

Flashbulb Interaction

collaborates with clients
to drive vision at the forefront of
knowledge work user experiences

CONSULTING STUDIO OVERVIEW Version 1.0

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Mapping User Experience Advancement

Many onscreen applications for knowledge work are unimaginative and undifferentiated, presenting too many frustrating barriers to success and too few direct pathways toward desired outcomes...

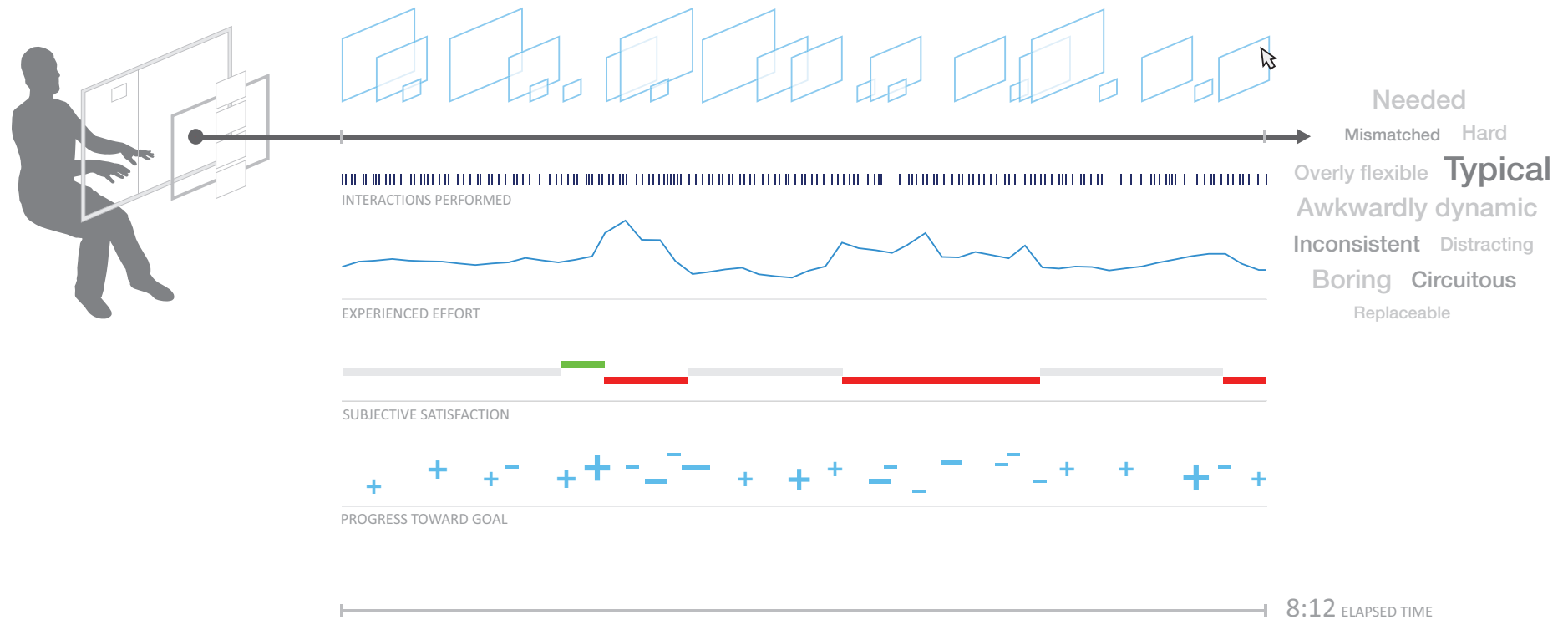


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Mapping User Experience Advancement, Continued

Our clients strive to create innovative “tools for thought,” transforming specialized work practices in ways that provide new and unexpected sources of value...

