Experience (43)	48%
Creating Wow Moments for the User (24)	27%
Multichannel Experience (seamless experiences) (35)	39%
Personalized Experiences (42)	47%
Complaint Management (10)	11%
Product Experience (49)	**55%**
Internal Process Experience (21)	24%
Measuring Experiences (33)	37%
Other (8)	9%

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

Does your company measure the impact of Experience Design?

88 RESPONSES

- **58%** NO
- **31%** YES
- **11%** Not applicable
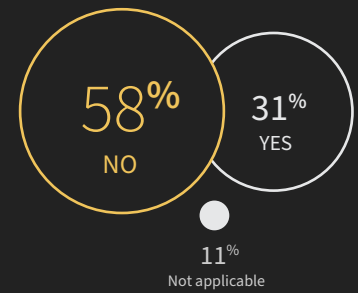
How do you measure the impact of Experience Design in your company?

27 RESPONSES

- Other **19%**
- Business Growth **19%**
- Link KPI's **33%**
- User/Client Involvement **30%**
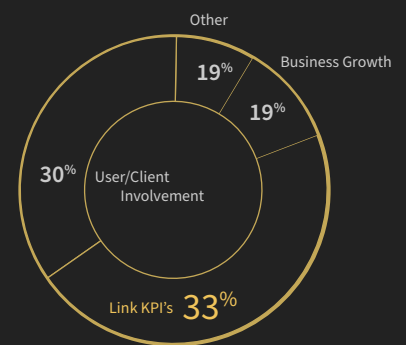
Why don't you measure the impact of Experiences in your company?

51 RESPONSES

- Other **12%**
- Lack of Intrest **20%**
- Unsure how to **24%**
- Not yet, but will measure in the future **12%**
- No Resources **12%**
- Alternate Priorities **22%**
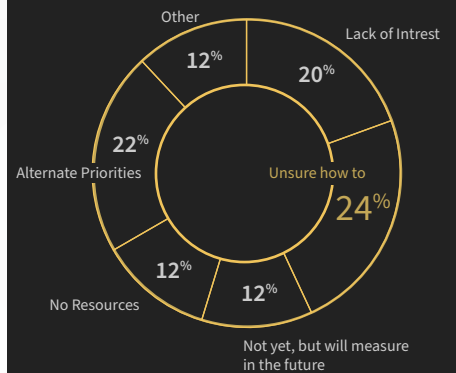
Do you link Experience KPI's to Business and Technology KPIs? (KPI = Key Performance Indicator)?

18 RESPONSES

- **11%** Always
- **45%** Regularly
- **33%** Sometimes
- **11%** Seldom

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70

08
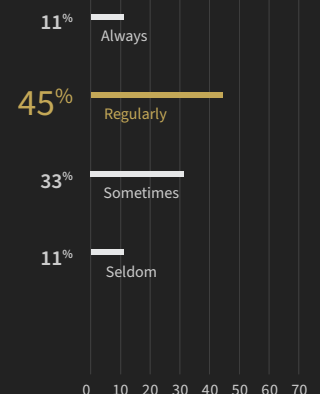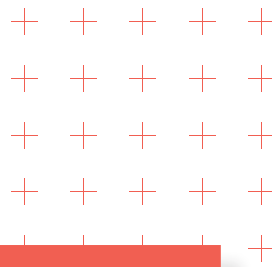
SUSTAINABLE UX: OBLIGATION AND OPPORTUNITY

THORSTEN JONAS

As UX Designers, Researchers, Strategist, we want to design and build better products for our users. We want to understand the users needs and create digital products and experiences that fulfill these needs in the best possible way. We fight for our users and their needs and desires. So, we are the good people, trying to do the right things.

THORSTEN JONAS

Founder / Digital Sustainability Trailblazer SUX - The Sustainable UX Network · Self-employed

—

But as Tony Fry once said: does what we create justify what we destroy?

Everything we design has an impact on the world, whether locally or globally. Every digital product or experience relies on hardware that needs a lot of resources to be produced, uses a lot of energy to run and emits a lot of carbon in the meantime. Back in 2020 the internet was already a bigger carbon-emitter than the whole airline industry, causing appr. 4% of the global carbon emissions with numbers rising. A website with 2,5 million users per month could easily emit 10 tons of carbon - per month. The datacenters needs millions of liters of water for cooling - water that is often lost locally, because it's vaporized. And the production of the computer chips for the servers and devices need massive rare raw materials

It's the digital products and experiences that need these servers and devices. The result of our work has an ecological impact on the world.

And there is more besides the ecological impact. Imagine an app where the user can order groceries that are then delivered to his/her home within a short period of time. There are various of these services available in many western countries. These services have a pretty good app, which makes it easy to order and to pay. Even the prices in 2023/2024 were often lower than in the local supermarket. So, from a UX perspective you could say: really nice user experience. But what else is happening? The delivery riders are often not paid well or even not employed but self employed (which means the job is without social insurance) or small local merchants and local supermarkets cannot match the pricing of the delivery companies (which is only possible due to massive venture capital backing). For the great experience of the user the price needs to be paid somewhere else.

And this is a general problem we can observe most often. A great experience for the user very often comes with a price that is paid somewhere else. Being it ecologically or socially.

We try to build the best solutions for our users: we observe, empathize and analyze to understand the needs and desires of our users and customers to build the best experience for them (well and for the business). But our perfect solution for the user is always part of a bigger, complex system and creates negative impacts on other actors in this system. Every digital experience and every

digital product is always part of a bigger ecosystem, with many more actors than the users. Actors that can be other humans, but also actors that can be non-human - like the environment, for example.

We focus so much on the user that we forget to take into account who and what else is affected by what we are designing. It's built into our tools and frameworks, since most of them always put the user into the center. It's even the thing we fight for with other stakeholders. But putting the user into the center creates unsustainable experiences.

We need to change this. Instead of focussing on the user only we need to change our mindset into seeing the user and the product as part of the surrounding ecosystem. We need to design our products and experiences in balance with these surrounding ecosystems.

Interestingly you can find this in the definition of Human Centered Design (HCD). HCD too often is misunderstood as User Centered Design, but in the current definition of HCD the ecosystem is already mentioned: "State of the overall system—including environmental, social, and economic aspects—in which present needs are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Still and we are honest, most often a pure user centered design approach is executed in UX. And it should be our obligation to change this. Instead of designing for the user, we should design for balanced ecosystems, where the user is instead of being the center one actor among others doing as little harm as possible.

1. Design for Ecosystems Instead of Users

We design services, apps, and websites for our users. In doing so, we focus so intensely on the needs of our users and try to align them with business needs that we completely overlook who or what else is affected by our designs. Every product always has a larger systemic context. There are always additional actors (human and non-human) involved beside our users—directly or indirectly. We must stop designing solely for our users and instead always understand and review our work within the systemic context.

2. Understand the Negative Impacts

To design more sustainably, we need to understand the negative impacts of our products and designs and relate them to user and business needs. For example, what is the carbon impact and where does it occur? Which other actors pay the price for the convenience of the users? At what points in the user journey are the negative impacts particularly high?

3. Design for all aspects of Sustainability

Sustainability is often equated with CO2 emissions. However, sustainability has many other aspects that we must consider in our designs, such as social justice, health, all living beings, sustainable consumption, etc. Reference recommendation:

UN Sustainable Development Goals.

4. Design Carbon Friendly

A website with 2.5 million monthly visitors can easily have an impact of tons of CO2 per month, resulting from the provision, transmission, and display of data. Our design has a direct influence on how 'heavy' a website or app is. Thus, how much data needs to be transmitted to display it. What fonts, colors, images, and image formats or elements we use, or which content is necessary and which is not—the possibilities are numerous to make our design 'data-lighter.'

5. Design for Equality

Digital products often perpetuate existing injustices. Older people often cannot use digital services because they only have limited access to and knowledge of digital devices. Gender injustice often arises because digital services are too often designed based on the stereotypical (white) male. And social injustice is an integral part of many digital services. We must always check the digital products we design on all levels and aspects of equality to prevent existing or new injustices in the digital world from being perpetuated.

