Akash Chaudhary

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I am a UX researcher who likes exploring the role of human values and motivations behind habit formation around the use of existing and novel technologies. My projects center around exploring the design space for enabling and affording better emotional expressions in the day to day lives of humans. I am currently exploring the experiences of people living in rural areas.

EDUCATION

University of California   **Santa Cruz, USA**
Master of Science, Computational Media   Sep 2021 - present

Advisor : Dr. Norman Su

CGPA : 3.81

Indian Institute of Technology   **Roorkee, India**
Bachelor of Technology, Production and Industrial Engineering   Aug 2011 - May 2015

Advisor : Dr. Apurbba Kumar Sharma

Major CGPA : 9

RESEARCH

"Are You Still Watching?": Exploring Unintended User Behaviors and Dark Patterns on Video Streaming Platforms   ACM Designing Interactive Systems '22

Chaudhary, A., Saroha, J., Monteiro, K.

Advisor : Dr. Angus Forbes, Dr. Aman Parnami

Verbose : Designing a Context-based Educational System for Improving Communicative Expressions   ACM Mobile HCI '21

Chaudhary, A., Belani, M., Maheshwari, N.

Advisor : Dr. Aman Parnami

Exploring Design for an Embodied Tool to Regulate Separation Anxiety in Dogs

Chaudhary, A.

Advisor : Dr. Katherine Isbister

Exploring Design Interventions to Improve Experiences of Rural Commute   Ongoing

Chaudhary, A.

Advisor : Dr. Norman Su

WORK EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant (Musical Data)| University of California, Santa Cruz   Apr 2022 - Jun 2022

- I was responsible for conducting demos, holding discussions and grading assignments in the class.
- I provided regular and timely feedback to students for their class assignments.
- I was also responsible for holding office hours with students to review their work material, answer general course related questions, and provide assistance on assignments.
- I maintained expertise in subject area throughout in order to expose students with up to date trends and recommend useful resources whenever necessary.

Teaching Assistant (Algorithmic Music)| University of California, Santa Cruz   Jan 2022 - Mar 2022

- I was responsible in assistng my primary instructor in managing the evaluation of course assignments and development of course feedback towards the end.
- I assisted students in building conceptual course-related concepts, helped them come up with new ideas for their creative projects by conducting brainstorming sessions and further helped them complete course assignments whenever required.
- I also assisted students with hands-on help on how to use python notebooks and certain library modules for the completion of required course objectives.

UX Researcher | Authentic User Experience Lab   Apr 2022 - Present

- I am currently working in collaboration with Dr. Norman Su who is also my lab advisor, to explore and find out the lived experiences of people living in rural areas. We are trying to understand faced by people in rural areas due to gaps in infrastructure facilities, especially computing and transportation.
- We are currently interviewing people to try and understand the problems faced by people in rural areas due to gaps in infrastructure facilities, especially computing and transportation.

UX Researcher | Creative Coding Lab   Sep 2021 - Mar 2022

- I collaborated with 4 team members including two mentors — UX design expert Dr. Aman Parnami and visualization expert, Dr. Angus Forbes, to identify and prioritize a research project involving design critique of video streaming platforms.
- I worked as the first author on a psychology-based user experience study that involved finding deceptive dark design patterns on popular video streaming platforms — YouTube, Netflix, PrimeVideo and Disney+ Hotstar.
- Our paper got accepted as a full paper conference submission at ACM Designing Interactive Systems 2022.

UX/UI Research Associate | Weave Lab   Jan 2018 - July 2021

- I collaborated with lab advisor Dr. Aman Parnami, and 2 other lab members at the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi, to come up with a novel design for the development of a speech improvement application.
- We iteratively built the application starting from low-fidelity wire framing and successive testing on lab members for required UI affordances.
- We then conducted a visual representation study with visual design experts to come up with a textual representation of 4 types pf speech intonations used by native English language speakers.
- We finally came up with the design of our mobile application and tested its usability and user experience among non-native English speakers.
- I worked as the first author on our project and our study got accepted as a full paper at ACM Mobile HCI 2021.
- Overall, I was responsible for formulating the sketch-based prototypes, conducting user studies, coming up with an exhaustive list of options for the visual representation study and getting directly involved with an intern in the development of the mobile application.
- I was further involved in analyzing user data, as well as formulating SUS usability scores, SEQ user experience questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Researcher | ILIAD Lab   Jan 2019 - Dec 2020

- I was a member of the weekly meetings at the Interdisciplinary Lab for Interactive AV Development (ILIAD), led by Prof. Timothy Scott Moyers Jr. at IIIT Delhi.

- I, along with 3 others, built a python-based graphical user interface that performed data sonification of different types of media files — Image (JPEG, PNG), video (mp4), audio (WAV) and CSV files. This was followed by MIDI conversions and message transfers to audio output softwares like Reaper and SuperCollider.

Research Intern | Verisk
<div align="right">May 2019 - Sep 2019</div>

- I was responsible for performing data analysis on the Q/A model of the language analysis model BERT for Natural Language Processing tasks on newspaper articles.
- I met with data scientists and engineers in the Verisk team weekly to report the text recognition accuracy of the model on domain-specific datasets that helped in fine-tuning the BERT model, thereby improving its accuracy by 1.2%.
- I was given freedom to explore the literature of text recognition AI models and come up with ideas on possible future research directions within the company.
- I presented research insights based on the proceedings of the 57th Conference of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL) and came up with ideas to conduct research on the detection of 'deception' in speech.

Product Manager | Derbii
<div align="right">Nov 2015 - Dec 2017</div>

- As a product manager, I was responsible for documenting user feedback on our early stage android and iOS mobile applications and coming up with key areas that need improvement.
- I was directly involved in discussions with our co-founder, Prasenjit Singh, who was also our tech CEO, involved the development of our mobile application.
- Apart from being a Product Manager, I was also responsible for overseeing multiple verticals of the startup, namely, Investor Relations and Marketing Growth.
- As a first employee of the company, I was responsible for fostering industry collaborations and managing investor relations.
- To meet the growth requirements of a bootstrapped startup, I was also required to came up with various ideas for employing strategies of below the line marketing that can help in organic growth of the company.
- In the later stages of my tenure, I was directly involved in engaging with 3 prominent investors that collectively made up the pre-series A fund for our company.

SKILLS

Hands-on coding

- Python, C, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, p5. Certified through Harvard course - CS50: CS50's Introduction to Computer Science (edX).
- User testing, formulating study protocols, conducting interviews, designing prototypes, cross-disciplinary collaborations with designers, data scientists and engineers, evaluating user data, writing summary reports and iterative designing.
- Data Structures and Algorithms. Certified through Stanford courses - Divide and Conquer, Sorting and Searching, and Randomized Algorithms (Coursera), Graph Search, Shortest Paths, and Data Structures (Coursera), Greedy Algorithms, Minimum Spanning Trees, and Dynamic Programming (Coursera), Shortest Paths Revisited, NP-Complete Problems and What To Do About Them (Coursera).
- Digital Signal Processing, through a non-degree course from EPFL (Coursera).

EXTRA-CURRICULARS

Sports

- I like working out and meditating, and was a regular part of our sports community at Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee.
- I received a gold medal in basketball in my undergraduate in the 4th year at Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee in the Inter-IIT sports fest.
- I also received a silver medal in basketball in my undergraduate in the 2nd year at Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee in the Inter-IIT sports fest.
- We came runners up in football in the Inter-Year Sports Competition in my undergraduate at the Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, in both the 3rd and 4th year.