

# CRAFTING EXCELLENCE: THE UX PORTFOLIO STUDY AT ASU

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## INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of this UX case study was to comprehensively understand and tackle the challenges confronted by ASU students majoring in User Experience (UX) in developing and improving their professional portfolios. Through an extensive research endeavor, valuable insights were gathered to guide strategies aimed at enhancing the portfolio-building journey for UX students at ASU.

Utilizing semi-structured interviews, contextual inquiries, and post-interview surveys, we employed a comprehensive approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from users, aiming to identify their shared objectives and obstacles. Drawing from these insights, we crafted a persona named Emily Chen, representing intermediate-level UX students, to illuminate her behaviors, objectives, challenges, and preferences. Additionally, we developed Usage and Concept Stories to pinpoint opportunities for improving user experiences by addressing their needs and experiences.

## KEY FINDINGS

### # Common Goals and Challenges:

- Participants commonly aimed to secure internships and develop compelling portfolios.
- Challenges included difficulty in obtaining expert portfolio reviews and finding suitable portfolio inspiration.

### # Insights from Competitive Analysis:

- Behance and UX Planet: Received high ratings for portfolio reviews, inspiration quality, accessibility, and integration of UX resources.
- Dribbble: Received high ratings for inspiration quality and generating improved ideas for UX portfolios.

After analyzing these platforms, a deeper understanding of industry trends and best practices in portfolio reviews, inspiration quality, and accessibility was gained.

## RESEARCH METHODS

Our class research group studied 6 ASU UX master's students via remote Zoom sessions, covering four parts:

- 1. Semi-Structured Interviews:** We use open-ended questions to uncover students' perspectives, experiences, and UX design challenges, enabling flexible expression and understanding.
- 2. Contextual Inquiry:** We ask students to demonstrate steps for seeking portfolio assistance, observing actions and tool usage without a specific ASU portfolio interface, supplemented by follow-up questions.
- 3. Post-Interview Surveys:** After interviews, Google Form surveys collect quantitative and qualitative data on demographics, interests, and tool proficiency, highlighting varying readiness levels and improvement areas.
- 4. Competitive Analysis:** We analyze Behance, Dribbble, and UX Planet to refine recommendations, learn from industry trends to enhance UX student portfolios, ensuring recommendations are informed by user needs and standards.

## PERSONA AND USAGE STORIES

### Persona Development:

Based on thorough research, Emily Chen emerges as the archetype for an intermediate ASU UX student. Emily's nuanced behaviors, aspirations, frustrations, and preferences offer profound insights into the journey of portfolio development, guiding the design process towards tailored solutions.

### Usage Stories:

Usage and Concept Stories serve as essential tools, portraying specific scenarios from Emily's journey. The narratives vividly illustrate her experiences, emphasizing the significance of seeking inspiration from high-quality portfolios and receiving personalized portfolio reviews from UX experts. Detailed scenarios illuminate the challenges encountered, facilitating empathetic understanding and informed decision-making throughout the user experience design process.

## THE DESIGN SOLUTIONS

### # Filter Button:

By allowing users to filter portfolios based on preset tags, ensuring relevance and credibility, and ensuring users find high-quality inspiration.

- Users can refine their searches more precisely by clicking keywords and selecting from the latest and most popular filter options.
- Users filter preset tags, such as "Industry Case Studies" and "User Experience Research Tags," to access suitable and high-quality inspiration.
- Users view filtered results with tags like "High Quality" and "Editor's Picks."

### # Inspiration boards and Note-taking Functionality:

Enables users to save inspiring portfolios and take notes on specific sections, facilitating organization and reflection for portfolio development.

- User-friendly, clicking on notes directly navigates to specific sections for note-taking in the case study.

### # Portfolio Review Sessions:

Providing users with two options for guidance and feedback allows for personalized guidance and feedback, enhancing learning and portfolio development.

- One-on-one meetings with UX Zoom experts and written guidance and feedback through portfolio file submission

