

What makes or breaks a user-centric approach from a UX and technical writing perspective?

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Abstract

The term 'user-centric approach' steadily gained momentum over the last two decades, to become a popular professional standard in the digitized industries.

The simplest way to define user-centric is in contrast with a product-centric approach: the focus of the technical content is shifted from the product and what it can do, to the user and what they want to do.

The end goal is to make technical content more digestible for users, making them feel that the content is tailored to their individual needs.

Upon closer investigation, it becomes clear that user-centric technical content and the definition given to this approach to content creation varies greatly due to several environmental and individual factors.

What seems to have become an industry standard, is an umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of practices that are sometimes difficult to pinpoint with precision and accuracy.

What does this approach actually mean to professionals? What are the facilitating and the challenging factors that come with this new way of thinking technical content creation?

Keywords: user-centric, technical writing, UX, customer, digital, technical content

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Please note that this article uses the Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA) referencing style.

Introduction

Most technical writers and UX designers working in digitized industries are familiar with the term user-centric approach. The concepts attached to the terms are also sometimes referred to as human-centered design or user-centric design. One of its definitions is: “an optimistic approach to invent new solutions. It starts with human beings and ends with the answers that are tailored to their individual needs.”

¹ This definition is clear while also leaving quite a bit of room for interpretations, especially when it comes to its practical implementation.

This fairly recent approach to thinking and delivering digital products and content was driven by an interest in reaching and retaining an ever-growing number of users across industries. This approach was originally a social science concept rooted in research psychology, first theorized by Don Norman and Peter Lindsay in 1986². The concept of user-centric approach thus slowly shifted over the years from the academic realm to the professional reality of many digitized industries. What a user-centric approach means from a practical perspective is certainly removed to a degree from its original academic definition.

¹ Sergey Gladkiy, User-Centered Design: Process and Benefits (2018) <<https://uxplanet.org/user-centered-design-process-and-benefits-fd9e431eb5a9>> [accessed 7 July 2020].

² Don Norman, Peter Lindsay, Human Information Processing: an Introduction to Psychology (New York Academic Press, 1986).

This user-centric approach that was first standardized in 1999³ as “human-centered design”, has become a current standard⁴ that is part of a larger array of accessibility standards for digital products and content. This standardization raises the question of what does this term used by many technical writers and UX designers really mean? Is the standard scrupulously studied and applied?

We decided to opt for the term user-centric approach in our article in order to include both technical communicators and UX designers because they are key contributors to the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach. Whether related to user experience or technical communication, this approach to technical content production at large has become part of the standard lingo in those fields. Delivering user-centric products and therefore technical content has become a standard across most digitized sectors that do not require compliance to strict standards and regulations. This approach that keeps the user in mind every step of the way to a final user facing product or content aims at increasing the user’s engagement with the product or the content which also means increased profit for these companies.

Our research aims at exploring what makes or breaks a user centric approach for UX and technical communication professionals.

³ ISO, Human-centred design processes for interactive systems (1999) <<https://www.iso.org/standard/21197.html>> [accessed 7 July 2020].

⁴ ISO, Ergonomics of human-system interaction — Part 210: Human-centred design for interactive systems (2019) <<https://www.iso.org/standard/77520.html>> [accessed 7 July 2020].

Methods

We blended quantitative and qualitative research for this article. We decided to create a survey⁵ that we shared across different channels. It is comprised of 19 questions divided into two parts, each providing a different range of information. Most questions had a set of answers that could then be elaborated on by the respondents.

The first part gave us general insight on who the surveyed professionals were: their age range, their background, how long they've been working in their field. We wanted to be able to cross reference the different subsets of our sample population, while also making sure the information provided came from people who fitted the two general profiles we defined as a scope for our survey (technical writers and UX designers).

The second part focused solely on what a user-centric approach meant to them in their work and what facilitated or hindered its implementation in their day to day work. Our quantitative questions were followed up by a qualitative question that let the respondents elaborate on their previous choice. We used this combination to help nuance our statistics but also to let respondents share insights we may not even have considered in our scope. The aim was to define a clear scope and get

⁵ Survey results are not attached to the article due to space limitations and anonymity purposes, but they can be provided by the authors upon request.

insights on our questions but also to leave the door open to findings that we didn't suspect.

We decided to survey technical writers and UX designers as they are the tech professionals who are most likely to implement user-centric approaches. Technical writers in the help content and UX designers in the UI content they both create to guide and help end users. When researching the term user-centric approach, we often see other satellite terms such as design and conception.

Our sample population is composed of 24 French-speaking professionals who answered our survey. We aimed at getting a sample population that was as diverse as possible to get a better overview of what it means for professionals across the board. This also gives us the possibility to see trends emerge from different subsets of the sample population. The individuals who answered our questionnaire were UX designer and technical writers from different companies who had varying levels of expertise in their respective fields. We contacted them by emails and on LinkedIn and we gathered the results and turned them into pie charts and tables.

Results

The following charts detail our survey findings. We also acknowledge any important factors that can have an impact on the conclusions we can draw from the results.

Part 1 of the survey

The age range of our population sample has a slight overrepresentation of professionals between the age of 18 and 39, comprising just under 71% of the total population sample. We mostly collected insights from professionals in their early to mid career.

How old are you?

