MICHAEL J DEVRIES

913-568 - 2999 - mdevries66@gmail.com
www.michaeljdevries.com

SUMMARY

Senior Usability Researcher and Analyst: Responsible for formulating, implementing, and executing usability lab and competitive user experience programs. Solid grasp of fundamental and special case research methodologies and analytics. Proven skills, in the lab and field, in all aspects of usability testing, heuristic evaluation, and competitive evaluation. Objective, intent on identifying the right behavioral, cognitive, and satisfaction data to optimally impact resulting designs.

EXPERIENCE

USABILITY RESEARCH AND ANALYST CONSULTANT   April 2010 - present

Client: IBM Internal Design Group (Contractor for CDI - August – September, 2010)
  o Conducted benchmark usability research and set up card sort research for a complex series of intranet sites. Work also included web software designs and intranet standards and usability heuristic evaluations.

Client: Physicians Mutual, Omaha, NE (Contractor for Modis - April 2010 – July 2010)
  o Conducted heuristic evaluations, performed usability testing, and prioritized findings so that usability improvements for a new my Account website could be incorporated into following agile iterative product development cycles. Usability feedback was a key factor is postponing the launch, and post design usability testing demonstrated greater than 75% task completion in 80% of tasks, where benchmarks were only at 20%. Delivered "importance of user experience" presentations to business systems analysts and creative/visual design teams.

SPRINT NEXTEL, Overland Park, KS   2000 - 2009
A $40 billion annual revenue telecom company serving nearly 50 million wireless customers.
Human Factors Engineer II - Competitive User Experience Program (2006 - 2009)
Led the Competitive User Experience Program, including managing interns. Evaluations provided competitive strengths against which designers, project managers, and other internal stakeholders could weigh business decisions and design implications. Products analyzed included Apple iPhone, Palm Pre, Samsung Instinct, HTC G1, LG Voyager, Danger Sidekick, and Sprint One Click. Other activities included review of specification documents, including wire frame evaluation and functional flows.
  o Implemented a competitive user experience program that serviced over 20 competency groups including product management, marketing, business intelligence, sales, and executives, saving the company approximately $400K in outsourcing over 2 years and one additional head count.
  o Provided over 150 evaluation reports on an extensive range of products and services, directly impacting design, product usability, strategy, legal actions, advertising, and end-user experiences. An iPhone evaluation earned an Excellence Award. Point source for advising on competitive usability trends.
  o Developed a method of heuristically measuring product usability and used it to consistently predict 80% of the usability issues found in studies. Evaluations were conducted on mockups, mobile applications, and web sites. Results provided baseline and comparative usability data.

Technical Specialist I - Usability Lab Specialist (2000 - 2006)
Planned and conducted all aspects of usability testing covering navigation, information architecture, shop and manage experiences, and a wide range of other ecommerce pages and telecom products.

- o Lead a team in the design and research of an online Shopper's Guide to assist users in selecting a wireless phone and plan that fit their needs. Included creating storyboards to define best case task flows, focus group research, and design activities. Exceeded expected purchase rates.
- o Identified and executed approximately 40 usability studies over a 4 year period. Translated research findings into design implications, thereby increasing user satisfaction and usability. Resulting usability findings and new concept designs directly impacted end user experiences.
- o Initiated usability research that enabled the visual design team to take first place in an independently judged competition, earning the team the right to design the sprint.com web site. Included developing a method of benchmarking web site aesthetic preferences.

USER CENTERED DESIGNS, Loveland, CO   1998 - 2000
Human Factors consulting, serving Fortune 500 & other companies
Human Factors Engineer and sole proprietor
Guided companies in various aspects of user-centered design and usability testing, including field behavior observation and detailed design reviews.

- o Consultant to Storage Technologies, Inc: Introduced user-centered design approach and usability testing into the company's design strategy on an internationally collaborative project, resulting in a tighter integration between specifications and user interface design.
- o Consultant to Trane Company: Integrated ideation and behavior research into focus groups, providing support for company product line decisions when both time and funding were limited.

LODESTONE RESEARCH, LLC, Loveland, CO   1996-1998
Market Research and Usability Consulting for Fortune 500 and other companies
Human Factors Engineer
Performed a variety of usability duties that spanned different products, including consumer desktop scanners, test and measurement equipment, web sites, computer applications, and hardware installations. Responsible for all aspects of usability testing, data analysis, and reporting.

- o Served as consultant on end-to-end usability design and research for 1st generation hand held scanner, resulting in co-author of more than 10 patents.
- o Designed a usability/focus group lab, enabling the company to more accurately measure a greater range of human behavior. Included integration of testing software similar to Morae.

OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Designed Own Professional Web Site: www.michaeljdevries.com

- o Designed, coded, and created content for professional web site in order to understand first hand how usability issues may relate to coding. The site is live, and undergoing redesign evaluation.

Volunteer Director Children's Program - (7 years)

- o Revitalized the program by integrating human factors design and user experience principles. Results included improvements in staff/child ratios (7/35 to 25/45), staff retention (about 70% year over year), efficiency, and satisfaction among children, parents, and staff.

Cognitive Psychologist - Armstrong Labs/Northrop Grumman
- o Devised a theory and measure of cognitive complexity to help trainers determine which tasks are more difficult to learn, and how to approach training for those tasks.

Human Factors Engineer, Air Force Operational Test & Evaluation Center
- o Improved validity and reliability of workload assessments for F-15E test pilots.

EDUCATION
- o M.S. - Psychology /Human Factors; Thesis: Theory of Cognitive Complexity and implication for identifying, which tasks, among many, require cognitive task analysis in the development of training system design - University of Idaho
- o B.A. - Psychology (major), Mathematics (minor) - University of North Texas

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIETIES
- o Society of Competitive Intelligence (SCIP) courses 101 and 102
- o AMC Sig Chi

SOFWARE AND SYSTEMS
- o Morae (usability testing and logging software)
- o Vovici Enterprise Feedback Management (usability and survey software)
- o UserZoom (usability testing, survey, and card sorting software)
- o Visio (storyboard, wireframing, prototyping)
- o Balsamiq (prototyping)
- o HTML – self taught code
- o Microsoft (Excel, Word, Powerpoint, Outlook)
- o Lotus (Notes, Sametime, LotusLive)
- o Windows and Apple OS