PAUL TOWNSEND

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TOP SKILLS

Product & User Experience
Design innovation workshops
Idea generation & evaluation
Prototyping & testing
Value propositions

Research
Generative interviews & studies
Usability & sentiment studies
Process & data insights
Competitive analysis

Planning & Prioritization
Project scoping & planning
Story mapping & MVP
Agile design strategies

Design Team Leadership
Team and skill growth
Supportive team culture
Business & client relationships

EDUCATION

University of Washington
Master of Science in
Human Centered Design
and Engineering

University of Michigan
Master of Science in
Mechanical Engineering

WORK HISTORY

TEAGUE

Principal Interaction Designer & Researcher
02/2022 to 07/2023

As Principal Interaction Designer & Researcher, I acted as an MVP team member leading innovative research and design across multiple problem spaces and methodologies. I approached technical and creative challenges with experience and strategic vision, and rapidly delivered valuable insights, designs, and other work products. I did all this while also coaching and guiding others, as well as supporting business development efforts.

case study

Project: Cloud Computing Services
Product & Design Research (01/2023 to 05/2023)

- **Overview:** A leading cloud computing company had blind spots around two of their major platforms (kubernetes and database). They requested deep generative research to better understand their users' real journeys, tasks, and tools, and to help the company clarify product vision and prioritize enhancements.

- **My contribution:** I led internal workshops to deepen the team's research questions and hypotheses, then created a research protocol using a hybrid of jobs to be done and product deep dive questions. I rapidly gained enough technical understanding to effectively interview expert users. I analyzed all findings, identifying and supporting key insights. I wrote final recommendations reports, which I then delivered to a large cross-functional audience.

- **Impact:** Product leads leveraged my insights to prioritize roadmaps and build business cases. UX leads took immediate action on certain interface and usability insights and adopted my enhanced journey framework. As a bonus, I positively influenced the overall cloud research team, who adopted my workshop approach and share-out structure.

> "There's a ton of gold in your study. We can pull on those gold threads as we go through it. The findings are fantastic!"

Sr Product Manager, Cloud Computing

case study

Project: Drone Delivery Service
Human Interaction Research & Design (02/2022 to 09/2022)

- **Overview:** A major online retailer engineered an autonomous package delivery drone but needed to explore and understand the human experiences around receiving the package, and to answer critical questions about this new delivery model. How much control does a customer expect over their delivery? How might they choose an exact delivery spot? What do they need to know in order to ensure the spot is clear for delivery? What delivery notifications are most important?

- **My contribution:** After rapidly immersing in the engineering and baseline human centered research, and expanding our understanding through competitive research, I created and hosted a series ideation, evaluation, and choosing exercises. I designed and prototyped interface and concept stimuli and built a progressive series of unmoderated and moderated user tests from which we identified key needs and experience issues and elevated high potential concepts.

- **Impact:** Iterating through multiple sets of concepts and tests, we surfaced key principles which the final design must satisfy in order to deliver a fast, easy, lovable customer experience. We met with technical groups to help negotiate more than "engineering minimum" so that initial trials would succeed and satisfy users. The product and engineering teams leveraged my reported recommendations to build their upcoming release cycles for MVP and beyond.

> "This research is helping us see around the corner beyond the next launch to understand what customers *really* need."

Product Director, Drone Delivery

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WORK HISTORY

SMASHING IDEAS

Design & Research Director
07/2019 to 01/2022

As Design & Research Director, I led a digital innovation team, blending a deep expertise in human centered design and research with business strategy and product development. I helped grow our team of designers and researchers, cultivating a peer skill sharing process, regular critiques, and fun activities. I actively generated new business, showcased project achievements through case studies, and supported strategic business efforts.

👁 case study

Project: Credit Union Bill Pay
Product Innovation Design Leadership (04/2021 to 07/2021)

- **Overview:** A credit union's bill payment platform was showing signs of age and losing its customer base. We were engaged to rapidly innovate. Could a re-envisioned bill pay service attract Gen Z and young millennials?
- **My contribution:** As director, I strategized and staffed the project, guided design & research methods, and led innovation and scope prioritization workshops. I actively prototyped and tested concepts with the team, sharing out key insights.
- **Impact:** After 10 weeks of rapid innovation, our clients could confidently take action on dozens of key insights across 5 high impact areas of the product experience. They justified funding, secured staffing, and accelerated launch.

"We have benefited from the full spectrum of what your team offers – from strategy and ideation to prototyping and iterative design."

Account Manager, Credit Union

👁 case study

Project: Aircraft Maintenance Training
Simulation Authoring Tool Design (04/2020 to 10/2020)

- **Overview:** An aircraft manufacturer created an advanced simulation environment for maintenance training. But research showed that they needed to also create an easy tool for airlines to be able to customize training modules for their own needs.
- **My contribution:** As team lead, I guided and performed research, ideation, concept testing, story mapping, MVP prioritization, UX and VX design.
- **Impact:** Our highly effective design innovation and production design led to successful agile development and launch. The product transformed the manufacturer's market position to that of an enhanced services provider.