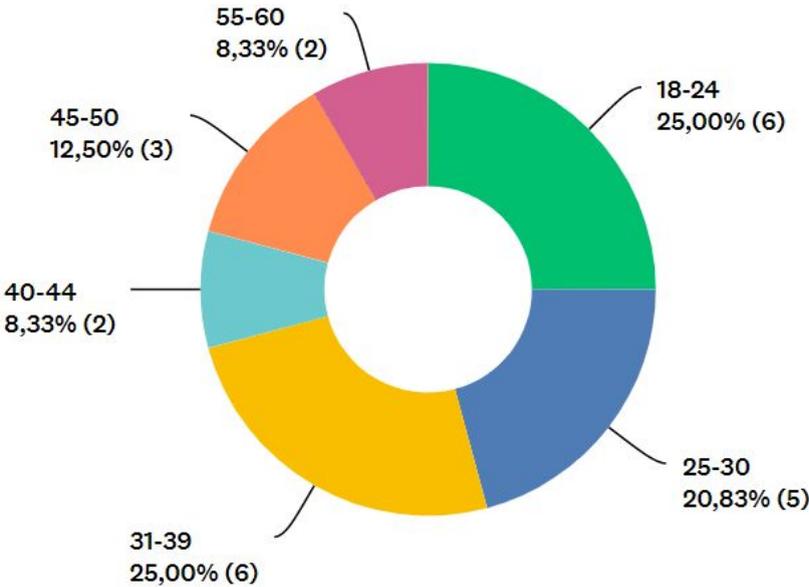


Figure 1 - How old are you? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

Nearly 96% of the respondents were educated at university level, with the large majority holding a graduate degree. Three quarters of them obtained a degree related to UX design or technical writing.

What's your highest level of education?

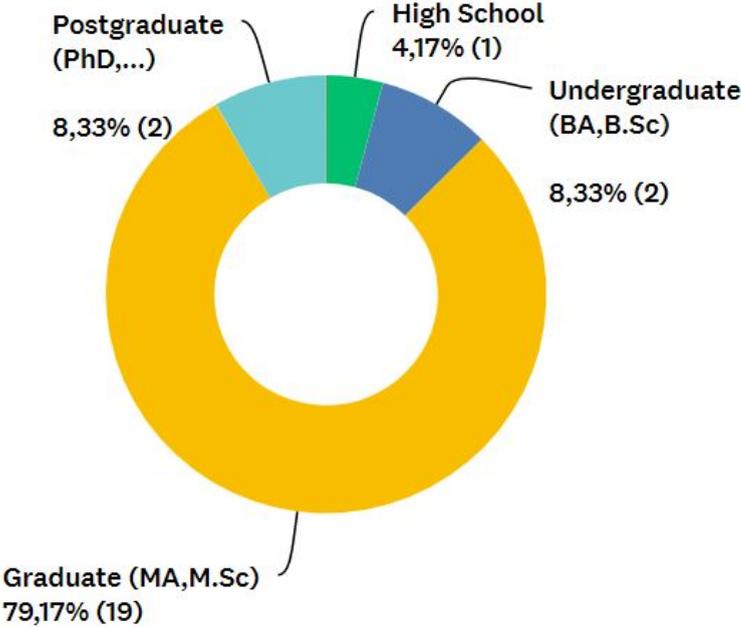


Figure 2 - What's your highest level of education? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

Did you obtain any degree or certificate related to technical writing or UX design?

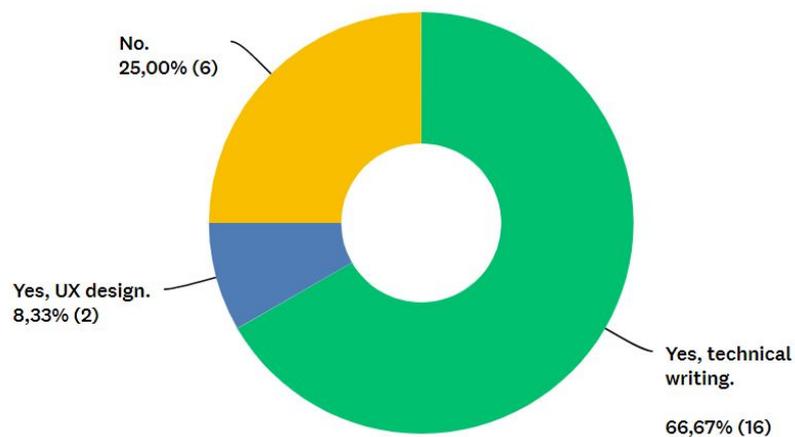


Figure 3 - Did you obtain any degree or certificate related to technical writing or UX design? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

A little over half the respondents are technical writers. However the underrepresentation of UX designer is nuanced by the 'Other' subset comprised mostly of UX writers.

The split is almost even between respondents who have had another career prior to their current one and those who did not.

Half of the respondents have less than two years of experience in UX design or technical writing. A third of them has over ten years of experience in their field. We have a relatively good distribution between junior and senior professionals with a slight underrepresentation of professionals between these experience levels.

What is your field of work?

