

Ricardo Acosta

Portfolio

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I'm Ricardo, a creator of innovative interfaces with over 20 years of experience working with industry leaders like Microsoft, the BBC, and award-winning startups.

My passion lies in every facet of user experience, from exploring the philosophical foundations of human behavior to crafting highly interactive solutions. I'm particularly drawn to prototyping, where creativity meets technology, allowing me to quickly transform concepts into functional, user-centered interfaces. Over the years, I've mastered a diverse set of skills, including sketching, wireframing, visual design, interaction design, UI, and 3D programming.

I thrive on solving complex challenges and redefining interaction paradigms. Recently, I've been focused on pioneering new interaction languages for VR and AR applications, combining cutting-edge design with robust functionality. My interest in artificial intelligence has also deepened, and I'm particularly excited about leveraging AI to push the boundaries of interface design and enhance user experiences in innovative ways.

Professional Experience



Not Another - Wonder House Coliving

Owner and Administrator, *March 2025 - present*

Led the launch and day-to-day management of a 14th-century farmhouse converted into a creative coliving. Accountable for budgeting and P&L, pricing and occupancy strategy, bookings and guest relations, vendor/contractor management, team scheduling and training, compliance and permits, and maintenance oversight. Designed resident onboarding, house rules, and a year-round calendar of community events to drive high satisfaction and sustainable operations.

ShapesXR

Lead Designer, *September 2023 - 2024*

I led a major UI and UX redesign of the app, improving user experience and interface appeal, which garnered widespread acclaim from the existing user base and attracted thousands of new professional users. I also drove an internal workflow transformation by introducing new tools and methodologies, streamlining processes and enhancing team efficiency..

Anotherway

Director/Owner, *September 2020 - present*

Released the award winning -hand tracking focused- VR Game "Unplugged: Air Guitar". I directed a group of developers, designers and producers in the development and maintenance of the game. Unplugged: Air Guitar was awarded with best Oculus Quest Game 2021 and Most Innovative Interaction 2021 among others and has been a financial success with versions of the game in Oculus Quest, Pico, Steam and PS5.

Microsoft

Senior Technical Designer, *Jan 2018 - September 2020*

Developing Mixed Reality experiences on the Windows Mixed Reality for Work team. In this role, I help the UX team create new interactions that work across many different platforms and devices AR-VR-Phone. Lately I've been working on the Microsoft Maquette, a VR prototyping app. My duties include UX design/ ideation, prototyping and implementation of interactions and

visual design.

Microsoft

Creative Technologist, *May 2015 - Oct 2017*

I joined the prototyping team exploring VR interfaces, Hololens ideas and interactions. I created PaintVR, a voxel based 3D sculpting VR app with objects support and a virtual 3d Library. I also delivered several 3D interactive prototypes that greatly helped define the interaction core for the current and next major release of Microsoft Paint 3D.

BBC WorldWide

UX Designer, *February 2015 - May 2015*

Working on the user experience of the popular BBC web video player iPlayer using the latest HTML standards and accessibility. I helped the team designing and prototyping several ideas using HTML+CSS+JS using Brackets, Framer and Proto.io

Microsoft

Lead Designer, *November 2013 - December 2014*

I joined **Microsoft** as a Blend Developer (Interaction/FrontEnd developer) but, due to my strong UX/UI/Interaction prototyping skills, I was quickly promoted to Lead Designer on one of the most important projects in the studio: *Upload Studio* for **Xbox One**. In this position, I was in charge of developing UX strategies so I used to deliver the appropriate documentation for it such as wireframes, IA, etc. I was also responsible for developing interactive prototypes, usually using Axure, to be used in User Testing.

While Axure is a good platform to communicate and test navigation and IA, it's just not enough when it comes to test the final User Experience with more complicated interactions, visuals, graphics and animations dictated by the brand identity. Due to this, I'm specialized in creating high-end prototypes that can be used in User Testing. They include animations, visuals and real data. All fully-interactive.

Being able to deliver these prototypes in quickly lets the team make the right decisions and finally create really "Next-Gen" UIs

Due to my solid programming skills, I was very aware of technology limitations so I was also in charge of coordinating both UI developer and Art teams to agree on a realistic solution, without overlooking the user experience.

Mr Roboto Game Studio

Art Director, September 2012 - November 2013

I led a team of 4 people; designers, 3d artists and developers, to create several mobile video-games including the award-winning: "Hope: The other side of adventure" with more than 50 reviews from sites like **IGN**.

