Abby Buchanan

UX Researcher & Strategist

Portfolio: abbybuchanan.com↗

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Summary

UX researcher and strategist focused on how people experience digital systems under real-world cognitive, emotional, and environmental constraints. I use qualitative research, user interviews, behavioral observation, and research synthesis to identify pain points and translate lived experience into actionable design insights. My work is especially focused on accessibility, cognitive load, neurodivergence, and human-centered technology.

Core Skills

Qualitative Research • Generative Research • User Interviews • Semi-Structured Interviews • Usability Testing • Thematic Analysis • Research Synthesis • Research Strategy • Accessibility • Systems Thinking • Journey Mapping • Cross-functional Collaboration • AI-Assisted Prototyping & Synthesis

Tools: Figma • Miro • Notion • Google Workspace • Claude • Agile Environments

Featured Research

UX Research Project: Scaffold | Cornell UX Design

- Planned and conducted generative qualitative research examining executive-function challenges related to neurodivergence, trauma, and brain injury.
- Recruited participants and facilitated semi-structured interviews using disability-centered practices (active listening, consent, and participant autonomy) to explore behaviors, pain points, and unmet needs.
- Synthesized findings into thematic insights around cognitive load, predictability, autonomy, sensory context, communication demands, and emotional safety.
- Translated research findings into actionable design principles and iterated a digital prototype supporting users during executive-function overwhelm.

Experience

Studio Manager (UX Systems & Operations) | Amri Studio | 2022–2024

- Redesigned physical, operational, and information-flow systems, improving clarity, accessibility, team alignment, and workflow.
- Improved workspace usability and accessibility for neurodivergent employees.

Freelance UX & Experience Designer | 2019–Present

- Conducted user-informed design for neurodivergent individuals, incorporating therapist input and individualized needs.
- Designed sensory-informed environments supporting regulation, clarity, accessibility, and cognitive ease.
- Developed educational experiences for neurodiverse and international learners across varied cognitive and cultural contexts.

Freelance Web Designer (UX-Focused) | 2019–Present

- Designed websites with clear user flows, improving onboarding and booking experiences by translating client needs into structured digital systems.
- Developed a structured client-discovery framework translating complex client needs into clear, systemized design direction.

Founder & Owner | Veda Collective | 2010–2020

- Built and managed a five-practitioner client-centered wellness practice.
- Conducted client interviews and translated behavioral insights into improved intake, booking, and service experiences.

Co-Owner & Systems Designer | Resound NW | 2011–Present

- Designed operational and physical systems supporting students and staff.

Education & Training

Certificate in User Experience Design, Cornell University (eCornell)
B.M. Music Composition (Tech Minor), Oral Roberts University
Certificate in Interior Design, Psychologie of Home Design School