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14 Trends Mobile App Designers Should Remember To Improve UX

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Successful CIOs, CTOs & executives from Forbes Technology Council offer firsthand insights on tech & business.

User experience is one of the most important considerations for an app designer—particularly a designer addressing the unique challenges presented by mobile devices. Using the right design strategies and remembering to incorporate the latest UX trends can boost an app's usability and popularity, as well as your company's bottom line.

Below, 14 experts from Forbes Technology Council share the UX trends that mobile app designers should be focusing on.

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1. Offering A Well-Rounded Experience

I think it all has to be about the end-to-end user experience. The user shouldn't know if they are dealing with the front end or the back end as long as they can consume resources and accomplish what they are trying to do. - Haim Glickman, Sungard Availability Services Limited

2. Using Open-Source Toolkits

By leveraging one of the many open-source toolkits to build hybrid applications, you are building on top of functionality that is battle-tested by the technology community. Even better, you can staff an engineering team capable of building an application that reuses components across iOS/Android, phones and tablets, and even the Web. It's maximum productivity. - John Bellone, SS&C Health

3. Leveraging PWA Tech

Thanks to progressive Web application (PWA) technology, developers can distribute their apps outside app stores and directly from their Web pages. PWA can deliver native-like capabilities without the need to develop separate apps for different stores. Most notably, developers can save on app store commissions (up to 30%) and share such savings with their users. - Ahmad (Al) Fares, CeliTech Inc.

4. Including Portrait And Landscape Views

Ensuring that your app is designed to accommodate both portrait and landscape views allows users to orient their device for maximum visibility in the way that works best for them. This flexibility in experience design increases satisfaction and delight and helps maximize adoption among users. - Amy Czuchlewski, Bottle Rocket

5. Focusing On Consistency

Consistency is key across your mobile app—for example, every feature is three or fewer touches/clicks from the point of logging in. Such consistency directs the user to quickly achieve their task and hence raises their productivity. - Ayman Shoukry, Specright Inc.

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6. Enhancing Accessibility

Accessibility should become an essential part of mobile app development out of empathy alone. Otherwise, we would fail to reach close to 15% of the world's population. Furthermore, embracing accessibility drives innovation. It forces developers to understand apps from a whole different perspective, leading us to new and inclusive ways of interacting with software applications. - Nacho De Marco, BairesDev

7. Adding Interactive Features

I would say a combination of several things will be trendy: animated illustrations, video content, storytelling and gamification. Users expect applications to be interactive, and we are going in a direction where video will be one of the main ways to deliver content to users. - Boris Kontsevoi, Intetics Inc.

8. Featuring Image-Based Controls

As mobile screens are getting bigger, their viewing experiences vary, too. Users are expecting an image-based rather than text-based experience to simplify their orientation. Smart UX designers will enable users to search and navigate using more intuitive image-based controls while eliminating the menu clutter. - Liat Zakay, Donde Search

9. Enabling Dark Mode

Light has such a significant effect on our bodies—it changes our sleeping patterns, the way our brains work and more. By giving people the power to use dark mode on a mobile app you give them a way to turn off the light and still stay online (which we know they'll do anyway.) Better still, give them the option to have it switch on and off based on their local time so they don't have to change it manually. - Thomas Griffin, OptinMonster

10. Designing For All Users

Inclusive design is becoming more and more critical. In the past, designers thought about meeting accessibility requirements to meet legal requirements (e.g., the Americans with Disabilities Act). That's table stakes in mobile apps and no longer enough to be successful. The next opportunity is to design for all users. - Nelson Cicchitto, Avatier Corporation

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11. Mimicking A Conversational Experience

Mobile apps have been developed as a separate channel for consumers when it comes to the business-to-consumer industry. Given the push toward an omnichannel, universal experience, a mobile app needs to mimic real-life experiences—for example, when ordering a coffee at a cafe, it includes a conversation with the cashier. A mobile app needs to mimic a similar real-life experience so it seems less technical and more human. - Tanvir Bhangoo, Freshii Inc.

12. Creating Shared Experiences

A lot of professional work and personal dialogue is moving online, especially now with the quarantine in effect. Therefore, the user experience should be envisioned as being for more than the individual. Today, technology is becoming inherently more social, and its evolution is needed now more than ever. Tech must be mobilized to create products and shared experiences that society can benefit from. - Alexandro Pando, Xyrupt Technologies

13. Ensuring It's Fun And Engaging

You want your app to be fun and engaging—something that lights up those pleasure centers in the user's brain whenever they open it. One way to achieve this is by integrating animation. Even simple microinteractions and active menu item animations can make your app easier and more fun to use while giving it a polished, high-tech feel. - Ron Cogburn, Exela Technologies

14. Incorporating Auditor And/Or User Feedback

Testing your assumptions is a "trend" that never fades, and for good reason—it's one of the fastest, most effective ways to figure out if your designs are solving problems or creating more. Whether it's bringing in a UX researcher to audit your app or giving early access to your intended audience, this type of feedback is crucial to formulating a more engaging, relevant user experience. - Marc Fischer, Dogtown Media LLC

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Boris Kontsevoi is a founder and President of Intetics Inc., a leading global software engineering and digital transformation company. Under his leadership, a group of software engineers developed into a truly global technology company with multiple professional certifications and industry awards, including the Global Outsourcing 100, Software 500, and Global Sourcing Association best of class company.

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