6. Design for Wellbeing and Fairness

We often design digital products user-centered, but in the end with the goal of meeting the needs of other stakeholders. Digital products are too often designed so that users, for example, stay engaged as long as possible (e.g., 'Infinite Scrolling') or buy as much as possible (e.g., many online shops). We must design digital products that treat users fairly and truly prioritize their wellbeing.

7. Design for Sustainable Users

When we give users choices, we should ask ourselves which option is the most sustainable and make that the standard. An example from e-commerce that some shops have already implemented: In the ordering process, delivery to the next hub (e.g., parcel shop) becomes the standard, and home delivery must be actively selected. This reduces the number of trips with the delivery vehicle, which reduces the carbon impact (even an electric vehicle needs energy that must be generated) and improves working conditions for delivery drivers (social impact).

8. Solve the Right Problems

As UX designers, we love to analyze, understand, and solve problems. However, we must also ensure that we are addressing the right problems and finding solutions that are sustainable in the long term. For instance, carbon offsets are often much less helpful than thought (up to 90% of the offsets through the supposed planting of trees are useless, according to the Guardian). Instead of integrating a function for carbon offsetting into our products in this case, we need to look at how we can generally reduce the energy consumption of our users or how they can make more sustainable decisions.

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UX RESEARCH
IS BECOMING PART OF COMPANIES' RISK MANAGEMENT

ULF SCHUBERT

The world is facing a turning point: technological innovations, geopolitical conflicts, political changes, the climate crisis and social change are creating a new era of uncertainty. In this environment, companies need to be more resilient, willing to learn and adaptable than ever before in order to remain successful in the long term.

ULF SCHUBERT
Director UX & Touchpoint Design DATEV eG

Especially in highly developed countries, companies are severely affected by the risks of the era of uncertainty. These range, for example, from the threat to business fundamentals posed by artificial intelligence and competitive disadvantages due to changing customer needs to a shortage of skilled workers due to changing employee expectations.

Now more than ever, thoughtful risk management is critical for businesses to thrive in uncertain times. Companies that identify, assess, and manage risk early not only improve their own resilience, but can also gain strategic advantages.

UX research makes an important contribution to risk management by enabling companies to understand and respond to both the changing expectations of employees and the changing needs of customers and users. UX research helps companies to minimize risks in the design of products and services by evaluating and continuously monitoring customer behaviour and feedback. It increases the certainty of important decisions in portfolio management and development through data-based insights from the customer and user perspective.

UX research not only provides answers to current challenges, but also enables companies to anticipate trends and potential risks at an early stage. By continuously monitoring customer behavior and customer feedback, innovations can be promoted in a targeted manner and mistakes in the development of services or products can be addressed quickly.

Risk management is an interdisciplinary task. UX research can serve as a link between different departments by providing data-based insights that can be used equally in management, strategy, product development and communication. A shared database breaks down silos and promotes customer- and human-centered decision-making.

In order to establish UX research as an integral part of risk management, UX researchers should develop additional skills. UX researchers should be able to think beyond the product and recognize larger systemic contexts. This includes understanding global trends and their influence on customer needs, employee expectations and business models. A deep understanding of market and industry dynamics is essential in order to identify relevant risks.

UX researchers should develop their data analysis skills, including the use of tools for quantitative analysis, statistical modeling and predictive analytics. This will enable them to make data-driven predictions about potential risks.

Risk management is not an easy discipline. It therefore does not make sense for UX researchers to take on the role of risk managers. Instead, UX professionals should strive to work closely with their colleagues in risk management. For this to work well, they should have a basic understanding of risk management processes. This includes knowledge of risk identification, assessment and prioritization as well as the ability to interpret and communicate research results in this context.

In the coming years, UX research will evolve from a product optimization approach to a strategic tool that makes companies more resilient and future-proof. The positioning of UX research as an integral part of risk management will help to significantly improve the human-centricity of companies.

SUSTAINABLE UX: OBLIGATION AND OPPORTUNITY

9. Design for less

A little less of everything must be our motto. A little less videos, images, and visual overload. A little less content and data storage. And a little less consumption and general use of everything. Many small impacts add up to make a big lever. And we designers can and must take direct influence on many points.

10. Make Sustainability Default

Sustainability cannot be achieved by adding an extra step 'sustainability' in the design process. Instead, sustainability must be an integral part of our entire design process. This means that every phase, from idea generation to final implementation, must be characterized by a consistent awareness of ecological, social, and economic responsibility. By adding these additional layers to every step of our design process, we ensure that all decisions can also be reviewed and assessed in the context of sustainability.

11. Design new Narratives

We must not only design our products sustainable but also the narratives surrounding them. Because sustainability still unfortunately has the reputation of being mainly a cost factor. However, this is not true. For example, Capgemini has found in a study on 'Sustainable Product Design' that it not only results in the reduction of CO_2 but also has a positive impact on customer relationships and the relationship of employees with the brand/company, and it includes opportunities for profit increases. Sustainability is already a business case. And we all must help establish this narrative by continually talking about it: with colleagues, with customers, and with all stakeholders.

Working towards sustainable digital experiences should be our obligation, as UX Researchers, as UX Strategists and as UX Designers. For too long we focused on the user only and by this helped to create harm on other ends. Often without even noticing. It is a problem by default, baked deep into many of the tools we use. We need to modify and extend these tools as well as our mindset to move beyond User Centricity to Sustainable UX and true Human Centered Design.

And we do not have to do everything right from day one, since this is nearly impossible anyway. Instead we need to see this as a process of change. Change of our way of working, change of the tools and frameworks we use and chance of the products and experience we create. Instead of feeling overwhelmed by the mass of things to do, we should ask ourself: what is the one thing I can do better until tomorrow, until next month. And from there, move on. For the good of the world and of future generations.

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DESIGN'S SECOND COMING:
HOW THE 2025 AI WAVE LED TO RENEWED HUMAN CENTRICITY IN DESIGN

RAMY NASSAR

The year is 2035, and I'm reflecting back on the past decade. I can't help but smile at those anxious LinkedIn posts from 10 years ago. You know the ones – designers sharing their fears about AI, posting endless threads about which skills would become "obsolete." If I could send a message back to 2025, I'd tell them to take a breath. The revolution that was coming would transform our field in ways none of us predicted.

RAMY NASSAR
Keynote Speaker |
Futurist

I'm recording this piece using my ambient thought capture system (remember when we used keyboards?), sitting in what we used to call a "home office" but is now just my thinking space. My AI assistant, Nova, is helping to organize my thoughts – though I had to explicitly tell her not to try enhancing my storytelling.

For those of you studying digital history, 2025 was a turning point for AI. ChatGPT-5 had just dropped, Midjourney V8 was generating entire design systems with a prompt, and everyone was convinced that traditional UX roles would vanish within months. The popular tech publication "Digital Futures" (which, amusingly, itself became AI-generated by 2028) ran the now-infamous headline: "The Last Designer: Why 2025 Marks the End of Human-Led UX."

They got it spectacularly wrong.
What actually happened was something my strategic foresight work had hinted at, but even I hadn't fully grasped: when you automate the mechanical aspects of design, you don't eliminate the need for designers – you finally give them room to actually design. Looking back, it's clear that 2025's AI wave didn't create a design apocalypse. Instead, it allowed designers to refocus on human-centricity.

The Summer Everything Changed
It's almost hard to remember how we worked before. Our days were consumed by what we now recognize as largely mechanical tasks: tweaking layouts, checking responsive breakpoints, running manual accessibility audits, coding basic interactions. A typical designer in 2025 spent upwards of 70% of their time on these technical aspects. We thought that was just part of the job. Then came what historians now call "The Summer of Automation." By late 2025, the revolution was in full swing. Figma's AI Design Copilot could generate entire responsive layouts from

sketches. Adobe's Creative Suite had evolved into Creative AI, automatically handling everything from visual hierarchies to interaction states. The real game-changer was Microsoft's acquisition of GitHub and their subsequent release of DesignOps AI – suddenly, the gap between design and development had virtually disappeared.

But here's where it gets interesting.

