DesignWhine

Your Gateway to the UX Life

12

USER DEFENDERS

DEAR NIKKI
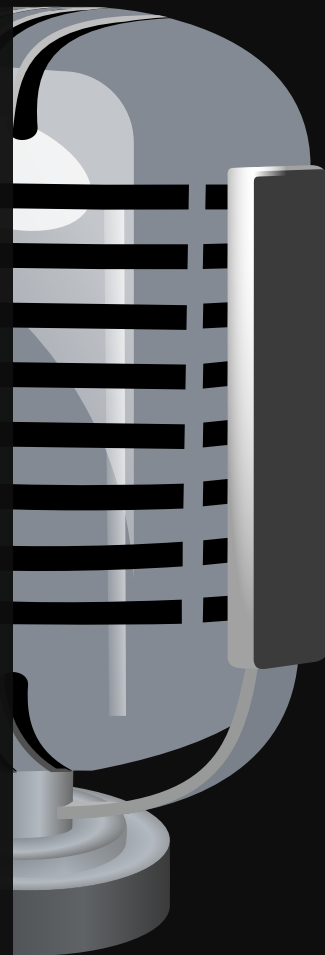
AWKWARD SILENCES

UX CAKE

UNDERSTANDING USERS

BRAVE UX

DIGITAL INSIGHTS

LEND ME YOUR EARS!

A LOOK AT THE FINEST PODCASTS IN THE UX DESIGN COMMUNITY

ALL-IN-ONE PLATFORM FOR E2E UX, DISCOVERY, JTBD MANAGEMENT, AND INNOVATION MANAGEMENT.

Discover, prioritize, and act on business opportunities.

Powered by AI, Athenno replaces all your tools and aligns your entire organization in one place. Say goodbye to manual work and hello to happier, more innovative, and productive teams.

Join 30+ global startups, freelancers, and enterprises who trust Athenno to uncover business opportunities, improve research, and achieve results.

Get Started with Athenno

ATHENNO

⑦ Survey Results - Your Recent Travel Experience

Insights & Opportunity Score   **Segments & Top Contacts**   Responses & Export

Average   **Percentage (Weighted Difference)**   Percentage (Multiplied 2D Area)

Scale of 10   Scale of 20   Scale of 100%

Opportunity Map (%)

- 🟡 Estimate my trip cost (7.67)
- 🟢 Minimize the time it takes to find a girlfriend (7.12)
- 🔴 Minimize the likelihood of overcooking a food (6.89)
- 🔵 Increase the number of cute cats I see when scrolling r
- 🟣 Use friend's opinion on where to go (6.3)

Personal Metric / Customer Need	JTBD	Segment Size (%)	Importa
Minimize the time it takes to book a place for couples	Booking a stay	46.7%	78%
Visit Property during a weekend	Job-to-be-done	41.5%	71%
Have a personal agent available over a weekend	Another JTBD	36.1%	67%

CONTENTS

DESIGNWHINE ISSUE # 12

Connect with us -   in / DesignWhine   🐦 / DesignWhine   ✉ / hello@designwhine.com

In This Issue

What is the UX Life?

As we spend more time in the UX design industry, we realize that UX design influences every single part of our lives.

We may have entered the field in the hopes of making just about a decent living, but UX design far exceeds those tiny expectations and transforms the very state of our being. We take UX home with us, and see everyday products through a new lens - the UX lens.

Thousands of freshmen from diverse backgrounds "self-learn" and find their way to the UX field every year out of pure zeal.

Much like meditation, passion for UX denotes a state of calm, unity, and enlightenment.

UX design is possibly the only sector where professionals have an unrivalled level of passion clubbed with creativity and a discipline that takes a lifetime to master.

At *DesignWhine*, we understand UX in more ways than one and cover stories, essays, and articles that represent the whole UX community's needs and goals. Think of *DesignWhine* as a UX club where you hangout, network, and interact with likeminded people over a drink.

For us, UX design isn't just a profession anymore, but a life calling, and at *DesignWhine*, we welcome you all to live that UX life you've been aspiring for!

Back From A Hiatus

As we journey into the digital age, the importance of User Experience design cannot be overemphasized. At DesignWhine Magazine, we are committed to bringing you the latest and finest insights in the world of UX design. In this issue, we feature interviews with some of the best UX podcasters out there, sharing their knowledge and experiences with our readers.

As we strive to bring you top-notch content, we must also be transparent with our struggles. DesignWhine Magazine is facing some challenges in maintaining regular releases due to lack of resources. However, we remain committed to providing our readers with the best content possible.

In light of these challenges, we are considering changes to our format to ensure that we can continue to deliver valuable content consistently. We will keep our readers updated on any changes that may arise.

As we navigate the ever-changing landscape of UX design, we are grateful for the support of our readers and contributors. Together, we can continue to push the boundaries of design and create user-centered experiences that impact lives positively.

In the words of Michael Crichton, "the future is as unpredictable as the past," but with DesignWhine Magazine, we are committed to bringing you the best insights and knowledge to prepare you for what lies ahead in the world of UX design.

