

## KUNAL D. PATEL

UX Designer + Technologist  
living in Brooklyn, NY

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**2002 - BACHELOR, ARCHITECTURE**  
**2006** Carnegie Mellon University  
Dean's List: Fall 04, Spring 05

**2006 - UI DESIGNER & DEVELOPER**  
**2007 (PART-TIME)**  
ArcVertuel, Pittsburgh, PA

**2007 - JUNIOR ARCHITECT**  
**2008** Kinlin Rutherford Architects PLLC  
New York, NY

**2008 - MFA, DESIGN + TECHNOLOGY**  
**2010** Parsons The New School for Design  
Graduated with Honors

**2009 TEACHING FELLOW/ASSISTANT**  
MFA D+T Bootcamp  
Creativity & Computation Lab

**2010 - EXPERIENCE LEAD**  
**2013** Huge, Brooklyn, NY  
Selected Clients:  
Four Seasons  
Pizza Hut  
American Student Assistance

**2012 - RECENT TALKS**  
*Badges are the Backup Quarterbacks of Game Design*, Interaction 13, Toronto, ON (01/28/13)  
*Psychology & UX: Understanding your User* (Moderator), Huge, Brooklyn, NY (8/14/13)

**2014 - SR. UX RESEARCHER**  
Contently, New York, NY

## Hi, First name . I'm Kunal, a UX Designer + Technologist.

I started my career designing physical spaces for few people, but soon realized I had more fun creating digital experiences for many more. Architecture taught me to balance design with the realities of construction, and this emphasis on craft is now essential to my UX philosophy.

By day, I work at Contently, helping create the future of content marketing (listicles need not apply) and evaluating what quality storytelling means online. On nights and weekends, I'm working on some quirky personal projects for which I'm always looking for collaborators.

What follows is the story of how I've acquired my unique skillset over the last 11+ years. If you like what you read, I would love to chat about how I can help you.

### I thought I was going to be an architect.

Turns out I was wrong, but along the way I learned how to observe and empathize with users, think conceptually, rapidly iterate ideas, juggle requirements with design, present and defend my work, and stay awake for inhuman amounts of time. In hindsight, I can't think of much better training for UX Designers to go through (minus the physical and mental scars).

### But an interactive side-project planted a seed of doubt,

My interest in Flash turned into an after-class job as a UI Designer & Developer for *Calakmul: La Adventura*. A gift for the Papalote Children's Museum, *Calakmul* was an interactive educational experience about Mayan culture, utilizing 3d environments, 2d characters, and multilingual audio & text.

### and after 1.5 years as a Jr. Architect, it was time to say goodbye.

Within a year at Kinlin Rutherford Architects, I was helping manage the interior design & construction of *610 West 110th St*, a 15-story pre-war condominium. Seeing apartments come to life was satisfying, but not as rewarding as launching *Calakmul*. I needed to see if my fledgling digital skills could lead me to a more fulfilling creative career.

### So I returned to school to study Design + Technology.

During my 2 years in the MFA D+T program, I soaked up as much as I could: Interaction Design, Web Development, Game Design, and Data Visualization. My thesis, *Not For Bots*, was a collection of subversive online products that challenged machine-centric design thinking.

Parsons also opened my eyes to how rewarding teaching could be; I taught Processing & PHP to graduate students, Game Design to 5th-graders, and helped run a Humanitarian Design Studio during a study-abroad trip to China.

### For 3.5 years I sharpened my UX skills at Huge,

I worked my way up from Interaction Designer to Experience Lead; planning, managing, & producing our UX deliverables (wireframes, vision decks, user flows, sitemaps, testing plans, etc.) in close collaboration with other departments.

I was fortunate that the *FourSeasons.com* redesign was my first project, and the one whose execution I remain proudest of. I had the most fun working "lean" for ASA on a new model for financial education, and learned the most during my 2 years helping *Pizza Hut* design and iterate on a massive redesign that should launch nationally this year.

### making time for teaching and thought leadership.

I was thrilled to help run the 2013 Huge UX School, an annual 10-week intensive for aspiring IxD's. In addition to teaching, it was my first real management exposure: reviewing applicants, mentoring junior employees, and helping make hiring decisions.

At Interaction 13, I presented a primer for how IxD's can apply game design principles to create better digital products. At Huge, I moderated a panel about Psychology in UX, and spoke on another about tips for how Agile could work for agencies.

### Now I'm helping define what quality storytelling looks like online.

I left Huge in October 2013 to take a creative sabbatical. After 4 months of learning & working on personal projects, I joined the team at Contently in February to help shape the future of content marketing and define how brands judge the success of original stories. My role balances research, analytics, design, and engineering and I couldn't be more excited to see where it takes me, and what I can apply to my own work and writing.