About Design Forward

Design Forward is a design summit organized by the Design Lab at University of California, San Diego (UCSD), where civic leaders, industry innovators and designers are invited to come together to explore the potential and power of human-centered design in driving San Diego’s economic growth and global identity. Part of the event consisted in an interactive showcase featuring examples of San Diego design thinking and doing. Round Feather presented during the afternoon Salons-San Diego Futures as a key leader in Human Centered Healthcare Design of the region. This event placed design as a critical component of San Diego’s innovation strategy, and connected 1000+ innovators through event partnerships with Startup Week and Creative Mornings San Diego. National and international partners such as Nissan, SAP, GoPro, HP, Aiga, Domus Academy and many others made the even possible.

Introduction

The status quo of healthcare innovation is fragmented. The organizational structure of the healthcare industry is channel/ entity specific with a focus on bottom line profitability by driving efficiency across respective channles. This pursuit of profitability often ignores the entire journey of user’s experience in their context. In today’s digital world most users move effortlessly across screens and channels. However, most healthcare innovations do not deliver this seamlessness in return, thereby fracturing the user’s journey and fostering disempowerment.

The opportunity for design is to seamlessly integrate the various channels that the user encounters in the journey from desire to fulfillment. Innovators must provide integrated solutions that are designed to be there in the precise moment when the user needs and wants them. Moreover, by implementing simple, low-cost modifications that place the user at the core of existing system processes, we can reduce costs while improving functional and emotional outcomes.

Human-centric design has an opportunity in the following healthcare spaces:

Patient Care in Large Hospitals:

Large hospitals pride themselves with the functional expertise of their doctors and the sophistication of their high-cost equipment. They place significant emphasis on the outcome while overlooking key emotional moments during the journey, such as the waiting room. For instance, the leading cancer institute in the U.S. is renowned for the quality of its doctors, pre-op/post-op procedures and treatment plans. Yet they overlook the waiting room experience and the deep anxiety that it inflicts on the patient. The patient may hear repeatedly that she is being treated by the best doctors in the field. But the anxiety inducing moments in the waiting room still provoke lack of confidence and hope. Why? Because the patient is dealing with several unknowns in the waiting room, such as – when the doctor will arrive, which doctor it will be, which nurse, what will they tell me, etc. The human-centric design opportunity arises here to translate the journey of the unknown into one of empowerment.
It does not take a significant financial commitment in the greater scheme of things to be concerned about the waiting room experience. But it is often overlooked because it is not considered important. This is because the emotional effects of the waiting room experience are not as manifest or measurable as the doctor’s credentials, for example. By employing a human-centric approach that addresses the user’s core needs, we can take steps towards dissecting the false dichotomy that expert involvement and capabilities are positively correlated with user’s happiness.

Figure 1. Current Healthcare is not Human Centered
Let's take an example of a patient’s waiting room experience:

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Figure 2. On the left, waiting room experience. On the right, de-humanized patient care.
Understanding Health Insurance

There is an abundance of information about benefits, forms, terms, etc. on health insurance portals and websites, but users still continue to be troubled by the complexities of their insurance. Why is that? Because the system approaches problems with Band-Aid fixes that end up drowning the user in an ocean of convoluted data. For example, when the insurance company requires the healthcare providers to list all their patient encounters to ensure efficiency on the provider portal, the provider loses valuable time that could have been dedicated to his passion for patient care. Similarly, when the member has to spend 45 minutes trying to recover a lost password for his portal, he loses valuable time that could have been dedicated to finding the right doctor for his family. When digital fails to deliver seamless solutions for the user, he/she will inevitably contact the call-centre. Health care providers spend over hundreds of millions of dollars on customer care by increasing staff to answer more calls. But the user does not want to waste time switching between channels, being put on hold and repeatedly providing personal information across touchpoints. Ultimately with the current solution, all constituents in this process are unhappy while hundreds of millions of dollars have been wasted. The human-centric design opportunity arises here to translate the fractured journey into a seamless one by harnessing new technologies and digital solutions that enable a stress free, low-cost resolution that empowers the user as well as the insurance company.

Figure 3. Inefficient Digital Provider and Member Health Insurance Portals leads to excessive need for Call Center
Connected Devices Integrating with User’s Lifestyle

Today, there is a proliferation of apps in the market across entities that are overwhelming to the user with limited usability and usefulness. Most healthcare apps today, do not allow users to easily access relevant information at the time when they need it.

With today’s digital capabilities you can satisfy the user’s needs in their contextual micro moment by integrating apps into a seamless experience that is intuitive to the user. Connected devices that integrate seamlessly with the user’s lifestyle will allow him/her to take proactive decisions in preventative health, cope with stressful medical situations and access the best solutions that are cost-effective, without having to download 10 apps and browse 30 sites.

The future is about seamless experience apps rather than fragmented, transactional ones. The challenge will be to convince the larger entities in the healthcare industry to adopt the common goal of designing user-centric experiences that truly place the human being at the core of the eco-system. The future of such innovation will create a healthier society that is informed on its well-being which in turn will significantly minimize the financial burden endured by the system.

Figure 4. Disconnected and confusing Apps
A human-centric approach will harness the following to improve emotional and functional outcomes while lowering costs:

1) Addressing the entire healthcare ecosystem, not as isolated parts, but as a whole – at the center of which lies the user and his/her emotional experience.

2) Focusing on the tension between the goals of the healthcare entities as well as those of the users, to develop solutions that tackle this duality.

3) Design solutions that blend seamlessly with the user’s lifestyle by being timely, contextual and relevant, thereby evoking bliss and empowerment.

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**Figure 5. By applying Design for Happiness we can design a Human Centered Healthcare at every touchpoint**

**Presenters:**
- **Eapen George** – President and CEO of Round Feather LLC, partner of UST Global
- **Emilia Pucci** – Head of Design for Happiness at Round Feather LLC, partner of UST Global
- **Dr David Whitehouse** – CMO Head of Digital Health Transformation at UST Global
ABOUT UST GLOBAL

UST Global is a digital technology services company that provides next generation digital solutions for Global 1000 companies. Our mission is to ‘Transform Lives’ using the power of digital technologies and the focus is on digital services and solutions. With a business model of ‘fewer CLIENTS, more ATTENTION’, UST Global strives for excellence in providing our clients with the best service and commitment to long-term client success.

Headquartered in Aliso Viejo, California, UST Global has over 15,000 associates operating in 25 countries across four continents. For more information please visit www.ust-global.com