RAJAT AGARWAL
Editor-in-Chief

Bottlenecks ⎙ Visit

Aligning UX design with user psychology

Bottlenecks: Aligning UX Design with User Psychology, by David Evans, an experimental psychology Ph.D. and senior manager of consumer research at Microsoft, presents high-stakes case studies and explores behaviorism, development, personality, and social psychology in digital design.
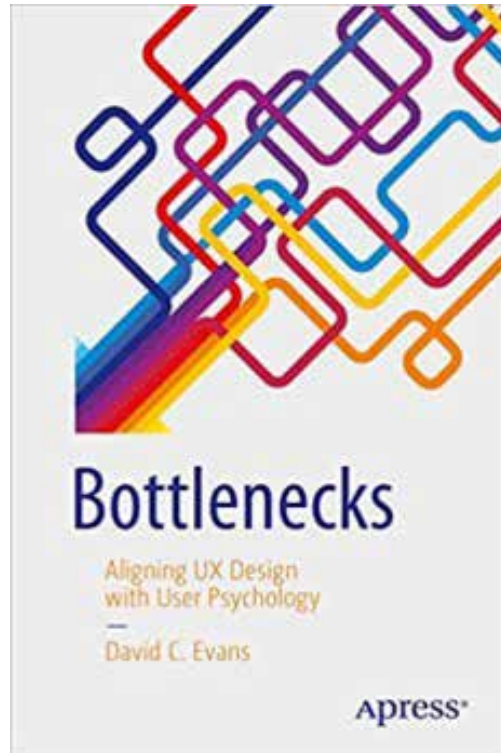
Dior And I ⎙ Visit

Learn from fashion design and apply it to UX design

Dior and I provides a privileged, behind-the-scenes look at the creation of Raf Simons' debut haute couture collection as the new artistic director of the Christian Dior fashion house. Although not directly related to UX design, the documentary takes viewers on a captivating journey into the glamorous world of fashion design.

'Zen of UX' T Shirt ⬈ Visit

Just your everyday smooth, comfy tee, a wardrobe staple

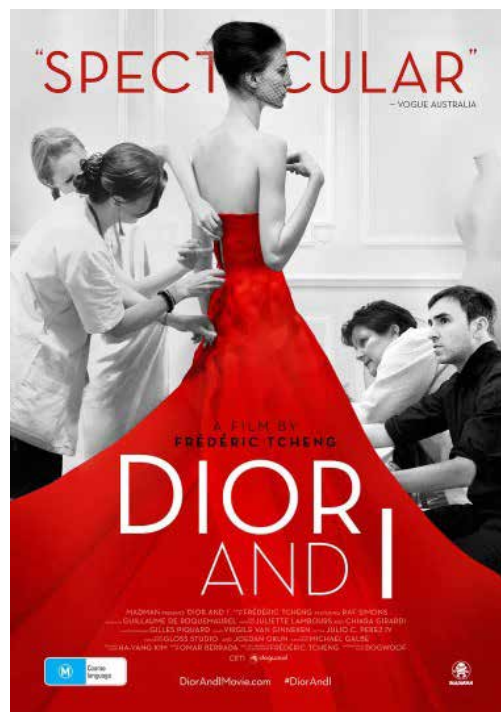Esoteric T shirts are an essential part of a UX designer's "look and feel" and this black cotton T shirt is an excellent choice for designers who live and breathe UX. The quirky way to announce to the world your creative process is sure to make you feel good when you sport it with a faded blue jeans.

Unstack Style Guide ⬈ Visit

Generate a brand style guide for any website instantly

The Unstack Style Guide is a Chrome extension that lets you easily grab all the design information you need from any website, including the brand palette, text colors, and font types. Whether you're looking for inspiration or designing branded content, you can use this free tool to grab all with just a click.

Are Indian Companies Motivated To Ask - "Why?"

Despite advancements and growth in the field, UX design research is still a bumpy road for India argues Juneza Niyazi

By Juneza Niyazi

Design research is a time consuming, people intensive and costly pursuit which does not guarantee a direct impact on the company's ROI. Unlike market research which is focused on data aggregation and synthesis from a larger sample size, design research is limited to 15 to 20 customers for a specific objective.

Often companies allocate a significant budget towards marketing and market research and a comparatively low budget for design research. This may not be the case in those startups or MNCs where the C-suite has prior experience or positive exposure with a designer or researcher. But most companies hesitate to allocate as well as integrate design research in their roadmap and budget conversations.

While working with marketing, sales and business analysts, what I have learnt is that executives are more confident to make decisions on quantitative research data. There is a bias towards statistical information over findings based on interviews or observations.

Today, there is a growing trend in usability testing, as these tests are cost effective, have a shorter turnaround time and could be run at a larger scale. But design research is not limited to validating design decisions; it has

"

BUSINESS PROPOSALS ARE OFTEN CRAFTED FROM THE SHOES OF THE COMPANY STAKEHOLDER AND RARELY ADDRESS THE CUSTOMER'S OR USER'S VOICE

more value in crafting hypotheses based on evidence and observing the said phenomenon by investigating and probing the cause and effect. Behavioural research is another domain within design research that is least explored within organisations. The findings in a behavioural research may not have a huge impact in quarter to quarter cycle, this should be considered more as an investment towards future company goals. Nevertheless, we have a long journey towards incorporating behavioural research as a branch within organisations. In fact, even design curriculums do not equip students to conduct behavioural research in a scientific and methodical manner.

But, this does not mean that usability testing is the only KRA for a design researcher within a company! I believe an early collaboration between researchers and business analysts could have a direct impact on a company's ROI!