Around 2027, we started seeing a curious trend in the data. Organizations that had fully embraced AI automation were spending three times more hours on user research than their competitors. Design-forward companies like Apple and Tesla were reporting unprecedented insights into user behavior. Why? Because for the first time, designers had the space to truly observe, think, and understand.

The numbers tell the story: In 2025, the average enterprise UX team spent 15% of their time on user research. By 2030, that number had jumped to 60%. AI hadn't replaced designers – it had transformed them into what we now call "Human Intelligence Specialists." Just ask Sarah Martinez, who made waves in 2029 by becoming the first Chief Human Experience Officer at Microsoft, a role that would have seemed redundant just a few years earlier.

Remember the old debate about quantitative versus qualitative research? It seems quaint now. Today's AI systems can process millions of user interactions in seconds, giving us the "what" faster than ever. But it turns out that understanding the "why" – that still requires human insight. The empathy, intuition, and contextual understanding that we worried AI would replace? They've become our most valuable skills.

Tales from Tomorrow's Trenches

A perfect example is the famous Nike case study from 2029. Their AI systems had flagged a subtle pattern in user behavior – a slight hesitation in the checkout flow that was costing millions in lost sales. The machines could identify the problem but couldn't understand its root cause. It took a human designer, spending time with real customers, to uncover the cultural nuance that the AI had missed: the way their one-click checkout process clashed with the gift-giving customs in several Asian markets, where the ritual of payment is part of the present-giving ceremony. That discovery led to Nike's "Cultural Commerce" framework, which we all take for granted now.

Another important moment came from an unlikely source: the healthcare sector. In 2028, a well-known health care provider's design team was using AI to automate their patient portal experience – standard practice by then. Their systems were flawlessly handling everything from appointment scheduling to medical record displays. But their AI analytics flagged something unexpected: despite technical perfection, patient engagement was dropping.

The team did something that would have been impossible in 2025: they spent three full months just observing and talking to patients. No prototypes, no wireframes, no deliverables. Just pure human observation. What they discovered revolutionized healthcare UX: patients weren't looking for more efficient interfaces – they were looking for moments of human reassurance in their digital healthcare journey. Something as simple as an empathetic message after viewing concerning test results or a warm congratulations after completing a treatment plan made all the difference. This insight led to their award-winning "Digital Empathy Framework," now a standard in healthcare design worldwide.

The Plot Twist No One Saw Coming

This brings us to perhaps the most important question facing our field in 2035: How do we prepare the next generation of designers for this new reality? The curriculum at design schools has undergone a radical transformation. Where we once taught tools and technical skills, we now focus on what AI can't replicate: emotional intelligence, cultural anthropology, behavioral psychology, and strategic foresight.

The successful designer of 2035 isn't distinguished by their mastery of tools – AI handles that. They're distinguished by their ability to deeply understand human behavior, to identify patterns that machines miss, and to translate human needs into experiences that resonate on an emotional level. As I tell my students, "AI can design the interface, but only humans can design the experience."

A Letter to Our Past Selves

So what does this mean for designers working in 2025?

First, embrace AI as your collaborator, not your replacement. The designers who thrived during the transition were the ones who let AI handle the "how" while they focused on the "why." Start by identifying the mechanical aspects of your work – the tasks that follow predictable patterns. These are your first automation candidates. For most teams, this means beginning with layout automation, accessibility compliance, and basic interaction patterns.

Second, invest heavily in your human skills. The market data is clear: the most sought-after designers in 2035 are those who combine deep user research expertise with strategic foresight capabilities. If you're reading this from 2025, consider this your wake-up call: take that anthropology course you've been eyeing. Study behavioral economics. Learn about cultural theory. These are the skills that AI has made more valuable, not less.

Third – and I can't stress this enough – learn to tell stories with data. In 2035, we have more user data than ever before, thanks to AI's analytical capabilities. But data without narrative is just numbers. The designers who've risen to leadership positions are those who can weave together quantitative insights and human narratives into compelling visions for the future.

Looking ahead to 2040, we're seeing early signals of another

14

DESIGNING FOR CONNECTION:
THE ROLE OF SOFT SKILLS IN UX

HANNA KÖHLER

User Experience professionals work within the full lifecycle of human-centered solutions, so they are naturally both creative and structured, and especially good with people, right? Not necessarily.

HANNA KÖHLER
Lead Accessibility
Center of Excellence
Deutsche Telekom

While empathy and creativity are often associated with UX, those qualities don't come automatically with the job title. Soft skills require practice and intention. For UX professionals, they are just as critical as the technical tools. Why Soft Skills Are Essential for UX Soft skills are personal traits, abilities, and attitudes that shape how we interact with others and they are independent of specific professional requirements. Unlike hard skills, which are technical qualifications with measurable outcomes, soft skills are harder to define and assess. In the context of Human-Centered Design and User Experience, soft skills are central to success. While tools and data can uncover trends, it is the designer's knowledge of human nature and active listening that transform those insights into real solutions. For instance, a skilled listener may uncover subtle pain points during user interviews that would not surface in a survey.

The specific soft skills needed also relate on the focus area within UX. (see https://ux-accreditation.org/focus-areas/) These key activities include e. g. UX strategy, user research, UI design, industrial design or accessibility. Each area demands a unique combination of soft and hard skills to deliver effective solutions.

Soft skills are especially vital in collaborative settings. UX professionals often work at the intersection of multiple disciplines, and they collaborate with roles like developers, product managers, marketing teams and executives. The ability to cooperate ensures smoother collaboration, while negotiation skills and assertiveness are crucial for advocating for user needs during high-stakes discussions.

The Shift to Strategic Roles

When UX professionals take on more strategic responsibilities, their career development increasingly depends on soft skills. Strategic thinking and decision-making become essential when defining design priorities, developing roadmaps or presenting design directions to

management. Persuasiveness and the ability to formulate ideas clearly often determine how well a concept resonates with stakeholders.

Organizational skills and structured work are also critical as UX professionals take on leadership roles. Managing multiple projects while ensuring alignment with both user needs and business goals requires a high degree of planning and discipline.

When looking at long-term career growth, soft skills are key as well. While hard skills help build the foundation of a career, skills like intercultural competence, strategic thinking, empathy and decision-making pave the way for leadership roles.

The Role of AI in Elevating Soft Skills

With AI tools rapidly evolving, tasks like generating wireframes, pixel-perfect user interfaces, or synthesizing data have already become more automated. However, humans bring emotional intelligence, intercultural competence and the ability to abstract to the table. These qualities are critical for interpreting nuanced user feedback, adapting designs to diverse cultural contexts and connecting machine outputs to meaningful, human-centered solutions. Not to forget: Resilience is always important in this fast-changing field, where technology and methodologies evolve constantly. UX professionals must remain adaptable, integrating AI into their workflows while ensuring that human- centricity stays in focus.

Building a Human-Centered Future

Soft skills allow UX professionals to manage the human side of design work. They make it possible to align teams, connect with users and take on challenges that no tool or process alone can solve. Our field of work is always evolving with technology, and these skills will help UX remain a deeply human and impactful discipline.

DESIGN'S SECOND COMING: HOW THE 2025 AI WAVE LED TO RENEWED HUMAN CENTRICITY IN DESIGN

transformation on the horizon. The emergence of quantum-enhanced AI and biodigital interfaces promises to reshape design once again. But this time, we're better prepared. We've learned that technological advancement doesn't diminish the importance of human insight – it amplifies it.

As I often say in my strategic foresight workshops: the future of design isn't about pixels or code or even interfaces. It's about understanding humans in an increasingly complex world. AI hasn't changed that fundamental truth – it's just given us better tools to pursue it.

And isn't that exactly what good technology should do?

RESOURCES

For those that are still in 2025, here are some resources that can help you navigate this technology wave.