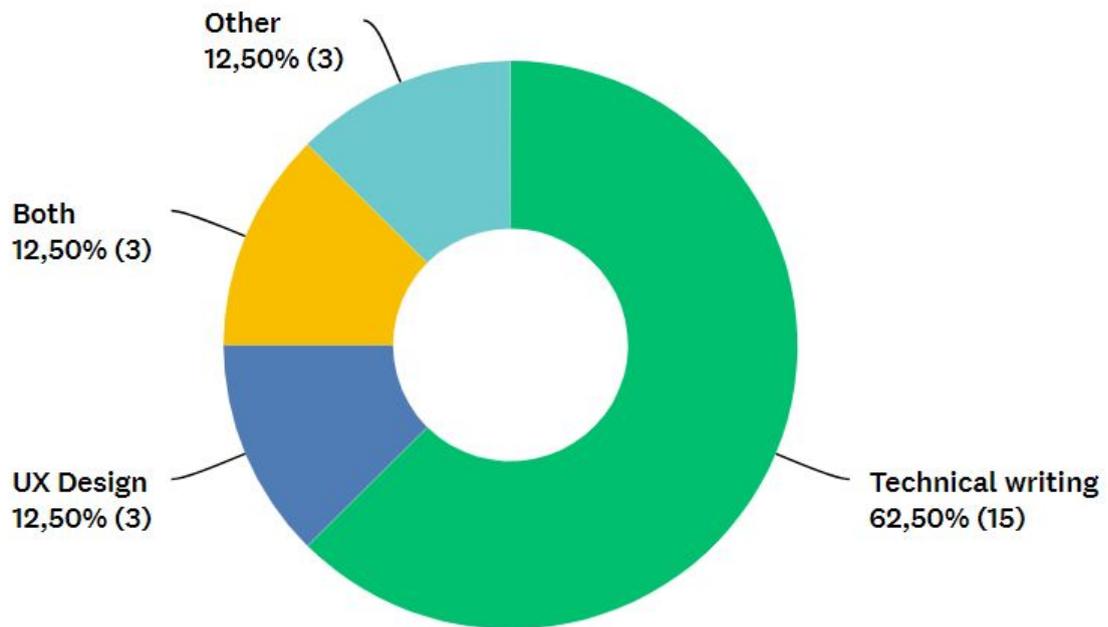


Figure 4 - What is your field of work? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

How long have you been working in your field?

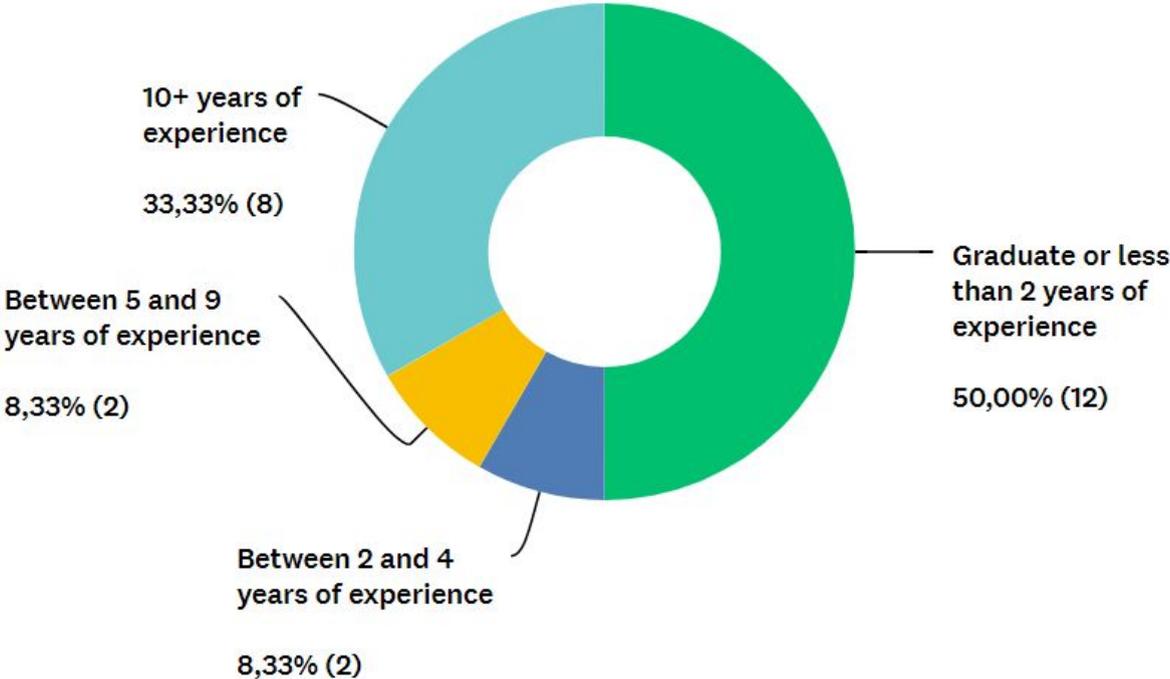


Figure 5 - How long have you been working in your field? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

Did you work in any other field prior to that?

