

User experience careers

There's a good chance that you enrolled in this certificate program hoping to find work as a UX designer in the near future. UX design is a rapidly changing field with a projected 10-year growth rate of 15% (Burning Glass, 2020). When you check out most job searching sites, you'll find tens of thousands of job postings for UX-related roles. In fact, recruiters around the world are struggling to fill open positions for UX designers because the demand for people with these skills is outpacing the supply of available UX designers. That's where you come in!

While it might be a little early to begin searching for jobs, it's important context to know that "UX designer" is just one of many job titles within the broader user experience field. As you continue with this certificate program, you might become interested in a certain specialty or career path within the field. In addition, as an entry-level UX designer, you will likely work alongside other UX professionals with various areas of expertise. To help you get started, this reading will explore a handful of different careers within the field of user experience.



Interaction designer

Interaction designers focus on designing the experience of a product and how it functions. They strive to understand the user flow, or the path, that a typical user takes to complete a task on an app, website, or other platform. At Google and many other companies, interaction designers are a specialized type of UX designer.

An interaction designer's work answers questions like: What should happen if a user taps on this button? How do we make this action easier for users to complete? And, how are the design elements within the website laid out?

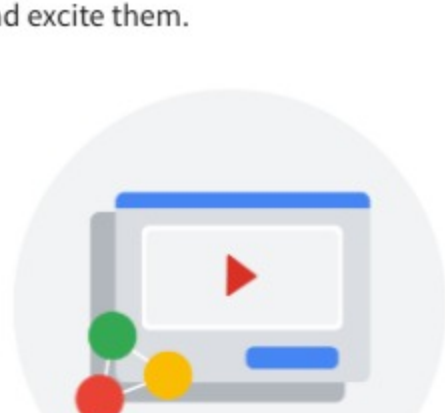
Interaction designers focus less on how the product looks and instead strive to make the product easy to navigate and simple for users to interact with.



Visual designer

Visual designers focus on how a product or technology looks. They are often responsible for designing logos, illustrations, and icons, as well as deciding on font color, size, and placement. Visual designers focus on the layout of each page or screen and make all of the design elements fit together in a visually appealing way. At Google and many other companies, visual designers are a specialized type of UX designer.

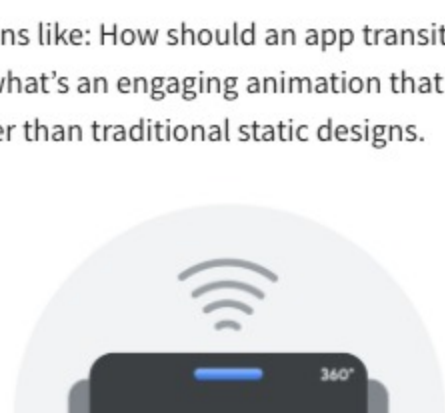
The role of a visual designer is to answer questions like: What kind of visual style should icons have, in order to fit the product's branding? Or, which color and font should we use for this button? The goal of a visual designer is to delight users with designs that inspire, engage, and excite them.



Motion designer

Motion designers think about what it feels like for a user to move through a product and how to create smooth transitions between pages on an app or website. They may also create animations or visual effects to bring their design ideas to life. At Google and many other companies, motion designers are a specialized type of UX designer.

A motion designer's work answers questions like: How should an app transition between pages? How do we show the connection between these actions? And, what's an engaging animation that will help tell our story? Motion designers focus on design elements that move, rather than traditional static designs.

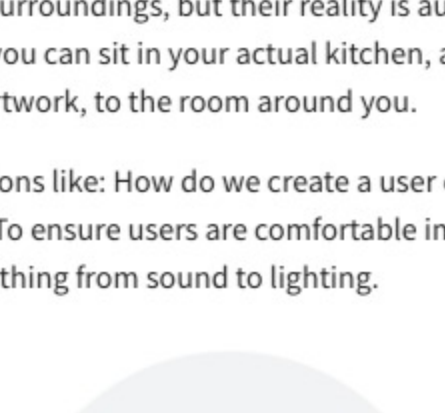


VR/AR designer

Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) designers create products that provide users with immersive experiences, unbounded by the limits of the physical world. **Virtual reality** involves a wearable headset that takes over a user's vision; it blocks out their physical surroundings and immerses them in a completely virtual world. For example, VR can feel like you're entering the setting of a magical imaginary land.

On the other hand, **augmented reality** uses the physical world as a backdrop and adds virtual elements on top of it. Users are still contextually aware of their surroundings, but their reality is augmented, or enhanced, by adding elements through a screen. For example, you can sit in your actual kitchen, and an AR experience can add digital images, like a new barstool or a piece of artwork, to the room around you.

