

TUTORIAL

on FISCAL TRANSPARENCY PORTALS

A USER-CENTERED DEVELOPMENT

MODULE 4

Identifying and segmenting
the audience



MODULE.4

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Tutorial on Fiscal Transparency Portals

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Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency

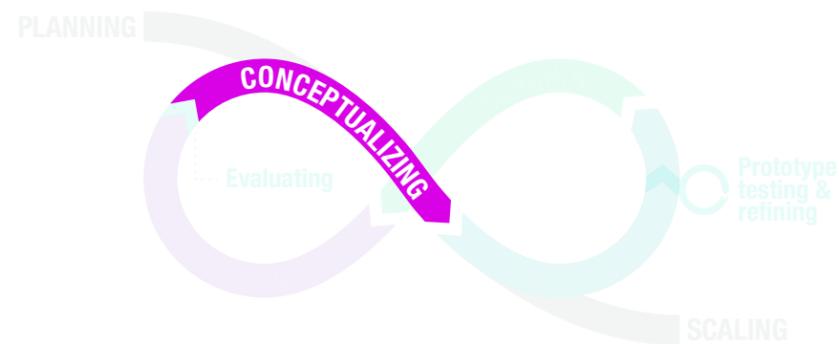
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Repeatedly, statements are made about the public's lack of interest in the information published on fiscal transparency portals or platforms. In addressing this, it's important to ask whether users' information needs were identified prior to portal development. It is possible that there is an incomplete understanding of our base of potential users, as well as of their interests.

It is important that the following questions are asked:

- What type of information arouses interest or is useful to the population?
- Who could the users or user organizations be?
- How frequently do they need and consult the information?
- What terminology makes it easier for them to find what they need?
- What sources do they currently use to find or request that information?
- In what format would the published information be most useful to them?

Students, journalists, government program beneficiaries, private sector groups, social activists or officials from different levels of government are just examples of some of the potential users of a fiscal transparency portal, each with different interests and information needs. In this fourth module, tools are introduced to identify the demand within and outside of government, which will simplify decision making on prioritizing the information, which formats to privilege, what update frequency to implement and which language to use. This falls within the conceptualizing stage.

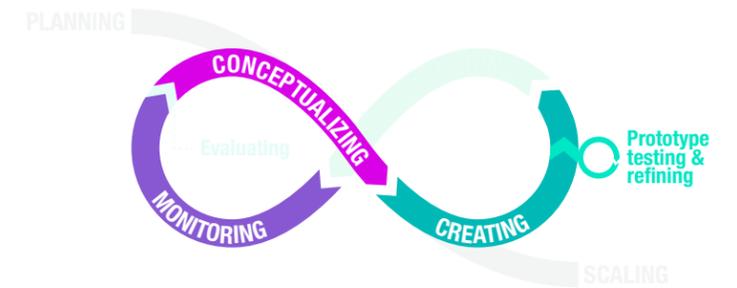


It is worth mentioning that while a fiscal transparency portal can contain different platforms for meeting the various data needs of users based on the information available within the government, when developing the portal amid the conceptualizing and creating stages, it is necessary to identify not only the different audiences in play, but also the users' capabilities and goals.

This module contains the way to **identify and segment audiences with a user-centered design approach**, user **research and segmentation tools**, and finally, small tips on **progressive disclosure**.

4.1 Identifying and segmenting audiences with a UCD approach

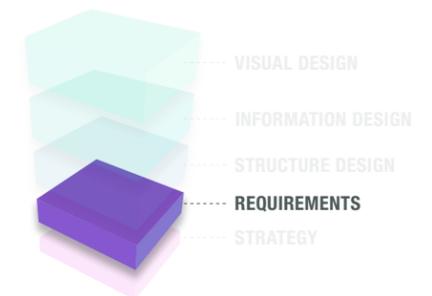
As mentioned earlier in the second introductory module, UCD is a method that focuses completely on providing solutions for the needs of those who will become a portal's final users. It is not about "thinking of users" throughout design, but rather engaging them during the process in order to truly understand them. In any development of technology, including the creation of fiscal transparency portals and platforms, the best results are achieved with user participation during the conceptualizing, creating, prototype testing and refining, and monitoring stages.



