DESIGN + MGMT

PRODUCT

my approach

There's countless venn diagrams discussing how Product Management is a blend of User Experience, Development, and Business Process. These are all great, but the thing that these don't directly address is discovering the user's wants. Sure, UX and Business Process are adjacent to a user base's wants and needs, but they're not directly related.

I start by discovering what users want and need. This helps to expose a gap in the market. This gap is the point of attack. Now the User Experience, Development Capabilities, and Business Process are focused around a direct market goal.

Understanding any change in experience and design is fundamentally despised by users means we need to be empathetic to their trepidation first and foremost. Even the best products with bleeding-edge improvements that become industry standard are off-putting to users if they have to completely relearn how to use the tools. Making improvements logical for users is the most important way to develop, plan, and roll out features.

The end result of focusing on user wants and needs and finding the market gap is a leaner required budget and higher user satisfaction. The math and logic behind this is simple, so why waste time throwing features at something when you can provide direct value to users out of the gate with a small subset of very pointed and proven features? "Don't waste time or budget" is my approach.

my background

I started building websites in 1996 when the band GWAR had a contest to build their new, official website. At a tender 13 years of age I got 3rd place in GWAR's website contest! I used MS word to make icons then DHTML (not a typo, it was early JavaScipting on markup meaning "Dynamic HTML") to achieve basic hover effects. Pretty old school, right?

Immediately, I fell in love with the process. Not so much the process of writing out the HTML markup and creating the graphics, but the process of discovering how to best organize the information and entice the visitors to browse everything was really intriguing.

Soon after this, I took my first paying web job in 1997 doing markup and Perl/CGI for CD Universe by lying about my age to meet legal working requirements. It was pretty awesome being a 14 year old getting paid relatively well in 1997.

Eventually I worked my way into the agency world, managing development teams specializing in content management systems, most notably WordPress. However I grew tired of focusing so much on development and wanted more. When the role of "User Experience" started taking hold and being valued as an independent position and discipline, I jumped right into that pool and pivoted my career.

After spending some time at agencies doing development, user experience, then helping mechanize and automate the agencies' internal processes, I decided to strike out on my own. I successfully ran my own one-man business for a while, but grew tired of the sales and procurement. With near-perfect timing, my former boss asked me to partner with him at his agency specializing in startups. He and I ran an app development agency specializing in startups for 3 years.

my goal

What allowed me and my business partners to work so well together is our love for the process of creating the product. We love producing and watching what we produce thrive. I don't think I'll ever be able to turn this off, and I'm ok with that. I have other hobbies like playing music, making music videos, and other creative outlets. Sadly, these don't pay the bills otherwise you'd be hard pressed to get the guitar out of my hands and the editing bay out from in front of me.

I've spent a lot of time curating philanthropy for musicians and creatives through the Boise Hive. Working with these people helping to provide mental health support to my fellow musician community was immensely rewarding. When I eventually retire from the world of product management, I will enmesh myself in the world of mental health services for musicians.

Helping to foster the next generation of creative people is very intriguing and rewarding for me. I'm not one of those old guys that hates all new music and new trends. Quite the opposite, I find them exciting! These young people are pushing boundaries and trying things my generation never thought of.

This all boils down to my real passion of constantly learning and making myself better. I will constantly expand myself by learning from the younger generations, dissecting things to figure out how they work, and visiting far away places to experience new cultures, ways to live, and new ways to think. Ultimately my goal is to learn and experience new things freely on any whim that carries me in the moment. Until then, I'll be diligently working towards that goal.

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professional experience

BETA CANON

2019 - 2023

partner
product manager
ux designer

An old boss had the idea to create a company specializing in startups. Soon after starting, he gained significant traction and needed help specifying these startups' software concepts so they could be properly developed. I came in as a UX designer and soon after was offered equal partnership in the company.

During my time at Beta Canon, I helped crystalize over 40 startup concepts drawn on napkins to full-fledged applications put out into the world. A handful of these applications survived the startup phase and are fully functional businesses still using the software I designed, tested, and developed.

Due to the volatile nature of startups, my business partner and I decided to close the agency and pursue more financially stable avenues of income despite our deep love of startups and problem solving for them.

IDAHO WEBSITES

2019, 2023

operations manager
dev manager

One of the employees I hired to replace me at Key Design decided to strike out on her own. When she began building her business, I was there to help her build a basis for how to manage clients, how to manage hosting servers, contracting, and all other facets that need to be wrangled to have a successful design, marketing, and web development agency. In 2023, I came in to help her wind down her business to a skeleton crew and pivot their services to a more bespoke website + marketing agency.

DOMESTIC JONES

2008 - NOW

owner
operator

I chose this name because I made a photo sharing website for my family out of state when I had my first child 17+ years ago. Soon after my second child was born I realized that I needed to legitimize my business. Since I already owned the domain name and I worked from home, why not just name my business that?

With this company, I've done everything from building websites, specifying software, designing print, editing video, and anything to do with media production.

WAY BACK

Before I was helping mold agencies and running my own business, I experienced life in the agency world as a worker in a cubicle and a lead for teams

VYNYL

ux designer
wordpress expert
2015 - 2017

DAVIES MOORE

(a.k.a. 116 & West)
development lead
2014 - 2015

KEY DESIGN

development manager
operations management
2011 - 2014

products + works

BRACELINE

Architecture Calculator and Drafting Tool

bracelinecalc.com

IFT

Idaho Federation of Teachers Union

idaho-aft.org

HIGH CALL

Rodeo Entry & Winning Management App

app.highcallrodeo.com

more details + info here →

references available if you ask real nice and complete the 5 (five) challenges of fire

dustin jones

PRODUCT DESIGN + MGMT