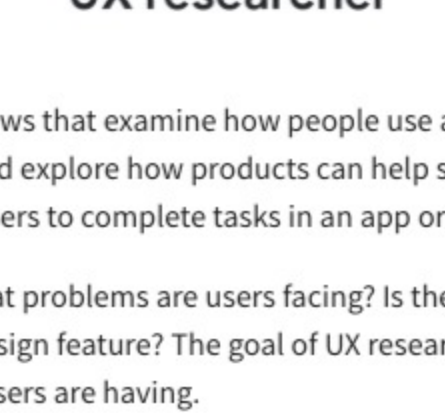
A VR or AR designer's work answers questions like: How do we create a user experience that leverages 3D space? Or, will this action cause a user motion sickness? To ensure users are comfortable immersing in a VR or AR experience, designers need to carefully consider everything from sound to lighting.



UX researcher

UX researchers conduct studies or interviews that examine how people use a product. UX researchers often identify pain points that users are experiencing and explore how products can help solve those problems. They also explore the usability of existing products, by asking users to complete tasks in an app or website, for example.

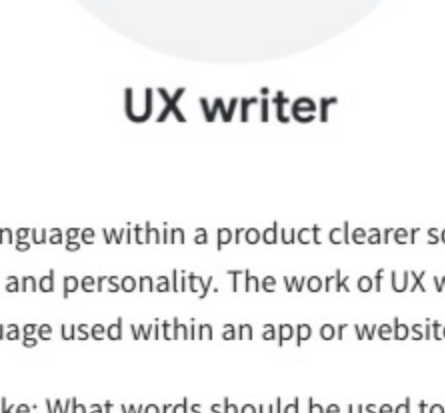
UX researchers answer questions like: What problems are users facing? Is the design of this product easy to use? And, would people be interested in this new design feature? The goal of UX researchers is often to understand how a product can provide a solution to a real problem users are having.



UX writer

UX writers think about how to make the language within a product clearer so that the user experience is more intuitive. UX writers also help define a brand's voice and personality. The work of UX writers often includes writing labels for buttons and determining the tone of language used within an app or website.

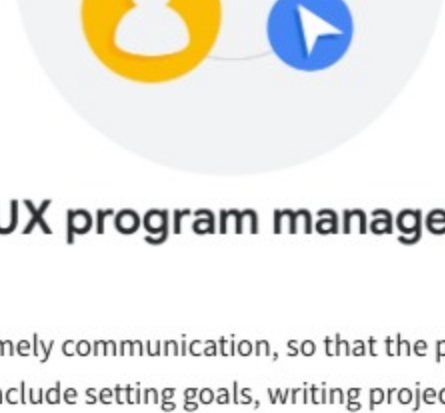
UX writers focus on answering questions like: What words should be used to communicate this idea clearly? Should the tone for this app be friendly or technical? And, what should the language on this button label say? UX writers often become subject matter experts in order to present content that's easy to understand for all users.



UX program manager

UX program managers ensure clear and timely communication, so that the process of building a useful product moves smoothly from start to finish. This might include setting goals, writing project plans, and allocating team resources.

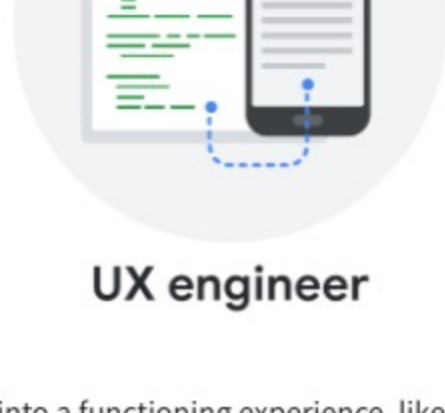
UX program managers answer questions like: What are the overall goals for this project, and what's the plan to achieve them? And, how can we create and improve processes within the team? UX program managers work across departments to make sure that UX is involved throughout a project lifecycle.



UX engineer

UX engineers translate the design's intent into a functioning experience, like an app or a website. They help UX teams figure out if designs are intuitive and technically feasible.

UX engineers answer questions like: How do we implement each interaction? How do we build this design in a way that stays true to its original intent? And, how might we explore alternatives to determine the best user experience? UX engineers synthesize design and development, bringing product concepts to life.



Conversation designer

Conversational interfaces are everywhere, from intelligent virtual assistants like Google Assistant and Siri, to interactive voice response systems like customer service systems you can talk to. Conversational interfaces even include automobile navigation systems and chatbots! Conversation design incorporates natural, real-world conversational behaviors into the interactions between users and these systems.

Conversation designers make it possible for users to have natural conversations to get things done. They leverage user research, psychology, technical knowledge, and linguistics to create user experiences that are intuitive and engaging. Conversation designers develop the "persona" or personality of the voice, as well as the flow and dialog of the interaction.

Conversation designers answer questions like: What's the ideal language and flow based on who users are, the task to be accomplished, and the context of the conversation? Does the personality of the virtual assistant seem genuine, engaging, and reflective of the brand values? How does the conversation work with on-screen elements? Does the virtual assistant offer a consistent, usable, and useful experience end-to-end?

Explore careers in the field of UX

You now know about some of the most common jobs in the field of user experience! As you begin your first job as a UX designer, you'll collaborate with fellow UXers, like the ones listed here, to create innovative and beautiful products that people love to use. Pretty exciting, right?

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