Sai Siddartha Maram

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Experience

UX Research Intern, Microsoft, USA   June 2024 – September 2024

- Conducted **13 usability studies** on the Xbox Family Safety and Microsoft Family Safety apps to assess whether their design and functionality align with **parents'** goals for effective parental control.
- Proposed a **streamlined strategy** to consolidate **6 parental control touchpoints** into a unified application, enhancing usability and reducing friction for parents.
- Developed a **taxonomy of parental interaction patterns**, providing actionable insights to inform future design decisions for videogame parental controls.
- Established a **sentiment analysis pipeline** to analyze recurring customer pain points on Reddit, uncovering key usability issues affecting parental control experiences.
- Facilitated **co-design sessions** with parents to identify **4 key approaches** for fostering good gaming habits and enhancing positive family gaming experiences (e.g., reward systems).

UX Research Intern, Meta, USA   June 2022 – September 2022

- Conducted **12 user interviews** with Facebook users, identifying **4 key expectations** for the Facebook *Top of Home* experience.
- Led **18 co-design sessions**, collaborating with users to refine experiences that better support their needs on Facebook.
- **Designed and prototyped 21 new user experiences** based on insights from co-design sessions, directly shaping future iterations of Facebook *Top of Home* (e.g., Facebook Sports Cards).
- Conducted **usability studies** to evaluate and validate critical product assumptions, ensuring a user-centered approach to improving Facebook *Top of Home*.

Graduate Student Researcher, Game User Interaction and Intelligence Lab, USA   June 2021 – Present

- Developed an **LLM-based framework** to analyze gamer perceptions of religion in videogames, contributing to academic discourse and leading to publication at **CHI Play'24**.
- Conducted **10 in-depth user interviews** with cultural stakeholders to create a **design framework** for referencing and evaluating **cultural elements in videogames**, resulting in publications at **CSCW'23**, **CHI'22**, **ICEC'22**, and **FDG'23**.
- Collaborated with **5 classrooms** and over **60 students** to develop **LLM-based learning systems**, identifying **8 strategies** to enhance AI chatbot interactions for education, resulting in publications at **ACM SAC'24, ISLS 2025**, and **BJET 2025**.
- Designed and executed **3 large-scale surveys**, leveraging **statistical analysis (Python, SQL)** to develop a framework for player reflection after gameplay, leading to publications at **IEEE CoG'23** and **CHI'24**.

Education

Ph.D. Candidate, University of California, Santa Cruz, USA – Human Computer Interaction   August 2021 – March 2026 (Expected)

B.E. in Computer Science, Thapar Institute of Engineering Technology, Punjab, India   August 2016 – May 2020

Skills

Research Methods: User Interviews, Game User Research, User Journeys, Card Sorting, Diary Studies, Thematic Analysis, Grounded Theory, Participatory Design, Co-Design, Usability Testing, Information Architecture, Surveys, Statistical Analysis, Prototyping

Tools & Technologies: Figma, Dscout, Qualtrics, Python, SQL, R, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, AI/ML Concepts