



## User Experience Design Strategy

Dev - design hybrid with 14 years experience designing human experiences based on story and biological neural processes

## Ben Sykes

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## Highlights

- Using JavaScript frameworks, created a way to “Drag & Drop” in Microsoft SharePoint for the GFS Ignition Portal at Microsoft.
- Conceived, created and designed the search engine [Information.com](http://Information.com). (Global top 500 sites on the web – Alexa Rank)
- Successfully led the creative UI vision of the music website American Idol Underground from conception to over 1 million unique hits a week.
- Designed Siderean’s Seamark UI which was named by KMWorld, as one of the Top Trend-Setting Products of the Year! (2006).

## Professional Experience

**FREELANCE CONSULTING** / [interActoid](http://interActoid.com) / Mountain View, CA / 2009 -Present

Projects:

- Interactive factoids for social networks
- Experience & interaction design consulting
- Interactive video / hypervideo widgets
- Mobile application development /Iphone UI design

Technology:

- Affiliate advertising
- Actionsript/Flash
- Fireworks/Photoshop
- Sprout API
- XML/CSS/JavaScript
- Facebook/Iphone SDK
- Premiere/Chroma Key
- Amazon (AWS)

**MANAGER OF USER CENTERED DESIGN** / [Cisco Systems](http://Cisco Systems) / Ireland - San Jose, CA / 2008 -2009

Products:

- WebEx & WebEx Connect
- Cisco Unified Personal Communicator
- Enterprise Instant Messaging Clients
- Web 2.0 Management Portal

Technology:

- Adobe Suite (all)
- Visio
- MS Project
- Expression Suite
- Visual Studio
- XAML/WPF

Responsibilities:

- Requirements capture & UI/Design spec development
- Team & vendor management, evaluation, scheduling & hiring globally
- Interaction design, information architecture & wireframe development
- Coordinate WebEx Connect design (ixd, ia, wireframe) into the Cisco Unified Communicator
- Coordinate and design (ixd, ia, wireframe) Cisco IM client integration into IBM Sametime & Microsoft Office Communicator.



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### PRODUCT MANAGER - UX LEAD / [Microsoft](#) / Redmond, WA / 2006 -2008

#### Products:

- GFS/MSN Ignition Portal - MS Sharepoint
- TSP Plug-in for Visual Studio (VSTF)
- Microsoft Online Suite (saas)

#### Technology:

- Adobe Suite (all)
- Visio
- MS Project
- Expression Suite
- Visual Studio
- XAML/WPF

#### Responsibilities:

- Requirements capture & UI/Design spec development
- Product managed the marketing strategy and wrote the usability testing plans.
- Worked closely with disparate development groups to establish product functionality, scope and delivery.
- Led team in experience design, Interaction design, information architecture & wireframe development
- Contextual inquiry, usability tests, affinity diagrams, event sequence diagrams, and use cases.
- Created & managed the creation of multiple high fidelity Flash driven clickable prototypes.

### ASSOC. CREATIVE DIRECTOR / [American Idol Underground](#) / Los Angeles, CA / 2005 -2006

#### Product:

- Social network for fans and artists separate from the TV show, yet under Idol brand
- Collateral (Rolling Stone, Music Connection)

#### Technology:

- Adobe Suite
- Actionscript/Flash
- ASP.net / VStudio
- XML/CSS/JavaScript
- Visio
- Agile - Scrum

#### Responsibilities:

- Design direction for both site & magazine collateral & UI/Design spec development
- Team & vendor management, scheduling & Fremantle engagement.
- Usability planning/testing & hotspot analytic tracking.
- Interaction design, information architecture & wireframe development

### INTERACTION DESIGNER - PROD. MANAGER / [Oversee.net](#) / Los Angeles, CA / 2004 -2005

#### Products:

- Search engine: Information.com
- BlogSource - Social blogging platform

#### Technology:

- Adobe Suite (all)
- Visio
- WAP/WML
- Agile - Scrum

#### Responsibilities:

- Conception of a "multi-search" engine harnessing untapped vertical engines and providing a tools layer.
- Technical requirements capture & UI/Design spec development
- Revenue modeling, market strategy, stakeholder pitch and all usability tests and A/B testing - tracking.
- Extensive new business development & strategic partnership creation.