During this period I gained a more serious interest in Human Behaviour theory, so I began to focus on Gamification techniques. I designed an internal gamified e-learning platform for **BBVA** and a very interesting project for the school book editors "**Santillana**" in which I mixed classic school books with a gamified experience on iPad. After these projects, I delivered several UX gamification lectures and courses for Spanish companies.

Thanks to my deep love for the filming industry, I collaborated on the initiative "Little Secret Film" from "**13th Street**", the popular Sci-fi channel, by doing the Art Direction on "Manic Pixie Dream Girl" and "Real Movie".

PlainConcepts: Microsoft Gold Partner

UX Designer and Game Art Director, February 2011 – August 2012

Game design, concept art, 3d modeling, animation and UI Developer on C#. I directed, among other games, "Bye Bye Brain", one of the most successful games on Windows Phone and Windows 8 with more than 2,300,000 downloads and 120,000 likes on facebook.

During this period, I worked as well as a UX and Visual designer and UI Developer on an internal **Microsoft** project (Codename "Sputnik") in Redmond (Seattle) .In this project I worked very closely with the Expression Blend and Windows Phone team.

Interactive Director, June 2010 - February 2011

In charge of a team of 4 designers, I worked on several projects for major companies like **Microsoft**, **BBVA** or **Real Madrid** among others. My responsibilities were to lead the team to create high-class user experiences with innovative tactile interactions. I usually delivered UX documentation such as UX strategy, wireframes or AI and designed the key screen visuals of the projects. I also managed the client relationship and led the meetings and discussions regarding any Visual or UX topics.

I was appointed as Official Microsoft 'Trainer of Trainers' (Metro program) in WPF/Silverlight/XAML and Windows Phone, which gave me the opportunity to deliver many lectures worldwide. I spent a while helping the Microsoft Silverlight Evangelist Team in Spain spreading the word to the top design agencies like Wunderman or AKQE. I was also entitled Microsoft Surface official trainer which allowed me to experiment with tactile interfaces before they became common.

UX Designer, January 2008 - September 2010

My primary tasks were the ideation and creation of interaction models, user experience, UI design, visual design and WPF/Silverlight/Blend composition. Functional mock-up design and programming.

My most relevant project on this period is the “**BBVA Portfolio**”. A Stock Market Web/Desktop application for both casual investors and day-traders that tried to move forward the visual appearance and interaction model of this type of, usually not very good looking, applications. As Official Microsoft Trainer in WPF/Silverlight for designers I gave several talks and workshops about how to change HTML design workflows into a more collaborative system designer-developer.

Ilitia Technologies: Microsoft Gold Partner

Interactive Art Director and UX Advisor, March 2007 – January 2008

The role was focused on fast mock-up and prototyping projects, as well as web design (Sharepoint), Blend and Silverlight development/design.

Publimedia Pixeland

UX Designer and Co-owner, January 2006- March 2007

The company was focused on web design using HTML+CSS so I took solid knowledge of this technology through the many web projects I worked on. I continued using Flash for a while for many interactive applications for tactile screens.

ArtStudio

Flash Interactive Developer, March 2004 – January 2006

Ideation, design and development of interaction models for tactile applications using Flash for Ubiq Window Screens. I worked on very exciting projects that mixed many technologies such as HTML+CSS, OpenGL, Quest3D, Flash and WPF among others. By the end of my time here, I was leading a small group of 2 3d artists

SpacioCreativo

Graphic Designer, February 2003 – March 2004

Web design and development using HTML+CSS and ASP, alternated with work on branding and print designs. Corporate identity, advertising and offline campaigns.

Software Knowledge



Unity3D	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
Microsoft Visual Studio	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
Axure	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
Sketch	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
Figma	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
Adobe Photoshop	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
Adobe Illustrator	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Professional
Adobe Premiere	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Professional
3D Studio Max & Vray	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Professional
Zbrush	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Medium
Microsoft Expression Studio & Blend	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
Procreate	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
Solid Works	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Medium
Blender	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Professional
Adobe Substance Painter	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Professional
Adobe Modeller 3D	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
Microsoft Maquette	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent

Code Knowledge



C#, .Net, Unity C#	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
WPF, Silverlight, XAML	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent

HTML & CSS	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Professional
Javascript/Node	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Professional
ActionScript	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Excellent
HLSL/ShaderLab	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Professional
SCRUM /Agile Dev Methodologies	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Professional

Languages



Spanish: Native

English: Fluent

Education



3 years of Industrial Design Degree at Universidad de Málaga
Microsoft Certified Professional on WPF (MCTS)

