

## Mike Pell

[pellmike@msn.com](mailto:pellmike@msn.com)

425.890.1610 cell

*"...very insightful perspective on the future of user interfaces"*

-- Jakob Nielsen

leading authority on web usability

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### QUALIFICATION HIGHLIGHTS

Software Designer with extensive experience and demonstrated success in a wide variety of roles over a 25+ year career in the industry, including key individual contributor positions in major corporations, executive management for small VC-backed startups, and two entrepreneurial runs. Principal inventor on several US Patents for software innovation in mobile, search and web browsing.

Currently at Microsoft Corp., driving the design for next-generation user experience in the Server and Cloud division, after designing and shipping products in Mobile, Search and Windows.

#### **Rare combination of talents – maverick designer, business-savvy technologist, charismatic leader**

- Business: Deep customer empathy, strategic thinker, marketing and sales experience
- Design: Versatility featured in portfolio of innovative interface design work (mobile, 3D, search, browser, desktop)
- Technology: Began career as a Software Engineer; comfortable writing code or rapid prototyping

#### **Proven track record throughout career of shipping highly successful software products**

- Key contributor to development of industry leading products including Windows 7, IE9, Outlook and Acrobat
- Demonstrated ability to effectively manage across multi-discipline software development teams
- Shipped products in many categories: mobile, OS, enterprise web apps, desktop applications

#### **Creative, Analytic, Versatile. Broad Skillset**

- As comfortable in front of customers and users as driving internal development efforts
  - Recognized as a world-class software designer and rapid prototyper (coding and creating artwork)
  - Strong management skills: people, communications, team dynamics, mentoring, hiring, recruiting
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### RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

#### **Microsoft Corporation**

User Experience Designer / Program Manager

December 2001 - present

Redmond, WA

Windows Server and Cloud – User Experience Designer driving the division toward a clearer future with high impact design and interaction work, collaboration and writing. Emphasis on Information Design and Display, Dashboard Monitoring, Troubleshooting and Brand work.

Windows 7 – User Experience Designer for the most critically acclaimed release of this flagship Microsoft product in a decade. Principal designer in several key areas – Windows Explorer, Libraries and Search. This multi-year effort went all the way from conceptual ideas, sketches, prototyping, and early user testing, to the final detailed design work, brand application and development deliverables.

Internet Explorer 9 and 8 – User Experience Designer on several major areas of investment in this important release of the world's leading web browser. Designed innovative additions to the Search and Tabbed browsing experience, Address Bar functionality, Web Developer toolset and Privacy features. Worked closely with the management team to align the business goals of the team with the needs of the customer.

Windows Live Search Desktop – (FILTER) User Experience Designer for a Desktop and Federated Search client application. Influenced and worked across many groups within the company to both innovate and integrate the best pieces of Office, Windows Vista and Windows Live user experience to deliver a compelling new customer experience. Responsible for all facets of the UI and Interaction model. Also served in the role as UX Program Manager to work closely with Dev to get the best implementation possible of the feature set.

Microsoft Outlook – As Program Manager, drove the design and delivery of a dramatically new Search experience for Microsoft Outlook (2007). This was the area of greatest resource investment for that release in both people and technology creation. Also, responsible for partner relationship management with a dozen teams across Microsoft in order to unify the next gen search user experience and technology adoption. Three patents filed on Search-related innovations.

MSN Mobile – First job at Microsoft was Lead Program Manager for User Experience in MSN Mobile, which provided wireless information services on a subscription basis for cell phones and smartphones in over forty countries worldwide. Built and managed a User Experience team, and helped ship four major releases of MSN Mobile web services in less than two years. Worked with many external partners to acquire content.

