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## INTRODUCTION

### **Bryn Ray**

Lead User Experience Consultant

I'm an analytical thinker, with a penchant for solving difficult design problems. Specifically, I work as a user experience (UX) consultant to help companies with complex information architectures (IA) design powerful digital solutions. My approach is holistic and data driven, centred around serving the people with the right information, at the right time, in the right place.

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## WORK HISTORY

### **Lead User Experience Consultant at Aiimi**

2017 - Now

Helping a range of high profile clients, with complex information environments, craft digital products that are both usable and delightful. We put real people at the centre of an evidence driven approach to solve important, real world issues in both the public and private sector.

### **User Experience Consultant at Bryn Ray UX**

2010 - 2017

Full spectrum user experience consultancy specialising in information architecture and design strategy. Adopting a user centred, evidence driven approach, I helped solve design problems for British Gas, EasyHotels, Tesco, Raddison Blu, Panasonic, Global, Glanbia, GSK and ICAP among other smaller name brands.

### **User Experience Designer at National Grid**

2010 - 2012

End-to-end involvement with the research, strategy, design and implementation of a commodity trading platform as well as a company-wide intranet based on SharePoint. For both of these projects my focus was to design the organisation structure then produce wireframes and prototypes that could be validated with real users.

### **Information Designer at Shropshire Council**

2008 - 2010

Using a range of user centred research methods I created effective, understandable, information design solutions for both printed media and the web. My most significant contributions focused on search patterns and the communication of further education offerings.

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## EDUCATION

### **MSc User Experience Design**

Distinction (91%)

As well as practical experience in the field, I have formal training as a design professional. I studied an MSc in User Experience Design at the University of Brighton where I finished top of my class with the highest possible honours. My final research paper on how digital products can be utilised within a circular business model won a Santander award for innovation and was given public commendation by the university's Vice-Chancellor.

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## CONTACT ME

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## SKILLSET

To be a truly great user experience consultant, I believe you must be skilled in a broad range of techniques, then be practiced in knowing when to apply each of them. Every problem is unique and the design process should be adapted based on context, needs, goals and restraints. Below is the skillset I draw upon to help companies solve design problems. My key strengths are in structure and strategy but i'm well versed in leading work across the board.

### Strategy

Understanding goals and gathering requirement to understand the problem and outline product vision.

- Stakeholder interviews
- Workshop facilitation
- Pitches & presentations
- User needs vs business goals
- Affinity mapping

### Evidence

Discovering what is happening with your product using facts and quantitative data.

- Usage data analytics
- On-site polling
- Eye tracking & heatmapping
- ROI value analysis
- Competitor analysis

### Empathy

Understanding the user, their mental model and the reasons behind their actions using qualitative research.

- User interviews & surveys
- Usability testing
- Ethnographic studies
- Context of use analysis
- Mental modelling

### Exploration

Map the current and expected experiences then propose alterations in an abstract format.

- User journey mapping
- Experience mapping
- Red route analysis
- Task & process analysis
- Task Scenarios & Storyboarding

### Structure (IA)

Understanding contextually relevant information and organising in an understandable and logical manner.

- Organisation schemes
- Organisation structures
- Task modelling
- Card sorting & tree testing
- Content inventory & strategy

### Creativity

Converting abstract concepts & information into screen layouts for communication and interaction.

- Sketching
- Wireframing
- Low fidelity prototyping
- Interaction design
- Pattern definition

### Finesse

The beautification of a research based wireframe design considering both accessibility and visual delight.

- User interface design
- Style guides
- Micro-interaction design
- Motion choreography
- Graphic & visual design

### Experimentation

The bridge between hypothesis and reality using a series of test & measure techniques.













- Interactive prototyping
- Appetite MVP tests
- Live beta testing
- A/B & multi variant testing
- Split testing

### Psychology

Optimising business return while maintaining a high quality user experience.

- Persuasive design patterns
- Behavioural science analysis
- Conversion rate optimisation
- Communication maps
- Captology

## MAJOR CLIENTS

## OUTCOMES

Throughout my career as a user experience consultant I've had the pleasure of working with clients on a wide variety of design problems. I primarily focus on helping clients define and understand their problem, we then work together to deliver a solution, being sure to accurately monitor and quantify it's effectiveness along the way. I've included a few of my favourite challenges below. Feel free to **get in touch** if you'd like more information or wish to see further examples.

