

Digital Product Design

Mark Rickerby

About Me

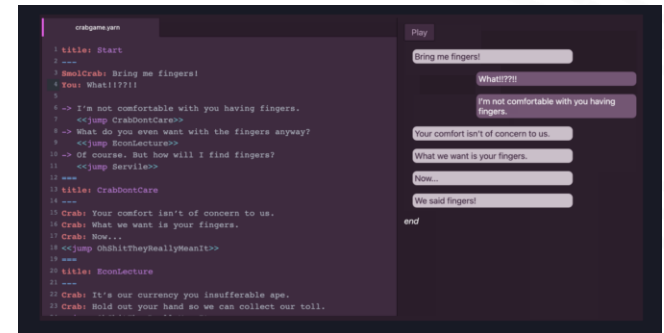
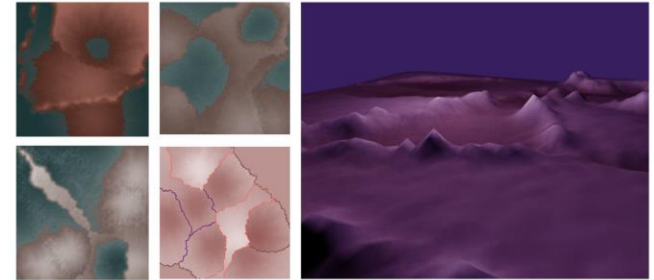
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Mark Rickerby

Director of Studies, Digital Product Design

Role: Teaching and curriculum design across BProdDesign and BDigiScreen programmes

Research: Interactive storytelling, creative collaboration tools, geophysical simulation, symbolic AI, history of design and computing



Why Digital Product Design?

- There's an industry need for designers who are creative and have the technical skills to design and prototype solutions, communicate with stakeholders, and produce viable commercial products.
- A new major developed through consultation with industry and former students, building on experience running high-growth game design and industrial design programmes at UC.
- Technology trends come and go, but the core foundations of human-centred design, creative and technical management and visual communication design have lasting importance across a wide range of possible career paths.

Teaching and Learning Approach

We focus on the whole product lifecycle, from audience insights, research and interactive prototyping through to testing and market validation.

- Researching and evaluating user needs, business goals, psychology, ergonomics
- Organising information and mapping digital experience workflows
- Typography, colours, visualisation: readability, legibility, usability, aesthetics
- Interactive prototyping and testing with users
- Interface technologies: web, touch screen apps, desktop apps, wearables, AR/VR, 3D interfaces
- Launching, marketing and scaling new products

Foundation for first year students

- All students eligible to enrol in first year can gain entrance to the Digital Product Design major.
- Design requires students to be comfortable working across a wide range of different social, technical and creative contexts—good communication, written language and research skills are important and highly sought after in industry.
- Not a maths-heavy discipline but solid understanding of geometry, trigonometry and algebra is very valuable in understanding user interfaces and visualisation technology.
- Some secondary school experience with digital technology, traditional graphics and tech drawing, and design and visual communication subjects is recommended.
- Flexibility, adaptability, critical thinking, and a problem-solving mindset are essential.
- Our foundation courses cross disciplinary boundaries between art, science, creativity and technology: **PROD110, PROD151, MATH110, COSC121/COSC122**

Unique opportunity in New Zealand

- The School of Product Design is a hub for interdisciplinary collaboration at UC, with working relationships that span Engineering, Arts, Science and Business.
- With Industrial Product Design and the technical programme for Digital Screen in the same school, we can offer unique project opportunities for students to explore app concepts that incorporate electronics and physical fabrication as well as user interfaces for entertainment products and immersive media.
- We are active in research and design practice with staff and visiting guests sharing expert skills and experience from a wide range of contexts, including large scale apps for global audiences, early-stage startups in NZ, and consulting on public and private sector design projects.
- Emphasis on building a design portfolio year-on-year, and delivering a final year capstone project.

Career Opportunities

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**Where can a degree in
Digital Product Design
take you?**



Product innovation

- Launching companies and market validation of new products and services
- Early-stage startups, high growth companies
- Well suited to ambitious, flexible, entrepreneurial people

Established companies

- Supporting design and technology within an existing product team
- Working on live services with large user bases
- Launching new products from an existing foundation
- Great opportunities for networking, upskilling, job stability

Consulting

- Combination of creative and technical expertise and people skills
- Well suited to extroverts, critical thinkers, good communicators

Two major tracks in a digital design career

Individual Contribution

Product Designer
Design Systems Engineer
Frontend Developer
Web Designer
Design Technologist
User Interface Programmer

People Management

Product Manager
User Experience Researcher
Creative Lead
Technical Lead
Project Manager
Design Facilitator

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Pātai? | Questions?