

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 2013 International User Experience Awards Winners Announced

Now in its third year, the International UX Awards are the first juried Awards to celebrate and highlight exceptional digital User Experience. The 3rd Annual UX Awards were held on May 21, 2013 in New York City at Parsons the New School to a packed room with enthusiastic response from the UX and tech community. Winning submissions included Google Now, Helsingin Sanomat, Actively Learn, Activ, WeMo, Cessna.com, ZocDoc, Water for People, PowerChart Touch, Amplify Tablet, USAToday.com, PUMA Joypad Wall, BMW ActiveE, American Express, Nike+ FuelBand and RealSpend.

Tumblr: the \$1.1 BN Value of “Pure UX”

Beverly May, the host and organizer, who founded and runs UX consultancy **Oxford Technology Ventures**, described how **Tumblr’s sale** this week to Yahoo! for \$1.1 BN was a classic case of the increasingly essential value of UX, calling Tumblr a “pure UX play”. Technologically, Tumblr is just another content management system with undifferentiated core technology capabilities—but the Tumblr user experience is so fundamentally different, simple and engaging, that it has drawn hundreds of millions of loyal users in a few short years. Other examples of “Billion dollar UX”, as Beverly termed it, include **Kayak, Pinterest, and Instagram**- all highly successful digital services that fostered ardent fans through a superior product experience.

The theme of the evening and of the submissions in 2013, as described by host and organizer Beverly May, was on **pervasive everyday technologies** that are transforming every aspect of how we are interacting and living, not just with our digital devices, but with our offline world and each other. Beverly highlighted that we’re now entering a **new Web 3.0 era** where digital devices determine or at least mediate almost every aspect of our online and offline lives. The role of UX has become ever more essential in helping to conceptualize and design these digital interactions.

User Experience (“UX”) is an emerging discipline and the “secret sauce” that ensures digital products and services are intuitive, usable, achieve user and business goals, and ensure users are happy and engaged with a product. The UX field encompasses visual design, product management, software development, usability testing, research and information architecture.

2013 UX Awards Recipient Highlights

Google’s Google Now highlighted the emerging theme of pervasive technology, winning the **Grand Prize** for Best Everyday Utility. Google Now is a pervasive Android App that doesn’t wait for a user to ask a question about what they’re seeking but rather anticipates their needs and interests from across other Google apps and services (Gmail, Calendar, etc.) and proactively sends users useful contextual information- addresses, flight status, meeting times and dates, weather and other notifications- to help simplify everyday life. Some users find Google Now creepy, while others call it “magical”, as the product’s lead designer, Peter Ng, noted when accepting the Award.

Other finalists were focused on pervasive technology and accessibility: creating easier, alternative means to interact with electronic products and services. A team of students from **Virginia Tech** won a Silver Award for accessibility product **Activ** that enables amputee users to interact with their phone through jaw muscle movements without using touch or voice. **Belkin’s WeMo device and app** allows remote monitoring and controls of home appliances through a very simple and intuitive iPhone or iPad app.

Education and health care were two additional peripheral themes of the night. Two winners, **Amplify Tablet by Amplify** (Bronze Award) and **Actively Learn by Schema Design** (Gold Award), aim to disrupt the way primary education is delivered in schools through new tablet and mobile app platforms that integrate student learning and assignments with teacher instruction and grading in innovative ways. Actively Learn is specifically focused on reading comprehension, while Amplify is aimed at curriculum and classroom management.

ZocDoc (Silver Award) and **PowerChart Touch** (Bronze) aimed to disrupt health care delivery through ZocDoc’s online patient health service provider booking service and PowerChart Touch’s simplified medical records system for clinicians.

Nike's Nike+ FuelBand by digital agency **R/GA** (Finalist Award) continues to advance consumer fitness monitoring with ever-simpler and more accurate health management.

The "**Big Data**" trend was represented through many submissions. One service, **Water for People** by digital agency **EffectiveUI** for nonprofit Water for People (Bronze Award), aimed to help improve the nonprofit's efficacy in helping the world's neediest obtain water through better data management and reporting. **RealSpend** by **SAP** (Finalist Award) was honored for their sophisticated reports management for business executives. For its integration with offline business, **BMW ActiveE** by digital agency **kbs+ Spies & Assassins** (Finalist Award) was lauded for a complex synthesis of in-store and online apps that synced with car data as part of the beta rollout of BMW electric cars.

At the high end of the wealth spectrum, digital agency **Digitas** won a Silver Award for the redesigned **Cessna.com** jet website, aimed at the high-net-worth user seeking private custom jets at price tags of \$20 million and up. Several other digital agencies won Finalist awards for innovative brand campaigns, including **American Express's** prospective cardmember website by digital agency **Huge**, and **PUMA's Joypad Wall** in-store experience by agency **kbs+ Spies & Assassins**.

Finally, the **Cava Interactive** team flew in from **Finland** to accept a Gold Award, one recipient in a tux and bow tie, which was awarded for the highly successful digital turnaround of **Helsingin Sanomat**, Finland's largest traditional newspaper. Meanwhile, the **USAToday.com** redesign by agency **Fi** for **Gannett** won a Finalist Award on the 30th Anniversary of the paper.

Other 2013 UX Awards Event Highlights

Mashable's CTO Robyn Peterson gave an engaging and funny **Keynote**, featuring **Mashable's Google Glass** and, of course, **Grumpy Cat** (as well as dogs) as he described Mashable's highly successful 2012 redesign, including innovative integrations of advertising across Mashable's digital and social media channels.