Researchers could support business development teams in the early stages of crafting business proposals by identifying opportunities and exploring possibilities through exploratory research or speculative research. Business proposals are often crafted from the shoes of the company stakeholder and rarely address the customer's or user's voice! This is a key perspective that a researcher will be able to offer!

As a Service Designer, it has been my top priority to articulate the value of research at the discovery phase to attain a buy-in from the executives. The gap I have encountered while working with researchers, is at the stage of research shareback.

The methods adopted to shareback research findings or insights are often in the form of a long, heavily worded document or an anecdote. We forget to tell the "stories" of our customers!

This limits the decision maker to understand the "so that" in our 'How Might We' statement! The most popular question a researcher encounters post a research shareback is - "What do we do next and how?"

Let me take this opportunity to share a story from my talk at the DesignUp conference, 2022 -

Imagine that we are assigned to research the experience of buying vegetables for indians! Buying vegetables in India is a ritual. We have a specific vendor we purchase from. We touch, examine, smell and pick each veg, and put this in a basket, which is then weighed by the vendor. If we are buying fruits, We even ask questions to the vendor such as, do you think this is ripe enough to consume today? And he would help us to pick the right fruit based on our needs. There is a sense of loyalty built within us, by the vendor, towards him/her.

"

THE METHODS ADOPTED TO SHAREBACK RESEARCH FINDINGS OR INSIGHTS ARE OFTEN IN THE FORM OF A LONG, HEAVILY WORDED DOCUMENT

As a design researcher, we want to share the above buying experience where the consumer chooses a vendor, builds trust with a vendor, and has the ability to choose vegetables based on when and how they're cooking them. This highly personalised experience lends to the feeling that the vegetables were 'picked by them and not for them'.

But when we are sitting in the boardroom with C-suite executives, software developers, marketing heads and business analysts who are looking for a solution, the abstract and emotional nature of the vegetable buying experience is often lost. Most often researchers summarise their experience. Few researchers also add quotes and images that have been beneficial. But, the synthesis of research findings are often statements, observations and anecdotes.

If the intent of the research was to understand the motivations for a customer to revisit a vendor, as a researcher we should be able to clearly articulate the needs, goals and pains for both the customer and the vendor. The outcome of the research shareback is to help a stakeholder who did not have the same opportunity to interact with the users, listen to their stories, visit their homes, observe their daily routine

This will help the core team to re-evaluate their business decision to build a feature to drive sales within their platform. This will help them question the true value the feature provides to their end customer and prevent them from replicating a feature in a competitor's app! This is a space where true innovation could be triggered by the findings from a researcher. This

"

THE OUTCOME OF THE RESEARCH SHAREBACK IS TO HELP A STAKEHOLDER INTERACT WITH THE USERS, LISTEN TO THEIR STORIES
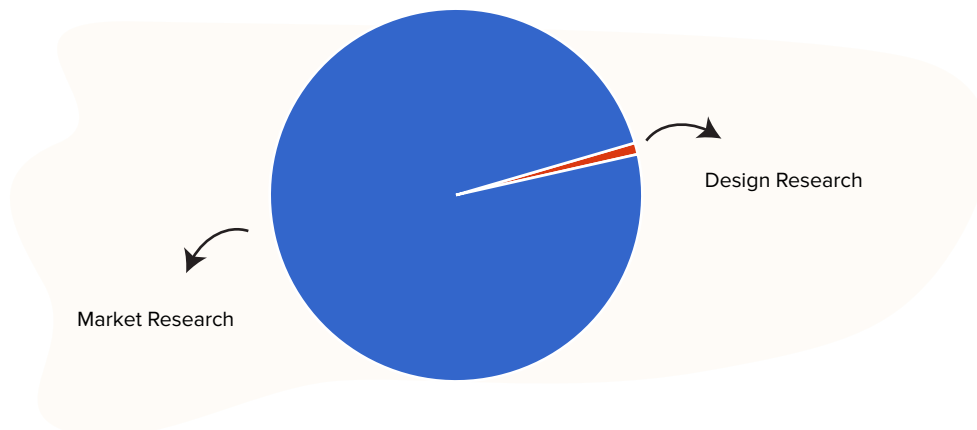
Budget for market and design research in any common business

would prevent yet another feature or an idea being a copy of a copy of a copy!

Recently I read this quote shared with The Ken by Ashish Goel, the CEO of Urban Ladder (a huge furniture retailer in India). He said," To design a bookshelf, you need to understand how people buy books in India. People always design for the western market - where people predominantly buy hardbacks over paperbacks. In India, it is the other way round". If we want to drive impact and be integrated within organisations, design researchers should constantly circle back to -

How might we help business teams to empathise with our customers, so that business decisions address our customer's need or pain while we drive our sales and revenue. ☺

Juneza Niyazi is a service designer based in India. She worked on interactive installations at Kochi Biennale & OFFF Barcelona, collaborated with non-designers, and earned a Master's in Interaction Design from Harbour Space (Barcelona)

The Cork-ing Success Of A UX Community in Ireland

How UX Cork contributes to the professional development of UX designers and enthusiasts in Cork, Ireland

By Team DW

Valeria's passion for User Experience (UX) led her to found UX Cork, a community that focuses on providing professional growth opportunities for UX designers and enthusiasts in Cork, Ireland. In an interview with DesignWhine, she shared her journey from studying fine arts and marketing to discovering her love for UX and how she came to establish the UX Cork community.

