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Design Portfolio- <https://ashutoshdesign.github.io>

My interest in design began from an early age when I used to dream up bizarre inventions or figure out what made a machine tick so that I could reimagine it to make it better. When I learnt that there was indeed a whole field of study that aligned with my interests and approached it in a scientific way, I knew I had to try it. I was naturally drawn to design as a field of study. Now, I'm pursuing my Bachelor's in Design with minor in Computer Science and Engineering from Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, India.

My experiments in design were initially limited to creating graphics and user interfaces through my own instincts. However, when I spent a couple of months interning as a User Experience Researcher at 1mg, India's largest health platform recognised by the United Nations, it gave me a whole new perspective about what design really consisted of. During the internship, I carried out extensive early stage user research using ethnographic research methods including contextual inquiry, shadowing and fly-on-the-wall observation. By the end of the internship, insights from my research were already being incorporated into their product development process. This experience sparked my interest in Design Research and Human-Computer Interaction.

Now, I search hungrily for new technologies and skills that could help me face newer and more involving challenges. People are often impressed by my level of inquisitiveness, diligence and critical thinking which have seeped into my academic and professional life. Not only have I explored and worked proficiently in nearly all the major branches of design, but also have an excellent sense of leadership and team spirit that I have garnered over years playing sports and leading in school.

"I believe in creating simpler and more meaningful experiences that make people more effective."

My research interests stand testimony to my belief. My primary areas of interest are Human-Computer Interaction and User Experience Research. I'm also interested in Interaction Design for mobile, web, virtual reality and

augmented reality. I wish to experiment with novel interaction methods and advances in Human-Computer Interaction for societal innovation especially in the domain of health. My internship experience at IIm which involved visiting crowded hospitals, meeting distressed patients and their families, listening to their stories of illness and exploitation, made me realise the pathetic condition of healthcare services in India. I want to use "design thinking" methodology to simplify the healthcare experience for people and enable self-health management, thus bringing about a change in the lives of possibly thousands of people.

Design, however, does not occupy all my time. I'm a sports enthusiast with a love for Squash and a nature lover who enjoys long road trips to exotic locations. My experience as Head Boy in school inspired me to take up leadership roles in college as well. I'm currently the Institute Secretary of Squash Club and have represented my institute at Inter-IIT Sports Meet. I also hold the post of Branch Representative of the Department of Design. These qualities of sportsmanship, adventurism and leadership often tend to seep into my professional life where I never hesitate to shoulder responsibilities and am not afraid to take risks.

My achievements have made me the person I am today. I qualified for the award of annual scholarship in the prestigious National Talent Search Examination 2013 conducted by the Govt. of India. I also received a certificate of merit from Central Board of Secondary Education XII board for standing amongst top 0.1% of successful candidates in Physics in India. I cracked JEE Advanced 2015 and secured a rank among top 0.2% candidates out of 1.5 million candidates. Recently, I bagged the "Silver Medal" at UXplorer 2017, a national-level student UX design challenge conducted by YUJ Designs for my smartphone application "Right Time".

In the summer of 2018, I am looking forward to interact with world-renowned researchers and work in their esteemed peerage. I'm on the lookout for projects in HCI with thought-provoking challenges which will open up my mind to new ways of approaching problems. I hope to gain an experience that would mould my work ethic and help me understand the academic methods and professionalism that are essential in a design research based career. Moreover, this will help me learn and grow as a designer and eventually aid me in my future endeavours.