**Strengths** (as pointed out by management in employee reviews)

- Vision
- Passion for great user experience
- Rapid prototyping skills
- Managing partners and working relationships

**Key Accomplishments**

- Shipped several industry leading software products and services on time with high quality
- Drove product innovations in the mobile and search spaces; 10 patents file; 4 granted to date
- Developed a solid methodology for designing and developing innovative software
- Built a large network of contacts across Microsoft and external partners

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**WildTangent, Inc.**

Sr. Director, Enterprise Development  
December 2000 - October 2001  
Redmond, WA

Recruited by CEO, Alex St. John, to create and run the Enterprise Development Group within WildTangent after a funding round lead by Accenture to push WT's technology into the Enterprise. Delivered over a dozen innovative working prototypes of solving real business problems through interactive 3D graphics embedded within web pages for major companies. Later tapped by St. John to lead the successful execution and deployment of the WildTangent Game Channel, a major shift in corporate strategy to sell online web games direct to consumers.

- Worked directly with Accenture, Microsoft, WaMu, Time, Boeing, SAS and Siebel on Enterprise solutions
- Formulated and drove the Microsoft .NET strategic plan for WildTangent
- Developed toolkits and examples of integrating Microsoft Office XML data with interactive 3D graphics
- Drove the initiative to ensure WT technology is VisualStudio.NET, C# and VB.NET compatible
- Managed the Solutions Engineering team within the Business Development group
- Responsible for execution, deployment and master scheduling of the WildTangent Game Channel initiative
- Managed all external Distribution Partners relationships with HP, Shockwave.com, GameSpy, GamePro
- Successfully launched Game Channel in the US; expanding to international partners

Reason for leaving: VCs refocused the company solely on Games

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**Futuristic Design, Inc.**

Chief Executive Officer

March 2000 - December 2000

Sunnyvale, CA

Founded and self-funded this software startup to bring his concepts for "Dimensional Communications" to market. The goal was delivering a web-based tool to uniquely combine rich media, 3D, speech and audio in a form that brought an order-of-magnitude leap in effectiveness when conveying dynamic information and processes within e-business systems.

- Wrote the business plan, created investor presentations, and prototyped the web-based software
- Recruited a senior team of former colleagues for key executive positions
- Attracted a highly successful Advisory Board of Silicon Valley executives
- Validated the business model and service offering with high-profile, paying customer (nVIDIA)
- Formed alliances with strategic industry partners, and briefed leading analysts

Reason for leaving: Combined efforts by joining well-funded WildTangent, Inc.

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**Fuel RTM, Inc.**

Chief Technical Officer (acting)

October 1999 - March 2000

Santa Clara, CA

Recruited by the Founder to serve as CTO during a key transitional period for the company. Fuel Real-Time Marketing (RTM) was a successful high-tech marketing communications and advertising agency with clients that included Microsoft WebTV, Sony Playstation, Seagate, CurrenEx, Asera, NVIDIA and Inventa. This thirty person firm consistently did top notch work and attracted top Silicon Valley clientele.

- Member of the executive management team during the transition from Ad agency to e-service provider
- Contributed to the overall strategic thinking for taking the business into its new market
- Part of the sales team that went in to pitch for new business, and wrote several client proposals
- Responsible for all technology-related aspects of client projects during this time
- Primary technical contact for all client meetings and ongoing project work
- Responsible for developing the methodology and process for internal project deployment

Reason for leaving: Consulting position served as a funding bridge for Futuristic Design

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**Promptu Corporation**

Director of Operations

April 1998 – Sept 1999

San Jose, CA

Promptu was a venture-backed Internet startup that was spun out of FCI Communications in May 1999. The company delivered a comprehensive enterprise solution for Channel Partner Management through a web-deployed ASP model. Customers included leaders such as Apple, Shell, 3Com, Oracle and Logitech.

- Key member of the executive management team that attracted venture capital funding
- Concurrently managed engineering, web production, creative, project mgt and support groups
- Deployed the processes and methodologies that made projects profitable for the first time
- Drove the company toward more progressive and efficient organizational structures
- Primary customer contact and project manager for several web-based applications and public websites
- Hired and retained key personnel and converted all contractors to full-time employees

Reason for leaving: Left to startup own company, Futuristic Design, Inc.