Originally from Spain, Valeria moved to Ireland in 2014 for an internship and ended up staying there after getting hired for a marketing role. With degrees in fine arts and international trade, she honed her design and marketing skills while working with various companies. Her interest in UX grew when she started working for manufacturers of electronic products, where she was able to provide input on both the product and website design.

In 2016, Valeria moved to Dublin to find bigger opportunities and enrolled in a postgraduate UX course. She then started attending UX meetups in Dublin and found a vibrant community. However, the busy city was not for her, so she returned to Cork, her preferred relaxed environment. To her surprise, there were no UX meetups in Cork, so she did some research and found out that a few people

A brainstorming session in action at UX Cork community

had tried to start one back in 2009-10 but were not successful.

Undeterred, Valeria contacted the people who had tried to start the UX Cork meetup and learned about their experience. Just as she was about to start the meetup, someone else beat her to it. Valeria reached out to the organizer and offered to collaborate. They agreed, and together, they organized events and worked to build the UX Cork community.

Over time, Valeria became the sole organizer of UX Cork and focused on providing consistency and growth opportunities for its members. She ensured that there was at least one speaker per month and lined up speakers from all over the world. Despite having a busy life, she made time to build the community, believing that it was necessary for the Cork community to grow professionally.

Today, David Hall, a member who had collaborated with Valeria before, helps her organize the meetups as a co-organizer. Valeria is now on maternity leave and has more time to focus on getting speakers for the community.

The founding members of UX Cork were Valeria and another member who has since left. David Hall has joined as a co-organizer and collaborates with Valeria to keep the community running smoothly. They are passionate about providing opportunities for UX designers and enthusiasts in Cork to learn, grow and connect.

Valeria also talked about the challenges of running a community. She mentioned that finding the right speakers can be difficult, especially those who are willing to travel to Cork. Valeria and David have to work hard to ensure that the speakers they invite can offer valuable insights to their members. Valeria also highlighted the importance of providing a safe and inclusive space for their members. She believes that diversity and inclusion are crucial for the growth of the community and ensures that everyone feels welcome at their events.

UX Cork has grown over the years, and Valeria and David have organized various events, including talks, workshops, and networking events. They have had speakers from companies like Google, Microsoft, and Shopify, who have shared their expertise with the community. The events have attracted members from different backgrounds, including designers, developers, product managers, and business owners.

The community has also organized hackathons and design challenges, where members work in teams to solve real-world problems. The challenges provide opportunities for members to work together, learn from each other, and showcase their skills.

Valeria and David have also collaborated with other UX communities in Ireland to organize joint events, which have provided members with even more opportunities to learn and network.

Despite several challenges, UX Cork has continued to grow and evolve. In 2020, the community faced a new challenge: the COVID-19 pandemic. Like many other communities, UX Cork had

"

ONE OF THE CHALLENGES IS FINDING THE RIGHT SPEAKERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE WILLING TO TRAVEL TO CORK

Another glimpse of a team meet for UX Cork

to shift to virtual events to comply with safety regulations. However, this did not dampen the enthusiasm of its members. In fact, the virtual events allowed members from all over the world to attend and share their experiences.

Looking to the future, Valeria and David are optimistic about the growth of the community. They hope to expand their reach and provide more opportunities for their members, including mentorship programs and UX design competitions. They also want to continue building relationships with other UX communities in Ireland and around the world.

Despite the challenges, Valeria and David remain committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all members.

"

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES, VALERIA AND DAVID REMAIN COMMITTED TO PROVIDING A SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL MEMBERS

Pro Bono: The Dark Side of UX Design Conferences

The UX design conferences charge hefty ticket prices to their audience while requiring many of the speakers to go pro bono

By Rajat Agarwal

As the world of UX design continues to evolve at breakneck speed, the importance of conferences as a platform for knowledge-sharing and networking has become increasingly apparent. However, a disturbing trend has emerged in recent years, one that threatens to undermine the very foundations of this vibrant community: the exploitation of UX designers by conferences that charge exorbitant ticket prices while failing to compensate their speakers.

It is a scenario straight out of a dystopian novel, where the powerful exploit the vulnerable for their own benefit. And yet, it is happening all around us, right under our noses. As UX design conferences proliferate, many have resorted to a despicable practice that involves asking speakers to participate "pro bono," in exchange for "exposure" or other intangible benefits.

The problem with this approach is that it places an unfair burden on the speakers, who are often forced to absorb the costs associated with attending the conference, such as travel, lodging, and meals. Moreover, it sends a message that the value of their time, expertise, and hard work is somehow worth less than that of the conference organizers, who are often raking in thousands or even millions of dollars in ticket sales.

This is not just a matter of ethics, but of basic economics. By failing to compensate their speakers, these conferences are perpetuating a system of exploitation that ultimately harms everyone involved. Speakers who are forced to work for free or at reduced rates may have to take on additional freelance work to make ends meet, which in turn can lead to burnout and decreased quality of work.

At the same time, the proliferation of these conferences creates a race to the bottom, where organizers are under pressure to keep ticket prices low, which in turn leads to a lower quality of experience for attendees. Ultimately, this harms the entire UX design community by undermining the very foundations of knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and innovation.

It is time for UX designers to take a stand and demand fair compensation for their hard work and expertise. By doing so, we can ensure that the world of UX design remains vibrant, dynamic, and inclusive, and that everyone has an opportunity to succeed and thrive.