Given lectures



Global XR Bootcamp 2021: Developing Unplugged Air Guitar.
Global XR Bootcamp 2020: Designing Mixed Reality Apps
Microsoft Mix Reality Dev Days 2020: Design user interfaces for Mixed Reality
Washington University 2020: Prototyping for Virtual Reality in Virtual Reality.
Microsoft Design Days 2019: Designing UI in Mixed Reality.
Cadiz University 2017: Designing UI's for a multi device world.
Cadiz University 2017: Shaping the future: VR, AR and AI applied to Engineering.
Alicante University: Human Interface, designing interfaces for mixed reality 2015
Microsoft Internal: How Gamification took over the world. 2014
Microsoft Internal: XAML for WinRT 2014
Madrid Innovation Center 2013 – UX Gamification Course
Simo Network 2012 – Gamification: Turn your product into a game.
Microsoft Windows 8 Training 2012 – Understanding Metro Style (Barcelona)
Microsoft Windows 8 Training 2012 – Metro Style Apps for Designers
SecondNug – Melting Silverlight and XNA on the web.
Microsoft Windows 8 Training 2012 – Designing Metro Style Apps
Microsoft Windows Phone Road Show 2011 - Design Day - Speaker
Microsoft Windows Phone Road Show 2011 – Using Blend to Create amazing UIs on WP7
Microsoft Corporation Redmond Channel 9 interview about ByeByeBrain for WP7
Microsoft: Windows Phone Training at Microsoft Spain Offices.
Microsoft's Executive MIX: Marketing online future.
Visual Studio 2010 Premiere, 5 Cities tour: Windows Phone Conference.
Grupo Editorial 2010: Silverlight 4 for Designers
DevDays 2009 Lisboa: Developing Surface Applications
DevDays 2009 Lisboa: WPF present and future.
Surface, the natural user interface (At Microsoft's Surface Premiere in Spain) 2009
Microsoft official Train for Surface Applications 2009
Microsoft official Train for Silverlight Development in Madrid 2009
Silverlight Training for Wunderman 2009
Ask the Experts on Windows Live Services for Silverlight at TechEd 2009
Universidad Autonoma de Madrid: 3D Game development on WPF 2008
Mind Camp 2008 Madrid: WPF for Casual 3D game development
Microsoft's TTT (Train the Trainers) for Silverlight 1.0 at Sao Paulo 2008
Microsoft's TechDay: Silverlight vs Flash, Silverlight for Designers 2008

Recommendations

Please ask for the full version of each

In over twenty years of software design I have worked with many talented designers. I keep a short list of those designers who I believe are truly exceptional and who I would always work with again. Ricardo's name is near the top of this list.

Alex Cullum
Creative Director
Microsoft

Ricardo is the complete app prototype package. He is an incredible designer, who has that rare ability to step back from a problem, put himself in the head of a user and come up with a completely different solution; rather than refine existing ones. On top of that he is a very talented prototype engineer, who can rapidly bring his ideas to life in working code that looks and feels finished.

Most importantly, he consistently delights with his magic. When he quietly calls you over and says "Sav do you want to see something cool?", you know your mind is about to be blown.

Salvatore Fileccia
General Project Manager
Microsoft

[...] Ricardo is by far one of the most talented people in the industry. Not only is he a world class designer but he is also a very talented and creative technologist. The combination of both skills make him a powerful mix. Ricardo's breadth of expertise allows him to make a positive impact on user experience projects from both design and user research perspectives. [...]

Claudio Guglieri
Design Director
Microsoft Corp.

[...] He has also produced some of the most innovative, pragmatic and interesting gamification concepts that I have seen. Above all, I was impressed with his ability to cope with the myriad of sometimes conflicting feedback to quickly pick out and filter through the most relevant ideas to arrive at something that actually works better than it did before. [...]

Sam Zawadi

Technical Project Manager
Microsoft Studios

[...] Ricardo inspires me. He's probably the most enthusiastic user experience advocate I've come across in a long time. Ricardo stands up for the user when no one else will or everyone's already thrown in the towel. And, he's got the creative & technical know-how to quickly materialize his ideas into interactive prototypes. [...]

Aimee Freeding
Lead User Experience PM
Microsoft Studios

[...] He is a special kind of designer, a mind made to think outside the box. He just doesn't settle for "what works" as he naturally pushes his thinking up to and well beyond the limit and the basic assumptions of conventional, by bringing forth that special bit that can dramatically change the user experience, making it compelling and unequalled. [...]

Raul Varela
UX Designer
Canonical Ltd

Ricardo is one of the most diversely skilled and creative people in our industry. He brings great passion and ambition to a project, but he also backs it up with a deep understanding of interaction design and the ability to build great interactive prototypes [...]

David Mondelore
Senior Creative Engineer
Microsoft Corp