

CORI

PEPELNJAK

USER EXPERIENCE RESEARCHER

612.859.0928 · cori@pepelnjak.com · Evergreen, CO · [LinkedIn.com/in/coripep](https://www.linkedin.com/in/coripep)

SUMMARY

Qualitative UX Researcher with big tech experience, employing multimodal methods to translate insights into actionable recommendations that shape roadmaps, new features, and solutions. Leverages a decade of creative and marketing leadership in the medical, outdoor, and hospitality industries to align user needs with business objectives, driving innovation. Recognized for product, design, and engineering acumen, excelling at the nexus of user experience and organizational mission.

SKILLS

Complex Data Analyses	Diary Studies	Log Data Correlation	Workshop Facilitation
Concept Testing	Evaluative Research	Report Presentation	Survey Design
CUJ Validation	Generative Research	Recruitment Management	Usability Testing
Data-Driven Ideation	In-Depth Interviews (IDIs)	Research Socialization	UX Design Tools Proficiency

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CURIOSITY TANK | FREELANCE UX RESEARCHER & TEACHING ASSISTANT | MAY 2021 – PRESENT

Provide research and teaching support to Curiosity Tank Research Consultancy and the "Ask Like a Pro" user research series.

- **Research:** Conduct rapid, user-centered B2C and B2B exploratory and evaluative research, delivering strategic and tactical insights that enhance clients' decision-making and business performance.
- **Teaching Assistant:** Mentor 50+ students in foundational, generative, and evaluative research for clients across healthcare, manufacturing, publishing, and research industries. Develop and lead workshops focused on survey programming, coded note-taking, and advanced analytics, including AI applications.

GOOGLE via ANSWERLAB | SENIOR UX RESEARCHER | FEB 2022 – MAR 2024

Led research at Google as an embedded Qualitative Research Consultant, focusing on a workstream dedicated to users' subscribed-to email content, impacting over a billion users. Collaborated closely with cross-functional teams on foundational and visionary concepts, rich UI experiences, and user personalization. Developed deep user and product expertise, leading to two year-long contract renewals.

- Spearheaded multi-phase research combining generative and evaluative methods requiring prototype customization and AI model analyses to enhance personalized experiences and prioritize engineering recommendations. Outcomes directly informed new product designs, feature optimizations, and roadmaps.
- Led a series of studies for Gmail's first Rich UI feature, utilizing diverse methods including live user experiments with users' log data. Achieved user-informed design changes, launch approval, and increase in user engagement.
- Managed and ran the first cross-product study, integrating user and merchant (Organic Marketers) feedback to refine and validate a multifaceted visionary concept.

EVP | FREELANCE RESEARCHER & CREATIVE STRATEGIST | OCT 2020 – FEB 2022

As a consultant to a private equity-owned multi-region ophthalmology group, directed creative initiatives and digital strategies, including developing a design system, to improve user experiences and scale solutions for growth and acquisition.

- Identified accessibility and usability issues through heuristic evaluation, Google Analytics, and Siteimprove reporting.
- Led the strategy, design, and evaluation of incremental UI and content changes to address usability and accessibility issues, aligning with the client's KPIs and budget constraints.

NATURAL RETREATS | OCT 2016 – MAY 2020

DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE SERVICES | JAN 2019 – MAY 2020

Led a team of seven creatives, collaborated with agencies, trained over 20 freelance photographers. Strategically aligned creative outputs with revenue targets, creating marketing efficiencies for luxury vacation rental company across 16 US markets.

- Developed brand standards with standard operating procedures. Co-directed the transformative nationwide rebranding campaign from concept through to execution, resulting in a 38% increase in high-end product recruitment and contributing to a 15% increase in the average nightly rate.
- Leveraged consumer feedback and market trends to enhance design aesthetics and messaging impact, resulting in a 21% increase in quality lead volume across portfolios.

SENIOR MARKETING MANAGER | OCT 2016 – JAN 2019

Orchestrated a high-performing marketing team overseeing both direct and channel partner strategies, driving annual revenue to \$34 million.

- Monitored Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to adjust and optimize SEM, email, organic and paid social campaigns for a 21% average increase in traffic, growing direct web sales for the region by 18%.
- Established partner relationships with community and hospitality groups to attain tourism insights to adjust promotions and campaign targeting that drove a 34% increase in leads.

FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER | PEPELNJAK.COM | JAN 2008 – SEPT 2018

Award-winning conceptual documentary photographer dedicated to long-term, immersive projects that explore the complexities of human nature—relationships to each other and the environment.

QUALITY BIKE PRODUCTS | APR 2014 – JUN 2016

SALSA CYCLES ACTIVATION MANAGER | MAY 2015 – JUN 2016

Conceived, planned, and executed all aspects of marketing and educational events for the region, achieving an average 3x growth in event attendance and consistent 30% increase in post-event sales.

ACCOUNT MANAGER | APR 2014 – APR 2015

Instrumental in stabilizing & strengthening significant partnerships in a high-profile territory (\$10M) with 4% annual growth.

EDUCATION

BACHELOR'S DEGREE | ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES | UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

GSAPP INTRO TO ARCHITECTURE | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

CERTIFICATIONS

ASK LIKE A PRO: UX RESEARCH SERIES | CURIOSITY TANK

UX/UI DESIGN | SPRINGBOARD

DESIGN THINKING | IDEOU

ADVANCE GOOGLE ANALYTICS | GOOGLE ACADEMY