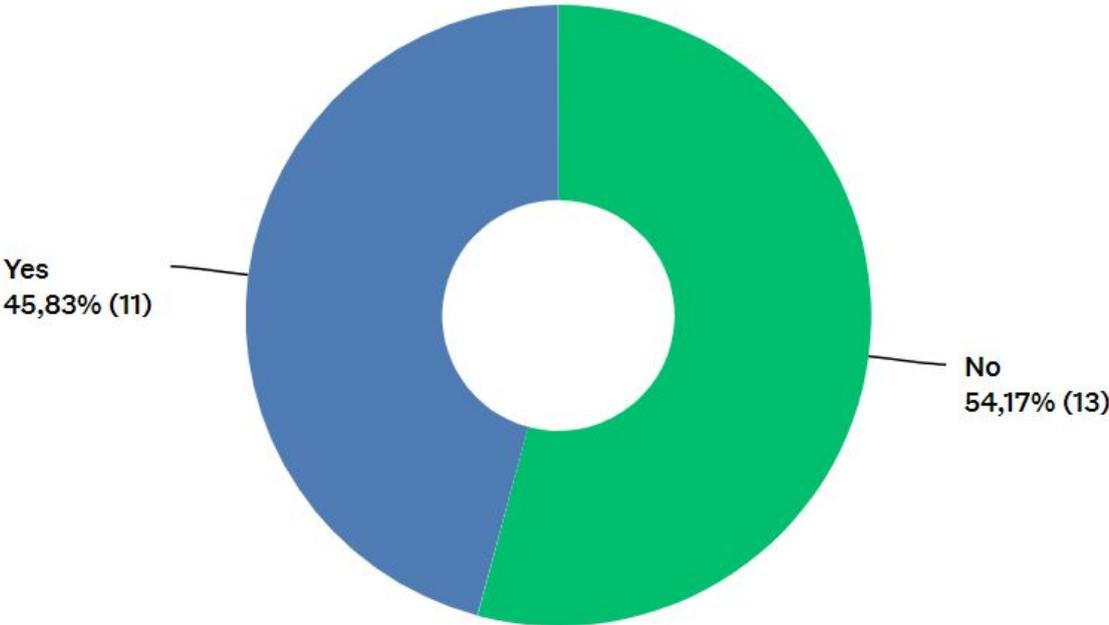


Figure 6 - Did you work in any other field prior to that? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

Yes answers include: “translation”, “project management for translation project”, “web development”, “retail”, “communication”, “accounting”, “sales”, “optronics”, “software transformation”, “quality assurance testing, translation and sales”

From these answers, we can note a balance between respondents who have always worked in the technical communication field and those who possess another background. So one can wonder if it is more important to have a degree in technical communication, maybe without technical knowledge, or if it is more important to have technical knowledge and turn to technical communication?

Most of the yes answers worked in “client-oriented” fields, in which the users, the clients, the readers are important. That most likely gave them a useful experience to turn to technical communication.

What is your company's business sector?⁶

- Software: 7
- Technology: 6
- Health: 2
- Communications: 2
- Banking: 2
- Defense: 2
- Tourism: 1

⁶ 22 respondents answered that questions

The vast majority of respondents work for software or tech companies. They overwhelmingly work for larger groups, with under 15% of them working in structures with less than 100 employees.

What's the size of your company?

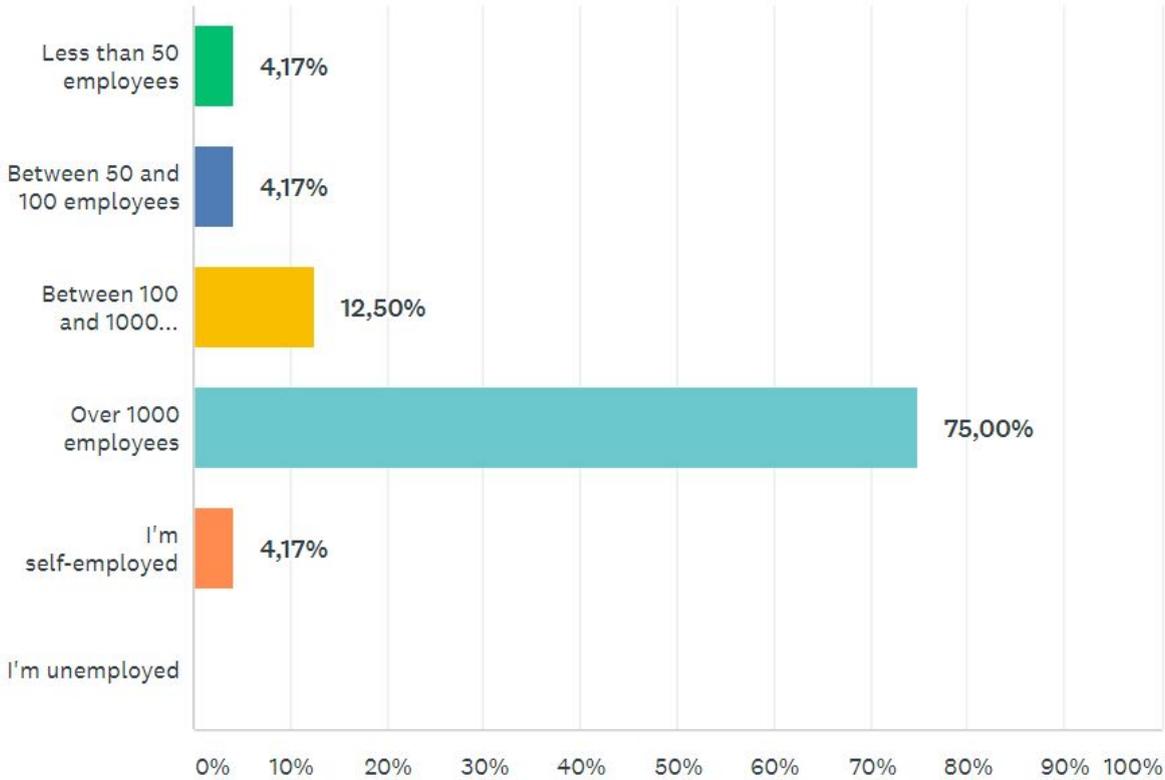


Figure 7 - What's the size of your company? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

Part 2 of the survey

This part of the survey focuses on the definition of the user centric approach for the respondents and how various influencers impact the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach. It includes sliding scale answers going from “not important” to “somewhat important” to “very important”. It also includes respondents’ open answers.

What does a user-centric approach mean to you?⁷

Most answers to that question revolve around the user’s needs and task completion as shown by the quotes below⁸:

“It means to put the user at the center of every decision. Not base our decisions only on our own experience. Also the wording needs to be based on the user's needs rather than on the tools functionalities.”

“All types of elements put in place so that users are satisfied with the final result as much as possible.”

“It means it is an approach that focuses on the user’s needs”

⁷ 22 respondents answered that question.

⁸ Full answers list is available in appendix A

“Empathy, always thinking about what the user will need and how we can help him reach his objectives. How to make a product and its documentation accessible for the user etc.”

