

KOMODO

EMBRACING USER EXPERIENCE DESIGN TO TRANSFORM WORKFLOWS

A showcase of businesses in complex sectors
embracing user experience to generate value.

— WHITE PAPER
USER EXPERIENCE

WHAT’S IN THIS WHITEPAPER

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Estimated reading time: 12 mins

01 — ABOUT US

WHY LISTEN TO US?

We're a creative product studio that puts UX at the core of everything we do.

As of 2022, User Experience design has never been a hotter topic. We make no promises to update this whitepaper every year, but we can promise that UX – as a core facet of digital product design – will keep growing in importance. The team at KOMODO has been embracing this for a while, cementing our studio as our clients' go-to design partner across a wide variety of sectors.

In an enormously busy ecosystem where products and apps compete for attention, new market entries are harder than ever. The only way to ensure your product's success is to let go of pre-existing concepts and readdress your plan in the context of your users. With KOMODO, we'll help you define who your users are, what they need, and how your product can meet their changing requirements.

33%

of bad UX experiences result in a user never coming back – and in a crowded market, many never start using the product at all.



KOMODO digital studio.

01 — ABOUT US

Whether you have a struggling project in need of a reboot, a new idea that will revolutionise your industry, or want to refine an existing product into something better, we use our five-step process to make sure your product is as good as it can be:

01

UNDERSTAND

We gather detailed user data and employ empathetic design thinking to identify your users and their behaviours.

02

DEFINE

We scope your project based on real needs, rather than speculation.

03

IDEATE

Our team brings creativity to bear and suggests ideas justified by our UX process.

04

CREATE

Experience an agile process that quickly pulls design and development together to launch your MVP.

05

REFLECT

We don't rest on our laurels – we reflect on the product and improve it based on genuine user data.

02 — WHAT IS UX?

WHAT IS 'UX' DESIGN?

User Experience design is the discipline of enhancing user satisfaction by designing around user needs, behaviours and emotions.

The term 'User Experience', often abbreviated 'UX', was coined in the 1990s by Don Norman – Director of The Design Lab at the University of California and an advocate for user-centred design.

I invented the term because I thought human interface and usability were too narrow. I wanted to cover all aspects of the person's experience with the system.

DON NORMAN

His aim was to push the importance of optimal UX as a basic requirement – that users should receive a personalised, meaningful experience. A user's experience is determined by their emotions and connection with the environment you've designed, and those environments aren't exclusively digital.

The dilution of the term 'UX' in digital sectors makes it harder for outsiders to understand what it means and how it can improve their business. We're always looking to break down barriers – and to make this clearer throughout this whitepaper.

02 — WHAT IS UX?

The Process Behind UX

An effective UX process is based on practice and refined over years of industry experience. Some of the initial stages include:

User Research	Every designer's starting point, and absolutely essential. Data collected at this early stage can improve an existing product's experience or become the foundation for an entirely new one.
User Personas	Data is summarised into user personas to group different user types — a fictional character created to represent a user type who might use a site, brand or product similarly. These become the targeted users and outline goals and needs.
User Stories	A persona's goals and needs are translated into product functionality — a description, in the end-user's language, that captures what they need to do as part of their job.
User Flows	Visualise the path a user takes to complete a task — from the starting point, through the steps required, to the final action — helping outline content requirements and pain points.
Design Iteration	To ensure the prototype meets the user's needs in the best possible way, it's placed in their hands so they can test that it's fit for purpose.

02 — WHAT IS UX?

Good UX is Good for Business

To create a service users engage with, you must build an environment they understand and enjoy. Those who fail sit at a significant disadvantage to competitors.

Amazon invested 100 times more into UX than advertising in its first year – it's now worth over \$1 trillion. Companies boast 37% increased revenue from effective UX, and Airbnb attributes UX for taking its worth to \$10 billion. As IBM's Tom Watson Jr. said in 1973, "good design is good for business" – swap design for UX and the wisdom still rings true.

Despite just 55% of companies performing any UX testing, demand for UX roles keeps surging – making designers more expensive to hire. Google even lists user experience as a search-ranking factor, and remote working has made quality UX skills harder to bring in-house. Glassdoor ranked UX designer among its 50 best jobs and LinkedIn a top-5 in-demand skill.

\$100

returned for every \$2 spent on UX, according to Point Source – and CNN Money predicted demand for UX designers would grow 18% by 2025.

