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Summary

Don Rickert Research & Design™ is a User Experience (UX), Research and New Product Development (NPD) firm that helps other companies to create breakthrough products. I am an owner and Managing Partner of the corporate parent of Don Rickert Research & Design™, Wiederholt & Rickert Partners, LLC, which also owns an online musical instrument company, Rickert & Ringholz Musical Instruments™ (www.fiddleandbowstore.com) and Adventure Rowing™ (in the inception phase, so no website yet). I will sell these businesses when necessary and plans have been made for such.

Most of the firm's work is in the realm of **USER EXPERIENCE (UX)**, with an emphasis on **usefulness, usability** and **appeal (desirability)**, the three main components of **VALUE** to customers. Drawing from extensive experience with interactive products as well as physical goods, the firm carries out the appropriate **QUANTITATIVE, QUALITATIVE** and **HYBRID** (a mix of quantitative and qualitative research, such as usability evaluation) consumer research services. Then, we integrate the discoveries from the various approaches into **ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS** that drive design.

Some of the common methods my firm employs are:

- Usability evaluation
- Card-sorting and categorization studies to determine optimal terminology (e.g. names for buttons and controls, etc.)
- Observing real people doing real things with current versions of clients' and competitors' products (ethnography, depth interviewing, etc.)
- Prototyping, model building
- Interviewing (structured as well as Depth Interviewing)
- Questionnaire design, implementation and analysis
- and a host of other more exotic methods (such as special methods for determining optimal pricing) when appropriate

My firm's work boils down to discovering what clients really need to know to win with a groundbreaking product.

I have over 20 years' experience as an expert and senior manager of the "people side" of invention, new products (interactive websites and physical goods), eCommerce and transaction-oriented software (e.g. bank systems and supply chain systems), including positions with AT&T Global Systems (now NCR), Bell-Atlantic (now Verizon), the George Washington University and S1 Corporation (top provider of financial and CRM systems for financial institutions, consumers, small business owners and large corporations). Much of my career has been in consulting; but even when it has not been, I have always insisted on direct client and/or customer contact.

¹ Designation for a Professional Member of the Industrial Designers Society of America

I am Professional Member of the Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA) and an Adjunct Faculty Member in the Industrial Design Program at Georgia Tech, where I teach NPD (New Product Development), Design Research and Ethnography.

Additional Background and Key Points:

- Well-developed strategic “big picture” skills
- Known for inventiveness and innovation
- Proven track record for managing large teams, even when geographically distributed.
- Promoting respect, collegiality and team health are major priorities and I am very good at this aspect, which I call Leadership.
- Proven track record in working cooperatively with other teams such as product management, usability engineering, IA, UI design, engineering, marketing and market research
- Experience and special talent for mentoring and career management of subordinates and teaching the skills they need for the team to thrive (e.g. how to effectively observe users in the field, how to derive design insights from design research, etc.)
- Extensive experience in consulting, with a well-developed ability to manage billable hours, utilization rates, etc.
- Strong philosophy that a User Experience team lives or dies by its ability to communicate with persuasive Persona, Scenarios and Prototypes
- Extensive experience in qualitative & quantitative research; including planning, execution, and analysis—wide variety of products and services, including manufactured products, computer-based systems and services
- Actual (and extensive) experience and skill in doing observational field research (e.g. consumer ethnography)
- Well-developed interviewing and group facilitation (e.g. ideation sessions) skills
- Strong and well-refined ability to identify and summarize qualitative (e.g. ethnography, interviews, focus groups, etc.) and quantitative research findings as they relate to business goals
- Extensive knowledge of consumer psychology and behavior
- Excellent communication, persuasion, problem solving, leadership, verbal, presentation and organizational skills
- Leader in business and consumer research ethics
- I am free and willing to travel extensively.

Education

George Washington University, School of Business

Ph.D., Information & Decision Systems (Specialization in Human-Computer Interaction & Human Factors), September 1989 – May 1997

Dissertation: A THEORY-GROUNDED EMPIRICAL EVALUATION OF SPECIAL-PURPOSE AND GENERIC INTERACTION DEVICES FOR INTERACTIVE TELEVISION

Activities and Societies: Member of the Doctoral Students Association Leadership Council; Doctoral Students Association representative to the Dean's Search Committee

Johns Hopkins University

M.S., Planning & Policy Management, September 1979 – May 1982

Specialized in design research, field methods (e.g. ethnography), advanced statistics and information systems.

