

Aaron Cooper

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Employing over 14 years of design experience in many contexts, I work within teams to vision, plan, architect and iterate experiences that connect people with information and other people. My background in industries ranging from architecture and product design to entertainment and professional services provides insight for alignment of vision with unmet needs.

Highlights

Passion for the design of iterative, full-circle brand experiences that effectively engage via a range of channels to learn from interactions with people

Well-developed relationship management and collaboration skills suited for the research, design, development, deployment, and refinement of products that achieve client goals and champion the user experience

Expertise in the translation of research and domain knowledge into targeted, scalable information architecture and interaction design combined with visual design that leverages appropriateness, balance and cleanliness

Experience necessary to coordinate and conduct targeted design research to reveal actionable insights on audience behaviors and motivations toward creation of meaningful experiences that strengthen brand relationships

Effective business goal prioritization, needs assessment and process development honed through freelance and full-time experience with a wide range of businesses and within a variety of design environments

Constant drive to expand knowledge and experience, encouraging growth and knowledge-sharing throughout organizations via engagement in local and national organizations, workshops, conferences, and other offline and offline venues

Professional Experience

Thomson Reuters

Senior Information Architect *November 2008 to present*

Engaged in new product development.

bswing

Senior Interaction Designer *June 2007 to November 2008*

I worked with clients such as The University of Minnesota, Pentair, Children's Cancer Research, D'Amico, Datacard, EMPI, Iconoculture, iSeek, MPR Sound Learning, Old Republic, Oracle and others. Responsibilities included new business development, information architecture and visual/interaction design. I worked closely with in-house research professionals and the larger team to synthesize experiences to bolster brands — to design interactions that moved people. I worked with interns, providing direction and mentoring in support of client objectives. I introduced new methods of collaboration such as mental model development and worked to enhance competitive analysis and brainstorming techniques.

Internet Broadcasting

Senior Interaction Designer *February 2007 to June 2007*

I contributed as a full-time Senior Interaction Designer within a team of product managers, researchers, developers, designers, writers, project managers and others. A large portion of my responsibilities included mentoring and collaboration toward integration of UX design principles within an Agile Development process. I assisted with the movement to user-centered experiences that considered advertising and other high priority business goals. I worked with team members to test, architect and design sites that met the business goals of partners like Hearst Media and Cox Television. I left IB when they relocated to St. Paul.

CRC Marketing Solutions

Senior Interaction Designer *September 2005 to February 2007*

As an art director, I collaborated on design within multiple channels, including websites, email communication, targeted microsites and print materials. I worked within a team to attract new business and maintain long-term client relationships. I contributed to campaigns for US Airways, United Healthcare, Thomson West and others. I worked on architecture and design of Ecolab's brand identity website. I worked with Thomson West on a phased redesign of WestLegalEdCenter.com, print product catalogs, video production of preroll advertising, interactives, and other initiatives. We engaged brokers and customers for Homecomings Financial and GMAC-RFC through announcements of product enhancements and launches.

Professional Experience

Larsen

Interaction Designer *January 2005 to September 2005*

Responsibilities included requirements gathering, architecture and visual design for websites, CD ROMs, online advertising and email marketing. Clients included GMAC-RFC, Twin Cities Public Television, AOL and others. While at Larsen, I exercised every creative, interpersonal and analytic muscle within a team of experienced design professionals. I decided to find a different type of design culture that placed greater emphasis on user experience.

HGA Architects and Engineers

Web Specialist *June 2002 to January 2005*

My responsibilities included project management, design and development of interactive solutions, including HGA.com, the “H!P” Intranet, email marketing and more. Projects leveraged Flash, HTML, JavaScript, CSS, top notch design and content management technologies such as Stellent Content Server. I was a founding member of “co.Lab,” a group of architects and designers engaged in design dialog within the community, including design critiques, galleries and more.

Brooks Stevens Design

Web Designer *April 2000 to June 2002*

Responsibilities included project management, art direction, interaction design and development, identity graphics design, direct mail, interface design prototyping, and kiosk design. Contributions increased success of product in the medical, consumer, and industrial markets through refinement of user experience. My time in this multidisciplinary environment provided a broader perspective on alignment of user needs and business goals toward the design of experiences.

GS Design

Designer *February 1999 to January 2000*

I collaborated with a team of talented designers in the planning, concepting, critique, and production of a wide variety of design solutions including catalogs, ads, direct mail, promotional items, magazines and interactive projects. Clients included Harley Davidson, Repel, Buell, Audi and others. GS provided constructive critique, constant communication, top-notch mentoring, and a high level of direct client interaction.

Independent Experience

people are interactive

Sole Proprietor 1996 to Present

I partner with a wide range of clients, from record labels and architects to financial companies and non profit organizations. Clients have included Warner Brothers Records, The American Cancer Society, Willy Porter, Carrie Newcomer, Electronics For Imaging, IKON, Thomas Register and many others. I began in 1996 with two clients. Opportunities grew significantly as I created strategic partnerships with other development and design professionals. I've developed relationships that endure and experiences that continue to drive sales and reputation.

Academic Experience

Minneapolis College of Art & Design

Adjunct Faculty 2007 to present

I love the opportunity to share experiences and expertise, learn from students and engage with other professionals to instruct and guide those interested in pursuing the challenges of online communication. I teach *Understanding Contexts of Internet Communication*. Students are challenged throughout distinct phases of discovery, definition, architecture, visual design and development of non-profit websites. Student reviews are based on participation during in-class dialog and “studio” time, combined with analysis of podcasts and blog articles, formal testing and critique. Guiding students through complicated group dynamics during each phase is the most challenging responsibility as an educator — and the most fulfilling.

Formal Education

Concordia University, Wisconsin 1991 to 1995

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology — *Magna Cum Laude*

University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee 1995 to 1996

Studied toward Masters in Counseling Psychology — *Left to pursue design career*

Milwaukee Area Technical College 1996 to 1997

Course within in Commercial Art Program — *Arts courses while working in design*

Involvement

Minnesota Usability Professionals Association

Minnesota Interactive Marketing Association

Adobe Flash Advanced ActionScripting for Applications

Trinity Lutheran Church, Waconia – Sunday School Teacher

References

“Aaron is a very talented designer. He is open minded, curious, thoughtful and committed to delivering only the highest quality work.”

Philip Hotchkiss

Owner, Philip Hotchkiss — BigCharts.com founder

“Aaron Cooper’s value lies in his (nearly superhuman) multidisciplinary approach to digital communications. As a highly-talented visual interface designer, an inventive Flash developer, an ingenious CSS programmer, and a skillful video editor, he solely embodies the expertise that typically requires four individuals.”

Jeff Coffey

Director of Interactive Strategy, CRC

“Aaron possesses an invaluable blend of well-developed and continually evolving technical acumen, passion for the creative process, and excellent design sense. As a team member, he is an incredible collaborator, always bringing an intelligent and balanced approach to the toughest of challenges, as well as leading by example.”

John Schneider

Vice President Marketing, Walsh Bishop Associates

“Aaron’s smart, strategic approach to interactive design and execution made for an electric collaborative process and resulted in better finished products for clients.”

Brian Beatty

Senior Writer, HartungKemp