In a UCD process there are two key elements to consider: user capabilities and goals.

• User capabilities

At the Requirements level of a UCD, the portal's content requirements, and their scope, are defined, where the functional specifications are established considering users' capabilities. In other words, to achieve a positive user interaction, during the development and update stages of the portal or platform it is vital to consider the audience's capabilities.

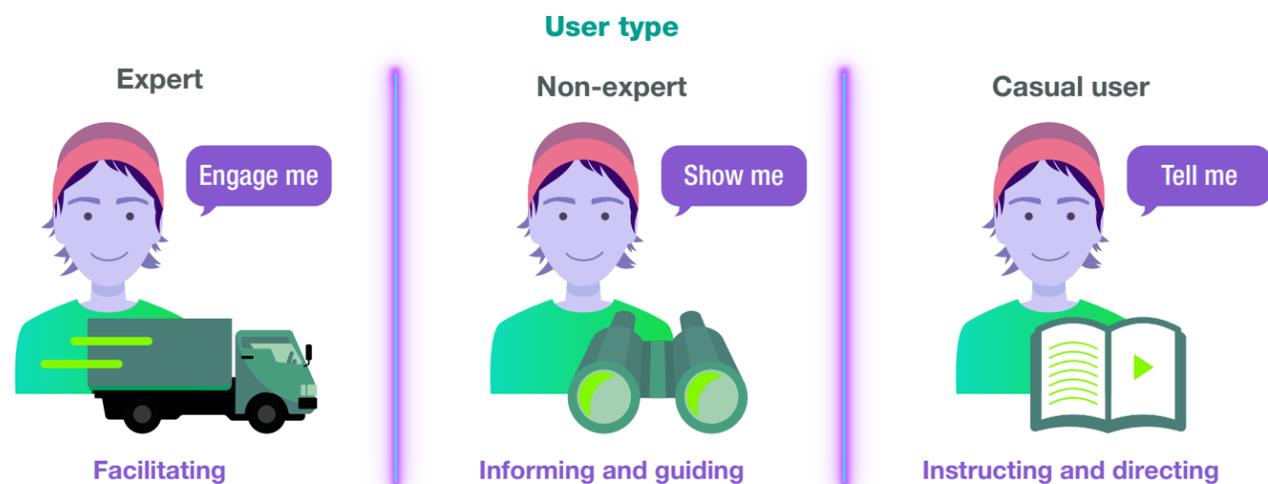


These are some examples of such capabilities:

- Level of understanding concerning fiscal matters
- Preference for certain information formats
- Technological abilities; use of internet, devices, apps, APIs, databases, social media, etcetera.

• User goals

Once the different types of users are identified considering their capabilities, the demand can be segmented. To help facilitate users' various goals, the portal's audience should be grouped based on similar profiles, or *segmented*. The aim of segmentation is to reach a positive usability result by allowing users to achieve their goals or accomplish tasks with a high degree of satisfaction and minimal effort.



EXAMPLE OF APPLICATION

Budget literacy allows for building the capacities of those users who wish to engage but do not have the knowledge necessary to do so. Two interesting cases of budget literacy implementation come from the Planning and Budget Office of Uruguay, which engages secondary education students through budget games that enable them to understand the structure and contents of the national budget; and the Institute for Socio-Economic Studies of Brazil, INESC, which provides training on public budgets to young indigenous and quilombola people, with special focus on the areas of health, property rights, socio-environmental agenda and food security.



4.2 Research and segmentation tools

To foster a more thorough understanding of the methods available for gathering and integrating information on the different potential audiences, six tools on **how to find the demand** are introduced below. The **personas and scenarios technique**, which is frequently used as part of UCD processes to enable the segmentation of all the gathered information, will then be explained.

