NUANCE taptu. NEUSTAR NGM tat Immersion

MEX is a very different kind of conference

We bring together 100 of the leading thinkers in mobile telecoms and challenge them to define the cutting edge of user experience through 2 days of learning, debate and networking.
We pride ourselves on the depth of our research, the diversity of our speakers and the relaxed and inspiring environment our venues.

This is our Manifesto

Marek Pawlowski
Editorial Director

Mark Hamilos
Operations Director

Some of our speakers at MEX 2008 include...

Carl Taylor
Director of Applications & Services
Three

Cyrus Allen
Director of Customer Experience
Telstra

Scott Jenson
Manager for Mobile User Interface Design
Google

J D Moore
User Interface Designer
Nokia

Steve Chambers
President, Mobile & Consumer Services
Nuance

JoEllen Kames
Manager for Experience Planning
Motorola

Thomas Kleist
Design Director
Native

Dr Norman Lewis
Chief Strategy Officer
Wireless Grids Corporation

Mike Short
Vice President of R&D
O2 and Chairman of the Mobile Data Association

Jo Rabin
Co - founder and consultant
MobileMonday London

Allen Scott
General Manager
NeuStar NGM

Sofia Svanteson
CEO and Founder
Ocean Observations

Paul Adams
User Experience Researcher
Google

MEX is the strategy forum for the leading minds in mobile telecoms.

The conference helps executives to gain a deeper understanding of customer behaviour and translate that knowledge into better mobile products. Our key objective is raising awareness of user experience issues as a strategic priority for everyone in the value chain, encouraging the mobile business to put consumer needs at the heart of the industry.

How MEX works

- MEX unites 100 of the brightest minds in telecoms with a clear objective: to create a collaborative response to the 10 agenda issues identified in our MEX Manifesto.

- We do this through a blend of inspiring keynote presentations, breakout discussions, panel debates and some unique challenges designed to keep our attendees refeshed and engaged. Everyone plays a role in responding to the agenda.

- Networking is at the heart of the MEX approach. There are open networking sessions on both days and an evening reception. We also actively facilitate new relationships by organising attendees into collaborative breakout teams for some sessions. All delegates receive access to our web-based contact system.

- Our in-house analysts are on-hand to report all the ideas generated by the conference. Conference participants receive a detailed post-event summary (last year it included more than 200 pages of notes, diagrams and commentary) as part of their attendance fee.

- Prior to the event we get people thinking about the Manifesto issues through a series of articles, interviews and videos published in our e-newsletter.

To register or to view the full speaking agenda, please visit www.pmn.co.uk/mex/.

What

MEX - The 4th annual PMN Mobile User Experience conference.

When

27th - 28th May 2008

Where

Wallacespace
22 Dukes Road
London WC1H 9PN
UK

Registration

Delegate places are priced at £1499.

To register on-line, please visit www.pmn.co.uk/mex/. Alternatively, you can call on +44 (0)7767 622957.

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Join the debate

Visit:
www.mobileuserexperence.com
to read the latest research notes and editorials on the MEX Manifesto.

Content itself will be the interface of the future

We believe... Icons are dead and the content itself is the new interface. By stripping away the confusion and clutter of traditional interface elements like menus and scroll bars we can put photos, music and video at the heart of the user experience.

The background The Series 60 multimedia gallery, The Coverflow system on the iPhone, Google Maps... they are all examples of applications where the content itself is at the heart of the user interface. If a user wants to browse music, he should be able to flick through the album art as if he was exploring covers in a record store. Photos should fill the screen and pan and scroll when the phone is moved or tilted.

Photos, calls, texts, music and video should be merged into a single activity log, clearly visible from the home screen. Users think in terms of friends, tasks, days out, favourite songs and web-sites. By separating these elements into individual application silos, the industry is limiting how big a role they play in the mobile experience.

The interface of the future will be content-centric and context aware.

To get you thinking...

Is it possible to rank photos and web pages on the same level of the interaction hierachy as voice calls and text messages? Can all objects be treated as equals within the mobile interface?

Do these sort of icon-lite, menu-free interfaces work on key-driven devices or are they only suitable in a touchscreen environment?

How can the user be prompted to explore the interaction possibilities without the traditional on-screen cues?