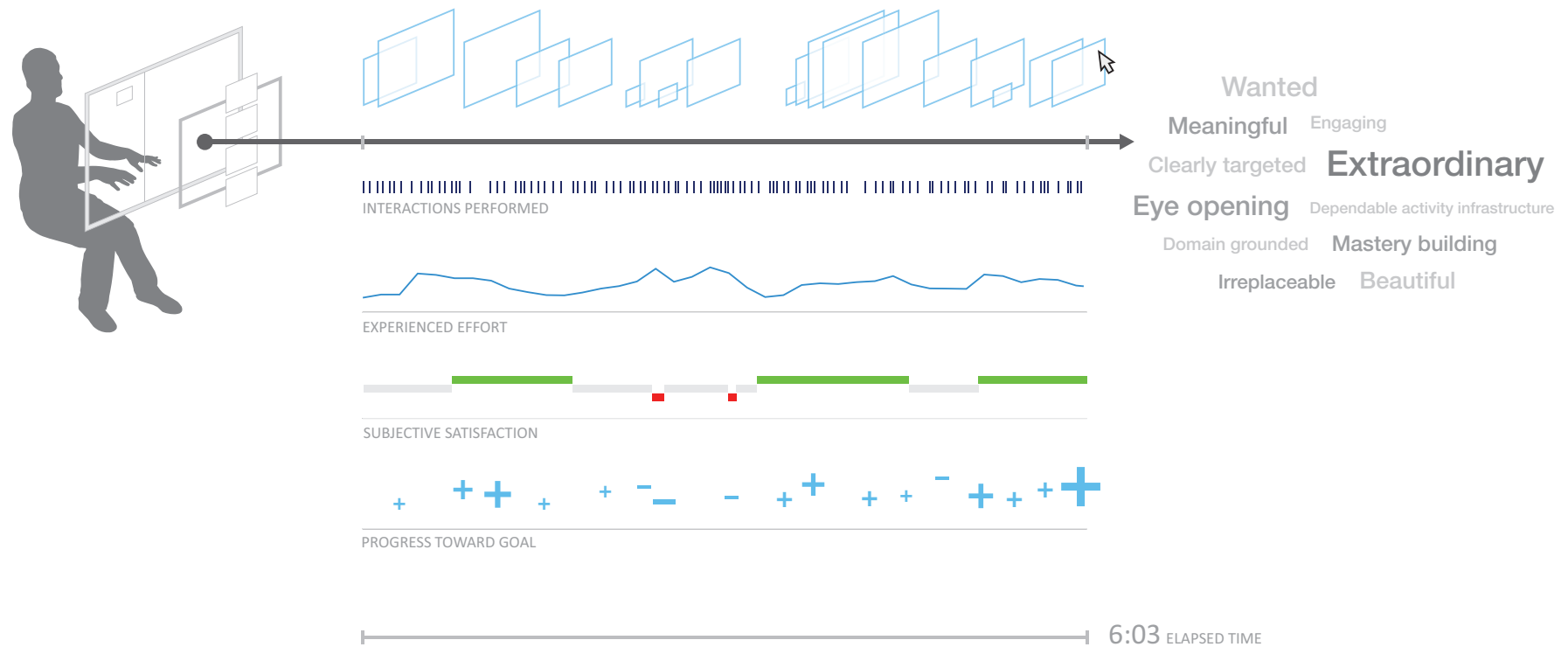


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Founder's Introduction

If necessity is the so-called mother of invention, then informed and insightful “problem finding” can be just as important for the creation of compelling technologies as extensive and divergent “problem solving.”

I founded Flashbulb Interaction, Inc. — a highly focused research, strategy, and design consultancy — to work with product creators and IT leaders who are striving to envision knowledge work applications that promote engaging user experiences and high value, transformative productivity.

Our name tells the story of what we hope to accomplish with our clients:

A flashbulb memory is one that stands out as a clear and pivotal moment, a punctuated experience in the compilation of one's past.

A flashbulb interaction is one of those rare moments when an interactive application impacts a knowledge worker in some profoundly positive way, such as making a complex conclusion clear or opening up a new vista of thought.

In too many situations, highly skilled workers are forced to use onscreen tools that are difficult to adopt or even work against the grain of their work practice. These applications are far from the augmenting “tools for thought” proposed by the pioneers of interactive computing — and many were created using the best methodologies, by motivated, industry leading teams.