4.2.1 How to find the demand

It is important to take into account that during the development of a fiscal transparency portal or platform, local context needs to factor into the methods used in locating the demand. Decisions regarding which of the following tools to implement should be made with the aim of reaching a highly representative value of different user needs.

» Requests for access to information

In countries with legislation that touches on transparency and access to public government information, people can submit requests to the authorities of the different branches, autonomous bodies, and subnational governments to access information about the activities they perform. Analyzing these requests for information can be useful in detecting the concerns and main demands the public have for fiscal information. It is also important to know not only what interested parties are asking for, but also to understand how they ask for it. Occasionally, the requested information may already be in the public domain; however, if several requests are made for this information, it is likely that users are seeking it in more colloquial terms; that its location is not intuitive for the user; or even that the formats in which the information is being published does not address the needs of the demand.

» Dialogue with the demand

Identifying interested people and organizations, meeting with them directly and listening to their information needs and capabilities will streamline future joint collaboration processes and strengthen the demand. Some strategies to build these channels with different groups are:

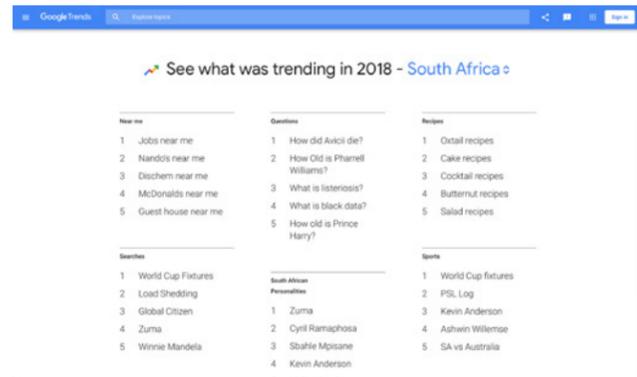
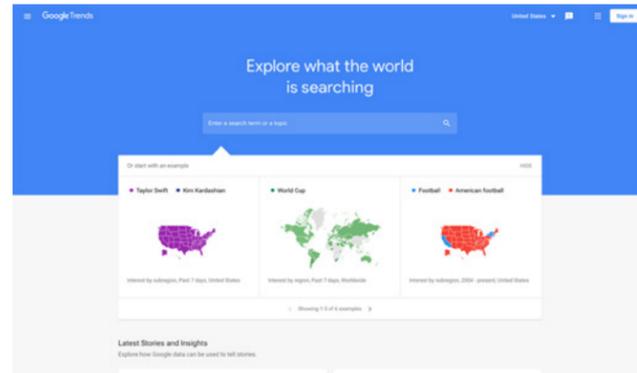
- a) Identifying organizations or academic institutions that consider fiscal matters as part of their agendas within and outside government. Participating in forums with specific communities--representatives of the press specialized in financial matters, economics, public administration or accounting academia; specialists in data science oriented toward civic advocacy; civil society organizations with a public policy agenda, etcetera--is also recommended to gather their inputs and work with them directly on a collaborative agenda.

Maintaining a continuous dialogue with the specialized demand will prove very useful in targeting efforts since they are the key users of fiscal information. However, this has obvious limitations regarding the capability to engage a wider and more general audience, and with those, a limited representational value. Therefore, the following additional tools are recommended to engage with the demand:

- b) Performing consultation exercises such as surveys or focus groups, which expose non-expert audiences to fiscal information so as to learn their perspectives, as well as their degrees of understanding and interest.
- c) Identifying and establishing communication with communities that are not expressly related to fiscal issues to encourage the exploitation of fiscal information in specific agendas. For example, engagements can be held with people who are part of a register of government program beneficiaries, journalists or groups interested in thematic agendas such as gender, environment, poverty reduction, entrepreneurship, etcetera.

