



User Context Cards

This set of cards helps your team **articulate who you're designing for by understanding the unique context** of the next wave of internet users.

We'd love to hear feedback or stories of how you use the cards with your teams.

The content is built on research conducted by IDEO, IDEO.org, Google, and publicly available material.

Learn more:

DigitalConfidence.Design



Network Connectivity

Mobile networks can be slow, intermittent, and unreliable. This means the next wave of internet users are often interrupted or unable to access the internet while interacting with your product.

ASK YOURSELF...

- ? How often is my user connected to the internet vs. not?
- ? How might an unstable connection impact the product experience?
- ? What parts of my product are still accessible to a user who's offline?
- ? How do I make being offline not feel like an error state?

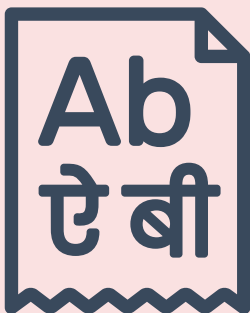


Digital Fluency

For users with low digital confidence, simple interactions like swiping or navigating between screens can feel hidden or intimidating. This leads to uncertainty, frustration, and drop-off.

ASK YOURSELF...

- ? What level of digital fluency do I expect my users to have?
- ? How do my users learn about new features or apps?
- ? What are the most popular apps among my target users?
- ? Are there any existing interaction patterns that feel intuitive to my users?



Textual and Numerical Literacy

Content that requires textual or numerical literacy can create barriers to entry. That means nearly one billion people in the world won't be able to effectively comprehend or engage with your app.

ASK YOURSELF...

- ? What is the average education or literacy level of my users?
- ? Have we considered other ways to present information (e.g., voice or visuals)?
- ? Will users with lower literacy levels still be able to navigate my product?



Financial Literacy

Transitioning from informal financial instruments (e.g., getting a loan from a friend or family) to more formal digital means of payments, savings, or commerce requires people to trust new institutions and learn new terminology.

ASK YOURSELF...

- ? What level of financial literacy does my typical user have?
- ? How can a user's financial literacy directly or indirectly impact their experience with my product?
- ? What types of offline financial interactions do my users currently engage in?



Device Sharing

The next wave of internet users often share devices and accounts to experience content together, learn new skills, and/or reduce hardware costs. Shared and mediated use can pose personal, privacy, and security concerns.

ASK YOURSELF...

- ? Who do my users typically share their phones with?

- ? Who else might be around when my users interact with my product? How does this affect their usage (e.g., monitored)?

- ? How can I make it easy to switch accounts between users?

- ? What types of concerns do users express around privacy in relation to device sharing?

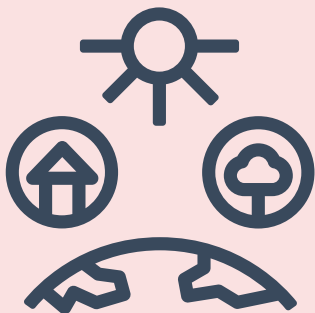


Hardware and OS

The next wave of internet users are often coming online through older, inexpensive devices with small, low-resolution screens and limited battery life. Storage is also limited, and there's a constant struggle to optimize space. Additionally, their devices often run old OS versions.

ASK YOURSELF...

- ? What sorts of devices do my users commonly use?
- ? Does my product respect users' limited storage? How about battery power?
- ? How do common issues like cracked screens affect the usage of my product?
- ? How does my product perform on an older operating system?



Usage Environment

Due to geography and the prevalence of outdoor employment, the next wave of internet users often use their phones in bright light or loud areas.

ASK YOURSELF...

- ? What do the physical spaces that surround my users look and feel like?
- ? Who else might be around when my users interact with my product?
- ? Does my product require a specific environment to be used successfully?

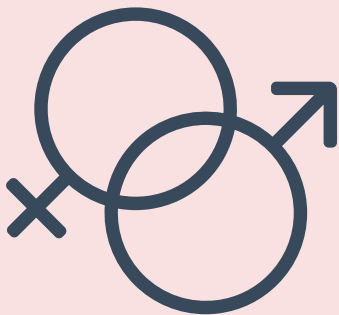


Cultural Context

The cultural norms that surround your user in the offline world impact their expectations of the online world too. Products that resonate act in a way that aligns with local customs, values, and preferences.

