UX Research Portfolio

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I am a **UX Design Researcher** specialized in mapping technology, smart cities, and wearable technology.

I was trained at **MIT** and have had the opportunity to work for high profile companies including **TomTom** (in Amsterdam) and **Disney Interactive Group** (in Tokyo). Through my work at MIT, I was also able to provide consultancy work for **Marriott Hotels**, **the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority**, and **RAI**, Italy’s national broadcasting company.

Over the years, I have worked on projects including: highly autonomous driving, apps for public transit, cycling computers, GPS running watches, sat-navs for scooters, games for the Japanese market, and smart tables for hotel lobbies.

I have conducted UX research in **ten countries** and on **four continents**.
How do I work?

I conduct research for **all stages** of the product development process: from “blue sky,” open explorations in the discover phase to validation oriented research in the deliver phase.
What methods do I use?

I utilize a broad toolkit of UX research methods. I select the appropriate method based on stakeholder input and the research questions we are trying to answer.
UX Method Cards

To help in selecting the best research method, my team has created this deck of UX method cards. We often use these cards in kickoff meetings with stakeholders to decide the best way to approach the research.
Digital Research Tools

I am also well versed in using digital tools for UX research.

Some of my favorites include:

1. **D-Scout and ContextMapp** - for diary studies
2. **Mural.co** – for remote collaboration, workshops and journey maps.
3. **User Testing.com** – for remote usability testing and international recruitment
4. **Treejack** – for information architecture
INTERNATIONAL FOCUS

I have setup and conducted on-the-ground user research in the Netherlands, France, Germany, the UK, Italy, Spain, the US, and Japan. I have also setup and led UX workshops in Peru and Russia.

EXPERIENCED WITH:
• Working with translators.
• Working with local recruitment / research agencies.
• Providing strategic guidance on product localization.
Case Study 1:

Scooter Drivers
Project Overview

In Spring 2015, TomTom was in the early stages of developing a navigation product for scooter drivers.

The research that I conducted for this project had two goals:

1. **Exploration**: Better understand the habits, desires, painpoints, and highlights of the European scooter driver.

2. **Validation**: Validate key pieces of the product proposition (e.g. feature set, hardware, and navigation prototype) within the real scooter driving context.

Where were we in the Product Dev Process?

*Discover*  *Design*  *Deliver*
**RESEARCH SETUP**

1: in-context interview
- I interviewed 6 scooter drivers in Milan and 6 in Amsterdam, next to their scooters.
- I asked them lots of questions about scooter accessories, their current solutions to navigate, and what their daily scooter commutes looked like.

2: card sorting
- I created cards which showed features we were considering for our product.
- I asked participants to sort the cards from most favorite to least favorite and to explain why.

3: concept testing
- I created a box which featured some illustrations of the product and a 3-D print of the product inside.
- Participants could take the product and imagine where they would mount it on their scooter.

4: shadowing
- Participants were given a navigation app on a phone, which I mounted to their scooter mirror bar.
- Participants drove their commute to work with the app, while I followed behind on my own scooter (+GoPro on my helmet.)
GUISEPPE

“I’m part of a scooter club. I’ve had many scooters since I was a teen…I have ten pairs of scooter gloves for all the seasons.”

- Age: 44
- Home: Milan, Italy
- Scooter Brand: Majesty
- Engine Size: 400 cc
- Relationship to Scooter: Passionate
- Tech Level: High
- User Type: Scooter Enthusiast
Shadowing Setup (on a scooter!)

UX Researcher: Riding scooter behind participant.

GoPro Camera 1: Affixed to researcher’s helmet, filming participant while driving.

GoPro Camera 2: Affixed to participant’s helmet, filming what s/he sees, how often they glance down at device, etc.

Test Participant: Sat-nav prototype affixed to scooter mirror bar.
Key Insights

1. **Current Painpoints**: Participants often check Google Maps on their way to a destination. They have to stop, take their phone out of their pocket, and take off their gloves to check it.

2. **Traffic Information**: Checking traffic information (on Google Maps or radio) is not that important for scooter drivers. All our participants weave through cars to bypass traffic (we saw this in the GoPro video footage).

3. **Interaction on the Move**: Interaction with a screen is extremely difficult on a scooter. Participants take their eyes off the road to look at the screen. Eye-catching zoom animations and high contrast work best for visibility outside and on-the-move.
Case Study 2: Running + Music
In January 2015, TomTom was looking for a USP for its new running watch and was considering music as an option.

The research that I conducted for this project focused on:

1. **Current Habits + Solutions**: How do users currently experience running with music? How do they experience their running arm bands, headphones, creating playlists, etc?
2. **Delivering Requirements**: If TomTom were to create a running watch with music, what elements would create the best experience for the user?
1: journey map (WS)
• In a workshop format, we invited 10 runners (5 casuals, 5 more serious) to learn about their running habits.
• One activity was to create a step-by-step user journey for their experience of “going on a run” with music.

2: co-design (WS)
• Another activity was to “design” your ideal running app on paper.
• We gave the user a number of widgets from existing running apps (including music), as well as blank squares where they could draw what they wanted.

3: in-context interview
• We then interviewed each runner individually, outside with their running gear.
• We asked lots of questions about their running arm bands, headphones, and experience with creating running playlists.