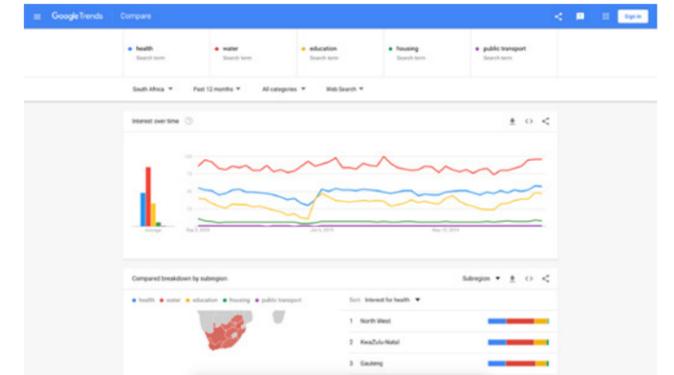
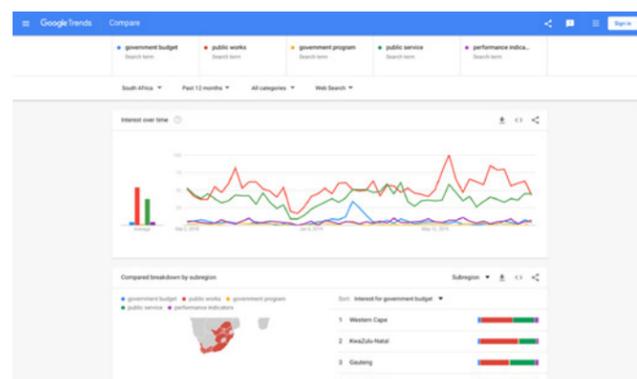
Online search trends

User trends in online searches are traceable at country level. This tracking is possible with the tool Google Trends, which can demonstrate both which budget issues generate more interest in the population and which words are being used to carry these searches out.



Using South Africa as an example, we can filter all the searches carried out in the country during 2018.

Afterward, we can compare search terms like *government budget*, *public works*, *government program*, *public service* and *performance indicators*. Google provides a comparison for the chosen year, as well as a comparison broken down by subregion or city, in some cases. It also displays individual results from the consultation of each chosen term. Adjustments to the filters of analysis can be made, and the information found can even be downloaded in CSV format.



Another method of searching, which is less technical is by topic--that is, by trying to identify which functional classification of the expenditure, such as health, water, education, housing and public transport, people are most interested in.

This tool, when properly used, can provide broad guidance on people's interests in fiscal issues, as well as on the terms most used to research them.

Portal and platform analytics

If a site already exists where information and fiscal data or reports are being published, it is necessary to examine its usage statistics, regardless of format. Namely, it is advisable to observe current usage trends in order to detect which information is used most often, as well as which is used least often, and why.

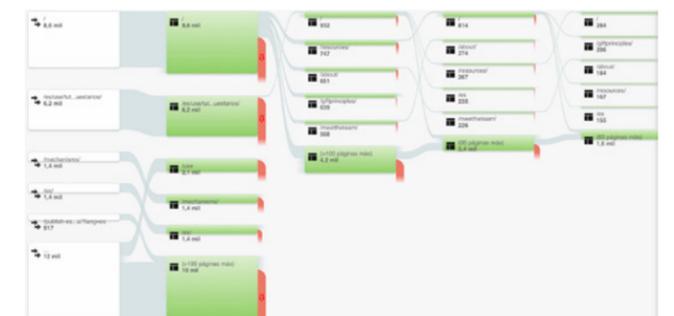
One of the tools most commonly used to do this is Google Analytics. By installing this application in the portal, the following can be identified:

a) The most visited sections or where users stay the longest.