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**Newfire, Inc.**

User Interface Architect / Program Manager  
May 1996 - February 1998  
Saratoga, CA

Newfire was a venture-backed Internet startup that created groundbreaking 3D online game technologies before Quake even existed. Based on a unique playback engine and toolset, Newfire enabled online games to be played within standard web browsers using Java and VRML 2.0 standards. This was way ahead of its time in both business model and market space in '96.

- Recruited out of Adobe Systems to become employee number one (after the company founders)
- Responsible for cross functional management of Engineering, QA and Product Marketing
- Designed, programmed and usability tested all aspects of user interface for 3D software products
- Created product specifications, visual designs, user experience and working prototypes for all products
- Art Director for early company image, marketing collateral, website artwork and 3D game demo
- Worked closely with Marketing and Sales on demo prep, trade shows and press events

Reason for leaving: Startup ran out of money after two years

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**Adobe Systems Incorporated**

Computer Scientist / Engineering Manager  
March 1990 - April 1996  
Mountain View, CA

Key contributor on the original skunkworks team that designed and built early prototypes of Acrobat in 1990. In fact, first and only Macintosh engineer on the Carousel/Acrobat project for the first year and a half. After working as an individual contributor UI Designer and Engineer on v1.0, promoted to an Engineering Management role during the 2.0 development process which focused on the complex installation and localization issues. Left Adobe in 1996 to join a VC-backed Web 3D startup founded by an Acrobat teammate.

- Key member of the original design team and first engineer assigned to Adobe Acrobat in April 1990
- Pioneered the use of Multiple Master font substitution technology in early versions of Carousel
- Principal user interface designer for Acrobat 1.0 UI (Macintosh and Windows)
- Programmed major UI portions of the Acrobat 1.0 viewer application and installer
- Created a dynamic language sensing Installer for the entire Acrobat product line in seven languages
- Formed and ran the Acrobat Release Engineering Group for MacOS, Windows and Unix platforms

Reason for leaving: Joined newly funded startup with Adobe teammates doing Interactive Web3D

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**Emerald City Software**

Software Engineer  
August 1989- March 1990  
Menlo Park, CA

Emerald City developed Adobe Postscript-related software and utilities for the Macintosh and NeXT platforms. Moved to Silicon Valley from Arizona to join this VC-backed software startup run by Randy Adams, which was later acquired by Adobe after releasing the groundbreaking TypeAlign (first utility based on ATM v1.0).

- Helped design and code the award-winning TypeAlign utility which was brought to market in 3 months
- Worked on the prototype of DisplayTalk Mac (Display PostScript programming environment)
- Forged a relationship with Pixar to work on 3D text utilities, which directly lead to their release of Typestry

Reason for leaving: Acquired by Adobe Systems, Inc.

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**Beyond, Inc.**

Founder, Chairman  
Sept. 1985- July 1989  
Tucson, AZ

Co-founded this software startup in 1985 to design and publish Macintosh utility software. The company successfully launched and sold its product for five years, and was later acquired by Dubl Click Software.

- Conceptualized and wrote the clever Macintosh 128k user interface enhancement, MenuFonts, in 1985
- Managed daily operations, customer support, marketing, production, documentation, advertising
- Successfully raised angel funding for the company through a private placement stock offering

Reason for leaving: After running the business for 5 years in the Arizona desert, it was time to move to Silicon Valley

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**EDUCATION****University of Arizona**

Bachelor of Science in Systems Engineering candidate  
August 1981-Sept. 1985  
Tucson, AZ

Originally planned to study Fine Arts and Graphic Design (via Art Honors program in High School), but soon discovered computer programming. Switched to Management Information Systems and general Business courses for two years, then transferred into the Systems Engineering program for remaining two years. Left school after four years in September 1985 to found one of the earliest Macintosh software startups. That small company became Beyond, Inc. (see above), which provided the chance to learn all aspects of running a software business from the ground up. Beyond was eventually sold to DoubleClick software after 5 years.

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**CONTACT INFO**

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