



**PEOPLE
FOR
RESEARCH**

Issue 11
December 2019

UX TRENDS 2020: OUR ANALYSIS

**We analysed over 40
trend-forecasting reports and
this is what we found out.**

Pages 8 & 9



Designing for accessibility:
experts share the biggest
challenges they've faced

Page 5



Looking back: Our top 5
achievements in 2019

Pages 6 & 7





WAVING GOODBYE TO 2019...

... and getting ready for the new year and new challenges!

It was a huge privilege to accept our award from the Market Research Society (MRS) back in September this year for Best Support Services. Our role in the process of market research and UX/user research often falls between the cracks when it comes to recognition by industry bodies, so it was extremely rewarding for the whole team to have their professionalism and hard work officially recognised in this way. Visit our blog to read more about this achievement.

As we prepare to enter 2020, we have some exciting plans ahead. We shall be building on the success of our remote research recruitment service. Following the launch of this new service in the summer of 2019, there will be more growth in this service over the next year, including further refinement and development of our capability to deliver on both UK and international projects.

Speaking of international work, I spent some time in New York City earlier this year discussing opportunities to bring the full PFR service to the United States. There are some exciting things in the pipeline for next year and all I can say is: watch this space!



The user research sector has gone from strength to strength over the last few years and I don't see any signs of this letting up in the current climate. In fact, with the general election now out of the way – and whether for or against leaving Europe –, either way there are strong indications that this is likely to be a record year for our industry.

Paul Gooding
Founder & CEO at People for Research



✚ £6.45B

The amount of money that UK consumers spent online between Black Friday and Cyber Monday in 2018.

✚ 70%

Of airlines already have or are planning to implement some version of AI to improve their customer support.

✚ £135B

The amount of profit the gaming industry is expected to generate by 2021 – a 25% increase compared to 2018.

Sources: Digital Arts Online, G2.com, and PhocusWire.

Editorial



By Maria Santos,
Head of Marketing
and Data Protection

What a year 2019 has been! We won an MRS award, rebranded and redesigned our business website, launched our new User Viewing website and the Accessibility Collective, developed new services, grew our team... We have so much to celebrate and be thankful for as we approach the end of another year and get ready for the challenges and adventures that 2020 will surely bring.

Before we go on a break to celebrate the holidays, we traditionally close the year with a balance and a forecast of the industry trends we believe will be big over the next 12 months. This year, we took a slightly different approach and looked at over 40 trend-forecasting reports to find out which topics the industry is likely to focus on in 2020. And, of course, we also added our own user research/recruitment-related predictions. The results are quite interesting – you can read more about this on pages 8 and 9.

We're very excited about the festive period just around the corner, but we can barely wait to be back in January and find out what 2020 has in store for PFR and our industry.

Join our mailing list! 

CREAM OF THE CROP

Freshly picked news and blogs

State of UX in the Enterprise 2019

By Kuldeep Kelkar, UX Matters

More than 200 global UX professionals completed UserZoom's second annual survey. Overall, the research found that the state of enterprise UX is growing stronger. Nevertheless, many organisations still face challenges.



Why are personas so important in UX design?

By Lauren Ellis, Nomensa

Humans have – this is no revelation – always had a soft spot for storytelling. Stories remind us of what's important. You should think of a persona like a story, or a lighthouse.



19 user research tips from 2019

By David Renwick, Optimal Workshop

This article is all about sharing our top user research tips from 2019. Some of these are as time-tested and true as the practice of user research itself, and others are starting to take off. Let's dive right in!



ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES

Designing for accessibility: experts share the biggest challenges they've faced.

A while ago, we asked the UX and research community on Twitter to share the biggest challenges they have faced when trying to design accessible and inclusive products or run research and testing with disabled users. December being the month when we celebrate International Day of Disabled Persons, we thought it would be the perfect time to share these challenges on our blog. Here is what the community had to say.

1. Stakeholders/colleagues don't see the value

Kari Goin Kono, UX designer:

"Collaborators don't see the value of the time and knowledge required to make a project accessible."

Allison Herrera, UX researcher:

"Stakeholders only want digital accessibility scans and not research with people."

2. Lack of know-how

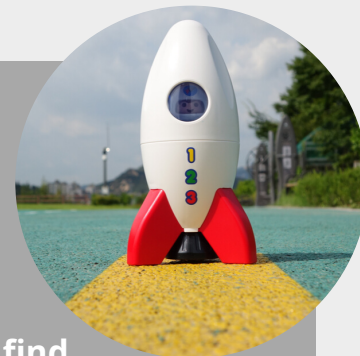
Julianna Rowsell, accessibility expert listed a few issues: "1. Not having done continual user research 2. Thinking accessible design has less aesthetic, or by trying to 'fix' a prototype after the fact. 3. Uninformed, bolted on a11y, isn't accessible."