ASK YOURSELF...

- ? How can I learn about the culture of my user?
- ? What cultural norms are important for me to consider when designing my product?
- ? Are there any holidays, festivals, or life events (e.g., "back to school") to consider?
- ? Are there opportunities to localize my product through visuals, language, or rituals?



Gender Norms

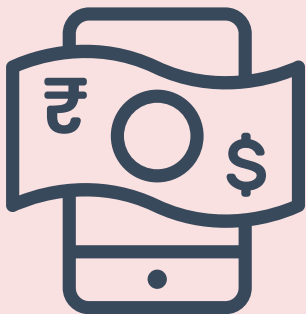
In many parts of the world, societal expectations of the way women spend their time and money make them financially reliant on men for big purchases. This means women's access to smartphones is often influenced by men.

ASK YOURSELF...

- ? Is my product used more by a particular gender, and if so, why?

- ? Do different gendered people use my product in different ways, and if so, how and why?

- ? Is my user's behavior on my product monitored by anyone else in their life?



Budget

Purchasing a smartphone requires saving a significant sum of money for many of the next wave of internet users. It's also important to consider how much your user spends on the internet vs. other priorities like food or housing.

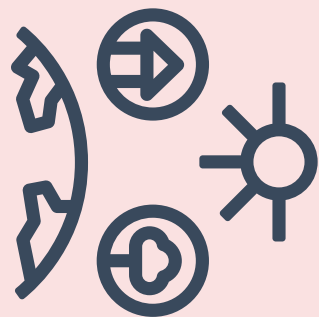
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- ? What do new users think the value or benefit of my product is upon first use?

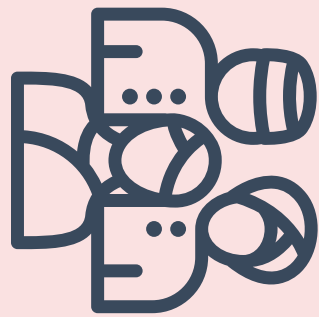
- ? Are my users ready to make payments using my product? What is their preferred method?

- ? Do my users think large data expenditures on my app are "worth it"?



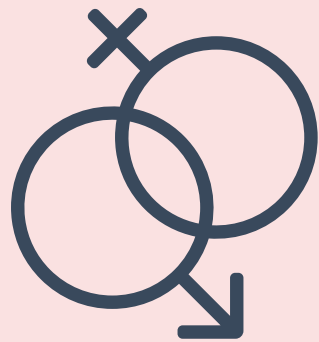
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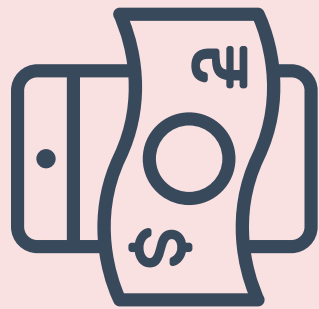
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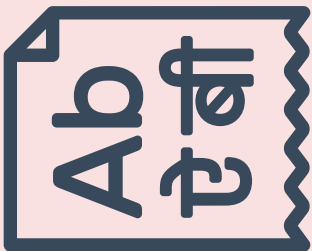
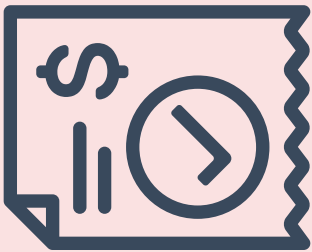
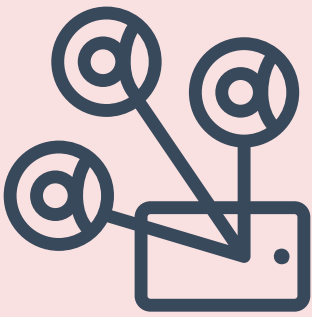
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Print This Page!

- Print these cards on card-stock or heavy paper.
- Either print original size (12x18 sheet) or scale down to A3 or Tabloid (Fit to Page)
- Print them double sided (along the short edge)
- Cut pages along the provided crop marks



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