### Reduce service contact volume by 50% or more

At British Gas

**Solution:** Self-serve online account management application and support centre

**Outcome:** Contact reduced by 58% saving circa £13 million per year

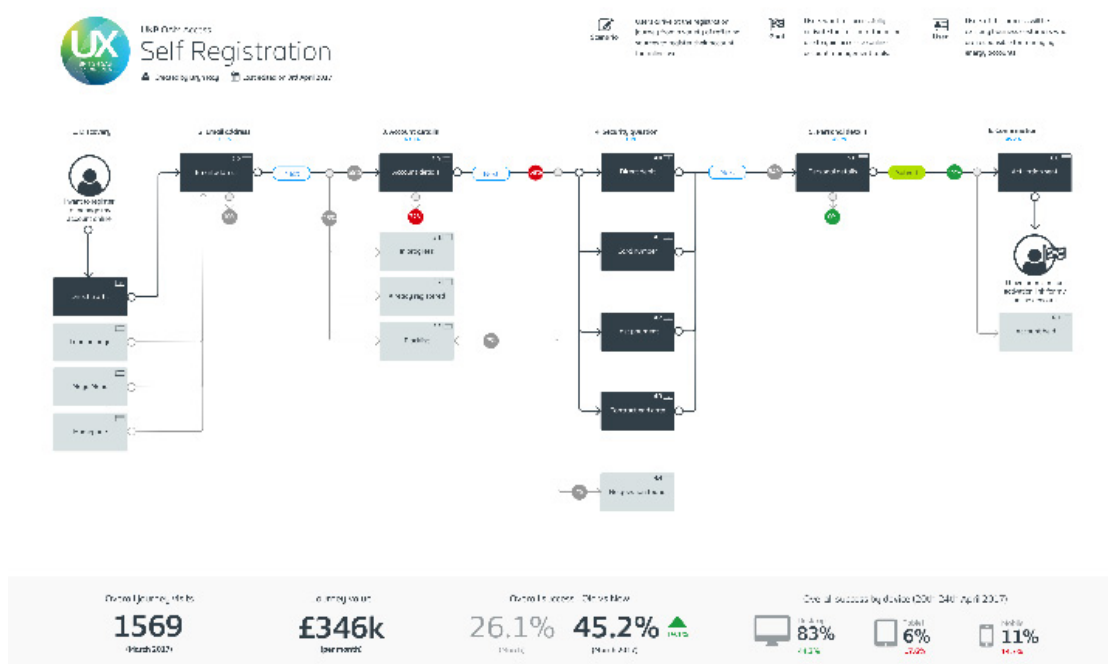
British Gas are the UK's largest energy provider supplying over 11 million customers. The task was to explore ways in which we could reduce customer contact volume to reduce dependency on call centres while maintaining brand trust and quality of service.

After extensive research, with both the business and users, we discovered that a huge volume of contact was being made to complete tasks that could be handled via an online account management application e.g. submitting a meter reading or viewing a recent bill. Although an application existed, along with most back-end functionality, uptake was low due to poor execution. Working with their team and taking an agile approach we re-worked the solution which has ultimately seen a drop in contact worth over £6 million per year for the existing user base.

Gaining access to the online account management application was another factor causing a significant number of users pain. As part of the revised solution we explored this user journey ultimately achieving a 70% increase in success rate while improving security. This has resulted in reduced contact for sign up while increasing the number of people using the online application, in-turn equating to a cost saving of nearly £4 million per year.

During our research we also discovered distinct trends in support questions being asked e.g. How to read a meter and moving premises. Taking these questions and following an organisational strategy tested against user's mental models, we created a comprehensive help area which has seen a usage uptake that equates to a cost saving of around £3 million per year. This support structure has also gone on to inform the development of an AI virtual assistant.

**Techniques:** Call centre monitoring, interviews, workshops, search log analysis, experience mapping, quantitative usage red-route analysis, system modelling, mental modelling, card sorting, thesauri development, organisation schemes, tree testing, surveying, wireframing, prototyping, user testing, pattern definition, journey mapping (below)



## Increase booking success rate by 20% or more

At easyHotels

**Solution:** Re-structured booking journey with revised information design

**Outcome:** Success rate improved by 24% increasing lead value by over £3.5 million per year

easyHotels is a budget hotel group operating in 23 different locations around Europe. Their business model is heavily dependant upon online bookings and while going through a digital re-platforming I was engaged to help optimise their online booking process.