"

IT SENDS A MESSAGE THAT THE VALUE OF THEIR TIME, EXPERTISE, AND HARD WORK IS SOMEHOW WORTH LESS THAN THAT OF THE CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

LISTEN UP
DESIGNERS

By Team DW

Seven prominent UX podcasters share valuable insights with *DesignWhine* on empathy, evolving industry, AI impact, successful UX teams, and the future of UX design

As technology continues to evolve, so does the need for user experience (UX) design. UX design plays a crucial role in creating digital products that are not only functional but also user-friendly. In recent years, UX podcasts have become a popular source of knowledge and inspiration for designers, developers, and anyone interested in UX design.

DesignWhine had the opportunity to speak with seven well-known UX podcasters about their experiences, insights, and advice for anyone interested in the field. Paul Boag from Digital Insights Podcast, Mike Green from Understanding Users Podcast, Nikki Anderson from Dear Nikki Podcast, Brendan Jarvis from Brave UX Podcast, Leigh Arredondo from UX Cake Podcast, Erin May from Awkward Silences Podcast, and Jason from User Defenders Podcast shared their perspectives on various topics related to UX design.

Their interviews cover a wide range of topics, including the importance of empathy in UX design, how to keep up with the constantly evolving industry, the impact of AI on UX, and the benefits of conducting user research. They also shared their thoughts on how to build a successful UX team, the future of UX design, and the role of diversity and inclusion in the field.

Whether you're a seasoned UX professional or just starting your journey in the field, the insights shared by these experts in their podcasts will inspire and inform your work. So, sit back, relax, and enjoy learning from some of the most respected voices in UX design.

"

THE INTERVIEWS COVER A WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS, INCLUDING EMPATHY IN UX DESIGN, HOW TO KEEP UP WITH THE EVOLVING INDUSTRY, AND AI

UNDERSTANDING USERS

WITH MIKE GREEN

In the interview with *DesignWhine*, we turned the tables and asked Mike about his favorite UX tool, technique, and a future trend which is what he usually asks all his guests on the podcast. Mike swears by the power of whiteboarding tools. Whether it's sprint planning, capturing user insights, analyzing findings or brainstorming ideas, these tools have become indispensable in the day-to-day operations of any UX team. The in-depth one-to-one user research interview is his favored technique to gather rich insights into how a user thinks and feels about a product or service.

Mike is fascinated by the rapid growth in AI and its capabilities and potential risks, particularly in the context of the recent launch of the conversational dialogue tool ChatGPT. He is keen to see how AI tools evolve and what role user experience design and research plays in that evolution.

Mike aims to bring a range of views and insights from different industries and countries in various UX-related disciplines. He prefers to invite experienced digital practitioners from the private or public sector, including Heads of UX, user researchers, UX designers, product managers, developers or even founders who are willing to share their knowledge, experiences and learnings for the benefit of the audience.

The main purpose of the Understanding Users podcast is to showcase the wide scope of user experience (UX) through interviews with different professionals in the field. The goal is to provide listeners with a better understanding of how other experts approach their work, including the challenges they encounter and how they have overcome them. By doing so, Mike hopes to inspire listeners to reflect on their own work and embrace a more user-centered approach to product design.

Mike Green, a UK-based award-nominated freelance user researcher and digital consultant, hosts the *Understanding Users* podcast. He has extensive experience working in agile service teams across government and the private sector, conducting research to design digital services that meet user needs. With a master's degree in psychology from the University of Bristol, he interviews UX professionals worldwide on the podcast to discuss their careers, challenges, and building digital products with users in mind.

TOP THREE EPISODES TO GET STARTED

Ep 5: Generative Research with Katie John
Katie John, Head of User Research at *Caution Your Blast*, discusses the importance of generative research and the qualities of a good user researcher, while sharing her favorite UX tool and a future trend

Ep 29: Importance of Stakeholders with Varun Muru-
Varun Murugesan, Co-founder and Head of Research at *Apple and Banana*, discusses the importance of involving stakeholders in the research process and the birth of *Fruitful* an online UX research library

Ep 31: Conversations at UXDX 2022, Dublin
Six UXDX 2022 Dublin conference attendees reflect on the event, their company challenges and opportunities, and their view of the future of User Experience as a discipline

DEAR NIKKI

WITH NIKKI ANDERSON-STANIER

Nikki, a former clinical psychology student turned user experience researcher, was inspired by Esther Perel's podcast "Where We Begin" to create her own podcast. She was fascinated by the live counseling sessions Perel conducted with couples, but one day, Perel introduced a new format where people could call in and record a question for her, and she would give them live advice. This sparked an idea in Nikki's mind to create a podcast where people could submit anonymous questions, and she could answer them in a more personal way.

Nikki realized that many people had similar questions, and creating a podcast where she could answer multiple questions at once would be a great way to spread her knowledge. Thus, "Dear Nikki" was born. The podcast has become a hit, providing a platform for people to seek advice and learn from Nikki's experiences.

Nikki says she has received a wide range of questions. She enjoys the variety of tasks that user research involves and appreciates the diversity of inquiries she receives. Although she doesn't get too many repeat questions, she has noticed a trend in questions related to stakeholder management and engagement, such as "how do I get my stakeholders to listen to me?" or "how do I better collaborate with stakeholders?"

The biggest hope for her podcast is to make user researchers feel less alone in their journey. The field of user research can be lonely, especially if you are a team of one. The podcast highlights that everyone is going through similar struggles, and that no one is alone in their experience.

