

Cheryl N. Platz

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A uniquely creative interaction designer and thought leader with deep experience in complex system and service design, multimodal user interfaces, conversational user interfaces, AI, facilitation, and storytelling. Fearless in the face of complexity.

Recent Experience

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN (IT)

As the principal of our Productivity & Collaboration pillar, drive large-scale ethnographic discovery (HCD research) to inform improvements to our **employee outreach and long-term technology strategy** at the foundation on topics like **digital collaboration and knowledge management**. In my first 6 months, I made research-driven strategic recommendations that led to a \$2 million accelerated hardware investment and a new \$750,000 knowledge management pilot project. Act as the HCD leader for multiple global service design initiatives, including the Teams Enablement Project, USP Strategy Journey, and foundation-wide knowledge management.

Principal Designer

DECEMBER 2018 - PRESENT

Microsoft

BUSINESS APPLICATIONS GROUP

As Design Lead for the new cross-product **Power Platform Admin Center**, drove the design of a portal unifying 4 disparate administrative experiences across PowerApps, Flow, & Dynamics. As Design Lead for **Azure and the Azure Marketplace**, developed and evangelized design guidelines used by over 70 Azure portal partner teams - and designed the Jan 2017 relaunch of Azure's cloud e-commerce site and a major update to sister site AppSource.com. Design leader for pre-production and alpha launches of conversational AI authoring tool **Dynamics 365 AI for Customer Service**, including storyboarding, concept work, information architecture.

Principal Designer

AUGUST 2016 - OCTOBER 2018

Amazon

ALEXA VOICE USER INTERFACE TEAM

Designed and delivered the cross-product **Alexa Notifications system**, including a new device-agnostic interruption model, VUI for retrieving notifications, and the Do Not Disturb feature. Collaborated with the **Echo Show platform** team on a new cross-product taxonomy for multimodal Alexa interactions, and the integration of notifications into our first deeply multimodal device. Represented Amazon voice design during major 3P engagements, including Sonos and Ford.

Senior UX Designer

OCTOBER 2015 - JULY 2016

Amazon

ENGAGEMENT DESIGN GROUP

As the **first designer on the Echo Look project**, conducted research and created storyboards to drive product vision from initial concepts to product proposals and eventual funding approvals from CEO Jeff Bezos, Devices VP David Limp, and other stakeholders. Drove Speech and voice UI for the Echo Look through concept and product definition phases. Researched, designed, prototyped, and authored final business and hardware requirements.

Senior UX Designer

SEPTEMBER 2014 - OCTOBER 2016

Ideaplatz, LLC

DESIGN EDUCATION & CONSULTING

As sole proprietor of a [boutique design consultancy](#), deliver design education internationally via workshops and talks to clients including BMW Group, Microsoft, and Facebook. Provided expert guidance under NDA to companies pursuing conversational UI. Self-published Alexa skills including 2 recognized as top skills by usage.

Principal and Owner

AUGUST 2017 - PRESENT

Skills

Brainstorming & ideation
Cognitive walkthrough
Content design & strategy
Contextual inquiry
Design systems
Ethnographic research
Flows & diagrams
Graphic design & print work
Heuristic evaluation
Information architecture
Interviewing
Journey mapping
Prototyping (functional)
Service design
Storyboarding
Surveys & diary studies
Typography
Usability studies
Web design
Wireframing
Workshop design
Workshop facilitation
Visual design

Tools & Languages

Azure & AWS
Adobe Illustrator
Adobe Photoshop
Basalmiq
C, C++, C#
CSS & HTML
Delve
Figma
Java & Javascript
MS Office
MURAL
Node.js
Sketch

Talk & Workshop Highlights

[KEYNOTE](#) **Opti-Pessimism: Design for the best case, build for the worst**
Interaction Latin America 2019, UX Scotland 2019, DEVit 360 2018

[TALK](#) **The Future of Voice**
Amuse UX 2018, UX London 2018, Microsoft Research, Webdagene 2017

[TALK](#) **Collaborative Creativity with Improv**
DesignOps Summit 2018, TEDxSeattle Women 2019

TALK **New Solutions to Old Problems: VUI Design**
UX Days Tokyo 2019, UX Days Seoul 2019, An Event Apart Chicago 2019

[TALK](#) **From Blank Page to World Stage**
Interaction 18, Design Matters 2017 (Copenhagen)

WORKSHOP **Giving Voice to Your Voice Designs**
UX Days Tokyo 2019, UX Days Seoul 2019, UX Week 2017, Interaction 17, UX Lisbon 2017, UX London 2018, EuroIA 2017, Webdagene 2017

Additional Experience

Microsoft **Senior UX Designer**
OPERATING SYSTEMS GROUP SEPTEMBER 2012 – SEPTEMBER 2014

Lead designer on multiple **Windows Automotive** systems and features: voice UI, shell design patterns, and notifications. On the **Cortana team for Windows 10**, designed multimodal experiences features on desktop and phone including inline correction of speech input, meeting scheduling, messaging, and email. **Granted US Patent: [Post-Drive Summary with Tutorial](#)**

CLOUD & ENTERPRISE DIVISION NOVEMBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2012

Designed graceful solutions for IT products that manage hundreds of thousands of devices and objects, both on-prem and in the cloud. One of two designers on the massive 4-year **System Center Configuration Manager 2012** project. Feature design for **Windows Intune Wave C & D**.

Amaze Entertainment **Producer**
GRIPTONITE GAMES STUDIO NOVEMBER 2004 – NOVEMBER 2007

Directly responsible for management & creative direction of Game Boy Advance and Nintendo DS dev teams of 8 – 15 artists and developers with budgets ranging from \$750,000 to \$1.85 million. Responsibilities included game design, project management, client relationship management, usability testing, and writing. **Shipped titles: Disney Friends DS, Pirates of the Caribbean At World's End (DS), Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (GBA/DS), The Chronicles of Narnia (GBA)**

Electronic Arts **Assistant Producer**
MAXIS STUDIO MAY 2003 – NOVEMBER 2004

Managed daily publishing, production, and, design tasks. Liaison between production, testing, and external developers. Supervised localization & ESRB submissions. Press tours. Wrote original in-game text for multiple games. **Shipped Titles: The Sims: Makin' Magic (PC), The Sims Bustin' Out (GBA, XBOX/GC/PS2), The Urbz (GBA, Nintendo DS launch title, XBOX/GC/PS2)**

Walt Disney Parks & Resorts **Interaction Designer**
DESTINATION DISNEY ON-SITE SUMMER 2002

Designed and prototyped an interactive resort TV system. Coded several network apps for Walt Disney Imagineering as part of the first prototypes of Disney's PhotoPass system.

MAYA Design **Interaction Designer (2001, 2002)**

Education

Carnegie Mellon University
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.)
Computer Science &
Human-Computer Interaction (2002)

Andrew Carnegie Scholar: 4-year scholarship awarded to top 1% of admitted students

Carnegie Mellon University
GRADUATE STUDY (no degree)
Entertainment Technology Center
(2002-2003) GPA: 3.73

Books

Design Beyond Devices:
Keeping people at the center of multimodal, multi-device experiences

BY CHERYL PLATZ
*Published by Rosenfeld Media
Coming in 2020*

Top Publications

[Pretty Please, Alexa](#)
Medium Featured Story

[Voice User Interface Design: New Solutions to Old Problems](#)
Microsoft Design @ Medium

[A Conversational Design Primer](#)
Medium Recommended Story

[Why Pokémon Go Will Have Incredible Staying Power](#)
Forbes.com

[What is UX Design?](#)
Huffington Post