| Número de visitas a páginas | Número de páginas vistas | Promedio de tiempo en la página | Entradas | Porcentaje de rebote | Porcentaje de salidas |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| 60.017 % del total: 100,00 % (86.017) | 48.072 % del total: 100,00 % (68.072) | 00:02:23 Medio de la visita: 00:02:23 (0:00:13) | 30.778 % del total: 100,00 % (20.778) | 67,41 % Medio de la visita: 67,41 % (0:00:13) | 51,28 % Medio de la visita: 51,28 % (0:00:13) |
| 12.169 (20,28 %) | 9.743 (20,27 %) | 00:01:52 | 8.614 (27,99 %) | 50,79 % | 45,67 % |
| 7.782 (12,97 %) | 6.620 (13,77 %) | 00:05:01 | 6.249 (20,30 %) | 85,81 % | 81,88 % |
| 2.230 (3,72 %) | 1.706 (3,55 %) | 00:02:27 | 573 (1,86 %) | 65,97 % | 42,78 % |
| 2.207 (3,68 %) | 1.782 (3,71 %) | 00:01:40 | 1.253 (4,04 %) | 46,86 % | 38,92 % |
| 2.170 (3,62 %) | 1.458 (3,03 %) | 00:01:11 | 404 (1,31 %) | 37,87 % | 21,11 % |
| 2.050 (3,42 %) | 1.643 (3,42 %) | 00:02:39 | 309 (1,00 %) | 65,37 % | 44,10 % |
| 1.805 (3,01 %) | 1.518 (3,14 %) | 00:03:19 | 806 (2,62 %) | 75,56 % | 60,66 % |
| 1.722 (2,87 %) | 1.548 (3,22 %) | 00:03:37 | 1.365 (4,43 %) | 61,10 % | 56,50 % |

| URL | Visitas | Porcentaje |
|--|---------|------------|
| / | 12.169 | 20,28 % |
| /es/usa/tutorial-datos-abiertos-apertura-y-uso-de-datos-prensa-startups/ | 7.782 | 12,97 % |
| /about/ | 2.230 | 3,72 % |
| /es/ | 2.207 | 3,68 % |
| /gifs/gifs/ | 2.170 | 3,62 % |
| /resources/ | 2.050 | 3,42 % |
| /rdsp/ | 1.805 | 3,01 % |
| /mechanisms/ | 1.722 | 2,87 % |
| /meetings/ | 1.658 | 2,73 % |
| /our-work/ | 1.606 | 2,68 % |

b) The most downloaded or consulted reports or documents.

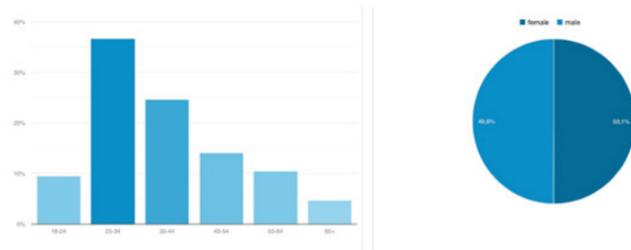


c) User behavior on the portal, from their arrival source, in some cases, to the last page they visit.

d) The days and times the most visits occur.

e) The devices used to connect, whether mobile or desktop, as well as the browser used for connecting (Safari, Firefox, Chrome, etc.).

f) Socio-demographic data on users, such as age range, gender and country, among others.



If there are already platforms or a portal specialized in fiscal information, it is advisable to install and frequently use this tool, which contains and provides timely information about the users, even in real time.

» Social media

Social media is another important source of information on the demand's interests; it is not only a space for direct interaction, but also an analytical tool to gauge content and trends. Trends in social media allow us to better understand the different audiences' needs.