The pre-event Reception was held in the adjacent Parsons outdoor courtyard in advance of the event, and featured copious alcohol and hors d'oeuvres under sunny skies, while the fairly raucous after-Awards Celebration, 3 blocks away at nearby Vapiano, featured more drinking and lively conversation. As the only Awards event focused specifically on User Experience, the community of UX professionals in attendance- and the dozens of recruiters there trying to lure them away to new jobs- seemed excited for the future of their profession and the next wave of immersive technologies to come.

All 2013 User Experience Award Winners

The Grand Prize winner received \$1000 and crystal trophy; Gold winners each received \$250 and a crystal trophy; Silver winners each received French Champagne and a crystal trophy; Bronze winners received framed plaques; and Finalists received certificates. More info on all: <http://userexperienceawards.com/ux-awards-2013-winners/>

- **GRAND PRIZE** for **Best Everyday Utility: Google Now** by **Google**
- **GOLD** for **Best Digital Media Transformation: Helsingin Sanomat Digital Transformation** by **Cava Interactive** for **Helsingin Sanomat**
- **GOLD** for **Best Social Learning Platform: Actively Learn** by **Schema Design, LLC** for **Actively Learn, Inc.**
- **SILVER** for **Best Accessibility Innovation: Activ** by students at **Virginia Tech**
- **SILVER** for **Best Consumer Device: WeMo** by **Belkin**
- **SILVER** for **Best UX Research Process: Cessna- We Have Your Jet** by **Digitas** for **Cessna**
- **SILVER** for **Most Useful Consumer Health Care Service: ZocDoc** by **ZocDoc**
- **BRONZE** for **Most Persuasive Use of Data: Water For People** by **EffectiveUI** for **Water for People**
- **BRONZE** for **Best Clinical Health Care Experience: PowerChart Touch** by **Cerner Corporation**
- **BRONZE** for **Best Classroom Learning Experience: Amplify Tablet** by **Amplify**
- **FINALIST: USAToday.com Site Redesign** by **Fi** for **Gannett**
- **FINALIST: PUMA Joypad Wall** by **kbs+ Spies & Assassins** for **PUMA**

- **FINALIST: BMW ActiveE** by kbs+ Spies & Assassins for BMW North America
- **FINALIST: American Express Consumer Digital Acquisition Journey** by Huge for American Express
- **FINALIST: Nike+ FuelBand** by R/GA for Nike
- **FINALIST: RealSpend** by SAP

2013 UX Awards Jury & Panelists

The 2012 Awards received over 30% increase in submissions from the prior year, forcing tough decisions by the jurors. Decision-making was done using a combination of points-based ranking by each judge and group consensus for the final Awards, as described during the event. The 2013 Jurors included:

- **Cindy Jeffers, CEO and CTO at Salon.com**
- **Chris Jaffe, Director, Product Innovation at Netflix**
- **Tomer Sharon, UX Author of *It's our Research* and Senior User Experience Researcher at Google Search**
- **Anders Ramsay, Agile UX Designer & Coach, UX Author, Leader of NYC Agile Experience Design Group**
- **Cory Lebson, Principal Consultant at Lebsontech in Washington, D.C. and Director of Strategic Partnerships at UXPA International**
- **John Payne, Design Educator at Parsons, Pratt and NYU and Principal at Moment Design**
- **Lis Hubert, UX Consultant & IXDA New York Local Leader**
- **Beverly May, Founder & President of Oxford Technology Ventures LLC; President of NYC-CHI and Founder of the UX Awards, was also onstage as Moderator & Host**
- **Robyn Peterson, CTO Mashable, Keynote speaker**

Full biographies of panelists and the moderator are available at <http://userexperienceawards.com/judges/>

About the User Experience Awards

Now in its third year, the **User Experience Awards** aim to raise awareness of the value and importance of great UX in creating effective, engaging and useful digital products and services in today's fast-evolving and competitive digital landscape.

The UX Awards' mission is to:

- Evangelize the value of exceptional UX in changing our way of life, disrupting markets and improving the utility of digital products and services;
- Showcase outstanding and innovative examples of exceptional digital user experience;
- Honor the UX creators as tech's unsung heroes; and
- Highlight UX Best Practices and processes to help the industry evolve.

The User Experience Awards are the brainchild of Beverly May and are organized by **Oxford Technology Ventures LLC** (www.OxfordTechnologyVentures.com), a boutique user experience and product strategy consultancy in New York, with **partner** support from the major User Experience and usability professional organizations in NYC, including **NYC-CHI**, the **NY Chapter of IXDA**, the **NY Chapter of the UXPA** and **Parsons the New School**.

The 2013 UX Awards were also generously sponsored by **AnswerLab (Platinum)**, **POW Interactive (Gold)**, **Google (Silver)**, **Modus Associates (Silver)**, **TriNet (Bronze)**, **Experis (Bronze)**, **Rosenfeld Media (Bronze)**, **Rutgers Center for Innovation Education (Bronze)**, **Loop11 (Bronze)**, **Ephibian (Community)**, **GarysGuide (Community)**, **Girl Develop It! (Community)**, **IA Summit (Community)**, **Sachs Insights (Community)**, **The Hired Guns (Community)**, **UltraLight Startups (Community)**, **UX Mastery (Community)**, and **UX Acrobatics Meetup (Community)**.

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