

Gerry Chu

UX Researcher + UX Designer + Prototyper
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UX researcher and designer with an engineering background, specializing in complex systems for expert users. Across 12 years of UX experience, I've turned opaque and fragmented products into clear models, tools, prototypes, and product decisions.

Seeking a hybrid research / design / prototyping role where I can combine AI-assisted development, systems thinking, and user research to design and build complex tools.

Selected accomplishments

- **Designed visualizations, dashboards, and tools** for complex taxation and real estate workflows. Designed mobile apps for Target and REI.
- **Built software and hardware:** Leveraged AI to build a language learning iPhone app and an income tax visualization website. Built interactive prototypes incorporating live customer data for usability testing at Zillow. Created Arduino-based interactive water fountains and software prototypes for novel hardware interaction devices.
- **Directly influenced product strategy and investment decisions:** Led research that validated new product opportunities at Zillow and Getty Images. Helped Avalara avoid investment in initiatives that had weak product-market fit or poor usability.
- **Led mixed-methods research across the product lifecycle:** Combined interviews, usability testing, concept testing, surveys, diary studies, benchmarking, A/B test analysis, support-ticket analysis, session recordings, and analytics to guide decisions. Created customer personas and journey maps.
- **Built scalable research practices:** Rebuilt or established research operations across multiple companies, including continuous discovery, research repositories, recruiting workflows, customer satisfaction surveys, and self-serve unmoderated testing.
- **Enabled teams to make better customer-centered decisions:** Trained PMs and designers on interviewing, hypothesis-driven discovery, Jobs To Be Done, opportunity-solution trees, and lightweight evaluative research.

Professional experience

Avalara — Senior UX Researcher

Oct 2021 - Oct 2024 | Seattle, WA

- Led UX research for sales tax compliance products including onboarding, integrations, reporting, developer tools, and AI-assisted support.
- Identified that many customer struggles were not simply usability issues, but also gaps in domain knowledge, system transparency, and mental models.
- Designed system diagrams and dashboard concepts to make Avalara's complex tax engine easier to understand.

Getty Images — Senior UX Researcher

Jul 2019 - Oct 2021 | Seattle, WA

- Became the sole researcher shortly after joining and rebuilt the research practice within the Design team.
- Partnered with the CEO's Chief of Staff on strategic research evaluating user need for a new product line, which was later green-lit.
- Led the redesign of Getty's customer satisfaction program, including an automated survey and reporting process.
- Established biweekly customer interviews and a searchable research repository; introduced unmoderated testing and trained designers to run lightweight studies independently.

Zillow — Senior UX Researcher

Jun 2013 - Feb 2019 | Seattle, WA

- Started as Zillow's sole UX researcher, supporting Buyers, Sellers, Rentals, Landlords, and sitewide customer experience.
- Updated personas and journey maps to align teams around customer needs across Zillow's marketplace.
- Created a site satisfaction survey and used findings to drive improvements in site quality and Zestimate trust.
- Validated long-term product strategies for Rentals and Sellers through generative research, concept testing, and quantitative studies.

Deloitte Digital / Ubermind — Senior UX Designer

May 2011 - May 2013 | Seattle, WA

Helped establish user research, usability testing, and prototyping as client services. Designed mobile apps for Target and REI.

University of Washington — Research Engineer

Mar 2009 - Apr 2011 | Seattle, WA

Mechanical engineering and programming for a UW-spinoff physical rehabilitation startup developing a robotic hand.

Hasso Plattner Institute — Visiting Researcher

2008-2009 | Berlin, Germany

Built FTIR and pressure-sensitive touchscreen prototypes for interaction research.

Microsoft Research — Research Intern

2008 | Bangalore; Redmond, WA

Created software for NanoTouch, a back-of-device interaction prototype later published at CHI. Prototyped multimedia techniques for health and sustainable agriculture information dissemination in India.

Education

University of Toronto — MS, Computer Science

Carnegie Mellon University — BS, Human-Computer Interaction and Mechanical Engineering