4: shadow a run
• We then observed how runners ran while listening to music.
• We followed behind them on a bike and filmed the experience using a GoPro attached to the bike handlebars.

Case 2: Run + Music
As part of the co-design workshop, we asked runners to describe their experience of “going for a run” as a story. As they told their story, each step was written on a post-it. This customer journey was the final result.
CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP: "Going for a run"

**STAGES**

**DURING RUN**

**STEPS**

1. Start the run
2. Music playing
3. Periodically check the distance covered
4. Switch songs in playlist
5. Receive alerts about upcoming events
6. Please listen to the music

**FEELINGS**

- eager
- tired
- annoyed
- annoyed
- motivated
- proud of self, accomplished

**PAIN POINTS**

- Too much noise
- Not enough information
- Song list too long
- I want to stop and look at my watch
- I have to stop to use my phone
- Agonizing, unable to use phone

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Running watch with music
- Utilizes BT headphones
- Easy to switch music between devices
- Music player integrated with watch
- Allows easy selection of music
- Easily switch music through smartphone
- Music on the go
CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP: "Going for a run"

STAGES

POST-RUN

STEPS

FEELINGS

PAIN POINTS

OPPORTUNITIES

Case 2: Run + Music
Key Insights

1. **Running arm band is a pain**: The running arm band is a huge pain point for users. The plastic casing on these arm bands makes it difficult to interact with your phone and it is a pain to look at your phone continuously on your arm.

2. **Headphones are a pain**: Headphones get caught on your arm when running and are often pulled out of your ear. Headphones that feature a control that is visible rather than behind the ear are more highly appreciated.

3. **Music + Running Playlists**: Runners have very specific ideas about what is good music for running (certain genres, certain BPM, etc.) Music files on their phone take up a lot of space, so they prefer Spotify.
Business Outcomes

1. **Unique Selling Point:** Because of my research, the idea of “music on the wrist” was solidified as the USP for our new running watch, the TomTom Spark. The Spark has since become a highly successful product from both a sales and reviews point of view.

2. **Headphone Design:** My research on users’ existing headphone solutions heavily informed the design of our wireless headphones.

3. **Partnerships with Spotify:** TomTom began to look into partnerships with Spotify to become the first running watch company to partner with them.
Case Study 3:
Fitness Tracker
Project Overview

In June 2016, TomTom was a few months away from shipping their new TomTom Touch fitness tracker.

The research that I conducted for this project was focused on:

1. **Validation**: Validate the usability of the device + app during the first use experience.
2. **Use Over Time**: How do participants react to the device over a period of a month?
3. **Exploratory Research**: Use the “Wizard of Oz” method to test an undeveloped feature.
Reasearch Setup

1: In-context interview
- I visited 6 participants in London and 6 participants in Berlin, at the place where they workout (e.g. home, gym).
- I asked lots of questions about their fitness gear, fitness history, and what fitness goals they have set for themselves.

2: Usability test
- I tested the out-of-the-box experience for the fitness tracker.
- I tested whether people could use BT to pair their device with their phone, whether they understood the instruction manual, the app, etc.

3: Diary study
- Participants then used the app for a period of one month.
- They recorded their reactions to the app each week through the diary research app, Dscout.

4: “Wizard of Oz” test
- TomTom stakeholders wanted to test a coach messaging feature, but it was not yet ready.
- So I pretended to be the TomTom Coach by sending participants motivational messages in Whatsapp.
Ed, 25

“I’m on this sweet potato diet at the moment. If I don’t look good, I won’t get cast in plays. They’ll just choose that guy who looks fitter.”

**Occupation**

Does 5 sidejobs to support his acting career

**Hobbies**

Painting, guitar, bouldering, drinking with friends

**Tracker**

Fitbit Charge HR. Bought it 6 months ago, usage depends on if he remembers to charge it

**Motivation for use**

Bought his tracker as one-upmanship to a mate who had one already

**Tracks...**

Likes to see progress towards his steps goal (12,000), stairs climbed and his HR when running

**Exercising habits**

He’ll exercise a lot when preparing for a play, after which his fitness goes down again massively. Will exercise excessively after a phase of being unhealthy or a weekend of heavy drinking.
In-Context Interview

As part of the in-context interview, I asked participants to tell me about their fitness history on a timeline. Potential relevant moments were given as pre-cut out squares, but users could also draw their own.
Wizard of Oz Experiment

I used the “Wizard of Oz” method to test the un-developed coach messaging feature in the TomTom Touch device.

I sent participants Whatsapp messages, using different tones of voice and different motivational strategies, asking them to imagine I was the tracker.

Then I asked participants to respond to the messages.
Key Insights

1. **Wearability + Fashion**: It’s very important to participants that their fitness tracker does not stand out too much. It should be small, light, and blend in with your clothing. For some, they also like to change strap colors and materials in order to match their outfit.

2. **Motivational Messages**: Motivational coach messages that focus on success chains (“you’re on a roll!”) receive the most positive ratings from participants. This insight was later validated in a quantitative format (e.g. online survey, N=300 per country).

3. **Proposition Testing**: Body Composition analysis was a key USP for our product. However, participants had no prior knowledge of this term and it wasn’t well explained on the box.
Questions?

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