

# Eric Atkinson - User Experience / Research Manager

## Summary

Mr. Atkinson is a research and design team leader who has proven success managing the delivery of high-impact product design and customer experience initiatives. He has a track record of tackling groundbreaking challenges by synthesizing complex data into actionable insights leading to positive business outcomes.

Mr. Atkinson is a flexible, high-performing team player who drives collaboration between leadership, product management, engineers, marketing, and product design. He enjoys working in fast-paced environments, mentoring team members and building team effectiveness. He has exceptional business acumen and research methodology expertise. He has helped grow user experience practices through high quality human-centered design and qualitative and quantitative research principles. He is passionate about fostering a culture of innovation on teams where learning is the driver to success.

## Amazon, Alexa Experience and Devices

Sr. UX Researcher

9/2017-Present

*Lead User Researcher on the Alexa Experience and Devices Research and Analytics team.*

- Creates a deep understanding and empathy for target customers through field research, surveys, personas, lab studies, and other methods (existing or invented) to be most effective to affect business outcomes.
- Partner closely with product and design teams to identify research topics, and build a research roadmap; communicate and refresh on a regular basis to ensure relevancy.
- Create research roadmaps that impact product lifecycles using a variety of appropriate techniques.
- Identify the best method or mix of methods based on research questions, timeline and resourcing.
- Develop metrics that appropriately reflect the user experience quality of a feature, product or system.
- Perform quick but thorough data analysis in order to create insightful and actionable findings.
- Communicate results and recommendations to executive leadership in design, product management, engineering, and marketing.

## Amazon, Alexa Skills

Experience Design Researcher

1/2017-9/2017

*I am Lead Researcher on the Alexa Skills developer user experience team responsible for growing the ecosystem and application catalogue from 8,000 to over 20,000 skills with more than 1,000 skills rated 5 out of 5 stars. I led the research roadmap and strategy of the successful private-beta launch of a reimagined platform to develop skills for Alexa.*

- Lead an international, research program for Amazon's Alexa Skills Technology that is charged with enabling and empowering application creators for Amazon's Alexa Voice Service and voice enabled devices including Echo, Tap, Dot, and Show.
- Drive and implement traditional and new research strategies for agile, innovation product teams that are creating the future of conversational interactions.
- Partner with product managers, solution architects, marketing managers, designers, engineers and research peers to understand and guide the organization's research strategy and roadmap.
- Design and conduct end-to-end product research including managing 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor engagements.
- Mentor team members on all aspects of end-to-end research including study design, moderation, analysis and reporting.
- Evangelize design thinking throughout the organization on the business value of formative, generative, and evaluative basic and applied research and customer centered experience design.

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## Insight Global – Microsoft, Cloud + Enterprise

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Principal User Experience Researcher

9/2016-1/2017

*As principal user researcher on the evangelism cloud + enterprise team, I developed a program to mentor and train all international product and engineering managers on human-centered design, design-thinking, and lean product development with measurable business outcomes for real-world projects.*

- Drive culture change in Microsoft Cloud + Enterprise engineering organizations responsible for cloud infrastructure, enterprise mobility, operations management, application development, and advanced analytics solutions.
- Lead operationalization of international, experiential design thinking education program.
- Develop roadmap, curricula and interactive modules for train-the-trainer workshops focused on business impact.
- Evangelized customer obsession and lean product development methodologies to obtain measurable business outcomes within the enterprise.
- Partnered with C-level directors and engineering program managers to report on program success.
- Trained and mentored project managers, engineers, researchers and designers on customer-centered design for real-world projects.

## WorldView Solutions Inc.

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User Experience Lead

10/2015-8/2016

*My UX Lead and business development responsibilities led to winning substantial projects and delivering measurably improved experiences for key accounts. One such flagship project increased conversion rates by 20% and decreased time on task by 49% resulting in an improved customer experience SUS score of 77 (B) from 57 (D).*

- Lead and implement end-to-end experience design practice for regional geospatial consultancy.
- Developed partnerships with clients, agency partners, engineering, and influencers to help ensure the company delivered elegant solutions to meet business goals and solve customer problems.
- Developed strategy and operational planning for the people, processes and technology required for UX execution.
- Built and supervised experience design team of five responsible for first generation MVP and vNext software research, discovery, ideation, design, presentation, critique, and validation.
- Recruited, hired and mentored UX team members including researchers, interaction designers, visual designers and design technologists.
- Established creative business development program and create work statements and proposals marketing the value of experience design to clients.