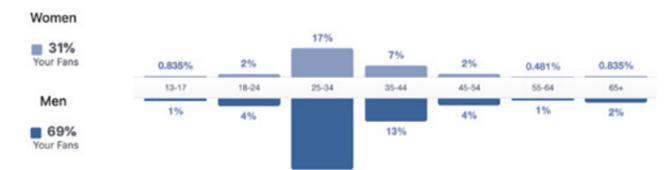
| | Total Page Likes | From Last Week | Posts This Week | Engagement This Week |
|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| International Budget Par... | 4.7K | ▲0.2% | 7 | 255 |
| GIFT - Global Initiative f... | 7.9K | ▲0.1% | 17 | 259 |
| Open Knowledge Found... | 18.7K | 0% | 7 | 60 |
| Transparencia Presupue... | 15.1K | ▲0.2% | 9 | 1.3K |
| Vulekamali | 857 | ▲10.6% | 16 | 1.3K |
| Open Contracting | 2.5K | 0% | 2 | 54 |

Monitoring the social media of other ministries, organizations or communities interested in the matter is also advisable, as it helps to recognize trends beyond the limits of a single organization and in identifying the content that generates the most interest.

| Published | Post | Type | Targeting | Reach | Engagement |
|-----------------------|---|-------|-----------|-------|------------|
| 08/13/2019 5:50 PM | #THURSDAY August 15, 10am EDT 3rd Episode GIFT's | Video | Targeted | 4.9K | 142 43 |
| 08/12/2019 9:10 PM | #THURSDAY, August 15 - #Finance4SDGs 3rd Webinar- Why | Text | Targeted | 296 | 9 7 |
| 08/12/2019 2:57 PM | In case you missed it! 2nd episode of the #Finance4SDGs Webinar | Text | Targeted | 171 | 12 8 |
| 08/12/2019 2:50 PM | #Finance4SDGs GIFT Webinar Series - Season 2 FULL SERIES: | Text | Targeted | 1.3K | 94 56 |
| 08/09/2019 5:21 PM | Amazing #LineUp! #Finance4SDGs Technical #WEBINARS 3rd | Text | Targeted | 537 | 5 8 |

Some media sites, like Facebook or Twitter, have their own analytical tools. Using these tools, growing trends, clicks, interactions, etcetera can be assessed in order to evaluate the information with the highest level of engagement, and to simultaneously create more effective communication strategies.

Example of analytical information in Facebook:



Example of analytical information in Twitter:



It should be born in mind that each population has different preferences regarding social media; and that it is thus important to identify which channels are relevant for a country given its current context.

In the case of Mongolia, the analytical information provided by Facebook had a high representative value, since it was utilized by 72.12 per cent of the country's internet users; in contrast to only 6.07 per cent that used Twitter.



<https://gs.statcounter.com>

Finally, a great deal of knowledge and experience has been gathered by different international agencies focused on encouraging better practices in terms of public finance management and fiscal transparency.

» Taking international sources into account

International sources provide resources to assist not only in identifying the immediate demand for existing information, but also in building long-term strategies that include processes to improve financial management.

The following are among the main international initiatives:

a) The International Budget Partnership (IBP) uses fiscal analysis as a tool to improve effective governance around the world. The IBP publishes the [Open Budget Index](#) biennially, which evaluates the degree of openness of eight main documents within the budget cycle. The results of the index help provide a reference of what information is not yet published, identify areas of opportunity, strengthen openness mechanisms and prioritize information disclosure.

b) The [Fiscal Transparency Code](#) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) identifies good fiscal transparency practices for growth as a fundamental element of good governance.

c) The [Budget Transparency Toolkit](#) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) offers a gateway to the various global budget and fiscal transparency institutions, official instruments, standards and guidance material. The Toolkit was designed with the participation and collaboration of the broader global community of budget and fiscal transparency institutions--namely, the IMF, World Bank Group, IBP, International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) and Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Program, all members of GIFT--and with the coordination of the GIFT team.

d) The Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT), as part of its core work streams, publishes case studies and research documents that help to identify better practices at the international level. Additionally, it works with its stewards and partners to harmonize fiscal transparency norms and standards, like the [High-level Principles on Fiscal Transparency](#), the [Principles for Public Participation in Fiscal Policies](#) and the [Guide on Public Participation Principles and Mechanisms](#).