At Flashbulb Interaction, we believe it is important to realize that specialized tools for work are not by their very nature destined for mediocrity or “just good enough” solutions. In fact, these complex and dynamic tools can become conceptually legible, compellingly powerful, and delightfully interactive in ways that are similar to the experiences evoked by the best new technologies found outside the workplace.

Visionary design strategies can positively transform knowledge workers' eventual experiences, providing new sources of value and advancing contemporary practices within entire fields and industries.

I hope that you find our point of view to be useful in your own product development activities and that you find our service offerings to be relevant for your consulting needs.

I look forward to hearing about any user experience challenges that you might be facing.

Jacob Burghardt
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Consulting Focus

At Flashbulb Interaction, we use design thinking to positively transform workplace applications.

We work with clients seeking to set higher goals, ask new questions, and explore innovative answers.

We believe that computing tools for knowledge work should be envisioned from a perspective that is distinct from those used to conceive consumer products and other technologies.

We help our clients improve peoples' working lives by advancing tools for thought that target valuable intersections of activity and technological possibility.

We act as trainers, advisors, facilitators — augmenting and inspiring client teams as they envision new and improved onscreen offerings.

We collaboratively investigate, interpret, and visualize application design challenges in a way that drives decision making, shared vision, and meaningful innovation.

We are big believers in concepting relevant futures as a pathway to defining larger strategic directions.

While we are strong on point of view, our collaborative approach does not force our clients through rigid and limiting methodologies. Instead, we work with clients to set meaningful goals and then develop tailored approaches for reaching them.

We work with producers of knowledge work applications to:

- Educate product teams to get them thinking about knowledge work tools from insightful new perspectives

- Envision a version 2.0 that is more than everything “missing” from earlier versions

- Extend existing applications with new features that integrate into real world work practices

- Understand potential users and how products might relate to their knowledge work tasks

- Set higher user experience goals through next generation product concepts

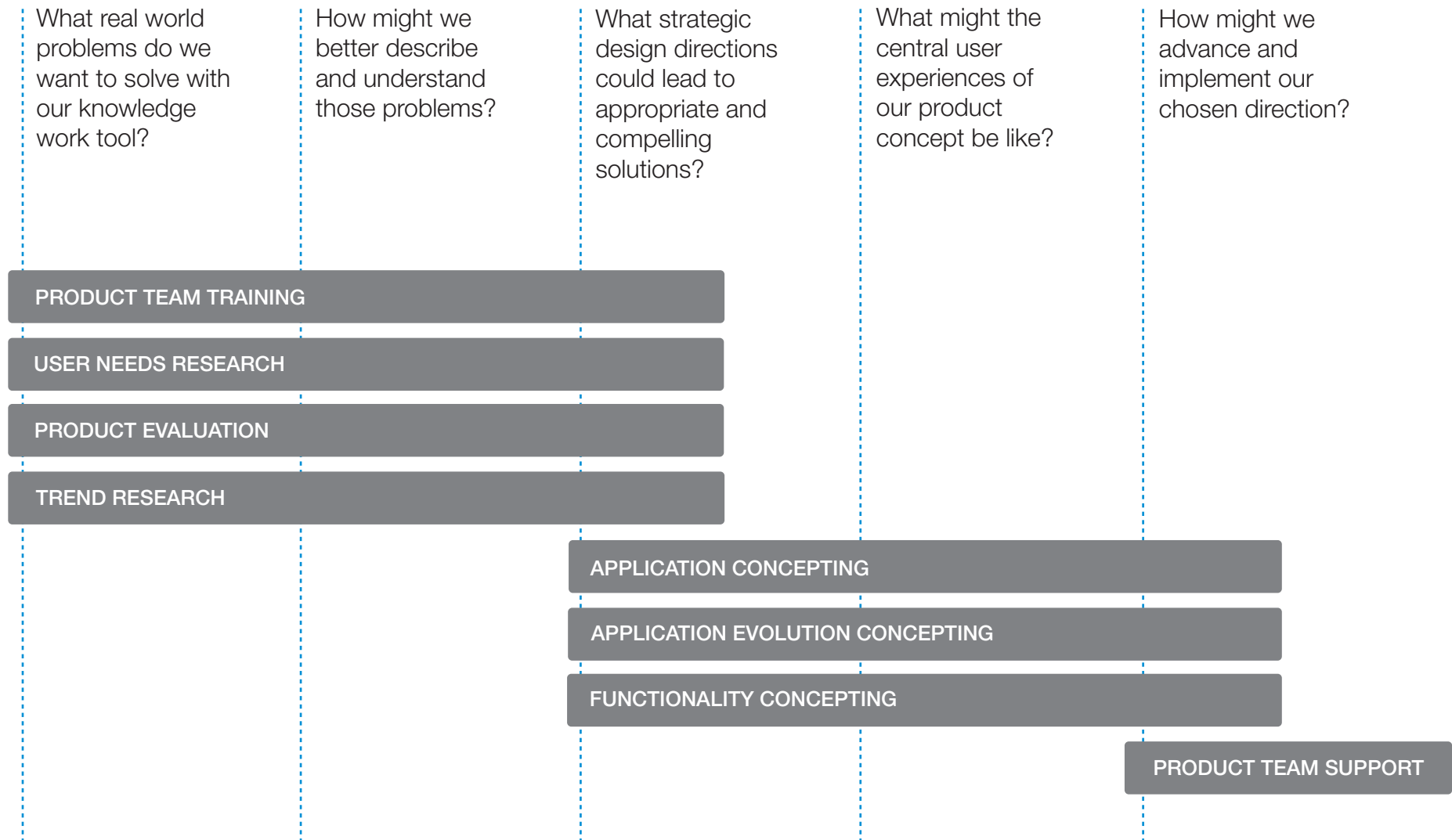
- Advise and support teams throughout product implementation

