JAMES MACIUKENAS, PH.D.

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Highly skilled User Experience Researcher with a proven track record of delivering exceptional results in complex projects. Adept at taking initiative, tackling challenging tasks, and providing timely solutions. Proactive approach to anticipating project and client needs, with a keen ability to discern project details and address problems effectively. Skilled in leveraging tools to interpret and visualize data, distilling complex qualitative data into meaningful insights, and actionable recommendations. I am eager to research the questions guiding your stakeholders to enrich the experiences of your users.

"James regularly delivered insights that were strongly appreciated by cross-functional stakeholders and influenced key product directions for our topic areas." –Blake Bennett, Senior UX Researcher for Gemini at Google

"[James's] blend of expertise, leadership, and client-centric focus makes him an invaluable asset to any organization fortunate enough to have him on board." – Erika Spear, Ph.D., Research Manager at AnswerLab

View case studies and work samples: moreperfectplaces.github.io

KEY STRENGTHS

Expert research skills, with a deep understanding of user needs
Proactive and solutions-focused approach • Excellent communication and moderation skills
Ability to work effectively in high-pressure environments • Skilled in data analysis and visualization
Collaborative and supportive team player • Strong leadership and client-centric focus

EXPERIENCE

Senior UX Researcher, AnswerLab, Chicago, IL & Remote, 2022-2024

- Conducted a pivotal research initiative focused on the pre- and post-launch phases of a major tech industry leader's generative AI LLM chatbot. Provided actionable insights to design and engineering teams, leading to significant improvements in user experience.
- Completed over 50 qualitative studies in 2 years using in-depth interviews, user testing, A/B testing, journey-mapping, and diary study methodologies to inform product development decisions for generative AI, digital assistant, search, and internal ad sales tools.
- Led foundational and iterative research for cross-functional teams making key product decisions, identifying opportunities, developing implementation plans, and optimizing AI-driven features.
- Contributed to the Emerging Tech Taskforce at AnswerLab guiding development of best practices for generative AI usage within the company.

Web Developer, Indiana University-Bloomington, IN, 2019-2022

- Developed responsive accessibility and UX standards-based web applications.
- Swiftly transitioned processes online for the School of Public Health, mitigating pandemic challenges and ensuring service continuity while highlighting the Dean's thought leadership.

Web Developer and Designer, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, IL, 2005-2019

- Led UX web development using A/B testing, market research, and analytics to guide stakeholders, resulting in a 40% increase in engagement and contributing to the college's first 7-figure donation.

Instructor, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, IL, 2006-Present

- Course topics taught: Technical Communication, Document Design, Usability, Public Engagement for Scientists where coursework inspires data science, health physics, applied math, and other students to craft compelling narratives based on communication and design fundamentals.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Technical Advisor | Ordinary People International, NFP | Chicago, IL, 2011-Present
- Technical Advisor | Evanston AYSO (Community youth soccer) | Evanston, IL, 2015-2019

EDUCATION

- Ph.D., Technical Communication | Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), Chicago, IL, May 2013
- M.S., Technical Communication and Information Design | IIT, Chicago, IL, May 2007
- B.F.A., Industrial Design | University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, May 1993

SKILLS

- Remote & in-person user testing
- UX writing
- In-depth interviews
- Survey development, deployment
- Diary studies
- Competitive analysis
- Journey mapping
- Analysis & reporting
- Insight development
- Client communications
- Multimedia storytelling
- Data visualization
- Web development

SOFT SKILLS

- Design thinking
- Interpersonal & collaborative
- Training & Mentoring
- Emerging tools integration
- Remote & in-person work

TOOLS

- Google Workspace
  o Sheets
  o Docs
  o Slides
- Adobe Creative Cloud applications
  o Indesign
  o Photoshop
  o Illustrator
  o Premiere
- Microsoft 365
  o Excel
  o Word
  o Powerpoint
- Slack
- Mural
- Dscout
- Qualtrics
- Figma
- HTML & CSS
- Wordpress
- Squarespace
- Salesforce