What is Interaction Design?

Interaction Design (IxD) is the design of interactive products and services in which a designer's focus goes beyond the item in development to include the way users will interact with it. Thus, close scrutiny of users' needs, limitations and contexts, etc. empowers designers to customize output to suit precise demands.

"Interaction Design is the creation of a dialogue between a person and a product, system, or service. This dialogue is both physical and emotional in nature and is manifested in the interplay between form, function, and technology as experienced over time."

What Designers Do – with the 5 Dimensions of IxD

For UX designers, "Interaction Design" is the axis on which our work revolves (i.e., the design of human interaction with digital products); however, the term also applies to understanding how people interact with non-digital products.

IxD has **five** dimensions: words (**1D**), visual representations (**2D**), physical objects/space (**3D**), time (**4D**), and behavior (**5D**)

IxD's five dimensions were first defined by a professor at London's Royal College of Art, Gillian Crampton Smith, and a senior interaction designer, Kevin Silver. The dimensions represent the aspects an interaction designer considers when designing interactions:

- Words (1D) encompass text, such as button labels, which help give users the right amount of information.
- Visual representations (2D) are graphical elements such as images, typography and icons that aid in user interaction.
- Physical objects/space (3D) refers to the medium through which users interact with the product or service—for instance, a laptop via a mouse, or a mobile phone via fingers.
- Time (4D) relates to media that changes with time, such as animations, videos and sounds.
- Behavior (5D) is concerned with how the previous four dimensions define the interactions a product affords—for instance, how users can perform actions on a website, or how users can operate a car. Behavior also refers to how the product reacts to the users' inputs and provides feedback.