👁 case study

Project: Seattle ORCA Transit Ticketing
Consumer Touch Interface Design (07/2019 to 12/2019)

- **Overview:** Seattle's LINK Light Rail was expanding from 16 to 38+ stops and multiple lines. The ORCA transit ticketing system was outdated, and needed to be redesigned for accessibility, cloud based technology, route expansion and many other factors. This presented an exciting puzzle of challenges and constraints.
- **My contribution:** After foundational research, I designed a baseline ticketing interface and optimized the challenging expanded maps, as well as new card-tap interfaces. I prototyped all interactions then field and studio tested the concepts. I coordinated across 7 transit agencies and dev teams, finalizing all UX & VX designs.
- **Impact:** The new tap interfaces launched successfully in Spring of 2023. ORCA field Ambassadors observed customers, who were pleased with the new look and could immediately use it without assistance, issues, or complaints. The interface is now leveraging new cloud technology, and ready to flex with next year's route expansion.

"We've launched dozens of transit ticketing touch interfaces around the world, but this is the best we've ever seen."

Product Manager, ORCA Transit Technology Partner

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"Paul is a talented designer, collaborative teammate, encouraging mentor, and an energetic spirit. He also has a superpower for digesting complex information and organizing it into an easy-to-understand manner for the rest of his designers to comprehend."

Associate Design Director, Smashing Ideas

"Paul has contributed a level of industry experience and domain knowledge that has helped us level up our collective abilities as a team. Paul has demonstrated a gentle confidence, depth of knowledge, and an understanding of the audience that has solidified each client's trust in him as well as our team."

Strategy Director, Smashing Ideas

WORK HISTORY

SMASHING IDEAS

Associate Research & Strategy Director
11/2017 to 07/2019

As Associate Research & Strategy Director, I helped build a human centered design and research collaborative practice. In our agency engagements, we created integrated small teams of designers, researchers and strategists to provide insights high on the business value chain while also firmly grounded in human centered practices.

case study

Project: Machine Learning Feature Studio
Product Strategy and Design (03/2019 to 07/2019)

- **Overview:** A machine learning startup had a rough product vision that needed sharpening. While the startup owners were highly skilled engineers and developers, they had only a rough idea of how to position the new product. What could they offer to empower less skilled users to gain machine learning feature insights? Would super-users shift away from their favorite custom scripts to use this tool?

- **My contribution:** I led a small, embedded design & strategy team to complete research, product ideation, concept testing, strategy and design. I worked intensively with the client to clarify their new product vision, confirm sentiment and usability with data scientists, and produce final visual designs ready for VC funding and later development.

- **Impact:** In a Geekwire article, the company's owners described our discovery work as "the smartest move we've made so far." The product secured $8M in VC funding after our project completed.

"Your contribution wasn't just about designing screens, but about discovering and testing our product. You helped us confirm what data scientists really wanted."

Owner, Machine Learning Feature Studio

case study

Project: Online Greeting Card Experience
Motivational UX & Product Ideation (09/2018 to 01/2019)

- **Overview:** A greeting card company asked our team to help them evolve to become a "meaningful connections" company. We demonstrated our Motivational UX design framework (a combination of behavioral psychology, game theory and UX) and used it to generate, refine, and prioritize new product ideas.

- **My contribution:** I collaborated with a team to design an all-new 3-day workshop around the Motivational UX framework. I created competitive research brain fuel and led multiple rounds of ideation and prioritization. I also created a final executive team prioritization exercise to help rank and roadmap the top concepts.

- **Impact:** The client generated strong concepts for a new target audience of millennial moms, and ranked and roadmapped their top 10 (and next 25) ideas.

case study

Project: Online Wedding Rings
Concept Generation, Testing and Site Refresh (02/2018 to 06/2018)

- **Overview:** Our client asked us to find innovative ways to reach customers online for a traditionally in-person purchase, and to modernize their site's look and feel.

- **My contribution:** I studied competitive trends and interviewed customer support teams to understand sales friction points. While my design partners prototyped new interactions, I executed research with rapid iterations of remote and in-person concept testing. Each week I shared insights and guided concept selection.

- **Impact:** Attachment rates (engagement + wedding band) improved through our innovative solutions, and overall sales immediately improved after our site design refresh work was implemented.

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WORK HISTORY

AT&T

Associate Product Director
01/2009 to 03/2017

As Associate Product director, I led a team of managers to evaluate, design and launch hundreds of enhancements to support our 100,000 sales and service reps and 100 million customers.

- **My contribution:** I identified opportunities based on trouble tickets, data insights, technology trends, and process analysis. I wrote business cases, defined end-to-end product and technical requirements, guided UX and service design, and managed releases to ensure success.

- **Impact:** I created a highly successful team that delivered new capabilities which eliminated millions of customer service calls and generated millions of dollars in additional sales. Typical ROI was achieved within 6 months.

👁
case study

Project: AT&T Terms and Conditions
Research, Design & Process (05/2015 to 11/2015)

- **Overview:** The AT&T Terms & Conditions (T&C) process was broken in the call center channel, driving hundreds of thousands of repeat calls to Care, and leaving loopholes allowing millions of dollars in losses. The process needed to be drastically simplified while also strengthening security, but the budget was limited.

- **My contribution:** I analyzed call center data, studied current broken processes, consulted software architects and developers, built a business case, secured funding, led the project team, negotiated with legal, designed high level wires, and worked with a cross-functional team to finalize and launch.

- **Impact:** We successfully launched and achieved payoff for our business case in under 3 months, saving $10 million per year.

> "Paul is a leader and collaborative team member. He is gifted in his ability to identify solutions, communicate potential options clearly, and then effectively resolve open issues."

Sr Call Center Operations Manager, AT&T