Figure 9 - What does a user-centric approach mean to you? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

How important is having a user-centric approach in your work?

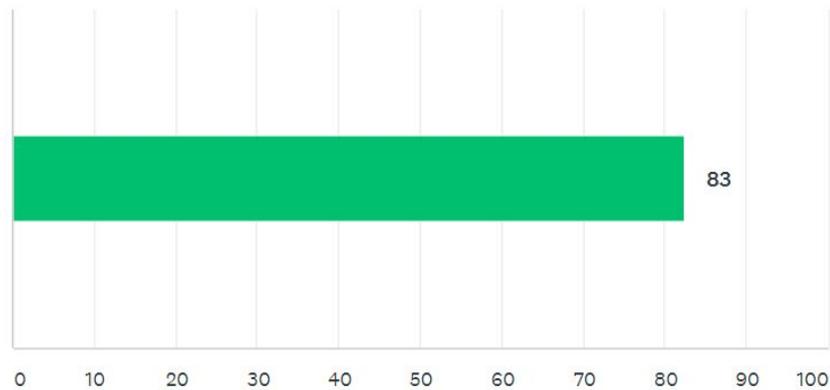


Figure 10 - How important is having a user-centric approach in your work? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

The average sits at 83%, with answers ranging from 0 to 100%. The average score is 83 so for most respondents, having a user-centric approach is important in their work.

Could you produce work that isn't user-centric?

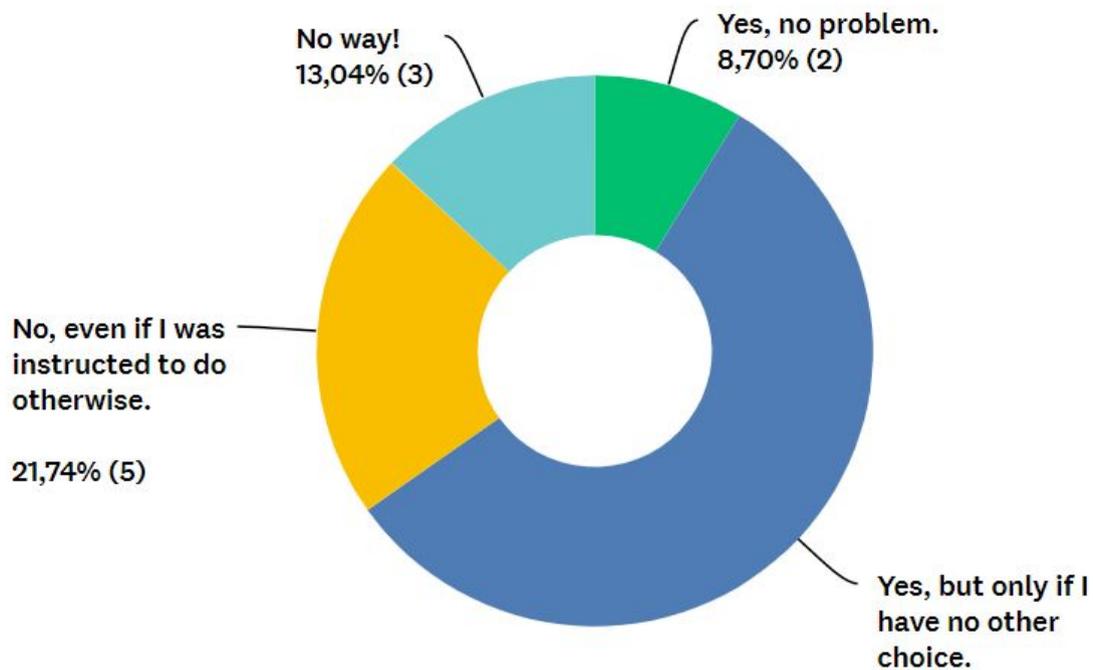


Figure 11 - Could you produce work that isn't user-centric? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

Only 8% of respondents would adopt a non user-centric approach in their work. Just under 34%% would not even consider it an option. Over 40% would agree to produce non-user centric work, only if no other option was available.

This figure confirms the tendency we got from figure 10, that is, user-centric work is important for most respondents. 13 people tell us that they could produce user-centric work but they would be bothered by it. They would rather produce user-centric work. 8 respondents clearly state that their work has to be user-centric.

Organize the following elements needed for the implementation of a user-centric approach from the most important to the least important? ⁹

	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
▼ Budget available for the project	13,04% 3	8,70% 2	8,70% 2	21,74% 5	34,78% 8	13,04% 3	23	3,04
▼ Time available to implement the project	4,35% 1	34,78% 8	17,39% 4	21,74% 5	17,39% 4	4,35% 1	23	3,74
▼ Number of people involved in the project	8,70% 2	8,70% 2	17,39% 4	21,74% 5	8,70% 2	34,78% 8	23	2,83
▼ Expertise in technical writing / UX design of the people involved in the project	30,43% 7	21,74% 5	13,04% 3	21,74% 5	4,35% 1	8,70% 2	23	4,26
▼ Passion and drive for the project	21,74% 5	8,70% 2	17,39% 4	4,35% 1	26,09% 6	21,74% 5	23	3,30
▼ Support of the hierarchy and cooperation with other teams	21,74% 5	17,39% 4	26,09% 6	8,70% 2	8,70% 2	17,39% 4	23	3,83