These six tools for “finding the demand”--requests for access to information; dialogue with the demand; online search trends; portal and platform analytics; social media; and international sources--will not only help in the conceptualizing stage of building a fiscal transparency portal or platform, but also in the prototype testing and refining stage, as well as in the launching and monitoring stages.

4.2.2 Personas and scenarios technique

Within a UCD process, the personas and scenarios technique helps to analyze and subsequently segment all the data gathered about the users, their capabilities and their goals.

This technique is executed based on the personification of objectives, capabilities and behaviors of segmented user groups through the creation of fictional characters that represent them, called *personas*. Once these representations are created, the possible interactions of the personas against hypothetical situations, called *scenarios*, are analyzed.

To be effective, the personas must (usability.gov, 2019):

- Represent an important group of users for the portal or platform.
- Express and focus on the main needs and expectations of the most important groups of users.
- Provide a clear image of the users’ expectations and how they will probably use the portal.
- Help discover universal characteristics and functionalities.
- Represent the patterns of real people with backgrounds, goals, values and capabilities.

It is important that each created persona expresses sufficient empathy and consideration so as to facilitate a better understanding of the users being represented; though, it is advisable not to add too many personal details, since that could lead to their ceasing to represent the user group. As Don Norman has expressed, personas need only be realistic; they don’t have to seem real or even be accurate as long as they help to exemplify target end users.

A persona is usually made up of:

- A simulated name
- Demographic information (age, gender, ethnic background, family status, etc.)
- A photo that represents the group of users
- A group profile (public official, economics student, data analyst, etcetera.)
- A career title and job responsibilities
- Possible interests and objectives when navigating the portal
- Technological preferences

Example of a Persona - 1

Sarah Econobel
"Economics and astronomy are fun!"

Demographics
 Age 38
 Education Economist
 Civil Status Lives with her boyfriend
 Position Budget Director, Ministry of Finance

Hobbies
 Reading
 Space camps

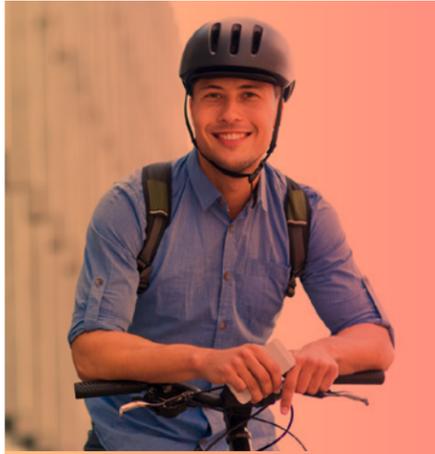
Technology
 Internet ██████████
 Social media ██████████
 Games ██████████
 Online shopping ██████████
 Programming ██████████

Specific skills
 Data use ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
 Public finance understanding ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Goals
 · Opening a blog
 · Improving public services for people
 · Traveling more
 · Increasing public participation in fiscal processes

Frustrations
 · Little time to read
 · Little disaggregation of spending open data in the country
 · Bad usability in the Ministry of Finance fiscal transparency portal

Example of a Persona - 2



Paul Codevila
"We are made of algorithms!"

Demographics
Age 29
Education Programmer
Civil Status Married, no children
Position Project Manager, Software as a Service

Hobbies
Watching series
Climbing
Social outings

Technology

| | |
|-----------------|------------|
| Internet | ██████████ |
| Social media | ██████████ |
| Games | ██████████ |
| Online shopping | ██████████ |
| Programming | ██████████ |

Specific skills

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Data use | ● ● ● ● ● |
| Public finance understanding | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |

Goals

- Buying an apartment
- Maintaining a healthy body
- Creating a private app to sell data analysis
- Building capacity to become more competitive at an international level

Frustrations

- Internet speed in his country
- Rainy days
- New code

The personas created for the UCD process of a fiscal transparency portal or platform will come alive and make sense once they interact with different scenarios. Scenarios are hypothetical interaction situations with the portal, or rather, small instances that describe how users carry out the typical tasks that they seek to accomplish. The description of the interactions between the personas and portal helps in understanding, identifying and anticipating the main, step-by-step paths that different users will take when navigating it later.