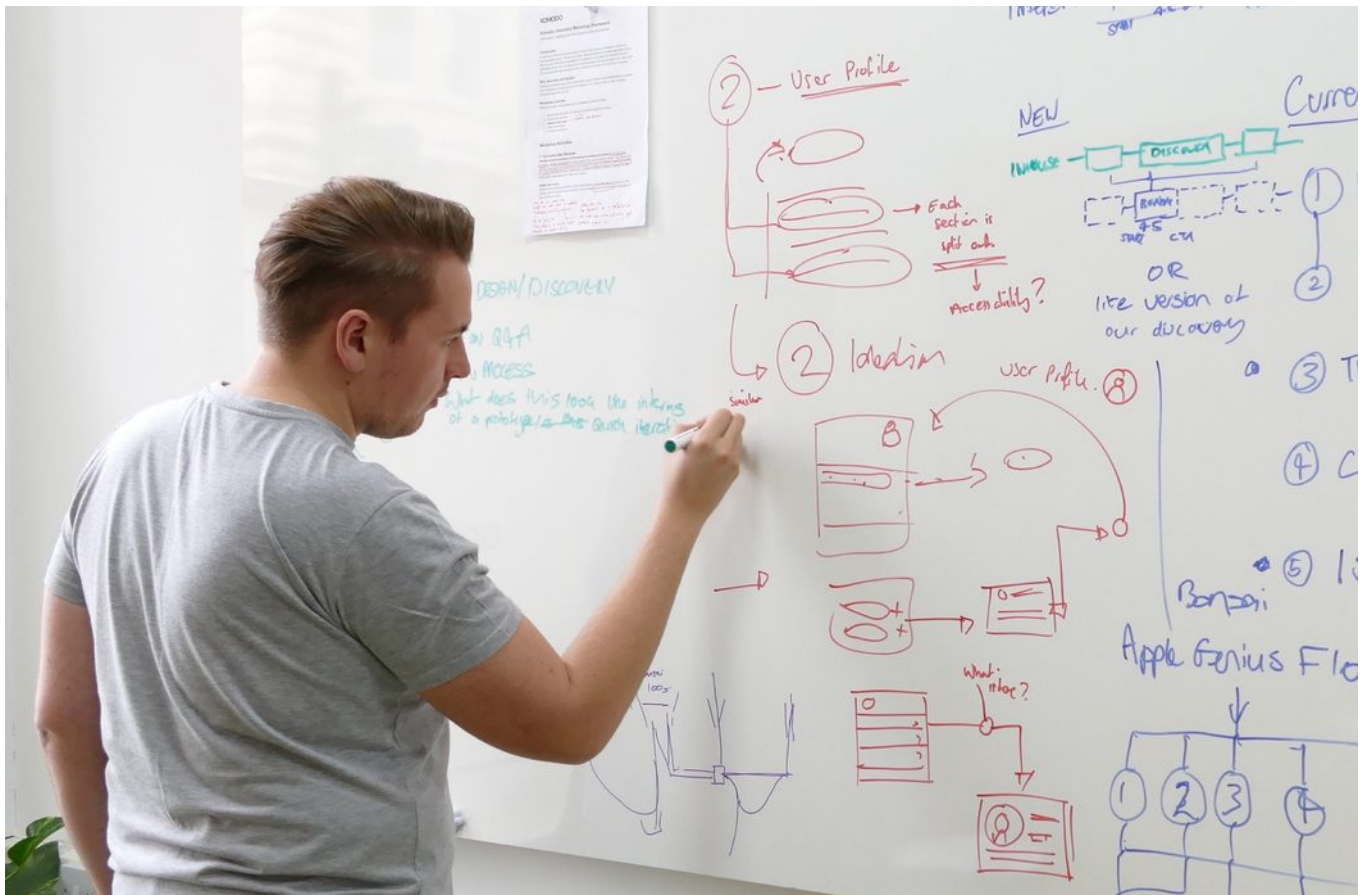
02 — WHAT IS UX?

The Difference Between UX & UI

Both UX and UI are crucial but very different. UI refers to how a product looks and feels; UX makes interfaces useful, while UI makes them aesthetically pleasing. UX designers are the architects of a product – but it must also look appealing, or customers are dissuaded from using it.

Enhanced Business Workflows

More companies, recognising the importance of UX, are adopting these practices and hiring studios to streamline their workflows. To promote good UX, this whitepaper contains case studies where UX proved integral – insights that will hopefully inspire you to review your own processes and see how UX can improve them.



