**Value Design**

What is design? What is good designer to put the question absolutely clear? To my mind it’s not the one with cliché thinking and ready to give you the ready-made answer (with all those layouts, visual effects and animation). It’s the one with a challenge spree and ready to offer a tailor-mage solution for a particular client. The real professional needs to have a wide horizon, a great host of knowledge and be problem and client oriented rather than obsessed with minute details. The most experienced and advanced ones are even able to identify and set goals themselves and are definitely perfect at reaching them. Those are just implementing the idea of Value Design – all their actions serve one aim – make a difference.

1. The problem is that most designers get obsessed with different visual effects.

Most clients unfortunately also see design as special effects and decorations. That is why they turn to professional designers too late, when everything is already done and programmed and the main principles cannot be changed. The only thing left for a designer is decorations and effects.

As a result, designers are discontent with clients because they don’t turn to them from the very beginning. On the other hand, clients are discontent with designers because the program is not user-friendly in the end.

*As an afterthought – designers always mock developers for constantly using some unnecessary plugins, although they themselves are also doing the same – looking for inspiration at different websites like … and playing with options of new programs like Sketch and Macaw.*

2. As mentioned before, the problem is often in the misunderstanding of the essence of design. Clients think it’s all about special effects and decorations. And designers know that it’s impossible to design something taking into consideration the client’s needs and demands. There are numerous methods of identifying those needs: personas, scenarios, storyboards, user tests. All those methods and techniques are united under the name of User Centered Design.

That means that designers are not always right.

3. The problem is that most clients understand design as special effects and decorations. Clients often have their own vision of the final program or product and when they come to consult a designer – this vision is just turned upside down and all the work must be started from scratch again. And as it all goes about big budgets, project managers don’t want big changes, drawing up new contracts, planning new budgets and so on. Their work is to see that program development doesn’t exceed the given time and budget limitations.

[ picture ] { Readmill } – this is an example that was made according to all UCD principles, but unfortunately it failed because the demands of the business were not taken into consideration and it didn’t bring in revenue.

Clients pay money to designers because they have problems to be solved.

Let’s take an example – patients’ registration in a hospital. The woman who does this job (let’s call her Mary), sits in a small noisy room dealing with angry people all the time, trying to put their personal information into the hospital database, using a slow computer with a small monitor.

The hospital management clearly sees that not all the patients who come to the hospital are able to see a doctor because of the slow registration process. And they are ready to spend some money on the solution of this problem.

Mary doesn’t need colorful buttons, generally she doesn’t even have time to admire them. She needs something that will make the data input faster for example search suggestions and the like.

Here is where the technological limitations appear. The hospital database is so slow that in order for the search suggestions to be applied, one needs to spend twice as much money to boost the database performance.

That’s why one shouldn’t get stuck on the problems of a single program – one should think of the hospital problem globally. The budget might be spent on installation of special scanning equipment which can automatically scan questionnaires filled in by the patients themselves. Here one doesn’t even mention decorations and visual effects.

User Experience is not just a collection of pictures, it’s a crossbreed of design, technology and business. Before the work begins it’s very important to identify the problem to be solved, define all possible limitation (budget, technology, knowledge and other). And the designer’s challenge is to offer a solution that fits into all these limitations and meets thedemands of both clients and users.