Tip: It is advantageous for technical team members to grasp the value of personas. When members of the development team reach a point of empathy with the project's personas, they will start to propose solutions as if those personas were real and not merely imagined. Well-constructed personas become part of the team.

4.3 Progressive disclosure

Progressive disclosure is a strategy of publication based on information prioritization. It entails favoring relevant content for users and intentionally omitting excessive or overly detailed information, which causes overload and hinders users from achieving their goals on the portal or platform.

As an example, when a user arrives at the home page of a fiscal transparency portal, it is not advisable to present them with a historical archive of the citizen versions of the budget or full explanatory information about this type of publication; instead, it is preferable to show users only one link to the latest citizen version of the budget, or to citizen publications. From there, it is possible to reveal the remaining content by using a "read more" link, through the process of *progressive disclosure*.

This method enables developers to understand and meet the needs of the many audiences of a portal or platform during the different stages of its creation, with specific consideration for users' needs and capabilities.

Example of a Persona - 3



Diane Hedge
"There are more good people!"

Demographics
Age 33
Education Attorney
Civil Status Married, with children
Position Health Sector Coordinator, Activist, Civil Society Organization

Hobbies
Theatre
Strolling in the park
YouTuber of short stories

Technology

| | |
|-----------------|------------|
| Internet | ██████████ |
| Social media | ██████████ |
| Games | ██████████ |
| Online shopping | ██████████ |
| Programming | ██████████ |

Specific skills

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Data use | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| Public finance understanding | ● ● ○ ○ ○ |

Goals

- Impacting the lives of the poor by advocating for a comprehensive healthcare system
- Saving money for her children's college studies
- Diminishing corruption within the Health Sector

Frustrations

- Neglect of the population
- Having no time for her family
- Bureaucracy

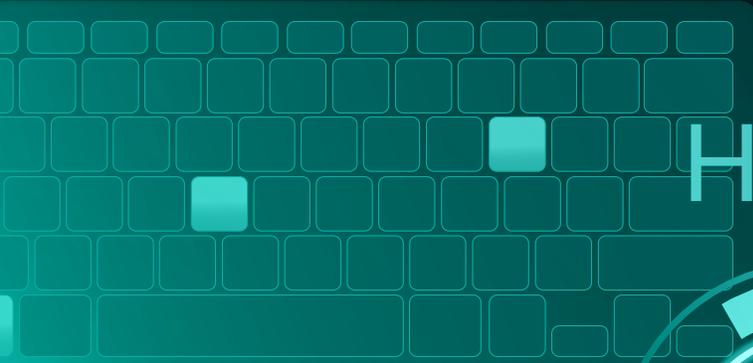


Application example

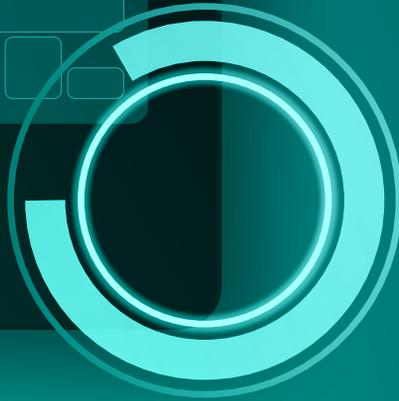
The fiscal transparency portal of El Salvador displays an explanatory video, inviting users to learn more about the subject; interactive graphics of the current budget year with possible navigation to greater detail; and buttons that allow data to be downloaded for deeper analysis in each of its main sections. In this way, it addresses three different audience profiles within a single screen.



UX



HTML >>



<CSS>

