

## Cynthia Putnam

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### Summary

**I am a researcher – designer hybrid.** My skill set combines the knowledge and ability to apply rigorous research methods and extensive design experience.

**As a researcher,** I am skilled in both qualitative and quantitative research methods in user experience research:

- Human-centered design methods for product evaluation including: usability/think-aloud protocols, cognitive walkthroughs, card sorting, heuristic evaluation and use cases
- Analyzing and conducting data from field research through interviews, surveys, contextual inquiries, observational studies, focus groups, and design ethnography
- Statistical analysis of large datasets using both multivariate and univariate tests (with SPSS) and non-parametric statistical tests for smaller datasets
- Creation of personas and scenarios as research summarizations

**As a designer,** I spent over 10 years as an industrial designer creating digital art, interaction design, video, and animations for a variety of delivery mediums and clients:

- Design and information architecting of websites and an understanding coding standards-compliant sites using XHTML and CSS
- Software product design and web-based product design
- Interactive games, activities and animations for the Internet using classic animation techniques
- 3D interface visualization and character animation using 3D Studio Max and Maya
- Logos and print-based media

**As a research-design hybrid,** I can effectively communicate data and ideas visually, interactively, and textually:

- Data visualizations, video summaries, and written reports
- Low to high fidelity prototypes and wireframes

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### Education

**PhD Human Centered Design & Engineering:** University of Washington (defense April 2010)

**M.S. Technical Communication:** University of Washington: 2006

**B.S. Industrial Design:** Western Washington University: 1984

### Certificates

**User-Centered Design:** University of Washington: 2005

**Character Animation for Games:** University of Washington: 2004

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### Research Experience

**User Experience Researcher:** Microsoft/Xbox games group (contract): 2010 to current

Research support for the Xbox/games group:

- Experimental design and data analysis to attain requirements and answer product team research questions.
- User requirements in the form of wireframes and written reports.
- Designing and conducting usability studies and analyzing the resulting data.

**Research Consultant:** PATH: Safe Water Project / Gates Foundation grant: 2008-2009

Statistical analysis of survey data. Respondents from the Andhra Pradesh region of India were questioned about behaviors and attitudes regarding safe/clean water including collection, storage, and preferences.

- Analysis resulted in several synopses in the form of visualizations and personas.
- Consulted on methods for an additional user research to assess usability issues of current water systems.

**Data Analyst:** Valid Concept: November 2008

Statistical analysis of usability survey data collected by Nokia.

**Research Assistant:** University of Washington: 2007-2010

Central Asia + Information and Communication Technologies project: 2007-2010

I project managed and participated in this research group focused on Internet, mobile phones, and related technology developments in the region, including:

- Collaborated in coding ethnography data from study participants.
- Conducted extensive quantitative statistical analysis of a data-set created by a yearly survey of 1000 participants in four Central Asian Countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan).
- Created prototypes for products/services ideated from research.
- Performed usability testing for research-based products
- Created personas, high level scenarios and user requirements for mobile-based service.

College of Engineering: 2007

- Led several focus groups and created multiple online surveys for the college's diverse user groups to determine their website needs.
- Information architecture of the college's website.
- Created a web-based prototype for usability, designed and managed and performed usability testing.

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**Teaching Experience** : University of Washington

**Introduction to Communication Design:** Instructor of record: 2006-2007

Designed and presented lectures and tutorials to instruct junior level students through many commonly used software packages in the field of technical communication. The students are expected to create artifacts in each software package from a user-centered perspective culminating in a web-based professional portfolio they wireframed, designed, and coded.

**Technical Writing and Oral Presentation:** Instructor of record: 2007

Instructed junior and senior level engineering students in design and production of professional documents and presentations they might be expected to create in the workplace.

**User-centered web design:** Teaching assistant: 2008

Instructed graduate students in how to create standards-compliant web sites using CSS and XHTML

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**Design Experience**

**Sr. Art Director:** True North Consultants Inc. (Hasbro Corporation): 2004-2007

Flash games and web sites supporting Hasbro's toy brands which included My Little Pony, Furby and G.I. Joe. Responsibilities included both the visual and interaction design of Flash games, web sites, illustrations and animations in 2D and 3D. Managed outside vendors and internal designers through multiple projects.

**Designer/3D Animator:** Microsoft Corporation: eHome Group (contract): 2004

3D user interfaces for the multiple devices available in Microsoft's "Home of the Future". Responsibilities included working with internal developers and outside vendors, managing and creating assets in 3D Studio Max for use in the live presentation engine, and creating videos in After Effects for the linear portions of the demonstration.

**Product Designer:** Microsoft Corporation: Works group (contract): 2002-2003

User interface/ product design of the task launcher for Works Suite 2004. Created all final art and icons. Working closely with the usability engineer, I created several DHTML and Flash prototypes for usability studies. Developed a design documentation specification site. Created Flash Product Tours including all interaction design and art and managed all localization through use of XML driven text content.

**Senior Product Designer:** Pacific Edge Software: 2001-2002

User interface and interaction design for the company's web-based project and portfolio management software products. Created HTML and Flash prototypes for internal usability testing and sales. Responsible for all design, art, icon illustration, and style guide documentation.

**Designer/Creative Director:** Cendant Corporation: 1997-2000

**Co-owner/Creative Director/Manager:** enVision Design, Inc.: 1994 - 1997

**Senior Design Manager:** Color & Design Exhibits (now Exhibit Group): 1987-1994

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**Software:** Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, Image Ready, After Effects, Flash, Director & Dreamweaver; Newtek Lightwave 3D, Discreet 3D Studio Max, Alias Wavefront Maya, Microsoft Office, SPSS, ATLAS ti.

**Awards**

- Excellence Award: Puget Sound chapter of the Society for Technical Communications for Microsoft Works Tutorial.
- Outstanding Female Graduate Student Award: University of Washington Society of Woman Engineers (2007 & 2010).

**Several peer reviewed publications** (see website for complete list), titles include:

- Adapting User-Centered Design Methods to Design for Diverse Populations.
- Getting Online but still living offline: the complex relationship of technology adoption and in-person social networks.
- Mobile phone users in Kyrgyzstan: A case study of identifying user requirements for diverse users.
- Computer Games in the Developing World: The Value of Non-Instrumental Engagement with ICTs, or Taking Play Seriously.
- Software and technologies designed for people with autism.