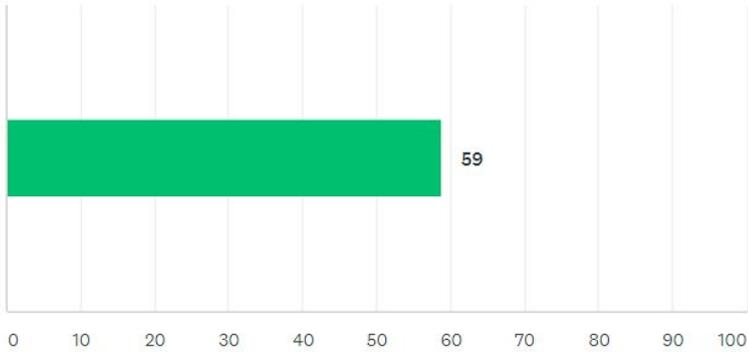
Figure 12 - Organize the following elements needed for the implementation of a user-centric approach from the most important to the least important? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

The expertise in technical writing or UX design of the people involved in the project is the factor that ranks highest overall in the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach. The second most popular factor overall is the support of the hierarchy, closely followed by the time available to implement the project. Passion and drive for the project is the fourth most important factor followed by the budget

⁹ 23 respondents answered that question.

available for the project. The overall least important factor is the number of people involved in the project.

How important is budget when implementing and maintaining a user-centric approach in deliverables?



10

Figure 13 - How important is budget when implementing and maintaining a user-centric approach in deliverables? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.

Answers ranged from 2% to 100%. The average sits at 59%, meaning close to “somewhat important” on the sliding scale.

¹⁰ 23 respondents answered that question.

How important is it to have support from managers and colleagues when implementing and maintaining a user-centric approach?

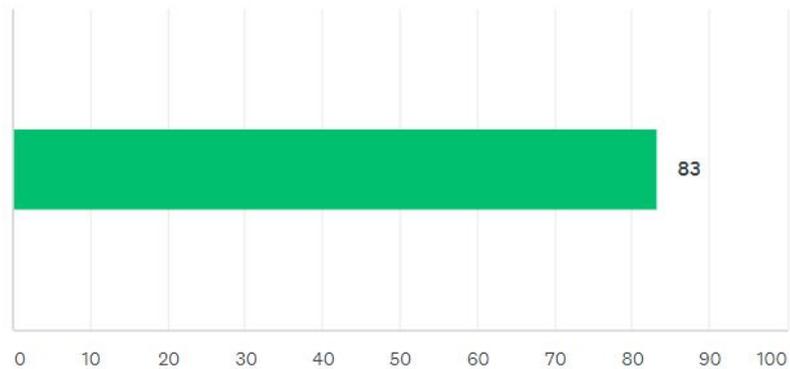


Figure 14 - How important is it to have support from managers and colleagues when implementing and maintaining a user-centric approach? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.¹¹

The range of answers was between 27% and 100%. The average answer is 83%, meaning it is close to “very important” on the sliding scale. This figure also correlates with figure 12, ranking manager support as the second most important factor for implementing a user-centric approach. 21 respondents gave this factor a score above 60%, and 13 among them gave it a score over 90%.

¹¹ 23 respondents answered that question.

How important is the size of the team in charge of the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach?

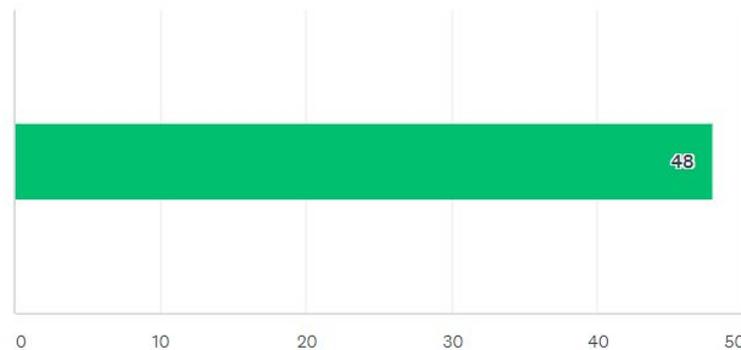


Figure 15 - How important is the size of the team in charge of the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach? Survey on 24 respondents, July 2020.¹²

The lowest score is 0% and the highest is 98%. The average score is 83%. Only 8 respondents gave this factor a score below 50% which roughly translates to a third of the respondents. It means that these 8 respondents gave a score sufficiently low to actually lower the average score. 6 respondents gave this factor a score of 60% or higher. The remaining respondents are located between 50% and 59%.

Which other factors can contribute to the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach¹³?

The main points raised by the respondents were related to the company and the end-users. Contact with end users is the main factor for many professionals. Having

¹² 23 respondents answered this question.

¹³ 23 respondents answered this question.

a company environment that promotes a user-centric approach is the second most recurring factor.¹⁴

“Feedback from users, support tickets, etc.”

“Any kind of experience using this concept would be welcome, I think. We don't all see things the same way, we don't all have the same needs either. So the more opinions, the better it will be.”

“User feedback”

“Clear company-wide KPIs > proving the approach works is key to its long-term implementation. Communication > linked to the idea of cooperation with other teams. A user-centric approach can only work long-term when you get the buy-in from everybody, from managers to developers. It's crucial to communicate this shift or plan to everyone within the company.”

“Company culture”

¹⁴ Full answers list is available in Appendix B at the end of the article

“The direct relation you have with the end-user of a project and the degree with which he feels invested in the design process. There you can have best insights and opinion on the usability as well as the feeling of a person as he is using a tool.”

Which other factors can be detrimental to the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach?¹⁵

Respondents had very different answers to that specific question but the recurring theme was lack of user contact and knowledge about them. ¹⁶

“It can be a term that's used way too loosely and end up being hollow. Especially when it's implemented across many different teams. It's hard to harmonize.”