Ultimately, the new booking journey had to communicate with the hotels property management system, so we started by modelling the information required to make a booking. We then took this information and began exploring user expectations and mental models to understand how they may interface with the system.

While conducting this qualitative research, we also utilised quantitative usage analytics, on-site polling and exit capture to identify key pain points in the existing process. These sticking points were fed back into the qualitative research methods, such as usability testing, to identify why they were occurring.

Once we'd gathered sufficient research we began making small, iterative changes to the existing journey and A/B testing to validate their impact. This gave us a number of quick wins and improved the success rate by 10% while still on the existing platform.

In the re-platforming we made a number of slightly more radical, structural changes such as step order and basket style room addition functionality. To ensure this had positive effect, we used our on-going research findings to work a design through to a high-fidelity prototype which could be appetite and beta tested before going being put into production.

During implementation we took a split-tested approach to launch over a 2 month period which ultimately saw an uplift in success rate of 24%. The value of the additional leads is estimated to be worth over £3.5 million per year.

**Techniques:** Quantitative usage analysis, screen recording, heat mapping, conversion funnels, usability testing, user Interviews, context of use analysis, mental modelling, on-site polling, A/B testing, task models, prototyping, interaction design, user interface design, information modelling, wireframing (below)

The image displays three wireframe screens for a hotel booking application. The first screen shows hotel details for 'Arena Boulevard' in Amsterdam, including location, reviews, and a 'CHOOSE ROOM' section for a 'Standard Room with Internal Window'. The second screen is the 'BOOKER DETAILS' form, which includes fields for email, first and last name, and phone number, along with an 'EDIT' button. The third screen is the 'BOOKING SUMMARY', showing the selected room, stay dates (Mon, 17 Jul to 2 Nights), and a total payment of £156.00 with a 'BOOK NOW' button.

## Improve operational efficiency of festival management

At Global

**Solution:** A white label SAAS application that allows configuration of a modular booking process

**Outcome:** Booking team size reduced by 70% while sales volume increased by over 200k bookings per year

Global are an international radio, music and entertainment group who run popular names such as Heart, Capital and Classic FM. As of 2016, Global were selling over 1 million tickets per year for festivals including Hideout, Snowbombing and SW4. With their portfolio continuing to grow and sales volumes continuing to increase, Global needed a way to take bookings efficiently across all festivals while utilising a centralised service team.

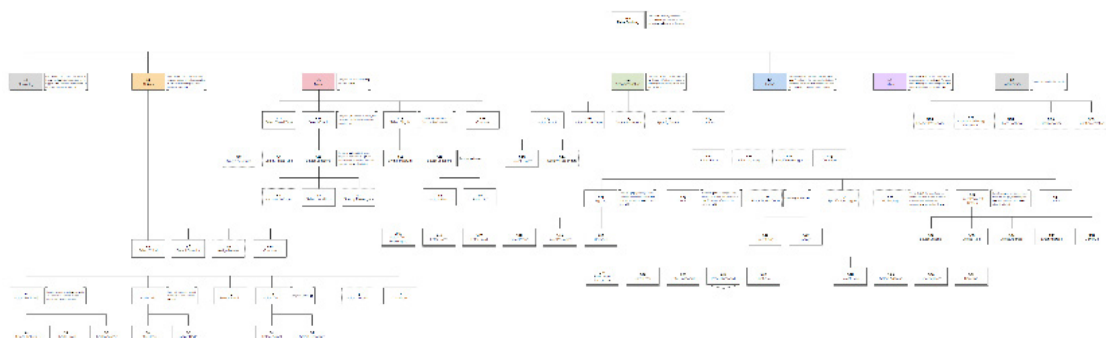
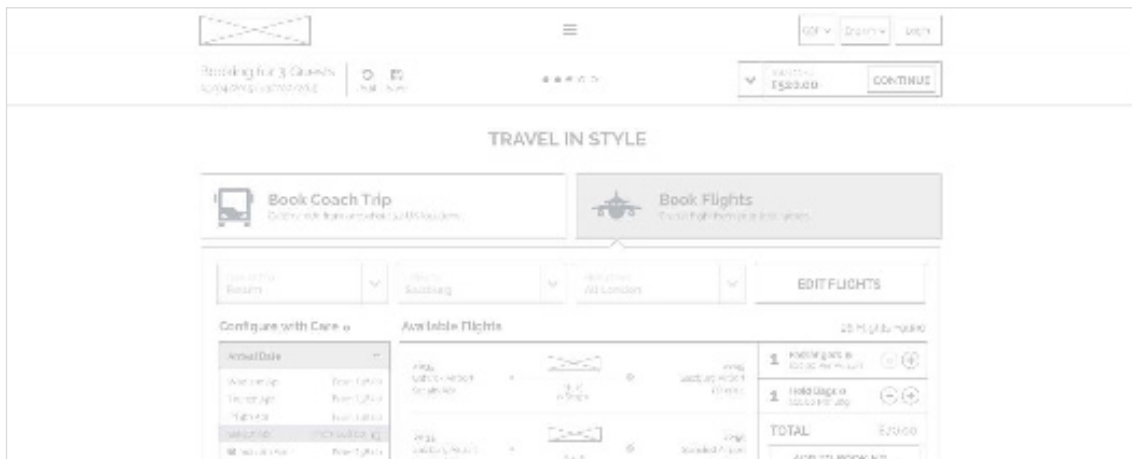
Starting with a round of landscape mapping and requirements gathering we found that despite having commonalities, different festivals are often managed in very different ways. However, through some extensive research with individual festival organisers we managed to produce a common information model.

