Nick Weinel

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Senior UX Researcher with 8+ years of experience leading mixed-methods research with vulnerable populations, regulated environments, and platforms serving 260+ million users. **I conduct 100+ trauma-informed research sessions** because I believe rigorous, empathetic research matters most when real people's difficulties are on the line. My end-to-end expertise, from study design and recruiting through synthesis and presentation of findings and recommendations, **combines large-scale behavioral data (50,000+ user sessions**) with deep qualitative insight to drive measurable product change. I also build research operations infrastructures to make individual projects more research-informed and entire organizations more research-capable,

Work Experience:

Senior Ux Researcher & Research Team Lead - Fearless | July 2024 - Present

- Lead end-to-end research across 10+ projects on a $5.1M contract, establishing goals, methods, recruiting screeners, test scripts, and timelines for generative and evaluative studies including field studies, usability tests, card sorts, tree tests, surveys, and participatory design workshops.
- Conduct 100+ trauma-informed research sessions with vulnerable populations (remote moderated, remote unmoderated, and in-person), safeguarding participant PII and translating deep empathy into actionable product specifications that improve digital experiences for users, patients and caregivers.
- Design mixed-methods studies connecting behavioral analytics with attitudinal data, partnering with data scientists to triangulate quantitative analysis of 50,000+ user sessions with qualitative interviews to drive measurable product improvements for customers and internal staff.
- Manage and mentor a team of 10 UX professionals, establishing psychological safety, breaking down siloed work environments, facilitating knowledge sharing, and promoting professional growth.
- Modernize legacy information architecture and content for a government site with 260+ million users, resulting in more transparent, empathetic content and a measurable decrease in support requests, and demonstrating research impact on both business and user outcomes.
- Facilitate workshops on product direction and service prioritization with groups of 20+ senior executives, building alignment on short- and long-term research strategy across 3 government agencies.
- Create standard research procedures and scale research operations through platforms in usertesting.com and Dovetail, enabling multiple agile workstreams to seamlessly conduct compliant, effective studies and contributing to a shared research repository.
- Present research insights and recommendations to stakeholders at all levels — outlining expected impact, identifying decision owners, and translating complex findings into clear, persuasive narratives.
- Inform survey design and execution across multiple initiatives, analyzing results from 50+ countries to identify trends and generate insights that inform product roadmap decisions and organizational change.

User Researcher II - Fearless | June 2022 - July 2024

- Synthesized and analyzed qualitative and quantitative data for complex government healthcare systems to make recommendations, define product requirements, and build stakeholder consensus, regularly collaborating with designers and engineers in Agile squads.
- Co-founded the Fearless Research Society, an internal community of practice, building UX research capability and enabling researchers and non-researchers across the organization to apply mixed-methods best practices.
- Improved and maintained a research resource repository and best practices documentation, increasing page visits by 85% and acting as a force-multiplier for research quality across the organization.

Project User Experience Specialist – UserWorks | January 2021 - May 2022

- Spearheaded usability testing for high-profile clients, moderating sessions, analyzing behavioral data, and proposing recommendations across information architecture, interaction design, and overall UX.
- Led FDA certification of developmental medical devices through formative and summative usability testing, demonstrating experience with regulated, high-stakes research environments.

-   Built and managed a research panel of 4,000+ participants, routinely managing and safeguarding PII. Improved survey response rate by 12% through optimized instrument design and targeted recruitment strategies.

Staff User Experience Specialist – UserWorks | May 2018 – January 2021

-   Executed a full range of UX research methodologies including usability testing, tree testing, card sorting, persona creation, and product evaluations for diverse agency clients.

Skills:

Research Methods: User Interviews | Field Studies | Usability Testing (moderated & unmoderated) | Card sorting | Tree testing | Diary studies | Survey design | Participatory design workshops | Behavioral data analytics | A/B testing | Contextual inquiry

Research Operations: Study design & planning | Recruiting screeners | Participant recruitment | Research repository management | Trauma informed research | Agile / sprint based research

Analysis and Synthesis: Thematic analysis | Statistical analysis | Data synthesis | Customer journey mapping | User flow mapping | Finding storytelling & presentation

Leadership: Workshop facilitation | Stakeholder management | Team management & mentorship | Strategic planning | Cross-functional collaboration

Tools: UserTesting | UserInterviews | Optimal Workshop | Dovetail | ProvenByUsers | dScout | Google Analytics | Qualtrics | SurveyMonkey | Figma | Confluence | Jira | Excel | Claude | ChatGPT

Education:

Bachelor of Science, Marketing / Bachelor of Arts, Economics
University of Maryland at College Park

Strategic Design and Innovation Fellows Programs
University of Maryland at College Park

Leadership Experience:

Co-Founder, Fearless Research Society | March 2024 - Present

Collaborator & Assistant Professor - Competitive Advantage II, MICA | March 2025- Present

Guest Speaker - Foundations of UX course, MICA | April 2023 - Present

Speaker, UX Professional Association D.C. Chapter | November 2019

Certifications & Awards:

Fearless "Guide from Beside" award winner for exceptional client relationship management, 2023

Data Analytics & UX (NNG)

UX Research (Uxcel)