Darrell J. Penta

UX RESEARCHER

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Effective mixed-methods researcher • Impassioned user advocate

Portfolio:
www.darrelljpenta.com/portfolio.html

EXPERIENCE

UX Researcher
Constant Contact

Feb. 2018 – Present
Waltham, MA

- Conducted the company's first in-house competitive benchmarking study against industry rival Mailchimp. • Performed statistical tests on data from 100 people. • Presented findings company-wide.
- Uncovered critical usability issues with a redesigned user interface for a high-priority UX initiative intended to reduce customer support calls by 16%. • Provided insights that led to renewed design/research efforts.
- Completed six studies in one quarter to support the timely rollout of mobile app updates. • Ran a MaxDiff feature-prioritization survey with 200 customers to inform the mobile team's product roadmap.

Research Assistant
Pearlmutter Lab, Northeastern Univ.

Sep. 2012 – Aug. 2017
Boston, MA

- Designed and conducted experiments to investigate factors affecting human language processing and cognitive reasoning.
- Increased the efficiency of the lab's data processing methods by writing R/Python scripts to automate extraction, cleaning, and analysis.
- Managed several cohorts of research assistants and oversaw lab operations.

UX Researcher
Independent Consultancy

Jun. 2009 – Dec. 2016

Notable projects include:

- E la Carte, Inc. — For the industry's leading pay-at-table systems provider, collected behavioral and attitudinal data about users' experiences with early prototypes of a tabletop order/pay terminal. • Observed, interviewed, and ran usability tests with patrons at a busy national restaurant location in Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA.
- EnglishCentral.com — For the industry's leading provider of online English conversation solutions, used competitor analysis and language acquisition research to evaluate the pedagogical effectiveness of a web-based platform with proprietary voice-recognition technology.
- National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers — For an online repository of educational materials for deaf studies scholars, interviewed stakeholders to identify potential barriers to access. • Identified commonalities among tags/descriptions of submitted materials (provided by users) to refine the information architecture of the repository's UI.

SKILLS

Qualitative research
Moderated/unmoderated usability tests • Interviews • Focus groups • Competitor analysis • Prototype testing • Feature audits • Literature reviews • Ethnography • Card-sorting

Quantitative research
Benchmarking studies • Surveys • MaxDiff (Best-Worst Scaling)

Hypothesis testing
A/B testing • Regression Models • Multivariate experiments • K-means & hierarchical clustering

Communication
Engaging presentations • Clear, concise reports • Effective data visualizations

Data collection tools
UserTesting.com • OptimalWorkshop • Qualtrics • SurveyGizmo • MechanicalTurk • GoToMeeting • Zoom

Data analysis tools
R/Rstudio • MS Excel • Matlab • Python • SPSS

EDUCATION

Northeastern University

PhD Psychology
MA   Psychology

University of Massachusetts

MA Applied Linguistics
BA English; Psychology-Sociology