Time-Tested Tools

"AI for Everyone" by Andrew Ng (Coursera) - A foundational course that demystifies AI concepts for non-technical professionals https://www.coursera.org/learn/ai-for-everyone

"Strategic Foresight: Tools and Techniques" (LinkedIn Learning) - An excellent primer on futures thinking methodologies https://www.linkedin.com/learning/strategic-foresight-tools-and-techniques

Nielsen Norman Group's UX Training Library - Their research-focused approach remains invaluable as we move toward more human-centered practices https://www.nngroup.com/training/

Forward-Thinking Forums

MIT Technology Review's AI section - Consistently thoughtful coverage of AI developments and their implications https://www.technologyreview.com/topic/artificial-intelligence/

Harvard Business Review's "Artificial Intelligence and Business Strategy" collection - Essential reading for understanding AI's strategic impact https://hbr.org/insight-center/artificial-intelligence-and-business-strategy

Where the Future Takes Shape

IxDA (Interaction Design Association) - Their forums and events are increasingly focused on AI's impact on design https://ixda.org/

Futures Platform - A community of foresight practitioners sharing insights and methodologies https://www.futuresplatform.com/

Tomorrow's Toolbox

Figma's Auto Layout and AI features - Start experimenting with automation in your current workflow https://www.figma.com/ai

Google's Material Design 3 - Particularly their documentation on adaptive patterns https://m3.material.io/

Google's People + AI Guidebook - Practical guidance for human-centered AI development https://pair.withgoogle.com/guidebook/

Current Country of Residence

71 RESPONSES

Austria
21%

Germany
14%

India
9%

Croatia
6%

All Others
33%

Netherlands
6%

United States
11%

14
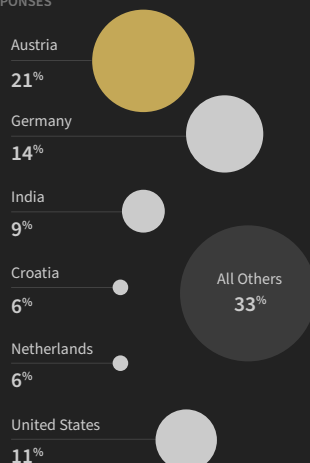
A CHANGE PERSPECTIVE ON UX MANAGEMENT — UNDERSTAND THE HUGE IMPACT!

VERENA SEIBERT-GILLER

The management of User Experience (UX) related strategies and activities is critical for the success of organizations. Whilst this is mostly acknowledged on a project or product level, the management aspects impacting the organization are often neglected or misunderstood. This is critical, because the cause of failing to design successful systems can very often be found in the hesitance or reluctance of included people.

VERENA SEIBERT-GILLER
Managing Owner @ UX Psychology e.U. | Psychology PhD

Once an organization has experienced the valuable outcomes of investing resources in a better User Experience it usually follows that path. Additional people are hired, new tools and methods applied, and project management structures introduced. Change and transformation takes place. But often organizations do not recognize those changes as a the critical transformation that it is.

Introducing UX methods and activities changes the daily work of people. Amongst others it changes tasks, required skills, quality measures, responsibilities and accountabilities, as well as communication and collaboration. Managers often face resistance when initiating these changes, as employees may struggle to adapt to new processes or perceive the transformation as disruptive. Also people might not know what respective changes mean for their personal situation. That causes uncertainty, and uncertainty is one of the most common reasons for change avoidance.

To overcome such challenges, UX management should be addressed as a structured change process, one that acknowledges psychological factors such as emotional responses, cognitive biases, and group dynamics. The 8-Step Change Model of John Kotter and the REDUCE model of Jonah Berger provide a good basis to start from. Combining these two models has shown to be very helpful, applicable and practical.

Kotter's 8-Step Change Model provides a strategic framework for guiding organizations through change. By applying this model to UX management, a smoother transitions and greater acceptance can be achieved.
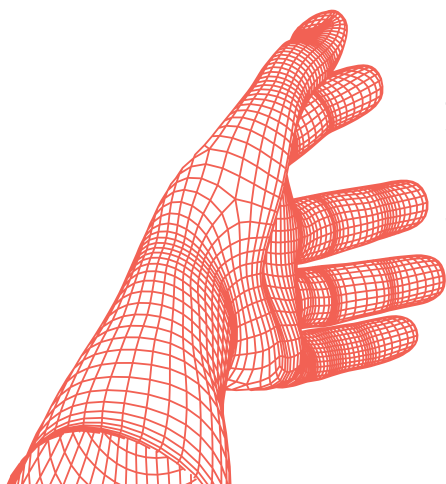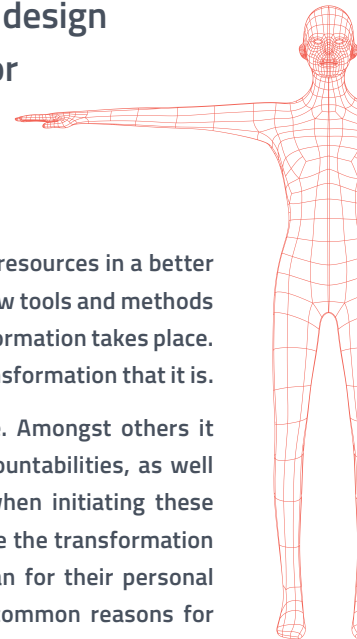
1. Create a Sense of Urgency:

For UX management to evolve and succeed, stakeholders need to recognize the importance of user-centric processes. Communicating the tangible benefit as well as stressing the negative consequences of disregarding the importance of UX helps generate urgency and buy-in.

2. Build a Guiding Coalition:

Implementing UX changes requires collaboration across departments, from product development to customer service. Forming a coalition of influential leaders who advocate for the UX vision can drive change and foster collective accountability.

3. Develop a Vision and Strategy:

A clear UX strategy aligns organizational goals with user needs. The strategy should outline specific improvements in products, processes, training, and teams to create a unified direction.

4. Communicate the Vision:

Change initiatives often fail when employees do not understand the purpose or significance of the transformation. More often even they fail, because communication causes more uncertainty than guidance. Consistent and transparent communication helps overcome confusion and creates alignment.

5. Empower Employees:

UX management requires employees to acquire new skills and adapt to updated processes. Providing focused, incremental training programs, methods and tools empowers teams to embrace change with confidence.

6. Generate Short-Term Wins:

Demonstrating measurable improvements early in the process, such as increased efficiency or increased user satisfaction metrics, builds momentum and reinforces the value of UX changes.

7. Consolidate Gains and Drive Change:

Sustaining UX improvements involves continuously refining methods and processes as well as team structures based on internal 360degree feedback as well as concrete outcomes.

8. Anchor Changes in the Culture:

To ensure long-term success, UX principles should become embedded in the organization's culture, influencing decision-making and day-to-day operations.

By addressing UX management as a change process, organizations can minimize resistance and facilitate smoother transitions, ensuring that internal processes, employee training, and team setups align with user-focused objectives. While Kotter's model offers a structured approach to change, psychological barriers can still hinder progress. Jonah Berger's REDUCE model provides tools to overcome invisible obstacles that arise during UX transformations:

1. Reactance:

Employees may resist UX changes if they feel their autonomy is threatened. Leaders can mitigate this by involving teams in the decision-making process, seeking input on training programs, and highlighting how changes benefit individual roles.

2. Endowment:

People are often attached to familiar processes, even if they are inefficient. Encouraging employees to compare old methods with new UX improvements helps them see the value of change.

3. Distance:

If UX goals feel too ambitious or disconnected from daily tasks, they may be dismissed. Breaking the transformation into smaller, achievable steps reduces psychological distance and builds confidence.

4. Uncertainty:

Uncertainty about new skills, tools, or team setups can create hesitation. Providing clear training plans, resources, and pilot programs helps reduce ambiguity and promotes smoother adoption.

5. Corroborating Evidence:

Employees are more likely to embrace UX management changes when they see tangible proof of success. Sharing case studies, user feedback, and data-driven results helps build trust and credibility.

By approaching UX transformations as change processes and leveraging psychological frameworks like Kotter's 8-Step Model and Berger's REDUCE model, organizations can navigate resistance, empower employees, and ensure long-term success. The integration of psychology into UX management not only enhances internal processes but also fosters a culture of adaptability and user-centric thinking, ultimately driving organizational growth and innovation.

If you want to discuss or learn how to apply the described approach, contact me!