Another key takeaway is to increase confidence and reduce imposter syndrome.

Nikki is a Lead User Researcher and the founder of User Research Academy. With over 9 years of experience in user research at a variety of companies, ranging from a tiny start-up called ALICE to the large corporation Zalando, she has led a diverse range of end-to-end research projects across the world and now owns her own company, helping others get into the field of user research. She lives in Jersey, loves reading and writing psychological thrillers, and being outside in the garden with her cats, dog, and koi fish.

TOP THREE EPISODES TO GET STARTED

Ep 1: How to get included in stakeholder rituals
This episode covers several topics, including how to get included in stakeholder rituals, getting UXR included in the process, treating stakeholders as users, and knowing when it's time to move on

Ep 2: How to prioritize user research projects
This episode covers Nikki's step-by-step process in prioritizing different user research projects, especially as a user research team of one
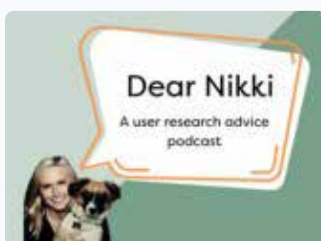
Ep 8: Own your research process
In this episode, Nikki encourages listeners to take ownership of their research processes and emphasizes that there is no one "ideal" research process that everyone must follow

BRAVE UX

WITH BRENDAN JARVIS

Brendan defines being brave in the context of creating digital products as being willing to be wrong about one's assumptions of the product's usability and value. He emphasizes the importance of actively challenging these assumptions through regular UX research, particularly in areas that could have a significant negative impact on the product's viability or user experience. On a personal level, he also believes that being brave is about being someone who is willing to constructively challenge the status quo and make decisions that align with one's values.

The host of the rather popular podcast typically invites guests to be on the show based on their previously shared articulate point of view, which he believes would be interesting and valuable to current and upcoming design leaders. Additionally, Brendan tries to ensure that the show reflects the diversity of people and perspectives in the field of design and product.

While speaking to *DesignWhine*, Brendan talks about the key takeaways he hopes for from his listeners.

The first takeaway he mentions is for design and product leaders to learn something useful from each conversation that they can apply in their personal or professional lives.

The second takeaway is for listeners to explore and question why they agree or disagree with the perspectives discussed. Exploring what lies beneath the immediate reaction and getting curious about that is where insight is found.

Lastly, he hopes that listeners will realize that his guests are, as amazing as they surely are, simply people. People who are brave enough to share their perspectives and reflect, refine, and evolve them over time.

Brendan Jarvis is the Managing Founder of *The Space InBetween*, formerly an award-winning digital design studio and now the only specialist UX research practice and world-class UX lab in New Zealand. With 15 years of agency leadership experience, he is dedicated to helping design leaders de-risk product design and shape healthy design cultures through effective UX research. Brendan hosts the Brave UX podcast, which is followed by people in over 50 countries to learn from the world's best UX, design and product leaders.

TOP THREE EPISODES TO GET STARTED

Ep. 76: Building Inclusive Enterprise Design
Aditi Sharma openly discusses being woman of colour in banking, how she's building a diverse and inclusive design culture, and why she's used design to dismantle injustices.

Ep. 91: Radical Thoughts on Living and Learning
Christina Wodtke reminds us to stop carrying the weight of the world, to start giving others the benefit of the doubt, and to make the most of the gift that is feedback.

Ep. 39: Design is Much More than a Job
Bob Baxley reflects on his time as a design leader at Apple, why no one can name a famous product designer, and the importance of having conviction in your ideas.

UX CAKE PODCAST
WITH LEIGH ALLEN-ARREDONDO

The UX Cake podcast aims to highlight diverse voices and perspectives in the field of UX design. Host Leigh provides a platform for underrepresented voices to share their unique experiences and insights while also featuring well-known experts in the field. The podcast focuses on topical discussions with guests who have a deep understanding of the subject matter and offer valuable resources for listeners. Through interviews with UX stalwarts and rising stars in the field, the podcast explores the latest trends and topics in UX, providing engaging episodes that encourage listeners to delve deeper.

Leigh shares the story of interviewing UX design legend Don Norman at the IXD Interaction Conference. After presenting her outline, Norman deemed it "too boring," prompting Leigh to rework her approach and produce an engaging episode that gave listeners an exclusive insight into Norman's thoughts and ideas. In contrast, Leigh's interview with Indi Young revealed Young's efforts to promote inclusivity and diversity in the UX community, and Leigh's admiration for her work

As a practitioner of user-centered work, Leigh knows all too well the challenges that come with trying to be effective and impactful in the business world. She believes it's not enough to just have exceptional technical skills in design, research, or writing. To truly succeed, you need a much broader skill set, including effective communication, collaboration, and strategic thinking.

Through UX Cake, she aims to address these often-overlooked aspects of UX work to help practitioners become more impactful.

Leigh Allen-Arredondo is the founder and host of the UX Cake podcast, amplifying diverse voices and ideas from around the globe to bring valuable insights to the UX community. Leigh is a seasoned UX professional with over 20 years of experience leading high-performing teams and driving product design at a wide range of companies, from Fortune 100 to startups and agencies. Today, Leigh is dedicated to supporting and strengthening the UX community through her Strategic UX Leader™ leadership coaching & development.

