USER EXPERIENCE (UX) MATTERS:

What are the Most Desired Skills in the UX Designer and UX Researcher Job Ads?

INTRODUCTION

- ❖ According to a job skills report released by LinkedIn, “UX” is ranked as the number five most desired hard skill by the companies in 2019.
- ❖ The job title of “web designer” has been transformed into many different titles over the ten years.
- ❖ Human Computer Interaction (HCI) has become a hot program in many American institutions of higher education.
- ❖ Should mass communications programs adopt UX?

RESEARCH QUESTION

RQ1: What assets (design skill, major, degree) are expected in a) UX designer and b) UX researcher job ads?

RQ2: Which industry has the highest demand for a) UX designers and b) UX researchers in the ads?

RQ3: Which geographic areas (west, mid-west, south, northeast) have the highest demand for a) UX designers and b) UX researchers in the ads?

RQ4: How do the ads on UX designers and UX researchers differ in terms of degree requirements, geographic locations and academic majors?

RQ5: How do ads’ posting time, ads’ companies, and companies’ location influence the number of views of the ads?

STUDY DESIGN

- ❖ A content analysis of 200 job ads from LinkedIn was conducted ($N = 200$).
- ❖ Job ads were collected in August 2019 using the stratified sampling method.
- ❖ Three coders coded the same 20 ads with ten on UX design and ten on UX research (inter-coder reliability: Krippendorff’s $\alpha = .70 – 1$)
- ❖ Coding categories: design skill, research skill, major, degree, company’s recognition, number of views, posting time, location, industry.

RESULTS

Visual Interface Design *(M=177, SD=1.16)*		
	Illustrator Skill	54% (No.1)
	Photoshop/Light Room Skill	53% (No. 2)
	InDesign Skill	35% (No. 5)
	Adobe Animate/After Effect	35% (No. 5)
Prototyping *(M=1.52, SD=1.54)*		
	Sketch	46% (No. 3)
	Adobe XD	37% (No. 4)
	InVision	29%
	Axure	21%
	Balsamiq	11%
	Omnigraffle/JustinMind/Mockplus	8%
Coding *(M=.92, SD=1.29)*		
	Dreamweaver/HTML	37% (No. 4)
	CSS	33%
	Javascript/JQuery	20%
	Back-end language	2%
Usability Testing *(M=.02, SD =.14)*		
	Usability Testing Skill	2%
	Usertesting.com	1%
	UserZoom	1%

Note. $N = 100$

Behavioral Qualitative *(M=.89, SD=.84)*		
	Usability lab studies	55% No. 1
	Ethnographic field studies	34% No. 5
Behavioral Mixed *(M=.97, SD=1.10)*		
	Moderated Remote Usability Studies	47% No. 2
	Usability Benchmarking	38% No. 3
	Unmoderated Remote Panel Studies	10%
	Eye-tracking	2%
Behavioral Quantitative *(M=.21, SD=.51)*		
	A/B testing	14%
	Unmoderated UX studies	4%
	Clickstream analysis	3%
	True Intent studies	0%
Attitudinal Qualitative *(M=.57, SD=.81)*		
	interviews	37% No. 4
	Focus groups	16%
	Participatory design	4%
Attitudinal Mixed *(M=.36, SD=.56)*		
	Card Sorting	17%
	Concept testing	10%
	Diary/Camera studies	5%
	Customer Feedback	0%
	Desirability studies	0%
Attitudinal Quantitative *(M=.67, SD=.93)*		
	Email surveys	34% No. 5
	Intercept surveys	33%

Note. $N = 100$

Information Technology & Services & Computer & Network Security	59%	No. 1
Computer Software	37%	No. 2
Internet (including e-commerce)	21%	No. 3
Finance, Financial Services, Banking	15%	No. 4
Marketing /Advertising Services	13%	No. 5
Health/Wellness & Fitness/Cosmetics	9%	
Electrical/Electronic Manufacturing /Machinery/ Industrial Automation	8%	
Staffing and Recruiting	4%	
Consumer Goods	2%	
Higher Education	1%	

Note. $N = 100$

Information Technology & Services & Computer & Network Security	63%	No. 1
Computer Software	45%	No. 2
Internet (including e-commerce)	18%	No. 3
Finance, Financial Services, Banking	17%	No. 4
Marketing /Advertising Services	10%	No. 5
Health/Wellness & Fitness/Cosmetics	8%	
Staffing and Recruiting	7%	
Consumer Goods	3%	
Higher Education	2%	
Electrical/Electronic Manufacturing /Machinery/ Industrial Automation	1%	

