"Leading innovation by way of design thinking is the way forward in this era of transformation" – Prof Dr Uday Salunkhe, Group Director, WeSchool
WeSchool inspires professionals to apply design centric approach to drive innovations

Mumbai, 09 October, 2018: The objective of any product design lies in its usability quotient. Designing the product right is taking precedence over merely manufacturing the right product. Today, Design thinking approach is inspiring businesses to relook at the product portfolio from the user's perspective. Bringing together the various techniques and thinking processes in designing a product was the recently held **"Business + Design" conference in** association with **S.P. Mandali's Prin L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), Mumbai and UsabilityMatters.Org(UMO),** a not for profit organization on WeSchool campus, Mumbai. The one-day summit aimed at inspiring product designers, marketing professionals and entrepreneurs to reach out to their consumers by empathising to their needs through product/service design that solves problems and adds convenience. The conference also witnessed the inaugural of 'Dmagics'- Design for Management and Growth in Corporations and Society Exhibition by WeSchool to showcase socially beneficial innovative business concepts developed by its students.

Focusing on product innovation, customer experience, digital transformation and design culture, the summit included case studies, panel discussion and sessions on topics like The 3 Cs of Design – Charters, Critique, and Culture; aligning technology with business and customer experience strategy, User-Centricity and Business Strategy and "Users" are people too: 3 approaches design teams can use to enhance awareness of users as humans. The speakers at the conference were *Steve Fadden, Director, Analytics & Einstein UX Research, Salesforce; Lecturer, UC Berkeley, USA*.; *Russ Unger, Design Director at Userglue, United States; Dr. Kaustubh Dhargalkar, Entrepreneur, Academician & Innovation Evangelist; Aparna Piramal Raje, Columnist & Author working out-of-the-box; Prof. Sudhakar Nadkarni, Prof. Emeritus, Business Design, WeSchool; Ranjeet Tayi, Segment Ux Leader, Data Security Group @ Informatica and Shyama Sundar Duriseti, Staff Ux Designer, Nutanix also Co-Founder and Chair, UXIND and Dr Pradeep Pendse, Dean Academics (PTM) and CTO at WeSchool.*

Delivering the welcome address, **Prof Dr Uday Salunkhe, Group Director WeSchool said**, "Adding another dimension to innovation in product design, Design Thinking is empowering creative professionals and aspiring managers to invent new products. There is a strong need to solve new problems with our changing lifestyle. In view of nurturing thought leaders and practitioners through inventive education, WeSchool is collaborating with entrepreneurs and leaders who wish to instil such new age practices in their field of work."

Prof. Sudhakar Nadkarni, Prof. Emeritus, Business Design, WeSchool, inspired the students by saying, "The new age consumers are more aware of the products that best fulfil their needs. An informed consumer puts the marketers under pressure to constantly bring innovative offerings to their buyers. Through workshops in business design, we seek to add diversity in the thought process that will redefine customer experience."

The participants had a rich and thought-provoking experience while exploring the role of design in creating innovative change for social and economic development.