

User Experience – Responsibilities and Goals

Strategy

- Sets tactical and strategic goals, maximize efforts and diminish redundancy for:
 - establishing/introducing core methodologies and best practices for information architecture, business analysis and usability testing
 - Integrating other tools and resources to best assess user experiences quantifiably (web analytics, SEO/SEM strategies, etc.)
 - Ongoing discussion and collaboration between the user experience group and other disciplines within Studiocom.
- Establish and build user experience knowledge base using both project related and independently conducted studies, in anticipation of web and user trends, by:
 - Conducting multiple methods of primary and secondary research including interviews with key stakeholders, observation, surveys, market research, Web analytics, etc.
 - Analyzing user segments and their information and functional needs in order to create personas/scenarios.
 - Researching and analyzing industry trends and competitive information
 - Conducting ongoing usability testing and assessment
 - Defining metrics for assessing success
 - Authoring and publishing whitepapers, case studies, etc.
 - Lead local industry groups (i.e., Atlanta chapter, UPA), host industry community meetings, collaborate with other complementary groups (SIGCHI), development partnerships with educational institutions (i.e., Georgia Tech).
- Support growth exposure and credibility of Studiocom as top tier interactive agency through participation at key conferences as a presenter and/or panelist discussing user experience methodologies, case studies, successes and/or key learnings.
- Share emerging user experience trends, testing methodologies, significant shifts in perceptions, etc. through company wide presentations at “brown bag” get-togethers (“bring your own lunch”, talk, learn, ask questions).
- Participate in and lead special projects such as innovation teams, process development, etc.
- Build Usability program, incorporating a “menu” of tests to accommodate complexity, users, timelines and unique client needs. [see bulleted item in “User Experience group” for details]

User experience group

- Manage groups in LA, Boston and Atlanta, comprised of 3 multi-faceted User experience specialists with cross-functional skill sets in the user experience discipline (information architecture, user testing, business analysis, project based QA) as well as industry-related (i.e., flash, community, ecommerce, hospitality, SEO/SEM).
- Acts as hiring manager for the user experience group for all office locations, with a goal of increasing permanent staff, mentoring leadership and creating a pool of highly competent contractors
- Defines, maintains and updates all group job descriptions
 - **Senior** User Experience Specialist, who has a broad knowledge of information architecture deliverables and usability testing methodologies, plus has shown skill in successfully working with clients in all levels of communication (face to face, telephone, email and written reports/presentations). This Senior UX Specialist believes in a

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- collaborate process for problem solving and brainstorming across disciplines, as well as within the user experience group.
- User Experience Specialist/Information Architect, who shows an ongoing habit of increasing their knowledge and expertise of information architecture deliverables and usability testing methodologies, has had some exposure to direct client contact via face to face and/or written avenues, and is interested in gaining more expertise in working directly with clients. This UX Specialist believes in a collaborate process for problem solving and brainstorming across disciplines, as well as within the user experience group.
- User Experience **Strategist**/Business Analyst, who shows an ongoing habit of increasing their knowledge and expertise of information architecture deliverables and usability testing methodologies, has had some exposure to direct client contact via face to face and/or written avenues, and is interested in gaining more expertise in working directly with clients. This UX Specialist believes in a collaborate process for problem solving and brainstorming across disciplines, as well as within the user experience group.
- Reports short and long term status/staffing needs to HR staff/senior team
- Advocates for and mentors the user experience specialists across all office locations, with a goal to develop and mentor leadership roles for each office location.
 - Create professional development plan to expand on knowledge and skills. Discover and incorporate trainings into the group's schedule both internally and externally.
 - Understand each person and how they are best nurtured, and maintain open lines of communication at all times.
 - Establish regular "field trips" to one office location; by rotating visits, one group "hosts" and creates an agenda that includes meeting staff, reviewing current projects, discussing industry topics, etc.
 - Set "no work" days which requires that each group member does research and creates a presentation delving in to a new aspect to testing, research, documenting, etc., then presents it to the rest of the group. Ideally, this is one day between the traveling field trips, as a way not only to pursue the discipline, but also to maintain the feeling of community between all the offices.
 - Manage performance of the group by establishing baseline of expectations (internally within the group, as well as outfacing to the company and clients), setting appropriate measurements to conduct performance assessments. Establish consequences for each potential outcome of the reviews
 - Communicates recommendation for approval of department promotions
- Build Usability program, incorporating a "menu" of tests to accommodate complexity, users, timelines and unique client needs.
 - Create flexibility with acquisition of tools to build a mobile lab
<http://ovostudios.com/portablelabs.asp>
 - Take advantage of web based user testing with tools such as UserVue
<http://www.techsmith.com/uservue.asp#>
 - Use a survey tool such as Zoomerang Pro to screen, profile and gather quantifiable data
<http://info.zoomerang.com/>
 - Partner with usability labs for formal lab testing, both for clients and for audits.

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Sales and Projects

- Offer strategic input for incorporating user experience products and services into sales efforts, such as working with clients to understand/identify which services will best address their concerns, establishing measures of success and ROI as it relates to the user.
- Leads User Experience Group-portions of projects - from brainstorming and conception to architecting and training
- Collaborates with project teams to define strategy, site architecture and navigation, map out user flow and experience, and define levels of interaction, and methods of user testing.
- Assist Client Partners, Program Managers and other Directors in resource management and assignments
- Provide conflict resolution with regard to User Experience Group issues internally and clients, as necessary

Process

- Author documentation to address user experience needs for all phases of a project – both direct and supporting; ensure that each type of document addresses the needs of the project, disciplines and client
- Promote the importance of consistency of each document via training and communication within the user experience group.
- Validate usefulness of each document throughout projects and fine tune as necessary; manage process iteratively to understand what elements are unchanging and what should be flexible based on client needs. Publish process of user experience group, including reference to documents and/or services.
- Facilitate “post mortems” of projects to gather key learnings and incorporate in to the ongoing improvement of process.
- “Own” the Intranet development, and its ongoing improvement and integration in to the developing company wide process changes.