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ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR AI USE IN UX RESEARCH

BEN ANYASODO

The growing use of AI in UX research is definitely exciting it is also quickly becoming a bit like walking on a tightrope, as it throws up some tricky ethical questions that demand careful consideration to make sure researchers are doing the right thing. Questions about data privacy, informed consent, and potential biases.

BEN ANYASODO
Head of Research,
BBA Consulting

Firstly, the issue of data retention poses a significant concern. When information is shared with AI platforms, it is often retained indefinitely, raising questions about data ownership, potential future uses, and the long-term privacy of participants. This necessitates a thorough review of current informed consent practices to ensure participants fully understand how their data will be used and stored by AI systems. Existing informed consent procedures may not adequately address the nuances of AI involvement in research. Current consent forms may need updating to clearly cover AI processing, data retention and user rights. Participants should understand that data exposed to AI platforms may persist. It is important to define different levels of AI use in research (such as transcription, data analysis and pattern recognition, participant recruitment, data storage and training, synthesis and reporting) and the corresponding ethical consideration and consent requirement. Tiered consent models where participants can approve specific AI uses need to be considered. As well as opt-out options and procedures for participants to withdraw their data, even after it's been processed by AI. This might involve negotiating data deletion protocols with AI providers, and agreeing mechanisms to verify data deletion across AI systems. Organisations have a responsibility to guarantee the confidentiality and protection of user data. This may involve establishing robust data processing agreements and non-disclosure partnerships with AI providers.

Another thing is that AI can be a bit of a black box, and while users have a right to know how AI is using their data, the inherent complexity of AI algorithms makes it hard to explain exactly what's going on under the hood. Researchers must find ways to make things more transparent and help users feel comfortable with how the level of AI involvement in the research.

Lastly, AI-driven UX research is commonly associated with AI data challenges such as biases and hallucinations. AI models can inherit and amplify existing biases present in data, which can inadvertently lead to discriminatory outcomes in research findings and subsequent design decisions. Mitigating bias and ensuring fairness should therefore be a central priority in any

AI-driven UX research. Clear guidelines and best practices for ethical AI use in UX research need to be articulated and reflected in research protocols. E.g. AI-specific sections in the research protocol that describe AI processing steps
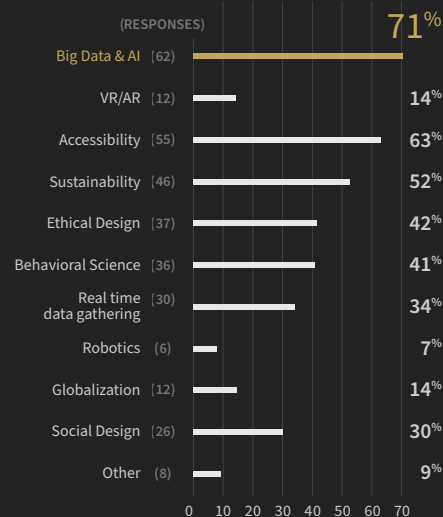
Organisations need to develop internal policies governing the ethical use of AI in research, including data protection, bias mitigation, and transparency. Such policies need to feature clear documentation of AI tools and their data handling practices, regular audits of AI vendors and their compliance, training for researchers on AI ethics and best practices, data processing agreements specific to AI usage, audit trails of AI usage, clear data retention and deletion policies and insurance considerations for AI-related privacy breaches. Part of organisational accountability for ethical data practice should include conducting regular review of AI usage practices and privacy impact assessments, mandating the use of anonymisation techniques before AI processing and prioritising local processing options where possible.

The evolution of data protection laws to specifically address AI use necessitates standardised frameworks across the industry. It might be crucial to re-evaluate and redefine data sensitivity classifications in light of AI capabilities. What was once considered non-sensitive might be when processed by AI with access to vast datasets. Data sensitivity framework should cover processing purpose, AI model type (local vs cloud-based), data retention policies, third-party access, training dataset usage etc. For sensitive research, special considerations are crucial, such as: enhanced security for commercially sensitive information, higher standards for medical/healthcare research, additional protections for vulnerable populations and specific protocols for financial or personal data.

The UX research community needs to proactively address these ethical concerns through open discussions and collaboration among researchers, compliance teams, legal experts, and AI developers to define practical AI policies.
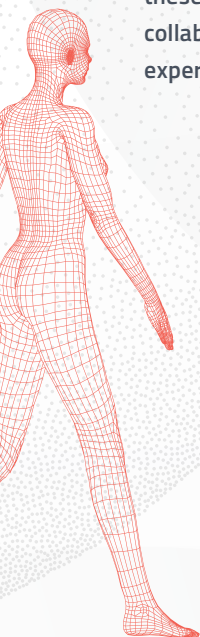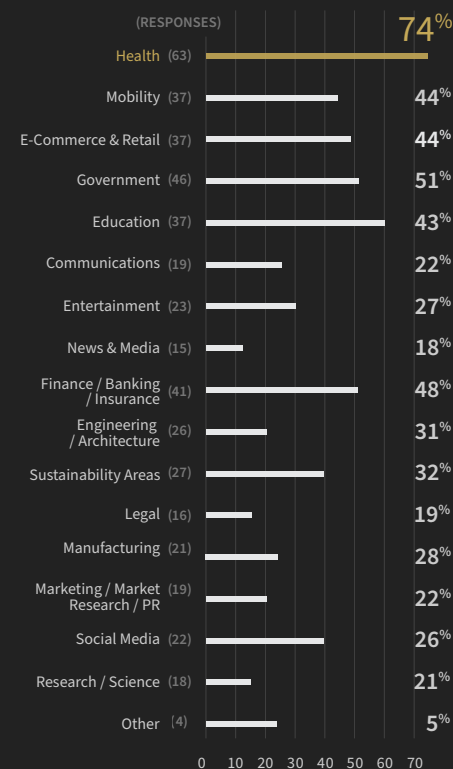
Which topics will be most important for our the Experience industry professionals in the coming year?

(RESPONSES)

Topic	%
Big Data & AI (62)	71%
VR/AR (12)	14%
Accessibility (55)	63%
Sustainability (46)	52%
Ethical Design (37)	42%
Behavioral Science (36)	41%
Real time data gathering (30)	34%
Robotics (6)	7%
Globalization (12)	14%
Social Design (26)	30%
Other (8)	9%

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70

What will be the most important Experience Design trend in the coming year?

88 RESPONSES

Trend	%
Predictive UX	21%
Gamification	7%
Emotional Design	5%
Device-agnostic Experiences	5%
Wearables	6%
Collaboration Methods	3%
Voice-UI	6%
DesignOps	7%
Storytelling	3%
UX Writing	23%
Sustainable UX	11%
Other	5%

0 5 10 15 20 25 30

Which industries will be seeking Experience Design support in the coming years?

(RESPONSES)

Industry	%
Health (63)	74%
Mobility (37)	44%
E-Commerce & Retail (37)	44%
Government (46)	51%
Education (37)	43%
Communications (19)	22%
Entertainment (23)	27%
News & Media (15)	18%
Finance / Banking / Insurance (41)	48%
Engineering / Architecture (26)	31%
Sustainability Areas (27)	32%
Legal (16)	19%
Manufacturing (21)	28%
Marketing / Market Research / PR (19)	22%
Social Media (22)	26%
Research / Science (18)	21%
Other (4)	5%

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70

WAKE UP, UX:
THE LAST FRONTIER IS HERE

JARED HUKE

20

Let's cut to the chase: UX as we know it is running out of room. Automation, AI agents, and an industry-wide inability to articulate value are eroding our relevance. We've been talking about human-centered design, but let's face it—we're becoming "human-adjacent." The business world is sprinting ahead with automation, while we're stuck selling hours in a world that's already moved on.

JARED HUKE
CEO, Daito Design

If we want to survive, we need to focus on where the puck is going, not where it's been. And where it's going is spatial computing.

From Groundbreaking to Commodity

Once upon a time, UX was groundbreaking. In the late '90s and early 2000s, technology was chaotic, and UX was the heroic discipline that brought order to the madness. We invented frameworks, guided development, and bridged the gap between humans and machines. It was exciting because everything was new.