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### **MULTIPLE ROLES** / [Digital Evolution](#) / Santa Monica, CA / 2001 -2004

#### Projects & Roles:

- Creator - Creative Director - EMTM (interactive training for the military)
- Sr. Web Developer - Digital Evolution corporate web site / intranet.
- Lead UI Designer - Sony APG Intranet
- UI Designer - Nissan brand performance system
- Flash game developer - [The Zenith Insurance \(Risky Robots\)](#)
- Lead Developer - Hewlett Packard CRM web site with focus on 508 compliancy.

#### Responsibilities:

- Requirements capture & UI/Design spec development
- Product managed the marketing strategy and wrote the usability testing plans.
- Worked closely with disparate development groups to establish product functionality, scope and delivery.
- Led team in experience design, Interaction design, information architecture & wireframe development
- Assisted in user contextual inquiry and usability tests. Translated user findings into affinity diagrams, event sequence diagrams, and use cases.
- Created & managed the creation of multiple high fidelity Flash driven clickable prototypes.

### **FOUNDER - FREELANCE** / Superfly Industries, LLC. / Pittsburgh, PA - Los Angeles, CA / 1995 - 2004

#### Projects & Clients:

- 200 plus client base
- Gary LeMel - Warner Brothers Music
- MGL Entertainment
- 5G Wireless (UCLA Portal)
- Siderean Software (NSA, NASA, Oracle)
- Venice Nutrition
- Hollywood Aid
- Crowne Limousine
- Informercial Host: Forbes Riley
- Inhost Web Hosting (Wyenet)
- Globe Motorsports
- IDT Technologies: EZCD Stack
- Designer Tracy Ross
- Comedian Carl Labove

#### Responsibilities:

- Web development
- Company direction & market strategy
- New business development
- RFP/RFI response & bid
- Requirements capture & UI/Design spec development
- Contextual inquiry / usability testing / usability participant recruitment & rapid prototyping
- Hypervideo & interactive flash video
- Worked closely with disparate development groups to establish product functionality, scope and delivery.
- User experience design, interaction design, information architecture & wireframe development.



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## Technical Skills

Proficient in Macintosh and Windows operating systems. Expert user in the following applications and technology platforms

- Microsoft Visio / Omnigraffle
- Microsoft Project / Merlin
- Microsoft Expression Suite
- Visual Studio Team Foundation
- Adobe Fireworks
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe Illustrator
- Adobe InDesign
- Adobe Flash (AS 2 / Video)
- Adobe Dreamweaver
- Adobe Premiere
- Adobe After Effects
- XAML / WPF / Silverlight
- HTML / DHTML
- CSS (Advanced)
- JavaScript Libraries (Prototype, DOJO, JQuery)
- Usability Testing and Contextual Inquiry
- User Research
- Heuristic Evaluation
- Iphone Application Development
- Facebook Application Development
- HyperVideo and interactive flash video
- Agile methodologies (XP, Scrum)

## Motion Picture

Worked on numerous feature films, and provided all video assist to the director, writer, and producers of the Academy Award winning film [American Beauty](#).

- Chroma Key lighting
- Principal Photography
- Editing & AfterEffects

## Professional Activities

UPA – Usability Professionals' Association  
 AIGA – American Institute of Graphic Arts  
 ACM SIGCHI - Special Interest Group on Computer-Human Interaction.  
 HFES – Human Factors & Ergonomics Society  
 STC – Society for Technical Communication

## Recent Speaking Engagements

Irish Microsoft Technology Conference  
 Dublin, Ireland 2008

Lecture: “What Species Is Your User” – The underlying biology of creating rich interactive experiences, and a strategy to bring your Silverlight applications to life.

Nextgen User Group  
 Coventry, England October 20th 2008

[Learntec Cognitive Design Conference](#)  
 Messe Karlsruhe, Germany February 3-5 2009

## Military

U.S. Marine Corps Infantry Reserve

- Operation Iraqi Freedom 2003-2004
- Provided humanitarian support.
- Part of the "[21 Days to Baghdad](#)" documentary.