Pre-Meeting Briefing - Helen Harley

Tom Cranstoun

January 2026

Contents

Pre-Meeting Briefing

Prepared for Helen Harley

From Tom Cranstoun

Date: January 2026

Purpose of This Document

This briefing provides background on a project I'd like to discuss with you. The goal is to give you enough context to decide whether you'd like to explore involvement further - no pressure, just information.

The Short Version

I've been working on something called **MX (Machine Experience)** - a set of patterns that make websites understandable to AI assistants like Claude and ChatGPT.

I'm building a community of practitioners around it, and I think your skills would be valuable. I'd like to invite you to join as a founding member.

What's Happening with the Web

For thirty years, we've built websites for human eyes. Now AI agents are visiting these sites, trying to understand content to answer user questions.

The problem: Most websites are invisible to AI. They can't parse unstructured content.

The result:

- Businesses don't appear in AI-assisted discovery
- AI makes up facts when it can't find clear data
- Users get unreliable information

Example: When someone asks an AI "What are the opening hours for Smith's Bakery?", the AI often guesses because the information isn't structured in a way it can reliably parse.

What MX Does

MX (Machine Experience) adds structure to web content so AI can understand it:

Human-Readable	Machine-Readable
"Open Mon-Sat, 8am-6pm"	Schema.org OpeningHoursSpecification
"£99"	Explicit price with currency
"Call us"	ContactPoint with defined method

The key insight: The same patterns that help AI also help people with disabilities (screen readers, keyboard navigation). It's a convergence - improving for one audience improves for both.

Why This Matters Now

In January 2026, Amazon, Microsoft, and Google all launched AI shopping assistants within seven days of each other. AI-mediated interaction is becoming infrastructure.

Websites that AI can understand will be discovered and recommended. Websites that AI can't understand will be invisible.

What I've Built

Two books (ready for publication):

- **MX-Bible** - Comprehensive guide (78,000+ words, 13 chapters)
- **MX-Handbook** - Practical implementation guide (11 chapters)

Supporting materials:

- 12 detailed appendices
- Code examples showing good vs bad patterns
- Web audit tool that analyses sites for MX compliance
- Compliance specifications

The Community

I'm building a community of people who:

- Understand MX principles
- Implement them in their work
- Help others understand the shift

The goal: Establish MX as the standard approach before the market fragments into competing proprietary solutions.

Why You

Your background fits remarkably well:

Your Experience	MX Community Need
Web design + development	Understanding both creative and technical sides
Technical documentation	Explaining concepts clearly to different audiences
Media/broadcasting	Content distribution expertise
Project management	Community coordination
Client-facing work	Practical guidance for businesses

Your ability to write documentation that "Average Joe" can understand is exactly what the MX community needs.

The Invitation

Part-time founding member during the MX community launch phase.

What it means:

- Not a job - no fixed hours, no employment relationship
- Flexible involvement - contribute when you can

- Early access to all materials
- Input on direction as the community grows
- Recognition as a founding contributor

What you might do (based on interest):

- Review documentation for clarity
- Help answer community questions
- Test tools on real sites
- Write practical guides
- Connect with others in the space

No obligation to do everything. Pick what interests you.

What's In It For You

Learning opportunities:

- Schema.org structured data (industry standard)
- AI agent behaviour and capabilities
- Where web development is heading
- Accessibility patterns (WCAG 2.1 AA)

Network:

- Other practitioners thinking about these problems
- Potential collaborators
- Early visibility in an emerging field

The Honest Assessment

What's uncertain:

- Market timing - adoption timelines are unpredictable
- Community growth - we're starting from scratch
- Revenue model - currently investment, not income

What's solid:

- Technical foundation - Schema.org, semantic HTML, ARIA are established standards
- The trend - AI agent adoption is accelerating
- The materials - publication-ready books, working tools

What I can't promise:

- That this becomes significant income (it might, but that's not the ask)
- Perfect timing
- Zero effort required

What I can promise:

- Honest communication

- Flexibility about your involvement
- Recognition of contributions
- An interesting intellectual challenge

The Ask

I'm asking if you'd be interested in joining the MX community as a founding member.

This isn't a contract. If you try it and it's not for you, step back gracefully - no hard feelings.

Before We Meet

You don't need to prepare anything. But if you're curious, you might think about:

- Does the MX concept make sense to you?
- Are there aspects you'd want to understand better?
- What kind of involvement would fit your situation?

The Conversation

When we meet, I'd like to:

1. Answer any questions this document raises
2. Hear your perspective on the concept
3. Discuss what involvement might look like
4. Let you decide without pressure

Our friendship matters more than any project. Whatever you decide is fine.

Contact

Tom Cranstoun

- Email: tom.cranstoun@gmail.com
- Website: https://allabout.network

Looking forward to our conversation.

Thank You for Reading

Thank you for taking the time to explore Machine Experience. Your interest in making the internet more accessible for AI agents helps build a better web for everyone.

Follow the Links Below to Learn More

- **An AI Assistant Joins the MX Community** Claude Sonnet 4.5's reflection on becoming a legitimate participant in the Machine Experience community

- **About Tom Cranstoun** Learn more about the author and his work in Machine Experience and web accessibility