Loyala College (Baltimore, MD)

B.A., Psychology, September 1971 – June 1974

Experience

Adjunct Instructor

- **Note:** Will resign from this position if I am chosen to lead User Experience

Georgia Institute of Technology – January 2007 – Present (1 year 5 months)

Teach New Product Development (NPD), Design Research and Ethnography in the Industrial Design Program, part of the College of Architecture.

Managing Partner

Don Rickert Research & Design™²—November 2005 – Present (2 years 8 months)

User Experience (UX), Research and New Product Development (NPD) firm whose focus is Useful, Usable and Appealing products; which include interactive and transactional systems, as well as goods and services. **Don Rickert Research & Design™** performs PRACTICAL quantitative and qualitative market research, ethnographic studies, usability evaluation, human factors/ergonomics and design consulting services to larger companies that fully understand the relationship between understanding their consumers and developing successful products.

- Usability Evaluation (all aspects, lab as well as field-based) **note:** often combined with ethnography
 - Ethnography (mostly small and medium scale)
 - Scenario and Persona Development
 - Information Architecture and Interaction Workflow
 - Distillation of discoveries (from above activities) and documentation of actionable insights to guide design decisions
 - Development of research-based User Experience style guides in close coordination with Product Managers and Development Managers on Functional Requirements and Marketing Requirements
 - User Interface prototyping (from wire-frames to high-fidelity)
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² A “DBA” for the actual corporate name, Wiederholt & Rickert Partners, LLC

Director, Human Factors & Customer Insights and Chair, User Experience Best Practices Committee

S1 Corporation, the leading provider of secure Internet solutions for the financial industry (www.S1.com) – October 1998 – November 2005 (7 years 2 months)

Responsible for the TOTAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE for a wide range of financial technology products:

- Official “Evangelist” for company-wide User-Centered Design
- Organized collaboration of diverse UI design & development teams in locations around the world (Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte, Los Angeles, Boston, Ireland, U.K. and India) note: involved 25+ individuals and was EXTREMELY effective.
- Oversight of Use Case development by Business Analysts, Functional Requirements and Marketing Requirements Documents (MRDs) by Product Managers
- Extensive work with several Content Management Systems typically used in conjunction with RUP (IBM's Rational Unified Process)
- Responsible for company-wide User Interaction Standards (i.e. Style Guides)
- Formalized Consumer Research, including ethnography and field interviewing, in the Product Development Process, a version of the Rational Unified Process (RUP) (**Results: Better product quality**)
- Introduced a User Experience Pattern-Based approach to product development (**Results: "Packaged" years of research findings into a specific, actionable form; usable consistency and visual appeal across product line**)
- Introduction and standardization of a number of new/better customer research methods, including online card-sorting, ethnographic methods, online testing, true quantitative (i.e. beyond pie charts) analysis of surveys (**Results: Increased the positive effect of research on product quality**)
- Established visual attractiveness and emotional appeal as quality criteria (**Results: Increased attribution of quality by prospective customers**)
- Brought Primary Research functions in-house (**Results: Greatly reduced expense and research more 'on target' to the important problems**)

Principal/Owner

Don Rickert, Ph.D., Consumer Research Consultant – February 1996 – October 1998 (2 years 9 months)

Consultancy Specializing in Consumer Research for New Product Development—

- Usability Evaluation (all aspects, lab as well as field-based) **note:** often combined with ethnography
- Ethnography (including immersive true Ethnography)
- Scenario and Persona Development
- Information Architecture and Interaction Workflow
- Distillation of discoveries (from above activities) and documentation of actionable insights to guide design decisions
- User Interface prototyping (from wire-frames to high-fidelity)

Primary engagements included:

NCR Human Interface Technology Center (HITC)—1995-1998. Work with NCR clients included—