Note. $N = 100$

No Degree	82%	
Bachelor’s	18%	
Master’s	0%	
PhD	0%	

Note. $N = 100$

No Degree	49%	No. 1
Bachelor Degree	27%	No. 2
Master Degree	17%	No. 3
Ph.D. Degree	1%	No. 5
Degree with no specification on levels	6%	No. 4

Note. $N = 100$

Human Computer Interaction	61%	No. 1
Psychology	46%	No. 2
Human Factor	35%	No. 3
Graphic Design	19%	No. 4
Information Technology	16%	No. 5
Anthropology	12%	
Computer Science	8%	
Industrial Design	4%	
User Experience	3%	

Note. $N = 100$

Human Computer Interaction/User Interaction Design	39% (No. 1)	
Design/Graphic Design/Computer Graphic Design	32% (No. 2)	
Computer Science	12% (No. 3)	
Human Factor	10% (No. 4)	
Industrial Design	6% (No. 5)	
Information technology/science/system/design/architecture	6% (No. 5)	
Psychology	4%	
User Experience	2%	

Note. $N = 100$

	West	Mid-west	South	Northeast	
UX Designers	12.5%^{a}	9.0%^{a}	15.5%^{a}	13.0%^{a}	χ^2 (3, $N = 200$) = 10.71 $p < .05$
UX Researchers	21.5%^{b}	11.0%^{a}	8.5%^{b}	9.0%^{a}	
	$p < .05$		$p < .05$		

Note. $N = 200$

	No Degree	Bachelor	Master/PhD	Degree required but not clarified	
UX Designers	41.0%^{a}	9.0%^{a}	0 ^{a}	0 ^{a}	χ^2 (4, $N = 200$) = 34.11, $p < .001$
UX Researchers	24.5%^{b}	13.5%^{a}	9.0%^{b}	3.0% ^{b}	
	$p < .05$		$p < .05$	$p < .05$	

Note. $N = 200$.

	Human Computer Interaction		
	Yes	No	
UX Designers	11.5%^{a}	38.5%^{a}	χ^2(1, $N = 200$) = 15.73, $p < .001$
UX Researchers	25.0%^{b}	25.0%^{b}	
	Human Factor		
	Yes	No	
UX Designers	5.0%^{a}	45.0%^{a}	χ^2(1, $N = 200$) = 15.67, $p < .001$
UX Researchers	16.5%^{b}	33.5%^{b}	
	Design		
	Yes	No	
UX Designers	8.0%^{a}	42.2%^{a}	χ^2(1, $N = 200$) = 3.88, $p < .05$
UX Researchers	3.5%^{b}	46.2%^{b}	
	Psychology		
	Yes	No	
UX Designers	2.0%^{a}	48.0%^{a}	χ^2(1, $N = 200$) = 47.04, $p < .001$
UX Researchers	23.0%^{b}	27.0%^{b}	
	Information Tech/Science System/Architecture		
	Yes	No	
UX Designers	3.0%^{a}	47.0%^{a}	χ^2(1, $N = 200$) = 5.11, $p < .05$
UX Researchers	8.0%^{b}	42.0%^{b}	
	Anthropology		
	Yes	No	
UX Designers	0^a	50.0%^{a}	χ^2(1, $N = 200$) = 12.77, $p < .001$
UX Researchers	6.0%^{b}	44.0%^{b}	

Note. N=200. * $p < .05$.

	B	*SE*	*β*
Companies’ Recognition	4.83	23.49	.02
Posting Time	.312	.135	.16 *
Midwest	12.987	26.571	-.04
South	-50.847	25.284	-.16*
Northeast	27.468	25.763	.08
Adjusted R^2	.063		
F	2.596		

Note. N=200. *The same columns with different superscripts ^{a} and ^{b} mean they are significantly different at .05.*

DISCUSSION

- ❖ For UX designer job ads, visual interface design is the most desired design skill, followed by prototyping, coding, and usability testing.
- ❖ For UX researcher job ads, the behavioral mixed method and the behavioral qualitative method are two of the most desired research skills.
- ❖ Information Technology & Service (59%), and Computer & Network Security (63%) are the two industries that have the highest need in UX designers and UX researchers.
- ❖ The South (15.5%) has the highest need for UX designers whereas the West (21.5%) has the highest need for UX researchers.
- ❖ Job posting time and the geographic location of the Northeast are two significant predictors of the number of views on a job ad.

Ruoxu Wang, Jin Yang, & Louis Asser {rwang4, jinyang, lwasser} @memphis.edu
Department of Journalism and Strategic Media, University of Memphis