blink

By

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Conferences are always, at least to some degree, about making connections. At this special event, we'll be digging into the theme of meaningful collaboration between product design and management leaders and user experience professionals.

Joe Welinske, Blink's accessibility director, is also the program manager for our ConveyUX conferences. Leading up to the event, he's been conducting video interviews with the presenters speaking with the event's many presenters—drawn from both product and UX—about the event's theme and the topics of their talks.

"One of the things that we want to accomplish with this theme" Joe explains, "is to foster collaboration and a better understanding between various parts of the organization including product design, product management, and user experience professionals."

Collaboration is key

For product leaders, ConveyUX Boston will be an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the ways they might put user experience resources to optimal use within product development. The event will provide UX leaders with insights about moving research and design further "upstream" to help support decision making and product evolution.

"It takes a village. No one person these days can really conceive of, design and develop, and launch the complex software products that we see out there," says Dan Olsen, author of *The Lean Product Playbook*. While speaking with Joe recently, Dan added, "I learned in my product career that I could write the best product requirements, but if we fall down on the UX design, it

doesn't really matter." We're excited to hear Dan's presentation "How Product Management Plus Design Leads to Product Success."

"We're starting to understand more and more who our customers are," Patti Palmer, Director of UX Design for TIAA noted in a conversation with Joe. "And, because of that, we're able to start doing conceptual work really early on and helping to drive some of those business cases that the product teams may want to do. So, it's a very interesting take to be that far up in the process. Normally, designers are a little bit further down." We're definitely looking forward to hearing her insights during her talk "Get Emotional, Connecting Products and People in the Digital World."

Dynamic conversations

Whether you're approaching opportunities from the product or design side of the equation, getting to the heart of good solutions means connecting with users and with each other on a deep and meaningful level.

"There's a need for our product teams to deeply understand customer motivations; not just market research, not just usability testing, not just focus groups," says Cindy Alvarez of Microsoft, who will lead a session titled, "Conversations to Great Products." Speaking with Joe about her book, *Lean Customer Development*, she added, "I think, you know, PM and UX folks are my favorite people. I mean I've been on both sides, so the notion of having an event to bring us together and help us work better together is just really exciting to me."

Samantha Starmer, VP of Design at Capital One, is in a unique position to see the benefits of bringing product leaders and UX leaders together. In a recent conversation with Joe, Samantha explained, "I've been very fortunate in my career to have product and UX and design reporting to me directly and sort of figuring out how to work best that way."

Speaking with Joe, Samantha posed these questions: "How do we get rid of what's often an 'us-versus-them' tension between the groups? And how do we work more closely together in a unified way in order to deliver products, experiences, and services that serve the business needs and serve the consumer needs?" The title of her talk will give you a clue: it's called "Separated at Birth, Why Product and Design Belong Together."

By focusing on the intersection of product and UX, Blink hopes to ignite a dialog between product leaders and UX leaders around the best ways to blend these disciplines. We believe that bringing together these disciplines opens the possibility not only to improve collaboration and innovation but also to help each of us gain an appreciation of shared knowledge, skills, and techniques. That's why we are so thrilled to make the nexus of product and UX the focus of ConveyUX Boston.

A multifaceted event

In addition to these and many other product and UX leaders, ConveyUX Boston will include interactive workshop sessions, case studies, and small group discussions. And, of course, there will be copious networking and socializing opportunities to round out our action-packed event on Boston's historic waterfront.

We plan to hang on every word. What about you?

ConveyUX Boston is coming August 15 and 16, 2019. [Learn more and register](#).