Handsets are no longer just for the hand

We believe... The role of the mobile device is expanding beyond the hand. In fact, handsets are spending less time in our palms and instead finding a role at the centre of the room. This trend represents a major new user experience challenge and will require us to think of new ways to interact with mobile devices.

The background Teenagers are relying on their mobiles as music systems in their bedroom. Parents are entertaining their kids with video playback on outings. Executives are tele-conferencing with the speakerphone function of their mobiles. Friends are sharing photos around the dinner table. It all adds up to a new role for mobile devices which goes significantly beyond their original design brief as handheld telephones, built to be comfortable when held to the ear.

These new usage scenarios require us to question the fundamentals of mobile design. There is a generation of users emerging for whom voice calls represent a relatively small percentage of their mobile interaction time and they want devices optimised for very different requirements.

For instance, consider how the integrated GPS on devices from Nokia, Samsung, HTC and others is encouraging users to replace the navigation systems in their cars with mobile phones. In this situation, many of the characteristics of today's handsets become counter-intuitive: small buttons are difficult to press while driving, interface text is hard to read while keeping an eye on the road and incoming calls and messages interrupt the interaction flow.

To get you thinking...

Can we further refine the standard twelve key monobloc design to give us greater flexibility to support these functions?

How much flexibility do we have in software platforms to support these different usage methods?

At what stage in the design process do we focus on particular user requirements and build them in to the hard-ware specification?

Fragmentation is the enemy of innovation

We believe... The structure of the mobile industry is killing application developers. There is a tidal wave of innovative content and services waiting to be unleashed if we can build a business environment which enables new companies to make money from mobile.

The background The industry's biggest players - handset manufacturers, network operators, software platform providers and chipset suppliers - have created a mobile eco-system which is fragmented at every level. As a result, small companies wanting to deploy services through the mobile channel face a minefield of self-proclaimed 'standards' and incompatible software platforms. This increases technical development costs, staff requirements and time-to-market, making it prohibitively expensive for small companies to prosper in the mobile business.

Even experienced developers focusing on a particular programming language find themselves re-coding applications to accommodate the platform variations which proliferate across handset models and network operators. Often the only way to be certain a product will deliver the user experience envisaged by its creators is to invest in physically testing it on every handset on every network. It would be like asking web developers to buy every model of PC and test it on every broadband supplier. As a result, many limit their applications to 'lowest common denominator' options like SMS and far more simply ignore mobile altogether.

To complicate matters further, developers which manage to overcome the technical challenges face an additional battle to negotiate commercial agreements with the numerous companies that control billing relationships with their prospective customer base. These often result in terms that would be deemed punitive in any other industry, with distribution and billing often accounting for more than 50 percent of the price paid by the end consumer.

To get you thinking...

How can we abstract the layers of the development process which cause small companies the most headaches, while still allowing value chain incumbents to maintain their competitive differentiation?

Which development options provide the best opportunity to create compelling user experiences and build profitable businesses?

How can we position add-on services alongside voice and SMS as a core service in the mind of the consumer? What is the best way to provide them with access to the widest choice of third party content, applications and services?

Fashion is a stronger motivator than functionality

We believe... Fashion is a stronger motivator than features. Colour, shape, texture and packaging play a bigger role in influencing mobile purchasing decisions than the specification list. The highest margins in the handset business are achieved by devices which lag the technology curve but invest in brand partnerships and a boutique retail experience.

The background It sells for £269 (USD 552) and yet it has a poor 2 megapixel camera, no 3G, no keypad and no support for memory cards. It can only be obtained from one operator and when you purchase it you are committing yourself to a minimum spend of £899 ($1843) over 18 months. It has been described by consumer watchdogs as the 'worst value mobile deal in history'. It sold more than a million within two and half months of launch. Say hello to iPhone.

According to aggregate estimates issued by several analyst firms, Apple makes a gross margin of around 50% on each iPhone. This contrasts starkly with the 13.9% average margin achieved by the world's five largest handset manufacturers (accounting for more than 80% of the market) in Q3 2007.

The iPhone is the poster child for a whole new generation of handsets which capitalise on consumer desire for the sleek, slick and fashionable. LG offers the Prada phone, Samsung has followed suit with an Armani product and Nokia's 8000 series continues to push the boundaries of how much people are willing to pay for under-specified yet beautifully attired handsets.

