

In Search of a Research Partner for a User Experience Design Master's Project in the Cleveland, OH Area

Hello Ohio businesses and non-profits,

I'm currently working on my master's degree at Kent State University in the emerging field of User Experience Design (Information Architecture and Knowledge Management). I'm nearing the completion of my degree and planning to work on a Master's Project that will tie together the key methods of my studies. I hope to begin in February 2010 and aim to complete and present the project by early July 2010.

I would love to work on the redesign of an in-house, web-based application or Web site for a local business. The project will focus on user research, a usability study and prototypes demonstrating a final redesign for the product.

If you're interested in this area, but have not had the time or resources to explore it in the past, this would be a great opportunity. I've outlined my key objectives for the project below, as well as key deliverables with which I would like to conclude the study.

Please contact with me if you are interested or if you have any questions. You can also visit my own Web site for examples of my previous work. Thank you in advance for your time!

Sincerely,

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Final Deliverables

- ▶ **Key findings** from a preliminary survey, user interviews and usability testing summarized in a research report
- ▶ A **competitive analysis** including best practices from similar products, common labeling and navigation systems and recommendations for a redesign
- ▶ **Blueprint designs** that visually demonstrate the new navigation systems, information architecture and user workflow
- ▶ **Wireframe designs** of the improved web site or application
- ▶ **Visual design** Photoshop documents, standards-based XHTML templates and style sheets to be used as a starting point for the redesign, as time permits
- ▶ **A slide presentation** showing my research methods, main deliverables and key findings (to be presented to a committee at Kent State University and optionally, to interested parties with whom I worked on the project)
- ▶ **A final compilation of the above deliverables**, to be shared with the institution or business and also submitted to Kent State University as a Master's Project.

Research Objectives

- ▶ Perform **user research** with the primary users of the application or Web site through a competitive analysis, requirements analysis, survey and short face-to-face interviews to determine areas of further study
- ▶ Discover **user experience concerns** with a usability study with the current product in a Usability lab using eye-tracking software and task-based analysis
- ▶ Develop an **improved Information Architecture** proposal for the product including a new labeling system, navigation scheme, workflow analysis and information layout
- ▶ Develop **low-fidelity, paper prototypes** for the product using the improved information architecture
- ▶ Develop **high-fidelity prototypes** to be used in a final round of Usability Lab testing. Compare these results with the original testing results.

The ideal partner for this project:

- ▶ Already has a web-based application or site in need of a redesign
- ▶ Has the resources to work with me on my project and will allow me to perform voluntary, in-house research with their main audiences
- ▶ Will share the project with the academic community
- ▶ Is located in the Cleveland area or can work with me remotely
- ▶ Has an interest in Usability, Information Architecture or User Experience Design