- The NCR Financial Center in London
- NCR product design group in Dundee, Scotland
- NCR Industrial Design Group in Dayton, Ohio
- NCR Teradata Division
- Carnegie-Mellon University
- The Software Engineering Institute (SEI)
- AT&T
- National Institute of Standards & Technology (NIST)
- Allegheny General Hospital
- Medical College of Pennsylvania

iXL and many of its clients—Highlights include:

- Established foundation for the Information Architecture & Consumer Insights Practice. Introduced observational field work (ethnography) as a routine aspect of all consumer research. Offered the position as first Director of the new group (accepted position at S1 instead).
- Information Architecture: The method I developed for documenting Information Architecture was adopted as the company standard.

Director, Human Factors & Consumer Research

Bell Atlantic Video Services – December 1993 – February 1996 (2 years 3 months)

Consumer research for new product and service development (ethnography and other field studies, focus groups, surveys, usability testing)—Defined the total customer experience for Bell Atlantic's Stargazer Interactive Television service, including—

- Packaging and the consumer "out-of-the-box" experience
- User interface design
- Design, evaluation and manufacture of remote control devices
- Training procedures for cable installers and Customer Support
- Collateral materials (e.g. "quick guides") for consumers

Senior Product Manager

James Martin & Co. – February 1990 – December 1993 (3 years 11 months)

Directed all aspects of the customer experience for top-selling online reference and computer-based training offerings related to the Information Engineering Methodology, including—

- Packaging and consumer “out- of-the-box” experience
 - Information architecture
 - User interface design
 - Installation instructions for consumers
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Independent Consultant

Surveys, Statistical Analysis and Training (Sole Proprietorship) – August 1984 – August 1990
(6 years 1 month)

Clients included:

- American Institute of Architects (Questionnaire design, statistical analysis and staff training)
 - IBM (training of System Programmers in the REXX language)
 - Planning Council of Chattanooga, TN (Research, including surveys and interviews for community needs assessment)
 - Systems Center (Human Factors/Ergonomics/Usability of mainframe operating system software)
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Director, Academic Computing

The George Washington University – August 1986 – February 1990 (3 years 7 months)

- Managed technical support and training for the entire University (25,000+ clients) and directed technology strategy
 - Served as Chair of the University Technology Committee
 - Faculty appointment (Professorial Lecturer) in the Statistics/Computer & Information Systems Dept.—taught computer programming for social and behavioral science students.
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Senior Research Associate

United Way of America – August 1983 – July 1987 (4 years)

- Managed and implemented quantitative and qualitative marketing/satisfaction research to help the national office of United Way best serve its 2000+ local United Way organizations.
 - Created 'Quest: A Tool for Listening to People in the Workplace', a PC-based survey tabulation package for local United Ways—a top-seller among the 2,200 independent United Way organizations for over a decade.
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Groups and Associations

- Professional Member, Industrial Designers Society of America (IDSA)

- Guild of American Luthiers (GAL)
 - Product Development & Management Association (PDMA)
 - American Marketing Association, AMA
 - Association for Computing Machinery, ACM
 - SIGCAS, ACM special interest group for Computers & Society
 - SIGCHI, ACM special interest group for Computer-Human Interaction
 - CHI-Atlanta, the Atlanta Chapter of ACM SIGCHI
 - Art Institute of Atlanta, Regular Industry Reviewer of Junior and Senior Interactive Media projects
 - Georgia Institute of Technology, Supervisor of Masters and Doctoral Interns
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Honors and Awards

- PDMA Georgia Chapter, Served on Executive Board as Director of Academic Affairs
- Atlanta Marketing Research Roundtable
- Faulkner University, Member of the Computer Sciences Advisory Board, serving as a representative for the Informatics (another name for Human-Centered Design) Program
- Two 'standing room only' lectures to the Atlanta Chapter of the American Marketing Association on the use of ethnography and related field methods in the NPD (New Product Development) Process
- Executive Council (founding member), CHI-Atlanta, the Atlanta chapter of the Special Interest Group for Computer-Human Interaction of the Association for Computing Machinery, (1998-99)
- Managing Editor, The CHI-Atlanta Bulletin, (1998- 99)