Now? Not so much. Phones haven't fundamentally changed in a decade. Most apps are just reskinned versions of the same basic templates. You don't need a designer to make something functional anymore. Throw together a good product manager, competent devs, and a passable business lead, and you'll get an app that's "fine." That's what we're up against: the perception that "fine" is good enough.

But it's not. We know it's not. And convincing the business world that it's not? That's on us.

The Last Frontier: Spatial Computing

Here's the thing: while the everyday world of UX has plateaued, spatial computing is the last great opportunity to redefine human-computer interaction. This is where we can shine again—where we can be pioneers, not just maintainers.

Spatial computing is more than augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR). It's about creating experiences where the digital and physical worlds seamlessly overlap. Think Apple Vision Pro, where the interface isn't just on a screen—it's in your environment. This is where UX can become indispensable again because no one has "solved" spatial computing yet.
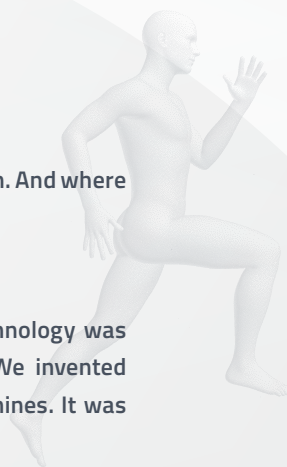
It's still messy, experimental, and full of potential.

Here's the kicker: spatial computing won't succeed without brilliant UX. Designing for 2D screens is one thing, but designing for a 3D, multi-sensory world? That's a whole new challenge. It's not about flat screens and buttons anymore; it's about interactions that feel natural in physical space. It's about designing the future of reality.

The Age of Selling Hours Is Over

Here's where the real problem lies: we've been stuck in an outdated business model. The age of selling hours is dead. Businesses don't care how long it takes you to solve a problem—they care about the results. They want to see ROI, increased revenue, cost savings, and user adoption. If you can't tie your work to measurable business outcomes, you're obsolete.

Automation is already chewing up the tactical side of UX. Usability testing? Automated. Basic UI design? Automated. The left side of the continuum—strategy and high-level impact—is where we need to be. If we don't claim that space, someone else will.

Did We Solve UX?

Here's a hard pill to swallow: maybe we solved UX. Maybe all the frameworks, heuristics, and design systems we've created have stabilized the chaos. The iPhone is a marvel of UX, but it's been fundamentally the same device for over a decade. We've turned unpredictable, clunky experiences into smooth, predictable ones.

But here's the catch: predictable isn't enough. If the world stops investing in UX, it's because we failed to make the case for why better is worth it. And, let's be honest, we watered down our own value. The COVID-era explosion of bootcamp grads flooded the field with undertrained, overconfident designers who muddied the waters. The result? A market full of mediocrity and a business world that no longer sees UX as worth the investment.

The Path Forward: Show, Don't Tell

The solution isn't another slide deck about the importance of UX. The solution is action. Show solved problems, not processes. Stop selling the idea of great UX and start delivering results that speak for themselves.

Here's the truth: spatial computing is our last, best chance to redefine ourselves. If we can own this space—if we can prove that UX is indispensable in shaping the future of human-computer interaction—we'll stay in the game. If not, we'll fade into the background as businesses automate the bulk of what we do.

What skills will Experience Designers need to develop in the coming years?

(RESPONSES)

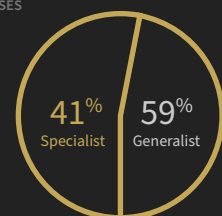| Skill		Percentage
Psychology	(53)	62%
Linguistic	(16)	19%
Design	(33)	39%
Programming	(13)	15%
Business Strategy	(50)	59%
Prompting	(26)	31%
Behavioral Science	(50)	59%
Industrial Forsight / Trend analysis	(33)	39%
Managing & Leadership	(47)	55%
Other	(7)	8.0%

Will the nature of work in Experience Design change over the course of the next 10 years?

85 RESPONSES

6% NO
94% YES
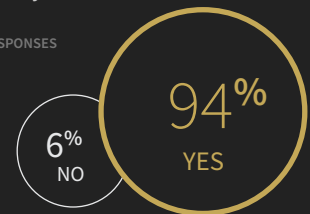
Will there be a higher demand for specialist or generalist UX designers?

80 RESPONSES

41% Specialist
59% Generalist

What will have the biggest impact on the nature of UX design work in the future?

80 RESPONSES

30% Task Automation
36% Emerging Technologies
18% More Responsibilities (more Management than Design)
11% More Leadeship Topics (bigger teams)
5% Other
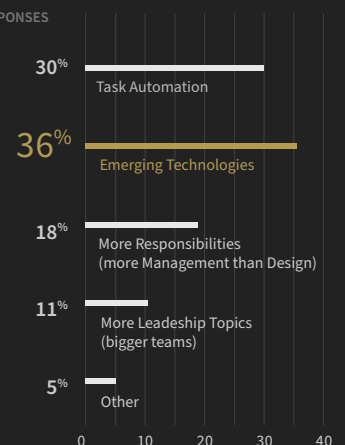
LEADER EXCHANGE

How might we reclaim and redefine the term "User Experience," shifting it away from marketing-driven perceptions and back toward a true human-centered approach that focuses on usability, empathy, and user satisfaction?

Reclaiming and Redefining "User Experience": A Shift to True Human-Centered Values

The term "User Experience" (UX) has increasingly been influenced by marketing-driven narratives, often prioritizing promises over the delivery of real value. To realign UX with its roots—usability, empathy, and user satisfaction—we must redefine its purpose and execution in a way that fosters collaboration and trust across disciplines while maintaining its human-centered ethos.

We found 5 action steps to achieve the goal:

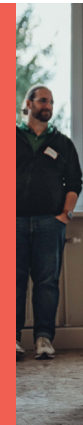#### 1. Addressing the Disconnect Between Marketing and UX

A significant challenge in reclaiming UX lies in bridging the gap between marketing and product development. Marketing often shapes user expectations, while product teams must fulfill those promises. To reconcile these differences:

- Collaboration is Key: UX defines the experience, and marketing communicates it. Ensuring these teams work cohesively will balance customer expectations with deliverable realities.

- Shared Responsibility: Both disciplines should maintain close connections to customers, emphasizing consistent feedback loops to keep marketing promises grounded in product capabilities.

2. Refocusing on Core UX Principles

To reclaim UX, organizations must emphasize its foundational pillars:

- Usability: Enhance products' ease of use by making this metric a central component of development cycles. Regular testing and iterative refinement are vital.

- Empathy: Build the capability to understand and share users' emotions, ensuring products truly address their needs. Empathy is harder to measure but remains critical in guiding decision-making.

- Satisfaction: Prioritize long-term user satisfaction through consistent evaluation of how well products meet user expectations.

CONTRIBUTORS:

Clemens Lutsch, Claudia Bruckschwaiger, Anika Lehnen, Kausik Surendran, Klaus Hofer, Ripul Kumar, Catharin Eure Walker, Dominique Winter, Hanna Köhler, Scott Parker, Mohan Krishnaraj, Everton Lewis, Nico Licht, Giles Harrison-Conwill, Sara Mastro, Ulf Schubert, Karola Sakotnik, Tim Scanlon, Thorsten Jonas, Nathan Fleischmann, Mirjam Wouters, Maria Giudice, Jasmeet Sethi, Swapnali Thakar, Janaina Pantoja, Vivian Gomes, Sabina N B, Vivek Arun, Hannes Robier

3. Strategic Thinking and Advocacy for UX

To redefine UX effectively, it must be positioned as a strategic priority within organizations:

- **Engage Leadership:** Speak the language of decision-makers, highlighting how UX drives business growth and aligns with organizational goals.
- **Use Data and Stories:** Leverage success stories and cautionary tales to illustrate UX's impact, creating urgency for its prioritization.
- **Network Across Disciplines:** Build alliances with stakeholders across functions to foster mutual understanding of UX's value.