We work with knowledge work firms to:

- Envision internal tools and processes to augment complex, evolving workflows

- Identify opportunities to enhance knowledge work with vendor products that will extend local practices

Service Offerings for Client Challenges



Service Offerings, Continued

SERVICE AREA:

PRODUCT TEAM TRAINING

Educating teams on key design factors for knowledge work applications

When product teams are seeking new ideas on how to advance innovative tools for knowledge work, they often have difficulty assembling and digesting a breadth of relevant design factors for their projects.

Flashbulb Interaction collaborates with clients to define and deliver training sessions that highlight important application design considerations for a product team's own ideation challenges.

Our training draws upon our free publication *Working through Screens: 100 Ideas for Envisioning Powerful, Engaging, and Productive User Experiences in Knowledge Work*.

Collaborative activities in this service area can include:

- Defining training goals for teams' particular needs
- Outlining appropriate training content and exercises
- Delivering training sessions and following through on teams' specific challenges

SERVICE AREA:

USER NEEDS RESEARCH

Understanding knowledge workers, their work practices, and product opportunities

When product teams are striving to understand the people and work that they intend to support with their technologies, they often face daunting challenges.

It can be difficult to uncover new insights for design strategy within specialized domains, since the crucial particulars of knowledge workers' practices are often unintuitive to outsiders.

Many teams have limited experience researching their customers and can benefit from process support and outside perspective.

Flashbulb Interaction drives influential, results driven studies by collaborating with clients to plan research, collect data, and synthesize outputs.

Collaborative activities in this service area can include:

- Consolidating teams' current information and assumptions
- Identifying information needs and determining appropriate research approaches
- Gathering data through relevant methodologies, such as ethnographic observation in workers' own environments
- Exploring captured data to discover key insights
- Creating models and frameworks that summarize key realities and opportunities in targeted markets

Service Offerings, Continued

SERVICE AREA:

PRODUCT EVALUATION

Examining potential user experiences of existing systems

Even when product teams generally know that improvements are needed in their application offerings, they often struggle to articulate and synthesize the feedback that they have received.

Additionally, many important user experience problems — both common and unique — may remain entirely unvoiced and undiscovered.