4

To get you thinking...

What are the key ingredients which transform a handset with an average specification into a premium product capable of commanding the highest prices? What design techniques can be employed to convey a sense of luxury?

A marketing deal with a major brand and surrounding an existing phone platform with a new casing doesn't make a luxury blockbuster. The most successful devices are those with a pure design concept that runs through all aspects of the user experience, from software interface to retail strategy.

The developing world is the new frontier for mobile user experience

We believe... The developing world is the new frontier for mobile user experience. It is the industry's responsibility to deliver voice communication and internet connectivity to the disconnected in ways which are locally relevant, useable and cost-effective.

The background Cellular networks were introduced to Kerala (India) in 1997. Fishermen soon began investing in mobile phones which allowed them to call local markets while they were still at sea and determine where they would receive the best price for their catch. These developments became the subject of a Harvard economist's acclaimed paper on the efficiency of markets. Robert Jensen's study found that the improvements in information flow facilitated by mobile phones helped to raise the fishermen's profits by 8%, lower consumer prices by 4% and reduce the average 'catch wastage' from around 6.5% to almost zero.

In sub-Saharan Africa, a group of network operators has said it will invest about $50bn to increase mobile coverage from 67% to 90% of the population by 2012. In 2007, only 150m people in this region - representing 20% of the population had mobile phones, yet the region is the fastest growing mobile market in the world. Across the globe, from Latin America to the Pacific Rim, millions of new customers are connecting to mobile networks every week.

What will the mobile user experience look like for these new consumers? Their usage requirements vary from rural workers wanting to speak with friends and family to a new generation of entrepreneurs requiring email and web access. Mobile devices will be their gateway to communications, but it may be in a very different form than what we have come to expect in developed nations.

To get you thinking...

What do we really mean when we talk about the 'developing' world? What are the key customer segments in these markets and what are their usage requirements?

What kind of knowledge and expertise can be transferred from existing projects in developed countries to enhance the mobile user experience for these new customers in the developing world?

Do developing countries actually represent the industry's biggest opportunity for mobile data, providing customers with the quickest, easiest and cheapest way to access internet services? What will these services look like?

Search requires a radically different approach in the mobile enviroment

We believe... Search requires a radically different approach in the mobile environment. To find the answers they are looking for in the time they have available, mobile users need access to the widest range of search techniques, yet these must be provided within a highly constrained interface.

The background A group of friends at a restaurant seeking the answer to a particular question. A commuter walking along a busy street trying to find the time of the next train home. A teenager in his bedroom searching for a video clip. An executive looking for a relevant email as he goes into a meeting. Is there a single mobile interface which can support such diverse search requirements?

Searching for digital information with a desktop computer has been built around keyword input and a summarised results page. Google, Ask, Yahoo and Microsoft Live are variations on a very similar theme. The giants of web-based search are seeking ways to expand their pay-per-click advertising franchises to a larger audience with little consideration for the vastly different behavioural characteristics of mobile users.

However, there are a growing number of innovative start-ups building search engines optimised for mobile. Techniques include asynchronous, message-based services employing a combination of human operators and advanced databases. There are browser-based tools which return search queries as neatly packaged pages with the layout optimised for their context. Some companies are even creating whole new hardware interaction layers to add a third dimensional element to the mobile search experience.

To get you thinking...

Is mobile search an application or an entirely new interface methodology?

How can we embed appropriate search techniques within core mobile applications, enabling users to jump easily from a name in their address book to a list of all the communications they've had with that individual?

What are the hardware and software innovations which can enrich search on mobile devices? How will new sensors, support for 3D graphics and location awareness be applied?

7 Intelligent contact lists are the future centres of the user interface

We believe... Presence and IP-based messaging change the dynamics of mobile communication. The natural focal point for next generation user interfaces is an intelligent, presence-enabled contact list. Enhancing the information and services which can be shared through people-centric networks is the best way to encourage usage of voice, messaging and data.

The background Mobile devices are unique. They are always with us and they are always connected to a network. However, several key areas of the user experience are yet to benefit from this connectivity. The contact list, the interface through which we connect to the most important people in our lives, remains a simple, localised database on most devices.