“If a product is not user-friendly, then it is difficult to make a user-centric documentation...”

“No clear objectives > hard to work towards a user-centric approach without any goals or focus”

“No contact between the users and the company.”

¹⁵ 21 respondents answered this question.

¹⁶ Full answers list available in Appendix C of the article.

“Go see how the users are constrained in their environment (objectives of the hierarchy, complex imposed procedures, autonomy or authorization request necessary for everything, report to write and distribute for each action undertaken, follow-up of the actions ...) before to offer them functions that they will not be able to implement because of these constraints.”

“To not have any skill in UX design”

Discussion

We have articulated the analysis and discussion of our research results around two points: what does a user-centric approach really mean for UX and technical writing professionals and can we single out a factor that makes or breaks a user-centric approach.

What does a user-centric approach actually mean to UX and technical communication professionals?

Most professionals surveyed have a degree in UX design or technical writing so they know what a user-centric approach means in terms of its original theory as well as in practice. Respondents without a degree in those fields had a customer-facing background before turning to technical communication, which means they gained, to a certain extent, a hands-on experience working on a user-centric approach. The common thread linking all professionals is their understanding (theoretical and/or hands-on) of who users are and what they may be looking for in the content they check or the product they use.

From the respondents' answers, we understand that "user-centric" is quite self-explanatory. The hour of glory of the product is over, now the user is at the center of attention. Users of digital solutions and content are faced with an

overwhelming amount of options that are very similar. The way to retain them seems to have shifted from what the solution or the content can do, to how the user feels about the content or the solution. The production is made with and for the user. UX and technical communication professionals gather information about the user by questioning them and base all their decisions on their answers. The goal is to make sure to satisfy and meet the user's needs in a way that goes beyond simple technical production.

“It means to put the user at the center of every decision. Not base our decisions only on our own experience. Also the wording needs to be based on the user's needs rather than on the tools functionalities.”

This quote from a professional further reinforces our assumption that, while a user-centric approach can take many forms, its core always remains to keep the user in mind while removing unconscious biases. Features and the content itself is important, but not as important as making sure the user sees their needs met, from their perspective.

Is there a single decisive contributing factor to the implementation of a user-centric approach?

The main takeaway from our survey is that while factors can be ranked by order of importance, the results always need to be nuanced. A user-centric

approach depends on many factors. Their importance not only vary sometimes greatly between professionals, but they also are often linked to one another.

The answers from figure 13 are telling. The majority of respondents agree that having an expertise in UX design and technical communication is important for the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach. With their answers, respondents highlight the importance of methodology and theoretical foundations in order to meet the user's needs. One cannot turn into a UX designer or technical writer and implement a user-centric approach without proper training. We had assumed prior to seeing the results that because a user-centric approach requires a number of soft skills in order to deal with users and customers, hard skills would probably rank lower.

We can understand from figure 14 that it is most likely the manager's decision to implement a user-centric approach. Without managers' support, professionals are less likely to be able to implement and maintain a user-centric approach. Therefore, deciding to implement a user-centric approach is certainly a team decision that requires support from the entire structure. A respondent summarized it as follows: "*a common strategy in the company*". While a user-centric approach seems to be broadly adopted in the fields of the professionals we surveyed, it's also worth noting that the approach requires a lot of means (human and material) which can make it tricky to implement and maintain. A professional mentioned: "*the benefit vs effort ratio. If it's going to require more work than it brings benefits, it's not worth it or viable.*"

How much a company can reap from the implementation and maintenance of such approach in technical content production is a considerable factor. We had previously assumed that because a user-centric approach is the standard for most digitized industries, companies and teams adhered massively to it in order to stay competitive. However, for some professionals, this could actually mean a decrease in competitiveness due to the means that need to be made available to implement such approach.

Figure 17 also helps us understand the factors which can hinder the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach.

Among the most common answers from the respondents is the lack of communication between the UX designer or technical writer and the user. UX designer and technical writers need extensive contact with users so they can ask questions and better understand their personality. This contact also means better odds at keeping their needs, problems or objectives in mind. which are at the center of a user-centric approach.

From the other respondents' answers, we can identify several factors, related to their working environment, that can hinder the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach. We received several answers saying "*bad organisation*" or "*old habits and processes*", "*constraints on budget*", "*restrictive deadline*". These answers confirm the importance of a conciliatory company in the implementation of a user-centric approach. It is capital that the companies understand the importance

of a user-centric approach and that they allocate sufficient means to implement it. Can we really implement a user-centric approach in a short amount of time?

Moreover, UX design and technical writing are new fields of work. As we noticed from other figures, these fields of work are booming these last few years so it makes sense that some companies are still adapting to this new way of working and that user-centric strategies can be long to implement in companies where it can be difficult to change organization.

In Figure 12, it is interesting to pay attention to the range of the answers provided by the surveyed professionals. While most respondents tend to agree that expertise in technical writing or UX writing is important to implement a user-centric project, we cannot say the same for the other factors. For instance, 11 respondents think passion for the project is important or very important. They put this factor in first, second or third position. However, 12 respondents positioned this factor at the fourth, fifth or sixth position. This divide is reflective of the differences between the respondents' working environment. Passion for working in a user-centric way cannot be defined as a leading factor.

In figure 15, the scores for the factor related to team size are really scattered which is a sign of its dependency on other factors. For instance, the number of people involved in a project can become important for someone who usually does not have much time to finish a project.

This is a sign that despite some agreement between UX and technical communication professionals, deciding which factors can facilitate or hinder the

implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach depends on three foundational factors: teams, hierarchy support and time. These can however be tweaked depending on different professional or business cases.

