

Janani Balachander

Service Designer

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Professional Summary

Highly experienced and empathetic Service Designer with a decade's track record in delivering user-centric design solutions. Originating in architecture, my problem-solving and analytical acumen allow for an innovative approach to digital product design. I am fervently dedicated to marrying user requirements with business objectives, having spearheaded design strategies across a spectrum of sectors including fintech and healthcare.

Key Skills

Design Strategy

User Interviews

Usability Testing

Design Research

User Journeys

Storyboarding

Figma

Sketch

Work Experience

Janani Balachander Ltd

Founder & Design director | 2013 - Present

As a Senior UX & Service Design Contractor, I specialise in managing complete project lifecycles, tackling complex challenges across diverse sectors. My focus is on delivering superior user experiences and innovative solutions, consistently aligning user needs with business objectives for impactful results.

Some agencies & brands I worked with

THE TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES



giffgaff

/thoughtworks

Sapient

AKQA

R/GA



MSL
Influence. Impact.

Key Pillars of My Service Design Expertise

User Research: I specialised in understanding user behaviours, needs, and motivations through diverse research methodologies. By leveraging insights from direct user feedback, I developed designs that adeptly addressed user challenges and enriched their overall experience. This approach guaranteed that the final design solutions were not only intuitive and engaging but also closely aligned with user expectations and preferences, embodying the essence of user-centred design.

Specific Examples

Thoughtworks: Conducted a User Research project for a commissioned pitch to a Government department, addressing significant challenges in their storage systems. Daily responsibilities included gathering both qualitative and quantitative data from users, aimed at identifying and understanding key pain points in the current system's usability

Achievement: Completed pivotal research in 6 weeks, developing a key technical solution and laying the foundation for future integration projects, demonstrating both efficiency and strategic foresight

Strategy Development & Implementation: The primary focus is on formulating and executing strategic plans. Responsibilities include analysing market trends, identifying business needs, and crafting strategies aligned with overall objectives. Implementation involves managing execution, monitoring progress, and adapting strategies to ensure optimal outcomes and alignment with business goals

Specific Examples

Care Quality Commission: In my capacity at CQC, I spearhead service design for a crucial digital transformation, working in tandem with stakeholders to tailor the digital strategy to organisational objectives. My role is integral to deciphering the agency's processes via meticulous research and stakeholder workshops. I formulate and enact a transformation strategy that bolsters patient care, encompassing strategic planning, hands-on implementation, and ongoing enhancement efforts.

Achievement: Successfully launched a new assessment system to support a framework for all care services, hospitals, GPs and adult social care in England to over 4000 assessors and inspectors in a programme that will impact over 40m people. The system has been incredibly well received with users highlighting how intuitive the platform is and commending its simplification of complex journeys

Design Leadership & Team Collaboration: Championing user experience design, I lead multifaceted projects, guiding UX teams through the intricacies of digital innovation. My leadership is characterised by a collaborative spirit, uniting cross-functional teams of engineers, analysts, and designers to transform user insights into compelling, intuitive products. With a hands-on approach, I steer strategy and execution, ensuring design excellence that resonates with users and fulfils stringent business objectives.

Specific Examples

Draw Group: In my role at Draw Group, part of Oliver Wyman, I provided design leadership for the UX of a cutting-edge banking application, orchestrating the user experience from conception to launch. Collaborating closely with Business Analysts, Product Owners, and Process Designers, I directed the team through complex UX challenges. My approach balanced hands-on problem-solving with strategic oversight, ensuring that our design solutions not only met but exceeded user expectations and business needs

Achievement: Despite the project's discontinuation due to the bank's acquisition, our innovative design work was repurposed, validating its quality and adaptability, and became integral to the success of subsequent projects within the organisation

Innovative Problem Solving: I excel in identifying and tackling complex design challenges with innovative solutions. My approach melds analytical thinking with creative ideation, leading to breakthroughs in user experience that push the boundaries of conventional design. I apply a blend of user-centred research, iterative design, and technology trends to devise solutions that are not only effective but also future-proof, catering to evolving user needs and driving business success

Specific Examples

Sapient: At Sapient, I developed a customer experience map for a novel retail concept, predicting the needs of new mothers and devising a solution to manage their children's nutrition. This involved innovative thinking to unite physical and digital products into a cohesive, user-friendly service.

Tribal Worldwide: I designed a comprehensive user journey for a Kitchen Visualiser tool, necessitating rapid prototyping and inventive methods to offer an experience that smoothly linked online and offline customer interactions

R/GA: I led the development of user journeys that transformed the customer experience, encompassing everything from selecting products to booking builders. My innovative strategy also included integrating shared services, such as hotel stays during home refurbishments, and a system for progress tracking. This all-encompassing approach to problem-solving ensured a smooth transition for customers during the potentially disruptive renovation process, maintaining continual satisfaction and engagement.

Technical Proficiency & Prototyping: My expertise lies in utilising a range of design tools and technologies for efficient prototyping. Skilled in rapidly transforming concepts into interactive prototypes, I facilitate effective testing and iteration. This technical proficiency ensures that my designs are both innovative and aligned with current industry standards, aiding in informed decision-making and continuous design improvement.

Specific Examples

giffgaff: I demonstrated technical proficiency by developing a CMS platform for the website's Help section, emphasising user-contributed content. My role involved prototyping various design solutions to enhance user interaction and content accessibility, focusing on intuitive and user-friendly interfaces through rapid prototyping and iterative testing.

News UK: I applied my technical skills in UX design to improve digital news platforms, prioritising a seamless user experience. This included designing, testing, and iterating prototypes based on user feedback, with an emphasis on responsiveness and user-centred design, ensuring the final designs effectively met user needs and expectations

Education

Management Programme for Women Entrepreneurs

Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore

Bachelors of Architecture

Bharath University, Chennai