TOP THREE EPISODES TO GET STARTED

Ep 52: UX Strategy with Jamie Levy
This episode is a "Best of" replay of Leigh's interview with Jaime Levy, author of the book "UX Strategy." Her book is still going strong, and these concepts are as important as ever, so a replay would be appropriate

Ep 51: Democratizing UX Research
This episode is about scaling user research - doing more research and getting more from your research resources - through democratization, or enablement, in your organization.

Ep 48: Influencing Without Authority
Increasing influence is crucial for impactful work in UX design. In this episide UX experts Hana Nagel, Real Canty, and Ashby Hayes delve into these issues with a powerful Q&A session with the live audience.

DesignWhine

Your Gateway to the UX Life

IN PARTNER

24 May 3rd, 2023 · Online · 24 hours non-stop

QUESTION

IF YOU HAD TO PICK **JUST ONE WORD** TO DESCRIBE YOUR IDEAL FUTURE FOR UX, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

We're giving away **100 fre**

RSHIP WITH **24 HOURS OF UX**

2023 - the futures of UX

Answer the question on left and tag 3 designer friends on our LinkedIn post for a guaranteed free ticket.

Click here for the LinkedIn Post

e tickets to 24 Hours of UX!

AWKWARD SILENCES

WITH ERIN MAY & JOHN HENRY FORSTER

DesignWhine Magazine had the pleasure of interviewing Erin May and JH Forster, the hosts of the podcast 'Awkward Silences'. When asked about the most unique name our of all podcasts out there, the hosts revealed that the name was chosen for its distinctiveness, memorability, and casual irreverence that signals an understanding of user researchers' mindset. Interestingly, the hosts came up with the name while chatting on Slack in 2018.

Erin and JH's success in securing high-quality guests for 'Awkward Silences' is the result of a combination of factors, including the show's growing reputation, the hosts' deep knowledge of the research field, and their strong network of contacts within the industry. The fact that the hosts are able to attract such a diverse range of guests, including respected industry professionals, research practitioners, and non-research professionals, is a testament to their ability to create a welcoming and inclusive space for all members of the research community. As a result, 'Awkward Silences' has become a highly respected and influential platform for discussions around research, and its popularity is only continuing to grow.

Erin and JH also shared that their podcast's central theme is research, and they hope to cover various angles of research with every episode. They aim to make their content accessible to a wide audience, including senior level research ops professionals, product folks, marketers, or anyone who can benefit from research in their work.

With over 114 episodes, 'Awkward Silences' continues to be a must-listen for anyone interested in research. Erin and JH's goal is to create a space where listeners can learn, be inspired, and connect with the research community through Awkward Silences.

Erin May is a left brained, right brained generalist with a moderate amount of interest in an immoderate amounts of things. She's a customer and user advocate, marketer and growth leader, with a strong background in content. She's a lifelong learner with strong opinions, weakly held. She's been the SVP of Marketing and Growth at User Interviews for 5+ years and Co-host of Awkward Silences for over 4 years.

JH Forster, a Product leader with 15 years of experience, oversees the Product Management as SVP of Product at *User Interviews*. He is enthusiastic about UXR and enjoys co-hosting Awkward Silences.

TOP THREE EPISODES TO GET STARTED

Ep 72: How to Ask Great User Research Questions
In this episode, Amy Chess, Amazon, discusses how great user research starts with a great research questions. Amy explains how to get this important part of the UX research process right.

Ep 77: How to Break Into User Research
This episide covers an honest and actionable advice from a seasoned researcher, Eniola Abioye, on how to start doing UX research, build a portfolio, and make the career switch

Ep 75: Debunking UX Research Myths
Zach Schendel, a research pro who has led teams at Unilever, Netflix, and DoorDash debunks some of the most common UX research myths he's come up against in this episode of Awkward Silences

USER DEFENDERS
WITH HOST JASON OGLE

DesignWhine recently interviewed Jason, the host of the User Defenders podcast, a UX podcast with a superhero theme. Jason was asked about the superpowers that he believes UX designers possess, and he highlighted two essential qualities: empathy and discontentment.

Empathy, according to Jason, is fundamental for UX designers. He stressed the importance of understanding and caring for the users they are designing for, even though they may have never met them in person. UX designers have an inherent desire to make things better for their users by removing any friction that prevents them from achieving their goals, needs, and desires.

Discontentment, on the other hand, can be a superpower if it drives designers to do and be better. As designers, they always see opportunities for improvement, even in the things they have designed. Jason shared his experience with his portfolio, which he initially thought was awesome but soon realized could be improved after a month of launching it.

When it comes to selecting guests for his podcast, Jason has a strict vetting process. He spends a lot of time, effort, and money producing each episode, ensuring that the content is of high quality.

The User Defenders podcast features superhero avatars of each guest, and the graphics were created by two talented artists: Cesar Lemus and Eli Jorgensen.

Jason believes that being a great UX designer requires one to be a great human, and he hopes that every listener of the show feels inspired and empowered to make a difference through their work.

Jason Ogle has been designing for Tim Berners-Lee's "World Wide Web" using CRT monitors, 2400bps modems, and a mere 216 colors since 1996. He fell in love with the marriage of design and technology around that time and knew he wanted to do it for the rest of his life. Jason desires to use his UX podcast as an avenue to inspire, enlighten, and entertain those passionate about making a difference in their work and staying hungry and inspired in this exciting and ever-changing medium.