3. Lack of diversity in design teams

Julianna Rowsell: "Usability testing with people with diverse needs is key. Screen readers, magnifiers, plain language, high contrast, keyboard only accessible

Have you heard about the PFR Accessibility Collective?

Click here to find out more about fixed-price accessibility-focussed user recruitment service. 



designs. Part of this can be done through purposeful user research and hiring more people with disabilities for their talents and perspectives."

4. Integrating accessibility into an existing product or going beyond the MVP


UI/UX designer Jason Bennet:

"Knowing that your product is going to have to integrate with a legacy or third-party system that isn't accessible, so you're not able to improve the whole of the user journey."

5. Finding participants

Emma Howell: "Recruitment."

Simone Borsci, researcher: "Involving in the design and testing people with different perspectives and abilities."

Click here to read the blog with more quotes from our experts. 

BALANCE

LOOKING BACK: OUR TOP 5 ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019

With the new year just around the corner, we are looking back at what the People for Research team achieved in over the last 12 months.

Accessibility & inclusion

Raising awareness about the importance of digital accessibility and inclusion has been one of our main goals for the last few years, and 2019 wasn't any different. A few months back, we launched our new fixed-price accessibility recruitment service in London and Bristol: the Accessibility Collective.

Hello, Exeter!

Following our London office in 2018, we expanded into Exeter this year through a partnership with co-working hub The Generator and u.exe, Exeter's first user experience viewing and testing facility. An exciting development following the launching of our redesigned website and new User Viewing website, a digital home for our Bristol-based viewing facility.

We won an MRS award

Back in October, the Market Research Society distinguished PFR with an Oppie – MRS

Operation Award – in the category of Best Support Services, thanks to our work for cpartners and charity FRANK.

Unmoderated remote research

In May, we officially launched our unmoderated remote research/testing recruitment service, managed by our MRS-trained team. To find out more about this, you can email vicky@peopleforresearch.co.uk or visit our blog.

B2B & international recruitment

The requests to find niche business owners and senior professionals increased in 2019, as well as the number of international or multi-location projects we worked on. Just in September, we recruited hundreds of participants across seven different countries for two international projects – a challenge that we translated into **a blog** with six top tips to help you go outside of your geographical comfort zone. 



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At PFR, we have worked closely with our clients over the last 12 months to understand the support they need from a recruitment partner in order to achieve quality results. Our B2B, remote and accessibility recruitment services are just a few areas that we're growing in 2020. We're excited to see how these developments can benefit the digital world.

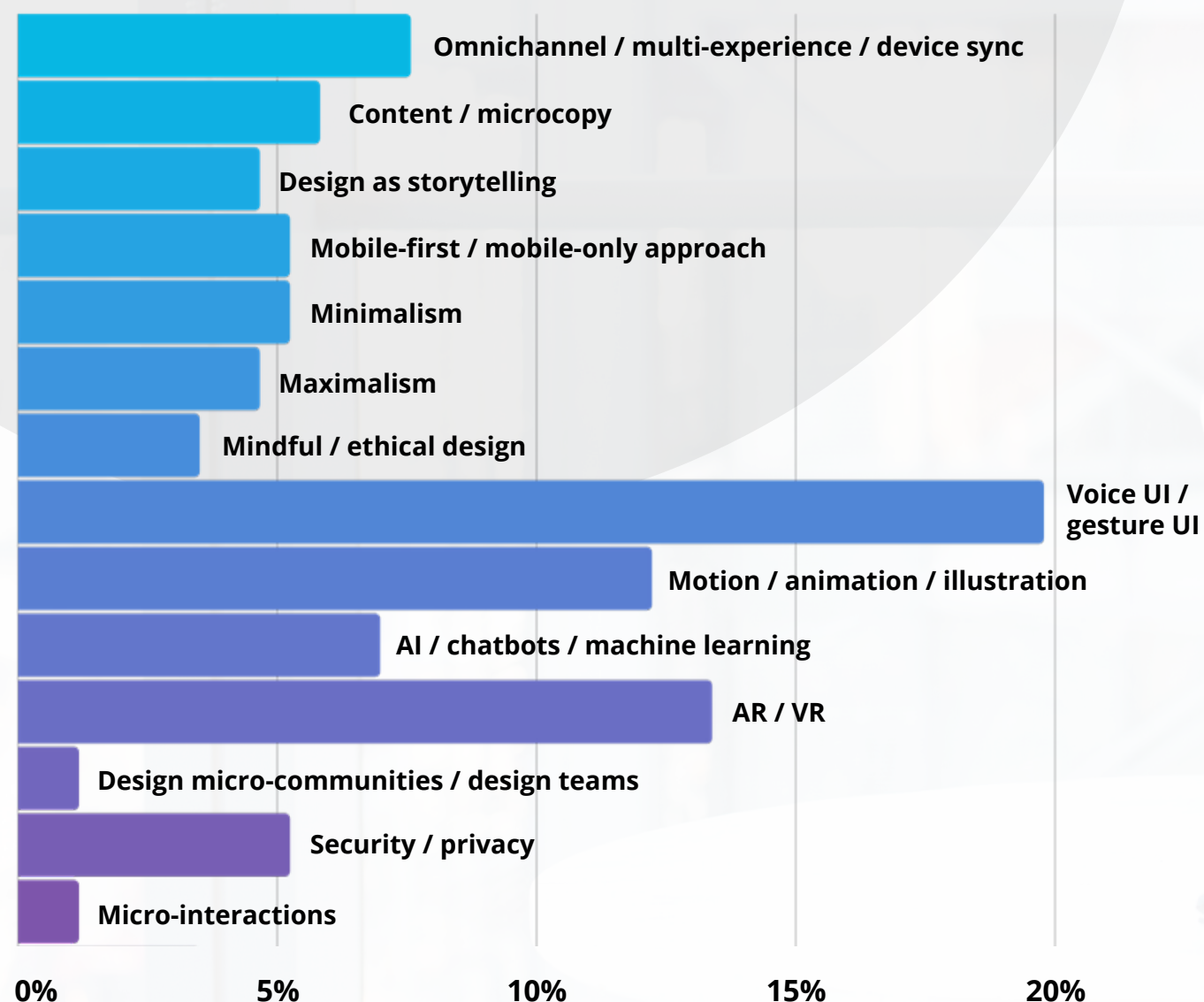
Kate Parrott, Project and Client Services Director