4. Evolving the Terminology

The term "UX" itself may need reevaluation to address evolving perceptions:

- **Alternative Concepts:** Differentiate internal and external user experiences through terms like "builder experience" and "consumer experience," ensuring clarity about which user group is being served.
- **Avoid Dilution:** Protect the integrity of the term "User Experience" by reinforcing its human-centered origins. Over-expanding or over-simplifying the concept could erode its meaning.

5. Integrating UX Across the Product Journey

Redefining UX requires integrating it into every phase of the product lifecycle:

- **Closing the Loop:** Ensure marketing and development teams contribute equally to user insights. This promotes alignment and reduces disconnects between user needs and product solutions.
- **Prototype-Driven Processes:** Leverage prototyping to validate ideas early and often, ensuring they address genuine user needs.

Final Thoughts

Reclaiming "User Experience" from marketing-driven interpretations requires a collective effort to refocus on usability, empathy, and satisfaction. By fostering collaboration, promoting UX as a strategic priority, and staying true to its human-centered roots, organizations can redefine UX as more than a buzzword. It becomes a transformative discipline that improves lives, fosters trust, and drives sustainable business success.

How Might We Create an AI-Governance to C-Level and Make the Ownership by UX Professionals?

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) has become a cornerstone for business innovation and competitive advantage. However, as AI technologies mature, organizations face the challenge of establishing robust governance structures that ensure ethical, sustainable, and user-centric AI implementations. A critical question emerges: how can we craft an AI governance framework that engages C-level executives while empowering UX professionals to take ownership?

Understanding AI Governance

AI governance refers to the policies, processes, and structures that guide the development, deployment, and oversight of AI systems within an organization. Effective governance ensures that AI technologies align with ethical principles, organizational values, and societal expectations. The role of C-level executives in this framework is pivotal, as they set strategic priorities and allocate resources.

The Role of UX Professionals in AI Governance

UX professionals bring a unique perspective to AI governance by emphasizing user-centric design, ethical considerations, and real-world usability. Their involvement ensures that AI systems not only perform efficiently but also address the needs and expectations of end-users. By bridging the gap between technical teams and business leaders, UX professionals can drive the creation of AI systems that are both innovative and responsible.

Key Steps to Creating AI Governance

To establish an effective AI governance framework with shared ownership by UX professionals, organizations should consider the following steps:

1. Establish a Cross-Functional AI Governance Committee
A successful AI governance framework begins with collaboration. Organizations should form a cross-functional committee that includes C-level executives, UX professionals, data scientists, legal advisors, and ethicists. This committee can:

- Define the organization's AI vision and ethical principles.
- Establish guidelines for AI development and deployment.
- Monitor compliance with internal and external standards.

2. Embed Ethics and Sustainability into AI Policies
Ethical AI is not a buzzword but a necessity. The governance framework should prioritize transparency, fairness, and accountability. Key initiatives might include:

- Developing ethical AI guidelines informed by global standards.
- Conducting regular audits to assess AI system impacts.
- Integrating sustainability goals, such as energy-efficient AI models.

3. Empower UX Professionals as AI Stewards
To make UX professionals integral to AI governance:

- Involve UX in Early Design Stages: Ensure that UX professionals participate in the ideation and design of AI systems to prioritize user needs.
- Provide Training and Resources: Equip UX teams with the knowledge and tools to evaluate AI algorithms and datasets.
- Foster a Culture of Advocacy: Encourage UX professionals to champion user rights and ethical considerations in AI discussions.

4. Leverage C-Level Advocacy for AI Governance
C-level executives must lead by example, signaling the importance of AI governance across the organization. Their roles include:

- Allocating resources to governance initiatives.
- Setting measurable goals for ethical AI practices.
- Communicating the business value of responsible AI to stakeholders.

5. Implement Feedback Loops and Continuous Improvement
AI governance is not static. Organizations should:

- Establish mechanisms for ongoing user feedback.
- Monitor AI performance and adjust policies as needed.
- Encourage open dialogue between UX professionals and other stakeholders to refine AI systems.

Case Study: A Collaborative Approach to AI Governance

Consider a global retail company implementing AI-driven personalization tools. By forming an AI governance committee, the organization:

- Included UX professionals in discussions about algorithmic transparency.
- Created ethical guidelines addressing data privacy concerns.
- Engaged C-level executives to champion these initiatives, resulting in improved user trust and higher adoption rates.

Conclusion

Creating an AI governance framework that integrates C-level oversight and UX ownership is both a strategic imperative and a moral responsibility. By fostering collaboration, embedding ethical principles, and empowering UX professionals, organizations can build AI systems that are innovative, user-centric, and aligned with societal values. In doing so, they pave the way for sustainable growth and long-term success in the AI era.

How might we integrate Sustainability and Ethics into Organizational Processes?

In the ever-evolving landscape of customer engagement, fostering a culture where user experience (UX) is everyone's responsibility can be transformative. Empowering employees across roles to contribute to UX aligns organizational focus, builds accountability, and enriches the collective ability to deliver exceptional user outcomes. Here's how this vision can be realized, based on various perspectives and insights:

In our discussion on October 13th 2024 we have found the following common denominator and 6 Steps approach:

1. Elevating UX Awareness Across the Organization

A foundational step is to demystify UX, ensuring it is perceived as a basic organizational need rather than a luxury. This entails:

- Education and Inclusion: Offer training programs tailored to various roles, highlighting how UX intersects with their day-to-day responsibilities.

- Showcasing Impact: Share tangible examples of positive and negative UX impacts across the organization. This creates awareness of UX's far-reaching effects on customer satisfaction and business success.

- Cross-functional Exposure: Encourage non-UX professionals to participate in user research and testing, fostering empathy and a deeper understanding of customer behavior.

2. Building a Culture of Shared Acountability

To make UX a shared responsibility, organizations must embed it into their culture:

- Craftsmanship and Ownership: Revive the value of craftsmanship in work, emphasizing pride and quality in deliverables across departments.

- Recognition and Incentives: Reward participation in UX initiatives and celebrate contributions that improve the user experience. This incentivizes engagement and underscores its importance.

- Integrating UX in Rituals: Establish organizational rituals, such as regular UX showcases or feedback sessions, to normalize its role in decision-making.

3. Practical Training and Skill Development

Practical exposure can bridge the gap between theory and actionable contributions:

- Heuristics and Usability Basics: Equip employees with fundamental UX principles, enabling them to integrate user-centric thinking into their work.

- Shadowing UX Professionals: Pair employees with UX teams to observe research, testing, and design processes, fostering collaboration and insight sharing.

4. Creating Proximity to UX Experts

Increasing employees' proximity to UX professionals ensures that knowledge and practices permeate the organization:

- Embedding UX Advocates: Position UX professionals in cross-functional teams to act as catalysts, spreading UX principles organically.

- Field Research Involvement: Encourage employees to accompany UX teams on research visits to see firsthand how products and services are experienced.

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5. Encouraging Habit Formation
Sustainable change often comes from habitual action:

- Feedback Loops: Build habits of consistent user testing, feedback gathering, and iterative improvements. This normalizes the practice of prioritizing the user.

- Cultural Embedding: Align habits with organizational values, emphasizing user focus in day-to-day operations and decision-making.

6. Measuring Success
- To ensure progress, organizations need clear metrics:

- Participation Rates: Track how many employees engage with UX initiatives and training.

- UX Outcomes: Measure improvements in user satisfaction, retention, and task success rates.

- Cultural Shifts: Assess shifts in attitudes toward UX through surveys and qualitative feedback.

Final Thoughts

Empowering all employees to contribute to UX fosters a shared sense of purpose and accountability. By blending education, culture, and practical engagement, organizations can unlock the collective potential of their workforce, ensuring user experience becomes an intrinsic part of their DNA. This shared responsibility not only enriches the user journey but also drives innovation and strengthens organizational cohesion.

How Might We Empower All Employ to Improve the User Experience as a Shared Responsibility?

We discussed this question in our first leadership exchange on October 2024. This was the outcome:

Embedding sustainability and ethics into organizational processes is no longer optional; it is essential for long-term success and societal impact. This article explores actionable strategies to achieve this integration, drawing insights from diverse perspectives.