In its first iteration, the ability to share presence information with our contact lists will enable us indicate how and when we'd like to be communicated with. It will change the experience by providing users with a better contextual understanding of the people they want to contact. New behavioural traits, like scanning your contact list to check who is 'available' or what your contacts are doing, will quickly emerge.

But why should it end there? Perhaps the intelligent contact list is actually the most logical gateway for a much wider range of services? If your best friend takes a photo and wants to share it, should it not appear immediately alongside his profile in your address book? If a key business contact changes his email address, should it not be automatically updated on your device? If parents wants to send pocket money to their children, should they not be able to do that by clicking on their contact listing and selecting the appropriate option?

To get you thinking...

Is it more logical for mobile interactions to start with selecting the contact rather than selecting the application function?

What additional services does an instant messaging architecture encourage? Could it help promote the growth of other applications, such as shopping, music downloads and mobile TV?

How can we open the next generation of messaging architecture to provide a gateway to all the services comprising a user's digital lifestyle?

8

Mobile payments herald the next generational shift

We believe... Mobile payment applications will lead the next major leap in wireless communications, when our interactions with machines start to outnumber our interactions with people. Using our mobile phones to pay for goods and services in the physical world requires an interaction model and user interface of breath-taking simplicity. Cash and credit cards represent a singularly impressive benchmark - only when we deliver unique benefit above and beyond these existing solutions will mobile payments explode.

The background You are doing your daily commute. As always, the train is too crowded to find a seat, so you're standing in the aisle texting with a friend. As the train arrives, you step onto the platform and you keep your phone in your hand, waiting to see your friend's reply. As you walk up to the turnstile, you swipe your handset across the reader almost without thinking and it vibrates in your palm to confirm your ticket payment has been made.

These kinds of natural interactions, where the primary interface is almost invisible, will lead the first wave of applications when handsets start talking to the world around us. To be adopted, they must be simple to use but also provide benefits unique to the mobile device. In the transportation example, these benefits could include avoiding queues by topping up ticket balances direct to the handset and an integrated timetable and route map application.

By using simple, time-saving applications such as these to establish consumer trust and the technology infrastructure, we can begin to build a much wider range of applications. In Japan, operators are already expanding the Osaifu Keitai (electronic wallet) system to allow users to download coupons and information cards from retailers supporting the service. As usage expands, the handset has the potential to take on the role of a 'remote control' for the physical environment.

To get you thinking...

What are the interaction models for some key mobile payment applications and how will these impact software and hardware design requirements?

How do we integrate the user experience across both mobile devices and the physical environment? How do we ensure turnstiles, point of sale terminals and all the other physical infrastructure required to make this work speaks the same interaction language?

What unique characteristics of mobile phones and networks qualify them to serve as the natural interface between humans and the world of embedded intelligence?

Users as individuals: uniquely complex and contradictory

We believe... Customers cannot be defined by numbers or segments or demographics. Every user is uniquely complex and contradictory. If we are to design experiences which recognise customers as individuals, we must develop research tools and analysis techniques which allow us to live and breathe the world as users see it.

The background He is a man in a suit. He spends £200 a month on roaming calls. He subscribes to the Blackberry email service. His operator has him neatly profiled as 'senior executive, world traveller' in its market segmentation model. When his contract comes up for renewal, it has its retention strategy all planned out: it can offer him the newest Blackberry handset at no charge, a great deal on roaming and a free Bluetooth headset. It's a market-leading anti-churn package and it's sure to appeal to someone in his segment.

Wrong. You see, when the high spending executive customer takes off his tie at the end of the day and sits down in a hotel room hundreds of miles from home, what he really wants is to see his young kids on a video call. His Blackberry can't do that and, since he falls under the 'business customer' group at his current operator, no one has thought to include him on the recent video calling promotion sent to all the tech-savvy teenage users.

A store at the airport, however, is more than happy to sell him a handset with video calling from a competing operator, even though he's wearing a suit and this device actually comes from the 'youth market' range. He has no particular loyalty to his current provider since number portability came in. It's a £3000 a year loss for his former operator but a priceless lifestyle gain for the customer. Come to think of it, the Blackberry always made him feel a little too conventional - his shiny new 'youth' phone actually makes him smile in meetings and, more importantly, the kids finally think their Dad is a little more cool.