Within this model were blocks of distinct functionality such as travel, ticketing, accommodation and extras. Each of these could then be split further e.g. travel could be comprised of coaches, trains and flights. Using this model we were able to define a modular solution that could be developed and implemented in an agile manner. Each individual festival could also completely customise what functionality they required and take a user centred approach to presenting this in the most effective order.

We then set about a discovery phase with a view to designing optimised booking journeys while educating the product teams at Global how to do the same. Eventually, a standardised research process was defined that helps each festival adopting the application to get the most out of it. Ultimately this SAAS product will also be sold to external festival organisers who will have complete autonomy over it's structure, so it was important to provide guidance in this.

Success varied on a festival by festival basis, but on average this application saw booking success rates for Global's festivals increase by over 35% while offering richer functionality and a more efficient back office process.

**Techniques:** Stakeholder interviews, workshop facilitation, user interviews, surveys, ethnographic study, context of use analysis, mental modelling, user journey mapping, experience mapping, organisation structure design, sketching, wireframing, low fidelity prototyping, interaction design, pattern definition, task modelling (below)



## Reduce application support contact by 50% or more

At TRAIN Fitness

**Solution:** Organisation restructuring including a help centre and implementation of a progressive on-boarding process

**Outcome:** Application contact reduced by 78% saving circa £640k per year

TRAIN Fitness are the UK's largest provider of professional fitness education courses. Their success over the past 20 years came from being one of the first to move in the digital space and allowing people to study online. With a number of outdated legacy systems and digital competition increasing within the sector, TRAIN engaged me to help them modernise their online learning platform. The primary objectives of this were to soften the system learning curve, ultimately eliminate the need for training and reduce the dependence on support agents.

The initial engagement with TRAIN was to first complete a ROI value analysis and competitor benchmarking. In doing so we analysed the operating model, quantified potential cost savings and thoroughly user tested the existing system as well as competitor systems. To get the most value out of this exercise we also needed to map the full user journey throughout the product life cycle, segment users based on experience and define key personas to test against.

