Design und Usability
in the Berlin-Brandenburg capital region
Usability and User Experience as Factors for Success

Usability and user experience – in short: UUX – are increasingly understood to be success factors of companies. Products that demonstrate a good user experience are preferred by buyers and users, both on the consumer market as well as in the business environment. They are characterized by increased effectiveness and efficiency and lead to happier, and thus more productive users, customers, and employees. In security-critical applications, such as in control rooms or for medical devices, good usability and user experience is increasingly becoming a legal requirement.

Technical criteria, such as functionality, reliability, and performance are fulfilled by a variety of available IT solutions. As a result, buyers and users are increasingly choosing products based upon UUX aspects as well. A look at the industries shows that the industrial and logistics industry has the largest share of UUX projects (about 39%). UUX projects are also now widespread in e-commerce (about 31%), in the financial services industry (about 22%), in the automotive sector (21%), and in healthcare (16%). However, expertise or knowledge about the appropriate methods are often lacking. The capital region is strongly positioned in this regard with its numerous service providers for usability and user experience testing and analysis, management consulting, prototype development, information architecture, product and industrial design, and design agencies. Larger cluster players such as Zalando, eBay, AVM, SAP, Deutsche Telekom, Akquinet, and many more have maintained their own UUX departments for a long time in order to ensure their market success.

UUX in the Capital Region

Numerous campaigns to promote design and usability have increased the international reputation of the capital region. Creatives and designers love the inspiring environment and benefit from low office and living costs, giving them room to experiment. Networks such as the International Design Center Berlin (IDZ) have more than two hundred design-focused member companies, agencies, institutions, and creatives. In addition to events and formats for networking members, the IDZ carries...
The experience in many of the projects that involved optimizing a product has shown me that usability and design go hand in hand. Anyone uncovering a usability issue also has to provide design solutions to fix it. For the cooperation of human factors experts and designers, which by the way is necessary, the capital region offers an ideal environment.

Prof. Dr. Manfred Thüring
Technische Universität Berlin, Department of Psychology and Ergonomics, Cognitive Psychology and Ergonomics Specialty

Designers develop solutions from the user’s perspective. With this approach, complex technologies and processes can be used to create intuitive and successful products. Technology companies in particular find an enormous number of partners in the design industry of the dynamic capital region.

Ake Rudolph
International Design Center Berlin
Strategic Leadership | Head of Strategy

Community and Events
The relevance of the topic is also reflected in numerous events in Berlin and Brandenburg. Various conference formats such as the World Usability Day Berlin, the Innovationskonferenz Design, the IA Konferenz, the MobX Summit, the UXCamp Europe, or the Human Machine Systems workshop in Berlin deal closely with the topic of design and UUX in various facets. Design and UUX also play an important role at event formats that are not superficially concerned with the topic such as at Droidcon, Berlin Buzzwords, Mobile Tech/IoT-Conference, BITKOM Trendkongress, VR Now CON, Design Days Brandenburg, among others.

Thus, a very lively community of freelancers, students, and employees has formed around UUX topics. Of particular note:

- IxDA Berlin
- Berlin User Experience Designer
- AG Design & Usability
- ProductTank Berlin
Promotion and Financing

Berlin-Brandenburg supports the area of design and usability through a transnational economic policy in the ICT, media, and creative industries cluster. The dense offering of consulting, financing, and targeted promotion creates a unique environment for settlements, startups, and innovative projects.

The two economic development agencies of Berlin and Brandenburg provide information about the various promotion and financing options.

The Berlin Senate Department for Economics, Energy, and Business and the Brandenburg Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy support the industry with grants and loans for property investments, labor costs, or technology-oriented R&D projects, as well as through infrastructure projects, networking, funding competitions, and expo appearances.

The investment banks in Berlin and Brandenburg have set up VC funds, which invest in startups in the early and growth phases. There are also innovation and technology promotion programs.

Selected Promotion Programs for Design and Usability

ProFIT
The ProFIT program, which promotes research, innovation, and technology, supports research and development and related market launch campaigns in key technological sectors.

BERLIN
Design Transfer Bonus
The Design Transfer Bonus program supports the transfer of design expertise from companies in the design sector and academia and from small and medium-sized enterprises developing technology-oriented products or services.

Berlin Innovativ
The Berlin Innovativ program offers medium-sized companies (up to 500 employees) low-interest financing on investments and operating resources.

BRANDENBURG
Mikrokredit Brandenburg
The Mikrokredit Brandenburg program supports small and medium-sized enterprises, such as startup companies and corporate successors, as well as new companies by granting a subsidized loan.

Gründung innovativ
With the Gründung innovativ promotion program, startup entrepreneurs are supported with innovative business ideas and the takeovers of innovative companies in the state of Brandenburg.

Brandenburgischer Innovationsgutschein (BIG)
The “Brandenburgischer Innovationsgutschein (BIG)” [Brandenburg Innovation Voucher] program supports innovation projects in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including craft businesses. The associated BIG Transfer promotes, among others, the transfer of design expertise. Additional Promotion programs include: BIG Digital, BIG FuE, and BIG EU.

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