Simplifying technology with users
Company: Entranet Ltd

What was the challenge?

Entranet is an innovation leader developing speech recognition/voice synthesis consumer applications for the interaction between people and smart devices. Entrant's mission is to create and promote innovative technological solutions that make life simpler and easier for everyone. Entranet launched its' proof of concept in 2014 by introducing a world-wide innovation, talk2lift (www.talk2lift.com). talk2lift® is the first and only speech recognition device worldwide designed for an elevator, enabling passengers to voice-control the lift, making the use of it easier for everybody and accessible to more people, especially to those with eyesight or kinetic disabilities. By the end of 2015 Entranet introduced the second version of talk2lift, the talk2lift avatar. talk2lift® avatar, is the first digital reception inside an elevator. This digital receptionist can detect the presence of a person and executes the commands that user gives. The next generation of talk2lift® combines the capacity of speech recognition with the futuristic design, introducing a simplified interaction with technology. In the next 6 months, Entranet will launch the "Housemate smart home package". The housemate package is a smart home in a box. It is the easiest smart home system to install, use, expand, configure and update. This is a box of pre-paired devices that provides to users complete control of their system and any information needed through voice commands. This new product, do not address a current problem, rather than it solves a future one, making people's lives better, integrating today their needs of tomorrow.

How design helped?

Entranet has developed the easiest smart home system ever, based on the principles of good design and interaction simplicity in everyday use of technology.

In Entranet's case, the design process supports and highlights a very innovative product. Using a user-centred design, the only methodology that puts users at the heart of the design process, Entranet created an intuitive application experience that does not require any training.

The housemate smart home system came from great ideas that were born out of the need to solve problems that users face in everyday life. The right design thinking is a proven way of solving user problems effectively. During the project development, both designers and developers are making stories, short descriptions of what the application should do from the perspective of the user, based on a three steps methodology:

1. Early and continual focus on users and their needs by studying their behaviour and attitudes,

2. Empirical measurement of user behaviour by observing, recording and analysing the user's reaction using prototypes.

3. Iterative design which solves problems found through user testing.

Adopting this design approach the project team united behind a common goal (by really understanding why they are designing), narrowed its focus onto a smaller number of key features that are specific to the user needs. Basically, the team followed the four principals needed in order to create an innovative technological solution that makes life simpler and easier for everyone:

Visual, Accessible, Simple, Interactive.

That's why the housemate package is the easiest smart home system to install, to use, to expand, to configure and update.
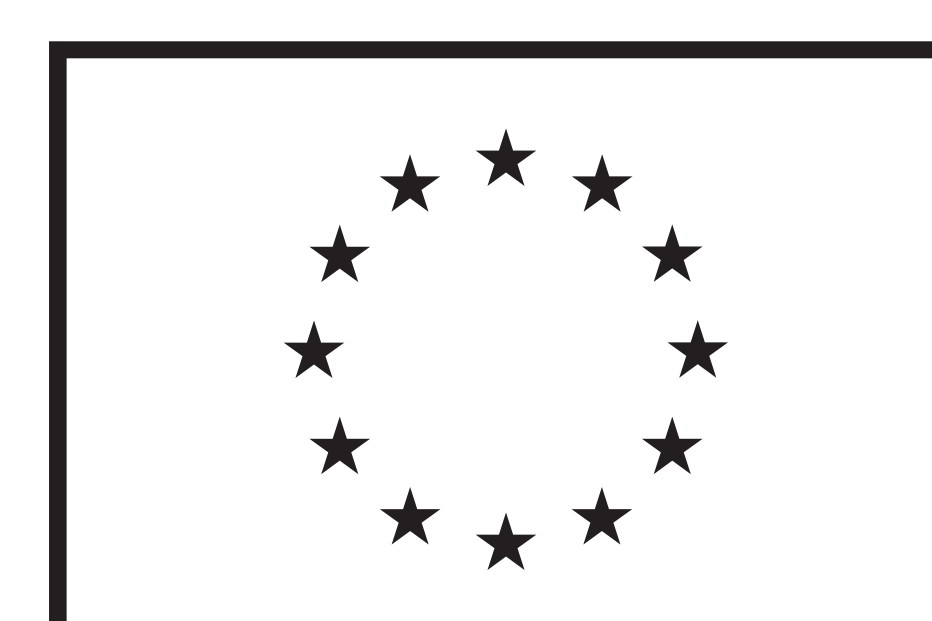
What is the impact?

Smart home devices and smart home ecosystems are becoming more prevalent worldwide but several barriers create a "chasm" of the tech adoption curve. High prices of the smart home products, coupled with the technological fragmentation within the connected home ecosystem, are the top barriers preventing the smart home market from moving from the early-adopter stage to the mass-market stage. Currently, there are many networks, standards, and devices being used to connect the smart home, creating interoperability problems and making it confusing for the consumer to set up and control multiple devices. Finally users think that smart home systems today do not cover real needs and that they are not for the computer-challenged. The housemate smart home package is the answer to all problems mentioned above. Entranet has designed the whole process in a way that responds to all these challenges in the best way possible.

Improved connectivity

Design4Innovation partner: Business and Cultural Development Centre - KEPA
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