

Zachary Sam Zaiss

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summary Seasoned User Experience Researcher and Design Strategist with deep expertise in collecting customer data, interpreting and synthesizing results, and communicating findings in a clear, concise, visual manner. Consistent top performer with a proven track record of driving customer-centric visions for large-scale, high-impact product changes, and landing those changes effectively based on customer feedback.

education **Master of Information and Data Science (MIDS)**, expected 2015
University of California, Berkeley; Berkeley, CA

Master of Human-Computer Interaction (MHCI), 2006
Carnegie Mellon University; Pittsburgh, PA

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Math, & Psychology, 2004
University of Nebraska, Omaha; Omaha, NE

professional experience **Microsoft Advertising**
Senior Design Researcher: Redmond, WA; 2013 - Present

- Led exploratory field research and design workshops with professional search advertisers to refresh personas and drive innovation into the Bing Ads product roadmap
- Directed Research Excellence initiative to instill UX Research best practices within my team and share those practices across Microsoft
- Ran extensive qualitative interviews to understand the digital advertising practices of small, local businesses; crafted research-based design principles for this audience that shaped new designs for Bing Places and Bing Ads Express; recognized as the subject matter expert on the digital advertising practices for local businesses based on this work

Microsoft Developer Division
Senior User Experience Researcher: Redmond, WA; 2012 - 2013

- Led worldwide research initiative (field research and remote interviews) to understand front-end web development; communicated findings via affinity diagramming, a customer wall, and detailed user profiles; recognized as the subject matter expert on front-end web development based on this work
- Conducted Quick Pulse Studies on core UI development features in Blend for Visual Studio; ensured timely delivery of results to impact development decisions, despite tight schedules
- Represented UX Research on the Developer Division UX Design Board, whose goal was to promote innovation in Visual Studio while maintaining UI consistency

User Experience Researcher II: Redmond, WA; 2008 - 2012

- Drove a 33% toolbar reduction effort for Visual Studio 2012; reduction decisions were based on telemetry data analysis and qualitative user studies; conducted validation testing to confirm that this potentially-disruptive change would land with minimal user frustration
- Defined the Visual Studio 2012 Simplicity scenario based on extensive primary customer research; shaped the top VS 2012 features within this scenario through interaction design mockups, interactive prototypes, and customer validation research
- Co-owned the Visual Studio 2012 UX Tenet, which gave guidance to teams across the division to ensure a base level of UX quality throughout the release
- Earned promotion to Senior level in recognition of exemplary accomplishment of the above Visual Studio 2012 initiatives

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professional **WorldLearn**

experience

User Experience Program Manager: Framingham, MA; 2007 - 2008

- Crafted a user-centered development process through the creation of user scenarios and profiles, as well as profiles for key business verticals
- Derived key product differentiators from user requirements and managed their design from concept to working code, including full ownership of CSS stylesheets

Microsoft Developer Division

User Experience Researcher: Redmond, WA; 2006 - 2007

- Led the creation of a new set of design and development personas through extensive field research
- Key figure in milestone planning through user profile and scenario development; assisted in storyboard development

Center for the Advancement of Applied Ethics

PICOLA Usability Analysis Lead: Pittsburgh, PA; 2005 - 2006

- PICOLA is a survey and online communication portal for deliberative polling
- Redesigned PICOLA based on extensive user research of live deliberative polls
- Responsible for UI development (Flash + ActionScript)

patents

Multi-Faceted Relationship Hubs

Microsoft Developer Division: Published 2013; US-2013-0007671-A1

- Addressed a design to streamline exploration of code artifacts across multiple relationships within a single view
- Drove early design envisioning, including construction of an interactive prototype, that served as the basis for the invention

Managing A Working Set In An Integrated Development Environment

Microsoft Developer Division: Published 2012; US-2012-0291012-A1

- Addressed a design of an integrated preview capability that enables exploration of complex code relationships across multiple files without disrupting a core working set of files
- Drove early design envisioning, including construction of an interactive prototype, that served as the basis for the invention

data collection techniques

Contextual Inquiry / Field Research
Design Workshops
Think Aloud Usability Studies
Quick Pulse Studies (Agile UX)
Focus Groups
Competitive Analysis
Telemetry Analysis
Heuristic Evaluation
Cognitive Walkthrough
Surveys

data communication techniques

Customer Walls
Affinity Diagrams
Modeling / Contextual Design
Personas / User Profiles
Annotated Walkthroughs
Solution Prototyping
Viral Videos / User Study Clips
Design Principles & Guidelines
Quantitative Analysis

honors

Gold Star Award, Microsoft, 2010
Best Poster Award, Mobile HCI 2006
Eagle Scout

affiliations

Scott Scholar Alumni Organization
Psi Chi

languages spoken

English
Spanish