Click here to read the complete article 

UX TRENDS 2020

OUR ANALYSIS

If you have read any of the many trend-forecasting blogs and articles circulating the web, you might have noticed a couple of things: some trends haven't changed much when compared to previous years, and some trends contradict each other. To get a better picture of what is happening in the UX and user research world, we analysed over 40 articles listing UX and design trends for 2020 and this is what we found out.



Interesting, right? Voice and gesture-based user interfaces, as well as augmented and virtual reality remain the biggest trends going into 2020, closely followed by animation and motion in design.


Despite being at opposite ends of the design spectrum, minimalism and maximalism sit very close to each other in this trend forecast. None of these are likely to be a surprise, but there is a 'newcomer' that is set to become one of the hottest new trends for next year: design as storytelling.

We're also pleased to see mindful and ethical design and accessibility trending in 2020, in line with a couple of our own predictions for user research and recruitment:

Ethical design

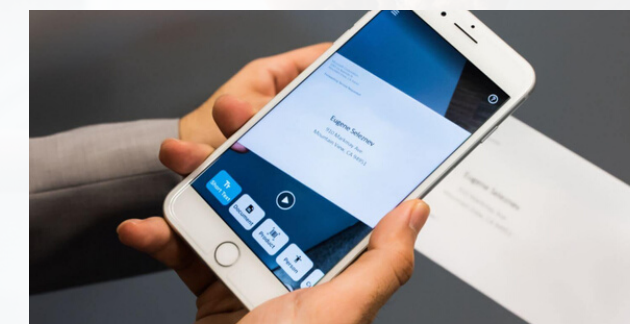
We attended a lot of events in 2019, and 'ethics' was one of the buzzwords repeated by speakers and attendees alike, from User Research London to Bath Digital Festival. The team at Toptal believes intentional ethical design is the top trend going into 2020: "Thankfully, dishonest design has been exposed to the glare of public scrutiny, prompting businesses and designers to more carefully weigh the ethical implications of their design decisions."

Biometric research & testing

One of the exciting case studies we are working on at the moment is about recruiting people with heart conditions to take part in biometric research sessions. You'll be able to read it soon on our blog, but for now you can check out **this article** by behavioural scientist Susan Weinschenk, on the advantages of biometric tools. 

Walk-throughs

"Walk-through tools like the kind provided by WalkMe have been around for a few years now, but this year I've seen the functionality copied by several other platforms. In 2020, I predict this will become the standard for more and more sites," Userzoom writes. These usability evaluation method tools literally walk the participant through a series of tasks and ask questions to understand the user's perspective – the goal is to evaluate the system's user-friendliness for new/infrequent users. We predict these walk-throughs will become more regular in testing sessions.



AI for accessibility

The numbers indicate that AI-powered accessibility services that monitor the web for compliance will keep growing in 2020. This technology scans websites at regular intervals, and when updates occur, a platform is modified to be more compliant. According to Toptal, "the accessibility requirements of motor, cognitive, and visual impairments (along with epilepsy) are all accounted for. Expect to see accessibility soar in 2020 as more teams and organisations integrate these AI services into their design process." This trend is also linked to Microsoft and their AI for Accessibility programme, as well as tools like Seeing AI.

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