TOP THREE EPISODES TO GET STARTED

Radical Empathy with Seth Godin

In this episode, Seth Godin shows us what radical empathy looks like. He reminds us to do work that matters, for people who care by focusing on serving a minimum viable audience

There and Back (and Forward) Again with Bob Baxley

In this episode, Bob Baxley, a Silicon Valley pioneer, takes us back in time and reveals how every little interaction matters and motivates us to be proud enough of the work we do

Harnessing Life Experiences in Design

In this episode, Shaheena Attarwala defends a woman's right to design her own future, especially in the face of fierce adversity and opposition. She champions living ruthlessly amid oppressive whims and societal precepts.

DIGITAL INSIGHTS

WITH PAUL BOAG

The Boagworld Show was a talk show covering various web design best practices and news. Paul Boag, the host of Digital Insights Podcast felt it was time to do something different, as the talk show format had become the norm for web design podcasts.

Digital Insights is a more focused podcast that aims to provide short, bite-sized pieces of UX and digital marketing wisdom. Each episode lasts only a few minutes and covers a specific topic.

During the interview, Paul, discussed the key considerations he takes into account when selecting a topic for the show. His top priority is to talk about things that his audience cares about. To achieve this, he has a page where people can suggest topic ideas and vote on the subjects they want to be covered.

Paul explained that while the takeaways from the podcast are always different, if there were an overarching theme, it would be the close link between user experience design and digital marketing. He emphasized that good marketing should continuously work to improve the user experience, and good UX should effectively sell the product or service.

When asked about the one thing he would like to alter in the UX design community, having almost witnessed its evolution since its inception, Paul expressed concern over the general disdain for marketers and marketing within the UX community. He explained that many UX professionals are naive, thinking that improving the user experience is the sole key to business success, when in reality, the issue is more complex. He emphasized that there must be a balance between meeting user needs and achieving business objectives.

Paul Boag is an expert in conversion optimization, digital strategy, and user experience design, with over 25 years of experience working with diverse organizations such as The European Commission, PUMA and Doctors Without Borders. He helps organizations better connect with today's digital consumers through consultancy and training. Additionally, Paul is a well-respected figure in the digital sector, with six books to his name including Click, Digital Adaptation and User Experience Revolution and a prolific writing and speaking career.

TOP THREE EPISODES TO GET STARTED

A Pragmatist's Guide To Lean User Research
User research can save time. In this episode, Paul focuses on the practical approaches to UX research that fit into existing projects

Embracing the Chaos: Designing for Human Behavior
This episode is a discussion on why we need to design interfaces that accommodate messy, unpredictable human behavior with empathy and functionality

Overcoming The Challenges Of Content Creation
When it comes to informational websites, content quality is often poor. There is no magic answer to fix that. However, there are practical techniques you can use to improve the copy on your websites and ensure your users find the content they are looking for

Empowering Elderly Users Through Co-design

Rittika, a Visual Designer at Merkle Inc., shares her journey of the hurdles in promoting digital literacy for elderly users

By Rittika Basu

My name is Rittika, and I am a Visual Designer at Merkle Inc., where I work on e-retailing platforms, connected commerce, and design systems. I have worked with companies such as Walt Disney, Toshiba, and OCAD University across India, Canada, and France. My belief in 'Good Design' is that it is a service or product that solves problems, improves lifestyles, and enhances user satisfaction.

Additionally, I have co-authored two research papers that were presented at conferences and later published in ResearchGate, Google Books, World Health Organisation, and SpringerLink. In my free time, I enjoy reading, calligraphy, and learning about mythology.

During my early years in academia, I struggled with missing out on smaller details, which led to loopholes in my final outcomes. While conducting my thesis research on designing a gerontechnological (digital tools that are specially designed for elderly users) medium for elderly consumers, I failed to understand why my design was not encouraging elderly users to use the tools I curated for them. Despite extensive research, surveys, and interviews, the education tools I designed were not being used by elderly individuals, despite my efforts to teach them one-on-one.

Determined to deliver on time, I found support from my mother and professor. I realized that instead of designing the platform for the elderly users, I needed to design with them, facilitating a co-design methodology.

Alongside the elderly users, we identified loopholes in the design and empathized with their capabilities while using mobile devices. For instance, older adults require higher contrast and longer pace for reading. Using the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), we completed an exemplary education tool to promote digital literacy.

This experience was not only a hurdle but also an opportunity to learn and grow. The importance of empathy and co-design methodologies to cater to diverse users is crucial in the design process. Good design requires a holistic approach that considers the users' perspectives, abilities, and limitations. It is essential to iterate, test, and refine designs based on feedback from users to create a seamless user experience.

I would advise my fellow designers and aspiring creatives to follow this quote by William Shakespeare, "if there is a good will, there is a great way". If you are determined and committed to achieve a goal, nothing can stop you from achieving it. ☺

Rittika is a Visual Designer at Merkle Inc., with experience in e-retailing platforms and design systems. She believes in good design that improves user satisfaction and has co-authored two research papers presented at conferences and published in various scholarly outlets

We need your ❤️

DesignWhine was born and continues to grow in moonlight.

It's a small independent venture run by a handful of team members after office hours. A lot of hardwork and resources go into it's production but we do it for the love of the UX design community.

If you enjoyed reading this issue, we request you to please share it with your professional network on LinkedIn and follow us on Twitter to support us.