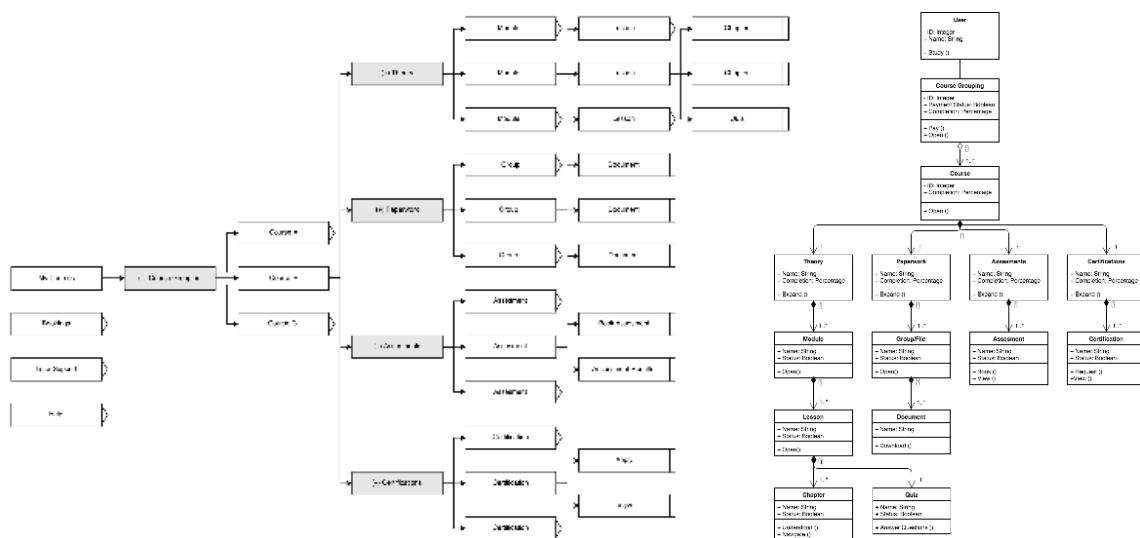
Due to the amount of time a student spends using the online learning platform, we discovered huge disparity in the ability of expert users vs that of a beginner users. As a general rule, the systems that took a simplistic approach to improve learnability provided a far less efficient learning experience for expert users. This was causing undue frustration which ultimately lead to lower pass rates (identified during research as the most significant pain point).

This lead us to continue the engagement focusing on creating an adaptive experience which progresses with the user. Based on the ROI analysis the expert state was kept much the same implementing only usability fixes identified in the lab session and updating the visual identity for a consistency. The main focus was on how we build a user's mental model of the learning process and incrementally add functionality.

To achieve this we undertook an organisational restructuring and implemented a needs based on-boarding process. A business orientated benefit of this on-boarding process, which could be tailored-made from a catalogue of modules, was that it allowed the core system functionality to remain the same across all course and user types.

The other major product we implemented was a new help centre constructed based on user research, analysis of search logs, an audit of past support tickets and interviews with customer support agents. The creation of this help centre, in tandem with the other system improvements mentioned, has ultimately seen a 78% reduction in contact, a 23% reduction in course completion time, a 10% uplift in first time pass rate and a 41% uplift in student satisfaction. TRAIN have also won a major industry award for Best use of Technology.

**Techniques:** Personas, usage data analytics, ROI value analysis, competitor analysis, user interviews, usability testing, context of use analysis, mental modelling, user journey mapping, red route analysis, task analysis, task modelling, organisation structures, card sorting, tree testing, sketching, wireframing, interface design, live beta testing



## Improve information findability by 100% or more

At British Gas

**Solution:** A revised information architecture and navigational approach based on a controlled thesauri

**Outcome:** Information findability improves by over 760%

It had been highlighted in a number of ways that people were having difficulty finding information and content on the British Gas website. Unaware of the extent of the issue we conducted a research project to understand the impact it may be having.

We began with a tree testing exercise to understand the extent of the issue and gauge how much resource should be allocated to improvement efforts. In the initial round of tree testing 1575 people began the exercise. Only 19% of those people managed to complete the tasks set and of those who completed the tasks only 34% identified the correct information locations. That equated to a success rate of just 6% and an unequivocal need to seriously improve the information architecture.

Our next steps were to conduct a full content audit, analyse search logs and review support tickets. We also conducted qualitative open card sorting and quantitative closed card sorting. Using the insight gained we were able to propose a new organisation structure and scheme.

Once we had proposed this new organisation, we subjected it to multiple rounds of user testing in the form of qualitative tree testing and quantitative tree testing, iterating and improving with every round. When we stopped seeing significant improvements in testing, we took the final proposal and subjected it to a large scale tree test to measure improvement. In this test, completion rose from 19% to 84% and success rose from 34% to 86% giving a total navigational improvement of 767%.

**Techniques:** User interviews, card sorting, tree testing, usage data analysis, on-site videos, search log analysis, support ticket analysis, organisation structure design, organisation scheme design, content inventory, gap analysis, context of use analysis