Planning out UX of a digital product.

03 — CASE STUDY

TRANSFORMING THE WAY POLICING SERVICES ARE DELIVERED

Northumbria Police's Police Box project is transforming how policing services are delivered – enabling officers and staff to interact with the information they need, where they need it.

The Police E-Box app has been rolled out across Northumbria Police to several thousand officers, whose highly positive feedback has shaped the product's future – they find it a useful tool in day-to-day duties. IT services were previously accessed via desktop PCs on WAN/LAN within police premises; mobile technology changed the infrastructure requirements and gave staff more flexibility in how they access information.

We produced user stories detailing how users interacted with each function – the backbone of the application, spelling out requirements and matching functions to them. Once all stories were met, the product was functionally complete. Early sprints focused on UX deliverables and the interface; we used interactive prototyping with a cross-section of officers to gauge reactions, then wireframes and a full library of task-flow diagrams, exhaustively tested with the Northumbria Police project team.



Police officer on patrol.

04 — CASE STUDY

RE-THINKING LEGACY INTERFACES IN SOCIAL HOUSING

A social housing technology provider needed a remote interface optimised for iPad – to change how housing officers operate across the country, streamlining their workflow and letting them work remotely with full access to information.

To set out requirements, we held discovery sessions with the client and their customers from numerous housing associations, building understanding of the various user types and drawing up key features for each. We formed detailed user personas per key user, splitting workshop participants into groups to rapidly create personas and user stories, then held a group discussion to agree a high-level feature list and rough roadmap.

Following sessions expanded these personas and dug deeper into each user's goals within the iPad solution. Staying focused on a streamlined workflow usable both on and offline was critical – it let us strip the feature list of unnecessary clutter, making it easier for a housing officer to do their job. As soon as an early prototype was ready, we tested it with a small, selected user group; feedback then drove iteration and crucial UX improvements.



Using a social housing platform.

05 — CASE STUDY

POLICE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM

We worked on a digital career-development mapping tool to support police officers seeking a new internal opportunity – making recruitment more intuitive, with a streamlined search and a way to assess a role’s suitability.

To achieve this, the tool takes existing career skills (if applicable) and compares them to an officer’s chosen ambition, providing job-relevant data so they can make informed decisions. A discovery session at the start with multiple officers gave great insight into what users needed and wanted; attendees prioritised their needs so it was clear which requirements mattered most.

We then produced user flows to drill into the user’s journey through the platform, reiterating to find the best way to lead them to their end goal. Once we had a prototype, an officer-driven user group of around 15 attended, all with bold ideas; after considering the feedback we made minor alterations, then designed and developed the platform in-house. It dramatically improved the career-development workflow, giving officers a clear plan of their pathway and how to achieve it.



Police officers on duty.