Conclusion

Our survey-based research unveiled some agreement as to what a user-centric approach is, that is, an approach focused on the user's needs and goals first, from which features and content can then be conceptualized and implemented. The user inspires the product and the content rather than the opposite.

Our survey also unveiled some of the critical factors that make or break a user-centric approach according to professionals who are usually in charge of its implementation in their various organizations. Time, support from management and coworkers. An abundance or lack in any of those three factors seems to have the biggest impact on the implementation and maintenance of a user-centric approach for our surveyed professionals.

What seems to influence the success or failure of a user-centric approach is much more difficult to assess and quantify than we had expected. As in any soft science that involves individuals, results can offer pointers but need to be analysed with caution.

In order to get more definite results on what makes or breaks a user-centric approach for UX and technical communication professionals, we would need to survey a larger number of professionals and follow up with individual interviews to discuss the professionals answers.

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About the authors

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Perrine is a technical writer at Thales SIX GTS France. She is always willing to learn skills and apply them on her job. Before turning to technical writing, she studied technical translation for a year.

Appendix A

To adapt the design and interface to the user's needs
Always think about the user journey, either in the technical documentation or in the product itself.
It means to put the user at the center of every decision. Not base our decisions only on our own experience. Also the wording needs to be based on the user's needs rather than on the tools functionalities.
All types of elements put in place so that users are satisfied with the final result as much as possible
Write as if you were speaking
It means it is an approach that focuses on the user's needs
Making sure everything is simple for the user
Focus on user's needs

It's a way to have the user engage with our product in a way that is beneficial to them in their work as well as beneficial for us because they enjoy using our product, which means they're more likely to want to use it more.

It means 2 things which I can resume in 2 words. I design WITH and FOR him.

Empathy, always thinking about what the user will need and how we can help him reach his objectives. How to make a product and its documentation accessible for the user etc.

Having the end user as your focus, understanding the problems they are trying to solve and providing a UI and documentation that help them do so.

User-centric means that the user needs and feels guide the design of a product as well as the experience related to this product. From the moment that you hear about it, to the moment that it become a social construct that everybody can experience. It takes in count every aspect of the human interaction. It can be a service, as well as an object...

It means to write documentation focusing first on the user's needs, and not on the product.

Nothing because that's never done. All is money centric on the Earth

A powerful way to satisfying customers. Crucial in the operational context

The personnel to whom the document is dedicated should become fully autonomous on the tasks described thanks to the user-centric documentation. Necessitates a huge pre-definition of users' attributes and tasks. Prefer modularity to avoid overlapping and redundancy.

Working on getting rid of biases to understand how your product is used and what your clients need instead of assuming what and how they want it.

A user-centric approach means that a company designs its product (commonly with softwares and mobile applications but not exclusively) in order to offer the best user experience possible. To do so, the company will mainly rely on user feedback and AB testing (among other available tools).

Making sure the user is at the center of every decision I take whether which tone of voice to use, understanding the feelings they're experiencing, and finally deciding which words to use within an interface

Providing the user with information that satisfies their needs and that is readily applicable.

Appendix B

The acknowledgement of this specific need by the managers
Feedback from users, support tickets, etc.
A common strategy in the company
Any kind of experience using this concept would be welcome, I think. We don't all see things the same way, we don't all have the same needs either. So the more opinions, the better it will be
The deliverables
Feedback or interview with the users
The skill level of the user and the reason why they will use the app
Have teams with different expertise and skills
The benefit vs effort ratio. If it's going to require more work than it brings benefits, it's not worth it or viable.
Good relationships

User feedback
Company culture
The direct relation you have with the end-user of a project and the degree with which he feels invested in the design process. There you can have best insights and opinion on the usability as well as the feeling of a person as he is using a tool.
The possibility to get feedback from the user.
Go see how users work in real life.
Motivation
Collaboration with OTJ (On The Job) users / customers
Supporters in the top management
The Lean/Agile methodologies, the level of technicality of a product, the level of computer literacy of the target audience, the level of competition on a specific market, the strategy of a company on the market (e.g. in order to acquire new customers from competitors)

Clear company-wide KPIs > proving the approach works is key to its long-term implementation. Communication > linked to the idea of cooperation with other teams. A user-centric approach can only work long-term when you get the buy-in from everybody, from managers to developers. It's crucial to communicate this shift or plan to everyone within the company.

Expertise in the field and product that the documentation covers

Team diversity

Appendix C

To not have any skill in UX design
If a product is not user-friendly, then it is difficult to make a user-centric documentation...
Lack of communication and of understanding of UA work
Content full of details, sometimes. Specific vocabulary that not everyone can understand. It depends of the projects I guess...
The translation
No contact between the users and the company
No time or money, or the managers do not get the point
Lake of information about users
It can be a term that's used way too loosely and end up being hollow. Especially when it's implemented across many different teams. It's hard to harmonize.
No access to the end-user

Not taking into account accessibility
Company culture! Feature-centric development priorities
The deadlines that are too restrictive, as well as a low budget dedicated to the UX research field.
To be completely unaware of the real use of a product in real job situation by users.
Go see how the users are constrained in their environment (objectives of the hierarchy, complex imposed procedures, autonomy or authorization request necessary for everything, report to write and distribute for each action undertaken, follow-up of the actions ...) before to offer them functions that they will not be able to implement because of these constraints.
Too much constraints on budget
Bad organisation.
Old habits and processes.
A divergent strategy from upper-management, a lack of support from upper-management, a lack of forward thinking, a niche market, an aggressive marketing strategy, a lack of budget (of course)

No clear objectives > hard to work towards a user-centric approach without any goals or focus

Insufficient access to the product