Defining Sustainability and Ethics
The first step for any organization is to establish a clear definition of what sustainability and ethics mean in its specific context. This foundational clarity ensures alignment across teams and projects. Organizations must take stock of their current practices and articulate why sustainability and ethics matter to them—whether to mitigate risks, enhance brand reputation, or contribute positively to society. Defining these terms enables organizations to align their values with their operational goals and decision-making frameworks

Raising Awareness and Visibility
Awareness is pivotal in making sustainability and ethics integral to processes. Employees, stakeholders, and even customers must understand the reasons behind these efforts. Sharing impact stories and illustrating the consequences of action or inaction can create a compelling narrative. Organizations can employ audits and mapping exercises to identify unintended consequences, helping to uncover hidden impacts and fostering transparency

Choosing Thoughtful Design and Technologies
Sustainability often starts with design. Adopting principles like Dieter Rams' tenets of good design—which emphasize honesty, longevity, and environmental friendliness—can guide product and process development. Organizations should consider whether certain technologies, such as AI, are necessary or if simpler, more sustainable solutions suffice. Additionally, evaluating the trade-offs between local versus cloud systems or device versus non-device solutions can help minimize environmental footprints

Identifying and Mitigating Negative Impacts
Every innovation carries a potential for misuse or harm. It is crucial to recognize and address these risks proactively. Organizations must look beyond the immediate user to consider the broader ecosystem, including societal impacts such as job displacement. By making potential negative impacts visible, organizations can foster dialogue and develop solutions that balance innovation with ethical responsibilities.

Establishing Guardrails and Incentives

Ethical guardrails, such as clear policies and performance standards, can guide decision-making and operations. At the same time, organizations must decide whether to incentivize sustainable and ethical behavior or impose penalties for non-compliance. Both approaches can drive change, but aligning these efforts with business benefits ensures they gain traction.

Profitability and sustainability should not be mutually exclusive; integrating ethical practices into the profit chain makes them more compelling for stakeholders.

Fostering a Narrative of Responsibility

Narratives shape perceptions and priorities. Organizations must craft stories that emphasize the importance of sustainability and ethics. These narratives can counteract misinformation and highlight the shared responsibility of all stakeholders in achieving sustainable outcomes. Designers, developers, and leaders alike are storytellers who can influence societal values through their work.
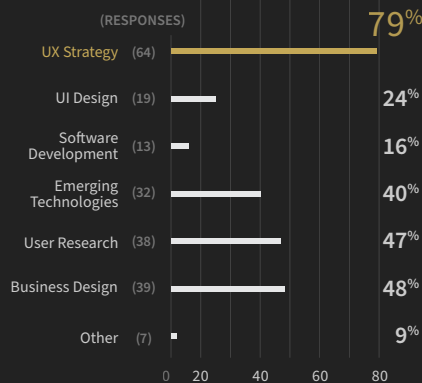
Measuring and Iterating

Finally, organizations need robust metrics to measure their progress. Whether it is reducing carbon emissions, improving labor practices, reducing negative impacts on third party actors or ensuring data privacy, quantifiable goals help track success. Regular audits and cause-and-effect mapping provide feedback loops that inform continuous improvement. By integrating these metrics into their objectives, organizations can ensure sustainability and ethics remain core components of their processes.
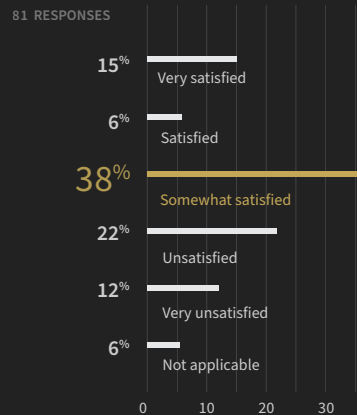
Conclusion

Embedding sustainability and ethics into organizational processes requires intentionality, transparency, and commitment. By defining clear values, raising awareness, leveraging thoughtful design, addressing negative impacts, and aligning these efforts with profitability, organizations can create systems that not only thrive in the present but also contribute positively to the future. This holistic approach ensures that businesses are not just participants in the global economy but also stewards of a sustainable and ethical world.
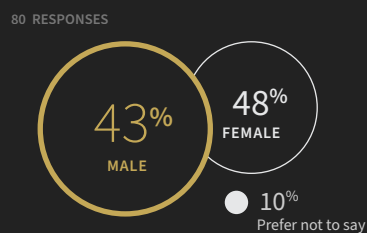
2025 EXPERIENCE TREND SURVEY

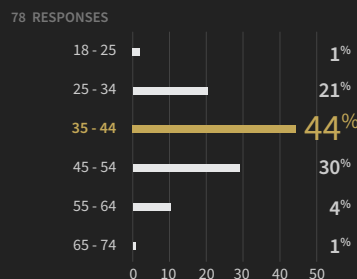**Which areas of Experience Design are you currently most interested?**

(RESPONSES)

Area	Responses	%
UX Strategy	(64)	79%
UI Design	(19)	24%
Software Development	(13)	16%
Emerging Technologies	(32)	40%
User Research	(38)	47%
Business Design	(39)	48%
Other	(7)	9%

Are you satisfied with the role and importance of Experience Design in your company?

81 RESPONSES

15%	Very satisfied
6%	Satisfied
38%	Somewhat satisfied
22%	Unsatisfied
12%	Very unsatisfied
6%	Not applicable

Gender

80 RESPONSES

43% MALE
48% FEMALE
10% Prefer not to say

Age

78 RESPONSES

18 - 25	1%
25 - 34	21%
35 - 44	44%
45 - 54	30%
55 - 64	4%
65 - 74	1%

Which department should Experience Design located in?

79 RESPONSES

Within the Operative area	5%
Middle Management	4%
Directly under the CEO	23%
Dedicated department	23%
Decentralized	13%
Not applicable	4%
Depends on the Company Structure	29%
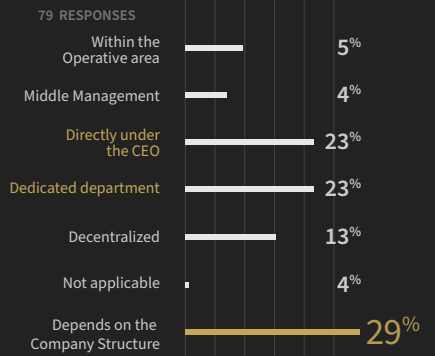
How do you expect your companies Experience Design budget to change in the next year (in 2025)?

81 RESPONSES

6% Significant increase
36% Stay the same
15% Expect slight increase
36% Expect slight decrease
7% Significant decrease
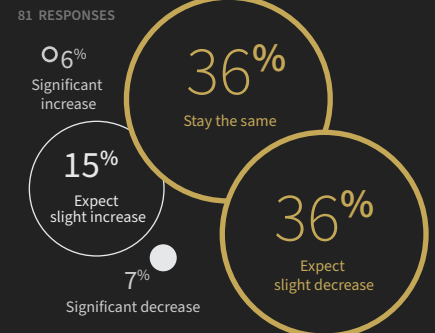
My work is related to Design activities (e.g. Managing, producing, ideating, etc of products, services, processes etc.)

81 RESPONSES

94% YES
6% NO

Company Size

81 RESPONSES

1 - 10	14%
11 - 50	15%
51 - 150	5%
150 - 500	16%
501 - 1,000	11%
1,001 - 5,000	12%
5,000 - 10,000	7%
10,000 & over	20%
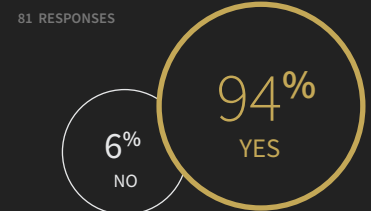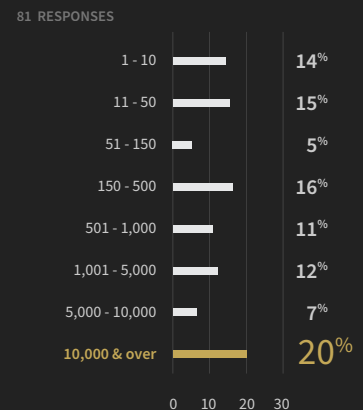
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