To get you thinking...

How can we get to know users as individuals? What kind of techniques can we employ to help us see beyond market segments and really get an insight into what drives mobile behaviour?

What's the optimum blend of qualitative insight and quantative data to help us better understand customers?

How do we feed this information back into a mobile industry still dominated by an engineering culture so that it has a real impact on user experience?

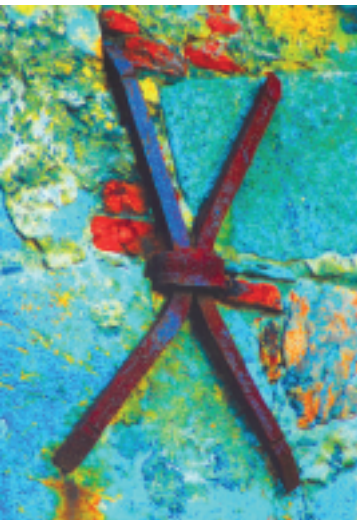
The potential of smart voice

We believe... The industry's love affair with all things '2.0' is blinding us to the reality that customers are spending more time than ever making basic voice calls. There are a wealth of potentially valuable smart voice features, ranging from conference calling and call waiting to texting to decline calls, which are failing because of poor user experience.

The background Even as we start to recognise how mobile user experience issues affect everyone in the value chain, there is a growing tendency to imagine these usability problems are limited solely to mobile data services. With more than 3 billion mobile voice subscriptions in use and voice continuing to account for the lion's share of industry revenues, it is easy to assume there are no problems left to fix.

However, in most markets voice ARPU (average revenue per user) is declining faster than revenue from data is increasing. With operators like Three launching handsets in partnershp with Skype and effectively offering unlimited calling for a flat fee, is there a way to extract new value from voice services by improving the user experience?

Almost every mobile handset is capable of supporting advanced calling features such as multi-party conferencing and call waiting, yet they are used by a tiny fraction of customers and almost exclusively in a business context. These capabilities are potentially of interest to a much wider group of customers - particularly in the youth market - but they are too complex to access and there is significant uncertainty around the pricing.



To get you thinking...

Is the customer landscape evolving to create new demand for advanced voice services?

Skype users regularly convene multi-party conversations or leave their connection open for hours at a time to create an in-room calling experience. Can the mobile interface be enhanced to promote this kind of interaction?

What can be done to encourage the take-up of services such as audio blogging, text-to-decline and push-to-talk?

Title sponsor: Nuance

Nuance (NASDAQ: NUAN) is a leading provider of speech, imaging and mobile input solutions for businesses and consumers around the world. Its technologies, applications and services make the user experience more compelling by transforming the way people interact with information and how they can create and share.

URL: www.nuance.com

Premier sponsor: Taptu

Taptu is the new direct-to-consumer mobile search engine that debuted late 2007 to praise and plaudits from leading industry commentators. Taptu believes that mobile search will only cross to the mainstream when search is made relevant to the needs of today's mobile users. The key to making this transition is to make mobile search 'Social'.

Taptu has demonstrated how social search can work today by applying 'social metrics' to relevancy scoring, for example using number of plays to rank music content and enabling frictionless sharing of results. This approach has led to a number of interface design innovations.

In the near future, social search will utilise human editing of search results and social graph information to make mobile search even more relevant and useful.

Taptu beta is available by visiting http://taptu.com on any internet-enabled mobile phones with a standard mobile browser (no download required) and is accessible worldwide in English, Spanish, French, German and Italian.

URL: taptu.com

Sponsor: NeuStar

Mobile network operators around the world trust NeuStar to enable real-time communications using presence information. NeuStar has enabled mobile instant messaging solutions for operators that have more than 300 million subscribers in total, and NeuStar's customers include many of the leading operators from across the globe.

NeuStar, Inc. (NYSE: NSR) is a provider of clearinghouse and directory services to the global communications and internet industry. In November 2006, NeuStar created its Next Generation Messaging Services by acquiring Followap Inc., a leading global provider of instant messaging, presence and interconnect services.