## CapTech Consulting – Fortune 500 Consumer Packaged Goods Company

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Manager, Customer Experience and Front-end Architecture

9/2013-8/2015

*The successful introduction of a lean build, measure, learn customer experience program delivered confident product deployments proven to solve user goals ultimately eliminating legacy software licensing costs by over \$10MM. The successful deployment of the system re-architecture improved product performance and increased daily active use by decreasing application page load time by 42%, page requests by 30%, and page size by 28%.*

- Built and managed a customer experience team of four tasked with the end-to-end user experience for client B2B ecommerce portal responsible for sales and contract execution, product fulfillment, category analysis, revenue reporting, and product promotion.
- Served as primary account manager conducting activities including meeting with executive leadership to elicit business goals, developing proposals and statements of work, and managing resource needs.

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- Partnered with creative vendors, program managers, and onshore and offshore engineers.
- Re-engineered and implemented a digital analytics framework; and also directed the front-end re-architecture of a mobile-first, responsive ecommerce solution.
- Directed the development and integration of an automated front-end scaffold and build process which introduced task and asset management, performance budgets, technical quality assurance oversight, and targeted deployment into the development lifecycle.
- Planned formative and evaluative quantitative and qualitative user research roadmap.

### Snagajob

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Sr. Interaction Designer / Researcher, B2C Product Team

2/2013-8/2013

*In this role, research I conducted improved the mobile web application finish conversion rate by 10%; increased application start conversion rate in the desktop experience by 15%; and successfully launched the first-generation app for iOS and Apple products with an average of 3.7 stars.*

- Led experience design and customer research for B2C mobile and web products.
- Established a prioritized UX roadmap including foundational research, generative design and discovery, beta cohort participatory design and validation, and summative optimization for product iteration.
- Partnered with product owners and engineering leads to distill business and user goals into clearly defined stories/tasks, opportunity backlogs and design principles.
- Developed operational, release, and iteration planning with executive leadership, business analysts, quality assurance, and marketing.
- Elaborated on customer segments and behavior to drive elegant, innovative web mobile solutions.
- Directed qualitative and quantitative user research activities, including foundational ethnographic studies, A/B/multivariate tests, and remote evaluative research, to rapidly validate user behavior and inform design strategy.

### Verisk Health (Verscend Technologies)

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Sr. Product Designer

7/2012-2/2013

*I was responsible for product design and research of first-generation, private beta launch for health and prescription drug plan business intelligence software.*

- Worked with product management to develop design and research roadmap and product strategy.
- Lead generative research and discovery resulting in new ideas for the product and service.
- Designed and conducted qualitative research and ethnographic studies that informed product concepts.
- Synthesized customer jobs-to-be-done (JTBD) insights into working user stories for engineering teams.
- Advised product owners and marketing on experience design and research opportunities to inform the product lifecycle.

### VA Dept. of Social Services

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Lead Product Designer / Researcher

1/2010-6/2012

*I led product design and research for successful launch of first-generation temporary assistance portal to over 1MM of Virginia's most vulnerable citizens.*

- Worked with teams of developers, analysts, and product managers to build and support interactive applications and public-facing products.
- Developed branding, user interface and interaction design of web-based applications.

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- Designed and conducted usability tests using paper prototypes and remote testing tools.
- Partnered with external vendors to develop prototypes and designs into rich application experiences.
- Served as the subject matter expert on usability and accessibility (Section 508, WAI-WCAG, WAI-ARIA).

## VA Office on Volunteerism and Community Service

Web Producer

7/2005-12/2009

## VA Dept. of Social Services

Sr. Designer / Content Manager

2/1999-6/2005

## Knowledge, Skill & Ability

Leadership	Research & Discovery	Design & Technology	Insight & Analysis
Team lead and agile coach	Customer-centered	Design direction	Topline and longitudinal report generation
Talent recruitment and mentoring	Research roadmap planning and design	Critique facilitator	Experimental applied analysis
Executive and technical presentation	Foundational/formative qualitative methods	End-to-end product design	Customer experience (Satisfaction, CE11, Net Promoter, USERIndex, SUS)
Program management	Discovery facilitator/coach	Information architecture	Translation and communication of complex concepts
Business development	Generative ideation	Front-end developer	ROI analysis
Client and vendor management	Experience mapping	Performance optimization	Data and statistics analysis
Product management	Evaluative/summative quantitative methods	Content strategy	Observational and field synthesis

## Education & Certifications

- MS, Human Computer Interaction candidate, DePaul University
- BA, Design and Visual Communications, Hampton University
- Certified Scrum Master (CSM)

## Professional Organizations

- User Experience Professionals Association (UXPA)
- International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP)
- Interaction Design Association (IxDA)
- The Information Architecture Institute
- Scrum Alliance
- AIGA

## References

References are available upon request.