

## Persona-Based Workflow Design

SUPPORTING THE WORKFLOW NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL USERS

Over the time since PACS was first introduced, the traditional user group has expanded beyond radiology to include surgeons and referring physicians. It is therefore obvious that a one-size-fits-all approach can no longer apply. Gain insight into how persona-based applications are designed to help healthcare facilities maximize their IT investments while supporting their individual users.

### WHAT IS PERSONA-BASED WORKFLOW DESIGN?

Persona-based workflow design tailors the application and underlying workflow to specific personas, or profiles, of model users. A persona profile is an effective design and communication tool created by examining user activities and identifying usage patterns. A persona is not a list of tasks or duties; rather, it identifies the needs and goals of the user and determines how the user interacts with the solution to accomplish these goals. Personas must have correct, relevant detail, and to be believable and meaningful, they must be based on the experiences of real users. Personas must accurately represent the target users and outline the flow of their days, as well as their skills, attitudes, environments and goals. The persona dictates the product features, navigation, interactions and even visual design of a solution.

### Creating Personas

The number of personas created depends on the number of identified, context-specific user groups. To distinguish which users are “persona-worthy”, the group should have three to four important goals or behavior patterns that differentiate it from others. With enterprise products that touch multiple roles, like IMPAX 6, several personas are necessary, each with a common user interface, yet adapted to individual roles. For example, an orthopedic surgeon would want pre-operative planning tools that are unnecessary for a radiologist. The display needs of a radiologist would vary from those of a referring physician. Furthermore, the reporting requirements of the IT Manager would not be useful to the technologist.

## Research is Key

To ensure that a solution can meet the needs, goals and workflows of these burgeoning users, research must be conducted through one-on-one interviews, focus groups and surveys with target users at numerous sites around the globe. This acquired information should then be incorporated into the design of a solution. While developing IMPAX 6, this is what Agfa did.

A persona-based design methodology creates a more intuitive application that helps users accomplish their goals, rather than just providing more tools. Additionally, because users can continue to work the way they want, the solution can minimize transition time and increase user acceptance.

Agfa uses the same methodology to design its PACS technology, creating a Form and Behavior document that outlines how the system is being utilized by different users to ensure that the software meets their needs.

For example, the color of the Agfa IMPAX GUI is designed to have the best contrast on a grayscale monitor, while still being useful on a color monitor.

The colors are the best possible for color-blind users, and also minimize the screen's brightness while displaying images.

The Prior Study box of the text area dims when the mouse cursor is moved away from it. This allows the radiologist to review images without the bright text area distracting the vision.

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