Flashbulb Interaction collaborates with clients to examine their onscreen application's current usefulness and usability in order to identify obstacles and plan advancements.

Collaborative activities in this service area can include:

- Consolidating teams' current information and assumptions
- Defining targeted questions and areas for evaluation
- Identifying information needs and determining appropriate research approaches
- Gathering data through relevant methodologies, such as expert evaluation based on established research and best practices
- Synthesizing findings to create models that illustrate key areas for improvement
- Driving top down decision making about next steps

SERVICE AREA:

TREND RESEARCH

Understanding influencing trends for design strategy

When product teams are articulating a new or evolving design strategy, they can often benefit from an understanding of changing conditions that could influence the shape of their new vision.

Flashbulb Interaction collaborates with clients to catalog potential influences, identifying novel opportunities and spaces of possibility that could provide compelling grounds for strategic ideation.

These influences can include new technologies, new usage trends for existing technologies, changes in professions and work environments, lifestyle trends for targeted workers, as well as relevant design and aesthetic trends.

Collaborative activities in this service area can include:

- Consolidating teams' current information and assumptions
- Researching changes in relevant conditions
- Distilling those trends into clear and visual tools for ideation and decision making

Service Offerings, Continued

SERVICE AREA:

APPLICATION CONCEPTING

Envisioning new product concepts

When product teams are tasked with creating an entirely new application, they often have difficulty developing a shared, big picture direction that will steer their efforts forward into implementation (with the assumption that many important details will need to be fleshed out along the way to a release).

In too many cases, teams iteratively slide down an unconsidered course toward a product design that they do not understand.

Flashbulb Interaction collaborates with clients to consider diverse and meaningfully innovative concepts for what an application could be.

Collaborative activities in this service area can include:

- Further articulating the product's top level strategy
- Asking a broader range of envisioning questions
- Creating highly visual frameworks that outline potential spaces of strategic opportunity
- Exploring and sketching targeted functional concepts within those spaces as a way of representing potential futures
- Including evaluative perspectives that refine ideas and focus efforts
- Driving top down decision making to arrive at a larger design strategy and overriding application concept
- Creating tools that summarize the key ideas and user experiences of the new product concept
- Developing a road map for how the product's functional development could unfold over time

SERVICE AREA:

APPLICATION EVOLUTION CONCEPTING

Re-envisioning existing products

When product teams face new technologies and shifting markets, they are often tasked with extensively reworking an existing product in order to improve its usefulness, usability, and positioning.

Alternately, teams may want to proactively consider potential changes in strategy and design by exploring various "futures" concepts, without any firm plans for reworking a product.

Flashbulb Interaction collaborates with clients to sketch innovative frameworks and concepts that could meaningfully advance knowledge work tools while preserving their legacy strengths.

Collaborative activities in this service area can include:

- Evaluating the successes and failures of the product's current design strategy
- Accomplishing many of the same activities as in envisioning a new product (see left column, this page)
- Examining what ideation outputs could mean in the context of the product's legacy
- Driving top down decision making to arrive at a new design strategy
- Creating tools that summarize the key ideas and user experiences of the new product concept
- Developing a road map for how the product's functional development could unfold over time

Service Offerings, Continued

SERVICE AREA:

FUNCTIONALITY CONCEPTING

Envisioning new functionality for existing products

When product teams are tasked with creating smaller scale functional extensions in existing computing tools, they face the challenge of making compelling advancements while maintaining their product's internal consistency, structural integrity, and design language.

Flashbulb Interaction collaborates with clients to map the current state of their products, identify opportunities for meaningful functional extension, and sketch diverse concepts for how such extensions could fit within new and existing users' experiences.

Collaborative activities in this service area can include:

- Understanding the initiating drivers and user needs associated with the functional extension project

- Evaluating and mapping the product's current design strategy and conventions

- Modeling how potential extensions could fit into the application's current usage

- Exploring diverse design concepts for new functionalities, as well as their potential impact on larger design strategy

- Selecting the most appropriate functionality concepts to pursue

- Positioning functional extensions within the context of a product's larger evolutionary trajectory

SERVICE AREA:

PRODUCT TEAM SUPPORT

Ongoing product design and development advising

When product teams head into implementation, they often struggle to hold onto their early decisions about the fundamental shape, essential character, and central concepts of their envisioned applications.