URL: www.neustar.com/ngm/

Design Competition sponsor: TAT

TAT (The Astonishing Tribe AB) has added the WOW-effect to mobile user interfaces for more than 80 million devices worldwide. Our products, TAT Cascades and TAT Motion Lab, built on the renowned Kastor platform, have transformed the way UI design and graphics can be implemented on a wide range of mobile devices. TAT products are recognised for their time-to-market savings, resource efficiency and platform independence, giving users a more dynamic, faster and richer multimedia experience, in a truly astonishing way.

TAT is headquartered in Malmo, Sweden, and with local presence in Korea, Taiwan, USA, and Japan.

URL: www.tat.se

Design Competition sponsor: Immersion Corporation

"Touch comes before sight, and before speech. It is the first language and the last, and it always tells the truth." – Margaret Atwood

As the global leader in haptic technologies, Immersion provides designers and manufacturers with tools and systems for using the sense of touch to add realism and engagement to digital interfaces.

Every category of machine interaction can benefit from judicious design around the tactile dimension; but nowhere is this sensory channel more relevant than in mobile handheld devices, where screen resolution, audio fidelity, and constrained mechanical controls mean that touch looms especially large in shaping the overall quality of the user experience.

Three of the world's top five handset manufacturers have licensed Immersion's VibeTonz platform and are using it to add tactile feedback to mobile user interfaces, multimedia, and applications. The platform consists of: 1) VibeTonz Mobile Player, a vibrotactile control system for embedding in handsets; 2) VibeTonz API, a set of cross-platform programming language bindings; and 3) VibeTonz Studio, a PC-based tool for authoring touch effects.

Founded in 1993, Immersion also sells haptic technologies into the automotive, gaming, medical, and imaging markets. Headquartered in Silicon Valley, the company has offices in Maryland, Seoul, London, and Helsinki.

URL: www.immersion.com

The MEX Design Competition and Awards

The MEX Design Competition challenges the world's best developers, engineers and visionaries to showcase mobile products or concepts which focus on meeting the unique requirements of individual users. We believe every one of the industry's 3 billion customers should feel their mobile user experience has been designed for them as an individual.

The MEX Design Awards

The winners will be honoured at the MEX Design Awards, an exclusive evening reception held on the opening night of the MEX conference in London on 27th May 2008. MEX Design Awards will be presented in front of an elite audience of the top executives and leading thinkers in mobile.

Enter your products, designs and ideas today

The competition is open for entries today and all are welcome: students, freelancers, professionals and companies. Entry is via a simple, on-line form. There are no limitations on what you can submit to the MEX Design Competition - it is all about giving contestants the creative freedom to think about the mobile experience in different ways. Some examples might include…

- Mobile web-sites
- Handset designs
- Software applications
- Technology platforms
- Design concepts

Entry to the Competition is free thanks to the support from our generous sponsors: Nuance, TAT and Immersion.

Find out more, read the full entry guidelines and enter on-line at: http://www.mobileuserexperience.com/mexdesign/

The closing date for entries is 23:00 GMT, 2nd May 2008.

NUANCE

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What

MEX - The 4th annual PMN Mobile User Experience conference.

When

27th - 28th May 2008

Where

Wallacespace
22 Dukes Road
London WC1H 9PN
UK

Nearest transport links

Euston and Kings Cross St Pancras are major transport hubs for over-ground, underground and bus services. Both are located approximately 5 minutes walk from Wallacespace.

Registration

Delegate places are priced at £1499.

To register on-line, please visit www.pmn.co.uk/mex/. Alternatively, you can call on +44 (0)7767 622957.

We are pleased to accept payment by Amex, Visa, Mastercard and cheque or bank transfer (with company invoice).

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Additional information

Please visit www.pmn.co.uk/mex/ for hotel suggestions, detailed information on transport, the local area and the latest updates to the agenda.

Join the debate

Visit www.mobileuserexperience.com to read the latest research notes and editorials on the conference themes.

Sponsorship opportunities

To enquire about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Marek Pawlowski (marekpawlowski@pmn.co.uk or +44 (0)7767 622957

The concept for the pictures developed through an idea to illustrate and identify the 10 manifesto points. The photography was shot exclusively for the MEX conference as a visual essay exploring the communication of numbers.

Design: Studio John Marsh
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