Sasha Maximova

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About

I am a Lean UX designer and product starter, originally from St.Petersburg, Russia, currently living in Prague, Czech Republic. I have more than 20 years experience designing, developing, researching and improving online tools, web-sites, blogs, and help systems.

I'm used to work in international teams and agile, customer-driven environments, together with software developers, technical communicators, and visual designers.

The best projects for me are those that challenge standards and go beyond user expectations. Luckily, I was a part of some and hope to continue that way :)

Experience

CO-FOUNDER, TRIRT SOFTWARE – 2010-PRESENT

Together with my husband started a side-kick product, more consumer-oriented – online outliner, http://checkvist.com, and later started a company to continue developing it into a business.

At first, we were just experimenting with implementing keyboard shortcut support on the web and with new (at that time) Ruby-on-Rails framework. Gradually it became a rather mature product with more that 60000 customers. The latest challenge is creating a mobile progressive web app.

LEAN UX PRACTITIONER, IT DEPARTMENT, 4FINANCE – 2016-2017

My first fintech job in a large international startup with dozens of projects (mainly online lending software) released each year in 18 countries. Very intense work on international user research and user testing (Lean UX and Lean Startup methodologies), collaboration with marketing and business teams, prototyping and copywriting.

INTERACTION DESIGNER ONLINE TOOLS DEPT, JETBRAINS – 2005-2013

Working as a sole UX specialist in a team of developers, I participated in all stages of product development, from the concept evaluation to interface design and bug-fixing. We didn't create personas, because we ourselves were our target audience in the first place ('eating own dog-food' is a company mantra even now). But we used to write use-cases, created mock-ups and sketches, and implemented new features in very short iterations to receive feedback and improve. During that time I worked on several projects, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes successively:

UpSource, http://upsource.jetbrains.com
A new code browser and code review tool, that will probably become a web-based IDE (not yet released).

YouTrack, http://jetbrains.com/youtrack
An innovative issue tracker, which sole requirement in the beginning was the simplicity of UI. As a result, a query-based interface allowed us to hide all additional filters, and keyboard shortcuts made all main actions accessible without blotting the UI with many controls.

Now the product went much further from the initial concept and has much more functionality that covers agile project management and custom workflow support.

TeamCity, http://jetbrains.com/teamcity
Continuous integration and build-server tool with sophisticated features for code-analysis. Started with one feature – the answer to the perpetual 'Who's broken the build?' question (that was a unique feature due to tight IDE integration), now TeamCity has become a mature multi-functional platform for build management.

WEB-SITE TEAM LEAD, JETBRAINS – 2004-2005

Following the success of iterative improvements, a new web-team was created with one lead designer, one technical designer, one Flash developer, one content-manager, plus myself as a lead and information architect and content strategist. We had wonderful time working on two successful redesigns (the second one table-less and html4/CSS2.2 compliant).

Our team also served as interface designers and prototype developers for the new web-based products. New area of 'real' tool development brought more technical and user interface challenges and less marketing and meetings, so I left my lead position to our technical designer and went to work in the web development team.

USABILITY ENGINEER, JETBRAINS – 2003

Joined the company as a usability engineer to analyse and improve the company web-site, http://jetbains.com. At that time JetBrains was a 20+ people bootstrapped startup, totally dependant on the online sales of its only product, IntelliJ IDEA Java IDE. So the web-site usability was a really important point. With great support and enthusiasm in the company, we've started conducting usability tests, developed personas, experimenting with the content and design. The results were sales growth, positive feedback from the customers, and a couple of new content-driven projects related to the web-site: newsletter with RSS feed and online magazine.

FREELANCE TRANSLATOR, CONTENT MANAGER, JOURNALIST – 2003-2005

Worked for several Russian publishing houses, specialising in technology and software development. Translated 'Deadline' by Tom DeMarco, which become a bestseller. Published articles on web usability in different online and paper periodicals. Started a blog dedicated to agile methodologies, and translated several basic articles on the subject (in 2002 agile really looked like a silver bullet to all process-related problems :)

Education

Russian State University for Humanities, Moscow, 1 year post-graduate studies 'Cultural Anthropology', 1996

St.Petersburg State University, MA 'Orientalistics, Mongolian and Tibetan philology', 1994

Skills

Lean UX and Lean research, Interaction design, information architecture, user assistance, minimalism, usability, prototyping, content, technical communications;

HTML/CSS/JS, version control systems, bug tracking systems, code review systems, Sketch, InVision, Atlassian Confluence.

References

Personal website http://sashika.com

Blog https://medium.com/@sashika

LinkedIn profile https://www.linkedin.com/in/sashika