Flashbulb Interaction collaborates with clients to help ensure that their chosen design strategies and application concepts are carried forward into compelling and appropriate offerings in the marketplace.

Collaborative activities in this service area can include:

- Validating that ongoing, detailed decisions are consistent with earlier *application envisioning* choices and mandates

- Extending and revising previously envisioned design concepts as teams discover new challenges and collect stakeholder feedback

Inaugural Publication

We are pleased to announce the inaugural publication in our Application Concepting Series:

***Working through Screens:
100 Ideas for Envisioning
Powerful, Engaging, and Productive
User Experiences in Knowledge Work***

Working through Screens is a reference for product teams creating new or iteratively improved applications for thinking work. Written for use during early, formative conversations, it provides teams with a broad range of considerations for setting the overall direction and priorities for their onscreen tools. Teams can use this book's 100 ideas as shared probes to push their *application envisioning* discussions into productive and compelling new territories of product usefulness, value, and innovation. Each envisioning idea is illustrated with a fictional user experience example from the architectural, clinical research, or financial trading domains. As a collection, the 100 ideas are a new synthesis for definers and designers who are striving to look past contemporary "business as usual" technologies to create meaningful tools for knowledge workers at the forefronts of their fields.

Working through Screens is freely available in .html and .pdf at www.FlashbulbInteraction.com, where you can also find an abbreviated "Idea Cards" version designed for use in product ideation exercises.

On site *Working through Screens* training is available. Flashbulb Interaction trains teams on how the questions in this idea generating book can drive innovations for their own products and organizations. Contact us at info@flashbulbinteraction.com for details.



Flashbulb Interaction Consultants

Jacob Burghardt | Owner + Principle Consultant

Jacob Burghardt is the founder of Flashbulb Interaction, Inc. He is a research, strategy, and design consultant who specializes in helping product teams to envision powerful, engaging, and productive interactive applications for knowledge work.

Jacob was drawn to a specialty in knowledge work products after seeing how innovative tools in this space can make meaningful differences in the experiences of people practicing their chosen vocations. He views these meaningful differences through the lens of pioneering visions in interactive computing, which optimistically outlined the potential for technologies to augment our cognitive and collaborative abilities as we solve important problems.

In his eight years of experience focused on computing tools for knowledge work, Jacob has worked for industry leading clients on diverse application types, including aviation navigation, scientific instrumentation and data analysis, financial trading, and creative asset workflow.

In his consulting efforts, Jacob seeks to reframe status quo conversations in the development of specialized technologies for knowledge workers. He works with clients to advance their dialog toward a better understanding of design strategy, while emphasizing underlying principles and possibilities in computer mediated work practice.

Jacob challenges clients with new goals and processes, supporting product teams as they envision diverse offerings and sketch elaborate concepts. To inform strategic ideation and ensure real world relevance, he facilitates purposeful, direct, and collaborative conversations between his clients and current or potential end users of their interactive products.

Jacob has lectured and published on topics in user experience. He holds a B.S. in Psychology and a B.S. in Technical Communications from the University of Washington. His first book length publication, *Working through Screens: 100 Ideas for Envisioning Powerful, Engaging, and Productive User Experiences in Knowledge Work*, is freely available at www.FlashbulbInteraction.com.

Our Consultant Network

Flashbulb Interaction maintains a proven network of affiliated resources for use in projects that require additional staffing. When additional consultants are required during a client engagement, permanent Flashbulb Interaction staff are our clients' key points of contact – ensuring consistent delivery and clear communication of project deliverables as efforts scale.

Thank you for your interest in

Flashbulb Interaction

Is your team trying to understand how you might improve your knowledge work product?

Are you ready to get started on envisioning your firm's next onscreen application?

Contact us to discuss how we might help you to better conceptualize and explore your new or iteratively improved technologies.

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