

PERSONAS INSPIRING SUCCESSFUL INNOVATION

Successful innovation goes beyond the best investment, technology, research and designers, according to Booz Allen Hamilton’s report *The Customer Connection: The Global Innovation 1000*. “Unless their R&D efforts are driven by a thorough understanding of what their customers want, their performance may well fall short – at least compared to that of their more customer-driven competitors,” the report says.

It’s essential to be crystal-clear about what customers buy. They don’t buy a product or service per se; rather, they buy a desired end-result. Customer experience personas capture the intertwined inherent emotional and functional value judgments, or metrics, for a solution’s ability to meet the intended end-result. Ethnographic and metaphor-based research is particularly useful in gaining a deep understanding of the full customer experience for persona development.

Customer experience personas are instrumental in growing a customer-centric culture and in-

volving the entire organization in ongoing customer-focused innovation of business processes and policies in support of the brand promise. Segmentation by circumstances, rather than demographics, is the best way to align innovation to desired end-results.

Re-framing competition by circumstance-based customer end-results helps the organization see things from the customer’s perspective. It enables a new vantage point on the value proposition and innovation opportunities.

Although the iPod was a late market entrant, it was the only solution delivering the desired end-result – the ability to legally buy single songs and share playlists – thereby becoming the market leader and outpacing Apple’s core business. Customer experience personas provide new perspectives for innovative business models, products, services, affinities and conveniences. Companies that find superior ways to deliver the desired end-result are the natural market winners.

See the e-handbook *Innovating Superior Customer Experience* for both internal and external customer experience innovation templates at www.clearaction.biz/innovating

DESIRED END-RESULT

What customer buys



Emotional

Functional



Circumstances