

NELL K. RICE

5345 QUAAS DR, WEST BEND, WI 53095

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

I design creative solutions to complex problems. As a User Experience, Product, and Service designer and researcher, I leverage data-driven insights to enhance the usability of enterprise-scaled products, services, systems, and technologies. I am focused on delivering tailored, user-centric research and design outcomes that drive the development and iteration of products and services while providing elegant end-user experiences.

EXPERIENCE

SENIOR EXPERIENCE RESEARCHER & DESIGNER; MASTERCARD FRAUD

APEXON, CHICAGO (REMOTE) – OCTOBER 2023 - PRESENT

- Providing research and design support across various frameworks within the Fraud Center, such as issuer security solutions, fraud center platforms, and internal Mastercard applications. Delivering lean UX outcomes and generating user-informed, data-driven insights to guide product management and influence stakeholder decisions.
- Developing user-centric brand experiences through developing and curating shared components and interaction patterns. Integrating user-centered design with SAFe Agile methodologies, aiming to accelerate market reach while ensuring a high-quality user experience.
- Acting as the primary liaison between internal stakeholders, management, and the UX and dev teams by creating and maintaining UX project roadmaps, managing projects and planning, gathering product/business requirements, and overseeing research design and compliance.
- Leading design management for research projects and maintaining visual and front-end artifacts for the program, working closely with developers to ensure brand and design guideline consistency, and overseeing interaction design consistency while confirming technical feasibility.

SENIOR EXPERIENCE & PRODUCT DESIGNER; PRODUCT INTEGRATION

NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL, MILWAUKEE (HYBRID) – MAY 2022 - JULY 2023

- Spearheaded a user-centered and strategic research program to benchmark and inform the design of technical products catering to 23,000 users in Northwestern Mutual's home and field offices.
- Successfully delivered sophisticated product integration experiences and solutions that balanced user needs with business requirements while adhering to tight budgetary constraints.
- Collaborated extensively with senior stakeholders- spanning 83 different roles and 12 different departments- to identify each user group's research requirements, desired outcomes, and measurements of success, thereby ensuring comprehensive research efforts and methodologies.

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- Conducted UX Research and created product and service designs, transforming customer insights into practical and actionable deliverables, including but not limited to journey maps, personas, service design blueprints, prototypes, workflows, affinity maps, and more.

LEAD UX/UI DESIGN INSTRUCTOR; DIGITAL SKILLS BOOTCAMP

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN- MADISON (REMOTE)– 2020 - DEC 2022

- Wrote and presented captivating lectures, facilitated interactive discussions, and conducted hands-on demonstrations for classes comprising 60+ Digital Marketing and UX/UI students.
- Played a pivotal role in creating fresh curriculum and materials that covered user experience research and design fundamentals, essential tools, resources, design thinking, and innovation.
- Effectively managed a small team of Assistant Instructors and Teaching Assistants, guiding and mentoring students in their coursework and research projects.

LEAD USER EXPERIENCE RESEARCHER; INNOVATION LAB

JOHNSON CONTROLS; MILWAUKEE (HYBRID)– NOVEMBER 2021 - MAY 2022

- Responsible for driving innovative outcomes through user-centric design methodologies, skillfully balancing conceptual and practical thinking.
- Ensured a holistic approach to investigating the user journey, considering business objectives and desired outcomes relative to available technology and user need.
- Planned, executed, and analyzed qualitative and quantitative research using various methods such as usability testing, card sorting, contextual inquiry, and survey design.
- Researched trends and opportunities in different market segments to identify gaps and potential areas for commercial product innovation.
- Conducted research to facilitate the design of JCI product and service solutions related to net zero building management for the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Dubai.

UX RESEARCH & DESIGN CONSULTANT; DIGITAL WORKPLACE

NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL, MILWAUKEE (HYBRID) – JULY 2020 - NOVEMBER 2021

- Utilized strategic design and research methodologies to assist Northwestern Mutual's WIRX organization in gaining deeper insights into the opportunities and challenges users encounter in the digital workplace.
- Collaborated closely with cross-functional teams to integrate business and technical requirements into user-focused research plans.
- By conducting qualitative and quantitative research and analyzing data, I facilitated developing and enhancing design and product decisions, ensuring alignment with business objectives and user needs.

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- Created a sustainable plan for continuous usability research, data collection, analysis, and reporting, ensuring a well-informed approach for ongoing improvements and decision-making.
- Formulated a sustainable plan for ongoing usability research, data collection, analysis, and reporting. Additionally, I facilitated workshops with customers and stakeholders, effectively aligning user needs with business goals.

BUSINESS ANALYST; WORKPLACE INNOVATION

WEST BEND MUTUAL, WEST BEND (HYBRID) – AUGUST 2019 - JULY 2020

- Collaborated across the business to conceptualize and clearly express ideas, establish a product vision, collect requirements, and explore solution possibilities.
- Created sophisticated mobile product solutions and applications aligned with West Bend Mutual's digital project roadmap while catering to user needs and market demands.
- Ensured seamless coordination with designers, developers, and software engineers throughout the project lifecycle, while maintaining budget adherence.
- Analyzed extensive data sets to communicate and balance both user and business insights effectively, enabling informed decision-making and problem-solving.

TEST ENGINEER

FACEBOOK, AUSTIN, TX – AUGUST 2017 - MAY 2019

- Worked across the Camera & Sharing product development organization, analyzing bug reports, and developing test case scenarios based on user feedback received during the alpha and beta test phases of Facebook software iterations.
- Identified problematic software iterations, changesets, and technical issues ahead of software releases.
- Analyzed data to effectively assess and communicate product launch risks and technical issues.
- Created support processes, internal tools, and training and developed automation and logic to streamline software testing as part of Facebook's continuous deployment strategy and tight deployment timelines.

