

Nicholas Hoyt

User Experience Designer

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My successes have resulted, in large part, from my ability to collaborate with other designers, to communicate effectively with developers, and to maintain a practical balance between user and business goals in making design decisions. My main strengths derive from careful observation and analysis of user research, and from a relentless attempt to ensure that every product feature is in proper alignment with users' goals.

Experience

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

2005-09 – present

As interaction designer, user interface designer and front-end developer, the purpose of my work at UIUC is centered around producing open source software tools that foster awareness and better understanding of web accessibility.

These tools include browser extensions, JavaScript bookmarklets and a web application, all of which evaluate and/or illuminate web accessibility features that are otherwise hidden from view.

- Designed and co-developed the 'Functional Accessibility Evaluator', a web application that spiders websites and produces evaluation results based on the entire range of WCAG 2.1 'A' and 'AA' Success Criteria.
- Designed and co-developed the 'Inspector for Firefox' browser extension, which performs the same type of accessibility evaluation as 'FAE' for a single web page, with additional features for dynamic content.
- Designed and developed the 'SkipTo Landmarks & Headings' browser extension for Chrome and Firefox, which enables users to easily navigate to ARIA landmark regions and HTML headings on a web page.
- Designed and developed the 'Page Structure' browser extension, which enables comprehensive manual checking of the headings and landmarks structure and labeling on a web page.
- Developed navigation menu prototypes and interaction models for improving the accessibility of web components being developed by a cross-functional campus group.
- Designed and co-developed the 'A11yFirst plugins for CKEditor', which provide proactive guidance for accessible authoring, including proper heading structure and text alternatives for images.
- Designed and co-developed the 'Accessibility Bookmarklets', which provide visualizations of headings, landmarks, image alternative text and form control labels, and are easily installable in any browser.

Independent Contractor – Boston, MA / Chicago, IL

1997-08 – 2005-08

As user interface designer and web developer, provided software design and development services with a focus on user experience design and front-end development for various clients, including ABN AMRO, Accenture, Allstate Insurance, Bank One, Fidelity Investments, HOLT Value Associates and the Illinois Institute of Technology.

- Served as lead designer in the user interface redesign of 'NetBenefits', Fidelity Investments' flagship web application for institutional investors, resulting in a major reduction of call center human resource utilization.
- Designed and developed the premier version of the 'Contribution Calculator' for Fidelity Investments, a financial planning tool for retirement savings account investors, featured on Fidelity's 'NetBenefits' website.
- Authored an ebook on XML and XSLT development for internal use by Accenture developers.
- Led the user experience design of a web application for call center representatives at Allstate Insurance.
- Designed the user interface of an application used by financial portfolio managers for HOLT Value Associates.

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Skills

User Experience & Interaction Design

- Requirements gathering and analysis
- Development of conceptual models, personas, scenarios
- Essential use cases, user role- and task-models
- Creation of wireframes using Sketch, OmniGraffle and Figma

User Research & Information Architecture

- Field observations, contextual interviews
- Task-modeling workshops, wants and needs analysis
- Card sorting exercises, focus groups
- Paper prototyping, low-fidelity prototypes

Usability Testing & Analysis

- Creation of interactive HTML/JavaScript prototypes
- Facilitation of remote and lab-based usability testing
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis of test results

Web Accessibility & Inclusive Design

- WCAG 2.1 requirements
- WAI-ARIA Authoring Practices, ARIA in HTML
- Accessibility evaluation and auditing

Front-End Development

- Modern JavaScript (ES6+), HTML, CSS
- DOM scripting and event handling
- Git, Node.js, npm, Babel, webpack, Rollup, Gulp
- Responsive design, Sass, Bootstrap
- Web components, Lit library, WebExtensions API

Education

B.A. in Computer Science, University of Massachusetts Boston

Summa cum laude

Resources

Browser Extensions & Editor Plugins

- [Page Structure for Firefox](#)
- [SkipTo Landmarks & Headings for Chrome](#)
- [SkipTo Landmarks & Headings for Firefox](#)
- [Copy Page Link for Chrome](#)
- [Copy Page Link for Firefox](#)
- [A11yFirst plugins for CKEditor](#)
- [Accessibility Bookmarklets](#)
- [AInspector for Firefox](#)