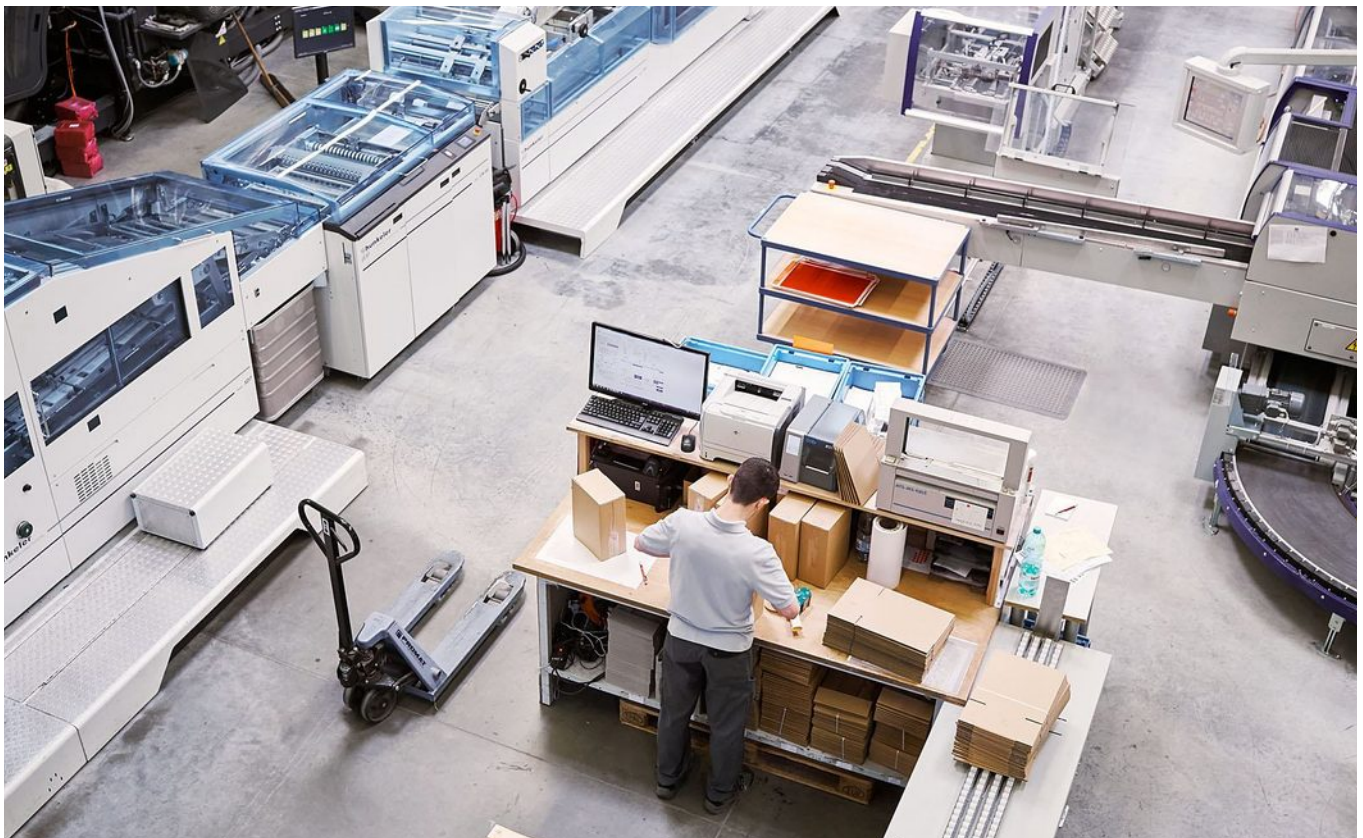
06 — CASE STUDY

JUST-IN-TIME PRODUCT MANUFACTURING

A high-profile manufacturer needed to streamline its workflow to empower its workforce to make better decisions in a time-sensitive environment – its products had grown more complex and in demand over ten years of success.

Having secured a lucrative account, demand soared. The products were once simple and generic, but became more customisable over time, so they needed a new way to support the growth of more unique products. The task was getting the right information to the right people at the right time – to decide when to manufacture, ship and store. There was readily available data, but no time or resources to take advantage of it.

We began by mapping the existing workflow, providing a baseline and unveiling undiscovered issues – a high-risk, overly complicated and inefficient workflow that needed to change. Slow communication meant that by the time workers pieced together data points, the moment to use them effectively had passed. Old processes had also led to larger stock holding than necessary.



Mapping a just-in-time manufacturing workflow.

06 — CASE STUDY

Keeping up with demand was the real challenge. Using historical data and bringing together insights from across the business helped them predict demand and reduce over-manufacturing. Collating and stitching information still only solved half the problem – it needed to be meaningful across the whole organisation, from factory floor to offices. We discovered what floor workers and office employees needed to see, and tailored the interface for all professions.

The outcomes ranged from real-time personalised dashboards for each user to accessible information across multiple devices – employees can now get the insight they need to react. A big part was tying existing systems together for a more automated, streamlined operation.

Future Tech

Manufacturing is a precise industry – the tiniest mistake can be devastating. This risk has allowed AR to flourish: numerous large manufacturers now trial AR in their daily workflows, and with proper user-driven justification, it can be transformative.

\$1bn

lost by Intel due to a fault in a graphics-processor chip – a reminder of how precise manufacturing must be, and why AR is gaining ground.

IN CLOSING

DELIVERING UX-DRIVEN RESULTS FOR YOUR TEAM

KOMODO has UX and empathy baked into the core of our processes. We have specific UX roles, but our whole team instils a user-focused approach at every stage – from initial understanding through launch and beyond. When outsourcing a product, you want a team that challenges you and makes the final product better. Whether you're a manager needing a helping hand or a business without a digital team, KOMODO can be your creative product partner – launching a product that meets your goals and provides real, tangible value to users.

GET IN TOUCH

WWW.KOMODODIGITAL.CO.UK

hello@komododigital.co.uk

0191 228 6555