

Unlocking the Future of Mobility

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We are in the middle of one of the most transformative periods in transportation history. The rapid pace of new technologies are making possible entirely new mobility experiences for consumer and commercial applications alike. These experiences will extend far beyond the vehicle to connected lifestyles, shared mobility, and wellness. In the future we will no longer drive cars but, rather, have mobility journeys. We will no longer book hotel rooms but have destination experiences. We no longer get coffee but have connected moments of shared luxury. In many ways this future is already here.

With all of this promise and the pace of new product introductions, a fundamental consumer question still looms: “Why aren’t people adopting these technologies faster?” Manufacturers continue to struggle with how to engage with customers at the right place at the right time and with the right content and capability to ensure adoption.

Throughout our thirty years of research with consumers we continue to come back to the same fundamental truth – the success of new innovations is never about the technology – it will always be about the consumer’s psychology.

Mobility has always been about freedom and empowerment. Legacy automotive brands as well as market newcomers all have access to the technology making innovations possible. Those that will win the mobility future will be the brands that can truly understand how to leverage it to deliver on customer needs and desires. Recognizing this, OEMs in recent years have invested heavily to build cultures of “design thinking” and grow their design research and user experience design teams. We are seeing the early fruit of these investments but there is much more to be done.

The Five Tenants for Successful User Experience

In this issue you will be reading about some of the latest developments in electric, autonomous, and connected experiences from the teams working on them every day. These user experience designers know that just having the technology won’t be enough. The challenge is to understand *what* people truly desire from these new experiences and *how* to deliver them in a way that is easy to learn, trustworthy, safe, and enjoyable.

The desired mobility experience frameworks we've developed are the result of years of user research and user experience design in automotive, public, and commercial transportation. The work we've done to understand and unlock user behaviors and desires has led us to identify five user experience imperatives. These five foundational elements will be key to unlocking the market adoption of connected, electric, and autonomous innovations.

Five Keys To Unlocking Future Mobility Experiences

1. Discover Value through Desirability

You may have heard the adage "people can't tell you what they want so research isn't useful for innovation". This is a myth. It is true that customers can't tell you what to "make" but they can be very articulate about the experiences they "desire" when given the tools to express it.

The Design Thinking process usually starts with "empathy" – the ability to share the feelings of customers. But empathy doesn't completely get us to the foundation for creating future experiences. Ultimately, we need to understand what customers "value". By understanding what they value in current and desired experiences, we can identify the gaps between today's products and services and those that customers really want. We can identify the opportunities to add value and create better future experiences.

We can help people tell us what they want through co-creation or participatory research. These techniques can reveal what experiences people truly desire. And these future stories are the beginning of the innovations that will put us on the path to unlocking the experiences that people will adopt and use. Brands that go beyond looking at net promoter scores and satisfaction ratings to measuring how well new solutions actually deliver on customer value and desire will have a competitive advantage moving forward.

2. See the Whole Customer

It makes sense that the automotive industry has largely focused on in-vehicle experiences to date. But since consumers are seeing mobility as a means to achieve greater, life-level goals, we need to broaden our focus and attention. As an industry, we are no longer looking only at the "experience with the thing" but, rather, the "experience *around* the thing". That is, the end experience goals that mobility solutions really serve.

These life level experiences include productivity, connection, communication, collaboration, and wellness among other emotional and functional benefits that users seek. In our research, we see that consumers are consistently more likely to use and adopt the products and services that meaningfully link to these overarching life-level goals, needs, and emotions – the "jobs to be done" – that motivate them.

A new age of connectedness is allowing us to deliver mass customization and personalized experiences. Consumers will now expect that their preferences, data, and history will follow them to each mobility experience – whether public, personal, or shared – connecting them to new experiences, reducing stress, reclaiming more personal time, and a continuity to life, work, and personal goals.

3. Build Trust for Engagement

With new autonomous, connected and electrified product features and services, the first “moments of truth” matter more than ever. They represent a significant paradigm shift from how users have traditionally engaged with automotive technology. To compound this challenge, the sheer volume of features being offered in new vehicles can be overwhelming to users. Successful early experiences will build trust, keep users engaged and drive faster adoption of new innovations. From the showroom to in-vehicle, connected capabilities, and dealer service experiences, we need to place design emphasis on these first experiential touchpoints. The adage, “you never get a second chance to make a first impression” is as true with connected vehicle use as with inter-personal experiences.

4. Eliminate Ambiguity

Ambiguity in use is one of the two primary destroyers of user experience. A key part of building trust with a vehicle or mobility experience is by eliminating any potential ambiguity the user may have with its operation. If a user doesn’t know if the vehicle has a feature, how to access it, its current status, or how it works, there is almost no way it will be used successfully.

Ambiguity leads to confusion, error, frustration, and lack of confidence – all things to be avoided with experience design. Autonomous features, electric charging, new shared services, vehicle-to-everything capabilities are all new to most consumers. So user experience designers must be increasingly focused on both design and measurement of in-context learning not just ease of use and distraction.

5. Ensure Predictability

The other primary breakdown in user experience is unpredictability. When users are startled by an unexpected outcome, they will often just disengage from using that product or service feature altogether. Certainly ease of use and distraction play a part unpredictability. But satisfaction in use is driven by the size of the gap between a user’s expectations with a product and the actual experience they have with it. An expensive new vehicle with the latest technology promises a great outcome. If the resulting usage experience is unpredictable, dissatisfaction will follow. These little “dissatisfactions” can add up over the course of a whole vehicle experience.

The Promise Kept

Following these five tenants of user experience will greatly increase the likelihood of successful adoption of new mobility products and services. They also drive a much higher likelihood of customer acquisition and retention. The reason is simple. The sale is the promise *made* by the brand. The usage experience is the promise *kept*. It must be trustworthy, learnable, unambiguous and predictable. It must represent the mobility and life value propositions that motivate users. These human factors can be known and designed for ensuring the success of innovation – unlocking the future promised by connected, electric, and autonomous mobility.