ICLOUD SECURITY ENGINEERING

APPLE CORPORATE, AUSTIN, TX – 2015 - 2016

- Served as the main point of contact among consumers, AppleCare technical support, and the iCloud Engineering team, conducting root cause analysis, data collection, and reporting for cybersecurity incidents.
- Conducted comprehensive incident reviews and analyzed atypical events, bugs, and other cybersecurity-related anomalies.

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- Offered valuable research and insights for the enhancement of security technology rules, methodologies, and filters.

EXECUTIVE RELATIONS & VOICE OF CUSTOMER; APPLE ONLINE STORE ALAC

APPLE CORPORATE, AUSTIN, TX – 2011 - 2015

- Conducted in-depth analysis of serious, sensitive, and highly visible issues reported to Apple from various sources, including consumers, State Attorney General and Better Business Bureau offices, Apple's Executive Staff, Apple Investors, Media and Public Relations teams, the media, and Apple Legal.
- Utilized qualitative and quantitative analysis of consumer feedback to create reports pinpointing and resolving service bottlenecks at an operational level.
- Collaborated with multiple levels of management, stakeholders, and Apple leadership across functions to tackle inefficiencies, correct procedures, address harmful practices, and resolve tooling issues.

BACK OFFICE TEAM LEAD, SME, & TRAINER; APPLE ONLINE STORE ALAC

APPLE CORPORATE, AUSTIN, TX – 2009 - 2011

- Identified and resolved intricate issues involving Apple Online Store Support teams in Brazil, collaborating with Apple Operations, Logistics, Fulfillment, and Finance.
- Responsibilities included analyzing, escalating, and actively addressing emerging customer issues, trends, and crucial business situations.
- Developed and localized service tools and processes for desktop and Mobile Apps, along with SAP, People Soft, and Salesforce-based services.
- Conducted User Acceptance Testing by creating and executing scripts that simulated changes in end-to-end sales and service processes.
- Authored over 30 processes and documents, providing detailed operational procedures and training materials for the Brazil Apple Online Store.

EDUCATION

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY – MS - INFORMATION DESIGN & STRATEGY, 2024

Focus: Data Analysis & Visualization / GPA: 4.0

KENT STATE – MS - USER EXPERIENCE DESIGN, 2020

Focus: Service Design / GPA: 4.0

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – BFA - FINE ARTS, 2000

Majors: Studio Arts & Art History, Minors: Biology & Romance Languages / GPA: 3.8

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SKILLS SUMMARY

FIELD RESEARCH AND ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES:

- Conducted extensive field research and ethnographic studies to gain deep insights into user behavior, needs, and pain points in real-world contexts.
- Utilized ethnographic methods such as participant observation, interviews, and contextual inquiry to uncover user motivations and challenges.

HEURISTIC REVIEWS AND USABILITY EVALUATIONS:

- Performed heuristic reviews of digital products to identify usability issues and adherence to best practices.
- Conducted usability evaluations, applying recognized usability principles to assess the overall user experience and suggest improvements.

BENCHMARKING AND COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS:

- Conducted comprehensive benchmarking studies to evaluate our product against industry competitors, identifying areas for differentiation and improvement.
- Regularly monitored and reported on competitive trends and emerging design patterns to inform design decisions.

CARD SORTING AND INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE:

- Facilitated card sorting sessions to collaboratively define information architectures and improve content organization.
- Utilized tools like Optimal Workshop and physical cards to gather user input and create intuitive navigation structures.

PROTOTYPING

- Created prototypes and wireframes to visualize early-stage design concepts.
- Leveraged tools like Balsamiq, Figma, AdobeXD, Axure RP, Sketch, and paper prototyping to rapidly iterate and gather feedback from stakeholders and users.

USABILITY TESTING AND USER FEEDBACK:

- Designed and conducted usability testing sessions, incorporating user feedback to refine product designs.
- Collaborated with UX designers to translate insights from usability tests into actionable design improvements.

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USER-CENTERED DESIGN WORKSHOPS:

- Led workshops to foster a user-centered design culture within cross-functional teams, promoting empathy for user needs and perspectives.
- Facilitated card sorting workshops, design thinking sessions, and journey mapping exercises to drive collaboration and innovation.

DATA SYNTHESIS AND REPORTING:

- Synthesized research findings from various sources into actionable recommendations for design and development teams.
- Prepared detailed research reports and presentations, effectively communicating insights to stakeholders and guiding decision-making.

CROSS-FUNCTIONAL COLLABORATION:

- Collaborated closely with product managers, designers, developers, and marketers to ensure a cohesive and user-focused product strategy.
- Acted as a bridge between technical teams and end-users, advocating for user needs throughout the development process.

CONTINUOUS SKILL ENHANCEMENT:

- Stayed abreast of industry trends, attending UX conferences and training to expand knowledge of UX methodologies and tools.
- Pursued education and certification opportunities in a variety of areas toward honing existing skills and developing others.

TOOLS OVERVIEW:

Sketch	UserZoom	Maze
Figma	Hotjar	dscout
Adobe XD	Optimal Workshop	Asana
Axure RP	Flowmapp	Jira / Jira Align
Balsamiq	Treejack	Zeplin
InVision	Chalkmark	Abstract
Proto.io	Maze	Miro
Origami Studio	Questions	Google Analytics
UXPin	Reframer	Mixpanel
UserTesting.com	Lookback	Crazy Egg
Optimizely	Typeform	SurveyMonkey